I think the key to this question lies in the widget sets that each of the
companies are developing as this is the first area where the products
have diverged (neglecting the PV-Wave Point & Click Interface Option).
I know virtually nothing about the PV-Wave widget set other than that
it is completely independent from the IDL 2.1 Widget Set and that I
believe interfaces developed under Wave-widgets can be ported to the
Point and Click Interface.  Perhaps the Point & Click Interface was
developed with these widgets, but I don't know.  Maybe a Wave user
can explain wave widgets.

The new IDL widgets are based on a subset of your standard
X-window or Sunview type widgets (scroll bars, push buttons, menus, etc.)
and appear sufficient to implement most types of interfaces.
The widget set is at a somewhat higher level than writing native
X-window code, but is still more complicated than writing regular
IDL code since actions are now event driven, rather than simply
executing serially from a program.  The new widget set is based on
open-windows for the SUN and Motif for the other platforms.  My
complaint about these widgets on the SUN, is that they don't currently
run under X11R4 ON A SUN, as IDL used some open-windows specific code
so you must run Open Windows Window Manager to use the widgets.  IDL is
aware of this problem, but I don't know what they intend to do about it.
Overall, the new widgets add tremendous capability to IDL and indicate
a postive step in the proper direction for IDL.  IDL is also working on
a MS-DOS version of IDL which I think is another step in the proper
direction.  I occasionaly have to use DOS on the road which greatly
hampers my ability to analyze data on-site.  IDL is planning on coming
out with a floating license soon which will offset one of the major advantages
that PV-Wave currently has over IDL.

I don't know what directions PV-Wave will be taking in the future,
but I think IDL has chosen a good path and I plan to stay with them.
It is always easier to stay with what you use, rather than switching
so I am somewhat biased.

BIASES:
IDL Experience - several years
PV-WAVE Experience - 2 hours


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|  || "plonski@aero.org"    those of The Aerospace Corporation.
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