
Subject: Re: Q: Xmanager explanation?

Posted by [J.D. Smith](#) on Wed, 08 Dec 1999 08:00:00 GMT

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"David L. Keller" wrote:

>
> Using IDL in two different projects about 10 years apart,
> I have yet to figure out what 'Xmanager' does for me.
>
> I realize that I have to keep track of widget ids, which
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> commands at the same time.
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> Anyone able to clearly explain what I get with xmanager?
> What it's drawbacks might be?
>
> -- Dave --

The code to XManager is available in the lib subdirectory of your IDL distribution, and is pretty straightforward. If it weren't for all the BLOCKING/NON-BLOCKING and outdated MODAL functionality, XManager would simply be calling widget_event for all managed widgets. For fun, try making a copy of xmanager.pro, modifying it to print some diagnostics inside the event loops, and letting it run.

A little experimentation will reveal that in almost no cases nowadays does XManager actually *do* anything. The "command line", i.e. something hard coded into IDL, now dispatches and handles most of the events. For traditional "blocking" applications (those without NO_BLOCK set), widget_event is called once with a special keyword, and only returns when nothings remains to generate events... i.e all of the work is done in widget_event, which each call to XManager in an application invokes once. Only the FAKE_MODAL event loop actually does any work, but it is seldom used, since you get the:

% XMANAGER: The MODAL keyword to the XMANAGER procedure is obsolete. It is superseded by the MODAL keyword to the WIDGET_BASE function.

warning every time. So, as you can see, with NONBLOCKING widgets upon us, more and more of the event handling code has moved away from XManager.

JD

--

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Subject: Re: Q: Xmanager explanation?

Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 08 Dec 1999 08:00:00 GMT

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David L. Keller (davekeller@pop.omah.uswest.net) writes:

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I'm trying to be serious here, but all I can think
of are wisecracks this morning. :-(

Drawbacks!? There are no drawbacks to using XManager,
believe me. A widget program that doesn't use

XManager is like going to the Rave with your hair slicked back with Brylcreem. Let's just say your chances of getting lucky are not too good.

XManager doesn't keep track of widget IDs, at least not in any meaningful way that will help you run your program. What it does keep track of is which event should be sent to which event handler. If you are still running IDL on your PDP-8 and you like flipping those switches to program the darn thing, then you will probably want to manage your own events. But the rest of us use XManager to take care of all this onerous work.

Your simple routine to keep track of widget IDs and names is nice, but it's just so much easier to use the built-in Find_By_UName keyword.

> I also don't trust Xmanager in that I am not sure that
> I can trust it with the 'interrupt' magic, and type IDL
> commands at the same time.

What version of IDL did you say you were running? IDL 1.5? Setting the NOBLOCK keyword gives you access to any widget program you want to run and access to the IDL command line at the same time.

There are any number of well-written widget programs around. I suggest you download a couple of them and have a look at what you are missing. A lot has happened in the 10 years you have been gone. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. OK, I get it. This guy is really Martin Schultz just having a go at me for some fun I poked at him in this newsgroup a while ago. :-)

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

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Uh, Dave. It's almost the millennium. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: Q: Xmanager explanation?
Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 09 Dec 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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Mirko Vukovic (mvukovic@taz.telusa.com) writes:

> Two years ago, I made the mistake of publicly announcing that I did not
> use Xmanager. The next thing that hit me Dave Fanning's book,
> unsolicited ! :-). I read with it with pleasure, and off course paid
> up.
>
> So, be carefull with what you say.

Shhhhuushh, Mirko. You are giving away one of my
best gorilla marketing tips! If this gets out, Lord
knows there will be no end of people admitting their
dumb programming practices. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: Q: Xmanager explanation?

Posted by [Mirko Vukovic](#) on Thu, 09 Dec 1999 08:00:00 GMT

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In article <384DE755.D4178242@pop.omah.uswest.net>,
davekeller@uswest.net wrote:

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Sent via Deja.com <http://www.deja.com/>

Before you buy.
