Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Struan Gray on Thu, 13 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Ronn Kling, ronn@rlkling.com writes:

> So why don't we hear from the rest of the newsgroup on this?

   I think it's a great idea, and would gladly pay shareware-level
fees, especially for things like postscript configuration which are
useful and help me write better applications but which are not
directly related to my research and therefore spend their entire life
on my back-burner.

   My own code is typical research-oriented stuff, blown together in
a hurry for unique occasions. There is little incentive to polish my
routines to a level where anyone can use them. Having done it once
for my surface plotting routines (happily - I'm not wingeing) I know
how much work it is and admire people like you and D.F. who do it all
the time. TI tend to end up using and contributing ideas and code
snippets rather than finished packages.

   That said, if there were a semi-established shareware market for
code I might be tempted to spruce up some stuff for public
consumption. I'd say go for it and see what develops (assuming this
fits both your business models).

Struan

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by ronn on Thu, 13 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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David (and anyone else listening),

First of all, it is not a good sign that you and I are the only ones
talking about this!

Some comments:

 >I think it is partly because the idea of cross-platform
 >compatibility, when it comes to IDL programs having anything
 >but the most basic functionality, is a cruel myth. :-(

I half agree, BUT... I have seven really complicated IDL programs in my
IDL Development Book that run on all the IDL platforms. I wrote them on

a windows 95 PC and then retested them on every other platform.
Granted, I had to make some changes but they were small. (One exception
is the Macintosh and how you have to click twice in every window. Once
to make it active and the second to push a button (or whatever).) As I
remember, I only spent a fews (part time) fixing all of the differences.
Just look in my code and see how many platform specific comments there
are...not many! But you are right, the GUI layout is absolutely the
most challenging.

But shareware doesn't just have to be entire applications. Take
FSC_inputfield.pro that you just sent me. I just tested it on IDL5.1 on
Alpha Unix, IDL5.2 SGI Unix, and IDL5.2 VMS and it works great! It is
certainly worth a few dollars to me for the privilige of using it!
(We'll talk later...) Based on my experience, getting compound widgets
to work across platforms is easier than an entire application. One of
my shareware routines lets you set up an input field with units
(distance, angle, or velocity). If you set it up for meters and enter
100 feet it will convert it back to meters. I have had no problem with
this on any of the platforms.

I also like the idea of specialized routines being shareware. For
instance, I have some IDL routines and a DLM that interface to a really
fast genetic algorithm on WIN32 systems. Now, I have put so much time
into this that I don't want to give it away. But if someone was willing
to pay a small fee I would be interested. I know other people also have
great routines that they don't really want to give away for free.

So why don't we hear from the rest of the newsgroup on this?

-Ronn
--
Ronn Kling
Ronn Kling Consulting
email: ronn@rlkling.com
Application Delvelopment with IDL book at :
 http://www.rlkling.com
Shareware and Freeware at: http://www.rlkling.com/

Sent via Deja.com http://www.deja.com/
Before you buy.

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <MPG.12e96a4bcbeffba39899ec@news.frii.com>,

davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

> Mike Schienle (mgs@ivsoftware.com) writes:
>
>> I won an IDL license several years ago from RSI. Since I was working at
>> Hughes at the time, it was legally their license. When the mound of
>> paperwork was produced for Hughes to accept the license, my manager told
>> me to take it home and never speak of it again :-)
>
> On such decisions, entire careers are built.

You're probably one of the few that knows how much truth is in that
comment. Hughes was getting ready to close down the division where I was
working. 6 months later I was a consultant, successfully bidding on
multiple contracts to the same Hughes division. Certainly wasn't my game
plan, but I'll go with what works.

> I wanted to write a book, but I was told no one would want
> to buy it. :-)

Ever started writing a book of your stories? Jack Canfield (Chicken
Soup) seems to have done pretty well for himself with similar material.

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by davidf on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Mike Schienle (mgs@ivsoftware.com) writes:

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> Hughes at the time, it was legally their license. When the mound of
> paperwork was produced for Hughes to accept the license, my manager told
> me to take it home and never speak of it again :-)

On such decisions, entire careers are built.

I wanted to write a book, but I was told no one would want
to buy it. :-)

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <85nduj$7r6$1@news.lth.se>, Struan Gray
<struan.gray@sljus.lu.se> wrote:

> Andy Loughe, loughe@fsl.noaa.gov writes:
>
>> How would this shareware concept work for those who
>> work in Government Laboratories... can the Gov't
>> cut you a check?
>
> I can only speak for my university (Lund, Sweden), but it can write
> and accept checks from individuals. There is a certain amount of
> setup that has to be done the first time an entity gets paid, so for
> onetime shareware fees I tend to pay the fee myself and get the money
> reimbursed - which, paradoxically, is bureaucraticaly more acceptable
> than paying direct.

I won an IDL license several years ago from RSI. Since I was working at
Hughes at the time, it was legally their license. When the mound of
paperwork was produced for Hughes to accept the license, my manager told
me to take it home and never speak of it again :-)

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <85nb5msnh1@nnrp1.deja.com>, wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us
wrote:

> Ditto those comments for the private section. All/most purchases need

> to come from approved sources. I would have an extremely difficult time
> recommending shareware purchase, even if only $30.

I've used petty cash to make shareware purchases before. I've also been
known to bury it in an expense account on travel.

> I would purchase it
> out of my own pocket in a dire situation, however.

That's what I usually do. I'll tell the group lead about it after the
fact. It's much easier to get forgiveness than permission.

>
> Personally, I would rather work on a barter-type of system. You help me
> - I help you - which is why Deja News exists. Shareware is a
> interesting concept, but IMO, an uphill battle.

Barters are always preferred to purchases when I'm buying something.
Purchases are always preferred to barters when I'm selling something.

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

In article <MPG.12e8ea40ec08e1b69899e7@news.frii.com>,
davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

> Ralph Lorenz (rlorenz@LPL.Arizona.EDU) writes:
>
>> I think part of the problem is that most IDL users are research-
>> oriented. If I can find a piece of code quickly that will do what
>> I want it to do, I'll use it, and many astronomy users provide
>> libraries of routines on the web.
>>
>> If, however, to use said piece of code, I need to have my department
>> write a check, or I need to worry about invoices etc, the effort to me
>> becomes disproportionate . I'd rather spend 2 hours
>> trying to code something than 1 hour doing paperwork to buy it..
>>
>> I know that may sound perverse (plus I know that the stuff you guys are
>> talking about is way more sophisticated anyway and probably takes
>> hundreds of hours to code)

>
> I've been hearing this so often lately it's finally
> beginning to sink through even my thick skull.
>
> I don't know why I'm wasting my time tying to write
> a book about object programming. The potential market for it
> must consist of about 10 programmers, who don't need
> a book anyway.

Add me to the list. I keep getting caught in legacy software and don't
get to exercise my object programming nearly enough. My thanks to Ronn
for his chapters in his book, and to David for the programs on his site.

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

In article <MPG.12e90f79dcd5c839899e8@news.frii.com>,
davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

> Bob Stockwell (dejastockwell@my-deja.com) writes:
>
>> PPS hey, the hell with RSi, dfanning.com should put
>> up the page. Dave deserves more money!
>
> I'll be looking for your check in the mail, Bob. :-)
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> P.S. There is a place on the Internet (the name
> escapes me right now) that is set up to handle
> all the financial details of distributing shareware.

Probably Kagi. I think we talked about it some time last year. Amazing
how often this idea gets tossed about on the back channels, but rarely
makes more than an honorable mention in the newsgroup.

> But I presume it will be too expensive for the
> author at the kind of volume we are talking about
> here (< 10 copies, apparently).

From
< http://faq.kagi.com/cgi-bin/WebObjects/ViewFAQs.woa/wa/Direc tAction?FAQL
isting=NewVend>
Kagi takes about 4% for a $600 item and about 15% for a $10 item. In
this particular case with David's $30 proposal, Kagi would take 11.7%,
or $3.50.

>
> I agree about the crippling thing, though. It's not
> worth it, just in terms of the time it takes. I think,
> now, it's probably better to just give the source
> out and let people's natural honesty shine through.

A gentle reminder sent to stdout on occasion might stimulate the honesty
gene.

> (I don't get that many reports of people stealing
> my book. But perhaps it's because I practically
> give it away to anyone who gives me a good story
> and has a sense of humor.)
>
> But setting up a proper shareware site, distributing
> funds to authors, etc. requires a better web page
> than I know how to build at the moment. I think you
> will have to get some commercial shopping cart
> software to handle it. That means coughing up
> some money you hope to recover with shareware fees,
> which--I have to tell you--seems more and more
> dubious. :-(

Maybe I can provide a service by setting you up with Kagi :-)

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <85nl6s$4s6$1@nnrp1.deja.com>, rgs
<dejastockwell@my-deja.com> wrote:

> I'm all in favour of shareware.
> Shareware is a great idea. You get quality

> programs for a very cheap price. You can't beat it.
>
>
> I'd buy any program that was even a little bit useful,
> especially if there was a convenient secure
> credit-card-accepting webpage.

I believe KAGI<http://www.kagi.com/> would be the ideal place to manage
it. I've purchased several items from KAGI with no problems at all.

>
> I think RSi should step in here and offer up such a page
> on their web site (I assume there isn't one now) to
> let everyone put there shareware, and have rsi take in
> the credit card money, and distribute it to the authors.

I think that would put RSI in a difficult position. I'd prefer they
concentrate on core functions and large-scale programs and let the
community provide small-scale programs.

...

> I think if RSI is going to capture a larger market share,
> they have to have some to play along with the "toolbox"
> marketing scheme (like the much hated (by me) matlab).
> I have matlab's latest release, with a whole handful of toolboxes,
> and they have more functions that I can count. IDL in comparison
> is barren of functions (referring to mostly math/numerical analysis
> etc. types of functions).
...
> Well, I'm anxiously awaiting the unveiling of
> the RSI (or Fanning) shareware page full of
> incredibly useful stuff written by everyone who has
> ever posted in this newgroup.

Same here.

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Mike Schienle on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <387F3086.22AF3DD8@see.signature.edu>, eddie haskell

<haskell@see.signature.edu> wrote:

> I do agree that the shareware concept is a great idea but I have never
> purchased shareware code myself and do not use most of the freeware code
> that is available.

From another perspective, I just spotted about 10 shareware programs in
my applications folder, all paid for. Maybe 6 or so freeware programs,
as well. Many oif these get daily usage, some have not been used in
quite some time.

> I am also a research oriented programmer and I
> consider the programming to be a lot of the enjoyment of the entire
> process. Unless I am strapped for time preparing for a presentation (as
> is currently the case) I really enjoy writing my own routines for
> plotting, creating postscript, image manipulation, etc.

I enjoy that, as well. I have a million little applications and
functions scattered neatly throughout my IDL code folders. Some of these
started out life as someone else's code and have evolved into something
completely different.

>
> For me it is not so much the purchase order problems as it is missing
> out on the fun of the mental creativity portion.

Trying to get inside someone else's mind can be pretty entertaining at
times. The recurring thought is, "What the hell was he thinking when
this came about?". Sadly, I've said that about my own code many times.

> Because my own code
> only needs to satisfy me and does not need to work on all platforms I
> can write most specific routines in less than a day, although I would
> never give my code to a stranger and expect them to understand how to
> use it.

Kinda scary, too.

> Additionally, I usually do not need all of the bells and whistles that
> come with a professional program. For example, the postscript program
> David has just put up.

I've offered to pay David for the older postscript program about three
different times. Not sure why he hasn't accepted in the past. Maybe just
setting out a tip jar on his web site would help.

> I have my own set of routines that do everything
> I ever find myself wanting to do with postscript (with the exception of

> putting titles on individual pages but I think that that is something
> IDL cannot do), thus spending money on additional functions that I would
> rarely use does not seem worth it.

Not sure how relevant this is to the above statement. It seemed more
clear before I wrote it. One of the craziest things I've encountered was
when I was working at Hughes Santa Barbara Remote Sensing about 5 years
ago. We had a hyperspectral sensor that was under development. Hughes
was in the usual budget fiasco so they froze software purchases. We had
our $6000 request for ENVI rejected. I spent $50000 recreating a few
functions that ENVI already provided that year.

> Just another point of view. However, for the sake of the IDL community
> in general I hope the shareware idea catches on.

The idea caught on a couple years ago. The IDL community hasn't embraced
it for some reason.

--
Mike Schienle   Interactive Visuals, Inc.
mgs@ivsoftware.com   Remote Sensing and Image Processing
http://www.ivsoftware.com/   Analysis and Application Development

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by ronn on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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All,

Wow! I make a post, go away for a day and have 18 replies!

In article <85nl6s$4s6$1@nnrp1.deja.com>,
  rgs <dejastockwell@my-deja.com> wrote:
> I'm all in favour of shareware.
> Shareware is a great idea. You get quality
> programs for a very cheap price. You can't beat it.
>

Absolutely!

> I'd buy any program that was even a little bit useful,
> especially if there was a convenient secure
> credit-card-accepting webpage.
>

Both David and I have secure sites that accept credit card entries. In
fact I have had shareware for sale for a few months, but precious

few takers.

The way I do it is simple, the save files are not disabled in any way
and if you want source you only have to pay a small fee. If you want to
buy something that someone else writes then you work it out with them.

> In fact, you guys* have inspired me. I'll write up two
> packages i've been thinking about and shareware them up.
> Look for an announcement sometime in early '05!
>

Let me know when you are ready!

> Well, I'm anxiously awaiting the unveiling of
> the RSI (or Fanning) shareware page full of
> incredibly useful stuff written by everyone who has
> ever posted in this newgroup.
>
I add more all the time!

So if the idea of shareware is a good idea, what types are people
interested in? Both David's and my stuff is slanted toward general GUI
type applications, but is that all there is? I personally like the
technical stuff. But I imagine that the more technical you get, the less
people are interested in it. For example, I have close to 90 IDL
routines that have to do with orbital mechanics but I have rarely seen
any posts asking about orbits. It is just a little too specialized.

-Ronn

--
Ronn Kling
Ronn Kling Consulting
email: ronn@rlkling.com
Application Development with IDL book at : http://www.rlkling.com
Shareware and Freeware at: http://www.rlkling.com/

Sent via Deja.com http://www.deja.com/
Before you buy.

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by davidf on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Martin Schultz (martin.schultz@REMOVE.dkrz.de) writes:

> "What to Do If You Only Have 10 Minutes to produce the plot your boss
> wants with IDL"
> may be even more catchy and address also those who don't work IDL on a
> daily basis ;-)

No doubt. But my publisher tells me this proposed title exceeds
the maximum allowed length by, oh, something like 32 words. :-(
We'll have to think of something catchy, but short.

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Martin Schultz on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:
>
>
> I think I'll shift gears, take the stuff I have and
> put it into the last chapters of a brand new IDL
> Programming Techniques book (where no one will have
> to read them), and write IDL Recipes: What to Do If
> You Only Have 10 Minutes a Day to Work with IDL. I'm
> pretty sure sales of this one would be brisk.
>
> Plus, I could charge an extra $50 to get all the
> neat programs I talk about in the book. (Assuming
> I can get them to work.) That would be consistent with
> my observation that you have to charge people something
> to make them want to use your free software. :-)
>
Sounds like a good plan. This is how the GNU people make money:
give the software away for free and write books that explain everything
and more. And it's probably easier to convince the boss/purchasing
office to buy a book as opposed to a shareware program. Finally: you
hold something in your hands! Post-finally: a book will generate an
automatic mode for site-licensing: while 4-5 people might share one
copy, a greater bunch will order more copies... You may want to take a

look at the Perl Cookbook as an example for how you can throw together a
bunch of examples in book format.

"What to Do If You Only Have 10 Minutes to produce the plot your boss
wants with IDL"
may be even more catchy and address also those who don't work IDL on a
daily basis ;-)

> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> P.S. On second thought, I could get the book to market
> about six months sooner if I called it IDL Recipes: What
> to Do If You Only Have 10 Minutes a Day to Work with IDL
> on your Windows PC.
Please don't! This could make some people angry whose advice you are
seeking once a while yourself ... (you may not even have to spell out
the differences but at least point them out though)

Best regards,
Martin

--
 [[[[[[[[[[
[[Dr. Martin Schultz   Max-Planck-Institut fuer Meteorologie   [[
[[Bundesstr. 55, 20146 Hamburg   [[
[[phone: +49 40 41173-308   [[
[[fax: +49 40 41173-298   [[
[[martin.schultz@dkrz.de   [[
 [[[[[[[[[[

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by davidf on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Richard Elsbernd (richard_elsbernd@itd.sterling.com) writes:

> I believe there is enough [object] material for a
> book equivalent in size to the original.

No question about it. And, quite frankly, I write
these books for myself anyway. The only real way
to learn anything new is to try to teach it or offer
it for sale. You get very clear about the distinction

between what you *think* you know and what you
really know. I recommend it for everyone, but
only if your family is comfortable with severe mood
swings. :-)

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
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Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by davidf on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Bob Stockwell (dejastockwell@my-deja.com) writes:

> PPS hey, the hell with RSi, dfanning.com should put
> up the page. Dave deserves more money!

I'll be looking for your check in the mail, Bob. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. There is a place on the Internet (the name
escapes me right now) that is set up to handle
all the financial details of distributing shareware.
But I presume it will be too expensive for the
author at the kind of volume we are talking about
here (< 10 copies, apparently).

I agree about the crippling thing, though. It's not
worth it, just in terms of the time it takes. I think,
now, it's probably better to just give the source
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(I don't get that many reports of people stealing
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funds to authors, etc. requires a better web page
than I know how to build at the moment. I think you
will have to get some commercial shopping cart

software to handle it. That means coughing up
some money you hope to recover with shareware fees,
which--I have to tell you--seems more and more
dubious. :-(

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Posted by eddie haskell on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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For me it is not so much the purchase order problems as it is missing
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use it.

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come with a professional program. For example, the postscript program
David has just put up. I have my own set of routines that do everything
I ever find myself wanting to do with postscript (with the exception of
putting titles on individual pages but I think that that is something
IDL cannot do), thus spending money on additional functions that I would
rarely use does not seem worth it.

Just another point of view. However, for the sake of the IDL community
in general I hope the shareware idea catches on.

Cheers,
eddie

----- ---- --- --- ---- --- -- --- --- -- -- - - - -
|\   A G Edward Haskell

```
|\   Center for Coastal Physical Oceanography
|\   Old Dominion University, Norfolk VA  23529
|\     Voice 757.683.4816    Fax 757.683.5550
|\       e-mail  haskell*ccpo.odu.edu
----- ---- --- ----  --- --- ---  --- -- --  -- - - -  -
```

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Richard Elsbernd on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT

David Fanning wrote:
>
> I don't know why I'm wasting my time tying to write
> a book about object programming. The potential market for it
> must consist of about 10 programmers, who don't need
> a book anyway.
>
> I think I'll shift gears, take the stuff I have and
> put it into the last chapters of a brand new IDL
> Programming Techniques book (where no one will have
> to read them)...

I am one of those ten programmers and would be interested an IDL object
programming book. I purchased IDL Programming Techniques, and probably
wouldn't want to buy an updated version for just a few extra chapters. I was
able to write my first object program using demo code as an example, but it
would have been easier with a book. I believe there is enough material for a
book equivalent in size to the original.

Rick

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by R.G. Stockwell on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT

I'm all in favour of shareware.
Shareware is a great idea. You get quality
programs for a very cheap price. You can't beat it.

I'd buy any program that was even a little bit useful,
especially if there was a convenient secure
credit-card-accepting webpage.

I think RSi should step in here and offer up such a page

on their web site (I assume there isn't one now) to
let everyone put there shareware, and have rsi take in
the credit card money, and distribute it to the authors.

The reason I say this (and I do realize that it will
never happen, because like all of my brilliant ideas,
they are somewhat lacking in brilliance) is that IDL
really needs user contributed files. And needs them
organized logically and all in one place. I realize there
are large librarys available on the web, but it is a little
hard to find what you need quickly.   It should be
as convenient and fast as possible to purchase/download
the code.

If users contributed more in hopes of getting a little
pocket money (to spend on beer of course), then IDL
becomes a more attractive product.
Also, shareware would invite competiton, and let the users
decide what code is worthwhile. Currently RSI accepts
proposals for toolboxes to be written, but RSI does not
have the expertise to decide who should do what,
as evidenced by their rejection of my proposal ;)

I think if RSI is going to capture a larger market share,
they have to have some to play along with the "toolbox"
marketing scheme (like the much hated (by me) matlab).
I have matlab's latest release, with a whole handful of toolboxes,
and they have more functions that I can count. IDL in comparison
is barren of functions (referring to mostly math/numerical analysis
etc. types of functions).

In fact, you guys* have inspired me. I'll write up two
packages i've been thinking about and shareware them up.
Look for an announcement sometime in early '05!

*(in the non-gender specific usage)

Well, I'm anxiously awaiting the unveiling of
the RSI (or Fanning) shareware page full of
incredibly useful stuff written by everyone who has
ever posted in this newgroup.

adios,
bob

--

R.G. Stockwell
Colorado Research Associates
3380 Mitchell Lane
Bouler Co

PS I strongly urge people to not to handicap the code.

PPS hey, the hell with RSi, dfanning.com should put
up the page. Dave deserves more money!

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by davidf on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Ralph Lorenz (rlorenz@LPL.Arizona.EDU) writes:

> I think part of the problem is that most IDL users are research-
> oriented. If I can find a piece of code quickly that will do what
> I want it to do, I'll use it, and many astronomy users provide
> libraries of routines on the web.
>
> If, however, to use said piece of code, I need to have my department
> write a check, or I need to worry about invoices etc, the effort to me
> becomes disproportionate . I'd rather spend 2 hours
> trying to code something than 1 hour doing paperwork to buy it..
>
> I know that may sound perverse (plus I know that the stuff you guys are
> talking about is way more sophisticated anyway and probably takes
> hundreds of hours to code)

I've been hearing this so often lately it's finally
beginning to sink through even my thick skull.

I don't know why I'm wasting my time tying to write
a book about object programming. The potential market for it
must consist of about 10 programmers, who don't need
a book anyway.

I think I'll shift gears, take the stuff I have and
put it into the last chapters of a brand new IDL
Programming Techniques book (where no one will have
to read them), and write IDL Recipes: What to Do If
You Only Have 10 Minutes a Day to Work with IDL. I'm
pretty sure sales of this one would be brisk.

Plus, I could charge an extra $50 to get all the
neat programs I talk about in the book. (Assuming
I can get them to work.) That would be consistent with
my observation that you have to charge people something
to make them want to use your free software. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. On second thought, I could get the book to market
about six months sooner if I called it IDL Recipes: What
to Do If You Only Have 10 Minutes a Day to Work with IDL
on your Windows PC.

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by Struan Gray on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Andy Loughe, loughe@fsl.noaa.gov writes:

> How would this shareware concept work for those who
> work in Government Laboratories... can the Gov't
> cut you a check?

   I can only speak for my university (Lund, Sweden), but it can write
and accept checks from individuals. There is a certain amount of
setup that has to be done the first time an entity gets paid, so for
onetime shareware fees I tend to pay the fee myself and get the money
reimbursed - which, paradoxically, is bureaucraticaly more acceptable
than paying direct.

Perhaps more of a problem would be that many of the potential
writers of IDL shareware are in receipt of US federal funds, and Uncle
Sam gets stroppy about charging the taxpayer twice. This is why all
the NASA images are public domain. Still, simply having a central
shareware archive would be nice, and those who did the programming on
the guvmint's time could set a fee of $0.

Struan

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by wbiagiot on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Ditto those comments for the private section. All/most purchases need
to come from approved sources. I would have an extremely difficult time
recommending shareware purchase, even if only $30. I would purchase it
out of my own pocket in a dire situation, however.

Personally, I would rather work on a barter-type of system. You help me
- I help you - which is why Deja News exists. Shareware is a
interesting concept, but IMO, an uphill battle.

Good luck nonetheless,

Bill B.

--
"They don't think it be like it is, but it do."

Oscar Gamble, NY Yankees

Sent via Deja.com http://www.deja.com/
Before you buy.

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by wmc on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Ralph Lorenz <rlorenz@lpl.arizona.edu> wrote:
> Struan Gray (struan.gray@sljus.lu.se) wrote:
> : Ronn Kling, ronn@rlkling.com writes:

> : > So why don't we hear from the rest of the newsgroup on this?

> If, however, to use said piece of code, I need to have my department
> write a check, or I need to worry about invoices etc, the effort to me
> becomes disproportionate . I'd rather spend 2 hours
> trying to code something than 1 hour doing paperwork to buy it..

I agree with this. Its not the whole story, but actually buying stuff
for me is a bit of a pain. Of course, I could use my own card and that
would be easy, but then I'm paying my own money for work stuff and that
hurts.

- William

--
William M Connolley | wmc@bas.ac.uk | http://www.nbs.ac.uk/public/icd/wmc/
Climate Modeller, British Antarctic Survey | Disclaimer: I speak for myself

---

Subject: Re: IDL Shareware
Posted by rlorenz on Fri, 14 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Struan Gray (struan.gray@sljus.lu.se) wrote:
: Ronn Kling, ronn@rlkling.com writes:

: > So why don't we hear from the rest of the newsgroup on this?

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trying to code something than 1 hour doing paperwork to buy it..

I know that may sound perverse (plus I know that the stuff you guys are
talking about is way more sophisticated anyway and probably takes
hundreds of hours to code)

:   My own code is typical research-oriented stuff, blown together in
: a hurry for unique occasions. There is little incentive to polish my

lets me calculate and plot in the same package.
: Struan

--
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