Subject: Mac OSX
Posted by Richard Adams on Mon, 08 Oct 2001 10:53:24 GMT
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Dear All,

   Word here on the street is that despite early announcements of support
for OSX there is now doubt that it will be supported. This must surely mean
the end of IDL on the Macintosh. I for one - with a lab full of Macs and an
admittedly small but growing number of IDL licences - think this is major
bad news. The potential of an adult operating system (OSX/unix) and a great
analysis environment (IDL) looked like a rosy future for our work. Am I the
only one who thinks that dropping Mac support would be a bad move? If others
feel the same then should we at least lobby for continued support for
Macintosh computers?

With best regards,

Richard.

--
Richard J Adams   }<}}}}ï¿½>   e: r.j.adams@bath.ac.uk
MRC Senior Research Fellow   t: +44 1225 826436
Developmental Biology Programme   f: +44 1225 826779
Department of Biology and Biochemistry
University of Bath
Bath, BA2 7AY
UK

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Tue, 09 Oct 2001 21:09:33 GMT
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JD Smith wrote:
>
>   Dr. Pennypacker knew he needed a powerful application that was
>   simple enough for even a kindergartner to use

Careful, now. Does this imply that we all here have not outgrown a
kindergarten yet, if we keep asking questions about an application that
is "simple enough for even a kindergartner" ?

And Dr. Pennypacker is now out of luck with his school full of Macs.

Pavel

P.S. I just started in C++, so in a year you'll see me in that newsgroup :-(

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by gschneider on Tue, 09 Oct 2001 23:01:26 GMT
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The recent turn-about by RSI (now Kodak) has hit us hard.
Here is an email I sent to RSI about this. I urge other
Mac platform IDL users to follow suit:

Dear Mr. Powell,

As I have now seen your recent statement regarding
RSI's dropping of IDL for MacOS in future releases,
I am forwarding an email I sent to Eileen yesterday.

Our immediate group (NICMOS Project @ UofA) has
eight current IDL/Mac licences in use. I realize
that this is not a huge number, but we are all
upset that you are deserting us. I have discussed this with
each of them and I can say my letter speaks for all.

I should add since my letter that your offer to:

> Customers using RSI products on one of these platforms can transfer their
> licenses to another supported platform at no additional cost if they are
> currently on maintenance.

is rather hollow as it is not a viable alternative for us as we
have made substantial commitments in H/W, S/W, and time
developing our Macintosh based environments. This is not simply
a matter of cost (though we are not please about the suggested
concept of abandoning all of our Macintosh hardware) but also
of productivity. To say we are dissapointed is an understatement.

Glenn Schneider

From: STOSC::GSCHNEIDER   "Glenn Schneider, mail forward from stsci.edu" 8-OC
T-2001 19:04:15.90
To: SMTP%"efield@rsinc.com",SMTP%"info@researchsystems.com"
CC: GSCHNEIDER
Subj: Termination of IDL/Noesys under MacOS

Dear Eileen & RSI,

Having just returned from the ADASS XI conference,
where I gave a talk extolling the merits of IDL and
IDL+Noesys for astronomical data analysis, I was
both shocked and saddened to learn of RSI's apparent decision
to drop support for both under MacOS. As the NICMOS
Project's Instrument Scientist at Steward Observatory I have
been a long time user of both IDL (on several platforms),
Transform (reborn in Noesys), and Mac OS. The later is
by far my environment of choice, and I routinely use both
RSI products to reduce and analyze large volumes of HST data
under Mac OS for myself, our team, and others in
the astronomical community.

Years ago our Instrument team selected IDL as our
research and development environment in part because
of its cross-platform support. We have had, and
continue to have, a significant number of dedicated Mac OS
users in our group and the impending loss of IDL (and
Transform under Noesys) will deal us a significant blow.
I am sure I speak for more than just myself when I ask
if this is an irrevocable decision? I had wondered
what changes might be afoot with Kodak's acquisition
of RSI, but I had never dreamed we would have our
support cut off at the knees. Did you query your
user community before reaching this decision, or was
it taken unilaterally? I understand that IDL and Noesys
is the intellectual property of RSI, now Kodak, and it
certainly is within your right to make such a decision.
I could possibly understand that decision if your
company had decided to terminate the product line, but
to drop support from one platform in particular, i.e.,
under Mac OS is unfathomable. I would ask if you would
reconsider this, as I feel that you are doing more than
a disservice to a significant user community, but by
doing so would forever earn their rightful distrust.

Respectfully,
Glenn Schneider, Ph.D.
NICMOS Project Instrument Scientist
Steward Observatory
University of Arizona

 *===
===================*
*   <<< Near Infrared Camera and Multi-Object Spectrometer >>>   *
*   !!!! Now at Rest in the Hubble Space Telescope !!!!   *
* Science Mission Completed: 18 Dec 1998   Cryogen Depleted: 04 Jan, 1999   *

```
 *================================================================
====================*
* GLENN SCHNEIDER      * Phone: 520-621-5865 FAX: 520-621-1891 Telex: 467175  *
* Instrument Scientist  * email: gschneider@as.arizona.edu              *
* Steward Observatory   * ftp:   starsrus.as.arizona.edu             *
* NICMOS Project  N326  ****************************************************
* University of Arizona * World Wide Web Information Server:           *
* Tucson, AZ 85721 USA  * http://nicmosis.as.arizona.edu:8000/          *
 *================================================================
====================*
*      !!!!  "Wishing you clear skies, and good seeing."  !!!!      -GS- *
 *================================================================
====================*
```

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 04:28:11 GMT

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Ok, since we are outpouring our feelings here - I will, too. I did already
sent this to RSI, but I think I will duplicate it to specific people there
and - what the heck - mail a printout of it was well.

Dear RSI,

I would like to convey my deepest dissatisfaction with the recent decision
to discontinue IDL support for the Macintosh.
Our research group uses Macs as a platform of choice for historical resaons.
I was very pleased to discover that IDL for the Mac was made available, and
immediately wrote a number of applications that we use for processing
atmospheric measurements and climate data. We in our group were looking
forward to the OSX release which promised to be one of the best versions of
IDL ever. Now, it appears that we were betrayed in our trust.
I am asking that my protest be forwarded to officers in your company who are
in charge of decision making. NOAA that I work for recently bought a site
license and our Macs are using that to run IDL. I feel cheated to end up not
being able to use IDL when a site license is available. I played my role in
NOAA's purchasing the site license by responding to agency-wide survey and
saying that I will use IDL daily on my two G4 Macs.
I am asking that RSI delivers OSX verion as promised, and continues to
support IDL for Macintosh.

Sincerely,
Pavel

--
Dr. Pavel A. Romashkin
R/CMDL1, 325 Broadway
Boulder CO 80305

ph. (303) 497-7408
fx. (303) 497-6290

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Randall Skelton on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 05:55:22 GMT
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On Tue, 9 Oct 2001, Paul Woodford wrote:
> What do people suggest as alternatives? I was looking at OpenDX a while
> back - has anyone here used that? I would think it could be ported to
> Mac OS X with a X windows interface without too much pain.

Unfortunately, there aren't many good options for modern Mac users who are
interested in cross platform visualization/analysis. As a visualization
only solution, OpenDX would probably port to OS X without much effort but
I suspect you will be disappointed with the rasterized output. The
biggest feature lacking in OpenDX, IMHO, is the lack of a
vector postscript renderer. It has been on the OpenDX todo list for over
2 years and progress has been very slow of late... Nevertheless, it is
remains an option. You may want to check out the Scientific Applications
for Linux page for more options:

http://sal.kachinatech.com/

I'm personally looking into Octave again...

http://www.octave.org

Cheers,
Randall

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Wayne Landsman on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 06:18:01 GMT
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Glenn Schneider wrote:

>
> Having just returned from the ADASS XI conference,
> where I gave a talk extolling the merits of IDL and
> IDL+Noesys for astronomical data analysis, I was
> both shocked and saddened to learn of RSI's apparent decision
> to drop support for both under MacOS.

And last Friday, I submitted a proposal to NASA to try to get some funding for the

IDL Astronomy Library, with one of the main arguments being that IDL was the leading professional-level astronomy data analysis software for the Macintosh.

In my own case, I had not yet installed IDL on my home Mac, but was expecting to do so with OSX, because (as others have mentioned) I expected OSX with its underlying Unix core to allow me to perform heavy-duty data analysis.   So unlike the case with VMS, where it was probably safe to predict declining sales of IDL licenses, the introduction of OSX IDL was almost certainly going to spur the purchase of Macintosh IDL licenses.   This leads the optimist in me to think that maybe Kodak/RSI will realize their mistake, and give OSX IDL a chance for at least a couple of years to see how much sales growth results.

Wayne Landsman   landsman@mpb.gsfc.nasa.gov

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Bernard K. on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 07:33:15 GMT
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I renewed my IDL maintenance contract at the beginning of summer
because I was expecting the forthcoming version to be available on
OSX as announced by RSI. If this had not been the case I would probably
have investigated to spend my future time and money on other solutions
for my DATA analysis.
Isn't the behaviour of RSI/Kodak in that matter considered illegal? I
mean they probably sold many maintenance contracts to people by letting
them think they would get an OSX version in the next release.

Anyway, I will write to RSI/Kodak later today to express my
dissapointment about their drop in OSX support and hope we are enough
complaining to make them evaluate their commitment again.

Bernard.

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Bernard K. on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 07:37:02 GMT
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Maybe we should also let Apple know about our feeling so they may
consider putting pressure on RSI or even give them some support to
continue development of IDL on Mac.

Bernard.

In article <101020010933154775%bknaepen@'skip'mac.com>, Bernard K.
<bknaepen@'skip'mac.com> wrote:

> I renewed my IDL maintenance contract at the beginning of summer
> *because* I was expecting the forthcoming version to be available on
> OSX as announced by RSI. If this had not been the case I would probably
> have investigated to spend my future time and money on other solutions
> for my DATA analysis.
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> mean they probably sold many maintenance contracts to people by letting
> them think they would get an OSX version in the next release.
>
> Anyway, I will write to RSI/Kodak later today to express my
> dissapointment about their drop in OSX support and hope we are enough
> complaining to make them evaluate their commitment again.
>
> Bernard.

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Randall Skelton on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 12:24:52 GMT
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The RSI page (http://www.rsinc.com/idl/whatsnew.cfm) is not particularly
clear on what operating systems will be supported or perhaps I have just
misinterpreted the newsgroup comments to mean that 'IDL for the Mac is
dead.'

For example, the image: http://www.rsinc.com/img/idl/PlatformTable.jpg
suggests that IDL 5.5 will be available for OS 8.6,9.x. Can anyone
confirm that this is the case?

Also, under the heading of 'Plans for Future Platform Support' MacOS 8.6,
9.x remain listed. This seems rather odd given Apple's rapid migration to
OS X.

There appears to be little arguing with the statement that, 'RSI will be
unable to provide IDL on the MAC OS X platform as previously planned'
listed on this page. I know if I have already bought a license for IDL
under the pretense of OS X support, I would be seeking a refund.

Does anyone know if IDL works under classic running on OS X? Also, does
anyone know if the Carbon API is considered 'static' or is it as dynamic
as it was during the spring? Could this be the cause of the halted port?

Cheers,
Randall

On Wed, 10 Oct 2001, Reimar Bauer wrote:

> last year I met David Stern in Darmstadt. This was before the idl5.4
> release.
>
> At this time I was informed that idl5.4 for AIX will be the last
> Version. One of the reasons is the migration from IBM to linux.
> I remember that several times it was discussed how difficulty
> it is to support more and more platforms or older and older
> platforms.
>
> We ourselfs are in a process to migrate from AIX to linux PCs
> too so this statement was bad for us but not as bas as it could be.
> Then with the idl5.4 release installed on AIX everytime idl
> was started we got a message that this is the last supported
> version for AIX.
> We and I believe some more others asked them to build IDL5.5 for
> AIX too and you are seeing the result. IDL5.5 will be builded
> for AIX too.
>
> There was no discussion about AIX and IDL in this newsgroup as
> I remember. I hope you all give your arguments to RSI too.
>
>
> regards
>
> Reimar
>
>
>
> --
> Reimar Bauer
>
> Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-1)
> Forschungszentrum Juelich
> email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de
> http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg1/
> == ======
> a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich
> http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg1/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.h tml
>
> http://www.fz-juelich.de/zb/text/publikation/juel3786.html
> == ======
>
> read something about linux / windows
> http://www.suse.de/de/news/hotnews/MS.html
>

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Richard Adams on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 12:56:19 GMT

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Randall,

   Matthew Powell's letter to the newsgroup yesterday was very clear.
Version 5.5 of IDL will be the last to run on Macs and it will be limited to
Systems 8.6/9.x. Unclear if it will run under Classic mode in OSX. From
that point on IDL is a dead language on Macs.

Richard.

> From: Randall Skelton <rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk>
> Organization: Oxford University, England
> Newsgroups: comp.lang.idl-pvwave
> Date: Wed, 10 Oct 2001 13:24:52 +0100
> Subject: Re: Mac OSX
>
> The RSI page (http://www.rsinc.com/idl/whatsnew.cfm) is not particularly
> clear on what operating systems will be supported or perhaps I have just
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>
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>
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>
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> unable to provide IDL on the MAC OS X platform as previously planned'
> listed on this page. I know if I have already bought a license for IDL
> under the pretense of OS X support, I would be seeking a refund.
>
> Does anyone know if IDL works under classic running on OS X? Also, does
> anyone know if the Carbon API is considered 'static' or is it as dynamic
> as it was during the spring? Could this be the cause of the halted port?
>
> Cheers,
> Randall
>
> On Wed, 10 Oct 2001, Reimar Bauer wrote:
>
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>> release.

>>
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>> it is to support more and more platforms or older and older
>> platforms.
>>
>> We ourselfs are in a process to migrate from AIX to linux PCs
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>> Then with the idl5.4 release installed on AIX everytime idl
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>> version for AIX.
>> We and I believe some more others asked them to build IDL5.5 for
>> AIX too and you are seeing the result. IDL5.5 will be builded
>> for AIX too.
>>
>> There was no discussion about AIX and IDL in this newsgroup as
>> I remember. I hope you all give your arguments to RSI too.
>>
>>
>> regards
>>
>> Reimar
>>
>>
>>
>> --
>> Reimar Bauer
>>
>> Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-1)
>> Forschungszentrum Juelich
>> email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de
>> http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg1/
>> == ======
>> a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich
>> http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg1/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.h tml
>>
>> http://www.fz-juelich.de/zb/text/publikation/juel3786.html
>> == ======
>>
>> read something about linux / windows
>> http://www.suse.de/de/news/hotnews/MS.html
>>
>
>

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Jaco van Gorkom on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 13:18:09 GMT
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>> From: Randall Skelton <rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk>
>>
>> The RSI page (http://www.rsinc.com/idl/whatsnew.cfm) is not particularly
>> clear ...
>
> Richard Adams wrote:
>   Matthew Powell's letter to the newsgroup yesterday was very clear.
>   ...

Matthew Powell's letter did not make it to our news server here in Juelich, so
maybe there are more people who did not see it. It can be found on Google:
 http://groups.google.com/groups?q=author:mpowell%40rsinc.com

  Jaco

P.S.: The above link will provide two hits. For peace of mind, do not click the
     older one...

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Noam R. Izenberg on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 14:22:00 GMT
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Richard Adams wrote:

> Randall,
>
>   Matthew Powell's letter to the newsgroup yesterday was very clear.
> Version 5.5 of IDL will be the last to run on Macs and it will be limited to
> Systems 8.6/9.x. Unclear if it will run under Classic mode in OSX. From
> that point on IDL is a dead language on Macs.

I'm using IDL 5.4 right now in a 9.2.1 Classic environment in OS X (PDQ YMMV Etc) and am having a
fine time. A couple things (like systime) seem munged up, but I have not yet felt the need to boot
up 9.2 to get IDL to do what I want. I did consider this, however, a temporary issue, as I was
expecting the OS X build.

Do RSI folks read this list? Any hint theyare cognizant of the business (Mac and other) they will
lose (and new business they will fail to gain) bynot supporting OS X?

Noam

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 14:55:25 GMT
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I think I know why they think only 3 people responded to dismissal of
Mac IDL. I just received a response from RSI that says "if you have
concerns, go visit IDL for Mac FAQ page", which in turn tells me how
lucky I am to be able to run existing IDL versions on pre-OSX operating
systems. I am afraid we are not being heard. Unless we email-bomb them,
they will not hear. I am switching off to snail mail.

Cheers,
Pavel

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Todd Clements on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 17:43:24 GMT
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Here's a copy of my letter to RSI/Kodak:

To whom it may concern -

I'm a fifth year graduate student in physical chemistry. We have a lab
with three licenses for IDL, none of which are for the Macintosh. In the
years that I've used IDL, I've fallen in love with the language and the
power it has to analyze and visualize large data sets.

My current career direction is to be in academia, probably directing my
own group. Likely I will have data analysis needs, and up until last
week, I was very likely to use IDL for those needs since I loved the
language. However, my computing platform of choice is Macintosh, and
will continue to be, especially with the release of OSX and a powerful,
robust UNIX environment with a GUI that actually makes sense. In my
current lab, we have no IDL licenses for the Mac since my advisors
platform of choice is not Mac, but that does NOT mean that Mac support
is not important.

Several people who have left this lab have gone on to other labs, and
based on our use of IDL, have arranged purchases of IDL licenses in
other labs. You've designed a great language, and it can be contagious.
However, despite how much I love IDL, I won't be trying to convince
anyone to buy it. I won't be using it in any lab I run. Students and
post-docs who leave my future lab will never have used IDL. Not because
I'm defending Apple for the sake of defending Apple, but because you are
no longer going to support my platform of choice. In my eyes, IDL is no
longer a "truly" cross platform solution, which is very important to me.

Who knows how many licenses (+maintenance agreements, etc.) RSI/Kodak
will lose based solely on _my_ decision to not use IDL once I leave this
lab. Five? Ten? Fifty? I agree, it's hard to say, but I do know that RSI
will be losing my business. How many other customers are in a similar
situation? I hope you took all of this into account when you made the
decision to drop a major platform.

Sincerely,
Todd Clements

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Stein Vidar Hagfors H[1] on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 18:34:27 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

colinr@toliman.uio.no (Colin Rosenthal) writes:

> On Tue, 09 Oct 2001 17:44:57 GMT,
> Dick Jackson <dick@d-jackson.com> wrote:
>
>> Does anyone else agree that PC and Unix IDL users *also* benefit from the
>> fact that IDL reaches to the Mac platform? To my mind, knowing that code I
>> develop on PC can (in general) run on Mac as well adds value to my work, and
>> I'd think it reasonable to consider some of PC and Unix licence/maintenance
>> fees as going to support Mac development.
>
> Absolutely. I don't use a Mac myself but I share code with
> colleagues who do.

And Colin, you certainly use Compac Alpha Tru64!!

It may be that nobody that can step in and take IDL's place instantly,
but platform independence is one of IDL's big selling points. Dropping
platforms left & right certainly makes them *very* vulnerable to
competition in the long run (and now I'm talking about the people on
the *supported* platforms). And the 180 degree turnaround we learned
of yesterday (no wonder they hadn't heard any complaints yet!) is
certainly not good PR..

I can understand that they haven't announced their turnaround with any
fanfare, since it essentially amounts to abandoning a significant
number of customers *after* leading them into a blind alley (with big
fanfare!), but then they shouldn't expect people to know about it and
have complained already.

--

 -- --------------
Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan

ESA SOHO SOC/European Space Agency Science Operations Coordinator for SOHO

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center,   Email: shaugan@esa.nascom.nasa.gov
Mail Code 682.3, Bld. 26, Room G-1, Tel.: 1-301-286-9028/240-354-6066
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771, USA.   Fax: 1-301-286-0264
 -- --------------

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Stein Vidar Hagfors H[1] on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 19:20:20 GMT
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gschneider@mac.com (Glenn Schneider) writes:

> The recent turn-about by RSI (now Kodak) has hit us hard.
> Here is an email I sent to RSI about this. I urge other
> Mac platform IDL users to follow suit:

Hey, why only Mac platform users! This concerns all of us, if we're at
all interested in collaborating with other people on one or more of the
FOUR platforms that are being dropped:

> These will be the last versions to support the following platforms:
>
> Apple Macintosh
> Compaq Alpha Linux
> Compaq Alpha Tru64 Unix
> Sun Intel x86 Solaris

Below is a copy of my email to both Matthew Powell <mpowell@rsinc.com>,
and info@rsinc.com:

Mr. Powell, and others,

I write this in response to the posting of October 8 on the
comp.lang.idl-pvwave newsgroup regarding the discontinuation of support
for four different platforms. I am not currently an active user of any of
those platforms, but I am affiliated with/collaborate with people and
institutions using IDL on *all* of the four discontinued platforms.

Although your revenue from licenses to these platforms may be small, even
smaller than the cost of supporting each one, I believe your business
decision is misguided. One of IDL's biggest selling points up to now has
been its platform independence. In the long run, I believe the total loss
of revenue due to this decision will be much larger than the current
revenue from those platforms alone. There may not be any competitor
standing by to take over your business in the immediate future, but this
decision makes IDL very vulnerable to competition in the long run.

Sincerely,

--
 --- --------------
Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan
ESA SOHO SOC/European Space Agency Science Operations Coordinator for SOHO

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center,   Email: shaugan@esa.nascom.nasa.gov
Mail Code 682.3, Bld. 26, Room G-1,   Tel.: 1-301-286-9028/240-354-6066
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771, USA.   Fax: 1-301-286-0264
 --- --------------

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Dick Jackson on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 19:21:50 GMT

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"Colin Rosenthal" <colinr@toliman.uio.no> wrote in message
news:9q1d2o$61m$1@readme.uio.no...
> On Tue, 09 Oct 2001 17:44:57 GMT,
> Dick Jackson <dick@d-jackson.com> wrote:
>
>> Does anyone else agree that PC and Unix IDL users *also* benefit from the
>> fact that IDL reaches to the Mac platform? To my mind, knowing that code
I
>> develop on PC can (in general) run on Mac as well adds value to my work,
and
>> I'd think it reasonable to consider some of PC and Unix
licence/maintenance
>> fees as going to support Mac development.
>
> Absolutely. I don't use a Mac myself but I share code with colleagues who
do.

This leads, of course, to the corollary that RSI is not just dropping the
Mac platform, but are then *diminishing* the power of the IDL product they
continue to sell for PC/Unix! I wonder how much they'll reduce our
licence/maintenance fees to account for this... :-/

(Boy, this is sounding a little like "an attack on one platform is an attack
on us all", but let's be peaceful in our response!)

Cheers,
--
-Dick

Dick Jackson   /   dick@d-jackson.com

D-Jackson Software Consulting /   http://www.d-jackson.com
Calgary, Alberta, Canada   / +1-403-242-7398 / Fax: 241-7392

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Paul van Delst on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 19:38:49 GMT
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Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan wrote:
>
> I can understand that they haven't announced their turnaround with any
> fanfare, since it essentially amounts to abandoning a significant
> number of customers *after* leading them into a blind alley (with big
> fanfare!)

This is the aspect I find _most_ odious. I'm not even a Mac user (wouldn't know the back from the front end of one) but RSI/Kodak can kiss my (linux) laptop license revenue goodbye. When the company brass shows customers such a low level of respect I fail to see why they deserve any in return - despite the good intentions and effort of the people at RSI who actually do the work/write the code. Harrumph.

--
Paul van Delst   Religious and cultural
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP   purity is a fundamentalist
Ph: (301)763-8000 x7274 fantasy
Fax:(301)763-8545   V.S.Naipaul

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 19:46:43 GMT
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Dick Jackson wrote:
>
> (Boy, this is sounding a little like "an attack on one platform is an attack
> on us all", but let's be peaceful in our response!)

Folks,

Talking on the phone with RSI gave me the impression that we better get all back to our own business. Forget it. They said they *will not even look* into keeping Mac (and those other rejects) supported. So, it is a done deal. And, from what they indicated, dropping these platforms was necessary to *keep IDL afloat*. You guess what this may mean :-(

Cheers,
Pavel

P.S. What is the alternative news group, now? :-(
I should rather ask, Where do you guys also post - JD, Craig, David,
Martin, Liam and all the rest of you, friends?

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by David Fanning on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 20:09:34 GMT
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Pavel A. Romashkin (pavel.romashkin@noaa.gov) writes:

> P.S. What is the alternative news group, now? :-(
> I should rather ask, Where do you guys also post - JD, Craig, David,
> Martin, Liam and all the rest of you, friends?

Uh, well, alt.sex.fetish. :-)

Cheers,

David

--
David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 20:12:56 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:
>
> Uh, well, alt.sex.fetish. :-)

Wow! I have been missing out all this time, damn it. How come you never
told me before! BTW, do you read your email?

Ok, bye now. Off to the alt.sex.fetish that is more promising for my Mac support...
Pavel

Subject: Re: Mac OSX

Posted by Noam R. Izenberg on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 20:27:53 GMT

> Talking on the phone with RSI gave me the impression that we better get
> all back to our own business. Forget it. They said they *will not even
> look* into keeping Mac (and those other rejects) supported. So, it is a
> done deal. And, from what they indicated, dropping these platforms was
> necessary to *keep IDL afloat*. You guess what this may mean :-(
>
> Cheers, Pavel

Pavel,

My phone conversations with botha tech and a sales rep indicated to me the opposite. If there's a
real outcry - from mac users. perhaps the whole IDL community, there may be a chance. RSI is
apparently now a house divided. Neither the tech nor sales staff new about this much than we did
and
were caught flatfooted even today when I called to complain. _I_ had to give the sales rep I talked
to the _RSI_ Mac FAQ's URL. I don't blame the rep.

If the IDL community as a whole sees this cut as a herald of the death of IDL/RSI cross platform
utility despite the offers of help and apparent inanityof the "business decision" IDL, and RSI
itself will probably be looking at viability problems in the not too distant future.

I think the decision is _so_ stupid and self destructive to IDL and RSI, that westand a real chance
of changing their minds. Maybe I'm naiive. Maybe the splitat RSI isstrong enough that enough
techs/writers will get disgusted and split off PV-Wave/IDL style to create a mac-IDL company. One
can only dream.

Noam

BTW- What _is_ the story with PV-Wave? This newsgroup is for both IDL and Wave. Did wave
abandon Mac
long ago? Are they an alternative?

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by David Fanning on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 20:39:04 GMT

Noam R. Izenberg (noam.izenberg@jhuapl.edu) writes:

> BTW- What _is_ the story with PV-Wave? This newsgroup is for both IDL and Wave. Did wave
abandon Mac
> long ago?

L-O-O-O-N-N-G ago.

> Are they an alternative?

No.

Cheers,

David
--
David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Randall Skelton on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 21:54:35 GMT
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On Wed, 10 Oct 2001, David Fanning wrote:

>> Are they an alternative?
>
> No.
>

David,

There are alternatives. I'll admit that none of them can compete with the
wide cross-platform support that IDL has enjoyed over the years but it
looks like RSI's cross-platform marketing approach has vanished.

Many alternatives for unix based systems can be found on the Scientific
Applications for Linux site which I've posted a few times now:

http://sal.kachinatech.com/D/1/

More specifically...

The R data language looks promising.
http://www.r-project.org/

Octave, Scilab, and RLab are Matlab clones but neither has great graphics.
http://www.octave.org/
http://www-rocq.inria.fr/scilab/scilab.html
http://rlab.sourceforge.net/ (no longer developed)

Yorick is another option (more like IDL)

ftp://ftp-icf.llnl.gov/pub/Yorick/doc/index.html

PyDL for Python Data Language is a parser with showing some promise
http://nickbower.com/computer/pydl/

SciGraphica is a clone of the popular commercial application "Microcal Origin".
http://scigraphica.sourceforge.net/

The TeLa tensor language looks ok but the web site is from 1997
http://sumppu.fmi.fi/prog/tela.html

Also the Euler Project:
 http://mathsrv.ku-eichstaett.de/MGF/homes/grothmann/euler/in dex.html

For those only looking for a Mac/Windows solution you might want to try
IGOR from Wavemetrics (Commercial but very affordable). Having been an
IGOR user for many years prior to Matlab/IDL I can say their support and
commitment is second to none. As of IGOR 3.16, the language it self
lacked a little in linear algebra area and it was notably missing data
structures last I checked. An object model and better 3d visualization
tools would also be required for it to really compete directly with IDL.
I would love to see the language develop a little further and a Linux
version to become available... http://www.wavemetrics.com

Cheers,
Randall

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by David Fanning on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 23:41:59 GMT
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Randall Skelton (rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk) writes:

> There are alternatives. I'll admit that none of them can compete with the
> wide cross-platform support that IDL has enjoyed over the years but it
> looks like RSI's cross-platform marketing approach has vanished.

Gentlemen,

I am sympathetic. I really am. I especially
dislike the cheesy way this whole decision
was announced. It denotes a lack of...well,
respect...for the people who really do pay
the bills it seems to me.

And from what I hear at least half the folks

at RSI are sympathetic. I don't think this was
a unanimous decision, not by a long shot. But
I don't think scientists are running the company
anymore. And I don't think the people who made
the decision really stopped to consider the--for
lack of a better word--cultural significance of a
decision like this.

Quite frankly, losing a platform like the Mac matters
to a lot of us, whether we use a Macintosh or not.

But given all that, I don't think this decision
will be changed. I don't know the leadership at RSI,
or anything about them, but I don't expect them
to change their mind for this reason.

The Mac right now, today, is not a serious
scientific computing platform. I know, I know.
MacOSX is going to change all that, etc., etc.
But I don't believe it. And I doubt the folks
making this decision at RSI believe it. Not when
perfectly good systems can be had for no more than
$3000.

Many of us using Windows today were once Mac users.
Why did we switch? I switched, because practically
everyone I knew was using a PC. And because the
software I wanted to use ran better on a PC than
it did (if it was available) on a Mac. Is that going
to change in the next year? The next two years? I
seriously doubt it. RSI is recognizing a trend that
has been going on for a long time. The Mac may be
the cat's meow in desktop publishing, but it is
never going to capture enough scientific computing
market share to drive software development on that
platform. That is an economic prediction, not
an indictment of the Mac's number crunching
capabilities.

And I am sorry to see the whole "Alternatives
to IDL" thread appear again. We hashed this whole
thing over several months ago. Yes, there are
alternatives to IDL. But let's be honest, most
of them suck in one way or the other. None of
them, *none* of them, are going to capture more
than an extremely small fraction of IDL users.

I really hate to be cynical on a newsgroup I

love so much, but I don't believe the majority
of the people beating their chests now will really
leave IDL. Too many colleagues, too much invested,
too easy to buy a new Dell machine and carry on.
And you will end up needing the new feature IDL
has added that is not available in whatever the
alternative de jour is that you decided to use
as a protest.

Yes, send your letters and e-mail. Yes, make
your feelings about this decision known to the
people who made it. Maybe it will cause them
to consider more carefully the next time they
make a decision like this. Yes, explore alternatives
to IDL, if you must. But in the end, you have
to realize that this is how things are in the
real world. We don't always like it, I'll grant
you that. But sometimes we have to accept it.
Sometimes that is the best alternative of all.

Sadly,

David

P.S. I just saw that sales of Eastman Kodak were
3.5 billion last quarter. Do you really think a loss
of a couple hundred thousand dollars of revenue from
disgruntled customers matters to them? This is just
the price *we* pay for a corporate culture.

--
David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Mark Hadfield on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 01:33:38 GMT
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Hi David

There are just a couple of points in your latest post I want to quibble with

> And I am sorry to see the whole "Alternatives
> to IDL" thread appear again. We hashed this whole

> thing over several months ago. Yes, there are
> alternatives to IDL. But let's be honest, most
> of them suck in one way or the other. None of
> them, *none* of them, are going to capture more
> than an extremely small fraction of IDL users.

I'm not sorry at all. I am a scientist who does a lot of data analysis and I
am always aware of the possibility that I could get my job done better with
a different suite of tools. I am also very aware of the transition costs! So
I enjoy reading informed discussion of the merits of different tools. Just
today I learned from JD that OpenDX doesn't have a Postscript renderer,
which saves me the trouble of having to find it out for myself.
(Surprisingly enough, the published information about software packages
tends to tell you what the package *has*, not what it doesn't have.)

> P.S. I just saw that sales of Eastman Kodak were
> 3.5 billion last quarter. Do you really think a loss
> of a couple hundred thousand dollars of revenue from
> disgruntled customers matters to them? This is just
> the price *we* pay for a corporate culture.

If "a couple hundred thousand dollars of revenue" doesn't matter to them
then why does the cost of supporting the Mac matter to them?

The Kodak takeover may have introduced a different corporate culture and a
more hard-nosed attitude to financial performance, but I should think the
RSI division still has to stand on its own feet financially.

Mark Hadfield
m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research

--
Posted from clam.niwa.cri.nz [202.36.29.1]
via Mailgate.ORG Server - http://www.Mailgate.ORG

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by David Fanning on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 02:00:56 GMT
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Mark Hadfield (m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz) quibbles:

> The Kodak takeover may have introduced a different corporate culture and a
> more hard-nosed attitude to financial performance, but I should think the

> RSI division still has to stand on its own feet financially.

Oh, no doubt it has to stand on its own feet. But
the RSI division with its paltry (to them, certainly
not to *me*) $25 million a year in revenue is just
down in the noise somewhere. *We* might miss IDL
a lot if it disappeared. Kodak wouldn't even blink.

And if I read my annual reports correctly, the guys
who lead these companies and make these kinds of
decisions don't miss the feed trough too much, no
matter what happens to the company financially.

I'll be absolutely frank with you. I don't think
a couple of handfuls of Mac users, even tossing chaff
in the air with both hands, makes the radar screen
with these guys. :-(

Cheers,

David

--
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by John Boccio on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 03:19:40 GMT
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In article <MPG.162e8aaf5237957a989700@news.frii.com>, David Fanning
<david@dfanning.com> wrote:

> Randall Skelton (rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk) writes:
>
>> There are alternatives. I'll admit that none of them can compete with the
>> wide cross-platform support that IDL has enjoyed over the years but it
>> looks like RSI's cross-platform marketing approach has vanished.
>
> Gentlemen,
>
> I am sympathetic. I really am. I especially
> dislike the cheesy way this whole decision
> was announced. It denotes a lack of...well,

> respect...for the people who really do pay
> the bills it seems to me.
>
> And from what I hear at least half the folks
> at RSI are sympathetic. I don't think this was
> a unanimous decision, not by a long shot. But
> I don't think scientists are running the company
> anymore. And I don't think the people who made
> the decision really stopped to consider the--for
> lack of a better word--cultural significance of a
> decision like this.
>
> Quite frankly, losing a platform like the Mac matters
> to a lot of us, whether we use a Macintosh or not.
>
> But given all that, I don't think this decision
> will be changed. I don't know the leadership at RSI,
> or anything about them, but I don't expect them
> to change their mind for this reason.
>
> The Mac right now, today, is not a serious
> scientific computing platform.

This is a load of utter garbage!!!!

We are entirely a Mac shop

Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry, Biolgy
at Swarthmore College.

We use Macs for both the curriculum and all of our reseach programs
(a total of 31 different programs).

Wealso use Macs in an Apple Seed paprallel cluster (20 machines) to do
parallel computing calculations on plasmas, ,galaxy-galaxy collisions
and posittons in solids.

> I know, I know.
> MacOSX is going to change all that, etc., etc.
> But I don't believe it. And I doubt the folks
> making this decision at RSI believe it.

All of the above works better under UNIX ---> MacOS X,
which now has the largest installed UNIX base

> Not when
> perfectly good systems can be had for no more than
> $3000.

So what. The price difference are no longer that dramatic.

>
> Many of us using Windows today were once Mac users.
> Why did we switch? I switched, because practically
> everyone I knew was using a PC. And because the
> software I wanted to use ran better on a PC than
> it did (if it was available) on a Mac.

We find the opposite is true.

> Is that going
> to change in the next year? The next two years? I
> seriously doubt it.

Why?

> RSI is recognizing a trend that
> has been going on for a long time. The Mac may be
> the cat's meow in desktop publishing, but it is
> never going to capture enough scientific computing
> market share to drive software development on that
> platform.

I think you and Kodak are wrong about this.

> That is an economic prediction, not
> an indictment of the Mac's number crunching
> capabilities.
>
> And I am sorry to see the whole "Alternatives
> to IDL" thread appear again. We hashed this whole
> thing over several months ago. Yes, there are
> alternatives to IDL. But let's be honest, most
> of them suck in one way or the other. None of
> them, *none* of them, are going to capture more
> than an extremely small fraction of IDL users.

Maybe we will now come up with something that is better.
Will make sure it only runs on MacOS X.
>
> I really hate to be cynical on a newsgroup I
> love so much, but I don't believe the majority
> of the people beating their chests now will really
> leave IDL.

No you don't.

> Too many colleagues, too much invested,
> too easy to buy a new Dell machine and carry on.
> And you will end up needing the new feature IDL
> has added that is not available in whatever the
> alternative de jour is that you decided to use
> as a protest.

The easy way is not always the best!
>
> Yes, send your letters and e-mail. Yes, make
> your feelings about this decision known to the
> people who made it. Maybe it will cause them
> to consider more carefully the next time they
> make a decision like this. Yes, explore alternatives
> to IDL, if you must. But in the end, you have
> to realize that this is how things are in the
> real world. We don't always like it, I'll grant
> you that. But sometimes we have to accept it.
> Sometimes that is the best alternative of all.

Give us all a break!
>
> Sadly,
>
> David
>
> P.S. I just saw that sales of Eastman Kodak were
> 3.5 billion last quarter. Do you really think a loss
> of a couple hundred thousand dollars of revenue from
> disgruntled customers matters to them? This is just
> the price *we* pay for a corporate culture.

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by David Fanning on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 04:25:40 GMT
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John Boccio (boccio@swarthmore.edu) writes:

> I think you and Kodak are wrong about this.

Probably. :-)

Cheers,

David
--
David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Randall Skelton on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 06:01:17 GMT
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It is probably in poor taste to answer my own post but here goes...

> On Wed, 10 Oct 2001, David Fanning wrote:
>
>>> Are they an alternative?
>> No.
>
> The R data language looks promising.
> http://www.r-project.org/

I just donwloaded a carbonized version of the R data language and I must
admit that I'm rather impressed. The syntax seems a little difficult to
wrap my head around (statisticians/mathematicians wrote the language) but
the capabilities are there and the extendability exists. It is, like IDL,
a programming/scripting language model which can be extended with
C/Fortran.

Supported platforms include:
Mac OS 9.x, OS X (binary/source carbonized)
Windows 9x/NT/2000 (binary/source)
Linux/Unix (source)

This seems to already cover more platforms than IDL these days and it is
all free under the GNU license.

The FAQ is avaliable at: http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html.

With regard to David's last comments:

> I really hate to be cynical on a newsgroup I
> love so much, but I don't believe the majority
> of the people beating their chests now will really
> leave IDL. Too many colleagues, too much invested,
> too easy to buy a new Dell machine and carry on.
> And you will end up needing the new feature IDL

> has added that is not available in whatever the
> alternative de jour is that you decided to use
> as a protest.

Call me fickle (and rather stuborn) but I'd rather only loose a years work
of coding on my PhD than risk loosing 2 or 3 when RSI decides that AIX,
SGI, Solaris or Linux aren't profitable. I have beat 'my chest', sent my
letters and spread the news of RSI's decision to every IDL user I know.
I don't honestly expect RSI to change its mind on this but I certainly am
not going to buy a bunch of windows PCs just for the privilege of running
IDL at $1500 for each academic license. I nevertheless agree that others
(with a code base of a decade) have a difficult choice to make.

Randall

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by colinr on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 08:17:22 GMT
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On Wed, 10 Oct 2001 19:21:50 GMT,
Dick Jackson <dick@d-jackson.com> wrote:
> "Colin Rosenthal" <colinr@toliman.uio.no> wrote in message
> news:9q1d2o$61m$1@readme.uio.no...
>> On Tue, 09 Oct 2001 17:44:57 GMT,
>> Dick Jackson <dick@d-jackson.com> wrote:
>>
>>> Does anyone else agree that PC and Unix IDL users *also* benefit from the
>>> fact that IDL reaches to the Mac platform? To my mind, knowing that code
> I
>>> develop on PC can (in general) run on Mac as well adds value to my work,
> and
>>> I'd think it reasonable to consider some of PC and Unix
> licence/maintenance
>>> fees as going to support Mac development.
>>
>> Absolutely. I don't use a Mac myself but I share code with colleagues who
> do.
>
> This leads, of course, to the corollary that RSI is not just dropping the
> Mac platform, but are then *diminishing* the power of the IDL product they
> continue to sell for PC/Unix! I wonder how much they'll reduce our
> licence/maintenance fees to account for this... :-/

Not to mention undermining the confidence of people running IDL on virtually
every other platform, many of whom must be wondering "who's next?".

--

Colin Rosenthal
Astrophysics Institute
University of Oslo

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by colinr on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 08:19:04 GMT
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On 10 Oct 2001 14:34:27 -0400,
Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan <shaugan@esa.nascom.nasa.gov> wrote:
> colinr@toliman.uio.no (Colin Rosenthal) writes:
>
>> On Tue, 09 Oct 2001 17:44:57 GMT,
>> Dick Jackson <dick@d-jackson.com> wrote:
>>
>>> Does anyone else agree that PC and Unix IDL users *also* benefit from the
>>> fact that IDL reaches to the Mac platform? To my mind, knowing that code I
>>> develop on PC can (in general) run on Mac as well adds value to my work, and
>>> I'd think it reasonable to consider some of PC and Unix licence/maintenance
>>> fees as going to support Mac development.
>>
>> Absolutely. I don't use a Mac myself but I share code with
>> colleagues who do.
>
> And Colin, you certainly use Compac Alpha Tru64!!

Indeed. Then there's and one of our colleagues here (initials VH, I'm sure
you can work it out :-)) whose new MacOSX laptop arrived on Tuesday.

--
Colin Rosenthal
Astrophysics Institute
University of Oslo

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Noam R. Izenberg on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 15:23:01 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

I am sympathetic. I really am. I especially

> dislike the cheesy way this whole decision
> was announced. It denotes a lack of...well,
> respect...for the people who really do pay

> the bills it seems to me.

What I fear is that Kodak management either doesn't care about, or worse, would _rather_ see the demise of IDL and RSI in general. Perhaps someone wants to gut the company and scoop the product.

> But given all that, I don't think this decision
> will be changed. I don't know the leadership at RSI,
> or anything about them, but I don't expect them
> to change their mind for this reason.

From what I see, the financial excuse is uttery uncompelling. This is good if is indeed the real reason. There is at least the possibility of convincing them the picture is not as dim as they (badly) modeled. If however the finacial excuse is just a smokescreen for a political decision ("kill cross platform because we're going to windows" or some such) then I agree we're all just spitting in the wind. If it is the latter, RSI will lose a whole lot of reputation on top of business.

> The Mac right now, today, is not a serious
> scientific computing platform. I know, I know.
> MacOSX is going to change all that, etc., etc.
> But I don't believe it. And I doubt the folks
> making this decision at RSI believe it.

As others have posted, I would disagree. Our section of APL is ~20% Mac. The planetary group is 40-50%. But heck, even 10% is nothing to sneeze at in the land of slim margins. Most mac users wouldn't even consider switching hardware platforms for the likes of a fickle software product. I think it's pretty awful timing to make such a summary judgement when the next year or so will reveal
the true answer.

> Many of us using Windows today were once Mac users.
> Why did we switch? I switched, because practically
> everyone I knew was using a PC. And because the
> software I wanted to use ran better on a PC than
> it did (if it was available) on a Mac.

I switched for the same reasons 5 years ago. Then I switched _back_ because of the G4 and OS X. Even
with the slowness of some major apps to convert I'm _much_ happier. But that's just one story.

> Is that going
> to change in the next year? The next two years? I
> seriously doubt it.

Already has changed, IMO.

> RSI is recognizing a trend that

> has been going on for a long time. The Mac may be
> the cat's meow in desktop publishing, but it is
> never going to capture enough scientific computing
> market share to drive software development on that
> platform. That is an economic prediction, not
> an indictment of the Mac's number crunching
> capabilities.

Only time will tell - not much time mind you,whic his why RSI's rationale rings so hollow.

> And I am sorry to see the whole "Alternatives
> to IDL" thread appear again. We hashed this whole
> thing over several months ago. Yes, there are
> alternatives to IDL. But let's be honest, most
> of them suck in one way or the other. None of
> them, *none* of them, are going to capture more
> than an extremely small fraction of IDL users.

Depends how many real hackers and crunchers move from IDL to a new suitor and bring their talents
with them.

> I really hate to be cynical on a newsgroup I
> love so much, but I don't believe the majority
> of the people beating their chests now will really
> leave IDL.

Maybe, maybe not. I'm certainly going to look, which I wouldn't have been doing before. _And_ I'm not going to be saying "IDL is the coolest" to anyone anymore. Intangibles both, but good for RSI? Nope.

> Too many colleagues, too much invested,
> too easy to buy a new Dell machine and carry on.

It will be possible, if not easy, to take a C++ course and translate most of what I do. Don't want to do it, but I will if I have to (probably would make me a better programmer in the end). I won't buy a new winbox just to run IDL, or _any_ program, for that matter. Not even after 10 years writing sloppy IDL code (one of the reasons I like it is that it is so forgiving to my amateurish coding).

> And you will end up needing the new feature IDL
> has added that is not available in whatever the
> alternative de jour is that you decided to use
> as a protest.

Such is life. That's why it's good to have codewarrior friends.

> ... But in the end, you have

> to realize that this is how things are in the
> real world. We don't always like it, I'll grant
> you that. But sometimes we have to accept it.
> Sometimes that is the best alternative of all.

I dunno. If I were you, or another "mainstream" platform IDL user, I'd really consisder that if 1 salary and associated resources is considered an unrecoverable expense to RSI/Kodak, What else is
too expensive to upgrade/maintain?

> P.S. I just saw that sales of Eastman Kodak were
> 3.5 billion last quarter. Do you really think a loss
> of a couple hundred thousand dollars of revenue from
> disgruntled customers matters to them?

It should. The PR they get for having their name associated with high profile researchis worth more
than that. The reputation damage for ditching loyal users is also worth more than that. Some of the
most disgruntled, who based major hardware purchases on the promise of IDL for OS X, are no doubt
considering legal action.Regardless of how sucessful or frivolous they might be, that too is worth more than a couple hundred thou. A hundred though here, a hundred thou there, soon you're talking
serious money.

Noam

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 15:48:20 GMT
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Randall Skelton wrote:

> For those only looking for a Mac/Windows solution you might want to try
> IGOR from Wavemetrics (Commercial but very affordable). Having been an
> IGOR user for many years prior to Matlab/IDL I can say their support and
> commitment is second to none. As of IGOR 3.16, the language it self
> lacked a little in linear algebra area and it was notably missing data
> structures last I checked. An object model and better 3d visualization
> tools would also be required for it to really compete directly with IDL.
> I would love to see the language develop a little further and a Linux
> version to become available... http://www.wavemetrics.com

Going to Igor after IDL for your data processing needs is like crawling
after you learned to fly. Igor (I have Pro 4.01) does not support
creating temporary data on the fly. In other words, if you are

interested in a subset of something, you must explicitly create a
variable containing the subset. Indeces do not exist, subscripts are not
allowed on the right side of assignment operator - this means, no
processing or re-assigning of subscripts. You have to use a loop to work
on a subscript. Expressions are not allowed in visualization calls, only
variables (so-called waves). Last time I checked, 3D visuals of any size
over a megabyte were so slow on a G4 it was unbearable. No pointers,
structures or objects.
Pros:
Nice 2D visuals with perfect eps output. Point-and-click color,
linestyle, etc - out of the box, no programming. A bunch of built-in
statistical analyses tools, easy to use (if you have the patience to
prepare your sub-arrays that you want to analyze). There is Xop (like a
DLM) support, but of course platform-specific and I think requiring a
developers license.
To sum up, Igor is a visualization package, not (really) a data analyses
tool. Processing efficiency is a lot lower than in IDL. I am responsible
for my words as I re-wrote our own data processing code from Igor into
IDL and gained 2 orders of magnitude performance increase. And our data
sets are relatively small - 10Mb the most.
I still do use Igor, and they do have a PC version that is fully
compatible with Igor for the Mac files. But I use it only to put the
results of IDL processing into nice presentation format.

Cheers,
Pavel

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by richard hilton on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 16:06:03 GMT
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> Hey, why only Mac platform users! This concerns all of us, if we're at
> all interested in collaborating with other people on one or more of the
> *FOUR* platforms that are being dropped:

We use the Compaq Alpha Tru64 version and believe me I will be writing to
them. To say I'm p****d off is an understatement. We have just invested a
substatial amount of time and money so that we could use idl+envi and I do
not intend to take this lying down.

--
Richard Hilton

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rdh5@dmu.ac.uk

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by John-David T. Smith on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 16:06:44 GMT
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John Boccio wrote:
>
> In article <MPG.162e8aaf5237957a989700@news.frii.com>, David Fanning
> <david@dfanning.com> wrote:
>
>> Randall Skelton (rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk) writes:
>>
>>> There are alternatives. I'll admit that none of them can compete with the
>>> wide cross-platform support that IDL has enjoyed over the years but it
>>> looks like RSI's cross-platform marketing approach has vanished.
>>
>> Gentlemen,
>>
>> I am sympathetic. I really am. I especially
>> dislike the cheesy way this whole decision
>> was announced. It denotes a lack of...well,
>> respect...for the people who really do pay
>> the bills it seems to me.
>>
>> And from what I hear at least half the folks
>> at RSI are sympathetic. I don't think this was
>> a unanimous decision, not by a long shot. But
>> I don't think scientists are running the company
>> anymore. And I don't think the people who made
>> the decision really stopped to consider the--for
>> lack of a better word--cultural significance of a
>> decision like this.
>>
>> Quite frankly, losing a platform like the Mac matters
>> to a lot of us, whether we use a Macintosh or not.
>>
>> But given all that, I don't think this decision
>> will be changed. I don't know the leadership at RSI,
>> or anything about them, but I don't expect them
>> to change their mind for this reason.

>>
>> The Mac right now, today, is not a serious
>> scientific computing platform.
>
> This is a load of utter garbage!!!!

I'm sorry David, but I'm going to have to agree with John here. You are
really off base, but in a way which is perfectly and painfully
understandable, and represents the same attitudes and set of false
impressions we're likely up against with the Kodak management right
now. The MacOS is a niche market player, 5-10% at best. Linux, while
also quite small (2-5%), represents a privileged child, free of 15 years
of derision and scrutiny, and is seen as a rising star. But look at Sun
Solaris, long regarded (for better or worse) as a top notch workstation
platform. But in terms of total user base, Solaris is *tiny* compared
to the other two. Yet its support remains firm. Why? Because it is
so popular among the scientific user base that foots the bills at RSI.
So, as we see, popular market share is a very poor measure of importance
for
scientific computing.

While the Mac was mired in several years of poor marketing choices,
things really have turned around in the last couple of years. The
substantial impression that Apple is a vanishing company has so firmly
entrenched itself among Windows users, that they haven't had time to
look up and take stock of reality. I really hate these "Macs are slow,
expensive, unpopular, and have no software, " vs. "Macs are the best
things since biscuits and gravy" arguments, but I feel compelled to
dismiss at least *one* of your somewhat underinformed notions about
Macs. I encourage you to try to find "a new Dell" laptop which can
compete with the Apple iBook in price to performance. With built-in
wireless networking, ethernet, a fast processor, superb display, long
battery life, and lightweight, attractive packaging, all for around
$1250, I think you'll have some trouble.

Regarding the unsuitability of Macs for scientific computing, lets let
quotes from RSI's own press releases from the likes of David Uhlir,
director of product marketing, weigh in on that question:

 "The Macintosh is now our fastest platform for basic binary
 operations on arrays in IDL."

 "AltiVec will definitely play an important role in IDL's
 future."

 "For example, basic binary operations on arrays in IDL run
 almost five times faster on Power Mac G4 systems than on
 otherwise comparable computers."

"Mac OS X brings the speed, stability and power of Unix to
IDL's Macintosh users. In combination with the G4 processor
with Velocity Engine and hardware OpenGL support on cutting
edge graphic accelerators, IDL on Mac OS X is a best-of-class
scientific visualization application."

"The Power Mac G4 gives us anywhere from a two- to five-fold
boost in performance for computationally intensive tasks."

This turn of events represents a startling and inconsistent about face,
and, for me at least, casts a pall of doubt over the stewardship of
IDL's future direction.

JD

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Pavel A. Romashkin on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 16:24:08 GMT
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"Noam R. Izenberg" wrote:
>
> From what I see, the financial excuse is uttery uncompelling.

Folks,

Finances was not the reason (I am of course speculating :-). I am
guessing, maybe, the reinforcement of the unfortunate belief that Macs
are not a worthy platform, was. And I am hoping that there might be a
chance the OSX version will show up (someplace), although it might not
be quite the same IDL as it was meant to be. I am upset but hopeful.
We can not make RSI undo what they've done. What I am hoping we could to
do is press RSI to let us have the beta for the OSX that they already
have. This is all I want to see now. Lets press for that. The beta *is*
worth it, guys. This is I think all I can *guess* at this point.
It will not cost RSI money to release, this will involve very little
effort on their part. And they do not need to support it, as betas are
not supported, we all know that. There might not be too many Mac users
out there (he-he-he) but we can insist that RSI will calm us all down
some if they lat those who want to have the beta. It is there, folks. We
deserve to look at it at least, since we will not get to keep it. And
the developers deserve to receive our appreciation.

Cheers,
Pavel

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Mark Hadfield on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 20:45:40 GMT
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From: "Noam R. Izenberg" <noam.izenberg@jhuapl.edu>
> From what I see, the financial excuse is utterly uncompelling.

Then you must know more about it than me. Please share it with us. How much
would it cost RSI to complete Mac OS X development and support it
thereafter? How much revenue would it bring them?

>   There is at least the possibility of convincing them the picture
> is not as dim as they (badly) modeled.

Again, you seem pretty confident that their figures are wrong. So what are
they?

Mark Hadfield
m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research

--
Posted from clam.niwa.cri.nz [202.36.29.1]
via Mailgate.ORG Server - http://www.Mailgate.ORG

Subject: Mac Scoop (Long)
Posted by Noam R. Izenberg on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 21:25:16 GMT
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OK. Hereï¿½s my scoop.

I just finished a conference call with Matthew Powell (PR), Mike Scally
(CEO) and Richard Cook (VP Dev) from RSI and have more information and
impressions.

Thing 1. While Iï¿½m still disappointed in the general situation, Iï¿½m
certainly not mad at RSI, nor to I mistrust anyoneï¿½s motives. Iï¿½ve been
convinced that their effort to support OS X lasted to the end of their
ability to do so (at least for now), and perhaps a bit beyond.

Thing 2. The future is not entirely bleak.

Thing 3: They are very painfully aware of the communication breakdown
that resulted in the current hubbub and are taking steps to remedy it.

My telecon was one. When they finished with me, they were moving on to another similar one with someone else. I would assume the web/sales/tech information is not going to be too far behind.

Here are some questions I had and _paraphrases_ of the answers. To the user community, I apologize if I missed a key question or didnï¿½t follow up. To RSI, I hope I represented things accurately. This is my first foray into journalism. :-/

Q: Did Kodak make them do it?
A: No. Kodak owns RSI and has put profitability pressure on it, but doesnï¿½t issue edicts about how to run things. [I believe ï¿½em.]

Q: Did they figure in the impact of the loss of the cross platform crown? 100+ license labs to go away (or worse, not sign on at all) due to the mixed nature of the lab and the need to share data/programs.
A: They tried, but it is a difficult intangible to judge.

Q: What the heck was so unrecoverably expensive about OS X?
A: [Summary only] Writing, documenting, debugging, Q&A, and support on an entirely new ground-up One-off build for a niche market proved more than they could support. They went several months farther in development than they thought they should have because of their desire to make the mac platform work out. In answer to a related question, Mac-based licenses would have to basically _quadruple_ (to roughly $1 million a year), and continue to show increase to make the effort profitable. [Opinion ï¿½ I think OS X has a shot if anything does, but it is asking allot]

Q: Couldnï¿½t they just put the development on hiatus until they saw how OS X shook out?
A: No, for a variety of reasons.

Q: Could they release an unsupported Beta?
A: Possibly, but it would satisfy no one. The first major bug would be a quality assurance nightmare. [Opinion ï¿½ it would stand a chance of pissing off more people than it would please]. When stopped, the build was about half done. I got the impression it had some ways to go to make it even a decent Beta.

Q2. What about volunteers who wanted to help finish the code?
A2. Easier said than done. Again a QA nightmare. Potential licensing issues.

Q. Could they make a Mac Linux release? [Personal note ï¿½ this would go 90+% of the way to making me happy. Iï¿½m a command line user of IDL and have used it on *ux systems for years. I hate widgets. I donï¿½t care about Aqua or Cocoa. All I want is IDL running natively on my mac.]
A. It may be feasible. They have not yet done due diligence exploring

the possibility. The effort up till now has been OS X or bust. Engineering opinion is that the IDL core should present little to no problem. The third party libraries can be worlds of trouble however (an example was given of the headaches converting some older HDF and other libraries to HPUX 64 bit).

Q2. How long would it take to determine if they could do it?
A2. A few people, a few weeks. More for Quality assurance.

Q3. Would they be willing to farm out some QA to the user community?
A3. Probably.

Q4. If this would work, could Mac-Linux version keep pace with other *ux versions?
A4. [I got the impression it would certainly be easier than writing and supporting a fully native OS X build]

[At this point I asked them to please please please do the due dilligence]

Q. Could they support IDL 5.5 (and maybe beyond) in the Classic environment of OS X? [Personal note: This would go 50% of the way for me. Though I had visions of dropping OS 9.x altogether eventually, it ainï¿½t going to happen for quite a while with Adobe etc going slow in carbonizing. I run IDL 5.4 in classic right now with very few problems and can continue as long as 9.x is around. Be even better if RSI supported it]
A. Theyï¿½re evaluating that now. They sounded optimistic. Thereï¿½s an issue with the Hasp, which goes away either with or after 5.5. Without the hardware protection it gets difficult to protect licenses on Macs.
[Opinion: I certainly understand that it takes only a couple vindictive souls or freeloaders to damage software-keyed product profitability. Theyï¿½re working on solutions for that, too, but did not elaborate. Again, though, this is a Mac-only problem.]
[Opinion: I like this as a short term solution. I like it a lot. It would give RSI an opportunity to hang in there and see how OS X affects the Mac market.]

Q. Is the decision to halt Mac OS Development set in stone now and forever?
A. No. Regardless of what they do theyï¿½ll be watching the Mac. They really wanted this to work. [Opinion: I believe them]

Q. Does Apple know that Mac+IDL kicks butt as a science app? Can they help?
A. Appleï¿½s donated a G4. RSI could use more help.
[Opinion: The Mac IDL base would be wise to turn some attention to Apple. I personally think that RSI and Apple could pushme/pullyou into the science mainstream, but it wonï¿½t happen if they donï¿½t back each

other]

Final impressions (all my own):
RSI is doing and has done the best it can for the Mac. The communication
cock-up cost them and they know it. There is at least a real chance for
a) Classic support and/or b) IDL for Mac-Linux. There is also chance for
future revival of OS X native IDL, but the numbers (big numbers) have to
be there. I judge the chance remote, at least for now. I personally
think that a Mac-Linux solution would be just fine. The IDL community
that must have OS X native IDL should ask/pressure Apple to partner more
deeply with RSI.

Thanks to Matt, Richard, and Mike for that most valuable commodity:
information.

Noam Izenberg

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Martin Otte on Thu, 11 Oct 2001 21:49:50 GMT
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> In article <MPG.162e8aaf5237957a989700@news.frii.com>, David Fanning
> <david@dfanning.com> wrote:
>
> The Mac right now, today, is not a serious
> scientific computing platform. I know, I know.
> MacOSX is going to change all that, etc., etc.
> But I don't believe it. And I doubt the folks
> making this decision at RSI believe it. Not when
> perfectly good systems can be had for no more than
> $3000.
>

Similarly, there are many scientists out there who would say that only
true science happens on unix machines, which excludes all Windows users

and now includes OS X users!

And what's with the $3000? At CompUSA, they just had 533 Mhz G4 macs
for slightly over $1,000. Even with a cheap VGA monitor that you may
already have unused around your home or office, this is more than
enough computer for most needs. And please don't bring up any useless
Mhz comparisons between platforms.

Martin Otte

(Also Dave, just a note from a former lurker that your web site is the
first place that I go to when I have a question about IDL, and if IDL
keeps mac support your book would probably be the thing that I buy when
I graduate and get a real job!)

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Dennis Boccippio on Fri, 12 Oct 2001 14:22:01 GMT
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In article <9q3kii$6su$1@readme.uio.no>,
 colinr@toliman.uio.no (Colin Rosenthal) wrote:

>> This leads, of course, to the corollary that RSI is not just dropping the
>> Mac platform, but are then *diminishing* the power of the IDL product they
>> continue to sell for PC/Unix! I wonder how much they'll reduce our
>> licence/maintenance fees to account for this... :-/
>
> Not to mention undermining the confidence of people running IDL on virtually
> every other platform, many of whom must be wondering "who's next?".

Precisely. Should we, e.g., discontinue future SGI procurements in
favor of Windows boxes? What's the IRIX "user base"?

- DJB

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Rob.Preece on Fri, 12 Oct 2001 14:29:47 GMT
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In article <101020010937028409%bknaepen@'skip'mac.com>, "Bernard K."
<bknaepen@'skip'mac.com> wrote:

> Maybe we should also let Apple know about our feeling so they may
> consider putting pressure on RSI or even give them some support to
> continue development of IDL on Mac.
>
> Bernard.
>
>

Bernard,

   I *have* contacted Apple, and they are *quietly* working behind the

---

scenes with RSI. This development is obviously very embarassing for them. My contact mentioned that it would be helpful to send an e-mail to Matthew Powell at RSI <mpowell@rsinc.com> stating the impact, future purchase plans disrupted, technical needs, and pointing out any business plans, commitments or contracts that may be adversely affected by RSI's (reversed) decision to support Mac OS X. Many thanks to the non-Mac folks that have stressed the aspect of loss of multi-platform support in IDL. I, for one, have gotten a refund of my maintanence renewal; it was the only choice...

  Rob Preece
  Assistant Research Professor
  Department of Physics
  University of Alabama in Huntsville

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by John-David T. Smith on Fri, 12 Oct 2001 14:47:41 GMT
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JD Smith wrote:
>   "The Macintosh is now our fastest platform for basic binary
>   operations on arrays in IDL."
>
>   "AltiVec will definitely play an important role in IDL's
>   future."
>
>   "For example, basic binary operations on arrays in IDL run
>   almost five times faster on Power Mac G4 systems than on
>   otherwise comparable computers."
>
>   "Mac OS X brings the speed, stability and power of Unix to
>   IDL's Macintosh users. In combination with the G4 processor
>   with Velocity Engine and hardware OpenGL support on cutting
>   edge graphic accelerators, IDL on Mac OS X is a best-of-class
>   scientific visualization application."
>
>   "The Power Mac G4 gives us anywhere from a two- to five-fold
>   boost in performance for computationally intensive tasks."

And here's a few more I found, from the competitive upgrade offer to former Mac MatLab users (granted its from 1997/98...):

"The decision to drop Matlab on the Macintosh came as a great surprise. As a software company with many satisfied Macintosh customers, Research Systems considers the Power Macintosh an important platform for technical data analysis and

visualization, both now and in the future."

"Research Systems is strongly committed to supporting the MacOS
on PowerPC-based platforms. The Power Mac is an ideal platform
for our products, as its high-performance processing and
state-of-the-art graphics complement IDL's strengths."

Taoist lesson of the day: though your words are honey sweet, you speak
with a forked tongue.

JD

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Noam R. Izenberg on Fri, 12 Oct 2001 15:01:58 GMT
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JD Smith wrote:

And here's a few more I found, from the competitive upgrade offer to

> former Mac MatLab users (granted its from 1997/98...):
>
>   "The decision to drop Matlab on the Macintosh came as a great
>   surprise. As a software company with many satisfied Macintosh
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>   important platform for technical data analysis and
>   visualization, both now and in the future."
>
>   "Research Systems is strongly committed to supporting the MacOS
>   on PowerPC-based platforms....
>
> Taoist lesson of the day: though your words are honey sweet, you speak
> with a forked tongue.

And so they were three years ago, and, I'm convinced, they'd still like to be. I've been told
(paraphrasing here) that that specific Matlab conversion campaign got RSI basically _nothing_. It
was a major demosntration (apparently one of many over recent years) that the mac market was
getting
ever-less hospitable. I still wish they'd been able to hold off the decision 0.5 to 1 year later
than they did, but how many statements made by any tech company (hard or soft) at the height of
the
Net boom still hold much water today? Wasn't PSINet buying stadiums around then?

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Ken Prager on Fri, 12 Oct 2001 16:06:02 GMT

In article <3BC705E6.A716EFFD@jhuapl.edu>,
 "Noam R. Izenberg" <noam.izenberg@jhuapl.edu> wrote:

> JD Smith wrote:
>
> And here's a few more I found, from the competitive upgrade offer to
>
>> former Mac MatLab users (granted its from 1997/98...):
>>
>> [snip]
>>   "Research Systems is strongly committed to supporting the MacOS
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>>
>
> And so they were three years ago, and, I'm convinced, they'd still like to
> be. I've been told (paraphrasing here) that that specific Matlab conversion
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> (apparently one of many over recent years) that the mac market was getting
> ever-less hospitable. I still wish they'd been able to hold off the decision
> 0.5 to 1 year later than they did, but how many statements made by any tech
> company (hard or soft) at the height of the Net boom still hold much water
> today? Wasn't PSINet buying stadiums around then?

I've been a Mac user since 1984 (I went out and bought my first one,
while still in college, right after I saw the Super Bowl ad). Aside
from Suns at work, I've used nothing but, ever since.

I've been a Matlab user since 1989.

To be honest, I never *really* converted from Matlab to IDL. Sure, my
group has purchased some Mac IDL licenses but I personally still use
Matlab, even with OS X. Why? It's what I'm used to, I have a lot of
time invested in Matlab scripts and functions, and it still works. My
plan has always been to use Matlab until it either stops working with
Mac OS or until a Rhapsody/OS X version of IDL came out. I was always
glad to know I had an alternative in IDL.

I received that upgrade letter a few years back and didn't bite becuase
I didn't have to. I wonder how many other people are out there who felt
the same way: they will use Matlab until it just won't work anymore.
It's not that the Mac market is dead but that there are still
alternatives to IDL. By the way, you can still buy version 5.2.1 of
Matlab for the Mac. Some say it's works better than version of 6.x for
PCs. I know it meets my needs.

Ken Prager

Subject: Re: Mac Scoop (Long)
Posted by msienkiewicz on Sat, 13 Oct 2001 00:30:56 GMT

Noam R. Izenberg <noam.izenberg@jhuapl.edu> wrote:

> Q. Could they support IDL 5.5 (and maybe beyond) in the Classic
> environment of OS X? [Personal note: This would go 50% of the way for
> me. Though I had visions of dropping OS 9.x altogether eventually, it
> ain't going to happen for quite a while with Adobe etc going slow in
> carbonizing. I run IDL 5.4 in classic right now with very few problems and
> can continue as long as 9.x is around. Be even better if RSI supported
> it]
> A. They're evaluating that now. They sounded optimistic. There's an
> issue with the Hasp, which goes away either with or after 5.5. Without the
> hardware protection it gets difficult to protect licenses on Macs.
> [Opinion: I certainly understand that it takes only a couple vindictive
> souls or freeloaders to damage software-keyed product profitability.
> They're working on solutions for that, too, but did not elaborate.
> Again, though, this is a Mac-only problem.]
> [Opinion: I like this as a short term solution. I like it a lot. It
> would give RSI an opportunity to hang in there and see how OS X affects
> the Mac market.]

I noticed the other day the announcement by the Globetrotter folks that
they had ported their FlexLM software license manager to MacOS X.
(http://www.globetrotter.com/pr100801.shtml) I had thought at the time
that it was a positive development given that is what is used to manage
IDL licensing on other Unix (and Linux) platforms. Not that it matters
so much now of course...

--
 --
Meta Sienkiewicz <msienkiewicz@earthlink.net>

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by pit on Sat, 13 Oct 2001 18:44:27 GMT

David Fanning <david@dfanning.com> writes:

> But given all that, I don't think this decision
> will be changed. I don't know the leadership at RSI,
> or anything about them, but I don't expect them
> to change their mind for this reason.

Well, they will have to live with the consequences.
And definitely one consequence is that they have shown that they are
not really reliable. This effect cannot be counted in numbers, but
should not be underestimated.

> And I am sorry to see the whole "Alternatives
> to IDL" thread appear again. We hashed this whole
> thing over several months ago. Yes, there are
> alternatives to IDL. But let's be honest, most
> of them suck in one way or the other. None of
> them, *none* of them, are going to capture more
> than an extremely small fraction of IDL users.

But 10 alternatives times a few percent *each* is an amount that
RSI/Kodak has to think about. I'd guess only very few people are
really using all that IDL offers, so they are content with an
alternative that satisfies exact that needs (I, for one, don't need
all that object oriented stuff).

> I really hate to be cynical on a newsgroup I
> love so much, but I don't believe the majority
> of the people beating their chests now will really
> leave IDL.

We are not using Macs, but we are using Alphas. No, I don't think we
are going to 'leave' IDL that fast, but we are lost for RSI, as we
don't buy new licenses anymore. For them, that is just as good as
'leaving IDL'.

> Too many colleagues, too much invested,
> too easy to buy a new Dell machine and carry on.

This is maybe fine for people running one computer. What about
network licenses in 20-30 computer environments? Do you also want to
'just buy 30 Dells'? Sorry if I laugh...

> And you will end up needing the new feature IDL
> has added that is not available in whatever the
> alternative de jour is that you decided to use
> as a protest.

1) I bought the license, I can use it as long as I want.

2) Many 'alternatives' are open source projects. Include the feature
   yourself, or find someone who does it...

> But in the end, you have

> to realize that this is how things are in the
> real world. We don't always like it, I'll grant
> you that. But sometimes we have to accept it.
> Sometimes that is the best alternative of all.

Yes, we may have to accept the decision they made. but they also have
to accept our decision. And at least for me one thin is clear: I'd
never switch to a Win-PC (and the concentration of RSI on the
Wintel-platform is obvious for quite some time already). If that
means 'Good-Bye IDL', it *is* Good-Bye IDL.

  Pit

--
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Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Andrew Cool on Mon, 15 Oct 2001 00:09:20 GMT
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Richard Hilton wrote:
>
>> Hey, why only Mac platform users! This concerns all of us, if we're at
>> all interested in collaborating with other people on one or more of the
>> *FOUR* platforms that are being dropped:
>
> We use the Compaq Alpha Tru64 version and believe me I will be writing to
> them. To say I'm p****d off is an understatement. We have just invested a
> substatial amount of time and money so that we could use idl+envi and I do
> not intend to take this lying down.
>
> --

Hear! Bloody Hear!

First we lose OpenVMS support (our major, major platform), and now
our Dec/Compaq Unix falls out of the tree too!

What are these people thinking?

A poor show on many counts. Madame Guillotine should be dusted off and
oiled up...

Andrew Cool

```
  ------------------------------------------------------------ ---------
  Andrew D. Cool                          .->-.
  Electromagnetics & Propagation Group         `-<-'
  Surveillance Systems Division           Transmitted on
  Defence Science & Technology Organisation   100% recycled
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```

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by Craig Markwardt on Mon, 15 Oct 2001 00:51:46 GMT

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Andrew Cool <andrew.cool@dsto.defence.gov.au> writes:

> Richard Hilton wrote:
>>
>>> Hey, why only Mac platform users! This concerns all of us, if we're at
>>> all interested in collaborating with other people on one or more of the
>>> *FOUR* platforms that are being dropped:
>>
>> We use the Compaq Alpha Tru64 version and believe me I will be writing to
>> them. To say I'm p****d off is an understatement. We have just invested a
>> substatial amount of time and money so that we could use idl+envi and I do
>> not intend to take this lying down.
>>
>> --
>
> Hear! Bloody Hear!
>
> First we lose OpenVMS support (our major, major platform), and now
> our Dec/Compaq Unix falls out of the tree too!
>
> What are these people thinking?

I am a relatively heavy user of alpha machines myself, so I hear you.
But in case you hadn't noticed, Dec/Compaq doesn't look like a winner
these days. Even worse than the Mac in that regard. Compaq sold the
Alpha line to Intel, and then sold *themselves* to HP. Those kinds of
events spell "implosion" for Alpha to me. :-)

Craig

--
```
------------------------------------------------------------- -------------
```
Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D.   EMAIL: craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response
```
------------------------------------------------------------- -------------
```

Subject: Re: Mac OSX
Posted by pit on Mon, 15 Oct 2001 19:21:41 GMT

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Craig Markwardt <craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu> writes:

> I am a relatively heavy user of alpha machines myself, so I hear you.
> But in case you hadn't noticed, Dec/Compaq doesn't look like a winner
> these days. Even worse than the Mac in that regard. Compaq sold the
> Alpha line to Intel, and then sold *themselves* to HP. Those kinds of
> events spell "implosion" for Alpha to me. :-)

Well, after Intel has said that the Alpha processor will not be
continued, I can to some extend understand the decision of RSI.
OTOH, alpha stations will be around for a long time, I'm sure.
And in that respect, it's astupid one.

   Pit

--
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