
Subject: Re: IDL vs Yorick?

Posted by [hcp](#) on Mon, 07 Oct 2002 10:19:16 GMT

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In article <3D9EEC29.A4C32728@astro.lu.se>, Ralf Flicker <ralf@astro.lu.se> writes:

|> At the risk of reiterating an old debate (if there was one), I

|> would like to hear people's opinions about [...] Yorick.

[snip a few tests showing Yorick to be more efficient than IDL]

|> I hope you don't mind rehashing the issue)

What me? No indeed -- I'm always game to re-hash this one. (See <http://www.met.ed.ac.uk/~hcp/idletc.html>)

The observation that Yorick is faster than IDL is an interesting one, given that the author of Yorick says in the Yorick FAQ:

"The commercial IDL interpreter is the only product I have seen which does any operation faster than Yorick -- it's array indexing operations are about 40% faster than Yorick's (see ./Yorick/include/test1.i). I don't know how Stern does it."

For many purposes I really liked Yorick. I particularly liked the way the plots are zoomable and the way the postscript output is almost exactly like the on-screen appearance. [Maybe IDL's object graphics are better than direct graphics in this respect -- I have never learned object graphics.]

I didn't like Yorick's command line -- it has no editing facilities. You can get these by running it inside Emacs, however.

Nowadays I'm using R (<http://www.R-project.org>) a lot instead of Yorick, mainly because it has HDF5 support. However it is a lot slower than Yorick or IDL for many purposes.

Neither R nor Yorick has built-in geographical mapping. This is a Really Big Issue for us and the main reason why we have not (yet) told RSI where to stuff their pricing scheme.

The "fourth man" to be considered is octave (<http://www.octave.org/>). This does have HDF5 support and the crap (gnuplot) graphics get slightly less crap if you go to the trouble to build it with plplot (<http://plplot.sourceforge.net/>) support. However, I have not yet played with octave enough to get a feel for how solid it is.

Hopefully, this kind of discussion will encourage RSI to drop their prices, but they seem to have the Microsoft mentality of jacking the prices up and

hoping that their customers are too comfortable to look for alternatives.
Right now, we might be.....

Hugh the Free Software Zealot

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OBDisclaimer: The views expressed herein are mine, not those of UofE.
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Subject: Re: IDL vs Yorick?
Posted by [Amar Nayegandhi](#) on Thu, 10 Oct 2002 16:18:38 GMT
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<snip>

> I didn't like Yorick's command line -- it has no editing facilities. You
> can get these by running it inside Emacs, however.
[
you could use 'rlterm' to get command line editing and history in Yorick.
Further, C. Wayne Wright has provided GUI capabilities to Yorick by using
Tcl/Tk and expect. Its called Ytk. You can read more about it at
<http://ytk.sourceforge.net>. I use Yorick and Ytk on a Linux platform and
it works great!
]

> Neither R nor Yorick has built-in geographical mapping. This is a Really
> Big Issue for us and the main reason why we have not (yet) told RSI where to
> stuff their pricing scheme.
[
We have in the past converted coastline ascii files to Portable Binary
Data (pbd) files in Yorick. These .pbd files are system independent. You
can easily generate pbd files in Yorick.
]

<snip>

>

> Hopefully, this kind of discussion will encourage RSI to drop their prices,
> but they seem to have the Microsoft mentality of jacking the prices up and
> hoping that their customers are too comfortable to look for alternatives.
> Right now, we might be.....

[
I agree... I still use IDL, but hope that competition from open source
will help in bringing prices down.

-amar

]

Amar Nayegandhi
