
Subject: Re: Simple GUI question

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 15:02:04 GMT

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Kevin M. Lausten (kevinlausten@hotmail.com) writes:

> I am a beginner user of IDL and results are expected soon. My current
> project begins with a GUI in which the user is prompted to input
> strings into several text widgets. I am having trouble passing this
> data from the GUI to my source code. The first line of my source code
> calls the GUI, and I need subsequent lines to perform procedures and
> functions on the data provided by the user. Any help would be greatly
> appreciated.

What you want is a modal or blocking "dialog" widget:

http://www.dfanning.com/widget_tips/modal_blocking.html

You can find an example of how to write one here:

<http://www.dfanning.com/programs/textbox.pro>

The example allows you to open a text widget and return the answer to your program. Your program will be slightly more elaborate than this, but will work on exactly the same principles.

```
IDL> theName = TextBox(Label='What is your name? ', $  
    Value='Unknown', Cancel=cancelled)  
IDL> IF NOT cancelled THEN Print, theName
```

Cheers,

David

P.S. The fastest way to learn about widget programming in IDL is to get a good book. :-)

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com

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

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

Subject: Re: Simple GUI question

Posted by [Pavel Romashkin](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 15:55:40 GMT

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This will be simpler than David's suggestion. Modal widget would be an overkill here.

Change the calling order completely. Call the GUI procedure first. Event handler can be very simple with just one "Do it" button that needs to pass events. You can ignore events from text widgets.

Upon "Do it" event (after user entered data into all text widgets) collect the contents from all your text widgets using `widget_control`, `txtWidget_ix`, `get_value=Data_ix` and then call your data processing function from the event handler, passing it all the `Data_ix` variables.

Cheers,
Pavel

"Kevin M. Lausten" wrote:

>

> I am a beginner user of IDL and results are expected soon. My current
> project begins with a GUI in which the user is prompted to input
> strings into several text widgets. I am having trouble passing this
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> calls the GUI, and I need subsequent lines to perform procedures and
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> appreciated.
> Thank you,
> Kevin

Subject: Re: Simple GUI question

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 16:54:57 GMT

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Pavel Romashkin (pavel_romashkin@hotmail.com) writes:

> This will be simpler than David's suggestion. Modal widget would be an
> overkill here.
> Change the calling order completely. Call the GUI procedure first. Event
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> collect the contents from all your text widgets using `widget_control`,
> `txtWidget_ix`, `get_value=Data_ix` and then call your data processing
> function from the event handler, passing it all the `Data_ix` variables.

Now I see where all those "impossible to use again" programs
come from. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: Simple GUI question

Posted by [Pavel Romashkin](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 17:20:58 GMT

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Oh come on. Nobody needs to *start* IDL programming in the widget_object world. This is the easiest way to scare off new users with "difficulty" of using IDL. Not every program must be reuseable, some are ok just doing what they are designed to do.

David Fanning wrote:

>

> Now I see where all those "impossible to use again" programs

> come from. :-)

Subject: Re: Simple GUI question

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 18:31:01 GMT

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Pavel Romashkin (pavel_romashkin@hotmail.com) writes:

> Oh come on. Nobody needs to *start* IDL programming in the widget_object
> world. This is the easiest way to scare off new users with "difficulty"
> of using IDL. Not every program must be reuseable, some are ok just
> doing what they are designed to do.

My grandmother used to tell me, "If you start well, you end well." Cobbling programs together works, I don't deny that. I'm just saying they don't work for very long and they get new programmers into bad habits.

God knows, there are plenty of bad programs out there. (Some on my web page, as I was just discovering.) But it doesn't take *that* much longer to learn to do it right, and it pays off in spades down the road.

But I'm just trying to raise the general level of IDL competence, Pavel, not pick a fight with you. As I'm well aware, you have the vast majority of IDL programmers on your side in this one. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
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Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com
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Subject: Re: Simple GUI question
Posted by [Pavel Romashkin](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 19:54:24 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

>
> But I'm just trying to raise the general level of
> IDL competence, Pavel, not pick a fight with you.
> As I'm well aware, you have the vast majority of
> IDL programmers on your side in this one. :-)

Pick a fight! Good Lord, David, not me! Especially that I am indeed on the same side as you are on this one, just more tolerant to shortcuts :-)
Now that I wrote this I am in doubts; you have been awfully quiet lately. That Chameleon... or Catalyst... library of yours must be taking up all of your time :-)

Cheers,
Pavel

Subject: Re: Simple GUI question
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 18 Apr 2003 21:00:33 GMT
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Pavel Romashkin (pavel_romashkin@hotmail.com) writes:

> That Chameleon... or Catalyst... library of yours must be taking up all
> of your time :-)

Oh, don't even start with me! While my erstwhile collaborator takes a four-day Easter holiday (I'm only working with Americans and Ukrainians from now on; boy, **they** know how to work!), I'm stuck deep in the bowels of some object that refuses to cooperate with me. It doesn't even help my mood if I think of what I am doing at the moment as "gathering material for a book".

I spent four hours yesterday tracking down a leaking memory problem that turned out to be my own stupidity. Something I was suppose to learn in Objects 101. I'm not even going to tell you what it was because you would laugh, but I'm pretty sure I'm not going to forget **that** again soon. :-(

I wouldn't even be here today, except that I fell into that damn Microsoft trap of trying to be too clever. Now I've got the damn engine open and parts thrown around from here to there, and it may take a week to put it all back together again.

And in the meantime, I took a look outside. The apple trees are in full bloom today, the grass is green from the recent, badly needed rain, the sun is shining and I'm sitting here fuming. How in the world did my priorities ever get so screwed up!? Sigh...

Cheers,

David

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
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Subject: Re: Simple GUI question
Posted by [R.Bauer](#) on Sat, 19 Apr 2003 08:10:12 GMT
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Dear David and Pavel

I like very much the I of idl it stands for interactive.
For my opinion objects can't be interactive they are always well planned.

The people starting with idl are almost very different in learning and

working with idl. In most cases my feeling is if they can theireselfs work a bit on a solution without reading many books or asking a lot of people for help they like idl more.

I started myself with the basics idl book. It was a small book about 50 pages. On each page was an example and just behind you have the result. This book is missing since 5.0 from the idl descriptions.

The people who stay longer using idl they are interested more in writing good quality sources. They are intereseted in reading whatever is available.

My conclusion

I feel well if someone asks first time in this group and he or she gets a simple and a more detailed answer.
If this person spent later more time on discussions we will see what happens.

regards

Reimar

David Fanning wrote:

```
> Pavel Romashkin (pavel_romashkin@hotmail.com) writes:
>
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>> of your time :-(
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> priorities ever get so screwed up!? Sigh...
>
> Cheers,
>
> David

--

Forschungszentrum Juelich
email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de
<http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/>

=====

a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich
http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.html
