
Subject: GET_KBRD()... behavior depends on OS properties?

Posted by [timrobshaw](#) on Mon, 10 May 2004 05:53:41 GMT

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Hi there,

I've got a question I've been wanting an answer to for a long time. Somebody named Phil asked this about 5 years ago here, but the thread devolved into complaining about IDLDE rather than answering the poor guy's question... so this post has nothing to do with IDLDE.

I use the CURSOR command a lot when investigating data... usually spectra and images. Once in a while I try to get clever like so: if I press a specific key (the output is returned via GET_KBRD(0)) then a related task is run. But I'd really like GET_KBRD() to work while the cursor is sitting in the spectrum or the image window... this way, my routines can use the (x,y) position that the cursor is sitting at.

My big problem is that GET_KBRD() won't work until I get that cursor back into the IDL xterm (thus changing the cursor position).

I'm running IDL on Solaris. Checking the desktop properties, I find there's an option to control window focus (I think that's the official name for this click-on-the-window-to-activate-it business):

Set Active Window: {Click Mouse | Move Pointer}

When I select the Click Mouse option, now I can get GET_KBRD() to work when my cursor is parked anywhere in the desktop (including the IDL-generated plot windows) since the focus is still on the IDL xterm.

Is there any way to force this behavior from inside IDL? I'm guessing probably not, but I'm hoping someone knows more about this than I do.

-Tim.

Subject: Re: GET_KBRD()... behavior depends on OS properties?

Posted by [MKatz843](#) on Mon, 10 May 2004 21:07:36 GMT

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I think you can solve your problem with a minor change in strategy. Instead of using GET_KBRD() and simple graphic windows, go the extra step and create a small widget containing a widget_draw(), and set the keyword /KEYBOARD_EVENTS.

Here's what I do. I create a widget containing (at least) a text-input widget_text() field that's small, along with a widget_draw(). You can

use object graphics or direct graphics as you're probably used to. The user can click in the text field and enter keyboard commands. Alternately, any key that is typed when the input focus is on the graph window is identified and send to the same routine that deals with input for the text-field.

In the event handler, I add one line that returns input focus to the special text field after other appropriate events like mouse clicks in the window and such.

Using this method I can handle a combination of keyboard commands and multi-button mouse events all seemingly in the graphic window. It makes a powerful, quick interface.

If you need more details, let us know. I probably got this technique originally from suggestions posted on this newsgroup years ago.

M. Katz

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Subject: Re: GET_KBRD()... behavior depends on OS properties?
Posted by [timrobshaw](#) on Tue, 11 May 2004 05:56:52 GMT
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Thanks a bunch guys! I'll give this WIDGET_DRAW() a try. -Tim.

- > I think you can solve your problem with a minor change in strategy.
 - > Instead of using GET_KBRD() and simple graphic windows, go the extra
 - > step and create a small widget containing a widget_draw(), and set the
 - > keyword /KEYBOARD_EVENTS.
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