
Subject: Re: Choice of 64-bit platform for IDL
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Mon, 24 May 2004 14:34:28 GMT
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Of the UNIX choices you listed, my preference is Solaris. The only reason for that choice is that it seems to be the only one on the list where there isn't some question about future RSI support. Here, we use Linux and Solaris for the majority of intensive IDL computing and analysis. We used to have some AIX and HP/UX machines around, but those have been turned into boat anchors -- especially the old HP monitors, those things were heavy! But, I digress. My personal choice would be Linux, if the 64-bit solution existed. However, we do have IDL 6 running fine on a couple Solaris 9 servers.

I know that 64-bit computing is the future, but why have you decided to go after a 64-bit architecture? There are plenty of other factors to consider for a big, beefy machine -- RAM, processor(s) speed, cache speed, etc. If you wanted to maximize \$\$/flops (that's dollars per floating point operations per second) you might want to look at some of the cheaper 32-bit architectures and use the extra money to buy more RAM or processors. Just an idea I thought I'd throw out.

-Mike

Subject: Re: Choice of 64-bit platform for IDL
Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Tue, 25 May 2004 00:45:30 GMT
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"Wolf Schweitzer" wrote ...

- > We are evaluating the purchase of a 64-bit platform for IDL.
- > What we want to do is analyze, work with, and visualise, 3D-volume data
- > that ranges around 900 MB to 2.5 GB.
- > There's no 64-bit-Linux support because those developments are probably
- > too recent, there's no 64-bit Windows so far, so we're left with a
- > choice of Unix platforms.
- > Which are your recommendations?
- > - Solaris: Are Sun Blade workstations a good choice? Is Solaris very
- > common among IDL users?

I agree with Michael that Solaris is a fairly safe bet as far as RSI is concerned but I don't think now is the time to invest in Sun kit. While Sun delivers some decent hardware the ultraSparc processors are pitiful performers. Since you will be doing a lot of volume rendering processor performance will be critical.

Fujitsu's Sparc64 V is a different story but I don't know if it is binary compatible with uSparc.

> - HP/UX: What about the Itanium support? Itanium 2, maybe? No news by
> RSI yet, right?

With Intel's announcement of x86 64bit extensions and the "realignment" of its future strategy the Itanium's future is not as clear cut as it one was. FUD abounds. I would guess that RSI will be slow to move on this.

It would be nice if RSI would hint at their 64bit strategy, specifically on PPC 970 and X86-64 (both AMD and Intel flavors). I am unaware of the level of support OS X currently provides but linux distros are starting to offer 64bit support for Opteron/Athlon 64 and many institutions are in the evaluation phase (or further) with this technology. Knowing where RSI is heading would be very helpful.

-Rick
