
Subject: Re: ION Question

Posted by [Haje Korth](#) on Wed, 06 Apr 2005 17:06:28 GMT

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David,

yes, I have used ION Script in a "realistic" way. Let me start with stating that if you are a clever web programmer, ION Script is probably not the way to go. I am not a clever web programmer, but I needed to provide some Software to a wider audience quickly. At the same time I wanted to keep the source code local to avoid 50 people working with 50 different versions of the code. ION Script was my solution to the problem. The interface is not the most pretty I have seen, but it does its purpose. A remarkable fact is that I was able to do the transition within about a day or two. All it took was throwing away the widget and recoding it as an ION Script web page. The load time of the page is virtually zero and I do not see any slow down by ION itself. (Of course this does not mean that I am not wishing IDL could run faster at times.) So, I cannot confirm any of the problems you are having, although you were not specific as to whether you are using ION Java or ION Script. Maybe you should ask for a demo key and do a local installation.

Cheers,
Haje

"David Fanning" <davidf@dfanning.com> wrote in message
news:MPG.1cbdb1d68d7f11029899aa@news.frii.com...

> Folks,

>

> I've been asked to investigate the possibility of embedding
> an IDL application into a web page. Obviously ION is the only
> possibility. But when I went to the RSI web page for information
> and tried the ION example I was, uh, less than impressed.

>

> It takes several minutes to load, then the images are not
> centered in the windows, and when I move the slider bars
> to look at the images, anything cut off my my window
> disappears. In seconds (this is *fast*), my entire image
> has disappeared. :-(

>

> I know slick example programs are not really RSI's thing,
> but is that what I can expect with ION? Has anyone used
> it in a realistic way? My customer would like a fair amount
> of interactivity and at the moment I'm feeling fairly pessimistic.

>

> Thanks,

>

> David

>
> --
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Subject: Re: ION Question

Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Wed, 06 Apr 2005 17:11:05 GMT

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> I've been asked to investigate the possibility of embedding
> an IDL application into a web page. Obviously ION is the only
> possibility. But when I went to the RSI web page for information
> and tried the ION example I was, uh, less than impressed.

Same here. Were you looking at ION Script or ION Java? I was less than impressed with ION Script because of how limited it is, but I understand that ION Script is for those who don't want to get their hands dirty. I was less than impressed with ION Java because of overall performance and that everything was forced to be embedded in a Java applet.

> I know slick example programs are not really RSI's thing,
> but is that what I can expect with ION? Has anyone used
> it in a realistic way? My customer would like a fair amount
> of interactivity and at the moment I'm feeling fairly pessimistic.

It depends on what you're trying to do with it. How "interactive" do you need this to be? Which example program of RSI's were you looking at? The simpler the view, the faster the program will be. If you want whiz-bang rotating 3-D graphics with coyotes dancing across the screen, it will really slow down for most people. The problem is that everything is within a Java applet. The applet must be downloaded to the client computer and then run on the client, not on the server. Having a big, beefy server does not help you.

We played around with ION some, but we just found it too hairy to work with. We opted for doing our own web server programming and dynamically call IDL when necessary to make a plot, file or movie and serve that back to the end user. You don't have true interactivity in this case, but you have enough to take a user's selections and generate something on the fly based on that input.

-Mike

Subject: Re: ION Question

Michael Wallace writes:

- > It depends on what you're trying to do with it. How "interactive" do
- > you need this to be?

We want to navigate a 3D image cube, looking at all three slice orientations, zoom, pan, draw ROIs, sing and dance, all the usual things. And, of course, the client wants it all faster than we can do it now in IDL. :-)

- > Which example program of RSI's were you looking
- > at?

I was looking at the ION Java Human Browser Demo, which seemed a less powerful example of what we would like to build.

- > If you want
- > whiz-bang rotating 3-D graphics with coyotes dancing across the screen,
- > it will really slow down for most people.

This is still on our To-Do list, but it's coming. :-)

- > The problem is that
- > everything is within a Java applet. The applet must be downloaded to
- > the client computer and then run on the client, not on the server.
- > Having a big, beefy server does not help you.

Well, I'm naive enough (and don't know enough about Java, probably) to think this would be a Good Thing. Why is it a problem?

- > We played around with ION some, but we just found it too hairy to work
- > with. We opted for doing our own web server programming and dynamically
- > call IDL when necessary to make a plot, file or movie and serve that
- > back to the end user. You don't have true interactivity in this case,
- > but you have enough to take a user's selections and generate something
- > on the fly based on that input.

Yeah, I think interactivity is critical. We can do without some of the bells and whistles, I guess. But navigating images quickly and being able to annotate them is essential.

Thanks for the info.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Subject: Re: ION Question

Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Thu, 07 Apr 2005 19:40:55 GMT

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>> The problem is that
>> everything is within a Java applet. The applet must be downloaded to
>> the client computer and then run on the client, not on the server.
>> Having a big, beefy server does not help you.
>
>
> Well, I'm naive enough (and don't know enough about Java, probably)
> to think this would be a Good Thing. Why is it a problem?

It depends on your audience. Our application was going to be rather intensive and we decided to put that burden on the server rather than on client machines. It was much easier to buy a single beefy server instead of putting up a message to all our end users saying "thou shalt use a much faster processor and more memory."

>> We played around with ION some, but we just found it too hairy to work
>> with. We opted for doing our own web server programming and dynamically
>> call IDL when necessary to make a plot, file or movie and serve that
>> back to the end user. You don't have true interactivity in this case,
>> but you have enough to take a user's selections and generate something
>> on the fly based on that input.
>
>
> Yeah, I think interactivity is critical. We can do without some
> of the bells and whistles, I guess. But navigating images quickly
> and being able to annotate them is essential.

How much of this needs to be dynamic and how much can you pre-generate and store off to the side? If there's a way to create images or data sets ahead of time, I'd recommend doing that and then serve up the image/data set when requested. To the end user, it will appear like it's being created on the fly. If you were using a database behind the scenes, everything could be stored in there, including annotations and other meta-data, of course I'm probably going way beyond what you had in

mind. :-p

-Mike

Subject: Re: ION Question

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 07 Apr 2005 19:57:23 GMT

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Michael Wallace writes:

- > It depends on your audience. Our application was going to be rather
- > intensive and we decided to put that burden on the server rather than on
- > client machines. It was much easier to buy a single beefy server
- > instead of putting up a message to all our end users saying "thou shalt
- > use a much faster processor and more memory."

Oh, well, we are in a position to dictate to the end users what equipment they have to have to run our programs. If they don't have it and complain, we just shrug our shoulders and say "we told you so." :-)

- > How much of this needs to be dynamic and how much can you pre-generate
- > and store off to the side? If there's a way to create images or data
- > sets ahead of time, I'd recommend doing that and then serve up the
- > image/data set when requested. To the end user, it will appear like
- > it's being created on the fly. If you were using a database behind the
- > scenes, everything could be stored in there, including annotations and
- > other meta-data, of course I'm probably going way beyond what you had in
- > mind. :-p

Well, I didn't have much in mind. But this whole discussion is definitely making me more pessimistic than I was hoping it would. :-(

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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