
Subject: Hello again, and iTools
Posted by [struangray](#) on Thu, 08 Mar 2007 12:25:28 GMT
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It's been a while, but I have recently started programming in IDL again. Great to see some old names still posting here, and the new ones too.

Naturally I wish to save time, effort and frustration. Thanks to dfanning.com I have reacquainted myself with

device, deomposed=0

but now I feel the siren call of iTools and I am wondering if I should swim to land or stuff my ears with parsley?

In short: are the iTools stable, usable and extendable enough to make it worth my while to learn the whole application framework? Are there any bugs or gotchas that will bite me if I try to build an application more substantial than simple data viewers on top of the iTools base layer? I like the provided viewers, but have found a few bugs down among the details, and I am not yet convinced they are worth the commitment. I can bang together a basic program from my old widgets in short order, but most of what I am currently writing will be used by non-programmers later, and it seems as if a program built around iTools will be safer in the long run.

Comments?

Struan Gray
Lund, Sweden

Subject: Re: Hello again, and iTools
Posted by [struan.gray](#) on Fri, 09 Mar 2007 10:28:44 GMT
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Thanks for all the opinions and advice, even the cricket. I have a large collection of golden ducks in my personal sporting history, so I appreciate a game like baseball where you get three attempts at getting things wrong before they kick you off the pitch.

Live Tools and Insight were the first thing I thought of when I saw the iTools described in the manual. However, they were so obviously slow and buggy from the moment you called them up that I was never remotely tempted to use them and I could never understand why they were even included with the IDL distribution. iTools seems different enough to be tempting, although I appreciate the warnings.

For now I shall probably write my own widgets and pass data to iPlot and ilmage tools for data inspection. There is a lot of built in functionality that will be very tedious to duplicate, so that's a time saver for me, especially at the prototyping stage. I am also finding iTools a useful way to display or preserve internal data from inside image processing routines when debugging or fine-tuning the algorithm: IIMAGE, TEMPIMAGE works like PRINT, TEMPVARIABLE as way to keep tabs on what is going on inside functions and procedures even after they have returned.

Once I have immersed myself a bit more in the documentation it makes sense to see if I can get a file reader running, and to turn some of my eclectic collection of image processing routines into iTool operations. It looks like a good way to re-use code efficiently. Michael, your site will be a great help.

David, I look forward to buying your book. Please get it written in the next two weeks or so :-)

Subject: Re: Hello again, and iTools
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 09 Mar 2007 14:08:06 GMT
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Struan writes:

> David, I look forward to buying your book. Please get it written in
> the next two weeks or so :-)

I'll say this, Struan, you are a hard man to discourage! :-)

I've been reading Apley Cherry-Garrard's first person account of the ill-fated Scott expedition to the South Pole. There was a group of hard-to-discourage men! Although Cherry-Garrard's account is entitled The Worst Journey in the World, it is actually full of hope and inspiration.

I bring it up because the book starts off with this sentence: "Polar exploration is at once the cleanest and most isolated way of having a bad time which has been devised." I keep reading "polar exploration" as "iTool programming" and I can't help thinking of you.

Good luck. And, of course, we want to see the finished product. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Hello again, and iTools

Posted by [struan.gray](#) on Fri, 09 Mar 2007 14:36:22 GMT

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David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> I'll say this, Struan, you are a hard man to discourage! :-)

How hard can it be :-)

> The Worst Journey in the World....

>

> "Polar exploration is at once the cleanest

> and most isolated way of having a bad time which has

> been devised."

If I rememeber correctly, he also said that the pain and discomfort were vastly outweighed by the camaraderie engendered by mutual suffering.

A bit like this newsgroup...

Struan
