
Subject: IDL Widget Toolkit

Posted by [tumanjong](#) on Tue, 10 Nov 2015 19:09:48 GMT

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Approximately 3 years ago there was a brief discussion on this forum about the IDL widget toolkit. Mark Piper, who was then the IDL Product Manager, mentioned that it was something that will be looked into after IDL 8.3 was released. He also suggested that a web-based widget system was something that will be explored but that when the time comes he will be open to input from the community. Well, we are now at IDL 8.5 and there has been no mention of whether there is indeed any work being done on updating/replacing the aging (especially on Motif) widget toolkit. It will be very much appreciated if someone from Exelis can enlighten us on this issue.

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit

Posted by [tumanjong](#) on Thu, 12 Nov 2015 18:32:44 GMT

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On Wednesday, November 11, 2015 at 1:11:40 AM UTC-5, Chris Torrence wrote:

> On Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 12:09:51 PM UTC-7, tuma...@gmail.com wrote:

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> Hi all,

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> Well, this is a tricky question. We would love to refurbish the IDL widget toolkit. However, given the complexity of the current programming interface (API), and all of the weird widget properties and behavior, it would probably have to be a completely new API. That makes it difficult to justify based purely upon the number of IDL customers who actively develop widget apps.

>

> However, we are currently developing a new "browser" widget, which will allow you to embed a web browser inside an IDL widget app. Using this widget, you would be able to create an HTML5/Javascript app and host it inside an IDL application (which could be a base widget with nothing else in it). That way, you could create an IDL application which would have a modern look-and-feel, but still have it be cross platform. This is still in the prototype stage, so no promises on release date.

>

> Finally, I would strongly urge you to contact your IDL/ENVI sales representative. It's difficult for us to drive these huge projects from inside engineering - we *really* need customer feedback to sales! This is especially important for Mac and Linux, as those platforms don't get nearly as much love & attention as we would like.

>

> I hope this helps.

>

> Cheers,
> Chris

Hi Chris.

Though not the news I was hoping to hear it is really helpful to know where things are heading. At my organization we write and distribute a large cross platform IDL application and the dated look & feel as well as the limited functionality of the widgets is really disappointing to our users. At some point, if not already, this might become a deal breaker to some so I welcome any efforts towards providing an alternative way of constructing a user interface. Let me be the first to volunteer as a beta tester, if Exelis still makes use of that, whenever this browser widget is sufficiently mature.

I really appreciated the feedback.

Richard

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit
Posted by [natha](#) on Thu, 12 Nov 2015 21:02:30 GMT
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I totally understand Richard's point of view!
I also think that the IDL widgets are disappointing, dated look & feel and have limited functionality. At some point I started developing my own widget library based on graphic objects. I didn't finish but I know it is something it could be developed.

I always thought that if I had to create a large IDL application I would incorporate the Java-Bridge and develop the interface using a nice Java GUI framework. This would imply much more work but the final look & feel would be definitely nicer.

Nata

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit
Posted by [andrewcool777](#) on Sat, 26 Mar 2016 07:40:59 GMT
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On Wednesday, 11 November 2015 16:41:40 UTC+10:30, Chris Torrence wrote:
> On Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 12:09:51 PM UTC-7, tuma...@gmail.com wrote:
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> I hope this helps.
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> Cheers,
> Chris

Hi Chris,

Here we are, four months later...

Any sight of this new browser widget on the horizon?

Regards,

Andrew

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit
Posted by [lalonso22](#) on Sat, 26 Mar 2016 13:49:29 GMT
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> That makes it difficult to justify based purely upon the number of IDL customers who actively develop widget apps.

Given the current state (and past) of IDL widgets it is no wonder that the IDL customers using them is low. It is a real drag for a real growth of the environment. Maybe already too late? Hopefully not, but Python is getting better and better.

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Mon, 28 Mar 2016 12:39:52 GMT
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Hello,

On 03/26/16 09:49, lalonso22@gmail.com wrote:

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>> IDL customers who actively develop widget apps.
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> that the IDL customers using them is low. It is a real drag for a
> real growth of the environment.

That was my immediate thought too - the cart and horse problem.

The IDL widget appearance on *nix systems is quite crufty looking (I have no idea what it looks like on windows) . But I also thought that when I first started using widgets back in '93/94 (insert old geezer cackle here).

Given the generation of different neuronal pathways in my brain due to the shift from Direct to Function graphics, I'd like an OO equivalent for widgets - maybe then I'd write more widget-based apps[*].

I'd also like an easy way to package up a a widget app to provide to someone without an IDL license. Something they could run like an executable with zero knowledge of IDL or licenses or whatever.

Man, that last one would be so treMENDously huge - but I'm sure there are business reasons to not allow that (unless it's already possible? If so, then new IDL marketing folk are required)

Apologies for the early monday morning, pre-coffee musings.

cheers,

paulv

[*] Now I only maintain the 10 or so that I built over the last 10 or so years (it's depressing that I am now measuring my software-building lifespan in units of decades)

Subject: Re: IDL Widget Toolkit
Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Mon, 28 Mar 2016 16:57:51 GMT
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On 3/28/16 6:39 AM, Paul van Delst wrote:

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- > someone without an IDL license. Something they could run like an
- > executable with zero knowledge of IDL or licenses or whatever.
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- > so, then new IDL marketing folk are required)

Check out the MAKE_RT routine.

Mike

--

Michael Galloy

www.michaelgalloy.com

Modern IDL: A Guide to IDL Programming (<http://modernidl.idldev.com>)
