Subject: Making money (was: Computing Speed)
Posted by Struan Gray on Thu, 19 Feb 1998 08:00:00 GMT

David Fanning, davidf@dfanning.com writes:

> But, on the other hand, if RSI flooded the student market
> with cheap $200 software that was fully functional and got
> all those potential users BEFORE they purchased PV-Wave or
> MatLab, THEN lowering prices would certainly make a lot of
> sense. At least to me. :-)

   From my viewpoint the problem isn't just that the high prices limit
the number of bright young programmers who will be attracted (or
coerced :-) into using IDL but also that they make distribution of
useful software difficult. I have looked at putting together a nice
spectral deconvoltion package which even the most thick-skulled
diploma student could use (the object orientation in IDL would make
maintaining a lineshape library very simple and cool) but the cost of
getting the resulting package onto everybody's desktop computers is
just too high.

   Of course, RSI need to provide some incentive to stump up for the
full version of the program, and I would say the answer lies in
application development. Even if the student edition still restricted
the maximum size of arrays it could generate itself, it would be a lot
more attractive to me if it could also run some sort of
fully-functional 'save' files that could only be created by the full
price version. I could then see myself stumping up for a full version
for application development and student versions for all the users.
This will conflict with the runtime licence policy (it effectively
makes the student version a more versatile runtime licence) but IMNSHO
that would be no bad thing anyway.

Struan