
Subject: IDL 5.2 GUI Builder Tutorial ?

Posted by [Karl Young](#) on Thu, 20 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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In my style of always looking for a quick fix I was wondering if anyone knew of any kind of tutorial on the GUI builder in IDL 5.2. From some brief fiddling it looks reasonably easy to use but I'd like to see a couple of simple examples of building an interface and filling in the code so's to get started on the right foot. I'd be amazed if David didn't have something up his sleeve but I haven't scoured his web page very thoroughly lately. Thanks for any tips (including any advice to stay away from the GUI builder ...)

-- KY

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Subject: Re: IDL 5.2 GUI Builder Tutorial ?

Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 26 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Karl Young (kyoung@itsa.ucsf.edu) writes:

> So despite the fact that experts like David
> sneer at we widget challenged weaklings,
> I'm now convinced that the GUI-builder
> has its place.

Now, I don't recall sneering and I *certainly* believe the GUI-Builder has a place. I think we just disagree about where that place is. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. And like Jonas, I am looking forward to future versions of the GUI-Builder too. :-)

--

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Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: IDL 5.2 GUI Builder Tutorial ?
Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 27 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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Mike Schienle (mgs@ivsoftware.com) writes:

> Let me jump on this bandwagon with a rant of my own. I just spent a year
> dealing with a very disgusting usage of WIDED. Our tax dollars (in the
> U.S.) have been used to create this:

Your honor, I rest my case.

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: IDL 5.2 GUI Builder Tutorial ?
Posted by [mgs](#) on Thu, 27 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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In article <7ij5ea\$ckr\$1@nnrp1.deja.com>, rmlongfield@my-deja.com wrote:

> Hi Karl and all,
> I haven't seen the GUI tool but when I first started with widgets, I
> used WIDED, which I thought was useful at least in getting used to
> widgets and how the programs should look.

...

Let me jump on this bandwagon with a rant of my own. I just spent a year
dealing with a very disgusting usage of WIDED. Our tax dollars (in the

U.S.) have been used to create this:

```
base1 = WIDGET_BASE(base0, /ROW)
label1 = WIDGET_LABEL(base1, VALUE = 'Input L0 file  ')
gwid.ifile = WIDGET_TEXT(base1, /EDIT, XSIZE = 40, $
    VALUE = ")
gwid.select = WIDGET_BUTTON(base1, VALUE='Select')

base1 = WIDGET_BASE(base0, /ROW)
label1 = WIDGET_LABEL(base1, VALUE = 'Output directory')
gwid.outdir = WIDGET_TEXT(base1, /EDIT, XSIZE = 40, VALUE = './')
gwid.oselect = WIDGET_BUTTON(base1, VALUE='Select')

label1 = WIDGET_LABEL (base0, VALUE=' ')

base1 = WIDGET_BASE(base0, /ROW)
label1 = WIDGET_LABEL(base1, VALUE="Log file (for submit only) :")
gwid.logfile = WIDGET_TEXT(base1, /EDIT, VALUE='/dev/null', XS=35)
```

You might be thinking "Oh that's just someone's quick attempt at understanding something." You'd be wrong, because this is production code being used in the SeaDAS project by NASA and released to the public. This is a random file selected from 3 MB of this crap. I was the lucky person that had to add another satellite into this mess for a different company. It took a hell of a lot longer than it should have because of this useless naming. If you ever think your project will be used by someone other than yourself, think about the savings you could accomplish by doing the right thing from the start. Unfortunately, NASA has created a sinkhole and ought to be embarrassed for ever letting this project out in its current form. This example came from a file of 160+ lines with two lines of generic comments.

Before I go tilt at another windmill, let me suggest an IDL Style Guide that I put together earlier this year. It was written about 4 years ago, but cleaned up and put on the web in January. It's available at <http://www.ivsoftware.com/IDL_Style.html>. I'd like to get some feedback to make it an acceptable document for others to use, as well.

--

Mike Schienle	Interactive Visuals, Inc.
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Subject: Re: IDL 5.2 GUI Builder Tutorial ?
Posted by [rmlongfield](#) on Thu, 27 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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Hi Karl and all,

I haven't seen the GUI tool but when I first started with widgets, I used WIDED, which I thought was useful at least in getting used to widgets and how the programs should look. I also found it useful in learning how to position items ON the screen. The connection of bases and subbases and buttons and draw windows was very confusing. This tool helped in this respect. It was also useful, as was mentioned, in getting used to the proper syntax of a WIDGET definition.

I must, however, agree with David when it comes to actually using the resulting program to do something. I recall putting print statements in the event handlers so that at least I could find out where the program went when I pressed on a button.

In article <MPG.11af0de4659f2d9897b3@news.frii.com>, davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

> Karl Young (kyoung@itsa.ucsf.edu) writes:

> ---about the GUI Builder -----

> But, of course, the code doesn't *do* anything. All the
> event handlers are stubbed out "shells", there are no
> positional or keyword parameters defined to get data into
> the program, no provision for passing information around
> in the widget program, etc. Oh, oh. Bad news here. You
> are going to have to learn some widget programming anyway
> or you aren't going to be able to get any but the
> very simplest programs to work!

The biggest "paradym shift" (as I would call it, if only I could spell it right) was the understanding that the flow of a program was no longer from top to bottom. The main program code, which defines everything, ran from top to bottom. This makes the widget window that appears on the monitor. But the "action", the things that you want to happen, all are located in the event handler code, which had to be placed ABOVE the main program. This part was not included in WIDED and I suspect it isn't in the GUI either.

The simplest widget I have is one that draws an image and has a delete button on the bottom. This I can write in five minutes. (After about a year of learning IDL and widget programming, but I am pretty slow, I think). I got sidetracked badly with compound widgets, though others find them easy, it seems. Learning to use the UVALUE was also a major achievement (here's where David's book was particularly handy).

Do a widget search on this group. There's lots of stuff.

Anyhow, good luck!

Rose

--== Sent via Deja.com <http://www.deja.com/> ==--
---Share what you know. Learn what you don't.---
