AWIPS II Topic of the Week -- Plug-ins

Hi everyone...

So, there are plug-ins in EDEX and plug-ins in CAVE. What is a plug-in and how are they related? A plug-in is simply a piece of code that inherits from and extends a class (or set of classes) of an existing framework (e.g., infrastructure). Both the EDEX and the CAVE take advantage of this software technology. How are the EDEX and CAVE plug-ins related? In philosophy only. EDEX plug-ins allow new data types to be adapted into EDEX in a controlled yet loosely coupled, flexible way; and in the Eclipse RCP framework, new plug-ins are used to enhance existing functions in a controlled, yet loosely coupled, manner. But the two types of plug-ins share no code or common base class. CAVE plug-in code runs entirely within CAVE, and EDEX plug-in code runs entirely within EDEX. To support creating EDEX plug-ins, Raytheon has written some code within their AWIPS Development Environment which generates the EDEX plug-in code! And this code is itself a plug-in -- an eclipse IDE plug-in :-) . While we anticipate using plug-ins will make updating the software simpler, we still anticipate the route for local updates to AWIPS being via Python scripts and the micro-Engine.