
Subject: Re: Making a directory in an IDL routine.
Posted by [gurman](#) on Sun, 07 Dec 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <34870691.0@cfanews.harvard.edu>, rpete@ascda3.harvard.edu
(Pete Ratzlaff) wrote:

> David Kennedy (D.Kennedy@qub.ac.uk) wrote:
>> An usual request -
>> Does anyone know how to make a directory from inside an IDL
>> routine? I know its odd, but its the best way to organise
>> a huge save set that'll be generated.
>
>> (And better yet, how to check if such a directory already
>> exists).
>
>> I imagine that this is machine dependant - UNIX answers
>> only needed.
>
> 'spawn' can do both of these
>
> 1. To check if a directory exists:
> IDL> dir='/home/me/mydir'
> IDL> spawn, 'ls -a '+dir, result

This is better than findfile? I understand the latter has trouble with
UFS directories with lots of entries, but still....

>
> Now, check the length of RESULT[0]. If it is zero, then
> DIR doesn't exist, otherwise DIR does exist.
>
> 2. To create a directory
> IDL> spawn,'mkdir '+dir
>
> This may not be elegant, but it works.

The best part about findfile is that it's (relatively) OS-independent,
and even has a keyword, COUNT, that is ero indicates there are no files
meeting the filepath specification in the argument:

```
IDL> result = FINDFILE('<filespec>', COUNT = count)
```

e.g.

```
IDL> result = FINDFILE('/home/me/mydir', COUNT = count)
```

For some bizarre reason, the Digital UNIX version of IDL 5.0.3 cannot
resolve "~<homedirectory>" in findfile --- you have to state explicitly

where the home directory lives.

FWIW,

Joe Gurman

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