
Subject: Re: call external speed

Posted by [Karl Krieger](#) on Thu, 03 Sep 1998 07:00:00 GMT

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On Wed, 2 Sep 1998, curtis volin wrote:

- > I use the IDL SVD command very frequently, so I was wondering if it would
- > be any faster to create a DLL and call it with call external. I suppose
- > that the fundamental question is, are IDL routines optimized for speed?

I guess it depends on the algorithm. A function designed for a specific purpose will often be significantly faster if you code it with a compiling language and link it to IDL by call_external. Just run a test case and compare IDL's SVD to an implementation of SVD in C or Fortran.

BTW: I would recommend to use LINKIMAGE instead of CALL_EXTERNAL except perhaps for some quick and dirty hacks. With LINKIMAGE your procedures and functions have exactly the same syntax than the rest of IDL; you get argument checking, proper IDL error handling and it is possible to pass keyword parameters and structures to your routine. The downside is that it requires some more programming effort but it's really worth it IMHO.

Karl

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