
Subject: Multithreaded external routines for IDL/WinNT
Posted by [menakkis](#) on Fri, 25 Sep 1998 07:00:00 GMT

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Stein Vidar's good advice to Remy Indebetouw about a multiprocessing external routine on IDL/SGI, namely "Why not just try it?", gave me the nudge to act like a proper IDL explorer and "just try it" on WinNT.

And indeed it works!
(BTW, sorry Remy, I don't know anything about doing this on IRIX.)

Here's a small example, including C source (plus 3-liner .DEF file!), IDL test program, and binary .DLL: <ftp://demsyd.syd.dem.csiro.au/pub/idl/emmex.zip>
I've done some testing on my dual PII/300 and in the pointless but CPU-intensive calculation I'm doing in the test program, the benefit of using 2 CPUs instead of 1 actually hits the ideal 2*!

My apologies if this is old hat to any IDL users out there (BTW, where WERE you - why couldn't we tease a response out of you?), but this was news to me, and it's been pretty satisfying to be able to max out (from IDL) both of the CPUs that have just been keeping my office warm these last few months. I'd always thought along the lines of: "It can't be done ... IDL won't be having with threads ... Runtime-libraries will fight", etc, but it doesn't appear to be the case at all, at least on NT. Actually, when Steven Johnson pointed out that FFTW could go multithreaded I started wondering about this stuff. (BTW, thanks for being tactful, Steven. I haven't done the benchmark for Intel MKL vs FFTW, but after having looked at the FFTW web page and benchmark results more closely, I've got a mild but growing unease that my posting along the lines of "Hey, if you want fast FFT why not check out the Intel MKL" might turn out to be reminiscent, somehow, of a line from a Johnny Bravo cartoon; goes something like this... Johnny to a group of feminist activists: "Gee, I didn't know that chicks like to vote." :-)

Peter Mason

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