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Subject: Re: Curious FindFile behavior

Posted by [Dick Jackson](#) on Wed, 25 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT

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Barry Lesht wrote:

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>
> I'm running IDL5.1 on an SGI (IRIX6.2). I'm using FindFile to create
> an array of data filenames that I can pass to some processing code.
> There are (as it turns out) 515 files in the directory I'm searching.
> The filenames are all of the form xxxxxxxxxx.xx.yymmdd.hhmmss.cdf. I
> get the following from FindFile-
> [...]
> IDL> files=FindFile('*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
>      0
> [...]
> IDL> files=FindFile('*980*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
>      425
> [...]
> Can anyone explain this? Thanks.
```

Barry,

I recall seeing cases in IRIX where the result of a system call, if it is too large, ends up coming back completely empty instead! From what you've said, the result of 'ls \*.\*' or some such command would be at least 15K of text, but less for the last two, as there are fewer files to list. There may be a limit in between somewhere. (16KBytes, perhaps?)

I don't know if you can test this limit at the IRIX prompt, it may only happen when the result is piped into a program such as IDL. Sorry, I don't run IRIX anymore, so I can't test this.

One upshot of this is that you would get fewer 'findable' files if you started higher up in the directory tree, since each of the file names would be longer. This can indeed be frustrating.

A competent IRIX sysadmin would likely know more about these limits, and whether this is the problem at all.

Cheers,

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-Dick

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