
Subject: Re: Curious FindFile behavior
Posted by [mallors](#) on Thu, 26 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <73holl\$fts@milo.mcs.anl.gov>,
lesht@ANLER.ER.ANL.GOV (Barry Lesht) writes:
> 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('*.*', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
> 0
> IDL> files=FindFile('*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
> 0
> IDL> files=FindFile('*98*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
> 0
> IDL> files=FindFile('*980*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
> 425
> IDL> files=FindFile('*981*.cdf', COUNT=nf)
> IDL> PRINT, nf
> 90
>
> I don't see why cases 2 and (especially) 3 didn't result in nf=515.
> Can anyone explain this? Thanks.

This problem should really be addressed by RSI. What is happening, I believe, is that FINDFILE is spawning a shell to get the file list via something like "ls". However, the shell has limits on the byte length of command line arguments - for long lists, the command will fail. RSI should really be using another UNIX tool meant for this job - that is the "find" command. See the UNIX man pages exec(2), find(1), xargs(1) for more info.

I have a program FINDFILES on my web page that should work for you, and also "fixes" searching for files recursively. See <http://cspar.uah.edu/~mallozzir/idl/idl.html>

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