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Subject: Re: FORMAT codes and tabs

Posted by [Justin Ashmall](#) on Fri, 14 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Thanks very much for the effort - it certainly looks like you got the answer.

I think my best bet would be to read the line into a string, replace all the slashes with spaces and then use a single format, along the lines of

```
b_line = BYTE(line)
list = WHERE(b_line EQ (BYTE("/"))[0], count)
if count GT 0 then b_line[list]=(BYTE(" "))[0]
line = STRING(b_line)
```

Then use a general FORMAT statement with "I0"s.  
However I've not tried that yet!

Thanks again,

Justin.

Steven Thiel <[beorabor@bemail.com](mailto:beorabor@bemail.com)> wrote in message  
news:373B0402.E4155882@bemail.com...

> J. Ashmall:

>

> I think I know why IDL is behaving as it is, but really don't have an  
> answer to how you can read both types of lines using the same format  
> code. I entered a few commands at the command prompt:

> --

> IDL> line1 = '10/11/99' + STRING(9b) + ' 19 : 42'

> IDL> READS, line1, FORMAT='(I0,x,I0)', dd,mm

> IDL> help, dd, mm

> DD INT = 10

> MM INT = 19

> --

> This format does give us back two integers, but they are the wrong ones.

> We get back the 10 from the date and the 19 from the time. When you use

> the format code I0, IDL differentiates the elements to be read using

> white space. It applies the code I0 to the first element it finds- in

> this case this is '10/11/99'. If you tell IDL to FIX this string, you

> get:

> ---

> DL> HELP, FIX('10/11/99')

> <Expression> INT = 10

> ---

> After reading the '10/11/99', IDL moves on to the next element. In this

> case, it is the '19'. If we try and read in all elements, we get the

> following:

```
> ---
> IIDL> READS, line1, FORMAT='(I0,x,I0,x,I0)', dd,mm,yy
> % Unable to apply format code I to input: ": 42".
> % Execution halted at: $MAIN$
> ---
> After reading the first two elements, it moves on to the third- ': 42'.
> This one it cannot convert to the input format of integer:
> ---
> IDL> HELP, FIX(': 42')
> % Type conversion error: Unable to convert given STRING to Integer.
> % Detected at: $MAIN$
> <Expression>  INT    =    0
> ---
> Because you have other string characters in your input (the '/'), I don't
> really know how you would go about finding a general input format code.
> My suggestion would be to just read the whole thing in as a string,
> STRCOMPRESS it and STR_SEP it by single spaces. You will end up with an
> array that has the date as the first element, the hour as the second
> element, a ':' as the third and the minutes as the last. I know this
> will require more processing and isn't very clean, but I don't know of
> any other solution. I would be interested to know if someone does figure
> this out.
>
> Hope this helps.
>
> S.Thiel
> beorabor@bemail.com
> -----
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