
Subject: Global variables and IDL

Posted by [Kristian Kjaer](#) on Fri, 20 Aug 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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A while back, (13 Apr 1999 00:00:00 GMT, but I only read it now)

David Fanning wrote: << Subject: Re: Global variables and IDL

<< So I might write a "preferences" file for the application
<< that each person who installs the application has to modify
<< for their site. One item might be the location of the
<< "data directory". On the PC, this might look like this:

<<
<< DEFSYSV, '!Data_Directory', 'E:\secret\data'

<<
<< The UNIX user would modify this line to this:

<<
<< DEFSYSV, '!Data_Directory', '/usr/people/bob/secret/data'

(For what it's worth:)

For this kind of static information (where are the data, how to
print, etc.) I wrote a function, platform.pro which is called
whenever a module needs the information:

```
host=platform()
```

Platform.pro creates (internally) a number of structures similar to

```
dos_online_prfile32={
online : 'TRUE' , $
dataroot : 'p:\bw1\tascom\dat' , $
localdataroot : 'd:\bw1\tascom\dat' , $
plotfile : 'd:\temp\plot.ps' , $
plotcmd : 'start PRFILE32.exe /q d:\temp\plot.ps' , $
retain : 1 $ ; used in window,retain=host.retain
}
linux_offline_lpr={... etc
```

By a call

getenv('IDL_PLATFORM') ; IDL_PLATFORM: Environment var. telling us
where we are running

platform.pro decides which structure to return.

Then, if the code has to run on a new machine, platform.pro
needs adding to, but when, as happens more often in this case,
updated code is ported to any 'old' machine, no local changes
are needed.

