
Subject: Re: Problem with ASSOC,/PACKED
Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 02 Mar 2000 08:00:00 GMT
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Folks,

I wrote yesterday:

```
> Brian Jackel (bjackel@phys.ucalgary.ca) writes:
>
>> I've run across a bug(?) using ASSOC,/PACKED
>> This appears under v5.3 for Win9x, and v5.2 on
>> SGIs.
>>
>> If anyone has spare time, could you look
>> at the following demonstration script to see if
>> I'm doing anything obviously wrong. Tests
>> on other architectures or versions would also
>> be welcome.
>
> This is the first time I've run across this new
> PACKED keyword, so I really couldn't tell you
> how it works. But on the face of it (and given
> 12+ years reading IDL documentation) this appears
> to be an unfortunate explanation in the documentation.
> I don't have much to go on except a little voice in
> my head that goes, "Naaah, that's not how it works."
```

Well, my explanation sounded good, but was the usual nonsense, according to the people who really know how this works.

It turns out this is a bug in IDL that shows up when you have structure fields in structures. The ASSOC function counts the structure as "1", instead of the number of actual elements in the sub-structure. The fix has already been placed in the IDL 5.4 code.

Sorry for any confusion. And my sincerest apologies to any technical writers whose feelings I may have bruised. :-)

Cheers,

David

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