
Subject: Re: IDLv5.4

Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Fri, 22 Dec 2000 10:23:10 GMT

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David Fanning wrote:

>
> Jeffrey Newmark (newmark@eitv2.nascom.nasa.gov) writes:
>
>> I was wondering if anyone has had problems reading save sets
>> made with IDL V5.4 on older versions? Is this a feature?
>
> Uh, yes. It has been a feature since IDL 0.934b.
>
>> I can read old save sets on the new version. If indeed the savesets
>> are not backwards compatible, that is very annoying!
>
> What can I say. Get used to disappointment. :-)
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> P.S. Let's just say I'm working on a future-looking
> version of IDL that will anticipate all the new features
> in the product up through February 29th, 2043. You
> should see the list!!

Oh, actually some degree of forward compatibility is possible after all. I recently opened my eyes in amazement when I was able to read a text document produced with StarOffice 5.2 in the StarOffice 5.1 version. Seems like this would never be possible with MS Word, for they release new versions every so often specifically to ensure that the file format changes.

In terms of the IDL sav files, it should be possible for RSI to create a file format that is preserved over version changes most of the time, so that only new features will not be recognized when reading them into an older version of IDL. In fact, some work on this could open possibilities for cheap (free?) runtime licenses allowing only execution of sav files but no pro file compilation or interactive command line. Right now it seems practically impossible to distribute applications as sav files because you have to provide one for every new version (I vaguely remember that sav files are not even backwards compatible ?).

Cheers,
Martin

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[[ Dr. Martin Schultz  Max-Planck-Institut fuer Meteorologie  [[
[[      Bundesstr. 55, 20146 Hamburg      [[
[[      phone: +49 40 41173-308      [[
[[      fax:  +49 40 41173-298      [[
[[ martin.schultz@dkrz.de      [[
[[

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