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Subject: Re: Many procedures, what to do?

Posted by [Paul van Delst](#) on Fri, 12 Jan 2001 16:05:55 GMT

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Craig Markwardt wrote:

>  
> davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) writes:  
>> I have to admit, I'm always confused when I read articles  
>> like this. I've been writing IDL programs for over 12 years  
>> now, and I've maybe used FORWARD\_FUNCTION three times. I  
>> have gotten the wrong FOO program from some other directory  
>> maybe a few times more than that. But I have never, in all  
>> those years, had difficulty getting programs to compile  
>> and run when they are suppose to.  
>  
> Hi David--  
>  
> I guess what I'm saying is that I \*already\* have a library of 25  
> individual files that do low-level stuff. I am feeling like this is a  
> pain in the butt for me and for other people to manage. Also, all of  
> these functions share a lot of common parameters and keywords, so it  
> makes sense to only document them once, rather than in each file. All  
> typing and no rest makes Craig a bad carpal tunnel boy.

Hmm. I have encountered a (far less numerous) problem like this that involved 4 functions. The top level \_REF\_EXTRA dribbled all the way down to the lowest level, but each routine had, at some point, been used as an entry point. At first I didn't want to document every single doc header with the \_REF\_EXTRA keywords for the lowest level function, but then I considered the poor unfortunate user that would have to doc\_library, " again and again to find out what the extra keywords actually were. I bit the bullet and replicated the lowest level keyword documentation in all of them.

For your case with many more components, a utility to do this automatically would be the ticket. I have done similar things with shell scripts using sed and awk. A pain I grant you, but once done, it's done.

> My thought was to collapse all these routines into one single file.  
> That way it's easy to keep everything in one place, and there can be  
> lots of shared documentation.  
>  
> The problem with that is then there are a bunch of functions like  
> CMSV\_RLONG CMSV\_RSTRING, CMSV\_RCOMM, stored in a file called  
> cmsvlib.pro. IDL has no way to figure out these functions are stored  
> in cmsvlib.pro, or for that matter that they are functions at all.  
>  
> You are saying, "put each function in a separate file." I am saying,

> "I already have that, but am wondering whether one single library file  
> would be more convenient for downloaders."

For downloading, why not use a tarball/zipfile? Personally, I dislike a whole bunch of routines smooshed into one IDL file as you have suggested - IDL isn't geared to handle this sort of thing (as you've pointed out).

Anyway....

paulv

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Paul van Delst	A little learning is a dangerous thing;
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP	Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;
Ph: (301) 763-8000 x7274	There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
Fax: (301) 763-8545	And drinking largely sobers us again.
Email: pvandelst@ncep.noaa.gov	Alexander Pope.

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