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Subject: Re: IDL Memory Leaks

Posted by [Stein Vidar Hagfors H\[1\]](#) on Tue, 06 Nov 2001 21:21:25 GMT

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David Fanning <david@dfanning.com> writes:

> JD Smith (jdsmith@astro.cornell.edu) writes:

>

>> Correction, kindly pointed out by an RSI developer... the feature  
>> introduced to put a halt to David's perverse misuse of base widgets was  
>> \*handles\*, not pointers. Interestingly, he also filled me in that  
>> handles in fact \*were\* base widgets internally, stripped of everything  
>> by the uvalue. I had obviously attempted to elide those from my memory,  
>> and not without due cause. Let's hope we remember handles only as a  
>> curious side-excursion in IDL history, and insist on pointers in all our  
>> code.

>

> While we are getting a history lesson, I'll just  
> point out that using unrealized base widgets as pointers,  
> handles, or whatever, was not my idea. Like most of my  
> really good ideas, I stole this one from someone smarter  
> than me, Josh Goldstein, who was one of the best IDL programmers  
> I ever saw. He could write IDL code faster than I could think!

>

> I admit that I publicized this perverse idea,  
> but only because I found it useful for building  
> weird data sets and I found the notion of "pointers"  
> helpful in flogging IDL programming courses.

>

> I still run into an occasional program that uses  
> unrealized base widgets in this way. And I'm  
> happy to say those programs still run. :-)

Hey! I don't know where \*you\* got this idea from, but \*I\* have  
programs (still in use) from 1994 (the documentation headers were  
added 11 June that year..). In one of them, I even mention that "in  
IDL versions 3.1 or later," this or that may appear to disappear, but  
can always be recovered through a different routine (since the  
introduction of the NO\_COPY keyword...).

But alas, I think I converted to handles somewhere along the line..

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Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan

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