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Subject: Re: IDL Memory Leaks  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 06 Nov 2001 18:16:26 GMT  
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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. :-)

Cheers,

David

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