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Subject: Re: Returning A Variable Length struct to IDL from C  
Posted by [Nigel Wade](#) on Tue, 06 Nov 2001 13:36:21 GMT  
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Craig Markwardt wrote:

```
>
> Greetings--
>
> K Banerjee <kbanerje2@home.com> writes:
>
>> The next two lines are used to create the return value to IDL:
>>
>> void *psDef = IDL_MakeStruct(NULL, vbHeaderTags);
>> IDL_VPTR ivReturn = IDL_ImportArray(1, ilDims, IDL_TYP_STRUCT,
>> (UCHAR *) theHeaderActual, releaseMemory, psDef);
>
> Here is your first problem. IDL_ImportArray only works when you
> import static data, not dynamically allocated. Basically ImportArray
> only works once per piece of memory per IDL session.
```

Really?. I run code which calls IDL\_ImportArray many 1000s of times within a session, all with malloc'd data and have not had any problems.

Why do you think it can only be used once per session, with static data?

```
>
>> IDL_STRUCT_TAG_DEF vbHeaderTags[] =
>> {
>>     {"VERS", 0, (void *) IDL_TYP_STRING},
>>     {"USERHEADER", dims_user_header, (void *) IDL_TYP_STRING},
>>     {"BYTEOFFSET", 0, (void *) IDL_TYP_LONG},
>>     {0}
>> };
>
> Here (in my opinion) is your second problem: trying to do something
> too complicated within a DLM function. I personally think that while
> it's not impossible, trying to manipulate complex data structures
> within a DLM are very *close* to impossible and are really
> unnecessary.
```

No, no, no! You're missing the entire purpose of DLMs.  
It's the realm of DLMs to do those things which are too complicated to do in IDL. ;-)

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