
Subject: Assoc and byteorder keywords

Posted by [Richard French](#) on Thu, 28 Aug 2003 11:45:48 GMT

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I have several large binary data sets (image cubes) that I access from multiple platforms, using IDL. Typically, I do something like:

```
Openr,lun,/GET_LUN,'images.bin'  
Images=assoc(lun,fltarr(nx,ny))
```

I might then want to do something like this:

```
Norm=(images[5]-images[4])/(images[3]>threshold)
```

Unfortunately, from some platforms, the images are not in the correct byte order. Because byteorder is a procedure and not a function, I am forced into locutions such as:

```
im5=images[5]  
Byteorder,im5, /SWAP_IF_BIG_ENDIAN
```

```
im4=images[4]  
Byteorder,im4, /SWAP_IF_BIG_ENDIAN
```

```
im3=images[3]  
Byteorder,im3, /SWAP_IF_BIG_ENDIAN
```

```
Nomr=(im5-im4)/(im3>threshold)
```

This seems to be negating the syntactical efficiency of the ASSOC function. I could wrap all of this into a function, of course, but it seems to me that an easier way would be for ASSOC to have the capability of doing the byte-swapping on the fly, by having the same keywords as BYTEORDER. So, for example, I would like to see:

```
Images=ASSOC(lun,fltarr(nx,ny),/SWAP_IF_BIG_ENDIAN)
```

If RSI could just then call byteorder internally to the ASSOC function before delivering the data to the user, it would result in much cleaner code at my end. Does anyone see a way to do something like this already, or see any problems with this suggestion?

Dick French
