

---

Subject: Re: System Variable Behavior Changed in IDL 6.0  
Posted by [Pepijn Kenter](#) on Fri, 12 Mar 2004 08:51:54 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Marshall Perrin wrote:

```
> Michael Wallace <mwallace.removethismunge@swri.edu.invalid> wrote:
>
>>> Alternatively, one can just use environment variables:
>>
>> I knew there was an easier way!! Maybe trying to read the External
>> Development Guide today has made me think that everything must be hard!
>>
>>
>>> -----
>>> setenv IDL_DIR /usr/local/rsi/idl_6.0
>>> #setenv IDL_DIR /usr/local/rsi/idl_5.6
>>>
>>> setenv LM_LICENSE_FILE $IDL_DIR/license/license.dat
>>> setenv IDL_PATH +$IDL_DIR/lib:+$HOME/idl
>>> -----
>>
>> Typically, the license directory is under $RSI_DIR, not $IDL_DIR.
>
>
> Ah, OK, that must be a peculiarity of my site's installation. We've got
> difference license servers running for the various different versions.
>
>
>> Also,
>> make sure that your $PATH is updated also so that the correct
>> executables are called.
>
>
> Here's where it gets really slick. If you examine
> /usr/local/rsi/idl_6.0/bin/idl, you'll see that it's actually a shell
> script that uses $IDL_DIR to find and then execute something like
> /usr/local/rsi/idl_6.0/bin/bin.solaris2.sparc/idl
>
> Thus _no matter which */bin/idl is in your $PATH, if $IDL_DIR is set
> it will find and run the correct binary_!
>
> I've got all of IDL 5.2 through 6.0 installed and this trick works
> to switch between all of them, with the $IDL_DIR environment variable
> as the only single thing that changes.
>
> - Marshall
```

My machine has the soft links pointing to the IDL directories and all

environment variables and aliases are using this softlink. This way all paths are set correctly.

I realize now that my main problem with this solution was not the hassle of creating a softlink every time I wanted to change versions, but that I had to make sure the one or two other users on my machine are not currently working in IDL (don't worry, I did). Setting the correct environment variables in a script (or my `.bashrc`) will solve this problem. Also the other users, who don't have the root password, can then change versions if they like.

Thank you all for you input.

Best regards, Pepijn.

---