
Subject: Re: wrapper functions

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 06 Oct 2006 03:04:47 GMT

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Kenneth P. Bowman writes:

```
> I find that N_PARAMS() with SWITCH is very handy for setting defaults in
> procedures where optional positional parameters make sense.
>
> PRO BLAH, A, B, C
>
> SWITCH N_PARAMS() OF
>   0 : A = ...
>   1 : B = ...
>   2 : C = ...
> ENDSWITCH
```

In thinking about it, I guess I use N_ELEMENTS for all my parameters because I can throw better errors since I know *exactly* which parameter is missing:

```
IF N_Elements(foo) EQ 0 THEN $
    Message, 'Argument FOO must be a 2D array.'
```

I can also trap the error of the user calling my routine with an undefined variable, rather than with a real variable. This happens more often than you would think in IDL programming courses. N_PARAMS, of course, can't tell you much of anything about the parameter.

Cheers,

David

P.S. And don't even get me started on the mostly mis-used KEYWORD_SET. I see that function misused almost constantly in IDL programs to perform the function of N_ELEMENTS. Folks, it DOESN'T!! :-)

--

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
