Subject: Re: Interesting Rant
Posted by Nigel Wade on Thu, 16 Nov 2006 09:51:50 GMT
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Francis Burton wrote:

> In article <1163605646.246847.326220@i42g2000cwa.googlegroups.com>,
> Braedley <mike.braedley@gmail.com> wrote:
>> His comments about the 7/2 by themselves tell me that he doesn't know
>> jack about programming.

It's not just that example which show his general ignorance. Apparently he's a CS major who has never bothered to learn anything about actually programming and using computers.

>> I know for sure that at least 2 of the 4
>> competing languages (the C family, Java and possibly Maltab) all do the
>> exact same thing as IDL. EXACT! (Okay, maybe Matlab doesn't, I
>> haven't used it in 8 months.) The fourth is Maple, and it may still do

Every language which provides integer arithmetic does this. It's a fact of life of integer arithmetic. That the author of that rant doesn't know this only demonstrated his ignorance, it does not show a fault in any of those languages. The author would probably be equally surprised and annoyed by the loss of precision in floating point and have a rant at other languages because they can't do simple arithmetic correctly.

>
> In MATLAB, both 7/2 and 7/2. evaluate to 3.5 (displayed as
> 3.5000 by default).

MATLAB defaults to using double precision for all variables. As a corollary to the IDL "problem" of 7/2, try the same integer calculation in MATLAB to see how useful the opposite camp can be:

>> int16(7)/int16(2)

That one rather annoyed me when MATLAB first introduced non-double matrices. After I spent several days reprogramming a MATLAB to C interface so it returned integer matrices for integer data I discovered just how comprehensive their support of non-double data types was.

For those of you who don't have access to MATLAB, the result of the MATLAB integer division is:

??? Error using ==> /
Function '/' is not defined for values of class 'int16'.

I wonder how much that would annoy our CS major ranter?

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