David Fanning wrote:

>> Sorry... my head is spinning..... they don't have a clue what's supposed
>> to be in the file (in any way, shape or form), yet they know that they
>> need to read it????
>
> Clearly you are not on the front lines teaching people
> how to use IDL or your head wouldn't be spinning. (Unless,
> of course, from the inevitable overdose of Prosaic.) But,
> yes, pretty much. They know their professional life
> depends upon it, but they haven't yet learned which poor
> sucker had already done all the hard work and will be
> willing to share it with them.

Well, I would sort of expect them to have a vague idea of what the file
was supposed to contain, even if they don't know _how_ it contains it.
For example, if the HDF file is the output of a hydro calculation, there
are probably going to be three velocities in there somewhere. This would
have me looking for data set names like "v1" or "vx" or "velx" etc. in
the browser. This does rely on the person who created the file doing a
little bit of legwork - a possibly poor assumption.

If all they know about the data is that it's in an HDF file, but have
nary a clue as to what the data might be...... you'll have more luck
extracting meaning from the output of /dev/rand....

(Sorry if this is distracting you from the task at hand ;-))

Richard