
Subject: Re: byte offset in POINT_LUN

Posted by [badjelly.witch](#) on Thu, 09 Aug 2007 22:44:50 GMT

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>> And, viola! You are back! :-)

Magniifique!

I'd just like to add a warning: jumping around in a file *may* not be as efficient as you might think, especially if you're going backwards from the current position. Specifically, if you have gzipped your large ASCII file and opened it in IDL with the `OPENR COMPRESS` keyword (and why wouldn't you?) then moving around with `POINT_LUN` involves reinitialising the compressed data stream. I think to all intents and purposes it means IDL goes back to the start of the file and reads up to the saved position again.

I remember years ago I discovered a `BACKSPACE` command in an old version of Fortran on a PDP 11. I wrote a program that read a line, thought about it for a while and then backspaced to the start of the line and reread it. It worked beautifully on a small file but bogged down horribly on a large one, because `BACKSPACE` was rereading the entire file. A valuable lesson!
