Subject: Re: Structures and COMMON blocks
Posted by Ken Knighton on Wed, 10 Apr 1996 07:00:00 GMT
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Phil Williams <williams@irc.chmcc.org> wrote:
> I'm developing several widget based apps and have a question concerning
> the use of structures and common blocks.
>
> I have found both of these invaluable, but the problem comes when I want
> to add a variable to a common block or structure. When I try to
> recompile the .pro file idl won't let me. Is there another way to do
> this other than quitting IDL and starting it over?

You can add fields to anonymous structures using CREATE_STRUCT. You can not change the definition of a named structure.

As for common blocks, I don't know of any way to change a common block definition in the current IDL session. That means you have to exit IDL and get back in.

This might sound like a burden, but, except in special cases where you want to have a "static" value in a routine, you don't need to use common block variables. Instead, you can save information into an anonymous structure and then store the structure in a widget's uvalue and retrieve it at will. For examples of this, see the compound widgets supplied with IDL such as CW_FIELD.

If you really need to have a variable common block, then you can define a common block variable as a structure and simply add fields to the structure using CREATE_STRUCT.

```
IDL> common xyz_com, sGlobal
IDL> sGlobal = {a:5, b:'xyz'}
IDL> print, sGlobal
{       5 xyz}
IDL> sGlobal = CREATE_STRUCT(sGlobal, 'c', 7.5)
IDL> print, sGlobal
{       5 xyz      7.50000}
```

>
> Along this theme, is there a way to "uncompile" a procedure or function
> so that IDL forgets about it?

I am not aware of any.

I hope this helps.

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