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Subject: STRING(structure) curiosity

Posted by [wlandsman](#) on Fri, 10 Apr 2009 20:30:24 GMT

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I am using some old code that applies the STRING function to a structure. This surprised me because I didn't think it was possible.

```
IDL> a = { v1:bindgen(5), v2:!dpi, v3:['idl','structure'] }
IDL> print,string(a)
% STRING: Struct expression not allowed in this context: A.
```

The reason it works in the old code is that it used a format statement

```
IDL> print,string(a,f='( 5i3, f10.6, 2a10) ')
0 1 2 3 4 3.141593 idl structure
```

So it appears you can apply the STRING function to a structure but you \*must\* then supply a format statement. I actually like this behavior, but I can't find it documented anywhere. Applying STRING to a structure allows one to efficiently write the structure to an ASCII file, but I would think that one would always want to specify the format in such a case. --Wayne

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