
Subject: Using [XYZ]TICKFORMAT for dynamic formatting
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Tue, 19 May 2009 15:09:54 GMT
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Hello,

Given the following xtickformat function,

```
FUNCTION lowticks, axis, index, value
  RETURN, STRING( value, FORMAT = '(!C",f7.3)' )
END
```

I am doing something like the following to get the x-axis tick labels on every other plot printed on the next line:

```
!P.MULTI = [0,n_xplots,1]
!X.OMARGIN = [10,3]
!X.MARGIN = [0,0]
!Y.OMARGIN = [2,0]
!Y.MARGIN = [4,2]

FOR i = 0, n_xplots-1 DO BEGIN
  IF ( i EQ 1 OR i EQ 3 ) THEN BEGIN
    xtickformat = 'lowticks'
  ENDIF ELSE BEGIN
    xtickformat = "
  ENDELSE

  PLOT, x, y, XTICKFORMAT = xtickformat

  ...etc...
```

to prevent the end-of-axis tick labels from adjacent plots overwriting each other.

The problem is that I want the format in the "lowticks" function, the "f7.3", to be the same as those automagically chosen by IDL in the plots where the xtickformat defaults.

Does anyone know if there is any way to dynamically set the format string itself in this fashion? I.e. pass in the "f7.3" (or f4.1 or f5.2 etc) ?

cheers,

paulv
