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Subject: Re: IDL 8.0 compile\_opt changes  
Posted by [H. Evans](#) on Sat, 26 Dec 2009 21:21:27 GMT  
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So, what's the problem with using a "new" syntax that involves the comment character? This is what happens with numerous Unix shell scripts. For example:

```
;!compile_opt idl1
```

which would not break old code, but would inform the new version that the old syntax should be used when interpreting the .pro file. This could/should be the first line of the file. This would make converting older files a doddle with the flexibility of setting the default compile\_opt to idl2 while at the same time not breaking the file for older versions of IDL. Ideally a flexible syntax should be specified (could even be XML format if we really wanted to be absurd) that can be encapsulated in the commented header of a file.

I'm still partial to a new file extension, though. As mentioned before, it worked quite well with the FORTRAN community (and let's face it, there hasn't been a compiled computer language to rival Fortran developed in the last 20 years.). And let's not forget that minor, but much needed upgrade to c: c++.

H.

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