
Subject: Re: Warning: IDL 8.0 alters the behaviour of existing valid programs without any notice!

Posted by [Chris\[7\]](#) on Fri, 20 Aug 2010 21:57:17 GMT

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> Crashing is not a bug, if that's what you want your program to do in
> certain cases. So, a program can be bug-free under IDL 7, yet
> buggy when run under IDL 8.

I guess so. Though it sounds a little perverse to my ears to say that you "want" your program to crash. They do call it "crashing", after all...

I understand the frustration at the unexpected side effect of IDL allowing negative array indices (otherwise a great feature, yes?). But I'm still inclined to blame the end user for writing vulnerable code. Even if the code is "bug-free" in IDL7, it was still weak code for not checking for pathological cases. IDL8 removes the safety net.

It doesn't seem like good practice to explicitly rely on a programming language to crash whenever it detects a potential coding mistake. There are plenty of other instances where bad code yields unexpected results, but IDL doesn't say anything -- like dividing 2 integers and expecting a float.

chris
