
Subject: Re: Random number generators in IDL
Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 05 Feb 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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Michael Lefsky <mal3p@faraday.clas.Virginia.EDU> writes:

- > Is there any known problem with the number generators in idl?
- > I am printing out sequences of 300 random numbers generated with
- > RANDOMU and getting exactly the same sequence. ANY help would
- > be appreciated.

Sounds like you are always starting with the same seed. The IDL random number generators, like most (all?) random number generators on computers, produces a pseudo-random sequence of numbers. If you always start with the same seed, you will always get the same pseudo-random sequence.

Widget programs sometimes run into random number problems if the event handler depends on a random number sequence. If you go into the event handler quickly, over and over, you can appear to get the same number out of the generator. The trick here is to store the seed in a common block (yuck!). Or, if you hate common blocks as much as I do, store the seed in the info structure. (This way you can have many independent random number processes going all at once!)

Cheers!

David

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