
Subject: Re: IDL 8.2.2 released

Posted by [Andy Sayer](#) on Thu, 07 Feb 2013 14:22:20 GMT

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Also de-lurking to agree with Louis' comment: one of the reasons my group haven't updated from IDL 7 to IDL 8 is because the update breaks compatability with pre-existing code which we have been using for years, because of routines like this.

I know that's partially a code management issue which is our fault (trained as scientists first and programmers second, so some things such as namespace identifiers did not occur to us or others until we had been using IDL for some years), but as they say hindsight is 20:20.

On Wednesday, February 6, 2013 4:01:34 PM UTC-5, Louis Giglio wrote:

> Fab wrote:

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>> On 02/06/2013 06:18 PM, Mark Piper wrote:

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>>> Perhaps you could provide a list of other "things in this new version

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>>> of IDL that have been in the Coyote Library for a long time"?

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>>> I'll do my best to address any concerns.

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>> I'll partly answer for David because I noticed myself some similarities:

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>> BOXPLOT -> cgBoxplot

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>> SCATTERPLOT -> cgScatterPlot

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>> IMAGE_THRESHOLD -> cgOTSU_THRESHOLD

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>> These are surely not "inventions" from David, but things people have

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>> been using intensively in the last years or so, since they were not

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>> available per default in IDL...

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> I'm going to de-lurk after many years to comment on this. I'm not sure how many routines are

David's, but what I have noticed is an increasing tendency for IDL releases to co-opt the functionality of a third-party routine that was in use long before the feature was formally added to IDL. Examples include LEGEND and COLORBAR. LEGEND is a particularly good example because F. K. Knight's version has been available for ~18 years before an official (and incompatible) version was added to IDL.

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> Co-opting the names of existing routines of course creates headaches because of the resulting naming conflicts.

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> While I suppose it's good that 8.2.2 includes a new BOXPLOT routine, I note that it conflicts with Martin Schultz's version which I've used for 13 years. It would be nice if each new release of IDL didn't clobber another existing routine in the process.
