
Subject: Re: Match Histogram Binsize with Data Type
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 06 Mar 2013 12:25:11 GMT
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Jeremy Bailin writes:

> This might make me unpopular, but I think it's doing exactly what it's
> supposed to be doing in this case. The Sky Is Falling, etc.

Yes, of course. I'm not saying it is wrong. I'm saying it is needlessly confusing and leads people to inadvertently get the wrong values without a word of warning that it is doing so. Histogram is in many ways the heart of soul of IDL. If it has special requirements to make it work correctly, then either it should (1) enforce those requirements itself by checking to see that the requirements are met, or (2) warn users that they are using the program inappropriately and will get incorrect results. People will change their habits soon enough. Although God knows there will be a few weeks where 90 percent of the IDL programming public has to fix their damn programs!

Silently going about your business and producing incorrect results is irresponsible at best and certainly not what you would expect from a software company looking out for user's interest. I realize we use the program "as is and without warranty," but this is like if the TV command just decided to arbitrarily truncate your data to bytes before displaying it. Oh, wait. Bad example. Uh, well, you probably understand what I mean. People don't expect to use a function that blithely returns incorrect results that are EXTREMELY hard to distinguish from the correct results. So hard, I'm sure 99.9 percent of us don't know we are being bamboozled.

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>
Sepore ma de ni thue. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
