
Subject: Re: Match Histogram Binsize with Data Type
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Thu, 07 Mar 2013 21:44:49 GMT
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On 03/07/13 13:12, David Fanning wrote:

> Paul van Delst writes:

>

>> If it makes you feel any better, I lay awake at night worrying about
>> plausibly incorrect results. In any language.

>

> Well, it **does** make me feel better. :-)

>

>> But, I don't really use IDL to produce quantitative results (computing
>> means and stddevs don't count)

>

> I was on a forum web page not too long ago and the folks there were
> going off on how horrible IDL was to do anything sensible and how it
> confounded expectations, was impossible for new people to learn, etc.
> Then some guy jumps in to say, 'Wait, there is a web site out there
> where the guy tries to fix all the things that are wrong with IDL.'

>

> It stopped me. Is that what I've been doing all these years? Fixing IDL?

>

> I suppose it is. And then I got totally depressed. Why do I do this
> work? And why do I do it for free, for God's sake!? I've no money in the
> bank, a job that pays very little, and I choose to spend my time fixing
> IDL. It's a joke.

Maybe. But I (personally) don't think so.

You've chosen not to "pivot". :o)

<http://pragprog.com/magazines/2013-03/what-if-you-dont-want- to-pivot>

And, based purely on this forum (and the one day when we met and shared a beer), you certainly have lived a much more interesting life than most people (especially if we restrict the criteria to the more, uh, senior years of one's life! ha! :o).

I also wouldn't be too quick to discount the countless hours of hair-pulling frustration you have saved many people via your webpage/posts/library/etc. Karmic currency, you know? Doesn't help you fiscally, but still...

> That's when I decided to go trekking in Patagonia. :-)

Perhaps that's the normal response for people caught in existential cul-de-sacs? In the same vein, I go cycling in mountains somewhere (I

recommend Andalusia by the way...).

> Before I leave, though, I wrote my own histogram routine, cgHistogram,
> which I am just about to add to the Coyote Library. It fixes the bug
> with byte arrays (not fixed officially until IDL 8.2), checks to be sure
> the binsize data type matches the data type of the data you are binning,
> so you always get the correct results, allows for missing values in the
> histogram, will smooth the data if needed, and will return the relative
> frequency, instead of the histogram count, if you want that. It is a
> HELL of a lot better than the Histogram command, as always. Maybe one or
> two people will use it. ;-)

It won't put \$\$ in your account but: good one.

Enjoy your trek.

cheers,

paulv
