

---

Subject: Re: Storing !NULL in struct

Posted by [Yngvar Larsen](#) on Tue, 19 Mar 2013 08:59:39 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

On Tuesday, 19 March 2013 04:26:50 UTC+1, bobnn...@gmail.com wrote:

> I agree. LISTs and HASHes should return a reference to their elements and not a temporary copy.

Well put. This single sentence summarizes (my position in) the discussion well.

> In addition, IDL needs a reference type that would be similar to a PTR but would not need to be de-referenced to get at what it is pointing at. It could use de-referencing (or a function call) to set the reference but then would allow syntax like a normal variable. This would greatly simplify IDL programing and could perhaps be used to fix the mess that IDL LISTs and HASHes are.

I often use `C =TEMPORARY(*P)` in these situations, but then the contents of the pointer is then left undefined, and needs to be put back after use with `P = PTR_NEW(C, /NO_COPY)`. Your suggestion would make this much easier.

--

Yngvar

---