
Subject: Re: TOTAL() and NaNs, again

Posted by [Kenneth Bowman](#) on Tue, 26 Mar 2013 15:48:01 GMT

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On 2013-03-25 21:30:30 +0000, Fabien said:

> Dear IDLers,

>

> To be honest, this is described in the Doc: "Since the value NaN is
> treated as missing data, if Array contains only NaN values the TOTAL
> routine will return 0."

>

> But I don't see why it is so. This is not coherent with what one would
> expect TOTAL to do: the sum of all the elements in the array...

>

> Anyone to convince me that TOTAL() *has* to return 0 in this case?

When this was introduced I argued that it was implemented wrong.
(Others disagreed with me.) As it is, it nullifies the value of the
NaN keyword by requiring the user to check for the special case where
all of the elements are NaNs.

So, most of the time I find the NaN keyword to be useless for TOTAL.

Ken Bowman
