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Subject: Re: structures?

Posted by [peterkamatej](#) on Sun, 08 Sep 2013 13:37:16 GMT

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Hi Seb,

it seems to me that you might need some dynamic data structure, because there might be a different number of rows needed for each day. Also, a structure array is represented internally as just one "IDL Variable" and it needs to be stored in one solid block of computer memory. This could be quite resource-unfriendly if it's going to be very large (say, hundreds of MB). Especially, if you decide to enlarge the array, a new solid block of memory has to be allocated, the contents copied there and eventually the original memory can be freed.

You could use pointer array instead, but I recommend using the new dynamic data types introduced in IDL 8, `HASH()` and `LIST()`. I guess they work internally through pointers, so each part of the large data structure can be at different place in the memory, which is certainly more resource-friendly. However, the way you work with `HASH()` or `LIST()` is in many aspect similar to using normal arrays, which is also quite user-friendly (unlike using pointers).

Try looking to the IDL Help at these two data types and see if it suits to you.

Matej

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