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Subject: Reading binary (.ply) file of varying header size  
Posted by [desertdryad](#) on Thu, 06 Nov 2014 16:40:17 GMT  
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Hi folks -

Way out of practice IDL programmer, here. I need to be able to read binary files, with potentially variable length header files, in a function in IDL.

I'm not sure what the most efficient way to do that is; it seems it's easy if one knows a priori the number of bytes in the header, but I can't make that assumption. The files are .ply files, by the way, the header will tell me how much data follows, and the header ends with a specific set of characters. So, if I can read the header line by line, I can scan for the proper 'text' indicating end of header, and I know how to read in the rest. It's the header part I don't know how to do.

Anyone have a few hints? Or if you know where I can find a binary ply to idl data structure procedure and can point me there, I'm eternally grateful :)

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