
Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Thu, 11 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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Liam Gumley wrote:

>
> wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us wrote:
>> In the near term, I might be faced with porting my IDL application from
>> a Win95/98 platform over to an Alpha/UNIX combination. I would like to
>> ask if anyone is currently using IDL in this configuration and if there
>> are any outstanding problems/inconsistencies or anything that I should
>> know. A couple of years ago, I was a Sun Solaris user but have lost my
>> edge after being numbed with MS Windows.
>
> A few things to watch out for:
[suggestions deleted]

One item I forgot to mention. It's possible that Alpha/Unix will use vector fonts of a different size than Windows. To ensure that vector fonts are the same size on both platforms:

First, on Windows:

```
IDL> xsize = !d.x_ch_size  
IDL> ysize = !d.y_ch_size  
IDL> print, xsize, ysize
```

Then on UNIX (using the xsize and ysize values from Windows):

```
IDL> device, set_character_size=[xsize, ysize]
```

I prefer to enter the following command in the IDL startup file on whatever platform I'm using:

```
device, set_character_size=[10, 12]
```

Cheers,
Liam.

--
Liam E. Gumley
Space Science and Engineering Center, UW-Madison
<http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/~gumley>

Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Thu, 11 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT

wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us wrote:

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> edge after being numbed with MS Windows.

A few things to watch out for:

(1) Byte order

Although the Alpha/Unix combination has the same byte order as Windows, now would be the time to make your application independent of host byte order. I say this because if you get your application running smoothly on Alpha/Unix, then someone will want to port it to another Unix platform. If you've been dealing with ASCII, 8-bit, or netCDF/HDF etc. data only, then there's no problem. However if you're reading or writing any kind of multi-byte data, then I'd take some time to sort it out.

(2) 24-bit vs. 8-bit display modes

Whenever you port to another platform, you're bound to run into cases where someone will have a different display depth (8 or 24). Now is the time to make sure your application runs equally well in either display mode.

(3) Files and directories

If your application filenames and directories, you'll need to make sure the relevant routines are equally happy with Windows or Unix path syntax.

(4) Widgets

If your application uses widgets, then you'll be ok as long as you've mostly relied on IDL for widget positioning and sizing. If you've tailored your widgets for Windows with lots of xsize, ysize, xoffset, and yoffset keywords, you'll have some work to do on Alpha/Unix.

Cheers,
Liam.

--

Liam E. Gumley
Space Science and Engineering Center, UW-Madison
<http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/~gumley>

Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [ronn](#) on Thu, 11 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <80efte\$nl2\$1@nnrp1.deja.com>,

wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us wrote:

> Hi IDL community,
>
> In the near term, I might be faced with porting my IDL application
from
> a Win95/98 platform over to an Alpha/UNIX combination. I would like
to
> ask if anyone is currently using IDL in this configuration and if
there
> are any outstanding problems/inconsistancies or anything that I should
> know.

Hi Bill,

I move IDL code between windows 95, windows NT, Alpha UNIX, and SGI all
the time with no problem. The only gotcha's are if you have hardcoded
paths, or used explicit sizing on widget components. The GUI's will
still work, they just look funny. Some widgets (like sliders) do
behave slightly different between platforms, but normally you can live
with the differences. I have never noticed any different behaviour with
any internal routines.

-Ronn

--

Ronn Kling
Ronn Kling Consulting
www.rkling.com

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Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 11 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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Bill Biagiot (wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us) writes:

> In the near term, I might be faced with porting my IDL application from
> a Win95/98 platform over to an Alpha/UNIX combination. I would like to
> ask if anyone is currently using IDL in this configuration and if there
> are any outstanding problems/inconsistancies or anything that I should
> know. A couple of years ago, I was a Sun Solaris user but have lost my
> edge after being numbed with MS Windows.
>
> I realize that IDL is supposed to be platform independent, but it would
> appear to be a neat trick to have *everything* work on all platforms.

Well, there are only about 2 million variables. Perhaps "everything" is overly optimistic. :-)

But I would say you can get darn close pretty easily with IDL if you have taken some care in how you have written your program to begin with. People who struggle with this -- most of the time -- have not been particularly careful with filenames, the sine qua non for writing portable code. But if you have taken care of this, then any "fudging" you have to do can usually be handled in about 10-15 minutes.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question

Posted by [wbiagiot](#) on Fri, 12 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT

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Martin,

Your comments are true. I personally count comment lines with actual code when I do a line count. Good comments take as much work as good programming. It's always hard to convince your boss of that. :(

Thanks,

Bill B.

--

"They don't think it be like it is, but it do."

Oscar Gamble, NY Yankees

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Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [m218003](#) on Fri, 12 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <80efte\$nl2\$1@nnrp1.deja.com>,
wbiagiot@suffolk.lib.ny.us writes:

> Hi IDL community,
>
> In the near term, I might be faced with porting my IDL application from
> a Win95/98 platform over to an Alpha/UNIX combination. [...] [/color]

One could perhaps say that the amount of time you need to port from one platform to the other is inversely proportional to the speed with which you have written the program in the first place. Quick hacks tend to make many assumptions which can be platform specific (such as if !D.Name eq 'WIN' ... rather than e.g. if (!D.Flags AND 256) gt 0) and they tend to contain far less comments ;-)

As great as it is how much we can do with IDL, sometimes I wish the developer would not have to be aware of things like color depth or file path conventions. Didn't "they" promise us about 10 years ago that by now computers would program themselves?

BTW: it doesn't hurt Windows when you use '/' instead of '\'.

Cheers,
Martin

--

```

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[[
[[

```

Subject: Re: Alpha/UNIX rehosting question
Posted by [wbiagiot](#) on Fri, 12 Nov 1999 08:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Thanks to David, Ronn and Liam for the confidence and the tips - all of which will be duly notated. In one of the most recent versions of my application, I managed to remove about 95% of all hardcoded widget sizing parameters - you can't ever seem to get rid of *all* of them :) .
Funny about the comment concerning file paths. I remember going from

UNIX to Windows and using the wrong slash for months - arggg! I'll try not to be a pest when I get turned on for that port.

BTW - Ronn, I still owe you the new super-super speedy correlation routine. Will get that over soon.

Thanks,

Bill B.

--

"They don't think it be like it is, but it do."

Oscar Gamble, NY Yankees

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