Subject: HDF, netCDF, etc question
Posted by ronn on Fri, 06 Jul 2001 21:33:07 GMT
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Hi All,

Which format would be best for a large number of large sequential images
along with ancillary data such as field of view, exposure time, etc?
Discrimators would be things like speed in reading them in, ease to pull out
the images and information.

I don't have a lot of experience with these things so any and all opinions
are welcomed.

Thanks,
Ronn

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Ronn Kling
KRS, inc.
email: ronn@rlkling.com
"Application Development with IDL"ï¿½ programming book updated for IDL5.4!
"Calling C from IDL, Using DLM's to extend your IDL code" NEW BOOK!
Shareware and Freeware at: http://www.rlkling.com/

Subject: Re: HDF, netCDF, etc question
Posted by thompson on Mon, 16 Jul 2001 22:06:36 GMT
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Aaron Birenboim <aaron@shimi.swcp.com> writes:

> Craig Markwardt <craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu> wrote:

> : ronn kling <ronn@rlkling.com> writes:

> : * I advocated astronomy's FITS format. Plus: platform independent,
> :   metadata is in ASCII, good support in IDL Astronomy Library. Minus:
> :   seen as "archane."

> I agree. Its very simple, very "sharable".

> : * Many people seem to swear by Liam Gumley's binary tools. Plus: raw
> :   speed and direct access; platform neutral. Minus: low level.

> I dunno about this. But before I advocated a simple, binary format
> tied to a database for metadata. These could be a help here.

I also agree that a combination of a standardized format like FITS and a separate database containing metadata is a good way to go. For example, the SOHO project uses FITS files, and is supported by an SQL database (Oracle) which is populated by scanning the FITS headers.

We've also had good success using a database package written in IDL which does not require a separate license for an SQL database. This software, known as the UIT database package, is available as part of the Astronomy User's Library at

http://idlastro.gsfc.nasa.gov/

At least one of the SOHO instrument teams uses this package to maintain its catalog, instead of a commercial product like Oracle. One of the major advantages is that one can distribute the software and database files to outside users without requiring them to buy anything other than IDL.

William Thompson
