
Subject: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Randall Skelton](#) on Thu, 02 May 2002 15:12:06 GMT
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Hi all,

I'm using IDL 5.3 under linux and I have a curious question. For perspective, I tend to do most of my coding from the command line and not the gui (yes, I do use the 'stop' command a lot). I routinely check the contents of variables with 'print' and 'plot' commands to determine if my calculations look reasonable. My problem is, once I have issued a 'stop' command I cannot use object graphics to plot anything. All I get is a black background window that is usually dissociated from xmanager. I'm sure there is a good reason for this but I'm stymied. Any thoughts?

Cheers,
Randall

Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Fri, 10 May 2002 16:44:21 GMT
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Ahhh, widgets....

Issuing the STOP command stops xmanager's ability to process events. Since OG widget programs rely on events to draw the view to the window this never happens and you get the black window of despair. Direct graphics widget programs will possibly draw the initial plot but will not be able to process events either.

I can't explain the details but I'm sure someone else in the group can.

A non widget program will run as expected after issuing a stop. I created a simple non-widget OG program that I could pass data to plot after issuing a stop. You could craft yourself some nice little tools to do line and surface plots which automatically scale and rotate objects. You lose the ability to manipulate them and cleanup is awkward. You would probably have to use READ to wait for a keypress before destroying the objects.

Or maybe you just look at your data using DG. So that's why they are keeping DG around....

-Rick

"Randall Skelton" <rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk> wrote in message
news:Pine.LNX.4.33.0205101048540.16883-100000@mulligan.atm.ox.ac.uk...

```

> With regard to more context, imagine a procedure aptly named 'test':
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>   STOP
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> IDL> test
> % Compiled module: TEST.
> % Compiled module: DIST.
> % Stop encountered: TEST   5 /blah/.../blah/test.pro
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> 'fsc_surface', or any of the RSI example code 'show3_track',
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> routines have built-in data (in the event that the user doesn't pass an
> array) and even this fails to display when my routine is stopped. Of
> course, once I continue the program and allow it to finish, everything is
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> Any help would be greatly appreciated!
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> Cheers,
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> IDL 5.3 (soon to be 5.5); RH Linux 7.x; XFree 4.0.3
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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Paul Sorenson](#) on Fri, 10 May 2002 20:39:06 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

The offending widget programs are written in such a way that they never draw their graphics until they receive an expose event. xObjView currently has the same weakness. Perhaps a clever fix could be put into these programs. Until then here is a lame hack I use. Its a wrapper to xObjView.

```
pro dbov, oObj, _extra=e
;
;Procedure dbov: "debug objview". Provide an invocation of xobjview
;that is useful when IDL is stopped (e.g. at a breakpoint). Widget
;programs don't run (i.e. respond to events) when IDL is stopped.
;xObjView is a widget program. If it is invoked when IDL is stopped,
;its graphic window remains blank because it is waiting for an expose
;event which never comes. Procedure dbov forces an extra draw to
;guarantee that the initial view of oObj is drawn.
;
xobjview, oObj, tlb=tlb, _extra=e
xobjview, refresh=tlb
end
```

Paul Sorenson
Gun For Hire
aardvark62@msn.com

"Rick Towler" <rtowler@u.washington.edu> wrote in message
news:abgtdg\$1kks\$1@nntp6.u.washington.edu...

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>> PRO TEST

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>> END

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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Randall Skelton](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 06:52:21 GMT
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Well this is certainly not good news... The whole point of me using OG was so that I could actively pan-and-scan through a very complex data array. Personally, I need to be able to do this when I use STOP or set breakpoints.

Surely all those die-hard proponents of IDL OG will be hard at work this weekend trying to come up with a fix for this ;) In the meantime, I'll be forwarding my complaint to RSI UK!

Cheers,
Randall

PS: David, on what page of your book is this bizarre IDL widget behavior described? Surely you have an insightful comment to add? After all, it was your book that convinced me that widget-based viewers using object graphics was the way forward. Note, of course, that I do not hold you responsible for my duress as I try and view matrices using shad_surf and for-loops. Surprisingly, the 'window refresh' actually reminds me of making little cartoon flip-books in grade school. I am now beginning to long for the days when my only concern was how to best dispose of the 30 celery sticks my mom packed in my lunch...

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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 15:45:23 GMT
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Randall Skelton (rhskelto@atm.ox.ac.uk) writes:

> Surely all those die-hard proponents of IDL OG will be hard at work this
> weekend trying to come up with a fix for this ;)

OK I have a partial fix, but if I want to save my
marriage, I am going to have to write it up later.
If this lawn doesn't get mowed NOW I am in HOT water. :-(

I'll set my alarm for 3AM and write it up then.

Cheers,

David

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Liam E. Gumley](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 16:26:03 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Rick Towler wrote:

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[stuff deleted]

I recall an interesting thread from last year regarding XMANAGER
internals, and whether you even needed XMANAGER to run a widget program.
A search on Google Groups

<http://groups.google.com/groups?group=comp.lang.idl-pvwave>

for XMANAGER yielded the thread "Re: Xmanager R US" as the first hit. In
the thread, Pavel Romashkin and J.D. Smith make some interesting

observations about the workings of XMANAGER which may be relevant.

Cheers,
Liam.
Practical IDL Programming
<http://www.gumley.com/>

Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 19:23:43 GMT
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[more stuff deleted]

> [stuff deleted]
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This is worth investigating but I wonder how deep this goes. IDL still needs to process events whether it be xmanager or whatever is *really* managing events and I am not convinced that xmanager is the real problem.

The suggested work arounds don't really address Randall's main need for manipulating his data sets. You can force an application to draw before it goes into the event loop but it still won't accept input or redraw. Maybe an approach like this would work:

PRO TEST

DATA = BESELJ(SHIFT(DIST(40),20,20)/2,0)

not_ok:

stop

FSC_SURFACE, data, /block, ok=ok

if (not ok) then goto, not_ok

END

You could issue a stop, play with your data, then issue a .cont where you would jump into your OG viewer. Depending on how you choose to proceed, you could stop again and play with the data or you could continue on. Some minor modifications to your favorite OG program will be in order. Not pretty but functional.

-Rick

Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 19:39:49 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Randall Skelton (rshkelto@atm.ox.ac.uk) writes:

- > Well this is certainly not good news... The whole point of me using OG was
- > so that I could actively pan-and-scan through a very complex data array.
- > Personally, I need to be able to do this when I use STOP or set
- > breakpoints.
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- > Surely all those die-hard proponents of IDL OG will be hard at work this
- > weekend trying to come up with a fix for this ;)

I have long thought of myself as Cassandra, crying in the wilderness, desperate to get across my message of the power of prayer. But my words continue to fall on deaf ears. (We even have a new call for a "wish list" this week.) People! Wake up! The gods listen to our prayers and answer them. The result is always chaos and confusion.

This whole business, I'm afraid, is because some people (I won't name them, but you would recognize the names, I'm sure) would not be content running widget programs as the gods intended them to be run: one at a time. No, they wanted to run multiple widget programs AND type at the IDL command line, all at the same time. So, we were given this, and it has all been downhill since.

So, whatever it is that STOPS working with a STOP command, it is the thing that makes widgets work while the interpreter is working, too. (I intend to wave my hands here a bit, because I don't understand the details, or even the fundamentals. I'm just going to tell you how to work around whatever it is.) Let's just say there are loops within loops, and leave it at that. When you STOP whatever it is, call it the "initial interpreter", you stop the ability to send widget events to widget programs

from that same "event loop". (This was all discussed the other day.)

What we would like to do at the moment we are stopped, is start up *another* event loop that could work on our widget program, while the initial interpreter is momentarily stopped. We can do this, if we make the new widget program a BLOCKING widget program.

Now, I don't want to go far into the details of this, but recall that only ONE program can BLOCK. If you try to run two blocking programs, only the first one blocks the command line.

So, if the program you are running is a non-blocking program. (It sounds like it to me.) Then you can run an object graphics widget program, IF you can get this widget program to run as a blocking widget program.

I've added a BLOCK keyword to FSC_SURFACE so you can run it as a blocking program if this keyword is set.

http://www.dfanning.com/programs/fsc_surface.pro

In your little example test program, I can stop the program, then call FSC_SURFACE like this:

```
IDL> FSC_SURFACE, data
```

Not only does the surface show up, but I can rotate the surface, print, make JPEG files, etc. I have to close the program before I can type .CONTINUE in the stopped program.

> PS: David, on what page of your book is this bizarre IDL widget behavior
> described?

Oh, I'm sure it's described somewhere. I just can't find it. :-(

> Surely you have an insightful comment to add?

Of course.

The secret to a happy life is not getting what you want. It is wanting what you get.

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 11 May 2002 19:43:01 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

David Fanning (david@dfanning.com) writes:

> In your little example test program, I can stop the program,
> then call FSC_SURFACE like this:
>
> IDL> FSC_SURFACE, data

Whoops! Of course, this should be:

IDL> FSC_SURFACE, data, /Block

Cheers,

David

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Sun, 12 May 2002 19:42:52 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Heck, ignore what I am saying. Check out David's solution using his blocking fsc_surface program. Very cool.

-R

"Rick Towler" <tsehai@attbi.com> wrote

> The suggested work arounds don't really address Randall's main need for
> manipulating his data sets. You can force an application to draw before
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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [Paul Sorenson](#) on Mon, 13 May 2002 21:36:55 GMT
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David Fanning's post advising /BLOCK is brilliant! There are two bodies of code that implement the main event loop in IDL. The one that runs when there is a blocking widget is written in .pro (xmanger.pro). We know that .pro code can be run when IDL is stopped. That is why the dist routine, for example, can be invoked. When we ask for a blocking widget, we cause IDL to use the .pro version of its main event loop. That code, just like any other .pro code, runs, and we can interact with widgets, rotate, etc. as usual.

Ignore my post about "dbox", which was a wrapper to xObjView. Just invoke xObjView with /BLOCK instead. Much better than a cartoon flip-book!

-Paul

"Paul Sorenson" <aardvark62@msn.com> wrote in message
news:3cdc2db1\$1_3@corp-goliath.newsgroups.com...

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> xobjview, oObj, tlb=tlb, _extra=e
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>>>> > Hi all,
>>>> >
>>>> > I'm using IDL 5.3 under linux and I have a curious question. For
>>>> > perspective, I tend to do most of my coding from the command line
> and
>> not
>>>> > the gui (yes, I do use the 'stop' command a lot). I routinely
check
>> the
>>>> > contents of variables with 'print' and 'plot' commands to
determine
> if
>> my
>>>> > calculations look reasonable. My problem is, once I have issued a
>> 'stop'
>>>> > command I cannot use object graphics to plot anything. All I get
is
> a
>>>> > black background window that is usually dissociated from xmanager.
>> I'm
>>>> > sure there is a good reason for this but I'm stymied. Any
thoughts?
>>>> >
>>>> > Cheers,
>>>> > Randall
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Subject: Re: Object Graphics when using 'stop'
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 13 May 2002 21:53:38 GMT
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Paul Sorenson (aardvark62@msn.com) writes:

> David Fanning's post advising /BLOCK is brilliant!

See! Who said hand-waving wasn't an effective teaching technique!

Cheers,

David

P.S. Let's just say I'm glad to learn from someone who knows something about this that there **was** a method to this madness. :-)

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