
Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [savoie](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 14:55:55 GMT
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Steve.Morris@libero.it (Steve) writes:

- > Hi all,
- >
- > how can I add and IDL library (taken somewhere from the web) to the
- > standard path of my IDL distribution, so that each time I call a
- > procedure/function that is in the library, IDL automatically find it?
- > Do I have to put such library in some directory? where? (I use linux).

put something like this in your startup file, (or type on the command line).

```
!path = !path + "+/full/path/to/fanning/programs:"
```

The '+' means include all subdirectories under this one. And now that I've started answering this, I'm not sure I know the whole answer. In my startup I also have the following line, which may do the expansion of all the subdirectories.

```
!path = expand_path(!path)
```

All I know forsure is you can't go wrong if you put fanning's libs in your path. :)

- > Just a drop. I have got the new IDL version, but the "old" online help
- > doesn't work anymore :-(Is it right???
- > Only that nasty and NON user-friendly acrobat manual ...

Yes, just that nasty manual unless you use idlwave, and emacs mode for IDL.
see idlwave.org.

Matt

--
Matthew Savoie - Scientific Programmer
National Snow and Ice Data Center
(303) 735-0785 <http://nsidc.org>

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 14:58:11 GMT
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Steve wrote:

- > Hi all,
- >
- > how can I add and IDL library (taken somewhere from the web) to the
- > standard path of my IDL distribution, so that each time I call a
- > procedure/function that is in the library, IDL automatically find it?
- > Do I have to put such library in some directory? where? (I use linux).

Assuming you're on a unix/linux box, you need to add some definition to your IDL_PATH environment var:

```
export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+\${HOME}/idl
```

is what I do. Under my \${HOME}/idl directory I have a user_contrib directory containing all manner of third party libraries. (the "+" above means to search all the subdirectories too)

- > Just a drop. I have got the new IDL version, but the "old" online help
- > doesn't work anymore :-(Is it right???
- > Only that nasty and NON user-friendly acrobat manual ...

If you're on a linux box, you're SOL I'm afraid. There is no Search plugin available for acroread on linux (that I have been able to find - if I'm wrong, please let me know). Thus the online help is next to useless unless you know in advance where everything is. My solution has been to keep a session from an older version (5.5) of IDL (on a machine across the country) on my desktop so I have access to the old but efficacious on-line help. It does mean I have zero access to information about all the new stuff in IDL.

To be fair to the RSI folks, a reply I got from RSI (in response to either my rant about it here or my support request) stated that the old online help system (from an outside vendor) was effectively unmaintainable so something needed to be done. I just wish the "something" was something else. :o)

paulv

Subject: Re: library and online help

Posted by [R.Bauer](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 15:02:04 GMT

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Steve wrote:

- > Hi all,
- >
- > how can I add and IDL library (taken somewhere from the web) to the
- > standard path of my IDL distribution, so that each time I call a
- > procedure/function that is in the library, IDL automatically find it?
- > Do I have to put such library in some directory? where? (I use linux).
- >

> Just a drop. I have got the new IDL version, but the "old" online help
> doesn't work anymore :-(Is it right???
> Only that nasty and NON user-friendly acrobat manual ...
>
> Cheers,
> S.

The simplest way I believe is to use a startup file.

The startup file for our library looks like this one
http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl_icglib/idl_source/idl_all

this is an idl script with the syntax restrictions of a journal.

This example is platform independent for the settings for windows, aix and linux. A startup file sets the path in a defined way for several users. It prevents for path order changes by different users which could give different hard to find problems.

A startup file is accessed from idl by setting the env variable IDL_STARTUP to the file where it is.

for linux a simple one could be

```
!path=!path+':pathToSomewhere:'
```

expand_path() could be used to expand into sub directories. if they have the '+' sign in front.

```
!path=!path+':+pathToSomewhere:'
```

```
!path=expand_path(!path)
```

regards

Reimar

--

Reimar Bauer

Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-I)
Forschungszentrum Juelich
email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de

a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich
http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.html
=====

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [James Kuyper](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 15:28:16 GMT
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Paul Van Delst wrote:

...
> If you're on a linux box, you're SOL I'm afraid. There is no Search plugin available for
> acroread on linux (that I have been able to find - if I'm wrong, please let me know).

I'm not sure what a "Search plugin" refers to. I do know that I have no trouble performing searches within acroread on our linux machines.

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 15:29:15 GMT
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> how can I add an IDL library (taken somewhere from the web) to the
> standard path of my IDL distribution, so that each time I call a
> procedure/function that is in the library, IDL automatically find it?
> Do I have to put such library in some directory? where? (I use linux).

You need to add the path of the library to your IDL_PATH environmental variable. A typical IDL_PATH will look like
<IDL_DEFAULT>:/path/to/include:+/another/path/to/include

<IDL_DEFAULT> is a special path which refers to the core IDL library. Following that is a colon delimited list of all of the various paths you want IDL to automatically search. If you place a '+' in front of one of the directories, all subdirectories will also be included.

All you have to do is set the IDL_PATH variable in your shell resource file (.bashrc for bash or .cshrc for csh) and IDL should be able to automatically find everything.

> Just a drop. I have got the new IDL version, but the "old" online help
> doesn't work anymore :-(Is it right???
> Only that nasty and NON user-friendly acrobat manual ...

On Linux, the nasty acrobat manual is all that RSI provides. However,

if you can get your hands on the Windows idl.chm help file, you can view that with the xchm program which you can download from <http://xchm.sourceforge.net>. I find this much easier than the ugly acrobat help files.

-Mike

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [R.Bauer](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 15:59:58 GMT
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We have no problems too!

Reimar

--

Reimar Bauer

Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-I)
Forschungszentrum Juelich
email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de

a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich

http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.html

=====

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 16:10:16 GMT
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James Kuyper wrote:

> Paul Van Delst wrote:

> ...

>

>> If you're on a linux box, you're SOL I'm afraid. There is no Search plugin available for
>> acroread on linux (that I have been able to find - if I'm wrong, please let me know).

>

>

> I'm not sure what a "Search plugin" refers to. I do know that I have no
> trouble performing searches within acroread on our linux machines.

I'm just regurgitating what the websites tell me. When I go to
<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/alternate.html>
if you go down to the bottom you see:

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8 with Search

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8 i386 English for IBMi386 AIXi386 18MB

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8 i386 English for HP-UX 14MB

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8 i386 English for Suni386 Solarisi386 SPARCi386 9.5MB

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8

Acrobat Reader 5.0.8 i386 English for Linuxi386 8.9MB

where the "with Search" means an intelligent search functionality (not just a "find in page" type of search).

From <http://www.adobe.com/support/techdocs/ac76.htm>:

Choosing Adobe Reader with search and accessibility functions

When you download Adobe Reader from Adobe's Web site, you can choose the basic version or the expanded version with search and accessibility functions. These added functions allow you to do the following:

- Search a collection of PDF documents on a CD-ROM or a local file system. (This function requires an index file created in Acrobat.)

...[snip]...

To determine if an installed version of Adobe Reader has search and accessibility functions:

1. In Adobe Reader, choose Help > About Adobe Plug-ins.

2. In the About Adobe Plug-ins dialog box, the list on the left side indicates all plug-ins that are enabled:

- Search indicates that the version has search functions.

- Acrobat Accessibility and Make Accessible indicates that the version has accessibility functions.

When you download for linux systems, you aren't given a choice of "basic" or "expanded" ... basic is all their is. If you switch the platform to "Windows XP" you then see there are more options -- including the Search plug-in. If you do the

Help > About Adobe Plug-ins
thing, there is no "Search" listed.

If there is a way to get acroread for linux with the Search plug in, I would love to know how.

paulv

Subject: Re: library and online help

Posted by [Steve.Morris](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 19:16:46 GMT

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Thanks both! Now it works ... until my next doubt :)
One thing -maybe- worth to said. In my .bashrc file the following is needed

```
export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+\${HOME}/download/library  
export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+/usr/local/rsi/idl_6.0
```

The first statement is to add my library to the standard idl path
/usr/local/rsi/idl

The second line -I guess- is to account for functions in the new
-improved?- idl 6.0 directory ...

Or at least, in this way it works.

Cheers,
S.

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Wed, 07 Apr 2004 19:45:19 GMT
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Steve wrote:

```
> Thanks both! Now it works ... until my next doubt :)  
> One thing -maybe- worth to said. In my .bashrc file the following is  
> needed  
>  
> export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+\${HOME}/download/library  
> export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+/usr/local/rsi/idl_6.0  
>  
> The first statement is to add my library to the standard idl path  
> /usr/local/rsi/idl  
> The second line -I guess- is to account for functions in the new  
> -improved?- idl 6.0 directory ...  
>  
> Or at least, in this way it works.
```

Hello,

One thing I have found with the IDL 6.0 implementation is that the <IDL_DEFAULT> directory doesn't get assigned automagically like it used to. When I upgraded to v6.0 *nothing* in the RSI library worked. I discovered that for some reason, the actual path to the RSI IDLL code library wasn't there. So my .bashrc changed from:

```
export RSI_DIR=/usr/local/rsi  
export IDL_DIR=$RSI_DIR/idl  
. $IDL_DIR/bin/idl_setup.bash  
export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+\${HOME}/idl
```

to

```
export RSI_DIR=/usr/local/rsi
export IDL_DIR=$RSI_DIR/idl
export IDL_PATH="<IDL_DEFAULT>"
. $IDL_DIR/bin/idl_setup.bash
export IDL_PATH=${IDL_PATH}:+\${HOME}/idl
```

where the addition of

```
export IDL_PATH="<IDL_DEFAULT>"
```

is now necessary. I think that may be what you need to do. Michael Wallace's reply described the same thing (but better).

What I don't understand is what changed between IDL 5.6 and 6.0 that requires the <IDL_DEFAULT> definition. Didn't need it in my .bashrc before.

paulv

Subject: Re: library and online help
Posted by [kklare](#) on Wed, 21 Apr 2004 02:16:59 GMT
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You may also need to set !idl_help with a Unix shell initialization
(.profile or .tcshrc or .cshrc) command like:

```
IDL_HELP_PATH=$IDL_DIR/help":"$YOUR_DIR/help
```
