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Subject: Re: IDL> bug in SPAWN

Posted by [pellet](#) on Tue, 28 Mar 1995 00:49:33 GMT

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Fergus Gallagher (F.Gallagher@nerc.ac.uk) wrote:

: I am using IDL 3.6.1 under solaris 2.3. When I try

:

: IDL> spawn,command,out

: IDL> print,'\*'+out

:

: then the FIRST line of 'out' has the '\*' missing. Closer inspection

: shows that there is an extra character 13 at the start of out(0).

:

: This does \*not\* occur using the same version of IDL under SunOs 4.1.3.

:

: Can anyone report the same effect under any other operating system?

:

: It is not clear to me whether the bug is in the OS or in IDL.

:

: Fergus

:

It works ok on my machine. I'm using IDL 3.6 under AIX 3.2.5.

Jeff

[pellet@inrs-ener.quebec.ca](mailto:pellet@inrs-ener.quebec.ca)

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Subject: Re: IDL> bug in SPAWN

Posted by [Serdar Manizade](#) on Wed, 29 Mar 1995 08:00:00 GMT

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I have seen behavior from SPAWN that may or may not have anything to do with your problem. (I am now running IDL3.6.1a under Solaris2.3)

I was doing something like:

```
SPAWN,'ls *.dat', filelist
```

```
print,filelist
```

This would look fine on the screen, but then I would try:

```
openr,lun,/get,filelist(0)
```

and I would get a message saying file not found. A clue to the problem was revealed by:

```
print,strlen(filelist)
```

filelist(0) was much longer than any of filelist(1:\*). The problem was due to the initialization of my shell that was created by SPAWN.

I had some non-printing characters that were used to set the title of my X window etc. and these were being returned as the start of the result returned to SPAWN in the variable filelist.

The proper solution would have been to make my shell start-up smart

enough to recognize that it was not running in an X window. The quick solution (which is what I implemented) is to intercept the undesired characters thus:

```
SPAWN,'date ; ls *.dat',filelist
filelist=filelist(1:*)
```

For other applications where I did not need the shell (for example when I did not have any wildcards in my command), then SPAWN,/noshell would also work.

I first experienced the problem after upgrading the OS and/or the version of IDL, but I have forgotten the specifics-- it was over a year ago.

good luck,  
Serdar Manizade  
NASA Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island VA, USA

Fergus Gallagher <F.Gallagher@nerc.ac.uk> wrote:

```
>
> I am using IDL 3.6.1 under solaris 2.3. When I try
>
> IDL> spawn,command,out
> IDL> print,'*'+out
>
> then the FIRST line of 'out' has the '*' missing. Closer inspection
> shows that there is an extra character 13 at the start of out(0).
>
> This does *not* occur using the same version of IDL under SunOs 4.1.3.
>
> Can anyone report the same effect under any other operating system?
>
> It is not clear to me whether the bug is in the OS or in IDL.
>
> Fergus
>
> CC: FPS IDL tech support
>   Bill Thompson, GSFC
>
> =====
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> | http://uh.nmt.ac.uk/bnsc/fgg.html   |
```

> =====  
>  
>

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Subject: Re: IDL> bug in SPAWN  
Posted by [Fergus Gallagher](#) on Mon, 10 Apr 1995 07:00:00 GMT  
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Serdar Manizade <manizade@aol3.wff.nasa.gov> wrote:  
> I have seen behavior from SPAWN that may or may not have anything  
> to do with your problem. (I am now running IDL3.6.1a under Solaris2.3)  
> I was doing something like:  
> SPAWN,'ls \*.dat', filelist  
> print,filelist  
> This would look fine on the screen, but then I would try:  
> openr,lun,/get,filelist(0)  
> and I would get a message saying file not found. A clue to the  
> problem was revealed by:  
> print,strlen(filelist)  
> filelist(0) was much longer than any of filelist(1:\*). The problem  
> was due to the initialization of my shell that was created by SPAWN.  
> The quick solution (which is what I implemented) is to intercept the  
> undesired characters thus:  
> SPAWN,'date ; ls \*.dat',filelist  
> filelist=filelist(1:\*)  
>  
> For other applications where I did not need the shell (for example  
> when I did not have any wildcards in my command), then SPAWN,/noshell  
> would also work.  
>  
> Fergus Gallagher <F.Gallagher@nerc.ac.uk> wrote:  
>>  
>> I am using IDL 3.6.1 under solaris 2.3. When I try  
>>  
>> IDL> spawn,command,out  
>> IDL> print,'\*'+out  
>>  
>> then the FIRST line of 'out' has the '\*' missing. Closer inspection  
>> shows that there is an extra character 13 at the start of out(0).  
>>  
>> This does \*not\* occur using the same version of IDL under SunOs 4.1.3.  
>>  
>> Can anyone report the same effect under any other operating system?  
>>  
>> It is not clear to me whether the bug is in the OS or in IDL.  
>>

I think you've hit the nail on the head.

When I try

```
ls | wc
```

I get one byte fewer than

```
ssh -c ls | wc
```

This is under Solaris 2.3 and 2.4. Under SunOS 4.1.3, they both give the same result. ( I checked that 'source .cshrc | wc' gave a zero result on all platforms, since our .cshrc are OS dependent)

So, to answer my own original question, the bug appears to be in the OS, not IDL. Serdar's fix would seem to be a wise one for any applications developers to adopt, viz

```
spawn,'date;...',out  
out = out(1:*)
```

which absorbs any erroneous characters into the output from date.

Fergus

CC: Floating Point Systems

```
=====
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=====
```