
Subject: Re: Problems using SPAWN in IDL for WINDOWS?
Posted by [Mark Hadfield](#) on Thu, 29 Jun 1995 07:00:00 GMT
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rdhunt@kodiak.ms.sandia.gov (Richard D. Hunt) wrote:

>
> I am having a problem using the SPAWN command in IDL 4.0 for WINDOWS.
> It seems that IDL will spawn the command but won't wait for it to finish
> before it continues. Does anyone know how to get around this? Is
> there anyone out there who has done any system interfacing with IDL
> code? The WINDOWS version seems to be really lacking in this area.

I concur fully with your last comment.

I don't know of any way to make SPAWN wait for the spawned command to finish. Because the command is issued in a separate DOS box it would be necessary to throw IDL into a loop and monitor the existence of the DOS box. IDL can't do this without external programming.

Using Visual Basic, I have written an external program (I call it HELPER) that extends IDL for Windows' capabilities. IDL communicates with HELPER using DDE and can instruct it to start a program (DOS or Windows) or can send it a string to be stored on the Windows Clipboard. I haven't currently set up IDL/HELPER so that it waits for a spawned program to execute, but I could do this (it shouldn't be too difficult) if anyone wanted it.

It would also be possible (and more elegant) to write an interface between IDL and Windows API functions using C. I haven't done this because I don't have a Windows C compiler.

Perhaps I should also mention that I have an IDL procedure (called YIELD) that forces IDL to yield the CPU to other Windows programs and so allows co-operative multi-tasking.

Please email me if you want more info.

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Mark Hadfield hadfield@storm.greta.cri.nz
NIWA (Taihoro Nukurangi) NIWA.GRETA:HADFIELD
Wellington, New Zealand
