
Subject: Re: Preferences gone mad

Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Thu, 18 Nov 2010 20:32:29 GMT

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On 11/18/10 12:07 PM, Paulo Penteado wrote:

>
> It appears that a previously well behaved IDL installation has gone
> crazy with preference setting for one user. For other users on the
> same computer, things look normal. And the same seems to occur from
> the Workbench or the command line:
>
> IDL> p=pref_get('IDL_PATH')
> IDL> print,p
> +/usr/local/gpulib:<IDL_DEFAULT>
> IDL> p+=':/some_directory/'
> IDL> print,p
> +/usr/local/gpulib:<IDL_DEFAULT>:/some_directory/
> IDL> pref_set,'IDL_PATH',p,/commit
> IDL> print,pref_get('IDL_PATH')
> +/usr/local/gpulib:<IDL_DEFAULT>:/some_directory/
> IDL> exit
>
> Then, from a new session:
>
> IDL> print,pref_get('IDL_PATH')
> +/usr/local/gpulib:<IDL_DEFAULT>
>
> Where did the new preference go?
>
> The preferences file was updated; it contains:
>
> IDL_PATH : +/usr/local/gpulib:<IDL_DEFAULT>:/some_directory/
>
> The same happens if I change the path from the Workbench. It seems
> that IDL is ignoring the preferences file. I already removed the
> entire .idl directory, to let it be recreated, and it made no
> difference. The gpulib directory shows up because there is an IDL_PATH
> environment variable.
>
> Am I going mad? Am I missing something?

Preference values can come from several locations, in order of priority:

1. the command line when starting IDL
2. an environment variable
3. the IDL distribution preference file
4. a user preference file
5. the default value

IDL uses the value from the highest priority location. So, here, the environment variable is trumping the user preference file.

The lesson: pick one method of setting preferences and stick to it. This is one reason why I have a slightly complicated system to set my path using preferences instead of using an environment variable.

Mike

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Subject: Re: Preferences gone mad
Posted by [penteado](#) on Fri, 19 Nov 2010 01:59:17 GMT
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On Nov 18, 6:32 pm, Michael Galloy <mgal...@gmail.com> wrote:

>> Am I going mad? Am I missing something?

>

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>

> 1. the command line when starting IDL

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> IDL uses the value from the highest priority location. So, here, the

> environment variable is trumping the user preference file.

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> The lesson: pick one method of setting preferences and stick to it. This

> is one reason why I have a slightly complicated system to set my path

> using preferences instead of using an environment variable.

As it turns out, I was going mad, and it was because I was missing something.

I had not used an environment variable for the path in so many years I forgot the priorities, and was assuming that the preferences were appended to the environment value, not replaced by it. And the problem showed up because I had set up an environment variable in the global bashrc to put gpulib in the path for all users.

Thanks a lot, my sanity is restored.
