
Subject: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [mallozzi](#) on Tue, 09 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Hi all,

I just tried to port a large IDL package that runs fine on VMS, IRIX, Sun, and Linux to Win95. It appears that IDL does not recognize the long filenames that Win95 uses. IDL wants the filenames in this funny truncated state that MS came up with (filena~1.dat, filena~2.dat, etc). This will cause serious problems; for example, what happens when I write out a data file and then later want to read it back?

I was using v3.6, but a colleague told me this also happens under 4.0.1
Has anyone addressed this problem, or better yet, does RSI have a patch?
Any comments would be appreciated. Thanks.

-bob mallozzi

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [Peter Mason](#) on Thu, 11 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

<snip>

>> How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse
>> than the long data file names. I have a huge idl application I've been
>> working on for almost 3 years under various flavors of unix and on the
>> Mac (> 12,000 lines of code). Lots of procedure names like
>> "define_colors.pro", "set_contours.pro", "widget_window.pro," etc that
>> don't conform to DOS limits.

>

> I haven't tried to use IDL under the newer flavors of Windows, but in Windows 3
> one could reference a procedure by its name, and it would find it with the 8.3
> filename. E.g., calling set_contours would look for a file called
> "set_cont.pro". This causes problems when one has multiple routines which
> start with the same eight characters.

<snip>

Sadly, this is bust under NT and 95 if you retain the source files' long names (on disk). But if you go and rename the files 8.3 style it'll work as under win3.1x.

But things are not as bad as they seem - you don't have to rename all your source files to port to Windows if you're willing to "compile" your source and distribute a .SAV file instead of source. A .SAV file compiled on one platform will work on another, as long as the IDL versions are the same. If you develop under Unix and you use long names for your routines this

won't be a problem under Windows - IDL calls a routine using the full routine name (once compiled).
And the only filename you have to worry about is that of the .SAV file itself.

Peter Mason

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [thompson](#) on Thu, 11 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

"A. Scott Denning" <scott@abyss.atmos.colostate.edu> writes:

> Mark Hadfield wrote:
>>
>> mallozzi@ssl.msfc.nasa.gov wrote:
>>>
>>> I just tried to port a large IDL package that runs fine on VMS, IRIX,
>>> Sun, and Linux to Win95. It appears that IDL does not recognize the
>>> long filenames that Win95 uses....
>>>
>>> I was using v3.6, but a colleague told me this also happens under 4.0.1
>>
>> Yes, it does occur under 4.0.1. Under NT (and presumably under Win95 also)
>> many routines seem to accept long file names if you append a space on the
>> end, eg,
>>
>> OPENR, 1, 'alongfilename.dat'+ ' '
>>

> How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse
> than the long data file names. I have a huge idl application I've been
> working on for almost 3 years under various flavors of unix and on the
> Mac (> 12,000 lines of code). Lots of procedure names like
> "define_colors.pro", "set_contours.pro", "widget_window.pro," etc that
> don't conform to DOS limits.

I haven't tried to use IDL under the newer flavors of Windows, but in Windows 3 one could reference a procedure by its name, and it would find it with the 8.3 filename. E.g., calling set_contours would look for a file called "set_cont.pro". This causes problems when one has multiple routines which start with the same eight characters.

I don't consider that IDL for Windows will be useful until long filenames are supported. Otherwise, we have no sensible path for distributing our software to those platforms the way we currently do with Unix and VMS users. Thus, I discourage those who wish to use our software from buying IDL for Windows.

Bill Thompson

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [A. Scott Denning](#) on Thu, 11 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Mark Hadfield wrote:

>
> mallozzi@ssl.msfc.nasa.gov wrote:
>>
>> I just tried to port a large IDL package that runs fine on VMS, IRIX,
>> Sun, and Linux to Win95. It appears that IDL does not recognize the
>> long filenames that Win95 uses....
>>
>> I was using v3.6, but a colleague told me this also happens under 4.0.1
>
> Yes, it does occur under 4.0.1. Under NT (and presumably under Win95 also)
> many routines seem to accept long file names if you append a space on the
> end, eg,
>
> OPENR, 1, 'alongfilename.dat'+ ' '
>

How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse than the long data file names. I have a huge idl application I've been working on for almost 3 years under various flavors of unix and on the Mac (> 12,000 lines of code). Lots of procedure names like "define_colors.pro", "set_contours.pro", "widget_window.pro," etc that don't conform to DOS limits.

If I want to port this to NT, will I have to go through and change everything to 8-character names?! What a nightmare!

--

A. Scott Denning	scott@abyss.Atmos.ColoState.edu
Dept. of Atmospheric Science	Phone (970)491-2134
Colorado State University	Fax1 (970)491-8428
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1371	Fax2 (970)491-8449

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [Mark Hadfield](#) on Thu, 11 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

mallozzi@ssl.msfc.nasa.gov wrote:
>

> I just tried to port a large IDL package that runs fine on VMS, IRIX,
> Sun, and Linux to Win95. It appears that IDL does not recognize the
> long filenames that Win95 uses....
>
> I was using v3.6, but a colleague told me this also happens under 4.0.1

Yes, it does occur under 4.0.1. Under NT (and presumably under Win95 also)
many routines seem to accept long file names if you append a space on the
end, eg,

OPENR, 1, 'alongfilename.dat'+ ' '

however one or two don't (I can't remember which).

--

===== ==
Mark Hadfield NIWA (Taihoro Nukurangi)
 PO Box 14-901
m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz Wellington, New Zealand

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [thompson](#) on Fri, 12 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Peter Mason <peterm@demsyd.syd.dem.csiro.au> writes:

> <snip>
>>> How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse
>>> than the long data file names. I have a huge idl application I've been
>>> working on for almost 3 years under various flavors of unix and on the
>>> Mac (> 12,000 lines of code). Lots of procedure names like
>>> "define_colors.pro", "set_contours.pro", "widget_window.pro," etc that
>>> don't conform to DOS limits.
>>
>> I haven't tried to use IDL under the newer flavors of Windows, but in Windows 3
>> one could reference a procedure by its name, and it would find it with the 8.3
>> filename. E.g., calling set_contours would look for a file called
>> "set_cont.pro". This causes problems when one has multiple routines which
>> start with the same eight characters.
> <snip>

> Sadly, this is bust under NT and 95 if you retain the source files' long
> names (on disk). But if you go and rename the files 8.3 style it'll work
> as under win3.1x.

> But things are not as bad as they seem - you don't have to rename all
> your source files to port to Windows if you're willing to "compile" your

> source and distribute a .SAV file instead of source. A .SAV file compiled on
> one platform will work on another, as long as the IDL versions are the same.
> If you develop under Unix and you use long names for your routines this
> won't be a problem under Windows - IDL calls a routine using the full
> routine name (once compiled).
> And the only filename you have to worry about is that of the .SAV file itself.

That would require a nightly cron job to create either many thousands of save files for each procedure (and then how would we name those files?), or one huge save file containing all the software, which would mean that people would have reinstall everything if even only one routine changed. Either solution is the kind of hack that we shouldn't have to go through. We also can't guarantee that those who are trying to run our software would have exactly the same version of IDL that we do.

Another disadvantage of such save files is that the routines we have for exploring the documentation headers of the routines would not work.

Bill Thompson

Subject: RE: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [mallozzi](#) on Sat, 13 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

> How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse
> than the long data file names...

Well, I have been messing around with this for a few days now, and long PRO names are not a problem. If you have a file with many procedures in it, as long as the filename is 8.3, it will compile and run OK. Still, it is a lot of work, because reading and writing files must obey the 8.3 restriction, so if your code does a lot of i/o, you will have to make some changes.

This **really** irks me, because IDL uses as one of their major selling points that it is portable across many platforms, including Win95. In my opinion, IDL is NOT compatible with Win95, and RSI should not state that it is. OK, ranting and raving over...

-bob

Subject: Re: IDL & Win95 -- arrggh
Posted by [Mirko Vukovic](#) on Mon, 15 Jul 1996 07:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

mallozzi@ssl.msfc.nasa.gov wrote:

>
>> How about long procedure names? I would think this would be even worse
>> than the long data file names...stuff deleted ...
> This *really* irks me, because IDL uses as one of their major selling
> points that it is portable across many platforms, including Win95.
> In my opinion, IDL is NOT compatible with Win95, and RSI should not
> state that it is. OK, ranting and raving over...
>
> -bob

I beg to agree. WHEN I came to Varian (see .sig) from VMS I told my boss that I know IDL, have used it for ages, have tonnes of software etc, so that I can easily start calculating stuff etc. Was I surprised.

Release 4 was also buggy. No printing of programs or graphics. Sometimes I really wonder whether we have any protection from software releases like this. Maybe getting V5 for free or half price. The only reason I would want to get V5 is to get long file names and removal of printing problems.

I better stop now...

--

Mirko Vukovic, Ph.D. mirko.vukovic@grc.varian.com
Varian Research Center Phone: (415) 424-4969
3075 Hansen Way, M/S K-109 Fax: (415) 424-6988
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1025
