

Google Dart debut sparks chatter of JavaScript coup

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(PhysOrg.com) -- When the news appeared earlier this week that Google was unveiling a new programming language, Dart, for developers, tech blogs ignited with talk of how Google is staging a JavaScript coup. The assumption was that Google wants Dart, not JavaScript, as the eventual lingua franca for writing Web applications, a motive that Google's Dart team says is not accurate. JavaScript has been around and will continue to be, was their response.

Two engineers on the Dart team introduced the new language at the opening of the Goto Conference in Denmark earlier this week. "Today we are introducing an early preview of Dart, a class-based optionally typed [programming language](#) for building [Web applications](#)."

The details are available on a new web site, dartlang.org. [Google](#) is telling [programmers](#) that the new language is an easily digestible blend

of the new with the familiar—that is, new language features with familiar constructs and easy to define code. Google's Dart assures developers that “Dart code should look familiar if you know a language or two, and you can use time-tested features such as classes and closures.”

According to those who have already examined Dart, there is a comfortable familiar part, in, as one site puts it, the language looks, acts, and runs like Java and has a tool that converts the code into JavaScript.

According to Dart software engineer Lars Bak, Dart code can be executed in two different ways: either on a native virtual machine or on top of a JavaScript engine by using a compiler that translates Dart code to JavaScript. One can use the same Dart code in most modern browsers.

Dart comes with a set of basic libraries and tools for checking, compiling, and running Dart code, which will evolve as programmers send in their feedback, Bak said. Google's app, “Dartboard” has examples of Dart code.

Google is telling developers that Dart is still in the early stages of [development](#) and that it invites comments on what developers think of it so far. Dart has been made open source under a BSD license. The language and preliminary tools are [available on dartlang.org](#).

Meanwhile, developers will ultimately decide to what extent Dart succeeds as a language that can make a difference in programming productivity and good results. Dart watchers at this week's conference in Denmark, following the Dart keynote, underscored that Dart is only in technology preview stage and that features may change as feedback comes in. Another point underscored at the conference is that Dart is not designed to be "another JavaScript" per se but rather a way to address what is now a fragmented mobile platform environment.

More information: Google's blog post:
googlecode.blogspot.com/2011/11/...-structured-web.html

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