

Google trumpets Dart release as first stable version

October 17 2012, by Nancy Owano



(Phys.org)—Google on Tuesday released its first stable version of Dart SDK. Dart is a programming language for Web applications that Google thinks will offer an improved, easy to learn, high performance environment for web developers. A year ago, Google unveiled Dart and the news outside Google was largely seen as Google's rival to JavaScript. The assumption was that Google was out to fix what's wrong with that powerful lingua franca of the Web. Google however carefully said at the time that Dart was not intended to be "another JavaScript" per se but rather a way to address a fragmented mobile platform environment.

Tuesday's announcement is about an enhanced, first developer-oriented version of the Dart SDK, which is available for Windows, Mac and Linux.

"Today, after plowing through thousands of bug reports and feature

requests from the web community, a new, more stable and comprehensive version of Dart is now available and ready to use," said the [announcement](#) on Tuesday's *The Chromium Blog*. The Dart team's Lars Bak, a [software engineer](#), said Dart aims to create a structured yet flexible language for [web programming](#) and aims to make Dart feel familiar and natural to programmers.

Dart team members are summing up the point of working on Dart and achieving this stage of an October 2012 release in saying simply that "Dart is all about productivity." They said [web developers](#) can appreciate working with a more scalable language such as Dart.

According to the Dart team, this new version of the SDK offers a faster [virtual machine](#) that can even outperform [Google's](#) V8 JavaScript engine on some benchmarks, Richards and DeltaBlue, though they add that they are not yet able to say it is faster on every benchmark. They do say they aim to exceed expectations of developers who want a scalable and structured approach.

Dart is a class-based, object-oriented language with lexical scoping, closures, and optional static typing, for writing complex web apps. The new version includes Google's open source Dart Editor and "Dartium," a [Chromium](#) build with native Dart support.

Google is not replacing JavaScript but instead is providing tools to compile finished code to JavaScript. Developers can use a Dart to JavaScript translator which is part of the SDK to generate code for any browser. According to Google, "Dart can be compiled to JavaScript, so you can use it for [web apps](#) in all modern desktop and mobile browsers. Our JavaScript compiler generates minimal code thanks to tree-shaking." Improvements also include Pub, a new package manager and a language specification describing the Dart semantics.

Developers can download the Dart Editor from dartlang.org along with a copy of the open-source SDK and Dartium.

At what point Dart will gain traction is unclear. On an impressive note, the Dart programming language for the first time made a monthly Top 50 list of the most popular programming languages. On a sobering note, just barely. Dart came in as number 43.

The TIOBE Programming Community Index is an indicator of the [popularity](#) of programming languages and the index is updated once a month. C was number one. Java was number two. JavaScript was number 11. JavaScript was number 10 the same time last year but it lost its number 10 position to Ruby.

More information:

phys.org/news/2011-10-google-developers-javascript.html
developers.google.com/live/shows/7702017-1001/

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