

Extend Language Final Report

Ishaan Kolluri

isk2108

Project Manager

Jared Samet

jss2272

Language Guru

Nigel Schuster

ns3158

System Architect

Kevin Ye

ky2294

Tester

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1. Introduction

Extend is a declarative programming language meant to support spreadsheet-like functionality. It contains features such as complex calculations on large inputs of data, side-effect free and immutable values, and automatic formula adjustments relative to rows and columns. Extend is compiled to the LLVM (Low Level Virtual Machine) intermediate representation, which in turn is reduced to machine assembly. Extend takes inspiration from software such as Microsoft Excel, which allows users to link several formulae on dependent groups of data together, but takes this technology a step further by allowing users to encapsulate such calculations as functions.

1.1 Inspiration & Use Cases

Inspiration

Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets find issues at scale when users need to process more and more complicated calculations on several different sets of data, sometimes at scheduled intervals. Extend was conceptualized as a standalone application that removes the manual element of entering new inputs. It brings the best of spreadsheets and computation into one product.

Complex Calculations Across Many Inputs

Extend is spiritually closer in behavior to Microsoft Excel than other conventional programming languages. Extend can nest basic operations in cells of a range, Extend's proprietary data type, and apply mathematical operations on both individual cells of a range and the entire range itself. A dependency graph is evaluated at runtime to optimize and execute these calculations.

Flexibility

Extend, as a declarative language, allows you to keep dimensional values potentially variable until runtime, and handles some errors with the "empty" keyword, which persists throughout calculation instead of crashing the program. It supports a range of standard library functions that are additionally supported in conventional spreadsheet technology as well.