As we all know from last week’s discussion, JavaScript is a web programming language used mainly to run on the client-side (browser). It has been hinted that JavaScript may be losing relevance due to the rise of mobile computing (University of Liverpool/Laureate Online Education, 2014). However, I believe that the opposite is true, and that because of mobile computing, JavaScript’s importance is actually increasing.

First of all, JavaScript already has a sizeable market share. A survey conducted in 2013 reported that JavaScript was the programming language of choice by web developers, followed by Java and Objective-C (Appcelerator, 2013). With mobile devices accounting for almost 30 percent of all web traffic (Sterling, 2013), and 88 percent of all websites using JavaScript (W3Techs, 2014), it can be deduced that JavaScript is being used not only on the desktop/laptop platform, but on the mobile platform as well. The countless number of websites that already exist will not be changing to another technology anytime soon. From management’s point of view, the work required to switch over to a competing technology may not be worth the huge effort that will undoubtedly be required.

Second of all, JavaScript, being a scripting language, is naturally flexible. In my experience, while this flexibility may present its own set of problems, it also makes it suitable for rapid application development. Both Apple and Google, in a show of confidence to this technology, have included it in their development tool kits, allowing developers to interface with JavaScript applications (Wright, 2013). This flexibility is also allowing for the skills of traditional web developers to transition to that of mobile application and mobile website developers. Since all relevant organizations already have an online presence, the next progression is to that of the mobile arena.

Lastly, HTML5 with JavaScript has almost become the mobile application development standard (Tee, 2013). The fact that many organizations are developing apps using JavaScript as a bridge “between native experiences” (Tucker, 2013) is a testament to this. For example, Amazon is utilizing JavaScript as a bridge between HTML5 and Java purposes in their apps (Tee, 2013). This strategy, instead of developing apps using native languages such as Objective-C is advantageous because developers specializing in these native programming languages tend to be more expensive (Roggio, 2014).

In conclusion, the flexibility of JavaScript is making it a universal language. It is not only used in web development, but also for app development as well. It also has made in-roads into server applications development. Perhaps this trend may include other niches in the near future. A software engineer without any knowledge of JavaScript would be wise to add it to his or her list of skills.

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