
Subject: Re: Interesting Rant

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Thu, 16 Nov 2006 16:02:38 GMT

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Robbie wrote:

- > He is just pointing out the obvious. IDL appears to be a haphazardly
- > defined language. Many things are simply historical, and no one company
- > or person has been able to gain enough control to make things right.
- > Python is a good example of a language which has been built properly,

Regarding properly built languages, if you like Python, take a look at Ruby. Veddly nice... and I can indent as much or as little as I want! :o)

I wonder how the decisions were/are made at RSI/ITTVIS regarding the routine naming and syntax rules. Formally standardised languages (e.g. Fortran90/95/2003, C89/99, etc) typically lag behind (sometimes a wee bit too much) the bleeding edge of CS innovations -- and that's usually considered a feature. When the neato programming trick du jour is validated with years of use/trial/error, it's included in the standard with (hopefully) sufficient care taken to not break existing legacy code. "Community" standardised languages (e.g. Ruby, and I presume Python, Perl, etc) have a faster turnaround, but I think the end result/want/need is the same - more useful (as opposed to just flashy) features but don't break old code. Proprietary language (e.g. IDL, Matlab) standardisation.... well, I don't know how they do it. There is no formal user community input sought by as far as I can tell (for IDL at least, dunno about matlab). I don't think a marketing type asking "What do you want/need?" fully qualifies.

Anyway...

cheers,

paulv

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Paul van Delst Ride lots.

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