Subject: Re: What is JAVA? was: (Re: Compiling IDL ... ever likey ?)
Posted by pjclinch on Wed, 24 Jan 1996 08:00:00 GMT
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James Tappin (sjt@star.sr.bham.ac.uk) wrote:
: We seem to have been hearing a lot about JAVA recently in the IDL compilation
: thread. What is it?????? Apart from a "SHow JAVA window" menu item in Netscape
: 2 this is the only place I've ever heard it mentioned.

Java (capitalisation not necessary, BTW) is a programming language, but
it's also the most hyped computing technology of the moment...

It's an object oriented language with some roots in C++, but its
principal raison d'hype is it can be used to write programs which can be
run over the Internet independant of platform. So, you aim your Java
capable Web browser (e.g., Netscape 2, HotJava) at a suitable site, and
click on a Java application, and the Java binary (an intermediate level
compiled code automatically checked for secure operation) is loaded onto
your machine and run there by your browser rather than the server that sent
you the code.

For more info, check out http://java.sun.com and read all about it. It
was developed by Sun, and has now been licensed by pretty well all of the
big vendors, even Microsoft, who licensed it a week after they announced
rival technology Blackbird and found little groundswell behind it (maybe
since it's technologically backward vapourware, but that hasn't stopped
them before...).

Like most Big New Things, it isn't as great as the hype suggests (i.e.,
solving all the world's problems by next Tuesday), but like some Big New
Things, it should probably serve a useful purpose in the world of
networked computers.

It won't be replacing IDL/Wave though, any more than C++ has, as it's a
general purpose programming language. However, IDL x.0 of the future
could itself be written in Java (rather than C and/or Fortran) and exist in
more modular form with functionality downloaded over a network as required.

Pete.
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