New programming language rankings: Python now as popular as Java, as TypeScript climbs

Rising languages in RedMonk's latest ranking include Python, TypeScript, Kotlin, and Dart.

Source: https://www.zdnet.com/article/python-now-as-popular-as-java-as-typescript-climbs/

Python is tying with Java as the second most popular programming language behind JavaScript, according to developer analyst RedMonk's latest ranking.

The second spot for Python is the highest position it's ever attained in RedMonk's list of top programming languages, which is based on an analysis of GitHub and Stack Overflow data.

Historically, Python has been steady in fourth position but it rose to third spot three years ago in RedMonk's tables.

RedMonk analyst Stephen O'Grady attributes Python's rise to its versatility, application in new workloads and use cases, general accessibility, and ease of use.

While the company's ranking of programming languages is influential among developers, O'Grady notes that numerical rankings should be "taken with a grain of salt". The company produces the ranking twice a year.

Python has been rising across several programming language popularity indexes, including Tiobe and IEEE Spectrum.

Microsoft-maintained TypeScript for large-scale JavaScript projects has also risen one place to ninth position along with C. TypeScript could have slipped back to 15th but it continues to win developers because of its "ability to intermingle with a large existing codebase in JavaScript" and its ability to make code safer, according to O'Grady.

Rust is a popular language among developers who discuss technical challenges on StackOverflow, but it hasn't moved from its spot at 21. As O'Grady notes, Rust has the potential for core infrastructure projects but, like Google-created Go, it seems to be stuck on its current ranking. Go meanwhile has risen one place to 14.

Python rival, R, a popular language for data scientists and academics, has gained two places and is now at 13th spot, which O'Grady reckons is about as high as it will ever get. On the other hand, Python's rise in data analytics hasn't impacted R's ranking over time.

"Given the language's specialized focus, this is likely its effective ceiling, but it's also an illustration of the remarkable popularity of a language whose usage is restricted for all intents and purposes to a single domain – those who work with and operate on data," he noted.

Kotlin, a popular language among Android developers, has gained one spot and is now at 19th.

A recent survey by Snyk of developers who use JVM-compatible languages found that more developers are turning to Kotlin due to its neat integration with Java. More developers now use it than Clojure and Scala. But RedMonk ranks Scala at 13th place.

Google-created Dart has also risen three places, which appears to align with the rise in popularity of the Flutter UI toolkit, which is also developed by Google. In GitHub's 2019 State of the Octoverse report, Dart and Flutter ranked first and second for fastest-growing language and open-source project, respectively, over the past 12 months.

RedMonk placed Dart in 33rd spot 18 months ago and since then it's risen to 24th position.

Here are RedMonk's top 20 most popular languages for its first ranking for 2020:

1 JavaScript

2 Python

2 Java

4 PHP

5 C#

6 C++

7 Ruby

7 CSS

9 TypeScript

9 C

11 Swift

12 Objective-C

13 Scala

13 R

15 Go

15 Shell

17 PowerShell

18 Perl

19 Kotlin

20 Haskell

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