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I first heard about Pearl when I was in high school in the early 2000s. It was one of the most universal programming languages in the world, dubbed the Swiss Army Knife of the Internet. But compared to its competitor Python, Perl has disappeared from popularity. What happened to the most promising language on the Internet? Perl's low entry barrier compared to the compiled, lower-level language alternatives (namely, C) meant that Perl attracted users without a formal CS background (read: children from the script and beginners who wrote bad code). He also boasted a small group of experienced users (hardcore hackers) who could quickly and flexibly write powerful, dense programs that fueled Perl's popularity for a new generation of programmers. The Central Repository (Perl Comprehensive Archive Network, or CPAN) means that for every person who has written the code, much more in the Perl community (Perl Republic Program) can use it. This, along with the witty evangelism of the eclectic creator Larry Wall, whose interest in language ensures that Pearl led in the text parsing, was the formula for success at a time in which much textual information circulated during the Internet. As of the 21st century approached, many pearls of wisdom were forged to move and analyze information online. Perl has a learning curve often meaning that it was the third or fourth language studied by adopters, but it sat at the top of the stack. In the race for the millennium, it looks like C e will win, Java will be the place, and Pearl will show , Wall said in the third state Pearl address in 1999. Some of you would no doubt wish we could erase those top two lines, but I don't think you should be overly concerned. Note that both SH and Java are system programming languages. These are two sports cars before the race. Meanwhile, the Perl is the fastest SUV, coming up in front of all the other SUVs. It's the best in class. Of course, we all know Perl is in his class. Then came the upset. Pearl vs. Python Grudge Match Then Python came along. Compared to Pearl's straight-line script, Python was a lopsided affair. He even took after his namesake, Monty Python's Flying Circus. Remarkably, most of Wall's early references to Python were light-hearted jokes at his expense. Well, it's been a millennium, computers survived 2000, and my teenage years came and went. I studied mathematics, science and the humanities, but kept myself at arm's distance from entering computer code. My knowledge of Perl remained like the beginning of a new text file: a cursory and then a lot of empty space to fill. In college, CS friends at Princeton raved about Python as their favorite language (despite popular professor Brian Kernigan campus, which helped popularize C). I thought Python was new, but later I found out what it was around when I grew up as well, just not visible on the charts. By the end Python was not only a dominant alternative to Perl for many of the task of analyzing text, usually associated with Perl (i.e. regular expressions in bioinformatics), but it was also the most proclaimed popular language spoken with elegance and eloquence among my circle of campus friends who liked to be part of the up-and-coming movement. Side by side Comparison: Binary Search Despite Python and Pearl are well-documented rivalry and design solutions differences that persist to this day, they occupy a similar niche in the programming ecosystem. Both are often referred to as scenario languages, although later versions are equipped with object-oriented programming (OOP) capabilities. Stylistically, Perl and Python have a different philosophy. Perl's best-known motto is There's more than one way to do it. Python is designed to have one obvious way to do this. Python's design gave the newcomers an advantage: syntax with a lot of rules and stylistic conventions (for example, requiring indentations from white space for functions) provided newcomers with a more consistent set of programming methods; code that has performed the same task will look more or less the same. Perl's design favors experienced programmers: a more compact, less verbose language with built-in labels that have made expert programming easy. In the era of dotcoms and technological recovery in the mid-to-late 2000s, high-profile websites and companies such as Dropbox (Python) and Amazon and Craigslist (Perl), in addition to some of the largest news organizations in the world (BBC, Perl) have used languages to perform tasks integral to the operation of doing business in the Internet. But over the past 15 years, not only has the way companies have grown up and but so have the tools they use to grow as well, unevenly to the detriment of Perl. (A growing trend that has been revealed in the latest comparison of languages, Pearl Hacker in the country of Python, as well as by Python aggregator Evangelization Pythonista, also made in 2000.) The slow decline of Perl Today, Perl growth stagnated. At an Orlando Pearl seminar in 2013, one of the talks was called Perl Is Not Dead, it is a dead end, and claimed that Pearl now exists on the island. After the Perl programmers left, they always left forever, never to return. Others note that Perl remains out of language to learn first in an era when Python and Java have grown tremendously, and a new entrant since the mid-2000s. Ruby, continues to gain strength by attracting new users to the web application arena (via Rails) and then Django framework in Python (PHP remains stable as the easiest option as well). In bioinformatics, where Perl's position as the most popular script language many of the 1990s like genetic sequencing, Perl was supplanted by Python and the statistical language R (S-plus and descendant S, also developed in the 1980s). In scientific computing, my current field, Python, not Perl, is an open source overlord, even expanding at the expense of Matlab (also a 1980s kid, and similarly upgraded with OOP abilities). And the upstart PHP has grown in size to the point where it is now arguably the most common language for web development (although its position is dynamic as Ruby and Python suppressed the dominance of PHP and are now entrenched as legitimate alternatives.) Although Pearl is not in danger of disappearing at all, he is in danger of losing cultural significance, ironic fate given the love of the Wall of Language. How did Perl become an outsider, and can this trend be reversed? (And perhaps more importantly, will Perl 6 be released!?) How did I grow up to love Python Why Python instead of Perl? Perhaps an illustrative example of what happened to Pearl is my own experience with language. In college, I still stuck to the Contained Matlab and Mathematica environments, but my programming perspective changed dramatically in 2012. I realized the lack of knowledge about structured computer code outside the wall of the garden desktop application prevented me from completely mimicking the hypothesis of the natural world, not to mention analyzing datasets using the Internet, which is also becoming an increasingly intelligent and financially profitable skill set. A year after college, I decided to learn a real programming language in a serious manner: all in immersion taking me for a hump of knowledge, so even if I took a break, I would still save enough to pick up where I left off. A senior alum from my college who shared similar interests, and an experienced programmer from the late 1990s convinced me of his favorite language to sift and sort the text in a few lines of code, and get things done: Perl. Python, he dismissed, was what scientists used to think. I was going to get to know you officially. Before making a final decision on which language to learn, I approached the totals of internet resources, hid at PerlMonks, and purchased several used O'Reilly books, Camel Book and Llama books, in addition to other budding books. Once again, Python reared its head, and even Pearl forums and language sites lamented the digital siege their language had succumbed to. What happened to Pearl? I wondered. Eventually, not scared, I found enough to get started (quality over quantity, I figured!), and started studying syntax and working on examples. But it wasn't meant to be. Trying to overcome the engineered flexibility of Pearl's syntax, I crashed into a wall. I took Perl for analysis but after accepting the engineering alumni program offer, have moved on to Prepare. By this point, the huge advantage of CPAN has been negated by special, hodgepodge efforts from the uncoordinated but overwhelming groups of Pythonistas that are now gathering in Meetups, in startups, as well as in colleges and corporate campuses to evangelize the zen python. This created a lot of problems with importing (pointed to the wall) and synchronizing download packages to get scientific computing libraries (as I found), but also led to the proliferation of Pythons such as Anaconda, which include the most important libraries besides the standard library to ease the import tariff time. As if to benefit from the zeitgeist, technical book publisher O'Reilly ran this ad, rousing Perl devotees. By 2013, Python was the language of choice in academia, where I had to return for a year, and all he lacked in OOP classes, he made up in college classes. Python was similar to Google, which helped distribute Python and worked for van Rossum for years. Meanwhile, his Yahoo adversary (largely developed by Pearl) did well but relatively lagged in determining the future of programming. Python was a favorite and acting; roles have been changed. So, after six months of Perl-making efforts,

this straw of reality broke the camel's back Perl and caused a coup that damaged the programming of the Republic that has proven itself on my laptop. I shyly gave up the llama. A few weeks later, the tantalizing promise of the new MIT course of edX teaching the general principles of CS in Python, in addition to numerous examples of n00b, made Perl's syntax all too easy to forget rather than regret. Measuring the popularity of programming languages, in addition to friends and fellow programming enthusiasts I've met in the development community in the last year and a half, have confirmed this trend, along with the rise of Ruby in the mid-2000s, who also ate at Perl's ubiquity of stitching together programs written in different languages. While historically many arguments could explain any of these studies, perhaps Perl programmers didn't cheerlead their language as much, since they are too busy with productive programming. Job ads or hit search engines can mean that the programming language has a lot of bugs and problems with it, or that there is simply a large time gap between supply and demand. Accompanying the picture, and one that many in the Perl community now recognize, is that Perl is now essentially a second-tier language that has its place, but there will be the first few languages known outside the field of computer science, such as Java, C, or now Python. The Future Of Perl (Yes, it has one) I believe Pearl has a future, but this may not be one for limited Modern Perl is more suitable for users who have worked with the language from the early days, already dressed to impress. Impression. quirky stylistic conventions such as using \$US1 to announce variables, unlike other declarative \$1 characters for today's practical programmers-money that go into further development and a set of Frenemies Perl features such as Python and Ruby. And the high cost of activating Perl training, instead of implementing the Python solution. Ironically, just as Pearl was bullied in other languages, Pearl now finds himself on the receiving end. What's wrong with Pearl, in my experience? The ultimate problem with Perl is that if the Perl community can't attract novice users like Python successfully has, it risks becoming, as men's children, dwindling to a dead end; extensive repositories of hieroglyphic code looming in sections of the Internet and in the partitions of data centers, such as the halls of the Moria Mine. (Impressive and historic? yes, Perl 6 has been going on since 2000. However, after 14 years it is not officially done, making it the equivalent of Chinese democracy for Guns N' Roses. According to Larry Wall: We're not trying to make Perl a better language than C, or Python, or Java, or JavaScript. We're trying to make Pearl a better language than Pearl. That's it. Pearl may be on the same path to perfection as Axl Rose, underestimating himself, not others. It can still be too much. In the absence of a game-changing release of Perl (which may still be too little, too late) people who learn to program in Python don't need to switch if Python can meet its needs, even if it is widely regarded as second or third best in some areas. The fact that you have to import a library, or put up with some additional syntax, is much easier than the transactional cost of learning and switching to a new language. Thus, over time, the audience of Python remains young through its gateway strategy that van Rossum himself pioneered, computer programming for all. (These efforts were a complete success. For example, MIT Python replaced the Scheme as the first language of learning for all incoming freshmen, in the mid-2000s.) Python Plows Forward Python continues to gain a foothold one after another in areas of interest such as visualization (where Python still lags behind other language graphics such as Matlab, Mathematica, or the latest d3.js), website creation (Django frame is currently the main choice), scientific computing (including NumPy/SciPy), parallel programming (mpi4py with C. While none of these efforts are centrally coordinated by van Rossum himself, the ever-expanding user base and getting CS students primarily before other languages (such as Java or C) increases the likelihood that in disciplines will appear to build a build Python Library for itself, in the same open source spirit that made Perl a success in the 1990s. As for me? I'm open to returning to Pearl if he can offer me a vastly different experience from Python (but being disappointing doesn't count!). Perhaps Perl 6 will release that. However, at the same time, I commented on the advice of many others with a similar dilemma on the internet. I'll just wait and C. C.

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