

Extracted from:

From Java to Ruby

Things Every Manager Should Know

This PDF file contains pages extracted from From Java to Ruby, published by the Pragmatic Bookshelf. For more information or to purchase a paperback or PDF copy, please visit <http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com>.

Note: This extract contains some colored text (particularly in code listing). This is available only in online versions of the books. The printed versions are black and white. Pagination might vary between the online and printer versions; the content is otherwise identical.

Copyright © 2006The Pragmatic Programmers, LLC.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior consent of the publisher.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	The Emergence of Ruby	2
1.2	The Java Platform Is Weakening	4
1.3	Early Adopters Embrace Ruby	5
1.4	The Process	8
1.5	Moving Ahead	13
1.6	Executive Summary	13
2	Pain	14
2.1	The House of Pain	14
2.2	Poor Productivity	17
2.3	Long Ramp-Up	27
2.4	A Look at Risk	29
2.5	Executive Summary	33
3	Establishing Your Reward	34
3.1	Momentum	34
3.2	Productivity	37
3.3	Cost	46
3.4	Ramp-Up	49
3.5	Risk	55
3.6	Looking Ahead	57
3.7	Executive Summary	58
4	Pilot	59
4.1	Building Your Plan	59
4.2	Scenario 1: Classic Pilot	62
4.3	Scenario 2: Trojan Horse	66
4.4	Scenario 3: Race	69
4.5	Scenario 4: Bet-your-Business: Basecamp	71
4.6	Scenario 5: Rescue	72
4.7	Making the Choice	75
4.8	Executive Summary	75

5	On an Island	76
5.1	Overview	76
5.2	The Basics	77
5.3	Web Development	81
5.4	Rails	84
5.5	Middleware	88
5.6	Looking Ahead	90
5.7	Executive Summary	91
6	Bridges	92
6.1	Road Maps	92
6.2	Scenarios	94
6.3	Ruby to Java Bridges	105
6.4	JRuby	107
6.5	Service-Oriented Architectures	112
6.6	Executive Summary	118
7	Ramping Up	119
7.1	Building Your Staff	119
7.2	Building Skills Internally	123
7.3	Short-Term Augmentation	126
7.4	Preparing the Way	128
7.5	A Brief Word about Deployment	130
7.6	Executive Summary	134
8	Risk	135
8.1	Bad Risk	135
8.2	Mitigating Technical Risk	138
8.3	Mitigating Political Risk	143
8.4	What's Ahead for Ruby?	145
9	Bibliography	147

The enemy of the truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived, and dishonest—but the myth—persistent, persuasive, and unrealistic.

► John F. Kennedy

Preface

The Explosion

When I started writing *From Java to Ruby*, I had a good idea that Java was not the perfect solution for every problem, though some in the industry may wish it were so. I knew Java visionaries were nervously abandoning Java as they began to recognize real productivity problems and unrelenting complexity. I saw the Java community suffer through an unreal proliferation of frameworks, providing new choices but also introducing an integration quagmire and a near-paralyzing uncertainty. I heard from Java customers flailing against the tide of increasing complexity, desperate to keep their heads above water. In truth, some of those customers needed Java, and many still do. Still, others used Java because it was the popular platform at the time, even though more suitable alternatives existed. With slowly building momentum behind Ruby on Rails, I saw Ruby as a good candidate for growth. If Ruby kept growing, *From Java to Ruby* might have a chance.

But I had no idea how violent the explosion could be. Since I started writing this book, I've seen Ruby on Rails downloads grow by nearly an order of magnitude. Where I used to get dozens of emails a day, I now sometimes get hundreds of emails in a few hours from the Rails support forums. You can get books, hosting, training, consulting, and informed opinions from many reputable sources. Make no mistake: Ruby is exploding, and developers are driving the revolution. Developers can see the simplicity and power of Ruby, and developers first experience the amazing productivity improvements when using Rails.

The problem is this: developers don't usually pick technologies or sign checks. If Ruby is to continue the rapid growth, we developers need to understand how to make an effective case for our technology—but not by using technical buzzwords. We need to communicate in the language our managers understand.

Those deciding between Java and Ruby must understand how Ruby can save them money and help them better satisfy the needs of their customers.

I now believe that the ideas expressed in this book fill a vacuum. If this programmer-led revolution is to advance into the enterprise where it can do the most good, we must learn to express how the technical advantages of Ruby help solve business problems in ways that Java can't. After interviewing customers, visionaries, and Ruby programmers for this book I am more convinced than ever that Ruby represents a fundamental advancement over Java for many of the most important problems we need to solve. In *From Java to Ruby*, you'll learn:

- Why the Ruby risk profile is decreasing, even as Java's rapidly accelerates.
- Where Ruby can help, where it can't, and where it simply has more growing to do.
- Pilot strategies others have successfully used across many industries and circumstances.
- What industry visionaries say about Ruby.

If you think you might want to consider Ruby, other books may concentrate on helping you express your Java programs in Ruby. This book is about moving minds. If you are a manager, *From Java to Ruby* will help you articulate why Ruby is so important to your project, developers, and your customers. If you are a developer, you can buy this book for your manager or use the ideas to convince him yourself. These ideas work. I've used them successfully to jump-start my Ruby practice, and two reviewers of the book have already used them to help their management teams make the right decisions. They can work for you, too.

Acknowledgments

Writing a book is a challenging endeavor that tests each author with every word. Writing a book worthy of my name, and that of my colleagues at the Pragmatic Bookshelf, takes passion and plenty of help. *From Java to Ruby* would not have been possible without many people who stirred my passion, provided technical support, answered my questions, and provided frank criticism.

The Pragmatic Bookshelf

The Pragmatic Bookshelf features books written by developers for developers. The titles continue the well-known Pragmatic Programmer style, and continue to garner awards and rave reviews. As development gets more and more difficult, the Pragmatic Programmers will be there with more titles and products to help programmers stay on top of their game.

Visit Us Online

Java to Ruby Home Page

pragmaticprogrammer.com/title/fr_j2r

Source code from this book, errata, and other resources. Come give us feedback, too!

Register for Updates

pragmaticprogrammer.com/updates

Be notified when updates and new books become available.

Join the Community

pragmaticprogrammer.com/community

Read our weblogs, join our online discussions, participate in our mailing list, interact with our wiki, and benefit from the experience of other Pragmatic Programmers.

New and Noteworthy

pragmaticprogrammer.com/news

Check out the latest pragmatic developments in the news.

Buy the Book

If you liked this PDF, perhaps you'd like to have a paper copy of the book. It's available for purchase at our store: pragmaticprogrammer.com/title/fr_j2r.

Contact Us

Phone Orders:	1-800-699-PROG (+1 919 847 3884)
Online Orders:	www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/catalog
Customer Service:	support@pragmaticprogrammer.com
Non-English Versions:	translations@pragmaticprogrammer.com
Pragmatic Teaching:	academic@pragmaticprogrammer.com
Author Proposals:	proposals@pragmaticprogrammer.com