BIG-IP "Hunts" the Wumpus

Joe Pruitt, 2007-14-11

I've been thinking about this for a while now, and am working on my pitch to F5 management, but I thought I'd float it past you all out in DevCentral land. I've been thinking about how we can move our products beyond the typical enterprise/government/finance/etc customer base and into the hands of "Joe Consumer".

That got me to thinking about game systems: In my accounts, most households have at least one device capable of gaming.

I'm not a big gamer by any means, but in my household, I do have a good set of gaming platforms that either I or my family play somewhat regularly. We've got a PC for MAME, Backyard Sports, and browser based games. On the console front, we've got an XBox, XBox360, GameCube, and a Wii hooked up to our HDTV. And for handhelds we have Gameboys, PSPs, SmartPhones and iPods. And we aren't big gamers!

So, that got me to thinking about how we could penetrate this market. Back before graphical games were feasible, text based games were all the rage. Enter the Wumpus. In or around 1972, Gregory Yub wrote a text based strategy game that involved moving from room to room searching for the illusive Wumpus.

I took this as a great starting point in my plot to dominate the gaming market. I recently wrote a tech tip on building a FTP proxy with an iRule and I thought to myself that the usage of FTP's "changing directories" was pretty similar to "switching rooms" in the Hunt the Wumpus game. So I went ahead and wrote and iRule that implements my version of Hunt the Wumpus with a FTP based iRule proxy.

I've uploaded the iRule to the iRules codeshare section on DevCentral so please feel free to add to it. It would be great to see the features of the Wumpus game like shooting arrows and falling into pits become part of this implementation.

Granted, this is no Halo 3, but it's a first step at moving BIG-IP into the gaming platform that I believe it should be. First stop: "Hunt the Wumpus over FTP". Next stop total world domination.

*Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this blog post are mine and mine alone. In no means should you interpret this to mean that F5 Networks is entering into the gaming market, even though that's how we started - bet you didn't know that did you?. Microsoft, Sony, Nintendo, and all the various software game developers out there should not be worried. Now, when the Super Mario iRule comes out, then that's a different story B-).

-Joe

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