

DevCentral Top 5 9/24/2010



Colin Walker, 2010-24-09

Adding to the already wicked cool selection of stuff I get to talk about on a weekly basis, we're starting to see more and more content submissions outside of normal forums use from our user base. It's fantastic to see folks contributing articles that share their first-hand experience using F5 gear with others. This week I get a chance to talk about two different MVP contributed Tech Tips that are both interesting as well as educational. It's been a good week so sit down, buckle up and let's hit the [DevCentral](#) Top 5:

It's Midnight. Do You Know Where Your Tech Support Is?

<http://bit.ly/itsmidnight>

Adding to the long and still growing list of "Stuff that's so cool I wish I wrote it...but I didn't", The Bhattman knocks one clear over the center-field wall with this article depicting how to avoid headaches and sleep deprivation. Well, okay, he's really talking about automating the viewing of pool status via an iRule and a wicked cool shell script run via cron on the BIG-IP to update a class file that said iRule is reading...but it kinda leads to less headaches and more sleep. Not only is this a solid iRule but I absolutely love the incorporation of a cron controlled shell script to manage the data group entries. The Bhattman is truly a man after my own heart. There's a reason this guy is one of our DevCentral MVPs. When he takes the time to write up a solution like this I listen, and you should too. Go take a look.

Dynamic Intelligent Application Delivery in a Distributed Environment

<http://bit.ly/dynamicappdelivery>

Our second MVP contributed article this week is from Hamish, who is a bit of a wizard when it comes to dealing with intelligently balancing load. If I wasn't sure of it before, I'm absolutely sure after this article in which he describes how he's combining RRD, MySQL, iRules to grab LDAP bind info, and the BIG-IP to intelligently split traffic into priority groups, in effect, to ensure that high priority users' requests stay snappy. There is way too much for me to try and explain here but this is an awesome look at some of the advanced things you can do to make your application perform at its peak with a powerful ADC platform like the BIG-IP and some brain-power. Take a look, read it twice, take a break, then come back and try to fully digest it the third time through...that's what I did.

Small URL Generator: Part 2

<http://bit.ly/urlshortener2>

George is back with part 2 of his nifty URL shortening device, hand-crafted with his iRules fu. In this version he's adding some bells and whistles in the form of the ability to add customized URLs when shortening, and the use of variable key lengths. He's doing this in the case of the former for obvious reasons, it's easier to use terms we're familiar with than random characters, plus it's nicer to send people human readable URLs anyway. The latter is pretty cool, I like the way he's using the case logic inside his switch statement to do the selection grouping, very handy trick indeed. It's also cool to see him trying to be as efficient as possible by using the shortest key he can manage rather than a 6 character key for everything. Good stuff and I'm hoping he continues to build on this idea so take a look and be ready for version 3 in case we see one.

Java iControl Objects – LTM Pool

<http://bit.ly/javaobjects>

Joe is back to his usual ways, bringing us iControl magic all over the place on DevCentral. In this article he goes through and shows how to roll up some Java classes to allow you to more easily (hopefully) use some of the methods in iControl to perform common tasks. In this example he's dishing out the pool command and I'm hoping there are more to follow. While I'm not much of a Java guy, I know there are lots of them out there and it's good to see it getting some love. Definitely cool if you're interested in iControl, Java, programming, classes or any of that kind of geeky stuff which, let's be honest, you are or you wouldn't be reading this.

Heatmaps, iRules Style: Part 4, Meaningful numbers

<http://bit.ly/heatmapsv4>

In the fourth and, for now at least, last installment of this series I added some actual meaning to the pretty pictures I've been drawing with iRules and google's charting API. At this point we have a cool looking map that shows us the relative heat of traffic coming from different origins around the world, filters that we can use to view only certain parts of traffic based on URI, and different regions we can zoom to for a closer look. Part 4 adds the actual count of the requests coming in from each of those origins in an easy to read format that changes contextually based on which filter URL you're viewing. I'm planning on moving on to other topics for a while but we'll see, there are a lot more fun things that could be done with this, it might be back for Part 5. For now, enjoy and let me know if you've got any feedback.

Well there we are, the Top 5 from DevCentral. It feels odd not including any blogs this week, as our usual suspects are out there blogging hard and covering some very cool topics, but I wanted to try to get all of these articles out there. Be sure to go read through the blogs though to get even more win out of DevCentral this week, and every week.

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