

DevCentral Top5 01/22/2010



Colin Walker, 2010-22-01

Wow! What a whirlwind it's been the past few weeks. Between holidays and vacation and people traveling out of town, it's been an absolute zoo around here. Though I've been out the past week or so there has been an avalanche of content. I've hemmed and hawed and finally managed to slim my picks down to just five, though there are at least a dozen awesome things worth checking out on [DevCentral](#) in the past week or so. So don't be shy, get out there and poke around for yourself. For now, though, here are my top 5 picks for the week:

v10.1 - The table Command - The Basics

<http://devcentral.f5.com/Default.aspx?tabid=63&articleType=ArticleView&articleId=2375>

The new table command introduced in 10.1 is so awesome and powerful it's hard for me to decide where to even begin describing the grandeur that is the table command. I've decided to begin at the beginning, and point you to the basics first. There are nine (yes, 9) tech tips published in the past week or so having to do with the new table command. They range from this intro doc to some pretty powerful, in depth, well explained examples. They are all penned by the creator of the command and go into amazing detail. This series has instantly become a contender for one of my favorite batches of content ever released on DevCentral, which is saying something. If you're looking for a way to store data, store data in a structured format, perform counting operations or about a bagillion other things dealing with data storage and manipulation in iRules, you must read about the table command. Huge thanks to spark for the work on the command and going above and beyond on the documentation.

TMSH Scripting in v10.1

<http://devcentral.f5.com/Default.aspx?tabid=63&articleType=ArticleView&articleId=2374>

This week's Top5 has not one, but two awesome docs regarding scripting on your BIG-IP. While iRules are near and dear to my heart, TMSH is quickly catching my interest as well. The new shell along with the powerful new scripting capabilities are wicked cool and have the potential to do some pretty amazing things. TMSH crams a huge amount of utility into an easily approachable package. This great doc Jason wrote up gets you started in style with an excellent description of where to begin, then takes you quite a bit further giving you examples of just how to build your own script. The possibilities seem rather limitless so I'm excited to see what people start doing once they get the hang of it. Check this one out for sure, and if you like what you see I'd recommend taking a look at the TMSH wiki and maybe giving this week's podcast where we spoke with Mark Crosland in depth about TMSH a listen.

ARX Config, Day One

<http://devcentral.f5.com/weblogs/dmacvittie/archive/2010/01/18/arx-config-day-one.aspx>

In the first installment of what I'm hoping proves to be a long, detailed series describing his experiences with his ARX, Don dishes out a great intro post about getting his ARX out of the box and working. He's honest and gives plenty of details about both what he loved and what he...didn't, which I appreciate. It sounds like he also plans to go into detail about any troubles he's having or things that he finds that stand out to him and the users should know about. With his vast experience in the storage world, getting to see an ARX through his eyes is just about the next best thing to getting to fiddle with one yourself. So if you have any interest in learning what it's like to set up and start using an ARX device, I recommend keeping a keen eye on this series. Having no ARX experience myself I'm quite interested to get his impressions, so I'll be one of the subscribed readers too.

iRule Editor - Offline Editing

<http://devcentral.f5.com/Default.aspx?tabid=63&articleType=ArticleView&articleId=2385>

Joe's amazing creation, the iRule Editor, just got better. He's released a couple new features for it recently but the one that caught my attention the most is something that people have been asking about for quite some time now: offline editing. The iRule Editor has previously been a 100% online tool. You'd fire it up, connect to your device and start editing away. But what if you're on a plane or just don't have a device to connect to? Well, you were out of luck. Even though you could save the iRules themselves to your on disk archive, the editor wouldn't allow you to edit them offline before. But now, you can. Keep in mind that you won't be able to use any syntax checking because that uses tmm on the BIG-IP to test compile the code, but you can edit to your heart's content along with all the handy features of the iRule Editor you've grown to love. Joe even took the time to go through a walkthrough of how this works and show you how to use the cool new feature in this video. This is a very cool improvement...thanks Joe!

Following Google's Lead on Security? Don't Forget to Encrypt Cookies

<http://devcentral.f5.com/weblogs/macvittie/archive/2010/01/15/google-gmail-ssl-cookie-encryption.aspx>

Last but certainly not least is Lori's post talking about SSL and why it isn't the only thing you need to think about when working on securing an application. Yes, SSL is an excellent and pretty standard first step to securing an online application these days. I, just like Lori, completely agree that you should be using SSL encryption as a security measure if you're at all concerned about your users or their data. Something Lori mentions though is spot on, "it's not a panacea, especially where cookies are involved". Just because something is being encrypted across the wire doesn't mean that you can necessarily assume that it's going to be 100% safe once it gets where it's going. Data being stored on a client system, such as cookies that carry auth information, are a prime target for many malicious attacks trying to pry at user info. Cooke Encryption can be a powerful agent in stopping this and stepping up your security one more level. Have a look for yourself for a more detailed description of how this works.

There you have this week's DevCentral Top5. As always, feedback is welcomed and you can check out previous versions of the Top5 here - <http://devcentral.f5.com/Default.aspx?tabid=101>

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