

F5 Friday: Node in the Network



Lori MacVittie, 2013-13-12

#LineRate #NodeSummit #node #devops #SDN It's node. It's in the network.



I've been watching the ADC space a long time. Over a decade now, both from the publishing and vendor sides of the table. Having spent half my "life" as a developer and the other half of my "life" in the network, there's something about technology that marries the two that really get me hyper excited.

The last time someone introduced a technology that did just that was, perhaps unsurprisingly, F5 when it introduced iRules and iControl. Programmability was the name of the game, but it was perhaps a bit early to the game as few recognized just how important the ability to programmatically control and interact with the network was going to be (this was over 10 years ago). If you still aren't sure, take some time to read about SDN and devops and automation and, well, you get the picture. So it makes sense to me that F5 would lead the game again when the need for high-performance, programmable proxies made itself known.

You see, the [network is bifurcating](#). More and more developers and devops practitioners are looking for solutions that sit deep in the data center, right next to applications. Application and API proxies are the new black in the data center, and they're the infrastructure du jour that makes the transition from monolithic application to decoupled, service and API-based applications a whole lot easier for developers and operators who have to deal with nearly constant change. New, more agile architectures are necessary to support this transition as well as the need for 101% uptime. [Flexible infrastructure models](#), networks, and application proxies are now required.

Static proxies aren't going to cut it. Configuration of such systems are messy, manual and time consuming. Configurations don't necessarily fit well into a code-driven deployment model, where code artifacts are pulled automatically from repositories to build applications and services on a daily basis.

What devops and developers need is a programmable proxy; one that's able to integrate well into not only the infrastructure but the processes and systems that are responsible for building and publishing APIs and applications. That means an accessible, familiar API (REST is preferred) and the ability to code instead of config for critical infrastructure components like application and API proxies.

That's LineRate in a nutshell. Its control plane is a very modern REST API, not a thin veneer over an existing API or remote management system. You don't configure LineRate to do what you need it to do, you code. A few lines of node.js and voila! It's doing application routing. Or data transformation (XML to JSON anyone?). Or maybe it's [enabling you to test a new application with real data](#) - without concern it might screw up the real thing.

LineRate represents the very real manifestation of the marriage of applications and the network. It's the bridge over the gap between two worlds that are very much dependent on each other. Without the network, applications today are pretty much unusable. But without applications, networks have no reason to exist. It's a symbiotic relationship, with each fueling the other - neither can really stand alone any more.

LineRate brings both together and provides not just a way to interact with the data path in the network, but to control that data path, to change the behavior of the data path, to do things in the network that has not really been possible before. Where technologies today promote the ability to innovate in the network, LineRate actually provides the ability. Where technologies today claim to be able to extend the network, LineRate actually confers the ability on those so inclined.

It's no longer about configuration, it's about code. With configurations you're limited to what someone else thinks you should be able to do. With code, you can do anything. That's what's so exciting about putting node in the network.

You can [download your free copy of LineRate](#) today.

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