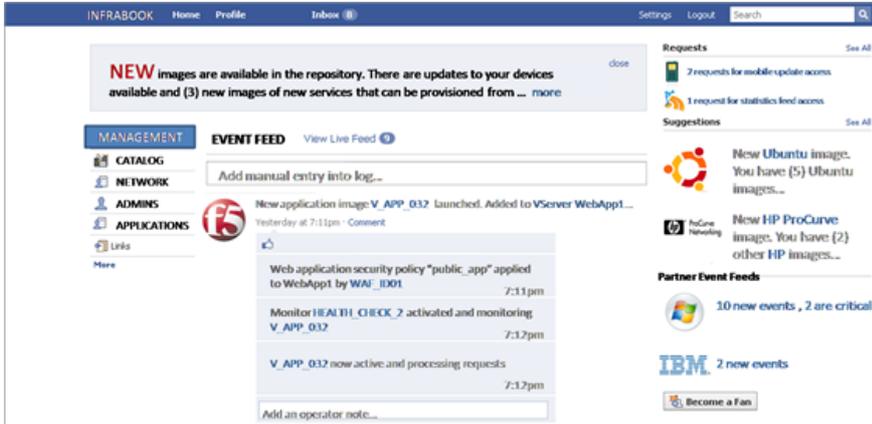


JSON Activity Streams and the Other Consumerization of IT



Lori MacVittie, 2011-15-06

The JSON Activity Stream specification could allow the (other and oh so soon forgotten side of) consumerization of IT to make its way into the data center.



Remember when I posited that the [Next-Generation Management of Data Centers Should be Modeled on Social Networking](#) and introduced the concept of “Infrabook” – a somewhat silly-but-serious-at-the-time idea that infrastructure should get “social”?

The recent publication of [JSON Activity Streams](#) – in addition to being very exciting from an

infrastructure architecture perspective – may be exactly what is needed to bring this concept to life.

Seriously.

Infrastructure already knows how to “speak” a variety of management languages such as SNMP and even XML, so why not adopt a simple HTTP + JSON approach to share real-time updates and notifications in the data center regarding the operational status of the infrastructure as well as the applications its designed to deliver?

JSON ACTIVITY STREAMS at a GLANCE

For those not familiar with Activity Streams (or JSON, for that matter) let’s take a quick look at it through a fresh lens.

JSON – Javascript Object Notation – is an unstructured data format that is (more and more) commonly used to exchange data between applications using REST APIs as well as between the client (typically a browser) and an application. It's actually a lot like XML, minus all the really hairy nesting and schematic constraints imposed on XML. While at first used primarily to enable real-time updating of clients a la AJAX, it is more and more frequently being used on the server side of architectures and thus as a means of integration, as well. It's fairly simple to parse and manipulate and unlike its XML predecessor is far more human-readable. JSON primarily uses a name-value mechanism for serializing data and any old-skool object-oriented programmer will see similarities in its serialization with other, past and present object-oriented serialization techniques.

A simple example of a JSON message might be:

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Corporate Headquarters
info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
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Japan K.K.
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