Load Balancing Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007

Ryan Korock, 2007-26-12

I'm not sure how many of you have considered Office Communications Server 2007 (OCS) yet, however the new functionality such as VOIP, Web Conferencing, and Application Sharing are starting to attract some real visibility within the Unified Communications space. In fact, Gartner places Microsoft squarely in the leader's quadrant for their UC 2007 Magic Quadrant.

http://mediaproducts.gartner.com/reprints/nortel/150273.html

Providing high availability and scalability for an OCS deployment is becoming more and more critical to the enterprises are looking to adopt OCS as part of their communications strategy. Interestingly enough, Microsoft has gone as far as requiring the use of a "hardware load balancer" for enterprise deployments. NLB is not supported in lab or production deployments with OCS.

http://support.microsoft.com/kb/939800

We've been working and testing with the OCS product team since the early alpha release days to make sure that we could provide a compatible solution for load balancing OCS. The good news is that we have a rock solid solution, tested by both F5 and Microsoft, and documented here

http://www.f5.com/pdf/deployment-guides/microsoft-ocs-ltm94-dg.pdf

We put over 6 months of testing, documenting, and collaboration with Microsoft in putting this deployment guide together. If you're looking for architectural strategies, best practices, or even just configuration instructions, take a look, they're in there.

I'd also like to elicit any feedback on deploying BIG-IP & OCS. My team tends to receive quite a bit of field related experiences on the subject, and our plan is to include this type of feedback in the form of best practice updates to these guides.