

Some Days, A Reminder is all You Need.



Don MacVittie, 2010-26-08

My eldest son has been having car troubles. To be more direct, he needed a new car. We agreed to help him out financially, let him go do his shopping and comparing, and when he chose a car I took him to pick it up. He chose a used PT Cruiser to replace his worn-out Olds Achieva, and on the way home, tried to familiarize himself with the features of the new car. Anything that the Achieva didn't have and the PT Cruiser did, he found to be odd to him. And I pondered that as I drove him to pick up the poor old Achieva and send it to its final resting place. We all do that. We get a shiny new toy, and then play with the features we were excited about when we chose it, or with the features that are somewhat familiar. In any complex system – cars or networking gear – we tend to lose some very cool bits in the conversion.



But some of those bits – like the heads-up display in his new car – can be a boon that offers him information he didn't have. In high-tech, there is plenty of that type of thing also. We're all talking a ton about Cloud and the revival of SaaS in the down economy, and for me at least, [WAN Optimization](#). These discussions leave us forgetting that there is a technological basis for these tools. But of course, these important topics are well below the radar when some of the cool stuff that comes out-of-the-box with F5 gear is being looked at (profiles for example, are high-level and very useful, so they draw admins eyes). This post is your friendly reminder that there are features on your F5 gear that could be garnering you a lot.

I normally like to present a problem or issue, then talk about solutions. Sometimes those solutions include F5 gear, sometimes they do not. This time I'm going to just talk about some of the less obvious features of F5 gear that are there for you – all for free with the product – that you could be taking advantage of to automate your environment or improve your Application Delivery Architecture. If you're not an F5 customer, well this is stuff that might change your mind, and if you are, you already have them in your building (or you can download them for free), so you should check the ones you are not familiar with out.

I'm a geek. I started as a developer, learned networking, spent my time as IT management, and now am a Technical Marketing Manager. The items listed here have a relatively high "Geek Factor", they're not something you want to run out and tell a conference room full of business managers about... But what they can enable for your organization, what becomes easier/faster/better, that you might want to chat up the business leaders about.

Note that some of these links require a free membership on F5 [DevCentral](#). No worries though, that membership is not culled for prospects or anything, it is a community that F5 happens to host, not a sales engine that you're getting duped into. Seriously. Ask the MVPs. Or any other member. It does give you access (through groups) to some of the brightest individuals involved in the topics below though.



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info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
emeainfo@f5.com

F5 Networks
Japan K.K.
f5j-info@f5.com