

Top5 12/16/2013



Colin Walker, 2013-16-12

Many things are afoot in the world of F5, with many feet marching along to a myriad of drummers, and many hands making light work, or so we hope. The cacophony of clichés aside, there's a heck of a lot being done these days. It's harder than ever to keep track of, catalog and assimilate. When even us robots plugged directly into the cortex begin sputtering and wheezing at the fire-hose of new information, products, technologies and features flowing frenetically our way, I can only imagine what those without proper neural implants connected to the mainframe must suffer. To aid in your ability to identify, ingest and internalize such inherently insurmountable information, I am here again today with my favorite topics from the past few weeks. If you've missed everything else, don't miss these. Feast your eyes on this week's Top5:

LineRate: Some of UR Code Are Belong to the Network

<http://bit.ly/1fif5Dz>

For those playing along with the home game, you have likely already noticed that the world of the network is changing, and fast. Rapidly programmability, flexibility and adaptability, not just elasticity, are becoming the order of the day. As SDN and virtualized networks become concepts that more and more companies are exploring at least from an investigative stance, these messages are being touted far and wide. Interestingly programmability is something that F5 has done for... well... pretty much always. 9+ years ago we put out v9 of BIG-IP that included TMM and with it an all new, shiny and wickedly tasty pairing of iRules and iControl. We've been leveraging programmability in the network ever since. Recently, though, we've made even deeper inroads towards addressing not just the ability to program your network but also to speak in languages, technologies and platforms that are more common in the application development world. Allowing the elusive app-dev to luxuriate happily in what feels like their lush, natural habitat seems to be the best course of action when trying to entice them to play with new toys. So that's precisely what we're doing. With LineRate's LROS offering you can load up a virtualized instance, programmable with Node.js compatible JS, and hack away 'till your heart's content. If that's not more dev focused, someone please explain to me what is. You'll be hearing a heck of a lot about LROS from me and other code happy folks here at F5, so buckle up and get out your notepad. For now, read this bit from the always informative Lori MacVittie that talks about what LineRate is, what it brings to the table, and more.

FSE iRules Challenge Roundup: They did what now?

<http://bit.ly/18SizLV>

FSE stands for Field Sales Engineer. FSEs are the technical backbone to our stellar, international sales team here at F5. They're the folks in the trenches that get the sometimes unsavory duty of making good in the DMZ on all the promises that the true sales types made on the golf course. It's not always easy, and as such we take pretty seriously the training and grooming of our FSEs before releasing them into the wild. As part of that we send them through a technical bootcamp here at F5 HQ. To get them thinking, learning and writing all things iRules, I always step in and present them with a challenge to get their code on. Basically I get to toss out a logic based obstacle course and see who comes out muddy, winded and bloody on the other side holding the prize. It's fun (for me) and grueling (for them) and hopefully imparts some handy knowledge along the way. If you want to take a look at the impressive winner, runner up and bronze medalist of this crop of talented FSEs, take a look here and follow along. They deserve some serious kudos for the awesome efforts, ingenuity and skills laid down. You know, for new fish and all.

On Building a Commercial Networking Product for the DevOps Community. A founder's Perspective.

<http://bit.ly/18vU60X>

Remember that LineRate thing I mentioned up there a couple posts ago? If you're looking for more information on what it is, why it is the way it is and some company history, look no further. John Giacomoni is one of the founders of LineRate as well as a pretty big bow-tie kind of developer. He's got chops, and isn't just a stuffy shirted executive type. It's super handy, then, that he's so willing to write about LineRate and put it out there for the awesome DC user community to absorb like the hungry little sponges we are. You too can get a heavy dose of LROS background, and I'm here to tell you it's worth it. Whether you're a "roll-your-own" kind of person or a "programming is the light and the one true way" kind of person or whatever, there's something in this post for everyone, I think, and it offers a very unique and, I believe, useful perspective on the solution being offered by LineRate. The "why" is often even more telling than the "how", in my opinion. Get a heaping helping of the "why" right here.

20 Lines or Less #70

<http://bit.ly/1cxGhuO>

This nearly ever present fixture in the Top5 is a massive favorite of mine, and of more than a few fans that have been kind enough to give props to the 20LoL over the years. Despite it being a favorite I often feel a bit of guilt shoving the 20LoL into the Top5 since they're both my writing. This one, interestingly, is not at all my creation, and as such I feel precisely zero remorse. Instead I'm rather excited to shine a light on the sweet finds that Jason put together to cover for me while I was out. Not only do I appreciate the coverage, but I also appreciate his fresh take and keen code spotting goggles, clearly used liberally for this post. If you're not familiar with the 20LoL and you have any interest in network programmability, you should get on the bus. Three examples. Less than 21 lines of code each. Links to posts. Simple explanations. Handy solutions. Click. It. Now.

Co-opetition at F5? Or, right tools for the right job!

<http://bit.ly/1cxGi1M>

Despite all the bad things I've said behind his back over the years*, its times like this that I can't help but think that Nathan Pearce, the author of this mighty fine post, is perhaps a scholar and a gentleman after all. Or at least a decent human being in most respects. This is a post addressing a question that has already and will continue to come up, I have no doubt, until this message is tattooed squarely across the foreheads of the front lines of F5 types dealing with dev types. TMOS or LROS? iRules or Node.js? Why one vs. the other, and do they compete too much to be healthy partners in crime? The answer, of course, is no, but that's a bit too simple. For the detailed comparison and response I highly recommend you check out Nathan's piece here about how these two heavyweight contenders in the networking programmability world actually tend to play more nicely than you may think. *Note: It has never in fact been proven in a court of law that I have said such things.

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