F5 Optimizes Applications with Cisco's ACI Architecture

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Integrated F5® solution enhances Cisco APIC environments with comprehensive L2–7 policy controls to address application performance, scale, and security

SAN FRANCISCO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Today at Cisco Live, Cisco's annual IT and communications conference, F5 Networks (NASDAQ:FFIV) announced an F5 device package for the Cisco® Application Policy Infrastructure Controller™ (APIC) that makes it possible for customers with F5 appliances to deploy policy-driven application services across layer 2–7 fabrics. Joint Cisco and F5 customers can significantly reduce operating costs without compromising security, availability, or performance.

The solution extends the F5 Synthesis™ architecture and programmable Software Defined Application Services™ within Cisco's Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI), helping customers efficiently deliver applications that are fast, secure, and available. F5's BIG-IP® solutions are also uniquely positioned to bring L4–7 multi-tenant capabilities to Cisco ACI environments, and support continued community-driven innovation around joint solutions through F5 DevCentral™.

Details

By combining the advantages of the F5 Synthesis and Cisco ACI models, organizations can deploy versatile, elastic network and application services—ultimately leading to quicker and more successful application rollouts. F5 and Cisco share a fabric-based approach that lets customers use their choice of physical, virtual, and cloud solutions to provide an environment that best suits their needs.

The F5 Device Package for Cisco APIC lets customers configure application policies and requirements for F5 appliances across L2–7 fabrics. This ensures that applications receive the services and resources they require throughout the network, while also enabling organizations to automate systems for further efficiency and cost savings.

Programmability to Intelligently Apply Comprehensive IT Services and Automation

F5's highly programmable and extensible solutions are equipped with powerful technologies like iApps®, iRules®, iCall™, and iControl® that enable customers to program and automate how application traffic is handled, according to specific business priorities. As an example, F5's event-driven iRules let customers quickly respond to changing conditions affecting their applications and websites on the fly without having to take systems offline or recode applications.

Integration to Orchestrate Network and Application Policies throughout L2–7

The F5 Device Package for Cisco APIC promotes customer flexibility in managing and orchestrating L4–7 application delivery services via Cisco APIC and through BIG-IP directly, with APIC addressing L2–3 needs. Beginning with F5's BIG-IP® Local Traffic Manager™ integration

with Cisco ACI, customers will be able to seamlessly add and orchestrate compelling capabilities beyond load balancing, such as optimization, access, firewall, and other security services.

True Multi-tenancy to Efficiently Deploy Software Defined Networks

With F5's industry-leading ScaleN™ architecture, customers can deploy multi-tenant solutions in their data centers leveraging route domains, F5 virtual appliances, and Virtual Clustered Multiprocessing™ capabilities. With the ability to configure L4–7 policies for each tenant application, customers have granular control over how precious resources are deployed and prioritized to support SDN. This frees IT teams from tying specific devices or resources to individual applications, while preserving the ability to isolate services if needed for compliance or other business requirements.

Supporting Quotes

"As a joint customer, we see the commitment F5 and Cisco share in delivering applications while ensuring IT flexibility. With their growing technology partnership, we anticipate the ability to seamlessly add F5 tools and capabilities to configure policies that simplify and automate the ways network and application services are efficiently applied throughout our infrastructure."

Kimberley Ledwell, Chief Enterprise Architect, Symantec

"In the Cisco ACI framework, F5 customers can preserve the advantages and capabilities of the F5 Synthesis model for L4–7 services while enhancing application deployments, delivery, and automation through Cisco ACI and APIC. At the heart of the integration is the ACI open policy model that offers investment protection with emphasis on programmability, automation, scale, and security. In addition, the combination of ACI-embedded multi-tenancy with the BIG-IP platform's equivalent functions makes the integration of Cisco and F5 technologies more attractive for service providers, enterprises, and large financial institutions on their journey to the cloud."

Soni Jiandani, SVP, Marketing, Cisco

"Like Cisco, F5 is focused on the intelligent delivery of applications and services in all types of environments. This announcement—and our partnership at large—centers on making it easy for customers to combine F5's L4–7 application fabric with L2–3 network fabric. Cisco's APIC provides organizations with a powerful tool to enhance ACI deployments, and we look forward to introducing complementary technologies that extend the value of these systems even further."

Manny Rivelo, EVP of Strategic Solutions, F5

F5 at this week's Cisco Live event in San Francisco

F5 is at Cisco Live 2014 in booth #1313 of the Moscone Center, highlighting the companies' partnership efforts and showcasing capabilities in ACI environments with the F5 Device Package for Cisco APIC. F5's presence at the show will also focus on additional topics, including:

- F5's Technology Alliance with Cisco
- F5's Cisco ACE Migration Solution
- F5 Support for Cisco's OpFlex Open Policy Framework
- F5 Reference Architecture for Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention Systems

Additional Resources related to F5 and Cisco ACI/APIC

- Operationalizing the Network with Cisco ACI and F5 Synthesis – Solution Profile

- Device Packages: Integrating F5 Synthesis with Cisco APIC – F5 DevCentral Blog
- Cisco ACI-themed Press Release from May 16, 2014

Availability

The F5 Device Package for Cisco APIC will be available as a free download via downloads.f5.com in summer 2014. Please contact a local F5 sales office for additional information and product availability in specific countries.

About F5

F5 (NASDAQ: FFIV) provides solutions for an application world. F5 helps organizations seamlessly scale cloud, data center, and software defined networking (SDN) deployments to successfully deliver applications to anyone, anywhere, at any time. F5 solutions broaden the reach of IT through an open, extensible framework and a rich partner ecosystem of leading technology and data center orchestration vendors. This approach lets customers pursue the infrastructure model that best fits their needs over time. The world's largest businesses, service providers, government entities, and consumer brands rely on F5 to stay ahead of cloud, security, and mobility trends. For more information, go to f5.com.

You can also follow @f5networks on Twitter or visit us on Facebook for more information about F5, its partners, and technologies.

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Availability disclaimer: Many of the products and features described herein remain in varying stages of development and will be offered on a when-and-if-available basis. These products and features are subject to change at the sole discretion of Cisco and neither Cisco nor its suppliers will have any liability for delay in the delivery or failure to deliver any of the products or features set forth in this release.

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