

F5 Enables 5G Services with New Solutions for Service Providers

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New tools and services will enable telecoms transitioning to 5G to optimize networks and monetize new services today

SEATTLE--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Today [F5 Networks](#) (NASDAQ: [FFIV](#)) announced several new solutions and enhancements designed to allow service providers to launch 5G services. The announcements include additions to F5's network functions virtualization (NFV) offerings that enable the optimization and scale of existing 4G and new 5G networks, along with other improvements to help providers speed up delivery of new 5G services and secure their networks at every layer. The company also announced a new service and support plan designed specifically to meet the complex and evolving needs of service providers.

From F5's [2019 State of Application Services survey](#), it's clear that [service providers](#) are emerging as technology leaders. Eighty percent of responding service providers indicated they are engaged in digital transformation initiatives. The push to virtualize the network and increase the speed to deliver new applications is driving the adoption of emerging technologies and underscoring the importance of application services that help manage critical performance and security requirements. Seventy-one percent of service providers report deploying automation and orchestration solutions, with 60% using containers.

"After years of preparing for 5G, we're seeing progress as telecoms and service providers begin to implement the infrastructure to make its promise a reality," said James Feger, Vice President and General Manager, Service Provider at F5. "We're delivering virtualization solutions and custom services that help them maximize the substantial investments in their current 4G networks now, while optimizing their infrastructure to enable the scale required to deploy the 5G networks tomorrow."

New capabilities and performance for NFV

With F5, organizations can simplify the complete lifecycle management of VNF services, unlocking essential scale and automation for newly virtualized networks without burdensome complexity. Unlike competitors, F5 offers packaged solutions that are simple to purchase, deploy, manage, and upgrade in a "use before you buy" model with subscription and perpetual licensing options. This approach is an ideal fit for mobile operators and service providers looking to software-based infrastructures as part of their network evolution.

To this end, F5 is announcing an expansion of its NFV packaged solutions with a new Carrier Grade NAT (CGNAT) standalone package. The new packaged solution, which includes the F5 VNF Manager, will offer a broad set of tools that enable service providers to successfully migrate to IPv6 while continuing to support and interoperate with existing IPv4 devices and content, simplifying network planning, sizing, and purchasing. The CGNAT VNF package will be available in the first half of calendar year 2019.

F5's NFV offerings will also see new performance enhancements through Intel[®] Quick Assist Technology (Intel[®] QAT), a feature of the Intel[®] Xeon[®] Scalable processor. BIG-IP[®] Virtual Edition support of Intel QAT for SSL/TLS acceleration and offload will provide up to four times the

performance of encryption done in software, freeing up the CPU to perform other application delivery tasks including L7 inspection, policy enforcement, and programmability.

Higher performance and increased throughput will also be enabled with BIG-IP Virtual Edition support of the Mellanox ConnectX family of network interface adapters, including 100G. Working together, F5 and Mellanox solutions can boost data plane performance to near line rate using optimized drivers that reduce the overhead associated with processing packets. Mellanox network adapters will significantly improve the performance of the entire portfolio of [F5 VNF solutions](#).

“5G is going to lead to an exponential increase in data usage and the creation of new applications and services that have only been imagined in the past,” said Amit Krig, SVP, Network Adapter Group, Mellanox. “ConnectX was developed to meet these needs both now and in the future. With multiple times the performance packed into the same infrastructure footprint, service providers working with F5 and Mellanox can maximize the return on their 5G network build-out and quickly reap the benefits of new 5G services.”

F5 also made several other announcements about solutions and services that will be featured at next week’s [Mobile World Congress](#) in Barcelona:

- **SP Essentials** – F5 is announcing a new package of technical support and maintenance services designed specifically and available exclusively for service providers. [SP Essentials](#) will enable service providers to get the most from their F5 products with services that assist them with adoption and world-class technical support. Services in the package include remote technical assistance from a dedicated service provider network support team with advanced F5 product and use case knowledge, standardized service level agreements, assigned proactive support for planned maintenance windows, high urgency incident management, among others. SP Essentials will be generally available by the end of March 2019.
- **F5 Automation Toolchain** – Automation is critical to service providers as they look to virtualize their networks, increase efficiency, and speed up the availability of new services. The [F5 Automation Toolchain](#) provides for programmatic deployment, configuration, and management of F5 devices and the services they support. Available on GitHub and based on declarative technology, the F5 Automation Toolchain provides the tools necessary to automate F5 services and to integrate F5 solutions into third-party automation, analytics, and orchestration tools.
- **NEBS Compliance** – F5 is now providing a NEBS level 3 compliant solution for the [i15000 ultra high-performance appliance series](#). The i15000 NEBS meets the strict quality requirements of service providers for disaster preparation and increased reliability.

About F5

F5 (NASDAQ: [FFIV](#)) gives the world’s largest businesses, service providers, governments, and consumer brands the freedom to securely deliver every app, anywhere—with confidence. F5 delivers cloud and security application services that enable organizations to embrace the infrastructure they choose without sacrificing speed and control. For more information, go to [f5.com](#). You can also follow [@f5networks](#) on Twitter or visit us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) for more information about F5, its partners, and technologies.

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