



ROI ANALYSIS

See how F5 Infrastructure
and the F5 BIG-IP MP from
Comtrade provide major
cost savings

See how F5 Infrastructure and the F5 BIG-IP MP from Comtrade provide major cost savings

Delivering applications quickly, securely and with high availability is the goal for IT departments. In this new world of IT, people can gain access to the applications they need from anywhere, whether they're customers shopping and banking online, or employees accessing the business portal to do their job effectively. In this "access everything from anywhere" world we live in, the basics still apply: availability, security and cost are important.

There are proliferating number of external threats that are impacting the hard and soft costs of application accessibility. Having the right infrastructure in place to support application availability isn't enough; it also has to protect against those wishing to destabilize availability and requires a single process for visualizing both the applications and supporting infrastructure to identify and shut down any erroneous incursions into the environment.

In this scenario, F5 BIG-IP devices provide secure load balanced access to applications along with features to automatically handle hacker attacks that can impact application availability and the security of the data. These features, plus others such as Access Policy Manager (APM), along with IT notification of hacker attacks, can significantly reduce the cost of an intrusion.

The next step is integrating F5 BIG-IP with an organization's IT operations strategy, and answering questions such as: "How can we have our Application Delivery Controllers and applications monitored within one framework," or "How are we going to ensure a good user experience and service levels?" Linking the availability of the applications and the underlying delivery controller and security modules into one single process significantly improves IT's ability to combat external threats quickly and efficiently. The Comtrade Management Pack for F5 BIG-IP natively plugs into Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) to provide IT with visibility into the access point for the applications, proactive load balancing and advance notification if hackers are trying to shut down or access the business data.

This approach enables customers to leverage existing tools and quickly integrate F5 BIG-IP monitoring into their IT organization. Comtrade Management Pack for F5 BIG-IP delivers tangible benefits, allowing teams to:

- Increase IT productivity and efficiency
- Leverage the existing monitoring platform (SCOM)
- Identify hacker intrusions through notification
- Reduce the cost of unplanned downtime

Increase IT productivity and efficiency

Typically, end users are unaware that they are going through an F5 BIG-IP device, because it performs numerous complex operations in the background. Services such as load balancing, application front end access and security monitoring happen without affecting the end user.

To fully reap the benefits of running F5 BIG-IP, IT departments should make sure that day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective. By receiving early alerts to any areas in need of attention, IT teams can address these alerts and keep business critical applications running smoothly.

Early detection of a problem can speed up the time to resolution. If there is a problem with the device configuration causing high CPU, lack of disk space, etc., it will impact the associated application. The networking team may be on top of fixing the problem, but the systems/applications administrators will know that there may be reduced capacity for handling an application. Having this information readily available can save hours of triage, and Comtrade's F5 BIG-IP MP gives warnings even before there is a problem so action can be taken to prevent a problem from occurring. For example, our MP generates warnings when disk space gets low so the situation can be quickly resolved and any ramifications from a lack of disk space can be easily avoided.

Now Level 1 and 2 operations staff can manage day-to-day tasks, start investigating alerts immediately and either resolve the issue themselves or pass it over to the appropriate person. By using the F5 BIG-IP MP, you can actually prevent your F5 administrator from spending unnecessary time performing initial investigations or handling alerts that could be resolved by lower level staff. Your F5 admins will be free to focus on other priority projects, and only be tapped when needed.

According to Comtrade customers, the direct result of these benefits is a 10-15% reduction in IT effort.

According to Comtrade customers, the direct result of these benefits is a 10-15% reduction in IT effort.

Leveraging the existing monitoring platform (SCOM)

Delivering IT services is becoming increasingly complex, and organizations focus a lot of their efforts on navigating this complexity to deliver those services effectively. This often involves standardizing operational monitoring efforts around a central platform such as Microsoft SCOM. F5 BIG-IP MP natively integrates with SCOM and fully utilizes both its concepts and its scalable and robust infrastructure.

This integration delivers the following immediate benefits to customers that have adopted SCOM:

- With almost no training, existing IT staff can fully supervise F5 BIG-IP devices.
- A trusted, industry-proven and scalable SCOM platform monitors F5 BIG-IP deployments.
- There's no need to invest into a new standalone monitoring tool just for F5 BIG-IP, and then train or hire additional people to deploy, integrate, use, and maintain it. Simply supercharge SCOM with F5 BIG-IP MP.

Leveraging existing infrastructure monitoring tools not only saves money in terms of upfront software costs, but also provides savings down the road by eliminating training and staffing expenses. Maintaining a separate infrastructure usually means adding staff to keep the infrastructure up-to-date and that staff needs to learn and continue to use the monitoring tools. Eric Koester of MyHighTechStart-Up told Investopedia that the cost of finding and employing the right person – including hiring and training costs – tends to be between 1.5x and 3x of the employee's salary. This means the total cost of ownership can be much higher when using separate tools (even ones that are free) because the day-to-day operational costs are more than the cost of leveraging an existing common infrastructure where you already have a trained staff.

SAVE UP TO \$150,000

By choosing F5 BIG-IP MP, an organization that is already using SCOM can easily save \$150,000 or more in hiring and training fees alone.



**HIRING
COSTS**



**TRAINING
COSTS**



**MAINTENANCE
COSTS**

Hacker intrusion notification

According to a 2015 study, Ponemon Institute found that a data breach costs businesses, on average, \$3.8 million for each breach. The F5 BIG-IP Application Security Module (ASM) monitors for intrusion and can take corrective actions. Comtrade's F5 BIG-IP MP lets IT teams know about attacks so they can monitor the environment to make sure nothing is impacted. Our MP can help answer the following questions:

- What is the performance of the virtual servers?
- Are the applications still available?
- Is the intrusion impacting user's ability to access your web site?

When customers are accessing your website, the average user will select another site if there is a delay of four seconds. Making sure that hackers do not gain access to your site is imperative from a security standpoint, but ensuring that they do not impede user access to your commercial web sites is just as critical, as a delay can cause a huge loss in revenue.

Security concerns are on the rise as hackers try to shut down businesses or gain access to financial information (credit cards, account numbers, etc.) or slow down the business. F5 recently noted that 58 percent of their customers are seeing increasingly sophisticated attacks on their networks.

Healthcare providers could potentially lose \$305 billion in patient revenue over the next five years due to the impact of cybersecurity attacks, according to a new report from [Accenture](#). About 50% of patients surveyed said they would find a different health care provider if they were informed that their medical records were stolen, according to a Ponemon Institute survey.

The latest [UK government survey](#) states that two-thirds of UK businesses are hit by cyber security breaches, but their directors are not notified, which leads to a false sense of security. The Comtrade F5 BIG-IP MP has reports to show the number, type and origination of the attacks. These reports can be also exported and sent to the management team to keep them informed.

The F5 BIG-IP ASM module shuts down cyberattacks, but it is also important as part of the overall security strategy to make sure IT is notified of the attack. In the case of the retailer Target, no action was taken by the security team even though the breach was identified early. Target had a 46% drop in profit. Had action been taken early, the impact could have been significantly less. The Comtrade F5 BIG-IP MP can report on the source of these attacks. This information can be used to optimize the F5 BIG-IP configuration so it can be more effective in blocking future attacks.

Making sure that hackers do not gain access to your site is imperative from a security standpoint, but ensuring that they do not impede user access to your commercial web sites is just as critical, as a delay can cause a huge loss in revenue.

Cost of unplanned downtime

An IT organization's worst nightmare is unplanned downtime of critical business applications. The inability of users to access their applications or data can be costly, as downtime can cause all or part of the organization to be forced to a grinding halt. The average cost of the business disruption from an unplanned outage is \$179,827 (Source: [Downtime, Outages and Failures - Understanding Their True Costs](#)). Early alerts to limitations in application availability and the Local Traffic Manager (LTM) module of F5 can greatly reduce the impact of an outage. Knowing about a potential outage or reduction in service as soon as possible allows IT to respond quickly to minimize or eliminate any downtime.

If you are already using SCOM, then adding the F5 BIG-IP MP will benefit the operations team by providing visibility into the health and performance of the F5 BIG-IP devices and monitoring the pool members, plus the ability to detect any security breaches that are making applications unavailable. With proactive alerting available across the application access points through the F5 BIG-IP devices, elimination or reduction of an outage by one or two incidents (or just one or two hours through early detection) can have big cost savings.

\$179,827
AVERAGE COST
OF AN UNPLANNED
OUTAGE



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COMTRADE'S F5 BIG-IP MANAGEMENT
PACK FOR SCOM OR OTHER COMTRADE PRODUCTS, PLEASE VISIT
COMTRADESOFTWARE.COM.**

