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F5 Strengthens Its Application Delivery and Security Platform to Simplify Operations and Accelerate Secure AI Adoption

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New platform enhancements—including F5 Insight for ADSP—offer unified observability and proactive intelligence for modern IT environments

LAS VEGAS--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Today at AppWorld, F5 (NASDAQ: FFIV), the global leader in delivering and securing every app and API, unveiled a major evolution of the F5 Application Delivery and Security Platform (ADSP). In tandem with F5's security-focused news, F5 is introducing several enhancements, including F5 Insight for ADSP with increased observability across the platform, support for agentic AI-driven workloads, future-ready cryptographic capabilities, and a new straightforward packaging approach to F5 Distributed Cloud Services designed to simplify SaaS deployments and promote infrastructure convergence.

Modern organizations operate increasingly complex IT environments where applications are spread across data centers, multiple clouds, and edge locations. F5 ADSP offers a trusted approach to navigate the challenges that distributed applications face in powering AI capabilities. With these latest enhancements, F5 ensures its platform can meet the critical demands of evolving application architectures.

“Most operations teams are stuck babysitting complexity they did not sign up for,” said Kunal Anand, Chief Product Officer at F5. “They have a dozen tools, a thousand alerts, and not enough signal. F5 ADSP collapses that mess into a platform. With F5 Insight, we turn scattered telemetry into a clear story and the next best action. Then we extend that foundation for agentic AI workloads and future-focused cryptography, because the infrastructure is changing, ready or not.”

F5 Insight: Laying the observability foundation for F5 ADSP

A critical new addition to the XOps component of F5's ADSP, F5 Insight transforms the way organizations approach applications and infrastructure. For teams using F5 BIG-IP solutions, F5 Insight delivers comprehensive, end-to-end observability and analytics tailored to their environments by harnessing tools such as OpenTelemetry.

Key benefits include:

Unified visibility: Real-time monitoring and analytics across application and infrastructure layers address longstanding industry demand for comprehensive insights in hybrid and multicloud settings.

Actionable intelligence: Created with the benefit of decades of experience in application delivery and security, F5 Insight doesn't just provide dashboards; it delivers operational clarity with impactful KPIs and visualizations, helping teams optimize application performance and holistically address potential issues

before they affect users.

AI-driven proactive guidance: By leveraging Model Context Protocol (MCP) integration and support for popular large language models (LLMs), F5 Insight offers predictive analytics and generates operational narratives to guide teams in prioritizing actions and addressing vulnerabilities—all through natural language interactions. With this functionality, operational data becomes clear and actionable, improving efficiency and collaboration.

F5 Insight for ADSP is a flexible, customizable solution available as both self-managed software and a forthcoming SaaS model. It is now generally available for BIG-IP, with plans to extend capabilities to F5 NGINX and Distributed Cloud Services.

F5 BIG-IP v21.1: Future-ready modernization

Building on the BIG-IP v21.0 milestone release in late 2025, upcoming BIG-IP v21.1 software evolves F5's ADSP to support today's demanding applications and APIs. This release bolsters an already industry-leading feature set by introducing innovative new capabilities, including:

Enhanced post-quantum cryptography (PQC) readiness: BIG-IP v21.1 adds support for new NIST-compliant cryptographic ciphers, providing robust encryption against future quantum threats. Complementing this, F5 BIG-IP Zero Trust Access (formerly F5 BIG-IP Access Policy Manager) debuts quantum-resistant TLS/SSL VPN tunnelling for secure application access and data transmission.

Delivery, security, and access for AI workloads: The release improves the security and performance of AI workloads by adding MCP protection and session persistence capabilities. It also empowers agentic AI by enabling fast, automated, and secure access to necessary resources by utilizing the new Dynamic Client Registration (DCR) feature.

Advanced protection for modern APIs and traffic protocols: With BIG-IP v21.1, F5 web application firewall (WAF) solutions now safeguard modern APIs defined by the OpenAPI 3.1 specification against malicious threats, while blocking sophisticated attacks targeting HTTP/3 protocol traffic such as a cross-site scripting or SQL injection.

Continued BIG-IP TMOS software modernization: BIG-IP v21.1 further upgrades the control plane to improve overall system reliability and efficiency, while introducing a new, high performance declarative API—the BIG-IP Declarative API—to support automation in the most extensive and dynamic application environments.

General availability of BIG-IP v21.1 is currently targeted for the second quarter of calendar year 2026.

F5 NGINX: Agentic observability powered by MCP traffic visibility

As AI agents increasingly interact with applications and APIs to execute tasks autonomously, enterprises require visibility into how these agents access and consume services. F5 NGINX delivers real-time observability into AI-initiated traffic—providing DevOps, SRE, and platform teams with deep insights into agent behavior across both known and shadow AI activity. By parsing and inspecting MCP metadata directly in the traffic path, NGINX surfaces agent request patterns, latency, throughput, and error signals to improve monitoring and governance.

Because NGINX occupies a privileged position in the application traffic path, organizations can use a single gateway to observe and deliver application, API, and AI workloads. There is no need to introduce a separate AI gateway—reducing tool sprawl, simplifying operations, and enabling unified governance across modern workloads.

workloads.

Agentic observability powered by MCP traffic visibility is generally available today in NGINX Open Source. Enterprise support and advanced capabilities are available through F5 NGINX Plus.

F5 Distributed Cloud Services: Simplified deployment

F5 has reimaged packaging for its Distributed Cloud Services, enabling a seamless buying experience and scalable adoption of F5 ADSP capabilities within a SaaS framework. The new starter packages, Essentials and Enterprise, both offer integrated services such as CDN and API security capabilities to align with modern business needs. These new packages simplify subscriptions while reducing friction and replacing dozens of SKUs with value-driven bundles.

These adjustments support F5’s vision of delivering SaaS solutions alongside traditional hardware, software, and managed services offerings, making the migration to a unified platform more seamless than ever for customers.

“F5 is addressing operational challenges while also enabling more effective AI application deployments and proactively preparing for future needs,” said Paul Nicholson, Research VP, Cloud and Datacenter Networks at IDC. “A key highlight is F5 Insight, which delivers the visibility and actionable intelligence customers require, with notable AI capabilities. Combined with MCP enhancements for AI applications and PQC support, F5 is meeting requirements for modern applications. Collectively, these advancements enable organizations to optimize operations, strengthen security, and scale across their environments.”

Supporting materials

Blog: Announcing F5 Insight for ADSP: Answering six critical questions

Blog: A sneak peek into F5 BIG-IP v21.1: AI security, PQC, and software enhancements

About F5

F5, Inc. (NASDAQ: FFIV) is the global leader that delivers and secures every app. Backed by three decades of expertise, F5 has built the industry’s premier platform—F5 Application Delivery and Security Platform (ADSP)—to deliver and secure every app, every API, anywhere: on-premises, in the cloud, at the edge, and across hybrid, multicloud environments. F5 is committed to innovating and partnering with the world’s largest and most advanced organizations to deliver fast, available, and secure digital experiences. Together, we help each other thrive and bring a better digital world to life.

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Forward-looking statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding the anticipated

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding the anticipated availability of certain products and releases, the intent to extend F5 Insight capabilities to additional platforms, and the development of future security, cryptographic, and AI-enabled features, which are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially.

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