

How would you like your Java?

WITH THE RELEASE of the first version of the Java Wrappers for iControl, you have several options for how to use Java with your BIG-IP system. To help you understand your choices and how you might want to use each, we've included these tips to get you started.

1 Option 1: The Java iControl API

This is the API you have always had. Download the API, build it according to the instructions included, and then make calls to the API. It is the best option if you are familiar with using the API. You can work with old or variant versions of the Java compiler because it enables you to build the library with your own tools.

call methods as if the APIs were local classes. With this option, you have fewer lines of code to maintain, which is good as the most-used APIs have rather simplified interfaces. The entire API is available—as in Option #1—should you want to do something the wrappers do not yet support. Use the Java Wrappers if they support your current version of Java and you're new to iControl.

2 Option 2: The Java Assembly

The Java assembly is designed to make loading and using the classes of the API easier. It comes prebuilt for a version of the Java compiler, and after loading the assembly, you get instant access to all of the APIs available. Since the assembly handles instantiation and loading, all you have to do is include it in your project and instantiate the one overarching class. This is a solid option if it supports your current version of Java, and if you already have a lot of iControl code.

Both the iControl API and the Java Wrappers project have samples that will help you to understand how to use them, and all of these options are supported on DevCentral via the forums and various tutorials. We intend to expand the Java Wrappers project over time.

3 Option 3: The Java Wrappers

The Java Wrappers project is designed to eliminate all of the underlying communications code. We handle finding and contacting the API; you just instantiate classes and

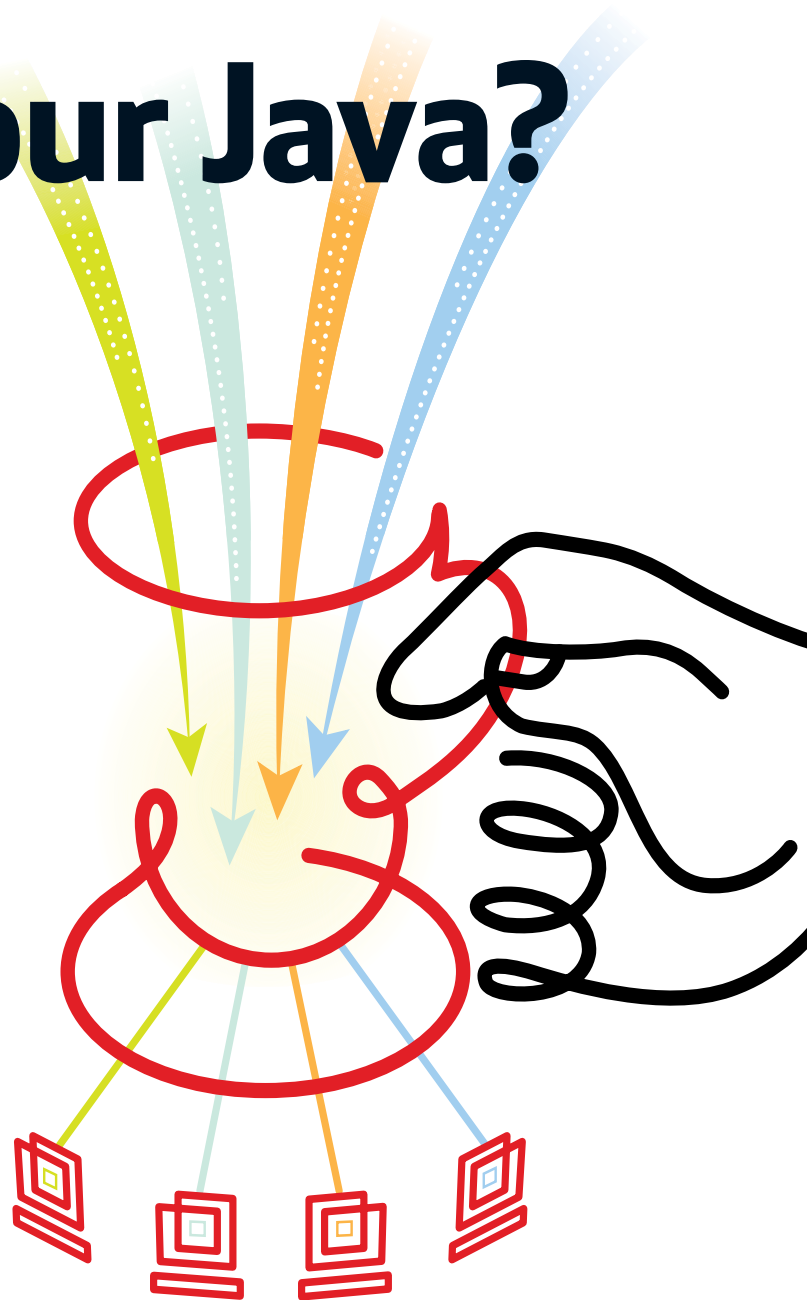
4 Option 4: MIDP/Java ME

We are currently working on another project that will release a class library supporting Java Micro Edition (Java ME) programming. The default API does not support Java ME because some popular handheld devices

(most notably BlackBerry) do not support the required Axis libraries, and Axis libraries are large, even on the JME platforms that do support them. Because of that, we are implementing a solution using kSOAP2 libraries as an Axis replacement. Expect to see prebuilt iControl libraries for MIDP in the future,

including samples that will enable you to monitor your BIG-IP system from any Java ME-compliant device.

Our recommendation is to use the method that works best for you and your organization. All of these solutions are based on the core API, and consequently will be updated when the API is updated.



DevCentral updates

Introducing advanced design and configuration pages for experts

Do you want to stretch the boundaries of our products or work with other advanced developers to create custom profiles for BIG-IP LTM? DevCentral has built a whole new topic area for advanced design and configuration, including a new discussion forum and wiki, that enables you to go outside the limits of basic load balancing and learn from other experts worldwide doing the most innovative things imaginable with BIG-IP LTM. Use the CodeShare to share and build on Enterprise Manager templates, custom profiles for BIG-IP LTM, monitors, and more. Check back each week for more scripts, templates, and forum topics.

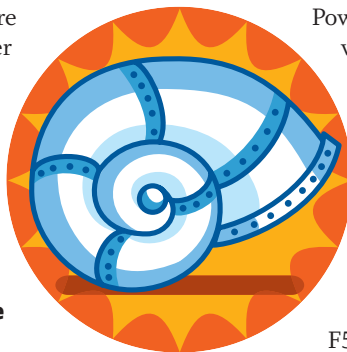
New DevCentral user groups

When we started DevCentral, we never guessed that our community would develop so quickly, and would also want to hang out together in a pub. With new DevCentral user groups, you can do just that—connect with other developers in your region, get updates about local events, and share ideas and tips with the DevCentral community just around the corner. We've made it easier for you to connect with developers in your area, find local events, or even start your own user group with regional user group pages right on DevCentral. Register at DevCentral and go to the "Community Resources" section to get started.

With dedicated user group forums, event calendars, and documents, you will be able to connect with users in your area. If you cannot find a user group in your area, please recommend one and the DevCentral team will help you get one started.

iControls and PowerShell

Microsoft recently made a new command line shell and task-based scripting technology available, Windows PowerShell. The shell is designed to help IT administrators gain control of system tasks and automate routine tasks.



PowerShell integrates with Exchange Server 2007, System Center Operations Manager 2007, System Center Data Protection Manager V2, and System Center Virtual Machine Manager. F5 customers can now use iControl to integrate PowerShell with BIG-IP.

The iControl PowerShell cmdlets and scripts use the iControl .NET assembly available in DevCentral labs. Included with the scripts is a PowerShell system profile script that handles dynamic loading of the iControl .NET Assembly. F5 has also provided examples showing how to use PowerShell to manage your BIG-IP system. F5 customers may want to look at the official PowerShell blog on DevCentral to learn how they can use PowerShell to control their BIG-IP systems, making

the life of their Windows administrators much easier.

Take a look at what our DevCentral community is doing

Our favorite aspect of DevCentral is that members share new and interesting samples and tips with the community on a daily basis. For us, community starts with users. Here are just a few favorite additions from DevCentral community innovators:

Using iRules to manipulate cache (by member "wschultz")

Using these community member-created iRules, you can allow for different cache times (when encountering a variable cache rate), gain fixes for Safari back-button issues, and increase ease of use with Movable Type and TypeKey.

Log http tcp udp to syslogng (by member "hoolio")

You can use iRules to log a summary of each request and its response, and send the data to a remote syslog server using the BIG-IP system's syslog-ng daemon.

SNAT for my network (by member "jasonmcmunn")

Now you can enable SNAT (Secure Network Address Translation) only for requests that originate from the load balancer-owned VLAN that contains the real servers. This validates the request from a real server behind the virtual IP (VIP), or another server on that VLAN, by identifying the load balancer IP number as the source address.

For more information on these topics, please visit <http://devcentral.f5.com>.

iControl Java enhancements deliver power without complexity

The DevCentral Team is proud to announce the first release of iControl for Java class libraries. This release wraps frequently used portions of the iControl API into local Java classes, helping developers to make calls without worrying about communications with

their BIG-IP systems. F5 provides test applications as source code and includes JPanel subclasses for several of the interfaces, making UI development easier.

This release includes wrappers for Virtual Node, Profiles, Pools, System,

and ConfigSync interfaces. Future releases will address more interfaces and provide more functionality. Visit the DevCentral forums and tell us what's most important to you.

F5 plans to make your work easier through this release. On average, using this class

library will require 80% less code than it would to call the APIs directly, because the class library will handle all communications issues. So head over to <http://devcentral.f5.com> to see how easy it can be to use code to control your BIG-IP system.