

EVENT FLASH

F5 Networks Unveils VIPRION: Next Generation Hardware Architecture

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IN THIS EVENT FLASH

This event Flash analyzes F5 Network's January 23rd next generation VIPRION announcement.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On January 23, 2008, F5 Networks announced its next generation hardware architecture, VIPRION. VIPRION is the new name of the product that F5 had code named Montreal. It is a clustered multi processing architecture that will allow it to leverage all of the features and benefits of TMOS, including the addition of modules to provide security, access control, acceleration, and WAN optimization. The new architecture will enable F5 to compete in the largest enterprise, service provider and Over the Top datacenters. Highlights of the product include:

- ☒ **Increase capacity without disruption:** Customers can add application intelligence without reconfiguring the network. As enterprises require more processing power, whether for L7 processing, SSL, or compression they can add another blade to an existing unit rather than deploy a separate device. VIPRION looks like one device to users, applications, and administrators, which allows organizations to scale their infrastructure while keeping management costs fixed.
- ☒ **Performance.** F5 is reporting that VIPRION has 36Gbps of L7 throughput and 200,000 SSL transactions per second
- ☒ **Device Consolidation.** The scalability of the platform enables customers to reduce the conga line of appliances within their datacenter network.
- ☒ **Reliability.** VIPRION offers two tiered availability-at the blade level and chassis level. Because of VIPRION's architecture, neither upgrades to capacity nor individual hardware component failures affect the delivery of applications. In a VIPRION system with multiple blades, if a blade fails, the others in the chassis can take over processing traffic with no disruption. Similarly, a single blade can be manually taken offline and removed without disruption.

The first release is local traffic manager only. The pricing for VIPRION is the following: The Chassis and local traffic manager will be: \$34,995. The Performance Blade is \$89,995. The Performance Extreme Pack: Software is: \$69,995. (Per Chassis, Includes: Max Comp, Max SSL, ACA, Cache, IPv6). F5 expects recognize revenue in the Q1 calendar of 2008 from VIPRION.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The time is right for F5 Networks to bring out its next generation VIPRION product line. This will enable F5 to maintain and grow its customers. While Over the Top providers such as Google and Yahoo tend to get the most press, F5 has a sizable opportunity in Service Provider Datacenters. In calendar Q4 2007 23% of F5's sales were to service providers. As the telco's increasingly replace proprietary equipment with industry standard platforms the needs to rely on application networking to add resiliency and scale to support next generation services is only going to increase. Service Providers are increasingly migrating to deliver next generation services from Network Datacenters and will require high performance platforms. Additionally, the number of enterprise datacenters is decreasing while those that remain are larger and becoming more dense. The outlook for bandwidth needs in these newer datacenters continues unabated.

F5 has enjoyed tremendous success in Datacenter Layer 4-7 Switching, growing 31% in the first three calendar quarters of 2007 year over year. Despite this success, F5's was often shut out of very high end server load balancing/ SSL deals. This new platform will enable F5 to have a place at the table in high performance deals. As the platform matures, and F5 brings out more services on VIPRION, the market will be watching if F5 can over take Cisco as the overall market leader.

For 2007 the Datacenter Layer 4-7 switch market reached \$1.8 billion up 23% year-over-year. As the market continues to climb in 2008, customers will benefit with new operational and administrative feature benefits coupled with attractive pricing.

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