Scaling and securing every environment helps protect your business from site outages and improves DNS and application performance. Securing DNS infrastructures from the latest DDoS attacks and protecting DNS query responses from cache poisoning helps keep your business online and viable. But to fully achieve these goals, organizations need efficient ways to monitor DNS infrastructure and application health, and to scale on demand to meet exact requirements.

F5® BIG-IP® Global Traffic Manager™ (GTM) distributes DNS and user application requests based on business policies, data center and cloud service conditions, user location, and application performance. BIG-IP GTM delivers F5’s high-performance DNS Services with visibility, reporting, and analysis; hyper-scales and secures DNS responses geographically to survive DDoS attacks; delivers a complete, real-time DNSSEC solution; and ensures global application high availability in all hybrid environments.

**Key benefits**

Hyper-scale DNS to up to 40 million RPS with a fully loaded chassis
BIG-IP GTM hyper-scales authoritative DNS to up to 40 million query responses per second (RPS) and controls DNS traffic. It ensures that users are connected to the best site and delivers On-Demand Scaling for DNS and global apps.

Protect against DNS attacks and ensure availability
Ensure DNS and application availability and protection during DNS DDoS attacks or volume spikes. In addition, mitigate DNS threats by blocking access to malicious IP domains.

Improve global application performance
Send users to the site with the best application performance based on application, geolocation, business, and network conditions.

Deploy flexibly, scale as you grow, and manage your network efficiently
BIG-IP GTM delivers flexible global application management in virtual and cloud environments. The web-based UI provides easy DNS configuration with centralized menus; advanced logging, statistics, and reporting; and a single point of control for your DNS and global app delivery requirements.
Unmatched DNS Performance

BIG-IP GTM delivers DNS performance that can handle even the busiest sites. When sites have a volume spike in DNS query volumes due to legitimate requests or distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks, BIG-IP GTM manages requests with multicore processing and F5 DNS Express™, dramatically increasing authoritative DNS performance to up to 20 million RPS in version 11.5 to quickly respond to all queries.

This helps your organization provide the best quality of service (QoS) for your users while eliminating poor application performance. DNS Express improves standard DNS server functions by offloading DNS responses as an authoritative DNS server. BIG-IP GTM accepts zone transfers of DNS records from the primary DNS server and answers DNS queries authoritatively.

Benefits and features of multicore processing and DNS Express include:

- High-speed response and DDoS attack protection with in-memory DNS
- Authoritative DNS replication in multiple BIG-IP or DNS service deployments for faster responses
- Authoritative DNS and DNSSEC in virtual clouds for disaster recovery and fast, secure responses
- Scalable DNS performance for quality of app and service experience
- The ability to consolidate DNS servers and increase ROI

In cases of very high volumes for apps and services or a DNS DDoS attack, BIG-IP GTM hyper-scales in Rapid Response Mode (RRM) up to 40 million RPS. It extends availability with unmatched performance and security—absorbing and responding to queries at up to 200 percent of the normal limits. See page 13 for performance metrics and details.

DNS Caching and Resolving

DNS latency can be reduced by enabling a DNS cache on BIG-IP GTM and having it respond immediately to client requests. BIG-IP GTM can consolidate the cache and increase the cache hit rate. This reduces DNS latency up to 80 percent, with DNS caching reducing the number of DNS queries for the same site. In addition to caching, BIG-IP GTM allows the device to do its own DNS resolving without requiring the use of an upstream DNS resolver.

Caching profiles available to select for multiple caches include:

- Transparent cache
- BIG-IP GTM site between client and DNS internal/external
- Hot cache
- Caching resolver
- No cache response so that BIG-IP GTM sends out the request with the response coming back for resolving and caching
- Validating caching resolver

BIG-IP GTM supports all common DNS deployments that are either authoritative or local resolver DNS. Specific zone requests not cached are forwarded to name servers for faster DNS resolving, allowing users to receive expedient responses.
BIG-IP GTM reduces the average DNS response time and latency for mobile and desktop devices from an average of 300 milliseconds (ms) and 100 ms respectively to as little as 15 ms, depending on workloads.

Secure Applications

DNS denial-of-service attacks, cache poisoning, and DNS hijacking threaten the availability and security of your applications. BIG-IP GTM protects against DNS attacks and enables you to create policies that provide an added layer of protection for your applications and data.

DNS attack protection features include:

- **Hardened device**—BIG-IP GTM is ICSA Labs Certified as a network firewall and resists common teardrop, ICMP, or daemon attacks.
- **DNS attack protection**—Built-in protocol validation automatically drops UDP, DNS query, and NXDOMAIN floods and malformed packets.
- **DNS load balancing**—BIG-IP GTM can be used to front-end static DNS servers. If the DNS request is for a name controlled by BIG-IP GTM, BIG-IP GTM will answer the request.
- **Security control**—F5 DNS iRules® can help you create policies that block requests from rogue sites.
- **Packet filtering**—BIG-IP GTM uses packet filtering to limit or deny websites’ access based on source, destination, or port.

DNS firewall

DNS DDoS, cache poisoning of LDNS, and other unwanted DNS attacks and volume spikes can cause DNS outage and lost productivity. These attacks and traffic spikes increase volume dramatically and can take down DNS servers.

BIG-IP GTM with security, scale, performance, and control functionality provides DNS firewall benefits. It shields DNS from attacks such as reflection or amplification DDoS attacks and other undesired DNS queries and responses that reduce DNS performance. In addition, you can mitigate complex DNS security threats by blocking access to malicious IP domains with Response Policy Zones. With BIG-IP GTM, you can install a third-party domain filtering service such as SURBL or Spamhaus and prevent client infection or intercept infected responses to known sources of malware and viruses. F5 DNS firewall services reduce the costs of infection resolution and increase user productivity.
Lower your risk of malware and virus communication and mitigate DNS threats by blocking access to malicious IP domains with a domain reputation service such as SURBL or Spamhaus.

F5 DNS firewall services include:

- Protocol inspection and validation
- DNS record type ACL*
- High-performance authoritative DNS, which scales responses exponentially
- Authoritative DNS hyper-scaling up to 200 percent to absorb DDoS attacks
- Latency-reducing DNS caching
- DNS load balancing
- Stateful inspection (never accepts unsolicited responses)
- ICSA Labs certification (can be deployed in the DMZ)
- The ability to scale across devices using IP Anycast
- Secure responses (DNSSEC)
- DNSSEC response rate limits
- Complete DNS control using DNS iRules
- DDoS threshold alerting*
- Threat mitigation by blocking access to malicious IP domains
- DNS logging and reporting
- Hardened F5 DNS code (not BIND protocol)

*Requires provisioning BIG-IP® Advanced Firewall Manager™ to access functionality.
BIG-IP GTM keeps DNS available with firewall services protecting DNS infrastructure from high-volume attacks and malformed packets.

**Complete DNSSEC signing**

With BIG-IP GTM DNSSEC support, you can digitally sign and encrypt your DNS query responses. This enables the resolver to determine the authenticity of the response, preventing DNS hijacking and cache poisoning. In addition, receive all the benefits of global server load balancing while also securing your DNS query responses. Alternatively, if a zone has already been signed, BIG-IP GTM manages static DNSSEC responses for higher performance.

**Centralized DNSSEC key management**

Many IT organizations have or want to standardize on FIPS-compliant devices and secure DNSSEC keys. You can use BIG-IP GTM with FIPS cards that provide 140-2 support for securing your keys. In addition, BIG-IP GTM integrates and uses hardware security modules (HSMs) from Thales for implementation, centralized management, and secure handling of DNSSEC keys, reducing OpEx and delivering consolidation and FIPS compliance.

**Top-level domain support for DNSSEC**

For DNS administrators who want to delegate to other secure sub-domains, BIG-IP GTM allows easy management of DNSSEC as a top-level domain, becoming a parent zone.

**DNSSEC validation**

In most networks, DNS resolvers offload DNSSEC record requests and crypto calculations to validate that the DNS response being received is correctly signed. DNSSEC responses
coming into the network require high CPU loads on DNS resolving servers. With BIG-IP GTM DNSSEC validation, administrators can easily offload and validate DNSSEC on the client side using BIG-IP GTM for resolving. This results in superior DNS performance and a dramatic increase in the site response to users.

Globally Available Applications

BIG-IP GTM offers global application availability and sophisticated health monitoring that support a wide variety of application types, giving organizations the flexibility to adapt quickly and stay competitive.

These global availability and health monitoring features include:

- **Global load balancing**—BIG-IP GTM provides comprehensive, high-performance application management for hybrid environments.
- **Dynamic ratio load balancing**—BIG-IP GTM routes users to the best resource based on site and network metrics (for example, based on the number of hops between the client and the local DNS).
- **Wide area persistence**—To ensure user connections persist across apps and data centers, BIG-IP GTM synchronizes data, propagates local DNS, and maintains session integrity.
- **Geographic load balancing**—BIG-IP GTM includes an IP database identifying location at the continent, country, and state/province level to connect users to the closest app or service for the best performance.
- **Custom topology mapping**—With BIG-IP GTM, organizations can set up custom topology maps. By defining and saving custom region groupings, you can configure topology based on intranet app traffic policies that match your internal infrastructure.
- **Infrastructure monitoring**—BIG-IP GTM checks entire infrastructure health, eliminating single points of failure and routing app traffic away from poorly performing sites.
BIG-IP GTM ensures users are always connected to the best site.
(1) User queries local DNS to resolve domain, and local DNS queries BIG-IP GTM.
(2) BIG-IP GTM uses metrics collected for each site and identifies the best server.
(3) BIG-IP GTM responds to local DNS with IP address.
(4) User is connected to site.

Application health monitoring

Today’s sophisticated applications require intelligent health checks to determine availability. Instead of relying on a single health check, BIG-IP GTM aggregates multiple monitors so you can check the application state at multiple levels. This results in the highest availability, improves reliability, and eliminates false positives to reduce management overhead.

BIG-IP GTM provides pre-defined, out-of-the-box health monitoring support for more than 18 different applications, including SAP, Oracle, LDAP, and mySQL. BIG-IP GTM performs targeted monitoring of these applications to accurately determine their health, reduce downtime, and improve the user experience.
Disaster recovery/business continuity planning

In addition to performing comprehensive site availability checks, you can define the conditions for shifting all traffic to a backup data center, failing over an entire site, or controlling only the affected applications.

Simple Management

Managing a distributed, multiple-site network from a single point is an enormous challenge. BIG-IP GTM provides tools that give you a global view of your infrastructure with the means to manage the network and add policies to ensure the highest availability for your business-critical applications. Features include:

- **Web-based user interface**—Manage global infrastructure from a centralized UI using:
  - Streamlined and centralized DNS and GSLB menus for fast configuration.
  - Efficient list and object management for complete visibility of global resources.
  - Unique naming of objects to reduce administration and build business policies.
  - Enhanced management of distributed applications as part of one collective group.
  - Context-sensitive help for information on objects, commands, and configuration examples.

Reduce DNS delivery deployment time with centralized and easy-to-find configuration and management sequences.

- **Powerful command-line interface**—The TMSH command-line interface delivers integrated search, context-sensitive help, and batch-mode transactions.

- **Automated setup and synchronization**—Autosync automates and secures multiple BIG-IP GTM devices, eliminating difficult hierarchical management common to DNS.

- **Scalable and optimized GSLB configurations**—Incremental Sync delivers high performance for large deployments. With more devices synced, configuration changes transpire rapidly. For large deployments with GSLB configurations and rapid user changes, you can protect changes by manually saving when most convenient.
• **Configuration retrieval**—AutoDiscovery enables retrieved configurations from distributed BIG-IP instances, removing repeat configurations across devices.

• **Data center and sync groups**—Create logical groups of network equipment to ensure efficient use of monitoring and metrics collection for intelligently sharing with members in the logical group.

• **Distributed application management**—You can define dependencies between application services and manage them as a group, building scalable traffic distribution policies and improving efficiency with granular control of objects.

• **iRules**—Use the F5 iRules scripting language to customize the distribution of global traffic. BIG-IP GTM looks deep inside DNS traffic to customize app traffic to the desired data center, pool, or virtual server. This reduces latency, increases attack protection, and improves performance.

• **Customize traffic with QoS**—Design traffic decisions and easily develop custom load balancing algorithms using quality of service metrics in iRules, such as round trip time, hops, hit ratio, packet rate, topology, and more.

• **DNS iRules**—Manage DNS queries, responses, and actions for a fast, customized DNS infrastructure. For instance, configure DNS iRules with filtering for protection and reporting.

• **F5 ZoneRunner™**—ZoneRunner is an integrated DNS zone file management tool that simplifies and reduces the risk of misconfiguration. Built on the latest version of BIND, ZoneRunner provides:
  - Auto population of commonly used protocols.
  - Validation/error checking for zone file entries.
  - Zone importation from an external server or a file.
  - Automatic reverse lookups.
  - Easy creation, editing, and searching of all records.
  - Easy management of NAPTR records for LTE and 4G requirements.

**DNS health monitor**

The DNS health monitor available in BIG-IP GTM and BIG-IP® Local Traffic Manager™ (LTM) monitors DNS server health and helps configure DNS based on reporting. The DNS health monitor detects whether the servers are operating at peak performance and helps in reconfiguring for optimal responses.

**High-speed logging**

You can easily manage DNS and global app logging for fast network visibility and planning. High-speed logging of DNS queries and responses, syslog, and global server load balancing decision logs improve information on data to enable fast network recognition with quick, deep search and display.

**Enhanced DNS detailed statistics**

BIG-IP GTM delivers advanced DNS statistics for administrators, with enhanced detailed data for profiles such as query type counts (A, CNAME, NS, RRSIG, AAAA, SRV, and “other” types) with requests, responses, and percentage counts. Stats are per profile and per device global count for fast visibility and capacity planning of DNS delivery infrastructure. DNS detail stats are viewable in DNS profile or in analytics reporting.
Advanced DNS reporting and analytics

F5 Analytics provides advanced DNS reporting and analysis of applications, virtual servers, query names, query types, client IPs, top requested names, and more for business intelligence, capacity planning, ROI reporting, troubleshooting, performance metrics, and tuning, enabling maximum optimization of the DNS and global app infrastructure.

Administrators can easily manage DNS using analytics with advanced reporting and analysis of actions for fast visibility of DNS delivery and infrastructure.

F5 Enterprise Manager

Enterprise Manager™ can help you significantly reduce the cost and complexity of managing multiple F5 devices. You gain a single-pane view of your entire application delivery infrastructure and the tools you need to reduce deployment times, eliminate redundant tasks, and efficiently scale your infrastructure to meet your business needs.

Network Integration

BIG-IP GTM is designed to fit into your current network and into your plans for the future. Integration features include:

- **SNMP management application support**—BIG-IP GTM integrates its MIBs and an SNMP agent with DNS. This enables SNMP management applications to read statistical data about BIG-IP GTM performance.
• **Third-party integration**—BIG-IP GTM communicates and integrates with a broad array of network devices. This includes support for various types of remote hosts, such as SNMP agents, third-party caches, servers, routers, and load balancers to diagnose the health of network endpoints.

• **IPv6/IPv4 support**—Ease the transition to IPv6 by providing DNS gateway and translation services for hybrid IPv6 and IPv4 solutions, and manage IPv6 and IPv4 DNS servers. BIG-IP LTM configured with NAT64 transforms IPv6 to IPv4 for those IPv4-only environments.

• **IP Anycast integration**—DNS query volumes directed to one IP address, whether legitimate or during a DoS attack, are easily managed by distributing the load among multiple geographic BIG-IP GTM devices. Network managers realize these benefits:
  - Improved user performance and reliability
  - Reduced network latency for DNS transactions
  - Ability to scale DNS infrastructure to manage DNS request load to one IP address
  - Lower rates of dropped query packets, reducing DNS timeouts/retries
  - Increased revenue by servicing more users and protecting brand equity

BIG-IP GTM and IP Anycast integration distributes the DNS request load by directing single IP requests to multiple local devices.

• **Global server load balancing in virtual and cloud environments**—Easily spin up virtual instances of BIG-IP GTM. Provide flexible DNS delivery and global application availability by routing users to applications in physical, virtual, and cloud environments.

**Architecture**

The advanced architecture of BIG-IP GTM gives you total flexibility to control application delivery without creating traffic bottlenecks.

The BIG-IP GTM architecture includes:

• **TMOS**—The F5 operating system, TMOS, provides a unified system for optimal DNS and application delivery, giving you total visibility, flexibility, and control across all BIG-IP services.
• **Query and response performance and scalability**—Linearly scale on larger platforms and increase performance by integrating functions in TMOS. BIG-IP GTM is provisionable for platforms that support F5 Virtual Clustered Multiprocessing™ (vCMP®).

**BIG-IP Platforms**

BIG-IP Global Traffic Manager is available as a standalone on BIG-IP appliances. It is available as an add-on module for BIG-IP Local Traffic Manager on any BIG-IP platform, including the F5 VIPRION® carrier-class chassis, and for BIG-IP LTM Virtual Edition. For detailed specifications, refer to the [BIG-IP System Hardware](#), [VIPRION](#) and [BIG-IP VE](#) datasheets.

**Virtual Platform**

BIG-IP Global Traffic Manager Virtual Edition (VE) offers the flexibility of a virtual BIG-IP system. Supported on several leading hypervisors and selected cloud environments, BIG-IP GTM VE can help meet the needs of your virtualized environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypervisors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VMware vSphere ESXi/NSX 5.5 and vCloud Director 5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrix XenServer 6.2 and Community Xen 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVM on CentOS/RHEL 6.4, Ubuntu 13.04, Debian 7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Hyper-V on Windows Server 2012 R2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon Web Services EC2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIG-IP Virtual Edition is available as an Amazon Machine Image for use within Amazon Web Services.
DNS On-Demand Scaling

Administrators have the option to add DNS and GSLB On-Demand Scaling with rate limit and object limit capacity as desired to BIG-IP GTM or BIG-IP LTM appliances. This option supports requirements for exact traffic performance, resulting in lower CapEx and OpEx. On-Demand Scaling includes the following services: DNS, GSLB, and DNSSEC. User interface statistics show rated capacity of instances, such as query RPS and object limits, which deliver fast traffic detail for easy capacity planning. Contact your regional F5 sales representative or reseller for more information.

Easy DNS with GSLB Evaluation and Testing

With the latest version of BIG-IP LTM, you can select DNS Lite, a performance-limited and free provisioning option with full DNS and GSLB capabilities for fast evaluation and testing. This invaluable option requires no evaluation keys or time limits for in-depth traffic performance and management analysis. Customers wanting to move to production deployment must purchase an appropriate BIG-IP GTM or DNS Services solution.

DNS Query RPS Maximum Performance

BIG-IP GTM or DNS Services delivers DNS query responses per second (RPS) with high performance scalability. The table below lists many BIG-IP platforms with DNS Express enabled for authoritative DNS query response with the maximum capabilities per platform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Max Query RPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Edition</td>
<td>250,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>215,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2200s</td>
<td>365,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000s</td>
<td>430,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4200v</td>
<td>730,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000s/5050s</td>
<td>785,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5200v/5250v</td>
<td>1,315,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7000s/7050s</td>
<td>780,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7200v/7250v</td>
<td>1,390,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10000s/10050s</td>
<td>1,130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10200v/10250v</td>
<td>1,905,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11050</td>
<td>2,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION 2200 Full Chassis (2 blades)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION 2400 Full Chassis (4 blades)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION B2100 Blade</td>
<td>875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION B2150 Blade</td>
<td>815,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION B2250 Blade</td>
<td>2,205,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION 4480 Full Chassis (4 blades)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION 4800 Full Chassis (8 blades)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIPRION B4300 Blade</td>
<td>2,320,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Virtual Edition is available in increments of 250,000 RPS. For 5000s and above, Rapid Response Mode (RRM—see page 2) delivers up to 200 percent of normal max query RPS when turned on. See F5 Sales or Reseller for details.
Simplified Licensing

Meeting your applications’ needs in a dynamic environment has never been easier. F5’s Good, Better, Best provides you with the flexibility to provision advanced modules on demand, at the best value.

- Decide what solutions are right for your applications’ environment with F5’s reference architectures.
- Provision the modules needed to run your applications with F5’s Good, Better, Best offerings.
- Implement complete application flexibility with the ability to deploy your modules on a virtual or physical platform.

F5 Global Services

F5 Global Services offers world-class support, training, and consulting to help you get the most from your F5 investment. Whether it’s providing fast answers to questions, training internal teams, or handling entire implementations from design to deployment, F5 Global Services can help ensure your applications are always secure, fast, and reliable. For more information about F5 Global Services, contact consulting@f5.com or visit F5 Professional Services.

DevCentral

The F5 DevCentral™ user community of more than 150,000 members is your source for the best technical documentation, discussion forums, blogs, media, and more related to DNS delivery and global app networking.
More Information

To learn more about BIG-IP GTM, use the search function on f5.com to find these and other resources.

Web pages
BIG-IP Global Traffic Manager
DevCentral

Datasheet
BIG-IP System Hardware Datasheet

Articles and white papers
DNS Reimagined Keeps Your Business Online
F5 Synthesis: DNS Shrugged
The Dynamic DNS Infrastructure
Cloud Balancing: The Evolution of GSLB
Distributing Applications for Disaster Planning and Availability

Case studies
SaaS Provider RelayHealth Delivers Innovative Healthcare Applications with F5 Solutions
Cloud-Based Automation SaaS Provider Ensures High Uptime and Resiliency for Critical Customer Apps