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A10 Networks Steps Up, As Juniper Steps Out

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While Juniper Networks (NSDQ: JNPR) closes down its DX line of load-balancing appliances, market newcomer A10 Networks is closing deals. A10 president and CEO Lee Chen says his company has signed four new accounts in the past month.

As reported by ChannelWeb and Light Reading, Juniper is dropping the DX product line that it acquired with the 2005 purchase of Redline Networks. A10 says that makes the market a four-company race, pitting A10 against Cisco (NSDQ: CSCO), Citrix (NSDQ: CTXS), and F5 Networks.

A10 is the newbie in that group. Founded in 2004 by Chen (former co-founder of Foundry Networks and Centillion Networks), A10's first product was an identity management appliance. A10 moved its headquarters to Silicon Valley in 2006, and in the middle of last year it began shipping its AX Series Advanced Traffic Manager, which manages application performance during peak loads. It also sells the EX Series bandwidth management appliance.

Earlier this week, A10 released the results of benchmark testing performed by the Tolly Group that showed the AX comparing favorably to F5's FIG-IP 3400. A10's switch was outfitted with a just-released software upgrade that brings new features and improved performance. One key metric: the AX exceeded 1 million Layer 7 transactions per second.

Cisco just came out with a new model in its competing Application Control Engine line, the ACE 4710 appliance.

A10 sells the AX to businesses and ISPs. P2P software developer Lime Wire is a customer. New accounts include Core Mobility (a service provide to mobile carriers), GameFlier (a game developer in Taiwan), the Beijing Olympics, and a major auto manufacturer.

Chen anticipates five to 10 times as many AX sales this year, though that's partly a reflection of the fact that A10 now has a full 12 months to sell its switches.