

Avans University of Applied Sciences Modernizes Hybrid Application Delivery with A10 Networks

Avans University of Applied Sciences modernized its hybrid application delivery by migrating from F5 to A10 Networks. With improved performance, simplified management, and scalability, Avans now delivers secure, high-availability services across campuses – with support from A10 Networks.

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**- David Schrok, Network Engineer,
Avans University of Applied Sciences**



Industry | Education

NETWORK SOLUTION



Thunder ADC Thunder SSLi

CRITICAL ISSUES



- Rigid legacy ADC - Existing solution lacked flexibility and hybrid-deployment support
- Operational complexity - Open-source options were complex and lacked enterprise-grade capabilities
- Scaling and cost pressure - Needed predictable costs and a platform that could scale with requirements

RESULTS



- Zero-downtime migration - Automated cutover delivered uninterrupted service and better performance
- Simpler, more reliable operations - Modern tooling reduced manual work and improved infrastructure stability

Secure Access to Hybrid Applications

Avans is one of the largest and most prestigious universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands, with over 30,000 students and 3,500 staff members. Known for its strong focus on practical education and close ties to industry, Avans provides a wide range of bachelor and master's programs across technology, business, healthcare, and the arts. With campuses spread across the Netherlands, Avans is committed to innovation, sustainability, and preparing students for real-world challenges.

Avans operates a dual-data-center setup with connections to both on-premises infrastructure and cloud services. Its core network is built around high availability and redundancy using a mix of virtualized workloads, dedicated hardware appliances, and SaaS platforms to deliver applications securely and without network interruption. Additionally, Avans also supports a growing portfolio of digital learning services, remote access environments, and collaboration tools.

Security, scalability, and uptime are key priorities for the university. Network Engineer, David Schrok, and his team, are responsible for the design, management, and continuous improvement of Avans' network and security infrastructure. This includes making sure that all applications and digital services remain available and performant across all campuses. David leads the evaluation and implementation of new technologies, identifying opportunities for improvements, and he works with internal stakeholders and external partners to make sure that Avans' network and security infrastructure meets current and future requirements.

Enabling easy and secure access to both on-premises and cloud applications is a key responsibility for Schrok. This includes capacity planning, managing application delivery and security platforms, handling service performance, and making sure the university can easily scale, in line with increasing student numbers and digital workloads.

Seeking a Future-ready ADC

Avans had implemented an F5 application delivery controller (ADC) that focused on cloud application delivery on-premises. However, given its requirement for hybrid support, Avans sought out alternative solutions. After evaluating several open-source solutions, Avans started reviewing and testing virtual appliances from A10 Networks. The team was impressed with the excellent customer support provided by A10 during this pilot testing stage.

Avans adopted both practical and strategic methods during the evaluation phase, concentrating on the following key requirements:

- **Ease of deployment and manageability** – Avans sought a platform that streamlines network and security operations through automation and user-friendly tools, minimizing time spent on manual setup.
- **Performance and reliability** – Avans required high availability, efficient load balancing, and SSL/TLS offload to handle peak demand during onboarding and exams.
- **Scalability and flexibility** – The solution had to support on-premises and current/future hybrid cloud needs with seamless migration paths.
- **Total cost of ownership (TCO)** – Avans prioritized transparent licensing, predictable costs, and scalable support to avoid steep price increases.



Balancing Performance and Simplicity: Why A10 Was the Strategic Fit

During the assessment, A10 stood out by providing an optimal balance of performance, manageability, and TCO. Compared to F5 and other solutions, A10 was the right fit for Avans' operational and strategic technology requirements. It offered the ideal mix of ease-of-use, robust enterprise features, and scalability. A10 was collaborative in its approach, actively supported testing, and responded promptly to questions. This gave Avans confidence that A10 could support a seamless implementation of the solution and deliver any ongoing support.

A10 differentiated itself in several key areas:

- **Ease of use and intuitive management** – A10 made complex network configurations quick and simple from day one.
- **Familiar CLI and automation** – Network engineers onboarded quickly thanks to a familiar command line interface (CLI), while Terraform and Ansible support aligned with Avans' infrastructure-as-code strategy.

- **Enterprise-grade access control** – Unlike open-source options, A10 provided native support for centralized authentication and authorization of users, administrators, and applications accessing its appliances and services.
- **Performance and efficiency** – A10 delivered strong performance with minimal resource demands and straightforward licensing of its appliances.
- **Cost-effective scalability** – Transparent licensing allowed Avans to scale predictably without unexpected costs.

"We started with a broad evaluation that included some commercial ADC vendors and several open-source alternatives. We needed to find a solution that fit our strategy to simplify management, improve flexibility, and reduce operational overheads. We tried several open-source ADCs, but most were missing key enterprise features or were too complex to manage."



Smart, Scalable and Supportive

Avans selected A10 Thunder® Application Delivery Controller (ADC) and virtual appliances. It completed a full migration from its existing F5 ADC environment to A10, replacing source network address translation (SNAT), reverse proxy, and URL redirection functions. Schrok's team built and tested the A10 configuration alongside F5, delivering zero disruption. Once ready, they executed a domain name system (DNS) cutover with no rollbacks or downtime.

Most of the effort focused on translating F5 logic into A10. Automation with Terraform and Ansible accelerated setup and delivered consistency, while A10's intuitive CLI simplified fine-tuning.

Native support for two authentication and authorization protocols, TACACS+ and RADIUS, enabled seamless identity integration, and the API fed real-time metrics into open-source observability and data visualization platform, Grafana, for performance visibility.

Challenges were resolved quickly with A10's support and simpler configuration model. The team was able to build in parallel without disrupting the F5 setup, making the final transition smooth and risk-free.

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"A10 has been a true partner throughout the entire process, not just a vendor."

Simpler, Faster, Smarter: Transforming Avans' Application Delivery and Operations

Since moving to A10, Avans has seen clear improvements in application delivery and operational efficiency. Performance is noticeably more consistent, and applications respond faster, especially during peak periods such as semester registration or exam weeks. A10's platform handles SSL offloading and traffic distribution efficiently, reducing latency for end users.

Operationally, the solution is significantly easier to manage. Routine changes that previously required substantial manual time and resources are now straightforward and quick. The ability to automate repeatable tasks using Ansible and Terraform has reduced configuration drift and improved overall reliability. In short, A10 has made Avans' ADC infrastructure simpler, faster, and more predictable.

Streamlining Processes: A Better Way of Working

As Avans' environment evolves further, it will look to continue to use A10's capabilities for application delivery, load balancing, and traffic management across cloud and on-premises environments. With a solid foundation in place, Avans is well-positioned to confidently scale its digital infrastructure, leveraging A10's solutions to support future innovation and growth.



The State of Application Load Balancing in 2025

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About A10 Networks

A10 Networks provides security and infrastructure solutions for on-premises, hybrid cloud, and edge-cloud environments. Our 7000+ customers span global large enterprises and communications, cloud and web service providers who must ensure business-critical applications and networks are secure, available, and efficient. Founded in 2004, A10 Networks is based in San Jose, Calif. and serves customers globally.

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