

Understanding Content Rules

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You can create content rules to specify how an HTTP request is directed to one or more Real Servers based on the URL or Header fields of an incoming request.

If a request does not match any content rule, it is directed to the Service's Real Servers.

After you define a Layer 7 - HTTP or HTTPS Service on the **BASIC > Services** page, click **Rule** in the **Add** field to open the **Content Rule** page.

A content rule consists of three patterns, host, URL, and extended match.

If there are multiple rules for a service, each element of an incoming request is matched against each element of the content rules in the following sequence:

1. Host
2. URL
3. Extended match

First an attempt is made to match the request against the host specified in each content rule. Next, an attempt is made to match the URL. Last, an attempt is made to match against the Extended Match. Once a match is made, the content rule is executed.

For example, if a Service has the following three rules:

- Rule A - host * URL: /xyz/123.htm extended match: *
- Rule B - host * URL: /* extended match: *
- Rule C - host .abc.com URL: / extended match: *

And the Load Balancer receives a request for `www.abc.com/xyz/123.html`. Rule C is the rule executed, because Rule C has the most specific match for the host request.

Here is another example. This time the Service has the following two rules:

- Rule A - host `www.example.com` URL `/images/*`
- Rule B - host `www.example.com` URL `/images/*.png`

The Load Balancer receives a request is for `www.example.com/images/x.png`. This time Rule B is executed because both the host pattern and the URL pattern are the most specific match for the request.

If a rule has the most specific host and URL for a request, any Extended Match expressions for that rule are evaluated in the order established by the Extended Match Order field. If the request does not

match any Extended Match expression for the rule then the request is considered to have failed to match any rule.

On the **BASIC > Services** page, you also configure the Real Servers that process the traffic matching the rule.

For details on Extended Match and Condition expressions, see [How to Use Extended Match and Condition Expressions](#).

For information on Redirect Rules, see [Understanding Redirect Rules](#).

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