Distributed Algorithms
Consistency & Replication

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Redundancy is our main avenue of survival
Robert Silverberg, “Shadrach in the furnace”
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Introduction to replicated systems

Introduction

Definition (Availability)

The probability that a system will provide its required service, or the ratio of the total time a system is capable of being used during a given interval to the length of the interval:

\[ A = \frac{E[\text{uptime}]}{E[\text{uptime} + \text{downtime}]} \]

Example

- One single server
- On average, crashes once per week (MTBF: 10.080′)
- Two minutes to reboot (MTBR: 2′)

\[ A = \frac{10080}{10080 + 2} = 0.9998 \]
Introduction

Definition (Availability)

The probability that a system will provide its required service, or the ratio of the total time a system is capable of being used during a given interval to the length of the interval:

\[
A = \frac{E[uptime]}{E[uptime + downtime]}
\]

Example

- Ten servers
- MTBF, MTBR as before
- All needed at the same time to perform the service

\[
p_f = \frac{2}{10082}
\]

\[
A = (1 - p_f)^{10} = 0.998
\]
Introduction to replicated systems

Introduction

Definition (Availability)

The probability that a system will provide its required service, or the ratio of the total time a system is capable of being used during a given interval to the length of the interval:

\[ A = \frac{E[uptime]}{E[uptime + downtime]} \]

Example

- Ten servers
- MTBF, MTBR as before
- One replica needed to perform the service

\[ pf = \frac{2}{10082} \]

\[ A = 1 - (pf)^{10} = 1 - 10^{-38} \]
Replication

How to increase availability:

- Avoid single point of failures
- Use replication (time/space)

Replication in space:

- Run parallel copies
- Vote on replica output
- High-availability, high-cost

Replication in time:

- When a replica fails, restart it (or replace it)
- Lower maintenance, lower availability
Replication

Replication advantages:

- Replicating a service increases its availability
- Performance benefits:
  - Geographical co-location
  - Load-balancing
  - No bottlenecks

Replication drawbacks:

- Trade-off between availability and consistency
- Transparent replication is difficult
Consistency problem

The consistency problem:

- Whenever a copy is modified, that copy becomes different from the rest
- Modifications have to be carried out on all copies to ensure consistency

Conflicting operations - from the world of transactions:

- Read–write conflict: concurrent read operation and write operation
- Write–write conflict: two concurrent write operations
Consistency problem

The goal
We generally need to ensure that all conflicting operations are done in the same order everywhere

The problem
Guaranteeing global ordering on conflicting operations may be a costly operation, downgrading scalability

The solution
Weaken consistency requirements so that hopefully global synchronization can be avoided
Consistency example

Example (Flight reservation database)

- At 9.36, all seats of flight 48 are booked
- At 9.37, Jane cancel its reservation on flight 48
- At 9.38, Michael tries to reserve a seat on flight 48
  - the answer is fully booked
- At 9.39, George tries to reserve a seat on flight 48
  - the seat is granted

What do you think?
Consistency models

Definition (Consistency model)
A contract between a distributed data store and a set of processes, which specifies what the results of read/write operations are in the presence of concurrency.

Definition (Distributed data store)
A distributed collection of storage entities accessible to clients
- Distributed database, file system
- Shared memory in a parallel system
Consistency models

Werner Vogels

Whether or not inconsistencies are acceptable depends on the client application. In all cases the developer must be aware that consistency guarantees are provided by the storage systems and must be taken into account when developing applications.


Amazon’s vice-president and Chief Scientific Officer
Consistency models

Strong consistency models
- Strict consistency
- Linearizability
- Sequential consistency

Weak consistency models
- Eventual consistency
- Client-centric consistency models
  - Read-after-read (monotonic read)
  - Read-after-write (read your writes)
- Causal consistency
Notation

- Write operation: $w(x, v)$
- Read operation: $r(x) \rightarrow v$
Strict consistency

Definition (Strict consistency)
A read operation must return the result of the latest write operation which occurred on the data item

Implementation:
- Only possible with a global, perfectly synchronized clock
- Only possible if all writes instantaneously visible to all

It makes sense, though:
- it is the model of uniprocessor systems!
Linearizability

Definition (Linearizability, Herlihy and Wing, 1991)

An execution $E$ is linearizable provided that there exists a sequence (linearization) $H$ such that

1. $H$ contains exactly the same operations that occur in $E$, each paired with the return value received in $E$.
2. $H$ is a legal history of the sequential data type that is replicated.
3. The total order of operations in $H$ is compatible with the real-time partial order $<_{E,rt}$.

- $o_1 <_{E,rt} o_2$ means that the duration of operation $o_1$ (from invocation till it returns) occurs entirely before the duration of operation $o_2$.
- The real-time order $<_{E,rt}$ is a partial order.
Linearizability

Example

Are the following sequences possible linearizations?

- $w(x, 5) \ r(x) \rightarrow 5 \ \ w(y, 6) \ r(y) \rightarrow 0$
- $w(x, 5) \ r(x) \rightarrow 5 \ r(y) \rightarrow 0 \ w(y, 6)$

Is the above execution linearizable?
(Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Linearizability

Example

- Are the following sequences possible linearizations?
  - $w(x, 5) \quad r(x) \to 5 \quad w(y, 6) \quad r(y) \to 0 \quad$ NO!
  - $w(x, 5) \quad r(x) \to 5 \quad r(y) \to 0 \quad w(y, 6) \quad$ NO!

- Is the above execution linearizable? NO!
  (Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Linearizability

Example

- Are the following sequences possible linearizations?
  - $w(x, 5) \ r(x) \rightarrow 5 \ w(y, 6) \ r(y) \rightarrow 0$
  - $w(x, 5) \ r(x) \rightarrow 5 \ r(y) \rightarrow 0 \ w(y, 6)$

- Is the above execution linearizable?
  (Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Linearizability

Example

- Are the following sequences possible linearizations?
  - $w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow w(y, 6) \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 0$  
    NO!
  - $w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 0 \rightarrow w(y, 6)$  
    YES!

- Is the above execution linearizable?  
  YES!

(Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Linearizability

Example

- Are the following sequences possible linearizations?
  - \( w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow w(y, 6) \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 6 \)
  - \( w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 6 \rightarrow w(y, 6) \)

- Is the above execution linearizable?
  (Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Linearizability

Example

- Are the following sequences possible linearizations?
  - $w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow w(y, 6) \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 6$ \hspace{1em} YES!
  - $w(x, 5) \rightarrow r(x) \rightarrow 5 \rightarrow r(y) \rightarrow 6 \rightarrow w(y, 6)$ \hspace{1em} NO!

- Is the above execution linearizable? \hspace{1em} YES!
 (Read: is there a sequence that is a linearization of the example?)
Sequential Consistency

Definition (Sequential Consistency, Lamport, 1978)

An execution $E$ is sequential consistent provided that there exists a sequence $H$ such that:

- **SC1** $H$ contains exactly the same operations that occur in $E$, each paired with the return value received in $E$.
- **SC2** $H$ is a legal history of the sequential data type that is replicated.
- **SC3** The total order of operations in $H$ is compatible with the client partial order $<_{E,c}$.

- $o_1 <_{E,c} o_2$ means that the $o_1$ and $o_2$ occur at the same client and that $o_1$ returns before $o_2$ is invoked.
- The client order $<_{E,c}$ is a partial order.
Sequential Consistency

Example

- Is the execution above sequentially consistent?
Sequential Consistency

Example
- Is the execution above sequentially consistent? YES
Sequential Consistency

Example

• Is the execution above sequentially consistent?
Sequential Consistency

Example

- Is the execution above sequentially consistent? NO
Sequential Consistency

Example

- Is the execution above sequentially consistent?
Sequential Consistency

Example

- Is the execution above sequentially consistent? NO
Sequential Consistency

Example

- Is the execution above sequentially consistent?
Sequential Consistency

Example
- Is the execution above sequentially consistent? YES
### Sequential Consistency Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process $p_1$</th>
<th>Process $p_2$</th>
<th>Process $p_3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$x \leftarrow 1$</td>
<td>$y \leftarrow 1$</td>
<td>$z \leftarrow 1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>print</strong> $y, z$</td>
<td><strong>print</strong> $x, z$</td>
<td><strong>print</strong> $x, y$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Initially, all variables have value 0
- How many “potential executions” (actions executed in any order)? $6! = 720$
- How many “valid executions” (with client partial order)? $(5!/4) \cdot 3 = 90$
- How many “potential outputs” (signatures ordered by $p_1$, $p_2$, $p_3$)? $2^6 = 64$
Sequential Consistency

- How many “sequentially consistent outputs”? < 64
- Example: Is 000000 sequentially consistent? No
  - All print operations “happen before” the updates - impossible
- Example: Is 001001 sequentially consistent? No
  - print $yz = 00$ after $x ← 1$, before $y ← 1$, $z ← 1$
  - $x ← 1$, print $yz = 00$, $y ← 1$, print $xz = 10$, $z ← 1$, print $xy = 11$, No!
  - $x ← 1$, print $yz = 00$, $z ← 1$ – no ($z$ was never equal to 1)
Several other models

- FIFO/PRAM Consistency (Lipton and Sandberg, 1988)
- Release Consistency (Gharachorloo et al, 1990)
- Entry Consistency (Bershad et al, 1993)
- ...
Weak consistency

**Problem**
- It is easy to provide strong consistency through appropriate hardware and/or software mechanisms
- But these are typically found to incur considerable penalties, in latency, availability after faults, etc.

**Example**
- Strong consistency often implies that message should arrive in the same order
- Can be implemented through a sequencer replica
- Latency: the sequencer replica becomes a bottleneck
- Availability: a new sequencer must be elected after a failure
Weak consistency

Weak consistency models

Different weak models differ based on the precise details of which reorderings are allowed:

- within the activity of a client
- by whether there are any constraints at all on the information provided to different clients
Eventual Consistency

Scenario: consider a system where

- updates are rare
- concurrent updates are absent, or can be easily resolved in an automatic way

Example: DNS

- Updates are rare w.r.t. to reads!
- Only a centralized authority can update the system; no concurrent updates.

Do we need sequential consistency in this case?
Eventual Consistency

Definition (Eventual consistency)
If no updates take place for a long time, all replicas will gradually become consistent (i.e., the same)

Comment:
- The consistency policy of epidemic protocols
- This is not a safety property, is a liveness one
- What happens in our three-process example with prints?
Eventual Consistency

- Example: Is 000000 eventual consistent? Yes

- In general, all the potential 64 outputs are possible
Consistency for mobile users

Consider a replicated database that you access through your notebook. The notebook acts as a front-end to the database.
Consistency for mobile users

Problem: Eventual Consistency is not sufficient

- You move from location $A$ to location $B$
- Unless you use the same server, you may detect inconsistencies:
  - your updates at $A$ may not have yet been propagated to $B$
  - you may be reading newer entries than the ones available at $A$
  - your updates at $B$ may eventually conflict with those at $A$

What we can do?
The only thing you really care is that the entries you updated and/or read at $A$, are in $B$ the way you left them in $A$. In that case, the database will appear to be consistent to you
Client-centric consistency

Idea

In some cases, we can avoid system-wide consistency, by concentrating on what specific clients want, instead of what should be provided by servers.

Models:

- Read-after-read / Monotonic reads
- Write-after-write / Monotonic writes
- Read-after-write / Read-your-writes
- Write-after-read / Write-follows-reads
Justifications

**Definition (Justification)**

Each operation \( o \) performed in an execution \( E \) has a justification \( J_o \), which is a sequence of other operations that occurred in \( E \) such that the return value \( o \) received in \( E \) is the one which the sequential data type would give to operation \( o \) when performed in the state which is produced by starting in the initial state and then applying each operation in \( J_o \) in turn.
Monotonic reads – Read-after-read

**Definition (Monotonic reads)**

If a process reads data item $x$, any successive read operation on $x$ by that process will always return that same value or a more recent one.

**Formally**

Given two read operations $o_1$ and $o_2$ submitted by a client $c$, the justification $J_{o_1}$ is a prefix of justification of $J_{o_2}$.

**Example**

Reading incoming mail on a web-server. Each time you connect to a different e-mail server, that server fetches (at least) all the updates from the server you previously visited.
Monotonic reads – Read-after-read

Is the above execution satisfying read-after-read?
Monotonic reads – Read-after-read

Is the above execution satisfying read-after-read? NO!
Monotonic reads – Read-after-read

Is the above execution satisfying read-after-read?
Monotonic reads – Read-after-read

- Is the above execution satisfying read-after-read?  YES!
Read your writes – Read-after-write

**Definition (Read your writes)**

The effect of a write operation by a process on data item $x$, will always be seen by a successive read operation on $x$ by the same process.

**Formally**

When submitting a read operation $o$, $J_o$ is equal to the sequence of write operation performed by client $c$ before submitting $o$.

**Example**

Updating your web page and guaranteeing that your web browser shows the newest version instead of its cached copy.
Other client-centric models

**Definition (Monotonic writes)**
A write operation by a process on a data item $x$ is completed before any successive write operation on $x$ by the same process.

**Definition (Writes follow read)**
A write operation by a process $P$ on a data item $x$ following a previous read operation on $x$ by $P$, is guaranteed to take place on the same or a more recent value of $x$ that was read.
Session consistency

Definition (Session consistency)

- A practical version of read-your-writes, where processes access a data storage in the context of a session
- As long as the session exists, the system guarantees read-your-writes
- If the session terminates because of a failure, a new session must be created
- Guarantees are limited to sessions
Causal Consistency – (Hutto and Ahamad, 1990)

Definition (Causal Consistency)
All writes that are (potentially) causally related must be seen by every process in causal order.

Define “causally related”:
- a read followed by a write, on the same process:
  - the write is (potentially) causally related by the read
- a write followed by a read of the same value, on diff. process:
  - the read is (potentially) causally related by the write

Example of use:
- Bulletin board
Causal Consistency

Example

- Is the following example causally consistent?
- Is the following example sequentially consistent?

\[ p_1 \quad w(s, 99) \]
\[ p_2 \quad w(s, 100) \]
\[ p_3 \quad r(s) \rightarrow 100 \quad r(s) \rightarrow 99 \]
\[ p_4 \quad r(s) \rightarrow 99 \quad r(s) \rightarrow 100 \]
Causal Consistency

Example

- Is the following example causally consistent?
- Is the following example sequentially consistent?
Amazon S3

Amazon S3 (Simple Storage Service) is an online storage web service offered by Amazon Web Services. S3 is designed to provide 99.99% availability and 99.999999999% durability of objects over a given year.

From Amazon S3’s FAQ

*Q:* What data consistency model does Amazon S3 employ?

Amazon S3 buckets in the US West (Northern California), EU (Ireland), Asia Pacific (Singapore), and Asia Pacific (Tokyo) Regions provide read-after-write consistency for PUTS of new objects and eventual consistency for overwrite PUTS and DELETES. Amazon S3 buckets in the US Standard Region provide eventual consistency.
Berkeley DB

Oracle’s Berkeley DB is a computer software library that provides a high-performance embedded database for key/value data. Used in Postfix, Subversion, SpamAssassin, BitCoin.

From the Berkeley DB manual

In a distributed system, the changes made at the master are not always instantaneously available at every replica, although they eventually will be. In general, replicas not directly involved in contributing to a transaction commit will lag behind other replicas because they do not synchronize their commits with the master. For this reason, you might want to make use of the read-your-writes consistency feature.
Apache ZooKeeper

Apache ZooKeeper is a software project of the Apache Software Foundation, providing an open source centralized configuration service and naming registry for large distributed systems. ZooKeeper is a sub project of Hadoop.

From ZooKeeper

*Sequential Consistency*: Updates from a client will be applied in the order that they were sent.

What?
Reading material

Relevant bibliography


Passive replication

- Clients communicate with primary server
- Updates are forwarded from primary to backups
- Queries are replied by the primary
Active replication

- Several (all) replicas handle the invocation and send the response
- Updates must be applied in the same order – total order broadcast
Passive vs Active

Passive replication

- Computation is performed only at primary
- If state updates are large, can waste network bandwidth
- Can handle non-determinism

Active replication

- Small recovery delay after failures
- If operations are compute intensive, can waste computational resources
- Only deterministic
Consistency protocols

- Primary-based protocols
  - Definition
  - Lower bounds

- Replicated-write protocols
  - Majority, quorum-based
  - State machine approach

- Client-centric protocols
  - Monotonic reads
  - Read-your-writes
The idea

- Clients communicate with a single replica (the primary)
- The primary updates the other replicas (backup)
- Backups detect the failure of the primary using a timeout mechanism
- Clients learn from the service when the primary fails and the service “fail over” to a backup
- Note: non-deterministic events are executed only at the primary
How to evaluate a primary-backup protocol

**Definition (Degree of replication)**
Number of servers used to implement the service; the smaller, the better

**Definition (Blocking time)**
The worst-case period between a request and its response in any failure-free execution

**Definition (Failover time)**
The worst-case period during which request can be lost because there is no primary
Definitions

**Definition (Service outage)**
The service has a server outage at $t$ if some correct client sends a request at time $t$ to the service, but does not receive a response.

**Definition ($(k, \Delta)$-bofo service - “bounded outage, finitely often”)**
A service in which all server outages can be grouped into at most $k$ intervals of time, each of them at most length $\Delta$. 
**Specification**

**PB1** At any time, there is at most one server $p_i$ that acts as a primary

**PB2** If a client request arrives at a server that is not the current primary, then the request is ignored

**PB3** There exist fixed values $k$ and $\Delta$ such that the service behaves like a single $(k, \Delta)$-bofo service
Primary-backup – Simple protocol

System model:
- point-to-point communication
- no communication failures
- upper bound \( \delta \) on message delivery time
- FIFO channels
- at most one server crashes

Two servers:
- The primary \( p_1 \)
- The backup \( p_2 \)

Variables:
- At server \( p_i \), \( primary = \text{true} \) if \( p_i \) acts as the current primary
- At clients, \( primary \) is equal to the identifier of the current primary
Primary-backup – Simple protocol

Protocol executed by the primary $p_1$

upon initialization do
  primary ← true

upon receive $\langle$REQ, $r$$\rangle$ from $c$ do
  state ← update(state, $r$) % Update local state
  send $\langle$STATE, state$\rangle$ to $p_2$ % Send update to backup
  send $\langle$REP, reply($r$)$\rangle$ to $c$ % Reply to client

repeat every $\tau$ seconds
  send $\langle$HB$\rangle$ to $p_2$ % Heartbeat message

upon recovery after a failure do
  { start behaving like a backup }
Primary-backup – Simple protocol

Protocol executed by the backup $p_2$

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{upon initialization} & \quad \text{do} \\
& \quad \left[ \text{primary} \leftarrow \text{false} \right] \\
\text{upon receive} \ \langle \text{STATE, } s \rangle & \quad \text{do} \\
& \quad \left[ \text{state} \leftarrow s \right] \quad \% \quad \text{Update local state} \\
\text{upon not receiving a heartbeat for } \tau + \delta \text{ seconds} & \quad \text{do} \\
& \quad \left[ \text{primary} \leftarrow \text{true} \right] \quad \% \quad \text{Becomes new primary} \\
& \quad \text{send} \ \langle \text{NEWP} \rangle \ \text{to} \ c \quad \% \quad \text{Inform the client of new primary} \\
& \quad \left\{ \text{start behaving like a primary} \right\}
\end{align*}
\]
Protocol executed by client $c$

upon initialization do
\[
\text{primary} \leftarrow p_1 \quad \% \quad \text{Initial primary}
\]

upon receive $\langle \text{NEWP} \rangle$ from $p_2$ do
\[
\text{primary} \leftarrow p_2 \quad \% \quad \text{Backup}
\]

upon operation($r$) do
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{while not received a reply do} \\
\text{send } \langle \text{REQ}, r \rangle \text{ to primary} \\
\text{wait receive } \langle \text{REP}, v \rangle \text{ or receive } \langle \text{NEWP} \rangle \\
\text{return } v
\end{align*}
\]
Simple protocol – Proof of correctness

PB1 At any time, there is at most one server $p_i$ that acts as a primary

Proof
- $\text{primary}_1 = \text{true}$ $\land$ $\text{primary}_2 = \text{false}$ until the failure of $p_1$
- $\text{primary}_2 = \text{false}$ until the expiration of the timeout
- $\text{primary}_2 = \text{true}$ after the expiration of the timeout
- Failover time: $\tau + 2\delta$
Simple protocol – Proof of correctness

**PB2** If a client request arrives at a server that is not the current primary, then the request is ignored

**Proof** Trivially follows from the protocol
Simple protocol – Proof of correctness

**PB3** There exist fixed values $k$ and $\Delta$ such that the service behaves like a single $(k, \Delta)$-bofo service

**Proof** Find $k$, $\Delta$

- At most one process can fail: $k = 1$
- $\Delta = \tau + 4\delta$:
  - Assume $p_1$ crashes at $t_c$
  - Any client request sent to $p_1$ at time $t_c - \delta$ or later may be lost
  - $p_2$ may not become the new primary until $t_c + \tau + 2\delta$
  - Client may not learn that $p_2$ is new primary for another $\delta$

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Alberto Montresor (UniTN)
Simple protocol – Questions

Question
What kind of consistency model is provided by this simple protocol?

Answer: Linearizability
An execution $E$ is linearizable provided that there exists a sequence $(linearization) H$ such that

L1 $H$ contains exactly the same operations that occur in $E$, each paired with the return value received in $E$

L2 $H$ is a legal history of the sequential data type that is replicated

L3 the total order of operations in $H$ is compatible with the real-time partial order $<_{E,rt}$
Primary-backup – Multiple backups

System model:
- point-to-point communication
- Perfect Channels
- perfect failure detector $P$
- FIFO channels
- at most $f < n$ servers crash

$n$ servers:
- $p_1, \ldots, p_n$
Primary-backup – Multiple backups

Protocol executed by process $p_i$

upon receive $\langle \text{REQ}, id, r \rangle$ from $c$ do

servers ← servers $-$ \{ $p_j : p_j \in \text{servers} \land j < i$ \}

if id $\notin$ state then

state ← update(state, r)

send $\langle \text{STATE}, state, id \rangle$ to servers

wait receive$\langle \text{STATE}, id \rangle$ from servers

send $\langle \text{REP}, id, \text{reply}(r) \rangle$ to $c$

upon suspect($p_j$) do

servers ← servers $-$ \{ $p_j$ \}

upon receive $\langle \text{STATE}, id, s \rangle$ from $p_k$ do

servers ← servers $-$ \{ $p_j : p_j \in \text{servers} \land j < k$ \}

if $p_k \in \text{servers}$ then

state ← s

send $\langle \text{STATE}, id \rangle$ to $p_k$
Protocol executed by client $c$

**upon** initialization **do**
- MAP $response \leftarrow \text{new MAP}()$;

**upon** receive $\langle \text{REP}, id, v \rangle$ **do**
- $response[id] \leftarrow v$

**upon** suspect($p_j$) **do**
- $servers \leftarrow servers - \{p_j\}$

**upon** operation($r$) **do**
- $id \leftarrow \text{newId}()$
- **while** $servers \neq \emptyset$ **or** $response[id] = \text{nil}$ **do**
  - $p_k \leftarrow \text{min(servers)}$
  - send $\langle \text{REQ}, id, r \rangle$ \text{to} $p_k$
- **wait** $response[id] \neq \text{nil}$ \text{or} $p_k \notin servers$
- return $response[id]$

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Primary-backup – Multiple backups

- How large is the failover time?
  \[ \tau + 2\delta, \] as before (hidden in the Failure Detector)

- How large is the outage period \( \Delta \)?
  \[ (\tau + 2\delta)f \]

- What kind of consistency model we obtain if all operations are handled by the primary?
  Linearizability

- What kind of consistency model we obtain if only write operations are handled by the primary?
  Sequential consistency
Lower bounds

- Assuming that no more than $f$ components can fail, what are the smallest possible values (lower bounds) of
  - the degree of replication
  - the failover time?
  - the blocking time

- Knowing the lower bounds for a problem enables to evaluate the quality of a protocol

- Tight lower bounds $\rightarrow$ optimal protocols

- Components:
  - Processes
  - Point-to-point links
  - Up to $f$ crash+link failures $\rightarrow$ at most $f$ processes may crash or $f$ links may crash or $f_1$ links + $f_2$ processes = $f$ components
## Lower bounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Failure Model</th>
<th>Degree of Replication</th>
<th>Blocking Time</th>
<th>Failover Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crash</td>
<td>$n &gt; f$</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$f\delta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crash+link</td>
<td>$n &gt; f + 1$</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$2f\delta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rec-omission</td>
<td>$\left\lceil \frac{3f}{2} \right\rceil$</td>
<td>$2\delta$</td>
<td>$2f\delta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>send-omission</td>
<td>$n &gt; f$</td>
<td>$2\delta$</td>
<td>$2f\delta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omission</td>
<td>$n &gt; 2f$</td>
<td>$2\delta$</td>
<td>$2f\delta$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lower bounds

Crash+link

To tolerate up to $f$ crash+link failures, more than $f + 1$ servers are needed.

Proof – by contradiction

Suppose $n = f + 1$ servers is sufficient

- divide the $n$ servers in two subsets $A$ and $B_1 \ldots B_f$
- if all server in $B$ crash, $A$ must become primary
- if $A$ crashes, one of servers $B_i$ must become primary
- what if all $f$ links between $A$ and $B_i$ fails?
Multiple primaries

- W1. Write request
- W2. Forward request to primary
- W3. Tell backups to update
- W4. Acknowledge update
- W5. Acknowledge write completed

- R1. Read request
- R2. Response to read
Quorum protocols (Gifford, 1979)

Definition

Quorum-based protocols guarantee that each operation is carried out in such a way that a majority vote (a quorum) is established.

- **Write quorum** $n_W$: the number of replicas that need to acknowledge the receipt of the update to complete the update
- **Read quorum** $n_R$: the number of replicas that are contacted when a data object is accessed through a read operation

Constraints

- $n_R + n_W > n$ (prevent R-W conflicts)
- $n_W > n/2$ (prevent W-W conflicts)

The algorithm

- To read, the most up-to-date entry is taken
- Quorums guarantee that the last written entry will be present
Quorum protocols (Gifford, 1979)

- **Read quorum**
  - $N_R = 3$, $N_W = 10$

- **Write quorum**
  - $N_R = 7$, $N_W = 6$
Quorum protocols (Gifford, 1979)

\[ N_R = 1, \quad N_W = 12 \]
Definition (State machine)

A state machine consists of:

- State variables
- Commands which transforms its state
  - Implemented by deterministic programs
  - Atomic with respect to other commands

Specification

- **Agreement**: every correct replica receives the same set of commands
- **Order**: every non-faulty state machine processes the commands it receives in the same order
Implementing linearizability – General scheme

Implementation

- The initiator A-broadcasts all read, write requests to all servers
- When the message is A-delivered at the initiator, it replies to the client

Correctness

- All replicas execute read, write in the same order

Assumptions

- Synchronous system
- Asynchronous system with $\diamond S$ failure detector
Implementing sequential consistency – General scheme

Implementation

- The initiator A-broadcasts write requests to all servers
- When the message is A-delivered, the replica updates its local copy
- Read request are replied immediately by the initiator

Correctness

- Writes are executed in the same order everywhere
- Reads are consistent with local order

Assumptions

- Synchronous system
- Asynchronous system with $\diamond S$ failure detector
Implementing causal consistency – General scheme

Implementation

- The initiator C-broadcasts write requests to all servers
- When the message is C-delivered, the replica updates its local copy
- Read request are replied immediately by the initiator

Correctness

- Writes are executed in a causal order
- Reads are consistent with local (and causal) order

Assumptions

- Asynchronous system
Hypervisor-based fault tolerance

- Implement state machine on virtual machines running on the same instruction-set as underlying hardware
- Undetectable by higher layers of software
- One of the great come-backs in systems research!
  - CP-67 for IBM 369 [1970]
  - Xen [SOSP 2003], VMware
- State transition should be deterministic
- ...but some VM instructions are not (e.g. time-of-day)!
- Two types of commands
  - Virtual-machine instructions
  - Virtual-machine interrupts (with DMA input)
    Interrupts must be delivered at the same point in cmd sequence
Hypervisor-based fault tolerance

  - Technical paper associated to a patent
  - Best paper award
  - Real implementation for XEN
Client-centric consistency - Naive implementations

- Each write operation is assigned a unique identifier
  ▶ Done by the server where the operation is requested

- For each client $c$, we keep track of:
  ▶ Read set $WS_r$: contains write operations relevant to the read operations performed by $c$
  ▶ Write set $WS_w$: contains write operations relevant to the write operations performed by $c$

- For each server, we keep track of:
  ▶ Write set $WS$: contains the write operations executed so far
Monotonic reads - Naive implementation

- To perform a read operation $o_r$, a client:
  - send $o_r$ and its read set $WS_r$ to the server

- The server
  - Checks whether all the writes in $WS_r$ have been executed locally ($WS_r \subseteq WS$?)
  - If not, asks the appropriate servers the missing operations $O$
  - Applies the operations $O$ and add them to $WS$
  - Returns the requested value and the $WS$ set to the client

- The client
  - Adds $WS$ to its local read set: $WS_r = WS_r \cup WS$
Read your writes - Naive implementation

- To perform a read operation \( o_r \), a client:
  - send \( o_r \) and its write set \( WS_w \) to the server

- The server
  - Checks whether all the writes in \( WS_w \) have been executed locally \( (WS_w \subseteq WS?) \)
  - If not, asks the appropriate servers the missing operations \( O \)
  - Applies the operations \( O \) and add them to \( WS \)
  - Returns the requested value to the client

- To perform a write operation \( o_w \), a client \( c \)
  - send \( o_w \) to the server
  - add \( o_w \) to the write set \( WS_w \)
Theorem (Impossibility of CAP)

It is impossible for a web service to provide more than two of the following three guarantees:

- **Consistency**
- **Availability**
- **Partition-tolerance**

This is the reason why Amazon Web Services only provide eventual consistency

- W. Vogels. *Eventual consistent.*
  \[Comm. \text{ of the ACM, 52}(1):40–44, 2009\]

Similar stands have been taken for example by HP

- HP. *There is no free lunch with distributed systems.*
**History:**

- First introduced by Eric Brewer in a keynote at PODC’00
  
  - E. A. Brewer. *Towards robust distributed systems (abstract).*

- Formally proved by Gilbert and Lynch two years later
  
  - S. Gilbert and N. Lynch. *Brewer’s conjecture and the feasibility of consistent, available, partition-tolerant web services.*
    
Reading material

  [http://www.disi.unitn.it/~montreso/ds/papers/PrimaryBackup.pdf](http://www.disi.unitn.it/~montreso/ds/papers/PrimaryBackup.pdf)

- F. Schneider. Replication management using the state machine approach.