Distributed Systems

17. Bigtable

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Bigtable

• Highly available distributed storage

• Built with semi-structured data in mind
  – URLs: content, metadata, links, anchors, page rank
  – User data: preferences, account info, recent queries
  – Geography: roads, satellite images, points of interest, annotations

• Large scale
  – Petabytes of data across thousands of servers
  – Billions of URLs with many versions per page
  – Hundreds of millions of users
  – Thousands of queries per second
  – 100TB+ satellite image data
Uses

• At Google, used for:
  – Google Analytics
  – Google Finance
  – Personalized search
  – Blogger.com
  – Google Code hosting
  – YouTube
  – Gmail
  – Google Earth & Google Maps
  – Dozens of others…
A big table

• Bigtable is NOT a relational database
• Bigtable appears as a large table
  – “A Bigtable is a sparse, distributed, persistent multidimensional sorted map”*

*Bigtable: OSDI 2006
Table Model

- (row, column, timestamp) → cell contents
  - Contents are arbitrary strings (arrays of bytes)

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rows</th>
<th>columns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>com.aaa</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www/TECH</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.weather</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;language:&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;contents:&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>com.aaa</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html...</td>
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<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www/TECH</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
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<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.weather</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Webtable example
```
Tablets: Pieces of a Table

- Row operations are atomic

- Table partitioned dynamically by rows into tablets

- **Tablet** = range of contiguous rows
  - Unit of distribution and load balancing
  - Nearby rows will usually be served by the same server
  - Accessing nearby rows requires communication with a small # of machines
  - You need to select row keys to ensure good locality
    - E.g., reverse domain names:
Table splitting

- A table starts as one tablet
- As it grows, it it split into multiple tablets
  - Approximate size: 100-200 MB per tablet by default

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>com.aaa</th>
<th>“language:”</th>
<th>“contents:”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www/TECH</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.weather</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**tablet**
### Splitting a tablet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;language:&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;contents:&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>com.aaa</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www/TECH</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.weather</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.wikipedia</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.zcorp</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.zoom</td>
<td>EN &lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Columns and Column Families

• Column Family
  – Group of column keys
  – Column family is the basic unit of data access
  – Data in a column family is typically of the same type
  – Implementation compresses data in the same column family

• Operations
  – (1) Create column family
  – (2) Store data in any key within the family

• Column families will typically be small
  – ≤ hundreds of keys; a table may have an unlimited # of column families

• Identified by
  family:qualifier
Column Families: example

• Three column families
  – “language:” – language for the web page
  – “contents:” – contents of the web page
  – “anchor:” – contains text of anchors that reference this page.
    • www.cnn.com is referenced by Sports Illustrated (cnnsi.com) and My-Look (mlook.ca)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column Family</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>anchor:cnnsi.com</th>
<th>anchor:mylook.ca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>com.aaa</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.cnn.www/TECH</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
<td>“CNN”</td>
<td>“CNN.com”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.weather</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>&lt;!DOCTYPE HTML&gt;…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

sorted
Timestamps

• Each column family may contain multiple versions

• Version indexed by a 64-bit timestamp
  – Real time or assigned by client

• Per-column-family settings for garbage collection
  – Keep only latest $n$ versions
  – Or keep only versions written since time $t$

• Retrieve most recent version if no version specified
  – If specified, return version where timestamp $\leq$ requested time
API: Operations on Bigtable

- Create/delete tables & column families
- Change cluster, table, and column family metadata (e.g., access control rights)
- Write or delete values in cells
- Read values from specific rows
- Iterate over a subset of data in a table
  - All members of a column family
  - Multiple column families
    - E.g., regular expressions, such as anchor:* .cnn.com
  - Multiple timestamps
  - Multiple rows
- Atomic read-modify-write row operations
- Allow clients to execute scripts (written in Sawzall) for processing data on the servers
Implementation: Supporting Services

• **GFS**
  – For storing log and data files

• **Cluster management system**
  – For scheduling jobs, monitoring health, dealing with failures

• **Google SSTable** (Sorted String Table)
  – Internal file format optimized for streaming I/O and storing <key,value> data
  – Provides a persistent, ordered, *immutable* map from keys to values
    • Append-only
  – Memory or disk based; indexes are cached in memory
  – If there are additions/deletions/changes to rows
    • New SSTables are written out with the deleted data removed
    • Periodic compaction merges SSTables and removes old retired ones

See http://goo.gl/McD6ex for a description of SSTable
Implementation: Supporting Services

• **Chubby**
  – Highly-available & persistent distributed lock (lease) service & file system
  – Five active replicas; one elected as master to serve requests
  – Majority must be running
  – Paxos algorithm used to elect master & keep replicas consistent
  – Provides namespace of files & directories
    • Each file or directory can be used as a lock

• **In Bigtable, Chubby is used to:**
  – Ensure there is only one active master
  – Store bootstrap location of Bigtable data
  – Discover tablet servers
  – Store Bigtable schema information
  – Store access control lists
Implementation

1. Many tablet servers – coordinate requests to tablets
   - Can be added or removed dynamically
   - Each manages a set of tablets (typically 10-1,000 tablets/server)
   - Handles read/write requests to tablets
   - Splits tablets when too large

2. One master server
   - Assigns tablets to tablet server
   - Balances tablet server load
   - Garbage collection of unneeded files in GFS
   - Schema changes (table & column family creation)

3. Client library
   - Client data does not move through the master
   - Clients communicate directly with tablet servers for reads/writes
Implementation: METADATA table

Three-level hierarchy
- Balanced structure similar to a B+ tree
- Root tablet contains location of all tablets in a special METADATA table
- Row key of METADATA table contains location of each tablet
  \( f(\text{table\_ID}, \text{end\_row}) \Rightarrow \text{location of tablet} \)
Implementation

• Tablet assigned to one tablet server at a time

• Chubby keeps track of tablet servers
  – When tablet server starts:
    • It creates & acquires an exclusive lock on a uniquely-named file in a Chubby servers directory
    • Master monitors this directory to discover tablet servers

• When master starts:
  – Grabs a unique master lock in Chubby (prevent multiple masters)
  – Scans the servers directory in Chubby to find live tablet servers
  – Contacts each tablet server to discover what tablets are assigned to that server
  – Scans the METADATA table to learn the full set of tablets
    • Build a list of tablets not assigned to servers
      – These will be assigned by choosing a tablet server & sending it a tablet load request
Fault Tolerance

• Fault tolerance is provided by GFS & Chubby

• Dead tablet server
  – Master is responsible for detecting when a tablet server is not working
    • Asks tablet server for status of its lock
    • If the tablet server cannot be reached or has lost its lock
      – Master attempts to grab that server’s lock
      – If it succeeds, then the tablet server is dead or cannot reach Chubby
      – Master moves tablets that were assigned to that server into an unassigned state

• Dead master
  – Master kills itself when its Chubby lease expires
  – Cluster management system detects a non-responding master

• Chubby: designed for fault tolerance (5-way replication)

• GFS: stores underlying data – designed for n-way replication
Bigtable Replication

• Each table can be configured for replication to multiple Bigtable clusters in different data centers

• Eventual consistency model
Sample applications

• Google Analytics
  – Raw Click Table (~200 TB)
    • Row for each end-user session
    • Row name: {website name and time of session}
      – Sessions that visit the same web site are sorted & contiguous
  – Summary Table (~20 TB)
    • Contains various summaries for each crawled website
    • Generated from the Raw Click table via periodic MapReduce jobs
Sample applications

• Personalized Search
  – One Bigtable row per user (unique user ID)
  – Column family per type of action
    • E.g., column family for web queries (your entire search history!)
  – Bigtable timestamp for each element identifies when the event occurred
  – Uses MapReduce over Bigtable to personalize live search results
Sample applications

- Google Maps / Google Earth
  - Preprocessing
    - Table for raw imagery (~70 TB)
    - Each row corresponds to a single geographic segment
    - Rows are named to ensure that adjacent segments are near each other
    - Column family: keep track of sources of data per segment
      (this is a large # of columns – one for each raw data image – but sparse)
  
  - MapReduce used to preprocess data

- Serving
  - Table to index data stored in GFS
  - Small (~500 GB) but serves tens of thousands of queries with low latency
• Apache HBase
  – Built on the Bigtable design
  – Small differences (may disappear)
    • access control not enforced per column family
    • Millisecond vs. microsecond timestamps
    • No client script execution to process stored data
    • Built to use HDFS or any other file system
    • No support for memory mapped tablets
    • Improved fault tolerance with multiple masters on standby
The End