Dynamo: Amazon’s Highly Available Key-value Store [SOSP’07]

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Contributions

"The main contribution of this work for the research community is the evaluation of how different techniques can be combined to provide a single highly-available system."

"The paper is mainly about the lessons learned."

Today’s Reminders

- Projects
  - Good discussions last Friday with all groups
  - 3 page project proposals due Friday October 30
**System Assumptions & Requirements**

- **Query Model & ACID Properties**
  - Key-value queries; State stored as blobs; No schema;
    Ops on single data item; Objects < 1 MB
  - Sacrifice consistency, isolation

- **Efficiency**
  - Commodity HW
  - Stringent latency SLAs (e.g., 99.9% within 300 milliseconds)

- **Trust**
  - Non-hostile environment, no authentication

- **Scale**
  - 100s hosts

**Design Considerations**

“One of the main design considerations for Dynamo is to give services control over their system properties, such as durability and consistency, and to let services make their own tradeoffs between functionality, performance and cost-effectiveness.”

- **Conflict resolution after disconnection**
  - When: During reads in order to ensure writes never rejected
  - Who: Application, fall back to “last write wins” at data store

- **Incremental scalability in storage hosts**

- **Exploit heterogeneity in hosts**

- **Symmetry: Each node has same responsibilities as its peers**

- **Decentralization of control**

**Service-oriented Architecture**

“The choice for 99.9% [SLA] over an even higher percentile has been made based on a cost-benefit analysis which demonstrated a significant increase in cost to improve performance that much.”

**Zero-Hop DHT**

- **Distributed Hash Tables (DHTs)**
  - such as Chord [Stoica et al, Sigcomm’01] are based on consistency hashing [Karger et al, STOC’97]

- **Why use DHTs?**

- **Zero-hop: Each node maintains enough routing info locally to route directly to destination node**
Partitioning, Replication, Versioning

- Each storage node assigned multiple positions on ring, across data centers
- Replication in successor nodes around the ring
- Data versioning
  - Vector clocks capture version causality
  - Truncate clocks if get too long

Execution of `get()` & `put()` Operations

- Client can route request directly to coordinator OR to node based on load info, who will send to coordinator
- Quorum system: need R nodes to read, W to write
  - R+W > N, where N is replication factor
- Return all versions that are causally unrelated (by VCs)
  - Also do read repair of stale versions
- For availability, use “sloppy quorum”
  - Send to first N healthy nodes
  - Hinted handoff: If B is down, send to E instead with hint that belongs to B
  - E sends to B when B recovers

Replica Synchronization

- Node maintains Merkle tree for each key range it hosts

Membership & Failure Detection

- Explicit command for adding or removing nodes from ring
- Gossip-based protocol propagates membership changes
  - Each node contacts a random peer every second
  - Seed nodes help avoid logical partitions
- Local view of failures suffices
Latency Optimization

- Coordinator for a write is the node that replied fastest to the previous read operation
- Also, increases chance of "read-your-writes" consistency

Popular Configurations

- Business-logic-specific reconciliation
  - E.g., Shopping cart
- Timestamp-based reconciliation: "last write wins"
  - E.g., Customer session information
- High performance read engine
  - E.g., Product catalog, Promotional items

Availability/Performance trade-off

- Typical services use N=3 replicas
- Common to use N=3, R=2, W=2

Read/Write Latency

Benefits of Buffering Writes

Couple hundred nodes with (3,2,2) configuration
Fraction of Nodes Out-of-Balance

load deviation threshold = 15%

Divergent Versions

- Good metric for consistency: number of divergent versions seen by the application in production environment
  - From failures
  - From concurrent writes to a single data item
- Shopping cart service: 99.94% of requests saw 1 version
  - Blame robots

Server-driven vs. Client-driven Coordination

- **Server-driven**: Load balancer assigns each client read request to a random node that acts as coordinator
- **Client-driven**: Client caches membership state (refresh by polling random node every 10 secs). Coordinates reads locally. Sends write requests to preference list. Avoids extra network hop of going to random node

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>99.9th percentile read latency (ms)</th>
<th>99.9th percentile write latency (ms)</th>
<th>Average read latency (ms)</th>
<th>Average write latency (ms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Server-driven</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client-driven</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background vs. Foreground Tasks

- Use admission control on background tasks
- Feedback mechanism determines admitting rate

Discussion

- Availability (in 2 years of production runs)
  - Applications have received successful runs (without timing out) for 99.9995% of requests
  - No data loss event
- Key feature: Tunable (N,R,W)
  - Requires tuning to get right
- Scalability challenge
  - Each node has a full routing table for all data
  - Could introduce hierarchical extensions to Dynamo

Dynamo Techniques & Advantages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Advantage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partitioning</td>
<td>Consistent Hashing</td>
<td>Incremental Scalability</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Availability for writes</td>
<td>Vector clocks with reconciliation during reads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handling temporary failures</td>
<td>Sleepy Quorum and hinted handoff</td>
<td>Provides high availability and durability guarantee when some of the replicas are not available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recovering from permanent failures</td>
<td>Anti-entropy using Merkle trees</td>
<td>Synchronizes divergent replicas in the background</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership and failure detection</td>
<td>Gossip-based membership protocol and failure detection</td>
<td>Preserves symmetry and avoids having a centralized registry for storing membership and node liveness information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Wednesday’s Papers

Memory Coherence in Shared Virtual Memory Systems
Kai Li and Paul Hudak
SigOps HoF paper

Scaling Distributed Machine Learning with the Parameter Server
Mu Li, David Andersen, Jun Woo Park, Alexander Smola, Amr Ahmed, Vanja Josifovski, James Long, Eugene Shekita, Bor-Yiing Su
OSDI’14