ZFS — and why you need it

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What is ZFS?

- Zettabyte File System (ZFS) developed by Sun Microsystems from 2001 to 2005, with open-source release in 2005 (whence OpenZFS project): SI prefix zetta $\equiv 1000^7 = 10^{21}$
- Sun Microsystems acquired in 2010 by Oracle [continuing ZFS]
- ground-up brand-new filesystem design
- exceptionally clean and well-documented source code
- enormous capacity
  - $2^8 \approx 255$ bytes per filename
  - $2^{48} \approx 10^{14}$ files per directory
  - $2^{64} \approx 10^{18}$ bytes per file [1 exabyte]
  - $2^{78} \approx 10^{23} \approx \frac{1}{2}$ Avogadro’s number bytes per volume
- disks form a pool of storage that is always consistent on disk
- disk blocks in pool allocatable to any filesystem using pool
- [relatively] simple management
- optional dynamic quota adjustment
- ACLs, snapshots, clones, compression, encryption, deduplication, case-[in]sensitive filenames, Unicode filenames, . . .
Why use ZFS?

- ZFS provides a stable flexible filesystem of essentially unlimited capacity [in current technology] for decades to come.
- We have run ZFS under Solaris for 11+ years, with neither data loss, nor filesystem corruption.
- Easy to implement $n$-way live mirroring [$n$ up to 12 (??limit??)].
- Snapshots, even in large filesystems, take only a second or so.
- Optional hot spares in each storage pool.
- With ZFS `zpool import`, a filesystem can be moved to a different server, even one running a different O/S, as long as ZFS feature levels permit.
- ZFS filesystems can be exported via FC, iSCSI, NFS (v2–v4) or SMB/CIFS to other systems, including those without native support for ZFS.
- Blocksize can be set in powers-of-two from $2^9 = 512$ to $2^{17} = 128K$, or with `large_blocks` feature, to $2^{20} = 1M$; default on all systems is 128K.
- Small files are stored in 512-byte sub-blocks of disk blocks.
Where do we run ZFS?

- Solaris
  $\Leftarrow$ main filesystem for 10,000+ users
- Dyson
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of illumos and OpenSolaris with Debian GNU toolset
- FreeBSD
- FreeNAS and TrueNAS
  $\Leftarrow$ products of iXsystems
- GhostBSD
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of FreeBSD 10.3
- GNU/Linux CentOS
  $\Leftarrow$ unsupported Red Hat
- GNU/Linux Debian
- GNU/Linux Ubuntu
- Hipster
  $\Leftarrow$ rolling update of OpenIndiana
- Illumian
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of OpenSolaris 11 illumos
- Mac OS X
  $\Leftarrow$ from OpenZFS, not from Apple
- OmniOS
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of OpenSolaris 11 illumos
- OpenIndiana
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of OpenSolaris 11 illumos
- PC-BSD
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of FreeBSD 10.3
- Tribblix
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of illumos, OpenIndiana, and OpenSolaris
- TrueOS
  $\Leftarrow$ rolling-update successor to PC-BSD
- XStreamOS
  $\Leftarrow$ fork of OpenSolaris 11 illumos
zfs subcommands

allow   
clone   
create  
destroy 
get     
groupspace 
inherit 
mount   
promote 
receive

rename
rollback
send
set
share
snapshot
unallow
unmount
upgrade
userspace

# zfs snapshot tank/ROOT/initial@auto-`date +%Y-%m-%d`
# zfs list -t snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>USED</th>
<th>AVAIL</th>
<th>REFER</th>
<th>MOUNTPOINT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tank/ROOT/initial@auto-2016-09-13</td>
<td>136M</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.8G</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tank/ROOT/initial@auto-2016-09-19</td>
<td>304K</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.9G</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## zpool subcommands

- `add`
- `attach`
- `clear`
- `create`
- `destroy`
- `detach`
- `export`
- `get`
- `history`
- `import`
- `iostat`
- `list`
- `offline`
- `online`
- `remove`
- `replace`
- `scrub`
- `set`
- `status`
- `upgrade`

```
# zpool iostat -v

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pool</th>
<th>Capacity alloc</th>
<th>Capacity free</th>
<th>Operations read</th>
<th>Operations write</th>
<th>Bandwidth read</th>
<th>Bandwidth write</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tank</td>
<td>21.7G</td>
<td>56.3G</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39.8K</td>
<td>3.58K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ada0p2</td>
<td>21.7G</td>
<td>56.3G</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39.8K</td>
<td>3.58K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
ZFS storage pools

- zero or more hot spares allocated at pool-creation time, or later:
  
  ```
  # zpool create tank mirror c0t0d0 c0t1d0 spare c0t2d0
  \Rightarrow \text{two disks in pool with one spare}
  # zpool replace tank c0t0d0 c0t3d0 \Rightarrow \text{replace bad disk c0t0d0}
  # zpool remove tank c0t2d0 \Rightarrow \text{remove hot spare}
  ```

- hot spares can be shared across multiple pools
- easy expansion: `zpool add pool vdev`
- disk-size agnostic [though best if pool members are identical]
- disk-vendor agnostic
- pools can grow, but **cannot shrink**
- optional quotas provide additional level of usage control within a pool
- quotas can oversubscribe pool storage
- quotas can grow or shrink:
  ```
  # zfs set quota=50G saspool01/students
  ```
none (no media-failure protection)

stripe over $n$ disks (fast, but no media-failure protection)

mirror: recover from failure of 1 of 2 disks

triple-mirror: recover from failure of 2 of 3 disks

RAID Z1: recover from failure of 1 of 4 or more disks

RAID Z2: recover from failure of 2 of 9 or more disks

RAID Z3: recover from failure of 3 of many disks

Recoverable data errors result in replacement of the erroneous block, making ZFS **self healing**.
optional compression with LZJB, GZIP GZIP-2, or GZIP-9 algorithms

compression may increase performance by reducing data transfer, as long as enough spare CPU cycles are available

copy-on-write policy means that existing data blocks are never overwritten: once the new blocks are safely in place, old blocks are freed for re-use if they are not in a snapshot

supports $n$-way mirrors: a mirror of $n$ disks can lose up to $n - 1$ disks before data loss

supports striping and RAID-Z[1-3]

internal per-block checksums [no hardware RAID needed or desirable: JBOD is good enough because ZFS is better than RAID]

ZFS is being optimized for SSDs, which suffer from severe wear limits that ultimately reduce disk and pool capacity
ZFS checksums

Unlike most other filesystems, each data and metadata block of a ZFS filesystem has a SHA-256 checksum stored in the *pointer to the block*, not in the block itself, so less subject to corruption.

![ZFS checksums diagram](image)

[From *Architectural Overview of the Oracle ZFS Storage Appliance*]

Checksums on new blocks are recalculated, not copied, and errors can be corrected if there is sufficient redundancy (mirror or RAID-Zn replication).
ZFS snapshots

- fast: one or two seconds, independent of filesystem size
- unlimited number of snapshots
- snapshots are read-only
- snapshots are user visible [e.g., 
  \texttt{.zfs/snapshot/auto-2016-10-11/home/jones/mail}]
- \texttt{.zfs} normally hidden from directory listing commands [management configurable]
- disk blocks captured in a snapshot are in use until snapshot is destroyed
- removing recent large files on a disk-full condition may free no space at all: instead, need to remove oldest snapshots
- a snapshot can be cloned to create a new writable filesystem
- **scrub** is root-initiated dynamic consistency check, run in **background** on **mounted** live filesystem, so no denial-of-service as in traditional **fsck**
- **resilver** is automatic dynamic consistency restoration run after a disk or network failure, or slowdown of one or more mirrors
- **ZIL** is **ZFS Intent Log**: a journal of metadata commits; it can optionally be kept in a different filesystem, perhaps on solid-state drives (SSDs)
ZFS scrub example

# mount | grep zfs
tank/ROOT/initial on / (zfs, local, noatime, nfsv4acls)
...
# zpool scrub tank
# zpool status
  pool: tank
  state: ONLINE
    scan: scrub in progress since Tue Oct 11 18:07:36 2016
      14.0M scanned out of 21.7G at 895K/s, 7h2m to go
      0 repaired, 0.06% done
config:
  NAME     STATE   READ  WRITE  CKSUM
  tank     ONLINE 0      0      0
  ada0p2   ONLINE 0      0      0
errors: No known data errors
on some O/Ses with ZFS, critical system updates are done in a new *boot environment* that is not visible until selected at the next boot

if a problem appears in the new environment, just reboot into most stable recent boot environment

analogous to *grub, lilo, silo*, or other boot loader, offer of multiple kernels at boot time, but includes much more than just the kernel
ZFS inter-site mirrors

- *n*-way live mirroring
- we use 8Gb/s FibreChannel connect to ZFS mirror in another campus building
- read requests can be served by any mirror
- if one mirror goes away, file serving continues transparently from another mirror
- when lost mirror comes back, a **resilver** operation eventually makes all mirrors consistent [but may take hours or days]
For convenient filesystem backup:

- initial `zfs send` of a ZFS filesystem snapshot to a remote machine running `zfs receive` duplicates filesystem (assuming compatible ZFS feature levels)
- remote machine has working [but out-of-date] copy of original filesystem: probably okay for HTTP and FTP services, library catalogs, and other reasonably stable databases
- subsequent `zfs send` transfers only a snapshot that is usually much smaller than original filesystem
- `zfs receive` can pull back a filesystem from a remote machine to repopulate a replaced or repaired local filesystem

Can **migrate entire live filesystem** to new storage technology with replacement of old disks by bigger new disks using `resilver` feature.
Some O/Ses [Solaris, ghostbsd, PC-BSD, and TrueOS] can boot from ZFS filesystem

Other O/Ses [Debian, FreeBSD, Ubuntu] need a small native UFS [or FFS, JFS, Reiser, XFS, …] filesystem for /boot partition, with remaining data on ZFS

Several Linux distributions have optional ZFS support [we run it on CentOS, Debian, Fedora, Red Hat, and Ubuntu]

Fully-bootable ZFS coming on Debian and Debian-like [ElementaryOS, Kali, Knoppix, Mint, Salix, Ubuntu, and others] GNU/Linux systems
SmartOS is a minimal OpenSolaris-based system with zones, ZFS, and a port of Linux KVM. SmartOS provides an alternative to Hyper-V, QEMU, VirtualBox, VMware, Xen, and other virtualization environments [News: Samsung bought out Joyent, maker of SmartOS, in June 2016]

VM filesystem backup and snapshot really requires communication between virtualization layer and VM O/S or database, but only a few O/Ses have the needed kernel drivers to support that

Without such synchronization, a restored backup or snapshot may well be unusable in a VM because of filesystem inconsistencies
Compared to GNU/Linux btrfs, ZFS

- is developed and supported on multiple O/Ses, and thus not tied to one O/S kernel flavor
- can be imported to, and exported from, other O/Ses with `zpool import` and `zpool export`
- is capable of much larger filesystem capacity
- is more mature and stable
- has more features, with deduplication, compression, encryption [not yet in OpenZFS], . . .
- snapshots appear to take much less space than in btrfs
- seems to reclaim disk space much faster from freed snapshots [personal observation]
Even if you cannot, or will not, manage ZFS on your fileserver, you can buy turn-key appliances that contain ZFS:

- Dell Compellent NAS
- EON ZFS Storage
- iXsystems FreeNAS and TrueNAS
- Oracle ZFS Storage Appliance [includes ARC — Adaptive Replacement Cache (DRAM level-1 cache), plus L2ARC (SSD level-2 cache, and ZIL in SSD)]
- Polywell PolyStor
- QNAP ES (Enterprise Storage) NAS
- Tegile all-flash and hybrid-flash arrays
- Zeta Storage Systems
- others?
Other filesystems with snapshots

- Apple Mac OS X **Time Machine** [incremental backups to remote storage with time-slice views]
- DragonFlyBSD **hammer** [automatic snapshots of active files]
  
  ```
  % undo -i myfile
  myfile: ITERATE ENTIRE HISTORY
  0x00000000102b96fa0 18-Aug-2016 09:57:49
  0x0000000010e621f0 27-Sep-2016 17:42:13 file-deleted
  0x0000000010e62310 27-Sep-2016 17:52:07 inode-change
  0x000000001128d8210 08-Oct-2016 09:13:47
  
  % undo -u myfile
  % undo -u -t0x0000000010e662310 myfile
  % ls -log myfile*
  -rwrxr-xr-x 1 132026 Oct 8 09:13 myfile
  -rw-rw-r-- 1 130023 Oct 12 06:26 myfile.undo.0000
  
  - GNU/Linux **btrfs** volume-based snapshots [read-only, or writable]
  - NetApp network attached storage (NAS) with proprietary **WAFL** filesystem with up to 255 snapshots per volume, visible in special hidden subdirectory `.snapshot` of each directory
  - others?
See interview with Richard Yao on *BSD Now TV* program *Episode 157: ZFS, The “Universal” File-system:*

https://www.bsdnow.tv/episodes/

Yao says that there *are* ways to lose your *entire ZFS filesystem*, even though they are rare [we’ve never seen such a loss]. All filesystems need to be backed up, and preferably, redundantly!
Our ZFS development wishlist

- shrinkable storage pools
- automatic drive capacity rebalancing in background after a pool is grown [or, in the future, shrunk]
- view into pool disks: free and used space, error counts, I/O stats, …
- better utilization of pool of disks of mixed sizes [e.g., from technology improvements over time]
- contiguous files [for maximal streaming performance]
- preallocated files [to prevent run-time out-of-space condition]; partly available by `# zfs set reservation=nnnn`
- traditional Unix access controls are based on 3 local categories: *user*, *group*, and *other*: need more, such as *client*, *customer*, and *world*
- NetApp WAFL-like `.snapshot` subdirectory of each directory
- quality-of-service (QoS) guarantee for ZFS I/O
- **platform-independent GUI** for visual control of disks, pools, mirroring, RAIDing, and striping, with visual warnings for excess use or errors [partially available with Sun StorAid or Oracle ZFS Appliance]
### Sample ZFS I/O statistics

```bash
# zpool iostat -v
```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pool</th>
<th>capacity</th>
<th>operations</th>
<th>bandwidth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alloc</td>
<td>free</td>
<td>read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pool01</td>
<td>9.53T</td>
<td>1.34T</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raidz1</td>
<td>2.38T</td>
<td>342G</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c0t2d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1t2d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c2t2d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c3t2d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c4t2d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c4t7d0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Books on ZFS

Web resources on ZFS

http://learnxinyminutes.com/docs/zfs/

http://open-zfs.org/wiki/Performance_tuning

http://wiki.freebsd.org/ZFSTuningGuide

http://www.bsdnow.tv/tutorials/zfs


