Deploying and Operating the SAM-Grid: lesson learned

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Sep 28, 2004
Overview

- Introduction to the SAM-Grid
- The SAM-Grid deployment and operations
- Lesson learned
  - Cluster
  - Grid/Fabric interface
  - Grid services
Mission: enable fully distributed computing for DZero and CDF

Strategy: enhance the distributed data handling system of the experiments (SAM), incorporating standard Grid tools and protocols, and developing new solutions for Grid computing (JIM)

History: SAM from 1997, JIM from end of 2001

Funds: received some funding from the Particle Physics Data Grid (US) and GridPP (UK)

People: Computer scientists and Physicists from Fermilab and the collaborating Institutions
What is SAM-Grid used for?

- **Montecarlo production for DZero**
  - From March 2004 produced > 2,000,000 events, equivalent to 11 yrs GHz computation

- **Other Activities:**
  - Extending the infrastructure to enable data reconstruction for DZero
  - Montecarlo production for CDF at the prototypical stage
Montecarlo Production Events

Integrated Number of Events produced in a period of 15 days

Number of Events

01-Apr 01-May 01-Jun 01-Jul 01-Aug

UTA-DPCC LUHEP ccin2p3 manchester Wisconsin LTU UTA-swift

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The Deployment Phase

The initial deployment took 3 months: Jan - Mar 2004

The *inefficiency* in event production due to the grid infrastructure improved from 40% to 1-5%

- Inefficiency of the infrastructure = $1 - \frac{\text{events produced}}{\text{events requested}}$

This talk focuses on the main sources inefficiencies and how we mitigated them
The Deployment Model

- Every site provides a gateway node where experts + local contacts can install the SAM-Grid software:
  - Standard middleware (VDT), Grid/Fabric interface, VO Services client code
- VO-specific services run at the site:
  - SAM, JIM Monitoring, Local Scheduler, Local Storage
- No software/daemon required at the worker nodes of the cluster
A dozen institutions currently part of the grid

\sim 50\% stable enough to be used for production

US Institutions
- FNAL, UW Madison, UTA, LUHEP, LTU, OSCER, OUHEP

Non-US Institutions
- IN2P3 (Fr), Oxford (UK), Manchester (UK), Prague (Cz), GridKa (De), Sprace (Br)
The Operation/Support Model

- A few production users can submit from their laptop to any SAM-Grid site
- The software at each site is *uniform* and *adapts* to the local fabric configuration
- The JIM infrastructure is currently maintained by 1 FTE + local contacts.
  - This improves the previous model, where an expert per site was necessary to maintain the specific local production mechanisms
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1. Time synchronization of the worker nodes
   - The Grid Security Infrastructure relies on the machine clock to determine the validity of the security tokens
   - Administrators: please run ntpd!
   - We also introduced artificial delays at the worker nodes to avoid "Proxy not yet valid" errors
2. The Black Hole effect
   - Even if a single node in the cluster is mis-configured and makes its jobs crash, the batch system keeps sending idle jobs to it: the whole queue of jobs will crash.

3. The Batch System does not immediately show up the jobs submitted to it or it times out
   - When the Grid asks the status of the jobs and cannot find them, it thinks that they are finished: resource leak!

   - Both problems have been solved writing an “idealizer” (level of abstraction) in front of the batch system. In this code we can exclude statistically bad nodes, retry polling commands, etc.
4. The worker nodes do not know their domain name
   - Our infrastructure wants to know... is this really SAM-Grid specific?

5. Running gridftp transfers between worker and head node *within a private network* is tricky
   - Gridftp works in active mode only: the server at the head node may not be able to open the port to the client at the worker node
   - Solution: give the head node a private network interface
6. Plan the OS upgrades with the system administrators... or be resilient to it
   "We upgraded the worker nodes to RH9 and forgot to tell you..."

7. Negotiate/Study the policy limits
   Jobs have been killed or slowed down by batch system CPU limits, data handling file transfers limits, probability of job preemption ~1, ...
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Most of our work went in the interface between the Grid and the Fabric

The standard Globus job-managers are not sufficiently...

- flexible: they expect a “standard” batch system configuration. None of our sites was that standard.
- scalable: a process per grid job is started up at the gateway machine. We want/need aggregation.
- comprehensive: they interface to the batch system only. How about data handling, local monitoring, databases, etc.
- robust: if the batch system forgets about the jobs, they cannot react. We have written the “idealizers” for this.

To address these issues we had to write a “thick” Grid/Fabric interface (jim-job-manager). The drawback of this approach is that it complicates the local configuration.
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Scalability of the semi-central services

- access to the central data handling database is organized in a 3-tiers architecture
- the middle tier couldn’t cope with 200 jobs starting up at the same time, asking for data
- we had to introduce retrials with exponential back off to mitigate the problem. We also aggregate access from the gateway node for the information that is common to all processes.
Firewalls: understand the network topology of your grid

- System administrators generally are willing to open ports to a certain list of nodes when the software is installed
- Maintaining the configuration up to date as new installation are deployed is difficult
- For core services, such as data movement, the SAM-Grid can route data via delegation if direct transfers are not possible
Conclusions

- The SAM-Grid is an integrated grid system for job, data and information management for HEP
- It is used in “production” for DZero montecarlo since March 2004.
  - We are working on data reconstruction for DZero and montecarlo generation for CDF
- During deployment and operations we had to overcome problems at the level of
  - the systems: careful administration is crucial
  - the Grid/Fabric interface: we need a “thick” interface
  - the Grid services: be careful about scalability and network topology