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Distributed Data Analysis in the ATLAS Experiment: Challenges and Solutions

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The ATLAS experiment at the LHC at CERN is recording and simulating several 10's of PetaBytes of data per year. To analyse these data the ATLAS experiment has developed and operates a mature and stable distributed analysis (DA) service on the Worldwide LHC Computing Grid. The service is actively used: more than 1400 users have submitted jobs in the year 2011 and a total of more 1 million jobs run every week. Users are provided with a suite of tools to submit Athena, ROOT or generic jobs to the grid, and the PanDA workload management system is responsible for their execution. The reliability of the DA service is high but steadily improving; grid sites are continually validated against a set of standard tests, and a dedicated team of expert shifters provides user support and communicates user problems to the sites. This talk will review the state of the DA tools and services, summarize the past year of distributed analysis activity, and present the directions for future improvements to the system.

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