Considerations for database servers

Castor review – June 2006

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Outline

- Current implementation
  - Machine setup
  - Database setup
  - Throttling
- Return on experience
- Documentation, operations and sharing with Tier1 sites
- Upcoming implementation
- Our conclusions

Questions to be addressed

- _Only_ for the database part
- 3. Is the service infrastructure, and particularly the database server hardware, appropriate?
- 4. Are the necessary operational procedures in place (with adequate trained personnel) to ensure the MoU service reliability commitments can be met?
- 5. Does the overall service have the required performance and scalability the Tier0? For the CAF? What aspects of the software or system limit performance or scalability? Are these limits a concern?
- 6. Is the current policy for the support of Castor at other sites effective and sustainable?

Return on the database architecture

- Castor(1) name server database
- Castor(2) stager database
- Castor(2) distributed logging facility database
- SRM database

- Different worklaod, can be grouped.

Current implementation

- 1 Castor name server database
- 6 Castor2 environments (each 2 database servers stager + DLF): ALICE, ATLAS, CMS, LHCb, ITDC, SC4
- Castor2 test (RAC system and DLF) and dev
- Castor2 SRM database
- -> 18 database systems

- Using “CERN disk servers”
- RedHat Enterprise Linux (3ES x86)
- Oracle Enterprise Edition database (10.2)

Issues with “CERN disk servers”

- Hardware problems
  - Lack of support from the vendor
  - Hardware problems, corruptions (see next slide)
- Machines are not RedHat Enterprise certified
  - Ultimately Oracle Support can reject calls (has happened: Oracle Support “ask your HW vendor to study the issue and review the certification”)
- Not designed for database workload
  - Database systems require a lot of IO operations per second (typically 8kB) -the case for the Castor2 stager- and very few “large IO”
- Lack of performance / memory
  - New preferred deployment Oracle platform is Linux x86-64
  - Larger memory
  - Several CPUs and/or cores

Corruptions

- 11 corruptions worked on between November 2005 and April 2006
  - On control files
  - On redo log files
  - On data files

```
Fri Nov 11 01:16:20 2005
Errors in file /ORA/dbs00/oracle/admin/CASTORSG/bdump/castorsg_arc0_7289.trc:
ORA-00354: corrupt redo log block header
ORA-00353: log corruption near block 212974 change 1612488170 time 11/11/2005 01:00:59
```

- Corruptions typically imply service downtime (lengthy recovery) and lot of work, may generate data loss.
- For Castor2, no data lost (but data loss on similar types of hardware for other services).
- Many of these corruptions have been fixed by the DBA during the night, delicate to automate fix (depends on type / place of corruption, not doing the right thing might harm more than help!).
- (since 1996), never had any of these type of corruptions on other platforms (Oracle writes a block which can be read later but not consistent with the format).
- *Many thanks* to IT-FIO Castor deployment and Linux Support for their help / investigations / new machines installations on the hardware platform.

Throttling

- The “database system” has to sustain the load and manage priorities (even in worst cases, where it should throttle the load while still being reactive)
- Throttling
  - CPU in case of resource starvation
  - Active sessions (better usage of resource, limits latch inter-locking)
- Strict limitations
  - PGA Memory (generate ORA-600 to be trapped)
  - Sessions (only for new session, no issue in stable usage, “garde-fou”)
  - SGA maxsize (should not be reached, but…)
  - Hints for the system
    - PGA target
    - SGA target
  - Space of course
    - Each user / major component has its own tablespace with limitations

Castor NameServer (DB) scalability

- Using a test (thanks to Olof/Ben), multithreaded / loop
  - Cns_creat
  - Cns_stat
  - Cns_setfsize
  - Cns_filestat
- Without problem, up to 920 Castor nameserver operations per second (with 15 threads).
- Oracle database is fully instrumented. We use the “wait event interface” as the main source for performance tuning (and early indication of scalability issues).

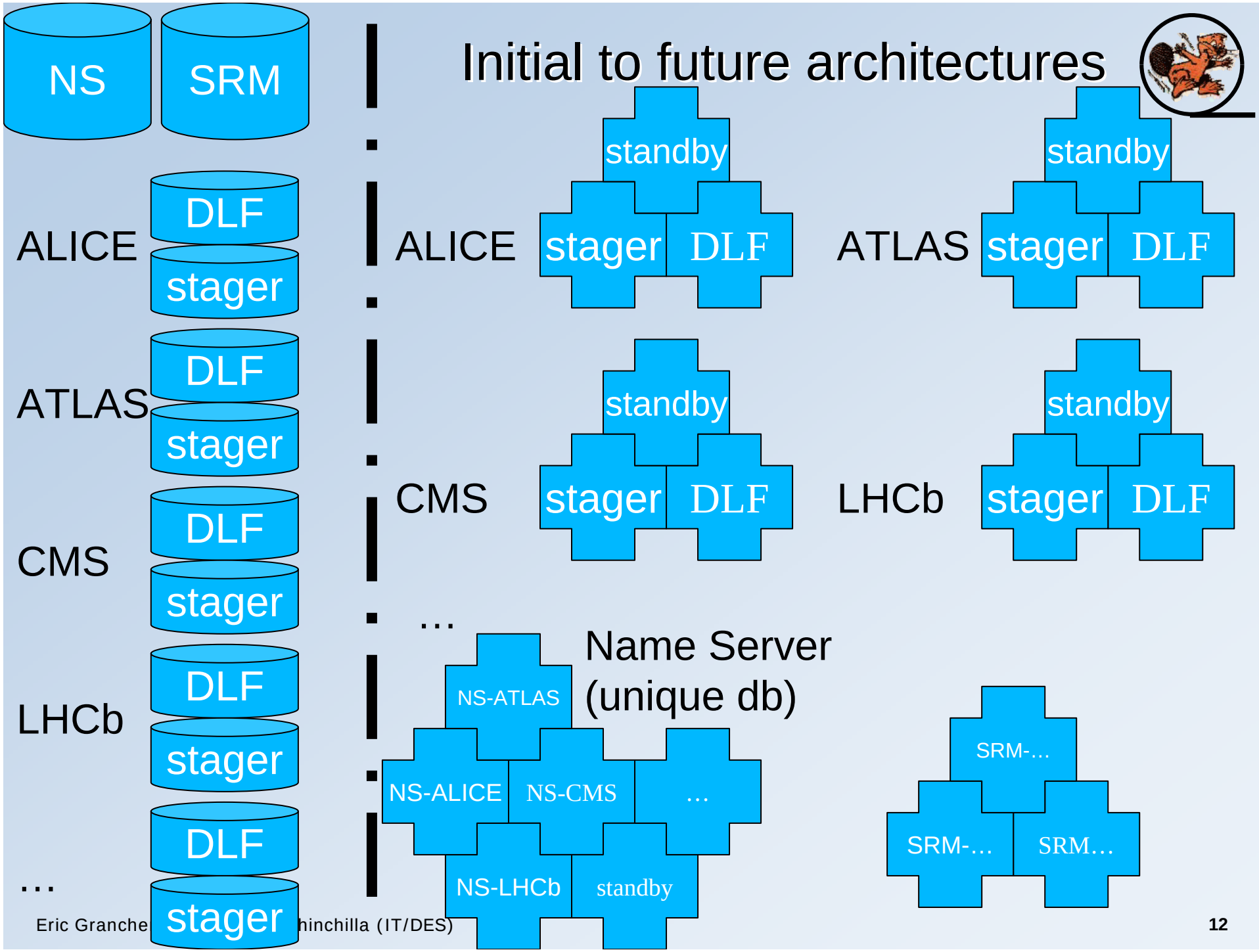
Castor NameServer (DB) figures

Event	Waits	Time (s)	Avg Wait(ms)	% Total Call Time	Wait Class
enq: TX - row lock contention	135,859	8,922	66	38.9	Application
log file parallel write	67,282	4,731	70	20.6	System I/O
log file sync	75,333	4,108	55	17.9	Commit
wait for scn ack	43,899	1,873	43	8.2	Other
control file sequential read	6,477	601	93	2.6	System I/O

New platform

- Use of the cluster (RAC) and standby (DataGuard) technologies understanding its limits
- Certified hardware (tested / validated / supported / guaranteed that the HW supplier and Oracle will work together on eventual issues)
- Flexible (depending on needs)
  - NS, stager, DLF, read-status
  - Eventually in a dynamic way
- Flexible (can have components made more powerful)
- Can scale with load

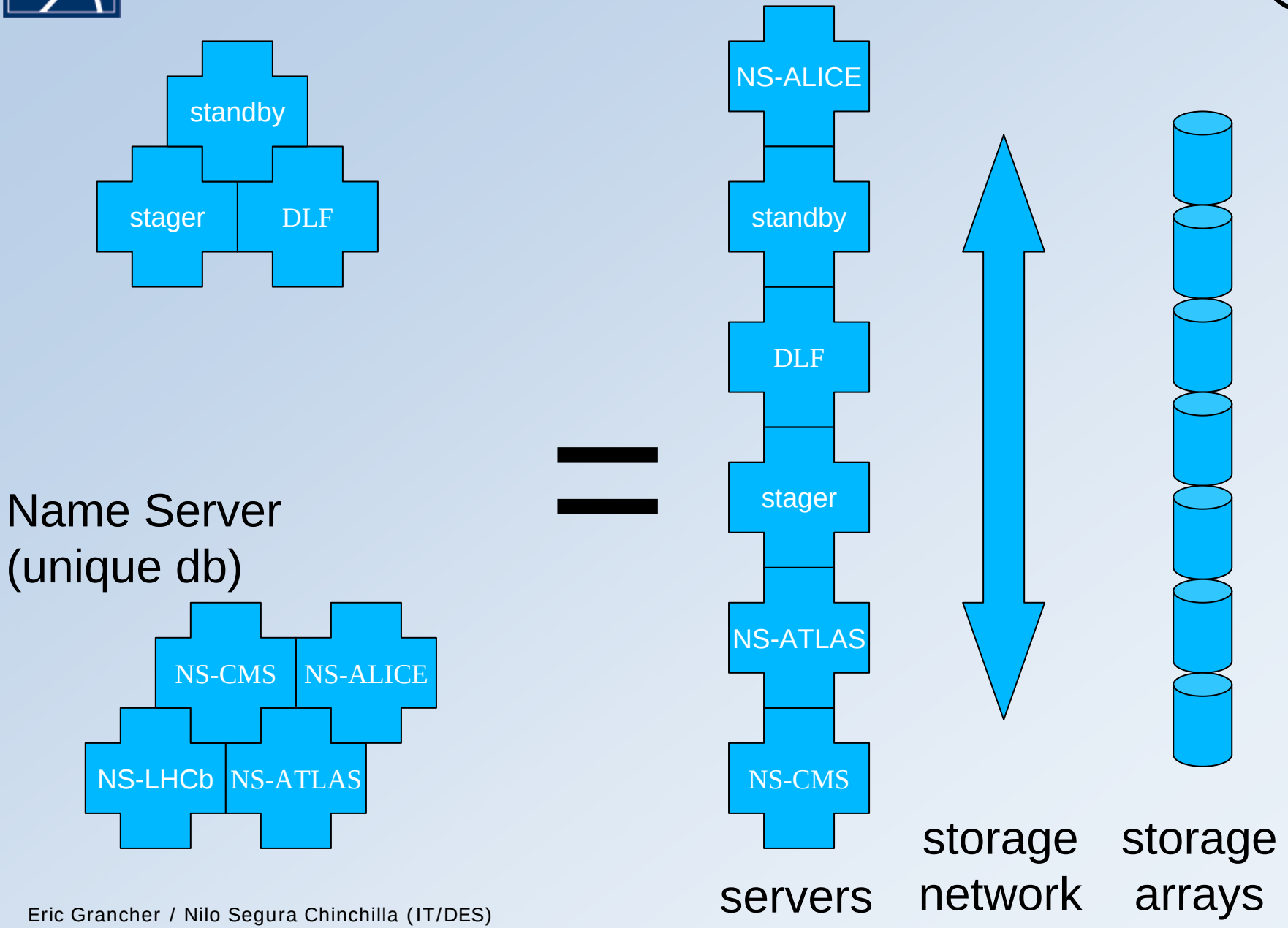
Initial to future architectures



Variations / combinations

- We may see that the usage patterns actually put a high-load on “name server”, stager, “status read”…
- Oracle clustering (RAC) make it possible to re-allocate resource where needed
  - 1 node for DLF + 2 nodes for stager versus
  - 1 node for stager + 2 nodes for DLF…
- Having standby (DataGuard) enables us to perform almost upgrades with very minimal downtime (<1 minute), cluster (RAC) does not.
- All database instances in a cluster share the same database, if there is a corruption, all nodes in the cluster may stop. With a standby, databases do not share “files”.
- Cluster and standby combination is the Oracle recommended maximum availability architecture.

Same hardware anyway



Collaboration with other institutes

- Oracle licensing.
  - Castor2 has been tested and works with Oracle Express Edition (free / limited version).
- Provide the creation scripts (with space and user allocation throttling/limits…) and can provide help for the initial deployment.
  - Full production support has to be done “locally”.
- Provide “Oracle statistics” (to have the same execution plans than the ones validated at CERN).
- Provide recipes / CERN Castor database guideline for deployment.
- Sharing of information (email for now, will to have phone calls, meetings).

Operations

- Database administrators are part of castor-deployment mailing list.
  - Very good interaction with the Castor dev/deployment teams.
- Database administrators can be called 24x7 (we also cover Christmas) with rotation on the people. Operators have the procedure (and had to exercise it ☹, see corruptions).
- All operations are logged in Twiki (visible to Castor deployment team, experiments).
- Reference documents for installation
  - Space allocation
  - “Oracle user” privileges
  - Throttling and limits
  - Table statistics

Security

- Model follows security best practices
  - no extra processes ran on the database servers,
  - No OS user login (administrators via ssh key).
  - OS and Oracle patches applied on a regular basis).
- Use Oracle advanced security mechanisms can be used (encryption, more secure authentication)
  - Tested and used on other services, non-significant overhead (especially for non-bandwidth intensive applications).
  - CERN has Oracle license for it.
  - To be validated, but a priori no issue to be faced.

Our conclusions

- A lot of experience gathered with the “initial” deployment (for the throttling / limits, for the execution plans / together with the other sites).
- We have “encouraged” an early move for all databases to database version 10.2 (10gR2), “premier support” until July 2010 (extended 2013).
- Security of the platform is correct satisfactory, more can be done if required (transparent for the application).
- We believe, based on our experience, that adequate hardware / infrastructure is mandatory for a service to reach its quality and availability goals.

References

- Oracle support
  http://www.oracle.com/support/library/data-sheet/oracle-lifetime-support-policy-datasheet.pdf
- Olof's stress test on the stager (stress on Oracle)
  http://castor.web.cern.ch/castor/presentations/2006/LSF-stress-testing.pdf