



Contribution ID: 334

Type: **oral presentation**

The GridPP DIRAC project - DIRAC for non-LHC communities

Monday, April 13, 2015 6:15 PM (15 minutes)

The GridPP consortium in the UK is currently testing a multi-VO DIRAC service aimed at non-LHC VOs. These VOs are typically small (fewer than two hundred members) and generally do not have a dedicated computing support post. The majority of these represent particle physics experiments (e.g. T2K, NA62 and COMET), although the scope of the DIRAC service is not limited to this field. A few VOs have designed bespoke tools around the EMI-WMS & LFC, while others have so far eschewed distributed resources as they perceive the overhead for accessing them to be too high.

The aim of the GridPP DIRAC project is to provide an easily adaptable toolkit for such VOs in order to lower the threshold for access to distributed resources such as grid and cloud computing. As well as hosting a centrally run DIRAC service, we will also publish our changes and additions to the base DIRAC codebase under an open-source license.

We started by taking a survey of the existing VO specific solutions using the feedback to determine the user requirements that were driving these implementations. These details were then used to map the base requirements to available DIRAC features, implementing any additional common functionality that was needed. Once the groundwork was complete, this knowledge was shared with the existing VOs and we worked with them to adapt their grid model to use the new DIRAC service.

The experience gained from this process was then used to recommend sensible approaches to the new VOs and assist them in getting started with distributed computing. We investigated different support models and found that a mailing list was the most accessible option for the target audience, while GGUS is used for tracking service issues.

We report on the current status of this project and show increasing adoption of DIRAC within the non-LHC communities.

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Session Classification: Track 4 Session

Track Classification: Track4: Middleware, software development and tools, experiment frameworks, tools for distributed computing