

Distributed Systems I

Software Architecture

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There are only two hard problems
in distributed systems:

2. Exactly-once delivery
1. Guaranteed order of messages
2. Exactly-once delivery

Lecture Goal: Balance a healthy love-hate relationship with dis-
tributed systems

Going forward

Investigating architectures that are *distributed*.

Distributed Systems Series

Distributed I *Reliability* and *scalability* of
stateless systems.

Distributed II *Complexities* of *stateful*
systems.

Distributed III *Hard problems* in distributed
systems.

What are the benefits?

- Improved *reliability*.
- Improved *scalability*.
Some systems are inherently distributed.
- Improved *latency*.

What are the drawbacks?

- Increased *complexity*.
- Increased *attack vector*.
- Increased *latency*.
- Introduce *consistency* problems.

We'll look at a few reasons that distributed systems are *fundamentally* quite challenging

§ Fallacies

A few reasons for complexity

The Fallacies of *Distributed Computing*.

Sun Microsystems in 1994, primarily accredited to Peter Deutsch
(doy-ch)

Fallacy #1

The network is reliable.







Solve it by resending it



If the service goes down and all clients are re-trying, the service is in for a shock when it comes back, we solve this with *exponential backoff*

Exponential backoff

```
1  retry = True
2  do:
3      status = service.request()
5
5      if status != SUCCESS:
6          wait(2 ** retries)
7      else:
8          retry = False
9  while (retry and retries < MAX_RETRIES)
```





Causes duplicate actions, problem for ordering/payments



Use tokens to prevent duplicates.

Fallacy #2

Latency is zero.

Network Statistics

Home to UQ

Home to us-east-1

EC2 to EC2

Network Statistics

Home to UQ 20.025ms

Home to us-east-1

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Network Statistics

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Home to us-east-1 249.296ms

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EC2 to EC2 0.662ms

Be mindful when designing distributed systems. Network call much slower then local call.

Fallacy #3

Bandwidth is infinite.

Similar to previous fallacy, be mindful, distributed calls clog up network.

Definition 1. Stamp Coupling

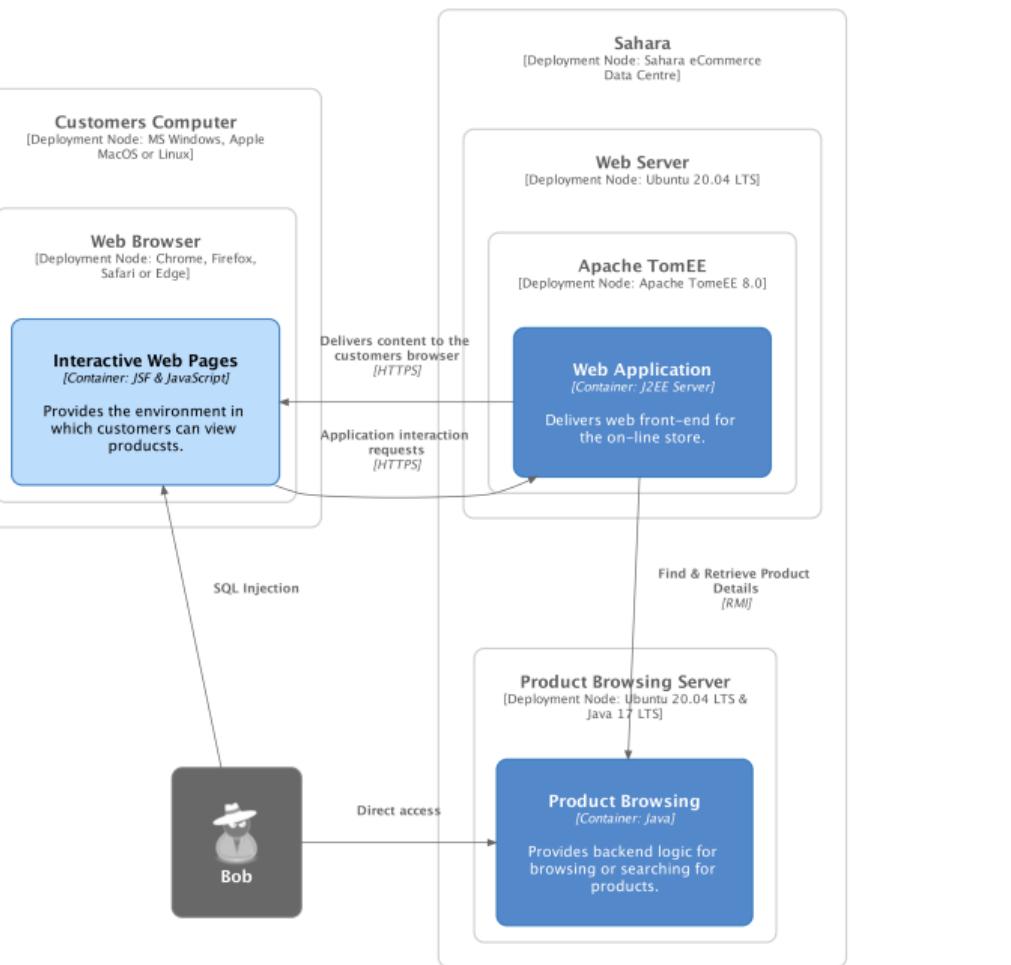
Components which share a composite data structure.

Fallacy #4

The network is secure.



Authentication only occurs when entering Sahara data centre



Bad actor gets access via one insecure node, network is compromised. Practice defence in depth.

Fallacy #5

The topology never changes.

Topology changes all the time, cloud has just made this easier.
Don't rely on static IPs. Don't assume consistent latency.

Fallacy #6

There is only one administrator.

Things spontaneously break. Who can help you?

Fallacy #7

Transport cost is zero.

Remember

Distributed systems are *hard*.

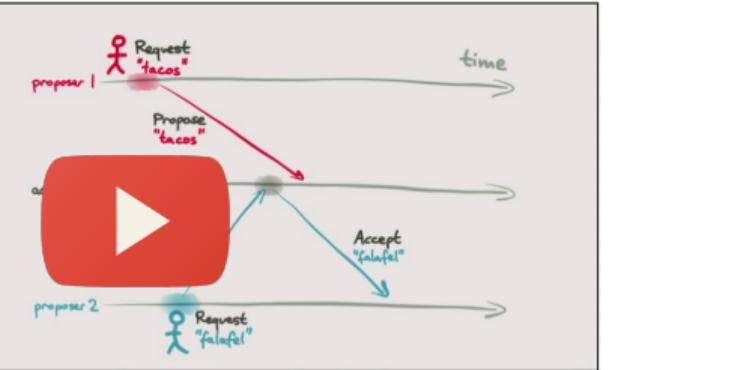
The choice to use them should be *well considered*.

Can often introduce more problems than they solve

When you need to, maybe prove it?



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Or, more realistically,

Use existing algorithms and software.

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Stateless vs. Stateful Systems

Stateless Does *not* utilize *persistent data*.

Stateful Does utilize *persistent data*.

Question

What makes software *reliable*?

Definition 2. Reliable Software

Continues to work, even when things go wrong.

Definition 3. Fault

Something goes wrong.

Death, taxes, and computer system failure are all inevitable to some degree.

Plan for the event.

- Howard and LeBlanc

Reliable software is

Fault *tolerant*.

John von Neumann built fault tolerant hardware in the 1950s.

Problem

Individual computers fail *all the time*

10-50 years hard-drive lifetime. 10,000 disks will fail daily. Google last had 2.5 million servers.

Solution

Spread the risk of faults over *multiple computers*, or, *nodes*.

Spreading Risk

If you have software that works with *just one* computer,
spreading the software over *two* computers *halves* the risk that
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Adding *100* computers reduces the cuts the risk by *100*.



- Why is this software somewhat reliable?
- Any individual service can go down and the rest still work.
- Can we do better?
- Can a service go down but have that service still work?

Question

Who has used *auto-scaling*?

Auto-scaling terminology

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Minimum/Maximum Capacity *Hard limits* on the minimal and maximum amount of instances.

What we really want

Desired Capacity Amount of *healthy* instances
we want to have in an auto-scaling group.

Health check

Mechanism to determine whether an instance is *healthy*.

Auto-scaling

An example



Product service keeps going down



We might expect product service to have a much higher load than other services





Use an auto-scaling group to replicate the service



What's the problem?



Traffic was all sent through the one instance, load balancer routes to all



In Summary

Simplicity

Reliability

Scalability

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Scalability Auto-scaling and load balancing allows *individual services to scale*. However, the *database is a bottle-neck*.

database is a bottle-neck is foreshadowing