Gestão de Infraestruturas de Computação 2021-22

Project Assignment 2

Theme: OpenPress Deployment

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Index

1.	Introduction	2
2.	OUR PRODUCT - OPENPRESS	2
3.	INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS	2
	DEPLOYMENT STRATEGY	
	4.1 NGINX	6
	4.3 CELERY	6 7
	4.5 PostgreSQL	
5.	OBTAINED RESULTS	9
6.	SCALLABILITY BOTTLENECKS	12
	6.1 CELERY BEAT	12
	6.2 PostgreSQL	
	6.3 AUTOMATION	12
7	CONCLUSION	40



1 Introduction

This report aims to describe the work developed in the context of the *Gestão de Infraestruturas de Computação* Course 2021/22. For this assignment, the main goal was to "ship" an existent product to a *Kubernetes* Infrastructure. Further on this report, it will be described the product that we decided to deploy, its components as well as the deployment strategy chosen.

2 Our Product - OpenPress

Our Product, OpenPress, is a web platform which allows verified and independent journalists to publish media available for everyone. Thus, its goal is to allow users to watch media from independent sources, avoiding the spreading of misinformation and "fake news". The base software of our Product is MediaCMS, which is an open source web based platform that works out as a content management system. Its main features consist on publishing media content, watch and download the media, as well as creating playlists and share with others.

3 Individual Components

The technology stack that allows the functionalities that we provide is the following:

- NGINX, an HTTP and reverse proxy server, and a generic TCP/UDP proxy server. Regarding our application, not only it serves the static content necessary but also routes the HTTP requests to our Backend and Frontend, as we shall see nextly.
- React.js, a JavaScript library used in building user interfaces such as our Frontend.
- Django, a Python web framework. In our application it accepts and processes HTTP requests and is responsible to create celery tasks, manage cache and store data in the PostgreSQL database.
- Redis, a in-memory data store is used in our system for caching purposes and as a broker for Celery.
- Celery, a distributed task queue is responsible in our application for performing and scheduling tasks.
 The tasks are divided in two queues, long and short. Short tasks consists on simpler tasks such as clearing user sessions while long tasks deal mainly with media encoding, a more compute intensive task.
- PostgreSQL, an open source relational database system is our system database responsible for storing all the data.

4 Deployment Strategy

In the figure 9 below, it is presented an overall deployment architecture. In this section, we will explore the deployment approach for all the application's individual components.

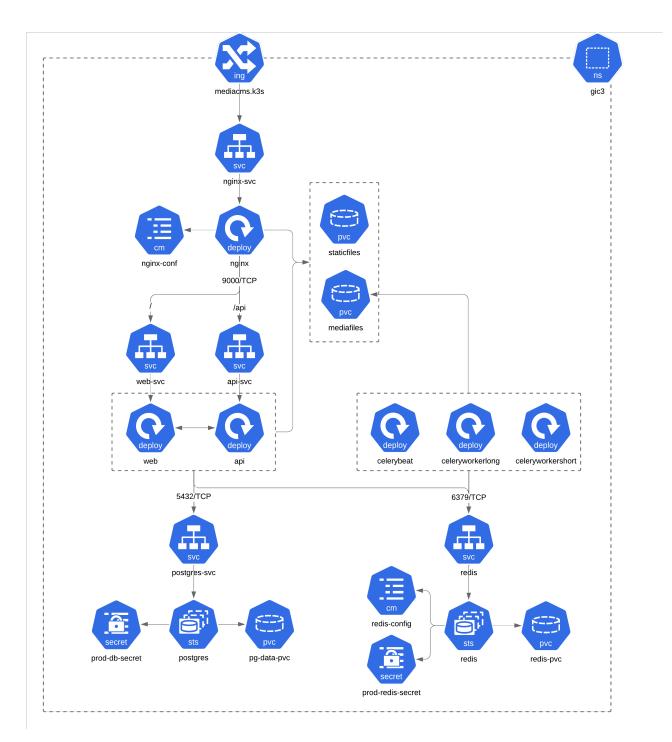


Figure 1: Deployment Architecture



4.1 NGINX

For NGINX, we decided to use Kubernetes Manifests of the following kinds:

- · Persistent Volume and Persistent Volume Claims
- Deployment
- · Service
- · ConfigMap

As mentioned above, NGINX is responsible for serving static content and routing HTTP Requests. The Ingress that we created so that requests from outside the Cluster could reach our services, routes all requests to NGINX Service Created. The following figure contains the **Ingress** that we have done:

```
rules:
- host: mediacms.k3s
http:
    paths:
- path: /
    pathType: Prefix
    backend:
    service:
    name: nginx-svc
    port:
    number: 80
```

Figure 2: Ingress Manifest

The only open port in the NGINX Service is the port 80, since is the port used for HTTP requests. Regarding the deployment of NGINX, three volumes have been created:

- · A volume for the Media Files
- A volume for the Static Files
- · A volume for the Nginx Configuration File

As the encoded videos were stored in the File System, this first volume mentioned is shared with the Celery Workers, the Django Service. The second Volume is shared with the Django Service so that the static content can be served by NGINX. Finally, the third one was necessary, as the Configuration File is Provided by a ConfigMap. The following figure shows an excerpt of the NGINX Deployment Manifest.



Figure 3: Excerpt of the NGINX Deployment Manifest

Additionaly, the figure above contains the configuration provided in the Nginx ConfigMap.

```
server {
   listen 80:
   server_name localhost;
   qzip on;
   access_log /var/log/nginx/mediacms.io.access.log;
   error_log /var/log/nginx/mediacms.io.error.log warn;
   location /static {
       alias /home/mediacms.io/mediacms/static;
   location /media {
       alias /home/mediacms.io/mediacms/media_files;
   location /demo {
       root /home/mediacms.io/mediacms/static/ ;
       index index.html;
   location / {
       add_header 'Access-Control-Allow-Origin' '*';
       add_header 'Access-Control-Allow-Methods' 'GET, POST, OPTIONS'
       add_header 'Access-Control-Allow-Headers' 'DNT,User-Agent,X-Re
       add_header 'Access-Control-Expose-Headers' 'Content-Length, Cont
       uwsgi_param QUERY_STRING
                                        $query_string;
       uwsgi_param REQUEST_METHOD
                                       $request_method;
```

Figure 4: Excerpt of the NGINX Deployment Manifest

As it may be seen, the locations /**static** and /**media** will retrieve files stored in the respective Volume Mount Paths. Besides this, the /**demo** location is responsible for our promotional page, in which the necessary files are also stored in the volume for static content. Lastly, the Root Location will route requests to the Frontend Service. Another Location, is the /**api/v1**, which will be explained on the next subsection.



4.2 React and Django

In our System, Django uses React in its templating engine. Thus, in order to try to separate concerns in our Kubernetes Deployment, the API and Frontend Deployments use the same Docker Image, but these will be responsible for handling HTTP requests for the endpoints /api/v1 and /, respectively. As mentioned above, NGINX will do perform the routing of the requests to the correct service. The image 5 contains the logs of the API and Frontend, which confirms that each of these are receiving the correct requests.

```
GET /view?m=0vrHeVwhT => generated 8:

GET /api/v1/playlists?author=teste2 => generated 52 b

GET /api/v1/media/0oh10ptPv/comments => generated 52 b

GET /api/v1/playlists?author=teste2 => generated 52 b

GET /api/v1/media/0vrHeVwhT/comments => generated 52 b

GET /api/v1/media/0vrHeVwhT/comments => generated 52 b

GET /api/v1/media/0vrHeVwhT/comments => generated 52 b

GET /bistory => generated 7426 bytes

(a) Api deployment

(b) Frontend deployment
```

Figure 5: An excerpt of Api and Frontend deployment logs

Once again, both the deployments use the same docker image and have two volumes which are also shared with NGINX and Celery (Figure 6.c). In the deployments YAML files, some important configuration parameters such as the Redis and PostgreSQL passwords are passed as environment variables using generated Kubernetes secrets (Figure 6.b). This enables the Web and Api component to communicate with the cache and the database. Another manifest kind used for both Frontend and API were Services. These Services only exposed port 9000, since it was the only port used by the UWSGI Server in Django (Figure 6.a).

```
# Create Service for APP
---
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
   name: web-svc
   namespace: gic3
spec:
   ports:
   - name: uwsgi
    port: 9000
    targetPort: 9000
selector:
   app: web
```

```
(a) Service Configuration
```

```
env:
- name: POSTGRES_USER
valueFrom:
secretKeyRef:
name: prod-db-secret
key: username
- name: POSTGRES_PASSWORD
valueFrom:
secretKeyRef:
name: prod-db-secret
key: password
- name: POSTGRES_HOST
value: postgres-svc
- name: REDIS_LOCATION
value: redis
- name: REDIS_PASSWORD
valueFrom:
secretKeyRef:
name: prod-redis-secret
key: password
```

(b) Environment Variables

```
volumeMounts:
    - mountPath: /home/mediacms.io/m
    name: staticfiles
    - mountPath: /home/mediacms.io/m
    name: mediafiles

volumes:
    - name: staticfiles
    persistentVolumeClaim:
        claimName: staticfilespvc
    - name: mediafiles
    persistentVolumeClaim:
        claimName: mediafilespvc
```

(c) Volumes Configuration

Figure 6: An excerpt of the Kubernetes entities for Api and Web components

4.3 Celery

For the Celery component, there are 3 deployments: one for the celery beat, and two for celery worker. One of the workers receives tasks from the short queue and the other from the long queue. Their tasks are many and diverse, but their core responsibility is to divide the uploaded videos in chunks and to encode them.

Their image is very similar from the Django and React component, meaning that they also need the Redis and



PostgreSQL environment variables to connect to them with the correct credentials. Besides, they also share the volume *mediafiles* to store the encoded video chunks. The only important exception is the command they finally execute in the *entrypoint.sh*, according to the job they are responsible for (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Celery command entrypoint

Pod Affinity ensures two pods to be co-located in a single node To distribute the CPU load of our system, we defined a pod anti-affinity rule to separate the Web component from the Celery component so that we could ensure that the pods regarding these components were not in the same node. This configuration was added in the Celery deployment and can be seen in Figure 8.

```
affinity:
   podAntiAffinity:
    requiredDuringSchedulingIgnoredDuringExecution:
        - topologyKey: kubernetes.io/hostname
        labelSelector:
        matchLabels:
        app: web
```

Figure 8: Celery affinity with Web Component

4.4 Redis

To deploy Redis an Master-Slave Architecture has been used with two Slaves and one Master. The Master is responsible for performing the Write Operations and propagate those to the Slaves. Therefore, the Slaves only perform Read Operations. Regarding Redis we decided to use the following Kubernetes manifest kinds:

Persistent Volume and Persistent Volume Claims

- Service
- ConfigMap



Secret

Since Redis in our system requires data storing and works out as a Broker for Celery, it is a Stateful Service. Thus, the StatefulSet was the choosen workload since in these each pod is given a name and treated individually, in contrast to a Kubernetes Deployment, where pods are easily replaceable. Stateful applications require pods with unique identities.

To do so, initially an **initContainer** is used with some steps necessary to update the configuration file for slaves and master pods: The Master Pod will initially have the hostname *redis-0*, thus, if a Redis Pod has a hostname different from this one, the configuration file for Redis will be updated to identify the pod as a slave. Additionally, **two volumes** have been created, one responsible for the persistence of data and other to store the ConfigMap file, as it will be explained. Finally, the authentication for Redis will also be added to the configuration file used the Password defined in the **Secret** created for Redis. This secret is created using the following command:

kubectl create secret generic prod-redis-secret –from-literal=password=\$(head -c 24 /dev/random — base64) -n gic3

The following figure shows the init container mentioned above:

Figure 9: Init Container in Redis StatefulSet Manifest

Besides this, the Configuration file for Redis is provided using a ConfigMap. Finally, in order to other components of our system access Redis, we created a Service for it, allowing requests to **Port 6379**, the default one of Redis. This Service has to be headless so that the Network Identity of the Pods is provided, in other words, with no ClusterIP.

4.5 PostgreSQL

PostgreSQL's deployment consists of three different Kubernetes manifest kinds: a service which exposes port 5432, a persistent volume and a deployment. The deployment manifest kind uses a docker image created. It also sets some important environment variables, such as POSTGRES_USER and POSTGRES_PASSWORD. The variables values are obtained through Kubernetes secrets. The command used to generate the secret was the following: *kubectl create secret generic prod-db-secret –from-literal=username=mediacms –from-literal=password=\$(head -c 24 /dev/random — base64) -n gic3*

The deployment also creates a volume which will be used to store the data of the database.

5 Obtained Results

We successfully deployed our application which is available at: http://mediacms.k3s. A promotional page of our project is also available at: http://mediacms.k3s/demo/.

In figure 10 below we can see the final deployment status.

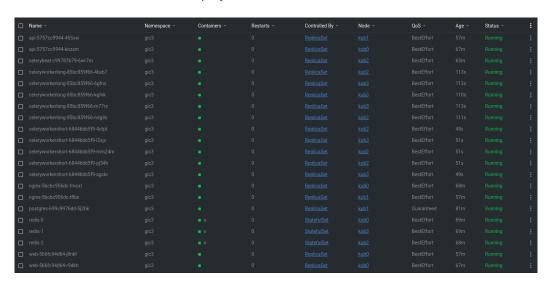


Figure 10: Pods running in final deployment

To respond to the bottlenecks of our application, we had to apply strategies to these points of failure. In our last presentation, we defined that horizontal scaling was of extreme importance in React, Django and Celery Worker components, since these were likely to receive more CPU load. Thus, we configured them such that their deployment could create replicas dynamically.

Despite not having in consideration the replication on the Redis component, we later notice that, for being the broker between Django and Celery, it would also suffer some of their load. For this reason, we built Redis as a cluster, increasing its performance and availability.

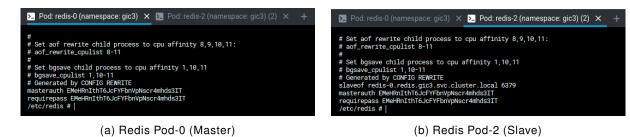


Figure 11: Redis cluster instances configurations

From the figure 11 above, it is shown how the configuration is adapted between master and slave redis nodes. Here, the Redis Pod-2 is configured to be a slave of Redis Pod-0 (named redis-0).

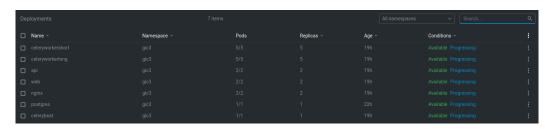


Figure 12: Pods and number of replicas in each deployment

As we can see in figure 12, there are 10 celery worker replicas, 5 for the long tasks and 5 for the short tasks. Two replicas were created for NGINX, Frontend(web) and API. The redis cluster contains 3 pods, one for the master redis-data-0 and the other two for slaves. Meanwhile postgreSQL and the celery beat only possess one replica.

It is important to notice that the celery worker replicas are in different nodes than the Frontend and web pods.

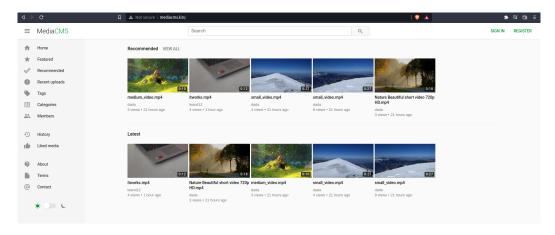


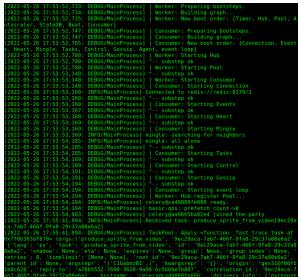
Figure 13: Website homepage in production

```
CREATE TABLE "django migrations" ("id" serial NOT NULL PRIMARY KEY, "app" varchar(255) NOT NULL, "name" varchar(255) NOT NULL, "applied" timestamp with time zone NOT NULL); (params None) related by the property of the prop
```

```
12022-08-26 17:53:32,505: DEBUG/MainFrocess) best: Starting.
12022-08-26 17:53:32,502: DEBUG/MainFrocess) best: Starting.
12022-08-26 17:53:32,502: DEBUG/MainFrocess) best: Centuals II 1 6 * (m/h/d/dM/MY) * (schedulentry: clear sessions) clear sessions) (crent schedule: crontab: II 6 * * (m/h/d/dM/MY) * (schedulentry: clear) sessions clear sessions) (crontab: II 1 6 * * (m/h/d/dM/MY) * (schedulentry: clear) sessions clear sessions) (crontab: II 1 6 * * (m/h/d/dM/MY) * (schedulentry: clear) sessions clear sessions (clear) sessio
```

(a) Web Logs

(b) Celery Beat Logs



(c) Celery Worker Logs

Figure 14: Redis cluster instances configurations

In figure 14, we can see the logs from some components. In (a), the migrations on the database were applied; in (b) the celery beat was up, and its schedule was running normally; and in (c), the celery worker was up, and receiving tasks from the beat and the web component.

6 Scallability Bottlenecks

In this section it will be discussed some possible scallability bottlenecks and issues.

6.1 Celery Beat

In our deployment there can only be on instance of the celery beat. While in terms of workload, for our use case, this should not be problematic in case of the instance failure the celery beat will shutdown and would not be replace as there is no other replica.

This would have implications on the use of the application as the celery beat is responsible for scheduling celery tasks.

6.2 PostgreSQL

In our current deployment PostgreSQL scallability is not possible.

Just like Redis an master-slave cluster for PostgreSQL could have been implemented. This could have been done using Kubernetes StatefulSets. StatefulSets would allow for stable, persistent storage while guaranteeing higher availability.

6.3 Automation

In the process of deploying our application there are some manual tasks that must be done which might make it harder to automate the deployment process.

The tasks consist on copying the *static* folder after the nginx, Frontend and API deployments and creating the *hls* directory, inside the Media Folder: As Kubernetes Volume mount paths will delete any existent content in that path, the *hls* subdirectory would be deleted. Besides this, an existent issue is that sometimes NGINX has to be reloaded when deploying it for the first time, to renderize the Static Content.

7 Conclusion

Kubernetes was fundamental to ease the process of deploying a full stack application that consisted of multiple services running in different containers. Besides, it has shown the low effort that it requires to scale up components that present risks of being bottlenecks in our infrastructure, achieving high availability and performance in our application. It was definitely an interesting assignment since we have faced multiple challenges to reach our goals, where we managed to understand better in practice the mechanisms behind Kubernetes and how we could "ship" a product to an Infrastructure in a scalable and manageable way.