

ntopng User's Guide High-Speed Web-based Traffic Analysis and Flow Collection

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1.1. What's New?

Release 1.1 (November 2013)

- Updated web GUI.
- Updated –i flag for specifying multiple interfaces simultaneously.
- Added –F flag for saving flows in SQLite format.
- Added -A flag for data aggregations for clustering information based on homogeneous information.
- Added activity map for having at 1-second visibility of hosts activities.
- Extended host reporting information with new reports and enhancements to existing ones.
- Added Google Maps support and HTML 5 map geolocation support.
- Performance improvements both in nDPI and the ntopng engine.
- Implemented passive OS detection by dissecting, via nDPI, HTTP request headers.
- All objects are JSON-friendly.

Release 1.0 (May 2013)

• First public release.

2.It's time for a completely new ntop.

15 years are past since the first version of ntop. In 1998 network monitoring requirements were very different from today: few protocols (mostly in plain text) to monitor, IP was not yet "the only protocol", low network speed, very few connected hosts, no iPhones yet, raspberry was still a fruit, Linux was still for geeks. In 2013 the whole picture is very different.

One gigabit links are now commodity (10 Gbit is around the corner), (too?) many hosts interconnected and mobile, application protocols (e.g. Spotify or Skype) are "the" protocols (TCP is a generic protocol) so we need nDPI to figure out what is happening on the network.

The way the original ntop was designed was IMHO very advanced for that time, but today is no longer so for many reasons. Today people want to have a flexible network monitoring engine able to scale at multi-Gbit, using limited memory, immune to crashes "no matters what", scriptable and extensible, able to see what's happening in realtime with 1-second accuracy, capable of characterising hosts (call it host reputation if you wish) and storing monitoring data on the cloud for (de-)centralised monitoring even of those devices that have no disk space. Over the past years we have tried to address ntop open issues, but the code base was too old, complicated, bug-prone. In essence it was time to start over, preserve the good things of ntop, and learn from mistakes. So basically looking forward by creating a new ntop, able to survive (hopefully) 15 more years and set new monitoring standards.

This has the motivation behind what I temporarily call ntopng (ntop next generation). The work to do is huge but as you can see many things are already working.

3. Introduction

ntopng is the next generation version of the original ntop, a network traffic probe that shows the network usage, similar to what the popular top Unix command does. It displays a list of hosts that are currently using the network and reports information concerning the (IP and non-IP) traffic generated and received by each host. ntopng may operate as a frontend collector or as a stand-alone collector/display program.

ntopng is based on libpcap and it has been written in a portable way in order to virtually run on every Unix platform, MacOSX and on Win32 as well.

ntopng is a network traffic monitor, by default it uses the layer 2 Media Access Control (MAC) addresses AND the layer 3 tcp/ip addresses. ntopng is capable of associating the two, so that ip and non-ip traffic (e.g. arp, rarp) are combined for a complete picture of network activity.

ntopng users must use a web browser to navigate through ntopng (that acts as a web server) traffic information and get a dump of the network status. In the latter case, ntopng can be seen as a simple RMON-like agent with an embedded web interface. The use of:

- a web interface.
- limited configuration and administration via the web interface.
- reduced CPU and memory usage (they vary according to network size and traffic).

3.1. The main design principles

- Open source, self-contained with zero configuration, just like the original ntop.
- ntopng is a cache, just like the original ntop, but contrary to its predecessor we leverage on Redis for implementing multi-level caching:
- ntopng keeps in memory the current network traffic
- Redis keeps the "recent network history"
- (Optionally) Persistently dump traffic history on disk for long term traffic analysis.
- <u>nDPI</u> centric: ports are no longer enough, as we want to identify application protocols even on non standard ports.
- Ability to leverage on <u>PF_RING</u> for monitoring million packets/second with no drops.
- Written in C++, with clean code layout. Occasionally some routines from the original ntop will be ported to ntopng, but the idea is to write everything from scratch on a clean room. The ntop code didn't have a real API and it was so complicated after years of patches, that people were scared of touching me.
- The web GUI is based on <u>Twitter Bootstrap</u> for modern, consistent, and mobile-friendly GUI.
- The ntopng engine is scriptable in LuaJIT.
- Web pages are written in <u>Lua</u>: everyone can write its on pages without having to code in C.
- ntopng, as well ntopng, leverage on the <u>MicroCloud</u> for creating a comprehensive network view.

3.2. What ntopng can do for me?

- Sort network traffic according to many protocols
- Show network traffic and IPv4/v6 active hosts
- Store on disk persistent traffic statistics in RRD format
- Geolocate hosts
- Discover application protocols by leveraging on nDPI, ntop's DPI framework.
- Characterise HTTP traffic by leveraging on characterisation services provided by block.si. ntopng comes with a demo characterisation key, but if you need a permanent one, please mail <u>info@block.si</u>.
- Show IP traffic distribution among the various protocols
- Analyse IP traffic and sort it according to the source/destination
- Display IP Traffic Subnet matrix (who's talking to who?)
- Report IP protocol usage sorted by protocol type
- Act as a <u>NetFlow/sFlow</u> collector for flows generated by routers (e.g. Cisco and Juniper) or switches (e.g. Foundry Networks) when used together with <u>ntopng</u>.
- Produce HTML5/AJAX network traffic statistics

Platforms

- Unix (including Linux, *BSD, and MacOSX)
- Win32 (including the latest Windows 7/8)

Web GUI

A modern HTML 5 browser is needed to visualise ntoping traffic statistics.

Requirements

Memory Usage

It depends on the ntop configuration, number of hosts, and number of active TCP sessions. In general it ranges from a few MB (little LAN) to 100 MB for a WAN.

• CPU Usage

It depends on the ntop configuration, and traffic conditions. On a modern PC and large LAN, it is less than 10% of overall CPU load.

Protocols

- IPv4/IPv6
- All IP protocols supported by nDPI (~170 and counting)
- ...and many more

Extensibility

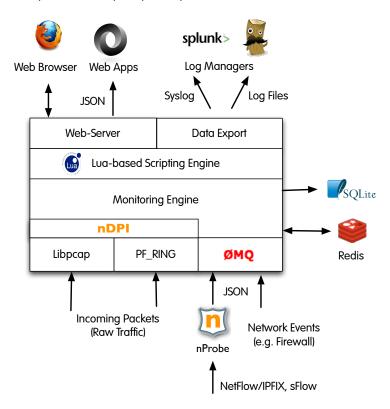
ntopng engine is scripted using the LuaJIT language. Users can extend the web interface as well modify it in realtime without having to code into the ntopng C++ engine.

Additional Features

- sFlow, NetFlow (including v5 and v9) and IPFIX support through ntopng
- Network Flows
- Local Traffic Analysis
- Lua lightweight API for extending ntop via scripts
- Support of both <u>NetFlow</u> and<u>sFlow</u> as flow collector. ntop can collect simultaneously from multiple probes.
- Traffic statistics are saved into <u>RRD</u> databases for long-run traffic analysis.
- Internet Domain, AS (Autonomous Systems), VLAN (Virtual LAN) Statistics.
- Protocol decoders for all application protocols supported by nDPI.
- Advanced HTTP password protection with encrypted passwords
- RRD support for persistently storing per-host traffic information

3.3. ntopng Architecture

The figure below depicts the may ntop components



ntopng Monitoring Engine

- Coded in C++ and based the concept of flow (set of packets with the same 6-tuple).
- Flows are inspected with a home-grown DPI- library named nDPI aiming to discover the "real" application protocol (no ports are used).
- Information is clustered per:
 - (Capture) Network Device
 - Flow
 - Host
 - High-level Aggregations

Information Lifecycle

- All information (e.g. hosts and flows) is stored in memory.
- Using command line options, users can specify how many hosts/flows can be kept in memory.
- Idle flows are periodically purged in order to free memory.
- Hosts are serialised and stored in JSON format in Redis for 1 hour, so that in case new traffic is detected ntoping can restore them from cache.

Packet Processing Journey

- Packet capture: PF_RING (Linux) or libpcap.
- Packet decoding: no IP traffic is accounted.
- IPv4/v6 Traffic only:
 - Map the packet to a 6-tuple flow and increment stats.
 - Identify source/destination hosts and increment stats.
 - Use nDPI to identify the flow application protocol
 - UDP flows are identified in no more than 2 packets.
 - TCP Flows can be identified in up to 15 packets in total, otherwise the flow is marked as "Unknown".
- Move to the next packet.

3.4. Using ntopng as Flow Collector

In ntoping we have decided to collect flows through ntoping that can act as probe/proxy. This is because we wanted to keep the ntoping engine simple and clean from flow-based application needs. The communication between ntoping and ntoping happens though ZeroMQ that decouples ntoping from ntoping. You can collect flows as follows:

- 1. Start ntoping that will act as a probe for ntoping ntoping -zmg "tcp://*:5556" -i
- 2. Start ntoping that will act as a collector (it listens on local port 5556) ntoping -i "tcp://127.0.0.1:5556"

Flows exchanged between ntoping and ntoping are formatted in JSON and not on standard sFlow/NetFlow format.

3.5. Download ntopng

Have a look at the <u>download</u> page.

4. Using ntopng

In the following sections, we discuss all the command line options and how to efficiently configure ntopng to run on your network.

4.1. Compiling ntopng Source Code

The ntopng source code (if you have decided to compile ntopng from source instead of using a binary package), on Unix it can be compiled as follows:

```
cd <ntopng source code directory>
./configure
make
make install
```

Please note that the ntopng source code compiles both on Unix and Windows. If you are looking for the main dependence and how to install it please read the appendix A at the end of this document.

4.2. Installing a Binary ntopng

On Linux, we pre-build two packages for the two most popular platforms Ubuntu Server LTE x64 and CentOS x64. We always build binaries for the latest server versions. Such packages can be installed from:

- http://apt.ntop.org (Ubuntu)
- http://rpm.ntop.org (CentOS)

Often the above packages can be installed on "sister" distributions such as Debian and RedHat/Fedora, although we cannot guarantee that they will work or install properly.

4.3. ntopng Command Line Options

Below are listed the available options and a detailed explanation of each option:

```
| 1 - Decode DNS responses and resolve
all
                                     numeric IPs
2 - Decode DNS responses and don't
                                         resolve numeric IPs
                                        | 3 - Don't decode DNS responses and
don't
                                         resolve numeric IPs
                                       | Input interface name (numeric/
[--interface|-i] <interface|pcap>
symbolic)
                                   | or pcap file path
[--data-dir|-d] <path>
                                   | Data directory (must be writable).
                                   | Default: data
[--daemon|-e]
                                   | Daemonize ntopng
[--httpdocs-dir|-1] <path>
                                   | HTTP documents root directory.
                                   | Default: httpdocs
[--scripts-dir|-2] <path>
                                   | Scripts directory.
                                   | Default: scripts
[--callbacks-dir|-3] <path>
                                   | Callbacks directory.
                                   | Default: scripts/callbacks
[--dump-timeline|-C]
                                   | Enable timeline dump.
[--categorization-key|-c] <key>
                                   | Key used to access host categorization
                                   | services (default: disabled).
                                   | Please read README.categorization for
                                   | more info.
[--http-port|-w] <http port>
                                   | HTTP port. Default: 3000
[--local-networks|-m] <local nets> | Local nets list (default:
192.168.1.0/24)
                                                                 \mid (e.g. -m
"192.168.0.0/24,172.16.0.0/16")
[--ndpi-protocols|-p] <file>.protos | Specify a nDPI protocol file
                                     (eg. protos.txt)
[--disable-host-persistency|-P]
                                  | Disable host persistency
[--redis|-r] <redis host[:port]>
                                  | Redis host[:port]
[--user|-U] <sys user>
                                   | Run ntopng with the specified user
                                   | instead of nobody
                                   | Do not change user (debug only)
[--dont-change-user|-s]
[--disable-login|-l]
                                   | Disable user login authentication
                                  | Max number of active flows
[--max-num-flows|-X] <num>
                                   | (default: 131072)
                                   | Max number of active hosts
[--max-num-hosts|-x] <num>
                                   | (default: 65536)
[--users-file|-u] <path>
                                   | Users configuration file path
                                   | Default: ntopng-users.conf
[--pid|-G] <path>
                                   | Pid file path
[--packet-filter|-B] <filter>
                                   | Ingress packet filter (BPF filter)
[--enable-aggregations|-A] <mode>
                                   | Setup data aggregation:
                                   | 0 - No aggregations (default)
                                      | 1 - Enable aggregations, no timeline
dump
                                    | 2 - Enable aggregations, with timeline
                                         dump (see -C)
[--dump-flows|-F]
                                    | Dump expired flows.
[--dump-hosts|-D] <mode>
                                   | Dump hosts policy (default: none).
                                    | Values:
                                    | local - Dump only local hosts
                                    | remote - Dump only remote hosts
[--dump-aggregations|-E] <mode>
                                      | Dump aggregations policy (default:
none).
                                    | Values:
                                   | remote - Dump only remote hosts
                                    | Dont flush hosts (default: none).
[--sticky-hosts|-S] <mode>
                                    | Values:
                                    | all
                                           - Keep all hosts in memory
                                   | local - Keep only local hosts
| remote - Keep only remote hosts
```

	none	-	Flush	hosts	when	idle
[verbose -v]	Verbose	<u>†</u>	cracing	3		
[help -h]	Help					

filename

The text of filename is copied - ignoring line breaks and comment lines (anything following a #) - into the command line. ntopng behaves as if all of the text had simply been typed directly on the command line. For example, if the command line is "ntopng s.conf" and file s.conf contains just the line '-s', then the effective command line is "ntopng -s". In case you use a configuration file, the following options on the command line will be ignored. Example "ntopng /etc/ntopng/ntopng.conf -v" the -v option is ignored.

The configuration file is similar to the command line, with the exception that an equal sign '=' must be used between key and value. Example: -i=p1 or --interface=p1.

Remember, most ntopng options are "sticky", that is they just set an internal flag. Invoking them multiple times doesn't change the ntopng's behavior. However, options that set a value, such as --trace-level, will use the LAST value given: -w 8000 -w 8080 will run as -w 8080.

-n: DNS mode

This specifies the DNS address resolution mode. Ntopng provides four modes: 0 - Decode DNS responses and resolve local numeric IPs only, 1 - Decode DNS responses and resolve all numeric IPs; 2 - Decode DNS responses and don't resolve numeric IPs; 3 - Don't decode DNS responses and don't resolve numeric IPs. By default the DNS mode is set to 0.

-i: interface

Specifies the network interface or collector endpoint to be used by ntopng for network monitoring.

On Unix you can specify both the interface name (e.g. lo) or the numeric inter–face id as shown by ntopng -h. On Windows you must use the interface number instead.

In case a user needs to activate ntopng on two or more different interfaces, then he/she needs to repeater the -i flag once for interface (e.g. -i eth0 -i eth1).

If a collector endpoint is specified, ntopng open a ZeroMQ connection to the specified endpoint as a subscriber. Example of collector endpoints are "tcp://127.0.0.1:5556" or ipc://flows.ipc

If you want you can pass a path of a pcap file (e.g. -i dummy.pcap) and ntopng will read packets from the specified pcap file.

nProbe can be instructed to act as a publisher delivering flows to a ZeroMQ endpoint using the --zmq <endpoint> parameter.

--data-dir l -d: data directory

Specifies the data directory. It must be writable. Default directory is ./data

--daemon I -e : start ntopng as a daemon

Useful when starting ntopng as daemon.

This parameter causes ntop to become a daemon, i.e. a task which runs in the background without connection to a specific terminal. To use ntop other than as a casual monitoring tool, you probably will want to use this option.

--httpdocs-dir I -1: HTTP documents root directory

This specifies the path of HTTP documents root directory. By default it is httpdocs.

--scripts-dir I -2: Scripts directory

This specifies the path of scripts directory. By default it is scripts.

--callbacks-dir I -3: Callbacks directory

This specifies the path of callbacks directory. By default it is scripts/callbacks.

--dump-timeline I -C

Enable timeline dump on disk (default: disabled).

--categorization-key I -c <key>

Set key used to access host categorization services (default: disabled). Please read README.categorization for more info.

--http-port I -w <http port>

Set the HTTP port. Default: 3000

--local-networks I -m <local nets>

Set the ip addresses and netmasks for each active interface. Any traffic on those networks is considered local. This parameter allows the user to define additional networks and subnetworks whose traffic is also considered local in ntoping reports. All other hosts are considered remote. If not specified the default is set to 192.168.1.0/24.

Commas separate multiple network values. Both netmask and CIDR notation may be used, even mixed together, for instance "131.114.21.0/24,10.0.0.0/255.0.0.0".

--ndpi-protocolsl-p <file>.protos

This parameter is used to specify a nDPI protocol file. The format is <tcpl udp>:<port>,<tcpludp>:<port>,....@eproto> where <port> is a port number and eproto> is a name of a protocol supported by nDPI protocol, or host:"<string>"@eproto> where string is part of an host name. As example see https://svn.ntop.org/svn/ntop/trunk/nDPI/example/protos.txt

--disable-host-persistency I -P

Disable host persistency

--redisl-r] <redis host[:port]>

Specifies the redis database host and port. For more information about redis, please refer to http://redis.io/

--user I -U <sys user>

Run ntopng with the specified user instead of nobody

--dont-change-user I -s

Do not change user (debug only)

--disable-login I -I

Disable user login. This is useful for debug purposes or if you want to let everyone access the web gui.

--max-num-flows I -X < num>

Specify the maximum number of active flows that ntopng will handle. If more flows are detected they will be discarded (default: 131072)

--max-num-hosts | -x < num>

Specify the maximum number of active hosts that ntoping will handle. If more hosts are detected they will be discarded (default: 65536)

--users-file I -u <path>

Users configuration file path Default: ntopng-users.conf

--pid I -G <path>

Specifies the path where the PID (process ID) is saved.

--packet-filter | -B <filter>

Specifies the packet filter for all packet capture interfaces. For pcap/PF_RING interfaces the filter has to be specified in BPF format (Berkeley Packet Filter).

--enable-aggregations I -A <mode>

Setup data aggregations (e.g. Operating System, DNS etc). The available modes are: 0 - No aggregations (default), 1 - Enable aggregations, no timeline dump on disk, 2 - Enable aggregations, with timeline dump on disk (see -C)

--dump-flows I -F

Dump expired flows. If ntopng is compiled with sqlite support, flows can dumped persistently on disk using this option. Databases are created daily under <data directory>/<interface>db.

--dump-hosts I -D <mode>

Dump hosts policy (default: none). If ntopng is compiled with sqlite support, hosts contacts can dumped persistently on disk using this option. Databases are created daily under <data directory>/<interface>/contacts. This options supports three dump modes: all - Dump all hosts; local - Dump only local hosts; remote - Dump only remote hosts.

--dump-aggregations I -E <mode>

Dump aggregations policy (default: none). Values: all - Dump all hosts; local - Dump only local hosts; remote - Dump only remote hosts.

--sticky-hosts I -S <mode>

Dont flush hosts (default: none). Values: all - Keep all hosts in memory; local - Keep only local hosts; remote - Keep only remote hosts; none - Flush hosts when idle.

--verbose I -v

Verbose tracing

--help I -h

Help

4.4. ntopng on Windows

ntopng is activated as service or application (i.e. you can start it from cmd.exe). The ntopng installer registers the service and creates an entry on the Start menu. Example:

E:\ntop\Source\ntopng\Debug>ntopng /h

Available options:

/i [ntopng options] - Install ntopng as service
/c [ntopng options] - Run ntopng on a console
/r - Deinstall the service

Example:

Install ntopng as a service: ntopng /i -i 0 -n 192.168.0.1:2055

Remove the ntopng service: ntopng /r

Notes:

Type 'ntopng /c -h' to see all options

In order to reinstall a service with new options it is necessary to first remove the service, then add it again with the new options.

Services are started/stopped using the Services control panel item.

If ntopng is started on the console, the /c flag needs to be used (e.g. ntopng /c -n 127.0.0.1:2055). If used as service, the command line options need to be specified at service registration and can be modified only removing and adding the service. The ntopng installer registers ntopng as a service with the default options. If you need to change the ntopng setup, you need to do as follows:

Services are started and stopped using the Services application part of the Windows administrative tools.

As network interfaces on Windows can have long names, a numeric index is associated to the interface in order to ease the ntopng configuration. The association interface name and index is shows typing the 'ntopng /c -h'

```
C:\ntop\ntopng\Debug>ntopng.exe/c -h
Running ntopng for Win32.

Welcome to ntopng v.x.x.x for Win32
Built on dd/mm/yy hh:mm:ss
Copyright 2002-13 by Luca Deri <deri@ntop.org>

[...]
Available interfaces:
        [index=0] 'Adapter for generic dialup and VPN capture'
        [index=1] 'Realtek 8139-series PCI NIC'
```

For instance, in the above example the index 1 is associated to the interface Realtek 8139-series PCI NIC, hence in order to select this interface ntopng needs to be started with –i 1 option.

5. API Scripting Lua

In the following sections, we discuss the main API Lua of ntopng.

5.1. Introduction

A design principle of ntopng has been the clean separation of the GUI from engine (in ntop it was all mixed).

This means that ntoping can (also) be used (via HTTP) to feed data into third party apps such as Nagios or OpenNMS. All data export from the engine happens via Lua API. Lua methods invoke the ntoping C++ API in order to interact with the monitoring engine.

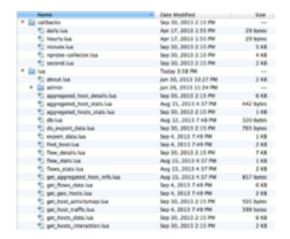
5.2. How ntopng and Lua working together

The Lua script are divided in two directory:

<ntopng directory>/scripts/callback/ scripts are executed periodically to perform specific actions.

<ntopng directory>/scripts/lua/
scripts are executed only by the
web GUI. Example:
http://localhost:3000/lua/flow_stats.lua

Each scripts uses the API Lua to access to interface or ntoping informations.



5.3. Developing with the API Lua

ntopng defines (in C++) two Lua classes:

- interface: This class provides to hook to objects that describe flows and hosts and it allows you to access to live monitoring data.
- ntop: This class provides a set of general functions used to interact with ntopng configuration.

If you are looking for a complete description of the API Lua, please read the appendix B at the end of this document.

Lua objects are usually in "read-only" mode

- C++ sets their data, Lua reads data (e.g. host.name).
- Some Lua methods (e.g.interface.restoreHost()) can however modify the information stored in the engine.

Example of Lua scripting 5.4.

In order to explain the main concept of Lua scripting, we created a few sample script.

You can find this sample script in <ntopng directory>/scripts/lua/esamples/ and execute each scripts by the web gui (with ntopng active).

 ntop lua class - http://localhost:3000/ua/examples/ntop.lua • interface lua class - http://localhost:3000/lua/examples/interface.lua - http://localhost:3000/lua/examples/debug.lua debug lua class

6. References

- 1. ntopng, http://www.ntop.org/ntopng.html
- 2. redis, http://redis.io
- 3. sqlite, http://www.sqlite.org
- 4. lua, http://www.lua.org

Appendix A: Source compilation dependencies

This section explain how to install all ntoping dependencies for the main operation system. You must install the following packages:

Centos

yum groupinstall Development tools

yum install automake autogen libpcap-devel GeoIP-devel hiredis-devel redis glib2-devel libxml2-devel sqlite-devel gcc-c++ libtool wget

Ubuntu/Debian

apt-get install build-essential libglib2.0 libxml2-dev libpcap-dev libtool rrdtool autoconf redis-server

Mac OSX

port install XXX (Please install macports)

In any case if you want an updated list of dependencies, you must use the following command:

Centos yum deplist ntopng
Debian apt-rdepends ntopng

Appendix B: Doxygen

This section explain how to configure and generate the ntopng documentation as doxygen style.

The ntopng documentation, on Unix it can be compiled as follows:

cd <ntopng source code directory>
./configure
cd doc/
doxygen doxygen.conf

Or by using the Makefile as follows:

cd <ntopng source code directory>
./configure
make docs

Documentation is generated using the doxygen tool (1.8 or higher) that uses <u>Graphviz</u> for drawing graphs.

In order to generate the documentation for the Lua API you need to install the <u>Lua plugin</u> for doxygen. You must install the following dependencies:

Debian apt-get install doxygen graphviz perl lua5.1 lua5.1-doc

Mac OSX port install XXX (Please install macports)

Once the dependencies has been installed, you can run the following command to install the Lua plugin.

cpan App::cpanminus
cpan inc::Module::Install
git clone https://github.com/alecchen/doxygen-lua.git
cd doxygen-lua/
perl Makefile.PL
make
sudo make install
sudo cp bin/lua2dox /opt/local/bin/