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Main page
Recent changes
Server admin log (Prod)
Server admin log (RelEng)
Deployments
SRE/Operations Help
Incident status

Cloud VPS & Toolforge
Cloud VPS documentation
Toolforge documentation
Request Cloud VPS project
Server admin log (Cloud VPS)

Tools
What links here
Related changes
Special pages
Permanent link
Page information
Cite this page

Print/export
Create a book
Download as PDF
Printable version

Incident documentation/20141126-oauth

< Incident documentation

Contents [hide]

1 Summary
2 Timeline
3 Conclusions
4 Actionables

Summary

After the deploy of HHVM to the general public, some users reported OAuth issues. Those were linked to the failure of apache_request_headers() to get the correct OAuth headers when apache uses mod_proxy_fcgi. A few defines in the general apache config solved the problem.

Timeline

- since 2014-11-21 a significant portion of the API traffic (~ 25%) was being served by HHVM.
- Around 16:00Z on 2014-11-25 the HHVM and the Zend appserver pools have been merged, and from that moment, one third of the requests to the backend were served by HHVM
- Users complained on IRC and bug https://phabricator.wikimedia.org/T75968 was filled at 05:24Z on 2014-11-26
- The culprit was identified in the fact that the Authorization header was not available to HHVM via apache_request_headers(). Further research showed that this is not HHVM's fault, but rather an apache mod_proxy_fcgi bug.
- Consequently, a patch was created to re-inject the header (https://gerrit.wikimedia.org/r/#/c/175952/); this was merged at 7:14Z, it propagated to the whole cluster in the next 20 minutes, which made oauth login in phabricator unbroken; The ticket was thus closed
- Around 10:20Z an editor reported a malfunction still persisting in flickr2commons due to OAuth failures
- After some further debug data was available, an inspection of the code showed another missing header that was later used by the oauth library, Content-Type. This was fixed with patch https://gerrit.wikimedia.org/r/#/c/175975/ which was merged at 11:40Z, and was propagated to the whole cluster in 20 minutes.
- No further report of errors from users, and the "Hello world" OAuth app magically got unbroken (I guess it was broken since we moved testwiki to HHVM some months back)

Conclusions

Apache mod_proxy_fcgi is not the best part of the webserver, but the problem we encountered was in fact sneaky enough. One thing we might want to look at is why we didn't have any report of OAuth failures in beta, where the problem should've showed up earlier.

Actionables

No real actionable for this item

Category: Incident documentation

This page was last edited on 1 December 2014, at 22:12.

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