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JEFFERSON LAB

Data Acquisition Group

cMsg Developer's Guide

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Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Introduction..... | 3 |
| 1.1. | <i>Abstract API.....</i> | 3 |
| 1.2. | <i>Framework</i> | 4 |
| 1.3. | <i>Proxy system.....</i> | 4 |
| 2. | Framework | 6 |
| 2.1. | <i>Java</i> | 7 |
| 2.2. | <i>C</i> | 8 |
| 3. | Proxy Server | 10 |

1. Introduction

In the following we describe how to customize the cMsg package by adding new domains and subdomains. Users of this guide should be familiar with the basic concepts and strategies of the cMsg package. See the *cMsg User's Guide* for more information.

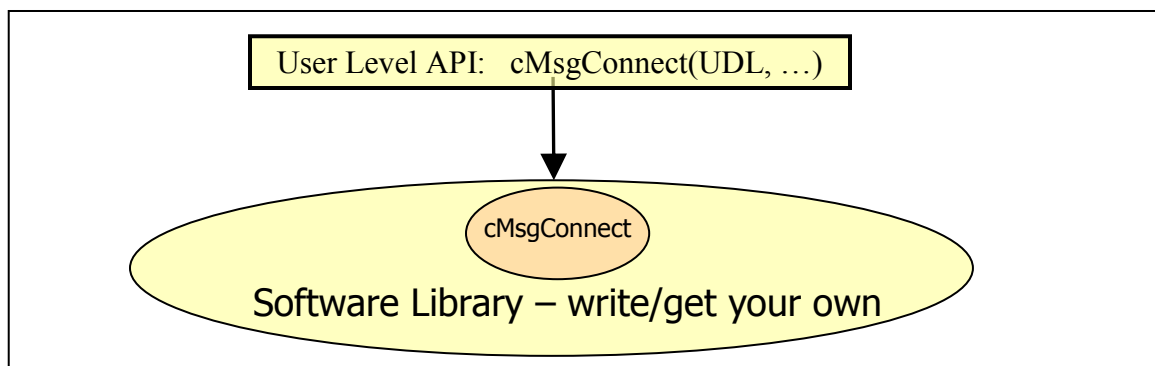
As noted in the user's guide, the cMsg package can be used at a number of levels:

- Abstract API to an arbitrary, underlying message system
- Framework for implementation of underlying messaging systems
- Proxy system to connect to remote messaging systems
- Full implementation of publish/subscribe and other messaging systems

This guide describes how to work with the first three levels above. The user's guide discusses the fourth level, i.e. how to use the built-in messaging systems provided with the cMsg package.

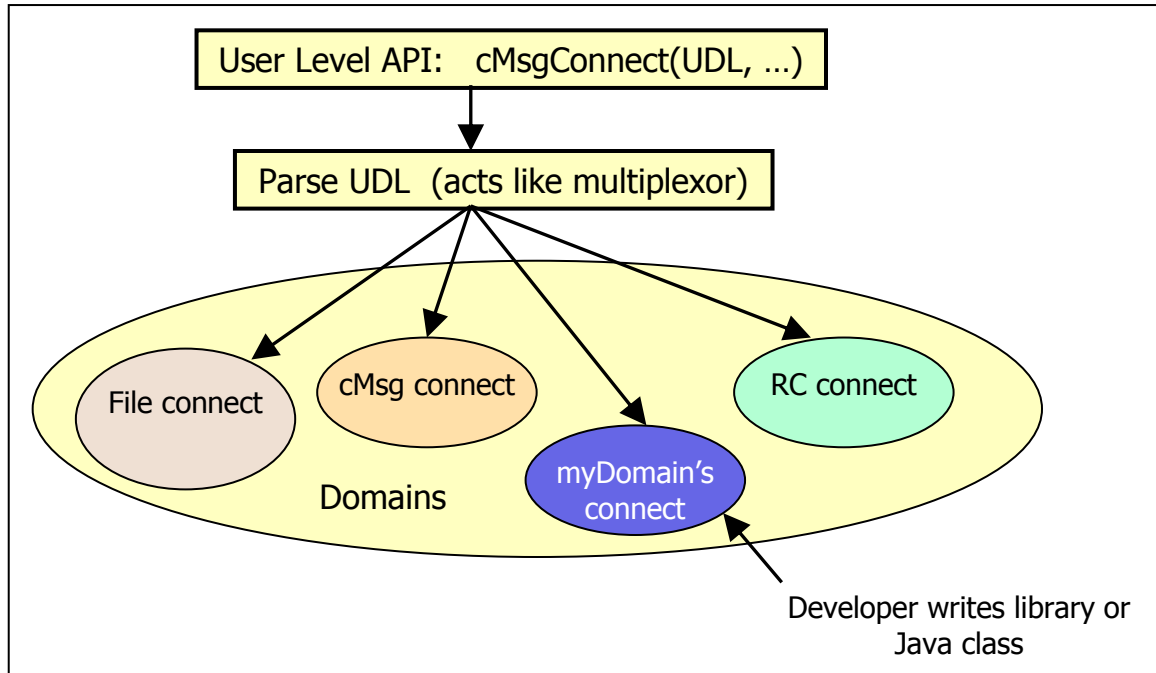
1.1. Abstract API

At the most basic level the cMsg API can simply be implemented as a façade on top of an arbitrary, asynchronous publish/subscribe or synchronous peer-to-peer messaging system. This approach may be useful since user code need not change if the underlying messaging system is changed; however, this will not be discussed further as there is little to say. Look at the diagram below to see a graphical view of how the API is implemented in this fashion. Far more powerful customizations of the cMsg package are described in the next two sections. See the API docs for details of the cMsg API.



1.2. Framework

A more interesting use of the cMsg package is as a framework for implementation of user-written domains. The cMsg client framework allows new domains to be easily added, dynamically in Java (1.5 or later), and dynamically or statically in C. The framework supports connection of clients to multiple domains, keeps track of separate callbacks and subscriptions, etc. Developers simply have to implement a basic set of messaging functions via an adapter class or interface in Java, or via a set of function pointers in C. See the graphical example below and Section 2 for details.



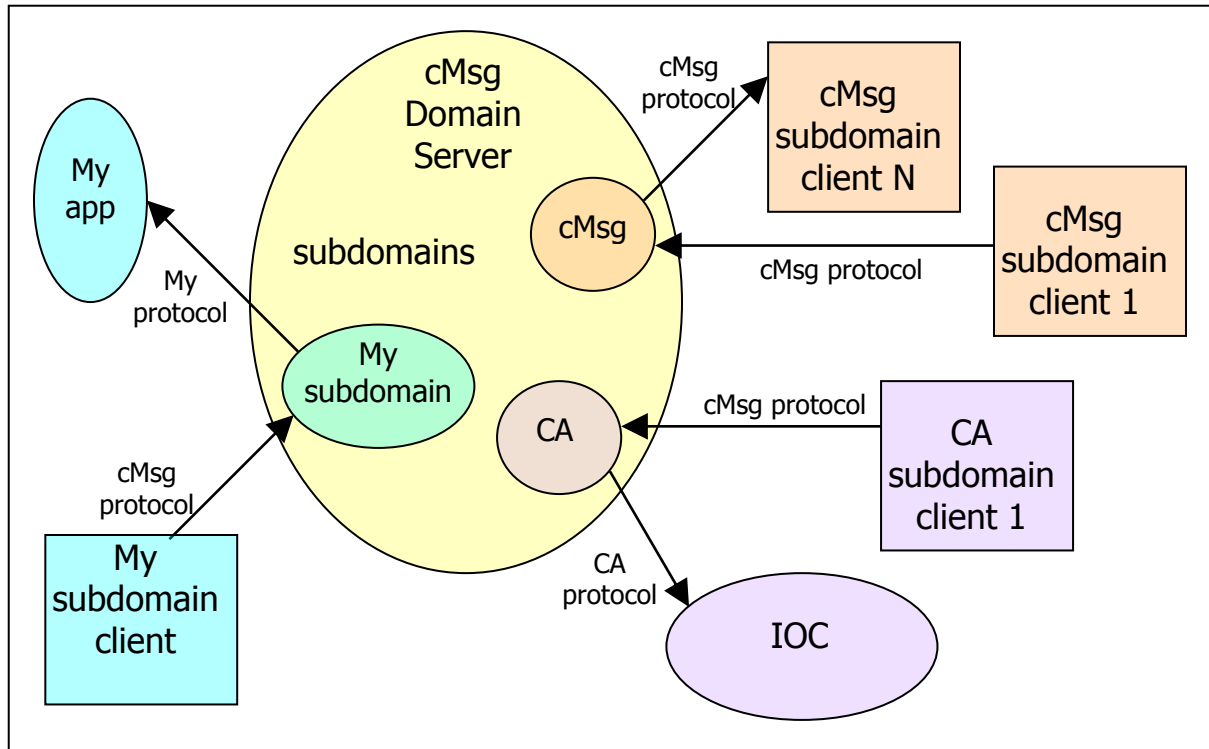
1.3. Proxy system

The most powerful customization of the cMsg package involves adding new subdomains to the built-in cMsg domain. In the cMsg domain a proxy server (provided) actually implements the messaging system and does all the work. The cMsg domain client code simply transports messages, subscription requests, etc. to the server. This is done in a completely transparent manner so that the client does not know that a remote server is involved.

Developers implement the messaging system using a subdomain interface (Java 1.5 or later) which is used by the cMsg domain server to actually do the work. Furthermore, subdomain classes can be loaded dynamically by the server as long as the class files are in the server classpath.

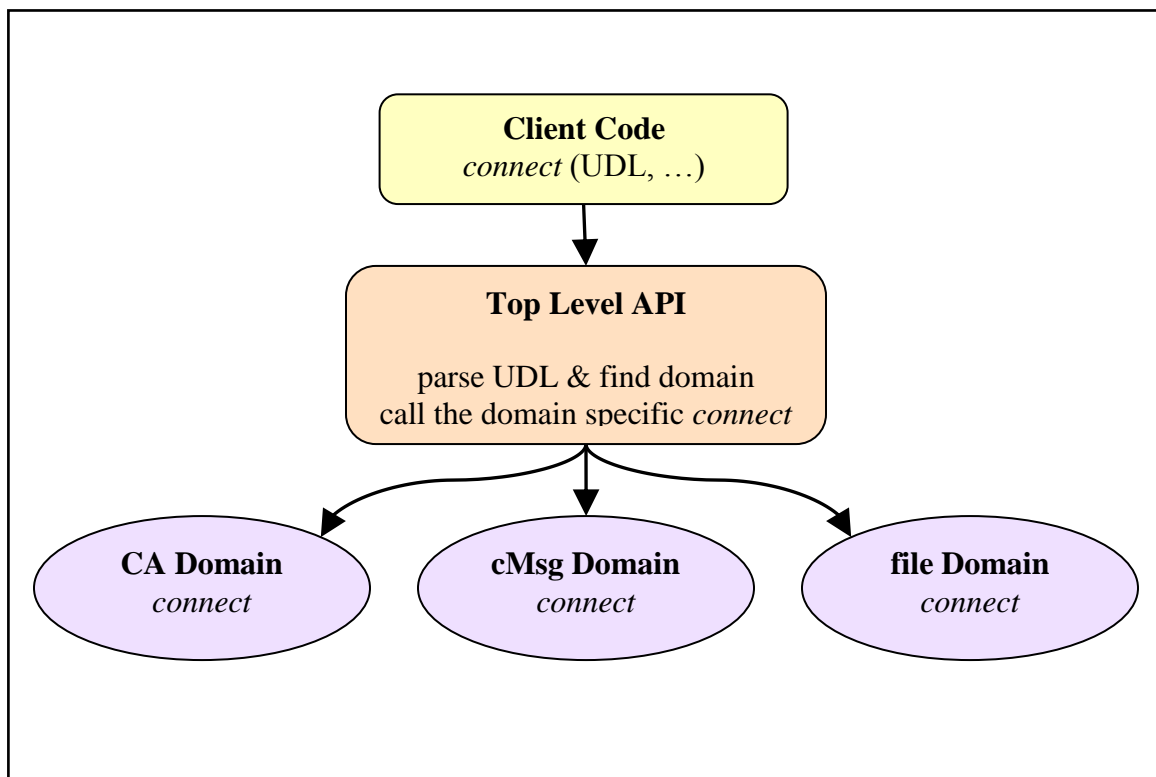
The major advantage of using proxy implementations is that the client nodes do not need access to licenses, libraries, etc. that are specific to the underlying messaging system.

These need only be available on the machine where the server runs. For example, access to messaging systems that are not available under VxWorks or on Solaris can be made available to VxWorks or Solaris clients through the proxy server. See the example below and Section 3 for details.



2. Framework

Let's begin by describing the general way in which both Java and C domains are structured. The cMsg package acts as a multiplexer. The top level user interface simply redirects the API calls to a specific implementation or domain. This is done simply by parsing the UDL in the "connect" call, determining the domain from the UDL and then passing the calls on to the domain level. The figure below shows graphically what happens to the connect call, but the same applies to all API calls.



There are some domains which exist only in Java and those that exist in C, C++, and Java. A domain with versions written in multiple languages must all use the same communication protocol. Another important note for the domain developer is that because clients can be multithreaded, there is the possibility that each function or method may be called simultaneously by different threads. In other words, **code which implements a domain must be thread-safe.**

2.1. Java

In order to create a new cMsg domain that plugs into the cMsg client framework, developers need to create a class that implements the cMsgDomainInterface interface or (much easier) extends the domain adapter class cMsgDomainAdapter. Both of the java files are in cMsg/org/jlab/coda/cMsg. The best way to learn how to do this is to view the programmer's guide (the javadocs). The comments in the javadocs give a nice explanation about what each class and method is about. For examples of domains look at the domains listed in the table below.

Start by choosing a **unique** (case insensitive) name for your domain. Already existing names and their associated implementations are in the following table.

| Domain Name | Class File Name |
|-------------|--|
| cMsg | org/jlab/coda/cMsg/cMsgDomain/client/cMsg.java |
| rc | org/jlab/coda/cMsg/cMsgDomain/client/cMsg.java |
| file | org/jlab/coda/cMsg/FileDomain/File.java |
| CA | org/jlab/coda/cMsg/CADomain/CA.java |

Once you have a unique name, the UDL to access your domain's server will look like:
cMsg:<domain name>://<domain specific stuff>.

In your domain-implementing class, you will have access to strings containing both the full UDL and just the <domain specific stuff>. Parse the UDL and pull out all necessary information. Usually information on how to reach the server is contained in the <domain specific stuff> as well as anything else you find necessary.

After the new domain is created, the question remains as to how a cMsg client can access it. The means by which this is achieved can be seen by looking inside the org/jlab/coda/cMsg/cMsg.java file. The domains listed above are provided with the software package and their location is hard coded into that file in the "createDomainConnection" method. The user is free, of course, to edit cMsg.java to include new domains and then recompile. However, an easier alternative is to give a flag to the JVM when running the client. This flag must be of the form:

-D<myDomain>=<myDomain'sClassName>,

where the specified class must be in your classpath. For example if I have a domain called "pow" and that is implemented in a java file whose full name (including package) is bam.java and my client code is in a class called crash.java, then I would run my client with a command like:

```
java -Dpow=bam crash
```

Note that domain names are not case sensitive, but dots are not allowed in domain names.

2.2. C

Similarly, developers need to provide a library that contains an appropriate set of functions that implement the API in the C language. In this case, new domains may be added either dynamically or statically.

2.2.1. Static

If adding statically, a bit of code editing must be done. In the C code directory there is a file called `cMsgPrivate.h`. This file contains 2 structures that must be filled – `domainFunctions` and `domainTypeInfo`. To get a good idea of how to do this see the doxygen html pages. A good example of this can be found in `cMsgDomain.c` which is the C implementation of the `cMsg` domain.

Just follow these steps:

1. Create and fill a structure of type “`domainFunctions`” with pointers to all the functions implementing the `cMsg` API.
2. In the global space, create and fill a structure of type “`domainTypeInfo`” in which the first element is a string containing the name of the domain and the second element is the structure with all the function pointers. Make sure the name of this structure is globally unique.
3. Now add this structure to the `cMsg.c` file declaring it extern. For example,

```
Extern domainTypeInfo myDomainTypeInfo;
```
- 4) Again in `cMsg.c`, add it to an existing array of `domainTypeInfo` structures called `dTypeInfo`. To do this, go to the function `registerPermanentDomains` and add 2 lines:

```
dTypeInfo[n].type = (char *)strdup(myDomainTypeInfo.type);  
dTypeInfo[n].functions = myDomainTypeInfo.functions;
```

where `n` is the next available integer.
- 5) Finally, recompile.

2.2.2. Dynamic

If adding dynamically, a shared library must be created. In the shared library, certain functions must be present. The following is a list of the necessary functions:

```
/* Prototypes of the 14 functions which implement the standard cMsg tasks. */  
int  cmsg_<domain>_connect(const char *myUDL, const char *myName,  
                           const char *myDescription, const char *UDLremainder,  
                           void **domainId);  
int  cmsg_<domain>_send(void *domainId, void *msg);  
int  cmsg_<domain>_syncSend(void *domainId, void *msg,  
                           const struct timespec *timeout, int *response);  
int  cmsg_<domain>_flush(void *domainId);
```

```

int  cmsg_<domain>_subscribe(void *domainId, const char *subject, const char *type,
                             cMsgCallback *callback, void *userArg,
                             cMsgSubscribeConfig *config, void **handle);
int  cmsg_<domain>_unsubscribe(void *domainId, void *handle);
int  cmsg_<domain>_subscribeAndGet(void *domainId, const char *subject,
                                  const char *type, const struct timespec *timeout,
                                  void **replyMsg);
int  cmsg_<domain>_sendAndGet(void *domainId, void *sendMsg,
                             const struct timespec *timeout, void **replyMsg);
int  cmsg_<domain>_monitor(void *domainId, const char *command, void **replyMsg);
int  cmsg_<domain>_start(void *domainId);
int  cmsg_<domain>_stop(void *domainId);
int  cmsg_<domain>_disconnect(void **domainId);
int  cmsg_<domain>_shutdownClients(void *domainId, const char *client, int flag);
int  cmsg_<domain>_shutdownServers(void *domainId, const char *server, int flag);
int  cmsg_<domain>_setShutdownHandler(void *domainId, cMsgShutdownHandler *handler,
                                      void *userArg);

```

where “<domain>” is the domain name in all lowercase letters. Files containing these functions must be compiled into a shared library with the specific name `libcmmsg<domain>.so` where domain is the domain name in all lowercase letters. In this way, a cMsg application will parse a given UDL, find the domain, and know which library to dynamically load. If the library is in the `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` environmental variable, then everything should be fine.

To reiterate, just follow these steps:

1. Create a file or files of the above listed functions.
2. Compile everything into a shared library with the name `libcmmsg<domain>.so`, domain being all lowercase.
3. When compiling your cMsg application that uses this domain, link it with this shared library as well as against `libcmmsg.so` and `libcMsgRegex.so`.
4. Run your application.

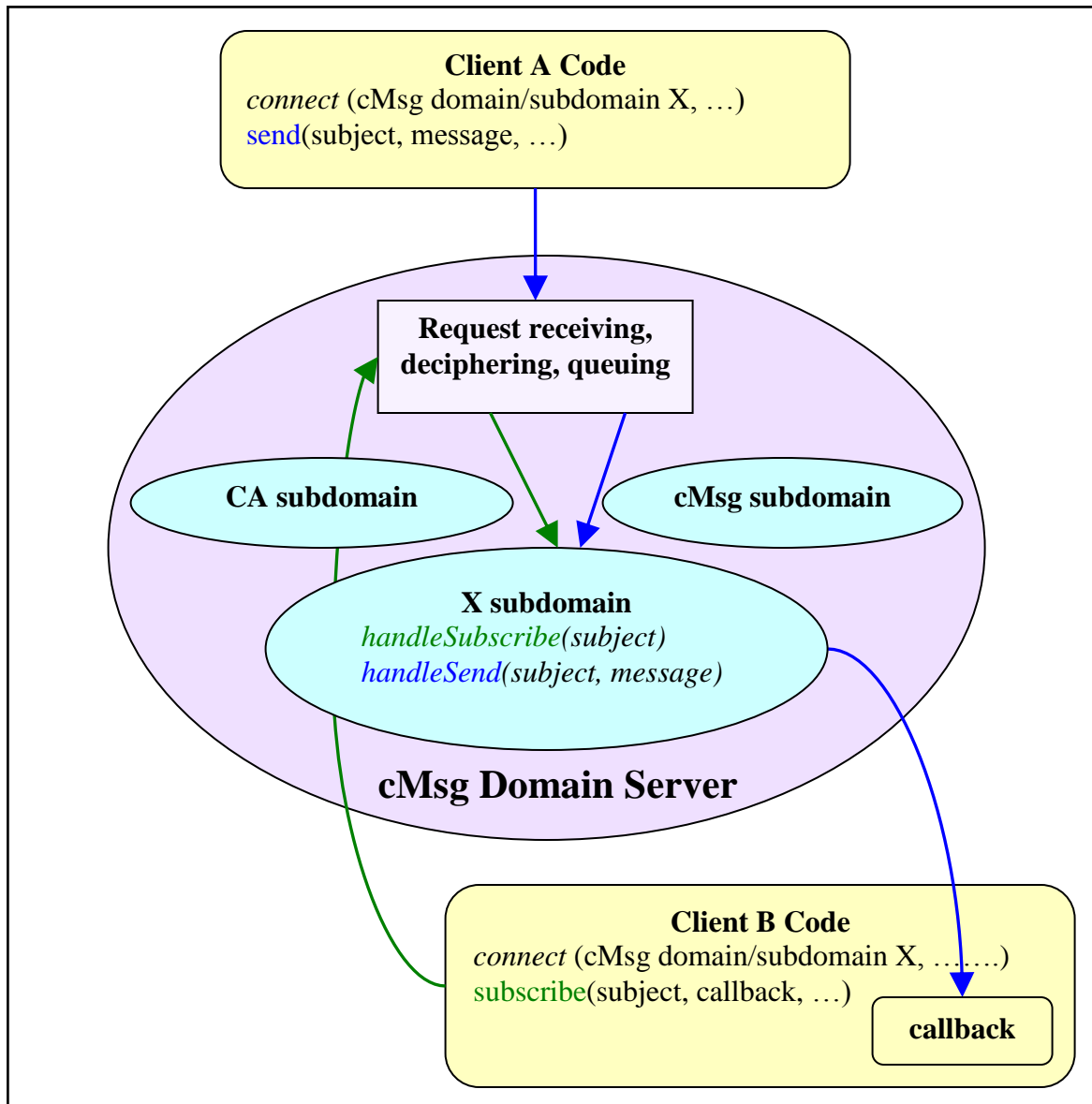
An example is provided in 2 files: `dummyDomain.c` and `dummy.c`. As the name indicates, the `dummyDomain.c` file implements an example domain which does nothing except print out a few things. The file `dummy.c` implements an application which uses the dummy domain. Using these 2 files as a template should make domain development quite simple. To compile the dummy domain stuff, go to `cMsg/src/C` directory. In that directory do a “make -f Makefile.unix dummydomain”.

3. Proxy Server

The cMsg domain is implemented with a server. All client API calls are directed to this server which carries out the desired actions. Because of the way this server is structured, it is also possible to use it as a proxy server. The part of the server which receives, deciphers, and queues up requests is distinct from the part which carries out the requests. In fact, for a single client, all requests are carried out by a single object which implements a specific interface – the cMsgSubdomainInterface . In actual practice it is easier to subclass cMsgSubdomainAdapter which already implements some minimum functionality in which default methods return “Not Implemented” for all messaging functions. Instead of listing and describing all methods of the interface, it’s easier to read the javadoc where such is already done for a complete description of the interface.

The object that handles this real functionality we call a subdomain handler with the idea that different classes that implement this interface can handle the messages in their own way (their own subdomain). Creating a new cMsg subdomain is the most powerful way of customizing cMsg. Messages published to the cMsg domain are transparently transferred from the client to the server, then passed on to an instance of a subdomain class for transport and delivery.

The diagram below is a graphical representation of what goes on. There are 2 clients in yellow – client A and client B. The cMsg domain server is the large oval in purple which contains 1 section for receiving requests and 3 different subdomains. Each subdomain is created when a client connects to the cMsg domain server and that specific subdomain. Thus both clients have already connected to cMsg domain & subdomain X. Client B has subscribed to messages of a certain subject which is shown by green arrows and is ultimately taken care of by the handleSubscribe method of the subdomain. Client A has sent messages with that same subject and is shown with blue arrows and is ultimately taken care of by the handleSend method. Finally, client B received those messages from the subdomain handler in a callback.



The developer needs to be aware of one very pertinent fact. Unless the name server is run with the `-Dtimeorder` flag, there will be several threads processing client requests on the domain server's request queue. Thus, **all methods in the subdomain handler object must be thread-safe.**

There are several subdomains already existing that will serve as templates for any developer. There are subdomains for talking to Channel Access (CA), a database (DB), smart sockets (SmartSockets), queuing messages in a database (Queue), queuing messages in files (FileQueue), and logging messages to a file (LogFile). There is also a dummy subdomain (Dummy) that provides a template.

4. Run Control Clients

This chapter will reference Vardan Gyurjyan's documentation once it is written about how to use the RC domain to become part of the run control system.