

File-System

Directories in Linux

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Directories

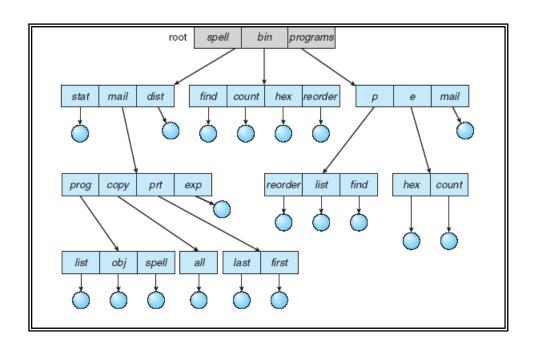
- Modern file systems are structured by means of special files: the directories
 - ➤ A directory is the node of a tree, or the vertex of a graph that includes some information about the (regular) files that it contains.
 - Directories and files are stored in the mass memory
- Operations that can be performed on directories are similar to the ones applied to files
 - Creation, deletion, listing, rename, visit, search, etc.

Structure

- Structuring a file systems by means of directories has several advantages:
 - Efficiency
 - Searching a file
 - Naming
 - Simplicity for a user to identify his files
 - The same name can be assigned to different files
 - Grouping (organization)
 - Grouping to the programs and data according to their characteristics
 - Editors, compilers, documents, etc.

Directory tree

- Directories and files are organized as a tree
 - Every node/vertex of the tree can include other nodes/vertex of the tree

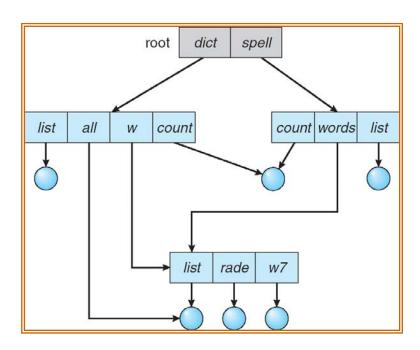


Tree directories

- Tree directories imply:
 - Current work directory, change of directory, absolute and relative path name, etc.
- Performance
 - > Efficiency
 - Efficient search
 - Naming
 - With absolute path or relative to the current working directory
 - Grouping
 - Flexible

- A tree file system does not allow sharing
- It is often useful to refer to the same object in the file system with different filenames
 - Same user refers to an object with different pathnames
 - > Different users want to share objects
 - ➤ It is worth noting that duplication of the object is not a solution because of
 - Increase of file system occupation
 - Possible information incoherence in one or more copies

Tree file systems can be generalized organizing them as acyclic graphs.



Performance

Similar to tree directories, but with possibility of sharing

Method

- ➤ A directory entry can be share by means of the creation of la link
 - A link is a reference (pointer) to another pre-existing entry

- More complex filesystem management due to links
 - > File system visit
 - If the entry is a link, follow the indirect link to reach the pointed-to entry
 - Many absolute paths, and different filenames may correspond to the same entry
 - File system analysis (statistics, e.g., how many files with extension ".c" exist?) are more complex

Removing an entry)

- Immediate deletion of the data
 - Some dangling links may remain
 - Attempt accessing data through a link could return a missing file error
- Remove the data when the last link is removed
 - Avoids dangling links
 - Need to manage multiple links
 - Keeping the list of all link is expensive (variable length list)
 - o Removing all links is expensive (need to search)
 - Search is more expensive
 - It is more effective to store a link counter associated to the data (for the hard links in UNIX the counter is stored in a field of the inode)

- Creating a new link to a directory could cause the generation of a cycle in the file system
 - > Managing a cyclic graph is more complex
 - Search and visit has to avoid infinite recursion.
 - > The simplest strategy avoid visiting the links
 - Cycles can be avoided if the creation of a link to a directory is forbidden