



Bilrost



A version control system that manages dependencies in large files

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Outline

Today's solutions?

Asset manager

Workflow

Benefits

Integration roadmap



Today's solutions

O1

Plain VCS: Version Control System

- Technology which is resource demanding
- Requires skilled staff to support
- Expensive
- Required for collaboration
- Critical for data protection

VCS timeline



**CVS: Concurrent
Versions System**



Perforce



SVN



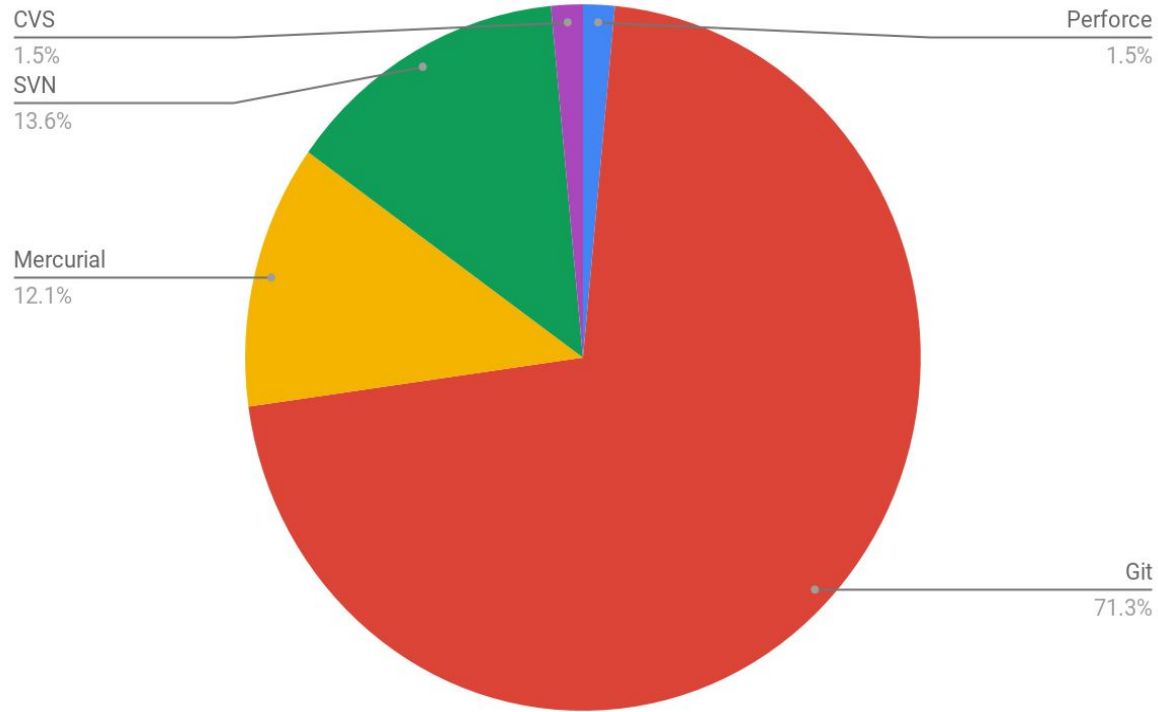
Git



**Git LFS: Large File
Storage**




Popularity (2016)



Specificities



	Branch	Sparse checkout	Large binaries	Price	Handle file dependencies
Perforce	No*	No	Yes	Not cheap	No
SVN	No*	Yes	Yes	Open source (pay for infrastructure)	No
Git/Mercurial	Yes	No	No	Open source (pay for infrastructure)	No
Git LFS	Yes	No	Yes	Not cheap	No



Bilrost asset manager

02

What if dependencies are too complicated to control?

- A file can depend to another one.
- A file doesn't contain meta informations for indexing, for example:
 - User owning the file
 - Tags for being found quickly

Bilrost asset



Entry	Meaning
Main	Main dependency if any
Dependencies	List of file dependencies
Description	Owner description
Tags	Asset tag names
Meta	Meta data related to the asset information: creation, modification, author...

- Is a container listing file pointers!
- Is meta-data stored internally by Bilrost
- Referenced by a uri:
 /assets/[...namespaces]/[asset_name]
 eg. /assets/a/b/c
- Mutable only from Bilrost API
- Implements dependencies between files
- Allows indexing the meta-data

Bilrost resource



- Represents files to version
- Is an asset dependency
- Referenced by a uri:
 /resources/[...folders]/[file_name]
 eg. /resources/a/b/c.png
- Mutable from user file system within **workspaces**

Bilrost project



- Contains versioned assets and resources organized within branches.
- Named under github policy format:
[organization_name]/[repository_name]
eg. fl4re/Game-assets
- Centralized in GitHub server for assets and S3 for resources.
- Defines the authorization scope.

Bilrost branch



- Almost the same as a git branch
- Is the duplication of files so that modifications can happen in parallel along both branches. Modifications are then isolated.
- Is identified by a name

Bilrost workspace



- Project representation in user file system.
- Contains assets and resources within a target branch, only the ones user subscribed to.
- Branches are switchable.
- Bilrost manages a favorite list of workspace pointers for being quickly findable within user's disk from its API.

Bilrost subscription



- Is bound to a workspace
- Tells which content user want to work with
- Sparse checkouts resources defined by an asset, a namespace or a search query. Ex:
/assets/feline/cat
/assets/feline
/assets/feline?q=black
- Operated from latest version of target branch

Bilrost stage



- Includes a list of assets to scope within next commit.
- Only created, modified, removed, renamed assets/dependencies are stagable.

Bilrost commit



- Pushes the changes in staged assets to the project.
- Requires a comment to describe the recorded changes.

Bilrost deploy



.bilrost.json

```
{
  "origins": [
    {
      "organization": "fl4re",
      "project_name": "game-assets",
      "branch": "release_branch",
      "deploys": [
        {
          "ref": "/assets/Nvidia_NDA",
          "dest": "GameExample/Assets"
        },
        {
          "ref": "/assets/Nvidia_Public"
        }
      ]
    }
  ]
}
```

- Downloads asset content to user's disk
- Is directed by JSON definition file
- Assets are found with:
 - ◆ Reference uri
 - ◆ Project name
 - ◆ Branch name
- Two modes: "move" and "link"

Additional features



- Resources are stored only once in the cloud storage per organization.
- Local cache
- Search API for discovering assets and its files



Bilrost workflow

03

How does Bob use Bilrost for versioning a new Game asset?

Pre-requirements:

- Bob and Alice are authenticated to the same project, “fl4re/Game-assets”

Demo



1/ Bob commits its first asset in production branch

2/ Alice modifies the asset in maintenance branch



Benefits

04

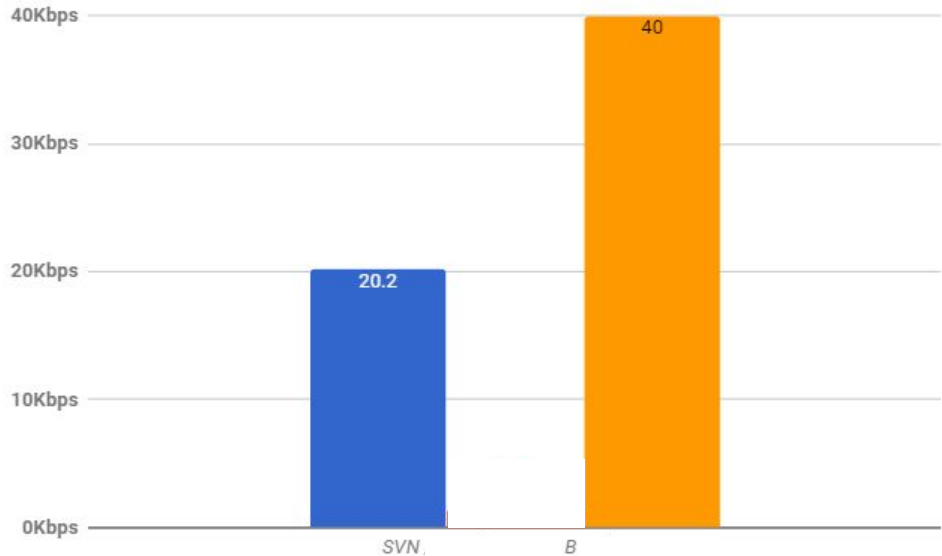
Why is bilrost much better?

- VCS coupled with an asset manager for handling dependencies
- Easy deployment
- Support Large Files

Better performances



Download faster! Tests done with 180 MB assets



VCS	SVN	Bilrost with CF
Down speed (Mbps)	69	84
Duration (s)	89	45
Duration (min:s)	1:56	0:45
Speed (Mbps)	2.02	4
Speed (Kbps)	20.2	40

Scalable



- Supports Amazon s3 for now, but could be hooked to any cloud storages. eg. Google cloud, windows azure, IPFS...
- Optional optimized CDN associated with cloud storage solution
- Supports undefined large repositories
- Better cost management
- GUI easily hookable with API

Conclusion



- VCS used in game industry not designed originally for game development... Bilrost does this!
- Validating/converting assets
- Platform for sharing assets on top of GitHub
- Bilrost is a tool to create a build system on top of it. When a resource changes we can easily know which assets are affected and rebuild them.

References



<https://gamedev.stackexchange.com/questions/480/version-control-for-game-development-issues-and-solutions?rq=1>

<https://softwareengineering.stackexchange.com/questions/136079/are-there-any-statistics-that-show-the-popularity-of-git-versus-svn>

<https://www.atlassian.com/git/tutorials/comparing-workflows#!workflow-gitflow>



Git LFS

- Branch support- Every addition can be controlled before being merged within production game iteration!
- No sparse checkout: Impossible to download individually game asset without fetching the whole project.
- Support for large binary files (>200MB) is recent and expensive. \$5 every 50GB allotted bandwidth. Every byte checked in/out are taken out from available bandwidth.
- No locking system. There is no way to prevent users to modify a file that is already being touched by someone else.



SVN

- Gets slower bigger the project becomes!
- Hard to maintain release branch. If one asset changes, how to revise this only asset?
- Branching means to duplicate all resources in local/remote storage. Besides rising cloud storage costs, this slows even more operations.
- Locking system is supported but not automatically operated when collaborating on the same asset.
- Sparse checkout is supported.
- Known problems:
 - Artists check in corrupted files.
 - Release sensitive data.
 - Mixed-in props and source code.



Perforce

- Expensive
- Branch support
- No sparse checkout
- Git is just better...