

(Kernel) Isolation – PV, HVM, OS-V technologies in Linux

Introduction and description of the isolation
differences between HM, PV and
OS-level virt. technologies.

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Paravirtualization

The background features abstract geometric shapes. A large teal shape occupies the left and top-left areas. To its right, a green shape is partially visible, separated by a white diagonal line. The overall design is modern and minimalist.

Paravirtualization (a.k.a. PV - Xen)

- Not kernel module, uses a hypervisor(domain 0)
- Guest OS has to be **aware** of the fact it is being paravirtualized(Kernel 3.0+).
- Hypervisor provides ABI to communicate and Guest OS calls it



Paravirtualization (a.k.a. PV)

- “No” Performance losses (direct access to resources)
- Faster boot - Can boot kernel directly (no bootloader)
- Guests uses **own** kernel
- Isolation on the underlying OS – processes could be secured by Apparmor/Selinux



Hardware-assisted virtualization

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Hardware-assisted virtualization (a.k.a. HVM)

For example: KVM or Xen

- **Using „hypervisor“ - guests are completely isolated**

binary translation to trap and virtualize non-virtualized instructions => emulation

- Has own bootloder
- Has own kernel
- **Not** modified OS.



Hardware-assisted virtualization (a.k.a. HVM)

- All resources are handled in-directly through emulation.
- Nowadays **PVHVM** can be used if OS supports it (Kernel 2.6.32+)
- Needs CPU flags (Intel *vmx* | AMD *svm*)



Operating-system- level virtualization

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Operating-system-level virt. (a.k.a. containers)

When we talk about containers we can think about a book in a shelf. There are multiple chapters in the book. Every chapter has a different "story" but they belong to the same piece of book.



Operating-system-level virt. (a.k.a. containers)

- Sometimes called as "**jail on steroids**".
- Containers provide an additional layer of the security by isolating resources on a OS level
- Can be used together with apparmor/SELinux to enhance security



Operating-system-level virt. (a.k.a. containers)

- Solves issues with shared libraries(multiple versions) and helps with keeping OS clean
- Easily destroyed
- Sharing the kernel with the host



Differences between virtual machines & containers

Differences between virt. machines & containers

- VMs are "heavier" to setup/start - in general
- OS boot takes up to minutes (PV/HVM difference)
- HW isolation on a hypervisor level(HVM/PV/PVHVM)
- Qemu process represents virtual machine, storage backend involved



Differences between virt. machines & containers

- Lightweight(MiB-"hundreds of MiB")
- Can be application oriented
- Isolation on an OS level - process tree



Containers technologies

The background features abstract geometric shapes. A large teal shape occupies the left and top-left areas. To its right, a white diagonal band separates it from a green shape on the right. In the top right corner, there is a small green rectangle. The overall design is modern and minimalist.

Containers technologies

- chroot *1982
- OpenVZ *2005
- lxc(lxd) *2008
- docker *2013
- systemd-nspawn *2013



Containers technologies

chroot *1982

- partial file system isolation
- nested virtualization



Containers technologies

OpenVZ *2005

- file system isolation
- disk quotas (ZFS)
- IO limiting
- memory limits
- cpu quotas
- network isolation
- partial nested virtualization
- live migration
- root isolation



Containers technologies

lxc(lxd) *2008

- file system isolation
- partial disk quotas (lvm/btrfs)
- partial IO limiting (btrfs)
- memory limits
- cpu quotas
- network isolation
- partial nested virtualization
- root isolation



Containers technologies

docker *2013

- file system isolation
- IO limiting (since 1.10)
- memory limits
- cpu quotas
- network isolation
- partial nested virtualization
- root isolation (since 1.10)



Containers technologies

systemd-nspawn *2013

- file system isolation
- disk quotas
- partial IO limiting (systemd+Cgroups)
- memory limits (systemd+Cgroups)
- cpu quotas (systemd+Cgroups)
- network isolation
- nested virtualization
- root isolation



The background features abstract geometric shapes in two shades of green. A large teal shape occupies the left and top portions, while a bright green shape is on the right. They are separated by a white diagonal line.

What are they using
to isolate resources?

What are they using to isolate resources?

- PID namespace - Process identifiers and capabilities
- UTS namespace - Host and domain name
- MNT namespace - File system access and structure



What are they using to isolate resources?

- IPC namespace -Process communication over shared memory
- NET namespace -Network access and structure
- USR namespace -User names and identifiers

Controls the location of the file system root



What are they using to isolate resources?

- Cgroups

Resource protection(cpu usage, memory usage, io)



When to choose containers and when vms

When to choose containers

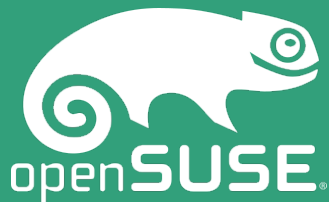
- testing a new application(from source - from the internet)
- fast deployments - "iso" template for the application(or for whole cycle)



When to choose vms

- wider isolation(running in the process, access to resources is filtered/emulated HVM or through api/drivers PV)
- "sandboxes" for customers





Questions?

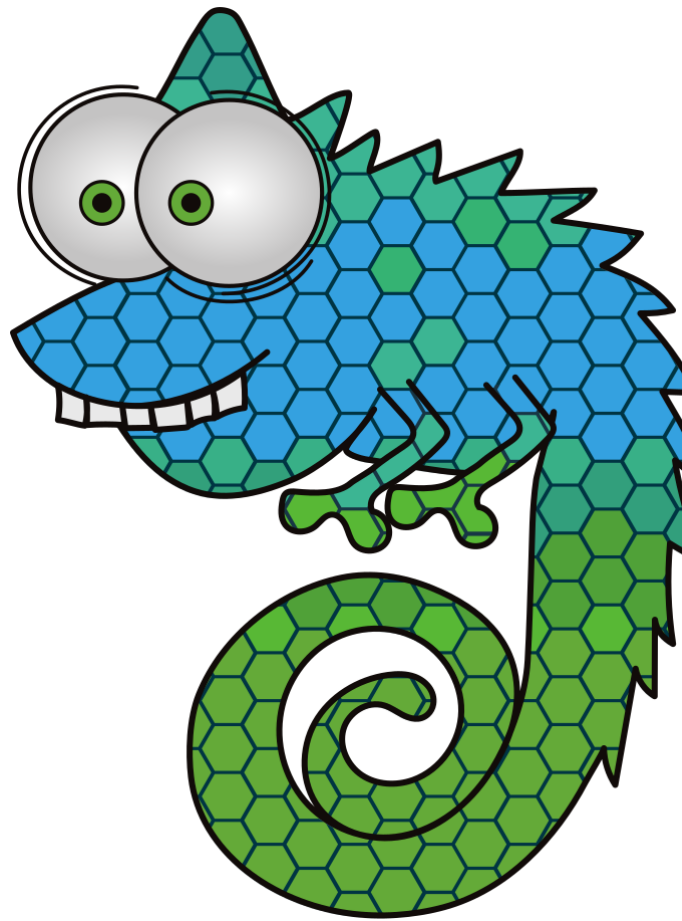
Sources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardware-assisted_virtualization

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operating-system-level_virtualization

<http://www.linux-magazine.com/Issues/2016/184/systemd-nspawn>

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Thank you

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