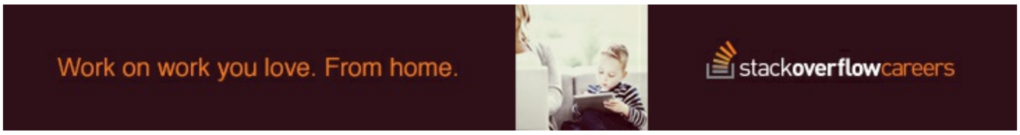
neo4j - Relationship between three nodes



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I'm totally new to `Neo4j` and I'm testing it in these days. One issue I have with it is how to correctly implement a relationship which involves 3 different nodes using `Spring Data`. Suppose, for example, that I have 3 `@NodeEntity`s: `User`, `Tag` and `TaggableObject`.

As you can argue, a `User` can add a `Tag` to a `TaggableObject`; I model this operation with a `@RelationshipEntity TaggingOperation`. However, I can't find a simple way to glue the 3 entities inside the relationship. I mean, the obvious choice is to set `@StartNode User tagger` and `@EndNode TaggedObject taggedObject`; but how can I also add the `Tag` to the relationship?

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asked Apr 13 at 19:47
tigerjack89
390 ● 3 ● 16

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1

This is called a "hyperedge", I believe, and it's not something that Neo4j supports directly. You can create an additional node to support it, tough. So you could have a `TagEvent` node with a schema like so:

```
(:User)-[:PERFORMED]->(:TagEvent)
(:Tag)<-[:USED]-(:TagEvent)
(:TagObject)<-[:TAGGED]-(:TagEvent)
```

Another alternative is to store a foreign key as a property on a relationship or a node. Obviously that's not very graphy, but if you just need it for reference that might not be a bad solution. Just

remember to not use the internal Neo4j ID as in future versions that may not be dependable. You should create your own ID for this purpose.

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answered Apr 13 at 20:10
Brian Underwood
4,364 ● 4 ● 18

thanks for your help Brian. I think your `TagEvent` is pretty similar to my `TagOperation`. So, is there a way to specify your schema in `Spring Data Neo4j`, using annotations or so? Are your approach transactional? I mean, how can I assure that when a `User` performs a `TagEvent` using a certaint `Tag` the USED relationship is automatically created? – tigerjack89 Apr 13 at 20:17

Sorry, I've not used Spring Data Neo4j before ;) I've mainly just worked with Cypher – Brian Underwood Apr 13 at 20:59

Thanks for your help anyway. So, what do you think is the best way to implement it in Java code? – tigerjack89 Apr 15 at 13:12

I'll let somebody else comment. I haven't written much Java in a long time ;) – Brian Underwood Apr 15 at 13:13

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