

The Lightning Memory-Mapped Database (LMDB)

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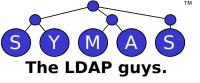
OpenLDAP Project

- Open source code project
- Founded 1998
- Three core team members
- A dozen or so contributors
- Feature releases every 18-24 months
- Maintenance releases as needed



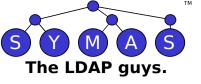
A Word About Symas

- Founded 1999
- Founders from Enterprise Software world
 - PLATINUM technology (Locus Computing)
 - IBM
- Howard joined OpenLDAP in 1999
 - One of the Core Team members
 - Appointed Chief Architect January 2007



Topics

- Overview
- Background
- Features
- Internals
- Special Features
- Results

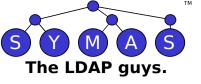


Overview

- OpenLDAP has been delivering reliable, high performance for many years
- The performance comes at the cost of fairly complex tuning requirements
- The implementation is not as clean as it could be; it is not what was originally intended
- Cleaning it up requires not just a new server backend, but also a new low-level database
- The new approach has a huge payoff



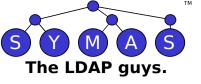
- OpenLDAP provides a number of reliable, high performance transactional backends
 - Based on Oracle BerkeleyDB (BDB)
 - back-bdb released with OpenLDAP 2.1 in 2002
 - back-hdb released with OpenLDAP 2.2 in 2003
 - Intensively analyzed for performance
 - World's fastest since 2005
 - Many heavy users with zero downtime



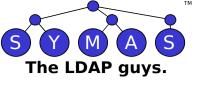
- These backends have always required careful, complex tuning
 - Data comes through three separate layers of caches
 - Each cache layer has different size and speed characteristics
 - Balancing the three layers against each other can be a difficult juggling act
 - Performance without the backend caches is unacceptably slow - over an order of magnitude...



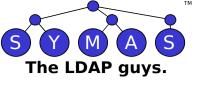
- The backend caching significantly increased the overall complexity of the backend code
 - Two levels of locking required, since the BDB database locks are too slow
 - Deadlocks occurring routinely in normal operation, requiring additional backoff/retry logic



- The caches were not always beneficial, and were sometimes detrimental
 - data could exist in 3 places at once filesystem, database, and backend cache - thus wasting memory
 - searches with result sets that exceeded the configured cache size would reduce the cache effectiveness to zero
 - malloc/free churn from adding and removing entries in the cache could trigger pathological heap behavior in libc malloc



- Overall the backends required too much attention
 - Too much developer time spent finding workarounds for inefficiencies
 - Too much administrator time spent tweaking configurations and cleaning up database transaction logs



Obvious Solutions

- Cache management is a hassle, so don't do any caching
 - The filesystem already caches data, there's no reason to duplicate the effort
- Lock management is a hassle, so don't do any locking
 - Use Multi-Version Concurrency Control (MVCC)
 - MVCC makes it possible to perform reads with no locking



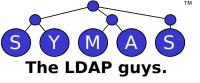
Obvious Solutions

- BDB supports MVCC, but it still requires complex caching and locking
- To get the desired results, we need to abandon BDB
- Surveying the landscape revealed no other database libraries with the desired characteristics
- Time to write our own...



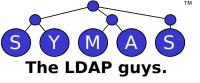
OpenLDAP LMDB

- Features At A Glance
 - Key/Value store using B+trees
 - Fully transactional, ACID compliant
 - MVCC, readers never block
 - Uses memory-mapped files, needs no tuning
 - Crash-proof, no recovery needed after restart
 - Highly optimized, extremely compact
 - under 40KB object code, fits in CPU L1 Icache
 - Runs on most modern OSs
 - Linux, Android, *BSD, MacOSX, Solaris, Windows, etc...



Features

- Concurrency Support
 - Both multi-process and multi-thread
 - Single Writer + N Readers
 - Writers don't block readers
 - Readers don't block writers
 - Reads scale perfectly linearly with available CPUs
 - No deadlocks
 - Full isolation with MVCC
 - Nested transactions
 - Batched writes



Features

- Uses Copy-on-Write
 - Live data is never overwritten
 - Database structure cannot be corrupted by incomplete operations (system crashes)
 - No write-ahead logs needed
 - No transaction log cleanup/maintenance
 - No recovery needed after crashes



Features

- Uses Single-Level-Store
 - Reads are satisfied directly from the memory map
 - no malloc or memcpy overhead
 - Writes can be performed directly to the memory map
 - no write buffers, no buffer tuning
 - Relies on the OS/filesystem cache
 - no wasted memory in app-level caching
 - Can store live pointer-based objects directly
 - using a fixed address map
 - minimal marshalling, no unmarshalling required



Single-Level Store

- The approach is only viable if process address spaces are larger than the expected data volumes
 - For 32 bit processors, the practical limit on data size is under 2GB
 - For common 64 bit processors which only implement 48 bit address spaces, the limit is 47 bits or 128 terabytes
 - The upper bound at 63 bits is 8 exabytes



Implementation Highlights

- Resulting library was under 32KB of object code
 - Compared to the original btree.c at 39KB
 - Compared to BDB at 1.5MB
- API is loosely modeled after the BDB API to ease migration of back-bdb code to use LMDB
- Everything is much simpler than BDB



Config Comparison

• LMDB config is simple, e.g. slapd

database mdb

directory /var/lib/ldap/data/mdb

maxsize 4294967296

• BDB config is complex

database hdb

directory /var/lib/ldap/data/hdb

cachesize 50000

idlcachesize 50000

dbconfig set cachesize 4 0 1

dbconfig set_lg_regionmax 262144

dbconfig set lg bsize 2097152

dbconfig set_lg_dir /mnt/logs/hdb

dbconfig set 1k max locks 3000

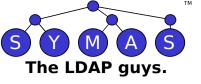
dbconfig set_lk_max_objects 1500

dbconfig set_lk_max_lockers 1500



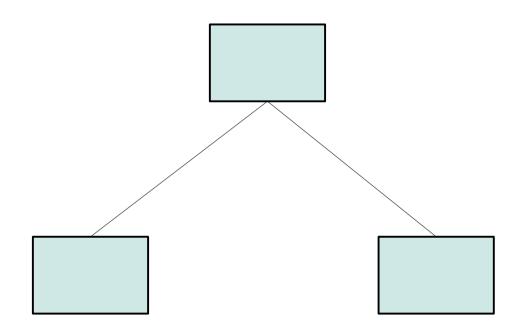
Internals

- B+tree Operation
 - Append-only, Copy-on-Write
 - Corruption-Proof
- Free Space Management
 - Avoiding Compaction/Garbage Collection
- Transaction Handling
 - Avoiding Locking



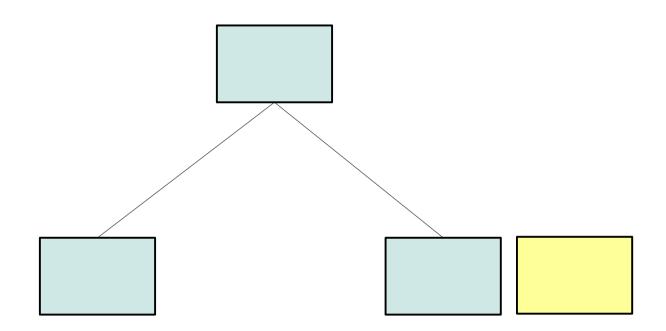
- How Append-Only/Copy-On-Write Works
 - In a pure append-only approach, no data is ever overwritten
 - Pages that are meant to be modified are copied
 - The modification is made on the copy
 - The copy is written to a new disk page
 - The structure is inherently multi-version; you can find any previous version of the database by starting at the root node corresponding to that version





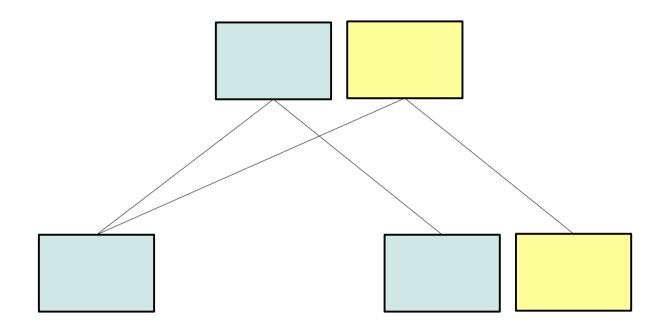
Start with a simple tree





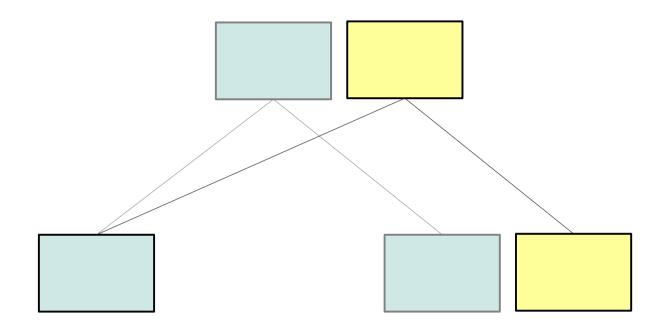
Update a leaf node by copying it and updating the copy





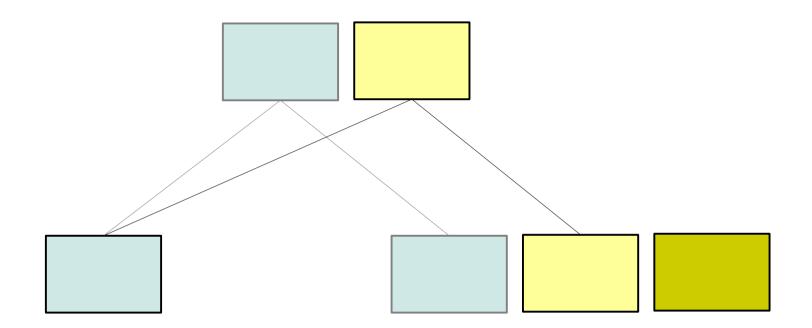
Copy the root node, and point it at the new leaf





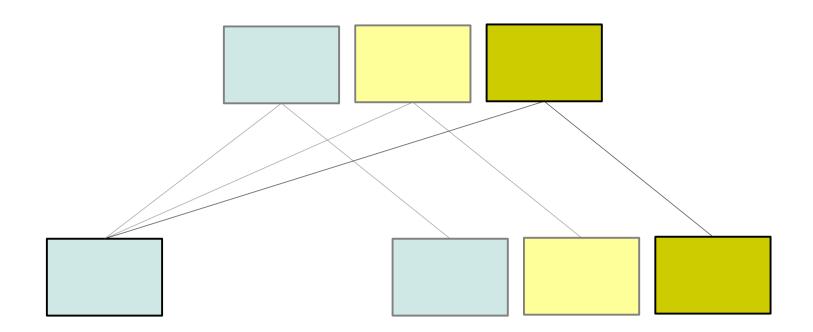
The old root and old leaf remain as a previous version of the tree



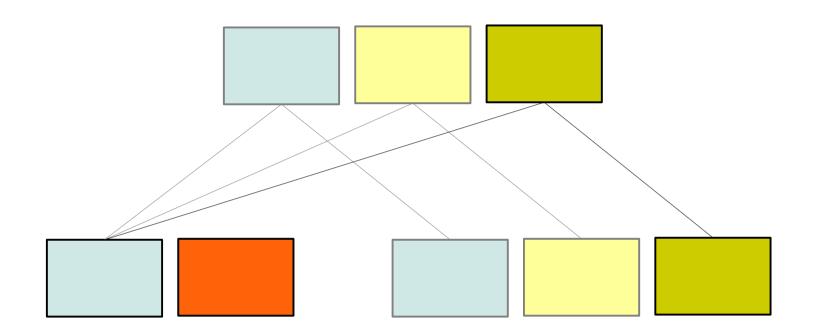


Further updates create additional versions

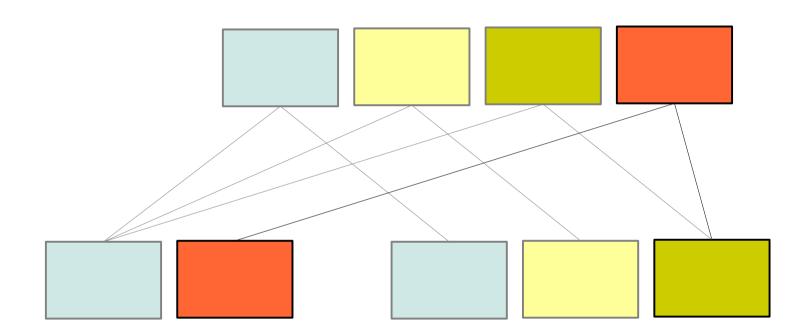


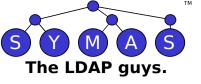








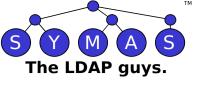




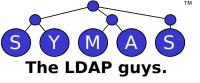
- How Append-Only/Copy-On-Write Works
 - Updates are always performed bottom up
 - Every branch node from the leaf to the root must be copied/modified for any leaf update
 - Any node not on the path from the leaf to the root is left unaltered
 - The root node is always written last



- In the Append-Only tree, new pages are always appended sequentially to the database file
 - While there's significant overhead for making complete copies of modified pages, the actual I/O is linear and relatively fast
 - The root node is always the last page of the file, unless there was a system crash
 - Any root node can be found by searching backward from the end of the file, and checking the page's header
 - Recovery from a system crash is relatively easy
 - Everything from the last valid root to the beginning of the file is always pristine
 - Anything between the end of the file and the last valid root is discarded

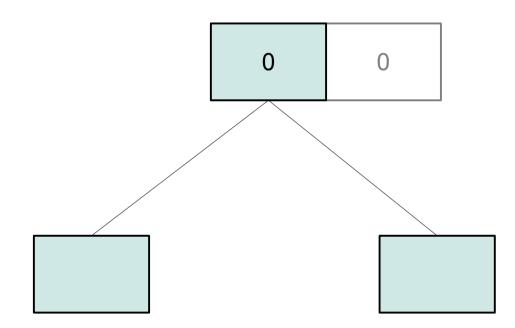


- Append-Only disk usage is very inefficient
 - Disk space usage grows without bound
 - 99+% of the space will be occupied by old versions of the data
 - The old versions are usually not interesting
 - Reclaiming the old space requires a very expensive compaction phase
 - New updates must be throttled until compaction completes



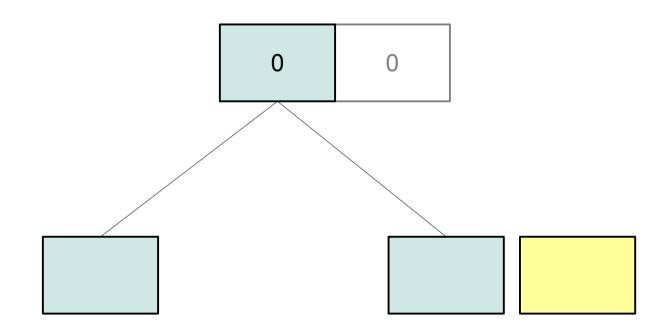
- The LMDB Approach
 - Still Copy-on-Write, but using two fixed root nodes
 - Page 0 and Page 1 of the file, used in double-buffer fashion
 - Even faster cold-start than Append-Only, no searching needed to find the last valid root node
 - Any app always reads both pages and uses the one with the greater Transaction ID stamp in its header
 - Consequently, only 2 outstanding versions of the DB exist, not fully "multi-version"



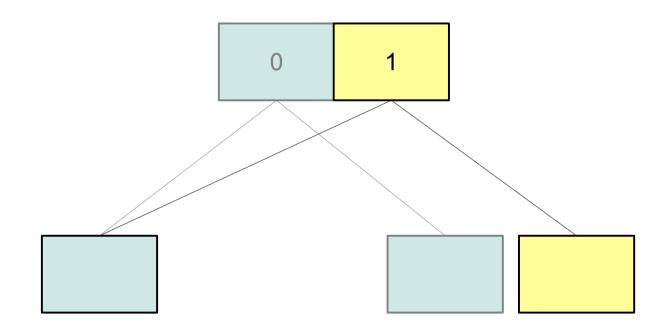


The root nodes have a transaction ID stamp

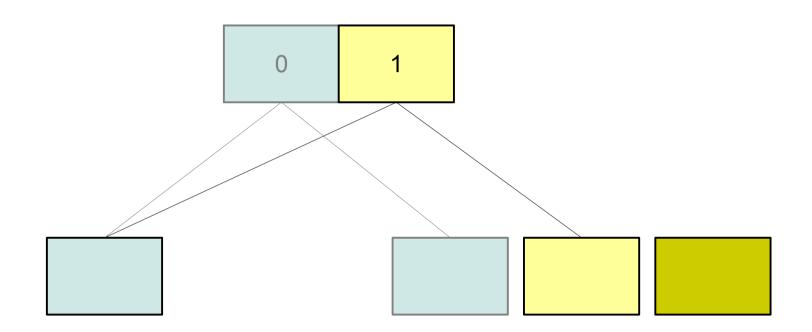




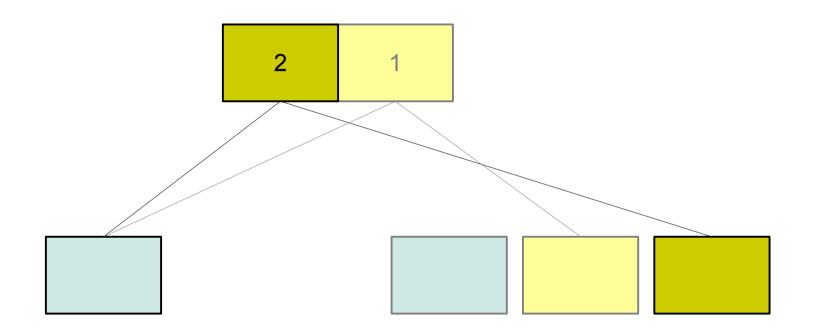






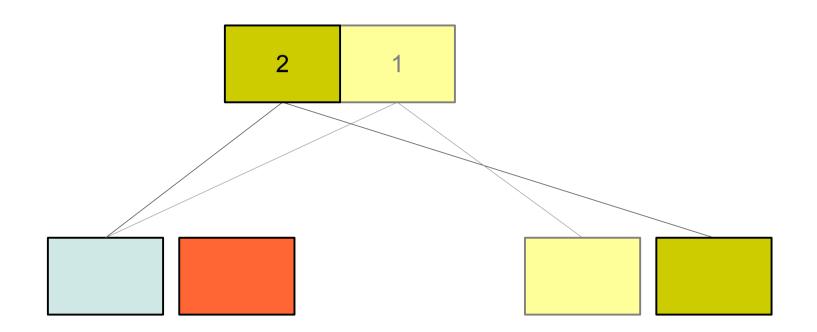




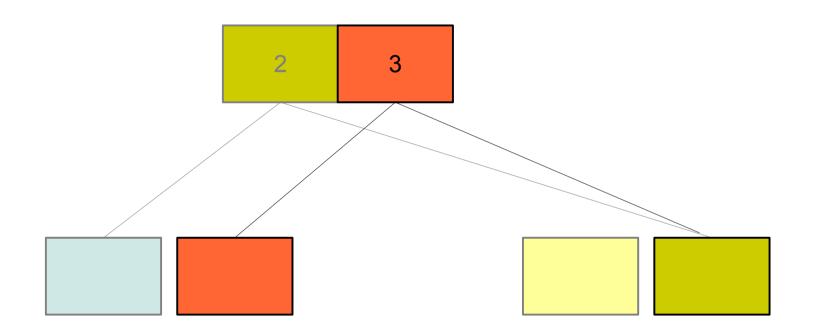


After this step the old blue page is no longer referenced by anything else in the database, so it can be reclaimed









After this step the old yellow page is no longer referenced by anything else in the database, so it can also be reclaimed



- LMDB maintains two B+trees per root node
 - One storing the user data, as illustrated above
 - One storing lists of IDs of pages that have been freed in a given transaction
 - Old, freed pages are used in preference to new pages, so the DB file size remains relatively static over time
 - No compaction or garbage collection phase is ever needed



Meta Page	Meta Page
Pgno: 0	Pgno: 1
Misc	Misc
TXN: 0	TXN: 0
FRoot: EMPTY	FRoot: EMPTY
DRoot: EMPTY	DRoot: EMPTY



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 0 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: EMPTY		Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 0 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: EMPTY		Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 0 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: EMPTY		Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 0 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: EMPTY	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 1 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: 2	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000
		1,foo	1,foo	txn 2,page 2



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 1 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: 2	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
		1,100	1,100	ixii z,paye z



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 1 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: 2	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000
		1,foo	1,foo	txn 2,page 2

Data Page

Pgno: 5 Misc... offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 1 FRoot: EMPTY DRoot: 2	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
Data Page	Data Page			
Pgno: 5 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah	Pgno: 6 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 3,page 3,4 txn 2,page 2			



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 3 FRoot: 6 DRoot: 5	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 1,foo	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
Data Page	Data Page	1,100	1,100	un 2,pago 2
Pgno: 5 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah	Pgno: 6 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 3,page 3,4 txn 2,page 2			



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 3 FRoot: 6 DRoot: 5	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,xyz 1,blah	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
Data Page	Data Page			
Pgno: 5 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah	Pgno: 6 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 3,page 3,4 txn 2,page 2			



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 2 FRoot: 4 DRoot: 3	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 3 FRoot: 6 DRoot: 5	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,xyz 1,blah	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
Data Page	Data Page	Data Page		
Pgno: 5 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah	Pgno: 6 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 3,page 3,4 txn 2,page 2	Pgno: 7 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 4,page 5,6 txn 3,page 3,4		



Meta Page	Meta Page	Data Page	Data Page	Data Page
Pgno: 0 Misc TXN: 4 FRoot: 7 DRoot: 2	Pgno: 1 Misc TXN: 3 FRoot: 6 DRoot: 5	Pgno: 2 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,xyz 1,blah	Pgno: 3 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,foo	Pgno: 4 Misc offset: 4000 txn 2,page 2
Data Page	Data Page	Data Page		
Pgno: 5 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 2,bar 1,blah	Pgno: 6 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 3,page 3,4 txn 2,page 2	Pgno: 7 Misc offset: 4000 offset: 3000 txn 4,page 5,6 txn 3,page 3,4		



- Caveat: If a read transaction is open on a particular version of the DB, that version and every version after it are excluded from page reclaiming
- Thus, long-lived read transactions should be avoided, otherwise the DB file size may grow rapidly, devolving into the Append-Only behavior until the transactions are closed



- LMDB supports a single writer concurrent with many readers
 - A single mutex serializes all write transactions
 - The mutex is shared/multiprocess
- Readers run lockless and never block
 - But for page reclamation purposes, readers are tracked
- Transactions are stamped with an ID which is a monotonically increasing integer
 - The ID is only incremented for Write transactions that actually modify data
 - If a Write transaction is aborted, or committed with no changes, the same ID will be reused for the next Write transaction



- Transactions take a snapshot of the currently valid meta page at the beginning of the transaction
- No matter what write transactions follow, a read transaction's snapshot will always point to a valid version of the DB
- The snapshot is totally isolated from subsequent writes
- This provides the Consistency and Isolation in ACID semantics



- The currently valid meta page is chosen based on the greatest transaction ID in each meta page
 - The meta pages are page and CPU cache aligned
 - The transaction ID is a single machine word
 - The update of the transaction ID is atomic
 - Thus, the Atomicity semantics of transactions are guaranteed



- During Commit, the data pages are written and then synchronously flushed before the meta page is updated
 - Then the meta page is written synchronously
 - Thus, when a commit returns "success", it is guaranteed that the transaction has been written intact
 - This provides the Durability semantics
 - If the system crashes before the meta page is updated, then the data updates are irrelevant



- For tracking purposes, Readers must acquire a slot in the readers table
 - The readers table is also in a shared memory map, but separate from the main data map
 - This is a simple array recording the Process ID, Thread ID, and Transaction ID of the reader
 - The first time a thread opens a read transaction, it must acquire a mutex to reserve a slot in the table
 - The slot ID is stored in Thread Local Storage; subsequent read transactions performed by the thread need no further locks



- Write transactions use pages from the free list before allocating new disk pages
 - Pages in the free list are used in order, oldest transaction first
 - The readers table must be scanned to see if any reader is referencing an old transaction
 - The writer doesn't need to lock the reader table when performing this scan - readers never block writers
 - The only consequence of scanning with no locks is that the writer may see stale data
 - This is irrelevant, newer readers are of no concern; only the oldest readers matter



- Explicit Key Types
 - Support for reverse byte order comparisons, as well as native binary integer comparisons
 - Minimizes the need for custom key comparison functions, allows DBs to be used safely by applications without special knowledge
 - Reduces the danger of corruption that Berkeley databases were vulnerable to, when custom key comparators were used



- Append Mode
 - Ultra-fast writes when keys are added in sequential order
 - Bypasses standard page-split algorithm when pages are filled, avoids unnecessary memcpy's
 - Allows databases to be bulk loaded at the full sequential write speed of the underlying storage system



- Reserve Mode
 - Allocates space in write buffer for data of userspecified size, returns address
 - Useful for data that is generated dynamically instead of statically copied
 - Allows generated data to be written directly to DB output buffer, avoiding unnecessary memcpy



- Fixed Mapping
 - Uses a fixed address for the memory map
 - Allows complex pointer-based data structures to be stored directly with minimal serialization
 - Objects using persistent addresses can thus be read back with no deserialization
 - Useful for object-oriented databases, among other purposes



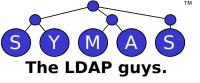
- Sub-databases
 - Store multiple independent named B+trees in a single LMDB environment
 - A SubDB is simply a key/data pair in the main DB, where the data item is the root node of another tree
 - Allows many related databases to be managed easily
 - Used in back-mdb for the main data and all of the associated indices
 - Used in SQLightning for multiple tables and indices



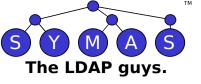
- Sorted Duplicates
 - Allows multiple data values for a single key
 - Values are stored in sorted order, with customizable comparison functions
 - When the data values are all of a fixed size, the values are stored contiguously, with no extra headers
 - maximizes storage efficiency and performance
 - Implemented by the same code as SubDB support
 - maximum coding efficiency



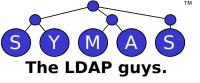
- Atomic Hot Backup
 - The entire database can be backed up live
 - No need to stop updates while backups run
 - The backup runs at the maximum speed of the target storage medium
 - Essentially: write(outfd, map, mapsize);
 - no memcpy's in or out of user space
 - pure DMA from the database to the backup



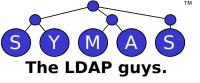
- Support for LMDB is already available for many open source projects:
 - OpenLDAP slapd back-mdb backend
 - Cyrus SASL sasldb plugin
 - Heimdal Kerberos hdb plugin
 - OpenDKIM main data store
 - SQLite3 replacing the original Btree code
 - MemcacheDB replacing BerkeleyDB
 - Postfix replacing BerkeleyDB
 - CfEngine replacing Tokyo Cabinet/QDBM



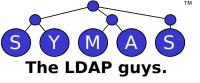
- Wrappers for many other languages besides C are available:
 - C++
 - Erlang
 - Lua
 - Python
 - Ruby
 - Java wrapper being developed



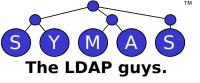
- Coming Soon
 - Riak Erlang LMDB wrapper already available
 - SQLite4 in progress
 - MariaDB in progress
 - HyperDex in progress
 - XDAndroid port of Android using SQLite3 based on LMDB
 - Mozilla/Firefox using SQLite3 based on LMDB



- In OpenLDAP slapd
 - LMDB reads are 5-20x faster than BerkeleyDB
 - Writes are 2-5x faster than BerkeleyDB
 - Consumes 1/4 as much RAM as BerkeleyDB
- In SQLite3
 - Writes are 10-25x faster than stock SQLite3
 - Reads .. performance is overshadowed by SQL inefficiency



- In MemcacheDB
 - LMDB reads are 2-200x faster than BerkeleyDB
 - Writes are 5-900x faster than BerkeleyDB
 - Multi-thread reads are 2-8x faster than purememory Memcached
 - Single-thread reads are about the same
 - Writes are about 20% slower



Results

- Full benchmark reports are available on the LMDB page
 - http://www.symas.com/mdb/
- Supported builds of LMDB-based packages available from Symas
 - http://www.symas.com/
 - OpenLDAP, Cyrus-SASL, Heimdal Kerberos
 - MemcacheDB coming soon



- Comparisons based on Google's LevelDB
- Also tested against Kyoto Cabinet's TreeDB, SQLite3, and BerkeleyDB
- Tested using RAM filesystem (tmpfs), reiserfs on SSD, and multiple filesystems on HDD
 - btrfs, ext2, ext3, ext4, jfs, ntfs, reiserfs, xfs, zfs
 - ext3, ext4, jfs, reiserfs, xfs also tested with external journals



Relative Footprint

text	data	bss	dec	hex	filename
272247	1456	328	274031	42e6f	db_bench
1675911	2288	304	1678503	199ca7	db_bench_bdb
90423	1508	304	92235	1684b	db_bench_mdb
653480	7768	1688	662936	a2764	db_bench_sqlite3
296572	4808	1096	302476	49d8c	db_bench_tree_db

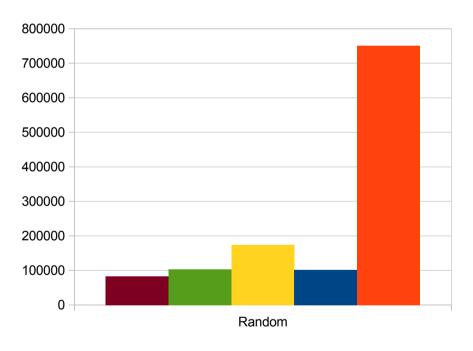
- Clearly LMDB has the smallest footprint
 - Carefully written C code beats C++ every time



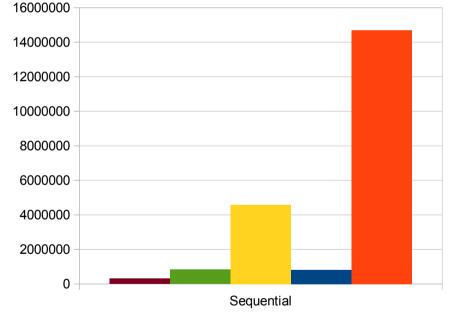
Read Performance

Small Records





Small Records

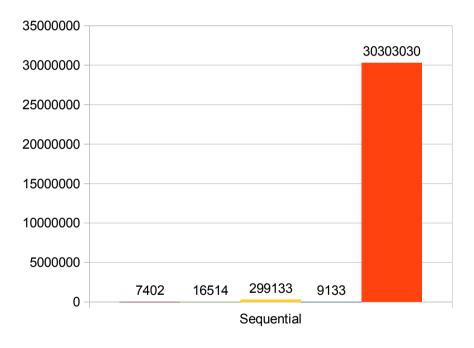


■ SQLite3 ■ TreeDB = LevelDB ■ BDB ■ MDB



Read Performance

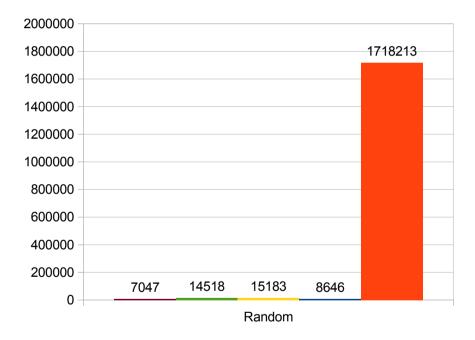
Large Records



■ SQLite3 ■ TreeDB ■ LevelDB ■ BDB ■ MDB



Large Records



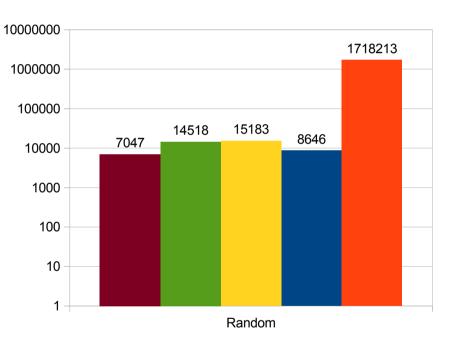


Log Scale

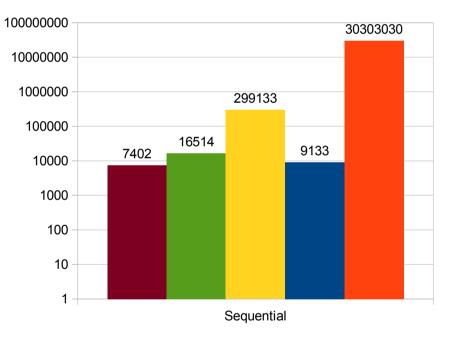
Read Performance

Large Records





Large Records

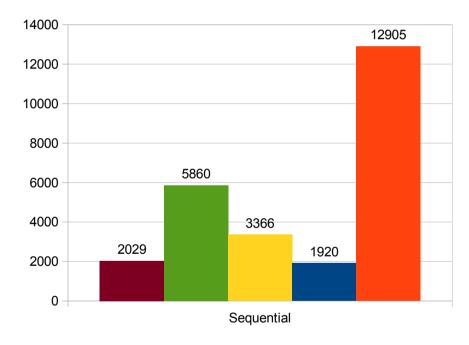


■ SQLite3 ■ TreeDB ■ LevelDB ■ BDB ■ MDB

■ SQLite3 ■ TreeDB ■ LevelDB ■ BDB ■ MDB



Asynchronous Write Performance



■ SQLite3 ■ TreeDB ■ LevelDB ■ BDB ■ MDB

Large Records, tmpfs

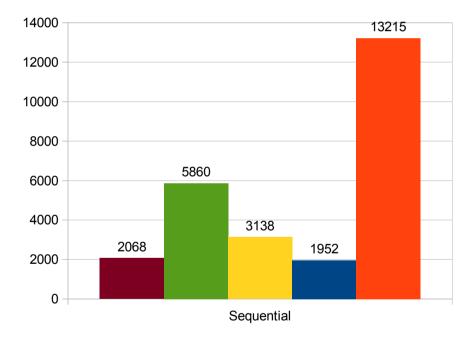
Asynchronous Write Performance

14000 12735 12000 10000 8000 6000 5709 4000 2004 1902 742 Random

Large Records, tmpfs



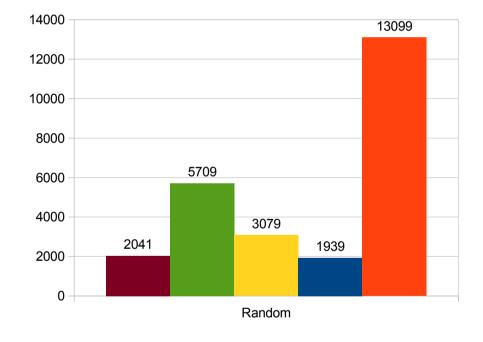
Batched Write Performance



Large Records, tmpfs

Batched Write Performance

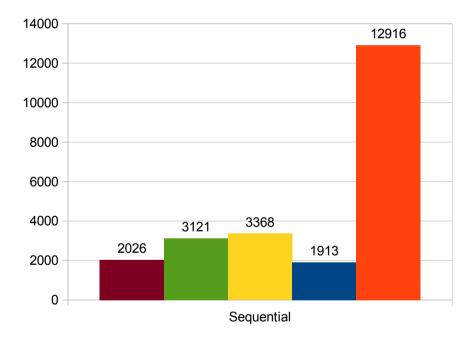
Large Records, tmpfs



SQLite3 TreeDB LevelDB BDB MDB



Synchronous Write Performance



Large Records, tmpfs

Synchronous Write Performance

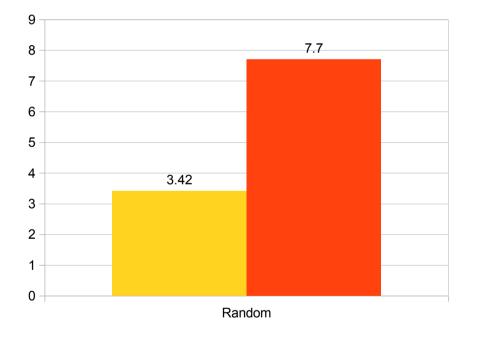
14000 12665 12000 10000 8000 6000 4000 2000 1996 2162 1893 745 Random

Large Records, tmpfs

SQLite3 TreeDB LevelDB BDB MDB



Synchronous Write Performance



LevelDB MDB

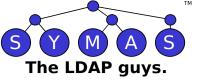
Large Records, SSD, 40GB

- Test random write performance when DB is 5x larger than RAM
- Supposedly a best case for LevelDB and worst case for B-trees
- Result in MB/sec, higher is better

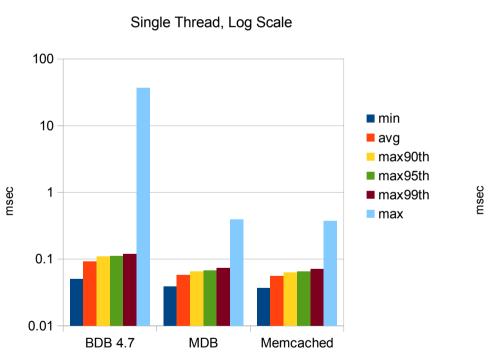


Benchmarking...

- LMDB in real applications
 - MemcacheDB, tested with memcachetest
 - The OpenLDAP slapd server, using the back-mdb slapd backend



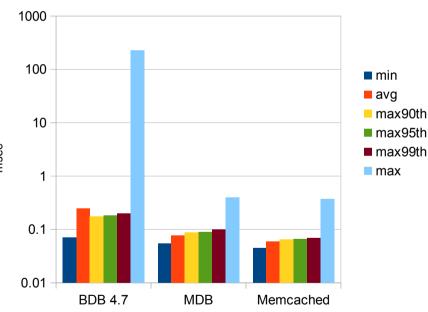
MemcacheDB

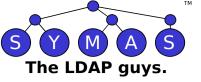


Read Performance

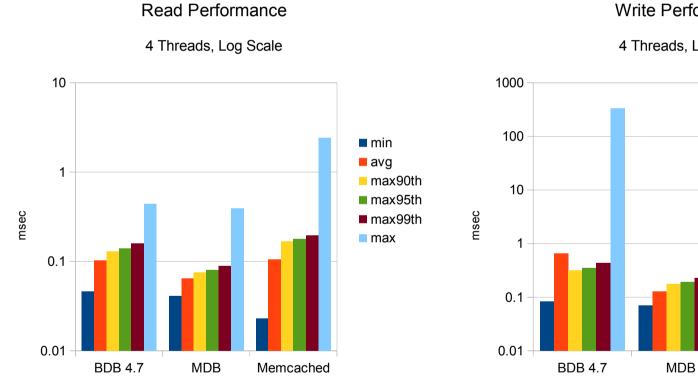
Write Performance

Single Thread, Log Scale





MemcacheDB



Write Performance

4 Threads, Log Scale

min 🗖

avg 📕

max

Memcached

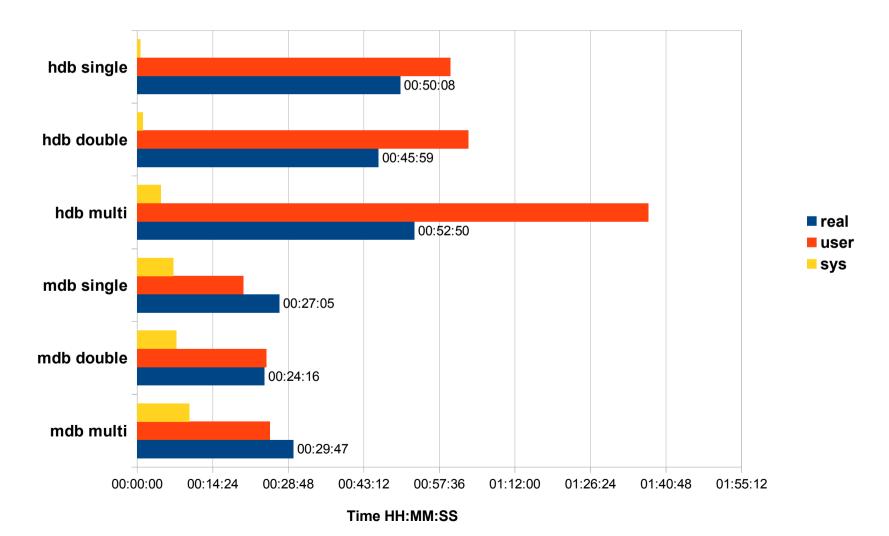
max90th

max95th

max99th

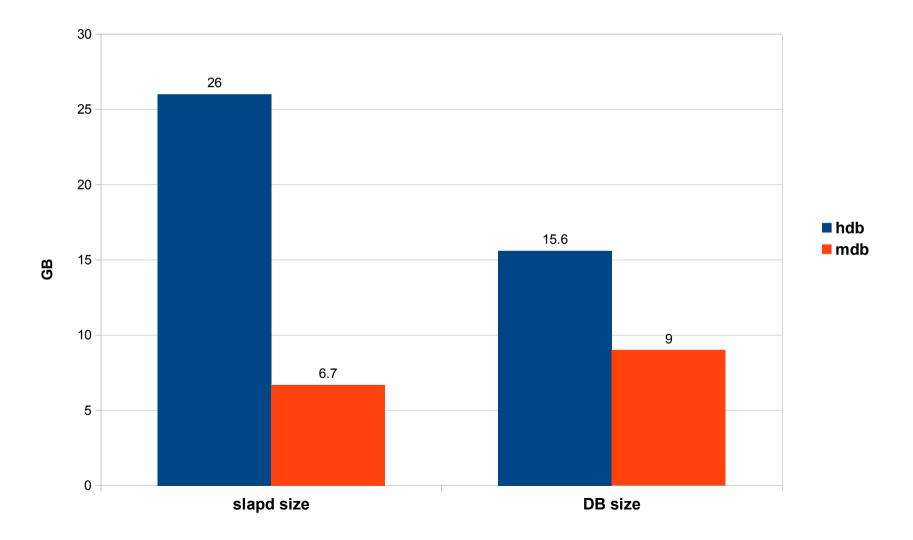


Time to slapadd -q 5 million entries



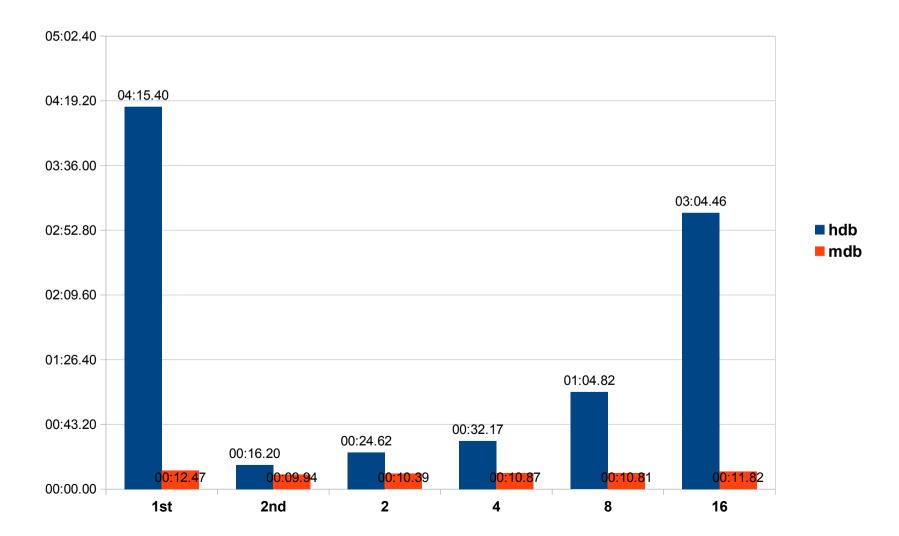


Process and DB sizes



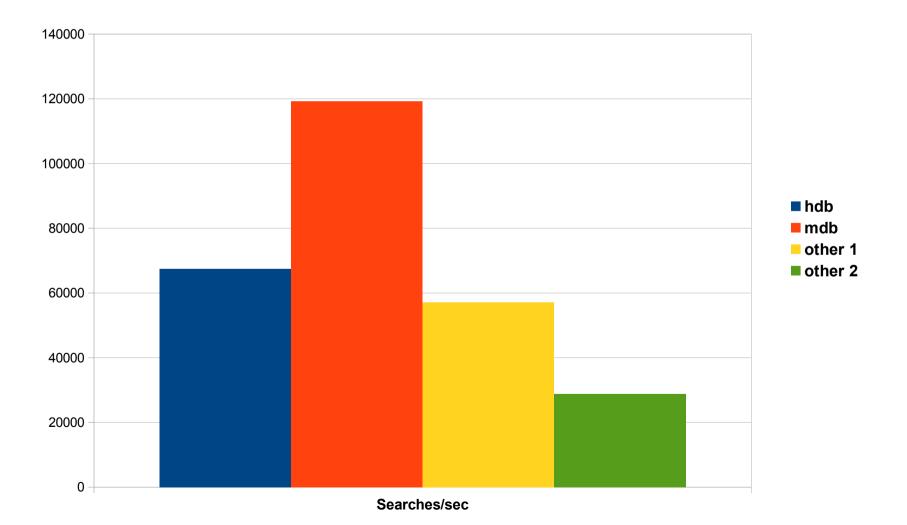


Initial / Concurrent Search Times





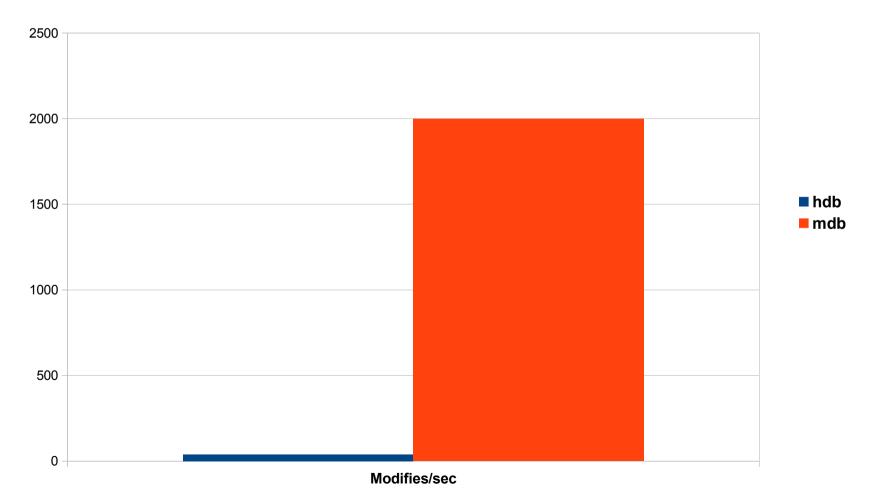
SLAMD Search Rate Comparison





Modifications/sec, Reported by Zimbra

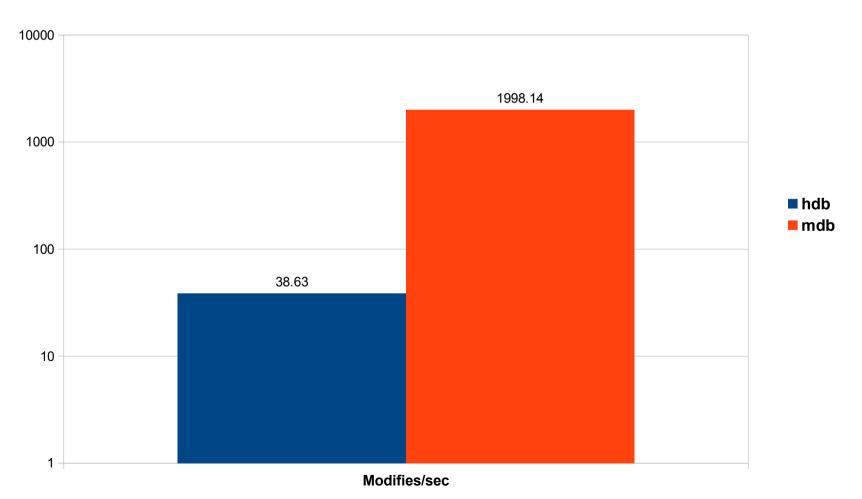
Single Node





Modifications/sec, Reported by Zimbra

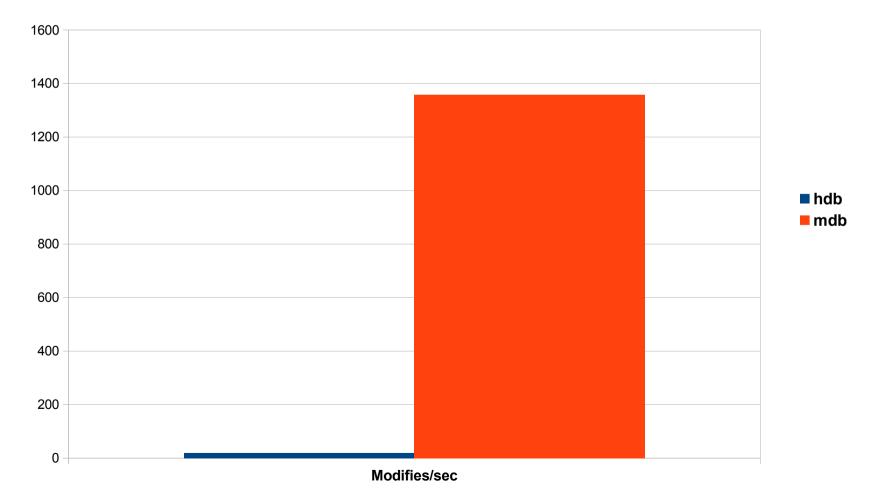
Single Node, Log Scale





Modifications/sec, Reported by Zimbra

Delta-Sync Provider





Modifications/sec, Reported by Zimbra

Delta-Sync Provider, Log Scale

