Yabusame: Postcopy Live Migration for Qemu/KVM

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Outline

• What is Postcoy Live Migration?
  – Comparison with Precopy
  – Experience from an early, ad-hoc prototype

• Postcopy for Qemu/KVM
  – Production-level design
  – Qemu/KVM upstream merge
Precopy v.s. Postcopy

• Precopy live migration
  – Copy VM memory before switching the execution host
  – Widely used in VMMs

• Postcopy live migration
  – Copy VM memory after switching the execution host
  – Yabusame
A VM with 1GB RAM is live-migrated to the right PC.

Normal Live Migration

Yabusame Live Migration  
(Developed by AIST)
Precopy Live Migration (1)

*Copy VM memory before relocation*

1. Copy all memory pages to destination
2. Copy memory pages updated during the previous copy again
3. Repeat the 2\textsuperscript{nd} step until the rest of memory pages are enough small
4. Stop VM
5. Copy CPU registers, device states, and the rest of memory pages.
6. Resume VM at destination
Precopy Live Migration (2)

Copy VM memory before relocation

Migration time depends on memory update speeds.
Postcopy Live Migration (1)

Copy VM memory after relocation

1. Stop VM
2. Copy CPU and device states to destination
3. Resume VM at destination
4. Copy memory pages
Postcopy Live Migration (2)

Copy VM memory after relocation

1. Stop VM
2. Copy CPU and device states to destination
3. Resume VM at destination
4. Copy memory pages

Copy CPU and device states
512KB or so (w/o VGA)
=> Less than 1 sec for relocation
Postcopy Live Migration (3)

Copy VM memory after relocation

1. Stop VM
2. Copy CPU and device states to destination
3. Resume VM at destination
4. Copy memory pages
Postcopy Live Migration (4)

Copy VM memory after relocation

1. Stop VM
2. Copy CPU and device states to destination
3. Resume VM at destination
4. Copy memory pages

Copy memory pages
- On-demand
- Background (Precache)
## Precopy v.s. Postcopy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Precopy</th>
<th>Postcopy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before the execution host is switched, memory pages are transferred to the destination.</td>
<td>After the execution host is switched, memory pages are transferred to the destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time until the execution host is switched</td>
<td>$\frac{\text{RAM size}}{\text{Network speed}} + \alpha$</td>
<td>$200-300\text{ms}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time until all states are removed</td>
<td>$\frac{\text{RAM size}}{\text{Network speed}} + \alpha$</td>
<td>$\frac{\text{RAM size}}{\text{Network speed}}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- alpha: depends on memory update speed (non deterministic!)
- Note the above values are the worst case.
  - Qemu skips zero-filled page.
Question (1)

• Is there performance loss after relocation?
  – Yes, (hopefully?) slightly.
  – The working set of memory pages is limited.
  – These pages are precached as soon as possible.
Migrate an **heavily-loaded** Web Server VM

Using the SPECweb 2005 Banking benchmark.

![Graph showing average response time over time. The execution host is instantaneously switched, and performance loss is limited.](image-url)
Transferred Page Offsets (Precache Disabled)

Most page offsets are limited in this area. => Precache this area for better performance.
Question (2)

• Useful for dynamic server consolidation?
  – Hopefully, yes.
  – Enables quick, deterministic load balancing.
Dynamic Consolidation

When datacenter load becomes high,

- Distribute running VMs into other hosts
- Power up new physical hosts

Assure VM Performance

Remove overload

The CPU usage of physical machines
Postcopy v.s. Precopy for dynamic consolidation

The consolidation system using precopy cannot quickly migrate VMs, resulting in serious performance loss on sudden load changes.

Postcopy contributes alleviating performance loss.

Performance Degradation (%)

Detection overhead
Summary of the first half

• Yabusame
  – Postcopy Live Migration for Qemu/KVM
  – The execution host is switched in 200-300ms.
  – The total migration time is shorter than precopy. It is deterministic!
  – An early-stage, ad-hoc, ad-hoc, concept-proof prototype is here.
    • http://grivon.apgrid.org/quick-kvm-migration
    • Do not use it!

• Next, discuss a upstream merge-able design…
Why re-design/implementation

- Next step of YABUSAME project
  - We'd like to merge post copy livemigration into the upstream
- The existing patch was implemented for
  - academic research
  - proof-of-concept
- So, its design/implementation is
  - Ad-hoc, quick-hack
  - Not suitable for the upstream merge
- => re-design/implement it for the upstream merge
Prerequisite

- New implementation should satisfy
- Allow qemu/kvm features
  - target/host agnostic
  - accelerator(tcg, kvm)
  - Devices
    - emulated devices, virtio, vhost
    - assigned-device won't be supported
- Allow kvm host features
  - Swap, KSM, THP/hugetlb, async page fault, coredump...
- Zero overhead after migration completes
  - CPU, memory
- Minimal administrative operation
  - Don't require special preparation on migration source
Implementation proposal

4. page contents is sent back
Connection for live-migration
is reused

0. mmap()
1. access to
guest RAM

3. Request for page

5. page contents
is passed down to
the driver

character
device

2. page fault is hooked by
Character device.

Host kernel

source
destination

vma::fault

Host kernel

guest RAM
Design points

- Who on the destination handles page requests
  - An independent daemon or a thread in qemu-kvm
- connection between source/destination
  - Re-use the connection of live-migration or
  - Create new connection
- Page transfer protocol. Based on
  - Qemu live migration or
  - other protocol: nbd, iSCSI, AOE
- How to hook guest RAM access
Hooking guest RAM access

- Insert hooks all accesses to guest RAM
- Character device driver
- Backing store (block device or file)
- Swap device
Insert hooks

- Insert hooks all accesses to guest RAM
- Carefull code inspection is required

Pros

- Portable. May work with qemu tcg without any kernel drivers

Cons

- Impractical
Backing device/file approach

- Use block device or file as backing store for guest RAM

- Pros
  - New device driver isn't needed

- Cons
  - Future improvement would be difficult
  - Some KVM host features wouldn't work (KSM, THP)

Diagram:
- qemu-kvm
- FUSE or nbd or User block device
- guest RAM
- Regular file or Block device
- Host kernel
- IO
- mmap()
Character device approach

- Character device to handle page fault on guest RAM area
- Pros
  - Straight forward
  - Future improvement would be easy
- Cons
  - New driver is necessary
  - Some KVM host features wouldn't work. (KSM, THP)
    - VMA isn't anonymous
    - Can be fixed
Swap device approach

- On destination, set up such that all guest RAM are swapped out

- Pros
  - Every thing would be normal after migration completes
  - New device driver isn't needed

- Cons
  - Future improvement would be difficult
  - Administration
    - setting up swap device

```
Block device
```

```
Host kernel
```

```
guest RAM
```

```
qemu-kvm
```

```
nbd or user block device
```

```
swap
```

```
IO
```

```
destination
```
## Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modify VMM</td>
<td>portability</td>
<td>impractical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backing store</td>
<td>No new device driver</td>
<td>Difficult future improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some kvm host features wouldn't work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Device</td>
<td>Straight forward</td>
<td>Need to fix kvm host features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swap device</td>
<td>Everything is normal after</td>
<td>Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>migration</td>
<td>Difficult future improvement</td>
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Future work after the merge

- Evaluation/benchmark
- Optimization
  - Another connection for background page transfer
    - Bandwidth control
  - Reduce unnecessary page fault
  - Mix precopy/postcopy
  - Avoid memory copy
  - Hint not to send page contents
  - Not to fetch pages when writing/clearing whole page
    - cleancache/frontswap might be good candidate
- Libvirt support is necessary?
- Cooperate with Kemari
Questions/discussions

- We want the community feedback
- Project page
  - http://sites.google.com/site/grivonhome/quick-kvm-migration
- Enabling Instantaneous Relocation of Virtual Machines with a Lightweight VMM Extension: proof-of-concept, ad-hoc prototype. not a new design
- Reactive consolidation of virtual machines enabled by postcopy live migration: advantage for VM consolidation
  - http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1996125
- Qemu Wiki
  - http://wiki.qemu.org/Features/PostCopyLiveMigration