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The Database State Machine Approach

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Abstract. Database replication protocols have historically been built on top of distributed database systems, and have consequently been designed and implemented using distributed transactional mechanisms, such as atomic commitment. We present the Database State Machine approach, a new way to deal with database replication in a cluster of servers. This approach relies on a powerful atomic broadcast primitive to propagate transactions between database servers, and alleviates the need for atomic commitment. Transaction commit is based on a certification test, and abort rate is reduced by the reordering certification test. The approach is evaluated using a detailed simulation model that shows the scalability of the system and the benefits of the reordering certification test.

Keywords: database replication, transaction processing, state machine approach, optimistic concurrency control, synchronous replication, atomic broadcast

1. Introduction

Software replication is considered a cheap way to increase data availability when compared to hardware-based techniques [16]. However, designing a synchronous replication scheme (i.e., all copies are always consistent) that has good performance is still an active area of research both in the database and in the distributed systems communities. Commercial databases are typically based on the asynchronous replication model, which tolerates inconsistencies among replicas [12, 32].

This paper investigates a new approach for synchronous database replication on a cluster of database servers (e.g., a group of workstations connected by a local-area network). The replication mechanism presented is based on the *state machine approach* [30], and differs from traditional replication mechanisms in that it does not handle replication using distributed transactional mechanisms, such as atomic commitment [5, 13]. The state machine approach was proposed as a general mechanism for dealing with replication, however no previous study has addressed its use in the domain of a cluster of database servers.

Our Database State Machine is based on the *deferred update* technique. According to this technique, transactions are processed locally at one database server (i.e., one replica

manager) and, at commit time, are forwarded for certification to the other servers (i.e., the other replica managers). Deferred update replication offers many advantages over its alternative, *immediate update* replication, which synchronises every transaction operation across all servers. Among these advantages, one may cite: (a) better performance, by gathering and propagating multiple updates together, and localising the execution at a single, possibly nearby, server (thus reducing the number of messages in the network), (b) better support for fault tolerance, by simplifying server recovery (i.e., missing updates may be treated by the communication module as lost messages), and (c) lower deadlock rate, by eliminating distributed deadlocks [12].

The main drawback of the deferred update technique is that the lack of synchronisation during transaction execution may lead to large transaction abort rates. We show how the Database State Machine approach can be used to reduce the transaction abort rate by using a reordering certification test, which looks for possible serialisable executions before deciding to abort a transaction.

We have developed a simulation model of the Database State Machine and conducted several experiments with it. The results obtained by our simulation model allowed us to assess some important points about the system, like its scalability, and the effectiveness of the reordering technique. Particularly, in the former case, it shows which parts of the system are more prone to become resource bottlenecks. Evaluations of the reordering technique have shown that transaction aborts due to serialisation problems can be reduced from 20% to less than 5% in clusters of 8 database servers.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. In Section 2, we introduce the replicated database model on which our results are based, and the two main concepts used in our approach. In Section 3, we recall the principle of the deferred update replication technique. In Section 4, we show how to transform deferred update replication into a state machine replication scheme. An optimisation of this approach that reduces the number of aborted transactions is described in Section 5. In Section 6, we present the simulation tool we used to evaluate the protocols discussed in the paper and draw some conclusions about them. In Section 7 we discuss related work, and in Section 8 we conclude the paper. The proofs of correctness of the algorithms are in the Appendix.

2. System model and definitions

In this section, we describe the system model and the two main concepts involved in our approach, that is, those of state machine, and atomic broadcast. The state machine approach delineates the replication strategy, and the atomic broadcast constitutes a sufficient order mechanism to implement a state machine.

2.1. Database and failures

We consider a system composed of a set Σ of sites. Sites in Σ communicate through message passing, and do not have access to a shared memory or to a common clock. To simplify the presentation, we assume the existence of a discrete global clock, even if sites do not have access to it. The range of the clock's ticks is the set of natural numbers. The set Σ is divided

into two disjoint subsets: a subset of client sites, denoted Σ_C, and a subset of database sites, denoted Σ_D. Hereafter, we consider that $\Sigma_C = \{c_1, c_2, \ldots, c_m\}$, and $\Sigma_D = \{s_1, s_2, \ldots, s_n\}$. Each database site plays the role of a replica manager, and each one has a full copy of the database.

Sites fail independently and only by crashing (i.e., we exclude Byzantine failures [24]). We also assume that every database site eventually recovers after a crash. If a site is able to execute requests at a certain time τ (i.e., the site did not fail or failed but recovered) we say that the site is *up* at time τ; otherwise the site is said to be *down* at time τ. For each database site, we consider that there is a time after which the site is forever up.[1]

Transactions are sequences of read and write operations followed by a commit or abort operation. A transaction is called a query (or read-only) if it does not contain any write operations; otherwise it is called an update transaction. Transactions, denoted t_a, t_b, and t_c, are submitted by client sites, and executed by database sites. Our correctness criterion for transaction execution is one-copy serializability (1SR) [5].

2.2. The state machine approach

The state machine approach, also called active replication, is a non-centralised replication coordination technique. Its key concept is that all replicas receive and process the same sequence of requests. Replica consistency is guaranteed by assuming that when provided with the same input (e.g., an external request) each replica will produce the same output (e.g., state change). This assumption implicitly implies that replicas have a deterministic behaviour.

The way requests are disseminated among replicas can be decomposed into two requirements [30]:

1. *Agreement.* Every non-faulty replica receives every request.
2. *Order.* If a replica processes request req_1 before req_2, then no replica processes request req_2 before request req_1.

The order requirement can be weakened if some semantic information about the requests is known. For example, if two requests commute, that is, independently of the order they are processed they produce the same final states and sequence of outputs, then it is not necessary that order be enforced among the replicas for these two requests.

2.3. Atomic broadcast

An atomic broadcast primitive enables to send messages to several sites, with the guarantee that all sites agree on the *set* of messages delivered and the *order* according to which the messages are delivered [17] (implementation details are discussed in Section 6.2). Atomic broadcast is defined by the primitives *broadcast*(m) and *deliver*(m), and ensures the following properties.

1. *Agreement.* If a site delivers a message m then every site delivers m.
2. *Order.* No two sites deliver any two messages in different orders.

3. *Termination.* If a site broadcasts message m and does not fail, then every site eventually delivers m.

The total order induced on the *deliver* is represented by the relation $\prec$. If message m_1 is delivered before message m_2, then $deliver(m_1) \prec deliver(m_2)$.

It is important to notice that the properties of atomic broadcast are defined in terms of message *delivery* and not in terms of message *reception*. Typically, a database site first receives a message, then executes some protocol to guarantee the atomic broadcast properties, and finally delivers the message. From Section 2.2, it should be clear that atomic broadcast is sufficient to guarantee the correct dissemination of requests to replicas acting as state machines.

The notion of delivery captures the concept of durability, that is, a site must not forget that it has delivered a message after it recovers from a crash. The agreement and order properties of atomic broadcast also have an impact on the recovery of sites. When a site s_i recovers after a crash, s_i must deliver first all messages it missed during the crashed period.

3. Deferred update replication

The deferred update replication technique [5] is a way of dealing with requests in a replicated database environment. It will be the base for the Database State Machine presented in Section 4. In this section, we first recall the principle of the deferred update replication technique, and then we provide a detailed characterisation of it.

3.1. Deferred update replication technique

In the deferred update replication technique, transactions are locally executed at one database site, and during their execution, no interaction between other database sites occurs (see figure 1). Transactions are locally synchronised at database sites according to some concurrency control mechanism [5]. However, we assume throughout the paper that databases synchronise transactions using a strict two-phase locking scheduler. When a client requests the transaction commit, the transaction's updates (e.g., the redo log records) and some control structures are propagated to all database sites, where the transaction will be certified and, if possible, committed. This procedure, starting with the commit request, is called *termination protocol*. The objective of the termination protocol is twofold: (i) propagating transactions to database sites, and (ii) certifying them.

The certification test aims at ensuring one-copy serialisability. It decides to abort a transaction if the transaction's commit would lead the database to an inconsistent state (i.e., non-serialisable). For example, consider two concurrent transactions, t_a and t_b, that are executed at different database sites, and that update a common data item. On requesting the commit, if t_a arrives before t_b at the database site s_i but after t_b at the database site s_j $(i \neq j)$, both transactions t_a and t_b might have to be aborted, since otherwise, site s_i would see transaction t_a before transaction t_b, and site s_j would see transaction t_b before transaction t_a, violating one-copy serialisability.

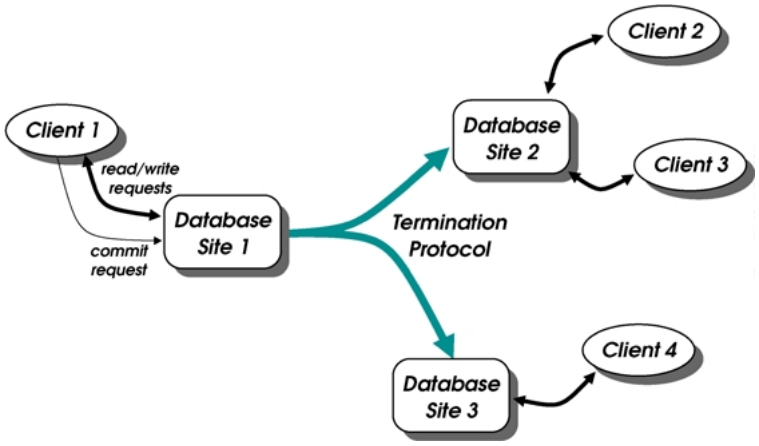

Figure 1. Deferred update technique.

While a database site s_i is down, s_i may miss some transactions by not participating in their termination protocol. However, as soon as database site s_i is up again, s_i catches up with another database site that has seen all transactions in the system.

3.2. *Transaction states*

During its processing, a transaction passes through some well-defined states (see figure 2). The transaction starts in the *executing state*, when its read and write operations are locally executed at the database site where it was initiated. When the client that initiates the transaction requests the commit, the transaction passes to the *committing state* and is sent to the other database sites. A transaction received by a database site is also in the committing state, and it remains in the committing state until its fate is known by the database site (i.e., *commit* or *abort*). The different states of a transaction t_a at a database site s_i are denoted *Executing*(t_a, s_i), *Committing*(t_a, s_i), *Committed*(t_a, s_i), and *Aborted*(t_a, s_i). The executing and committing states are transitory states, whereas the committed and aborted states are final states.

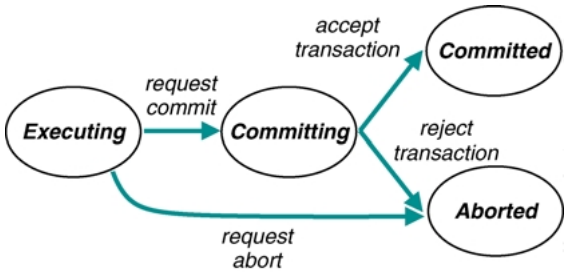

Figure 2. Transaction states.

3.3. General algorithm

We describe next a general algorithm for the deferred update replication technique. To simplify the presentation, we consider a particular client c_k that sends requests to a database site s_i on behalf of a transaction t_a.

1. Read and write operations requested by the client c_k are executed at s_i according to the strict two-phase locking (strict 2PL) rule. From the start until the commit request, transaction t_a is in the executing state.
2. When c_k requests t_a's commit, t_a is immediately committed if it is a read-only transaction. If not, t_a passes to the committing state, and the database site s_i triggers the termination protocol for t_a: the updates performed by t_a, as well as its readset and writeset, are sent to all database sites—notice that the readset and the writeset contain identifiers to the data items read and written by the transaction, and not their values.
3. Eventually, every database site s_j certifies t_a. The certification test takes into account every transaction t_b known by s_j that *conflicts* with t_a (see Section 3.4). It is important that all database sites reach the same common decision on the final state of t_a, which may require some coordination among database sites. Such coordination can be achieved, for example, by means of an atomic commit protocol, or, as it will be shown in Section 4, by using the state machine approach.
4. If t_a is serialisable with the previous committed transactions in the system (e.g., t_a passes the certification test), all its updates will be applied to the database. Transactions in the execution state at each site s_j holding locks on the data items updated by t_a are aborted.
5. The client c_k receives the outcome for t_a from site s_i as soon as s_i can determine whether t_a will be committed or aborted. The exact moment this happens depends on how the termination protocol is implemented, and will be discussed in Section 4.

Queries do not execute the certification test, nevertheless, they may be aborted during their execution due to local deadlocks and by non-local committing transactions when granting their write locks. The algorithm presented above can be modified in order to reduce or completely avoid aborting read-only transactions. For example, if queries are pre-declared as so, once an update transaction passes the certification test, instead of aborting a query that holds a read lock on a data item it wants to update, the update transaction waits for the query to finish and release the lock. In this case, update transactions have the highest priority in granting write locks, but they wait for queries to finish. Read-only transactions can still be aborted due to deadlocks, though. However, multiversion data item mechanisms can prevent queries from being aborted altogether. In [28], read-only transactions are executed using a fixed view (or version) of the database, without interfering with the execution of update transactions.

3.4. Transaction dependencies

In order for a database site s_i to certify a committing transaction t_a, s_i must be able to tell which transactions conflict with t_a up to the current time. A transaction t_b *conflicts* with t_a

if t_a and t_b have *conflicting operations* and t_b does not *precede* t_a. Two operations conflict if they are issued by different transactions, access the same data item and at least one of them is a write. The precede relation between two transactions t_a and t_b is defined as follows: (a) if t_a and t_b execute at the same database site, t_b precedes t_a if t_b enters the committing state before t_a; and (b) if t_a and t_b execute at different database sites, say s_i and s_j, respectively, t_b precedes t_a if t_b commits at s_i before t_a enters the committing state at s_i. Let $site(t)$ identify the database site where transaction t was executed, and $committing(t)$ and $commit(t)_{s_j}$ be the events that represent, respectively, the request for commit and the commit of t at s_j. The event $committing(t)$ only happens at the database site s_i where t was executed, and the event $commit(t)_{s_j}$ happens at every database site s_j. We formally define that transaction t_b precedes transaction t_a, denoted $t_b \rightarrow t_a$, as

$$t_b \rightarrow t_a = \begin{cases} committing(t_b) \stackrel{e}{\rightarrow} committing(t_a), & \text{if } site(t_a) = site(t_b), \\ commit(t_b)_{site(t_a)} \stackrel{e}{\rightarrow} committing(t_a), & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

where $\stackrel{e}{\rightarrow}$ is the local (total) order relation for the events $committing(t)$ and $commit(t)_{s_j}$. The relation $t_a \not\rightarrow t_b$ (t_a not $\rightarrow t_b$) establishes that t_a does not precede t_b.[2]

The deferred update replication does not require any distributed locking protocol to synchronise transactions during their execution. Therefore, network bandwidth is not consumed by synchronising messages, and there are no distributed deadlocks. However, transactions may be aborted due to conflicting accesses. In the next sections, we show that the deferred update replication technique can be implemented using the state machine approach, and that this approach allows optimisations that can reduce the transaction abortion due to conflicting accesses.

4. The database state machine approach

The deferred update replication technique can be implemented as a state machine. In this section, we discuss the details of this approach, and the implications to the way transactions are processed.

4.1. The termination protocol as a state machine

The termination protocol presented in Section 3 can be turned into a state machine as follows. Whenever a client requests a transaction's commit, the transaction's updates, its readset and writeset (or, for short, the transaction) are atomically broadcast to all database sites. Each database site will behave as a state machine, and the agreement and order properties required by the state machine approach are ensured by the atomic broadcast primitive.

The database sites, upon delivering and processing the transaction, should eventually reach the same state. In order to accomplish this requirement, delivered transactions should be processed with certain care. Before delving deeper into details, we describe the database modules involved in the transaction processing. Figure 3 abstractly presents such modules and the way they are related to each other.[3] Transaction execution, as described in Section 3,

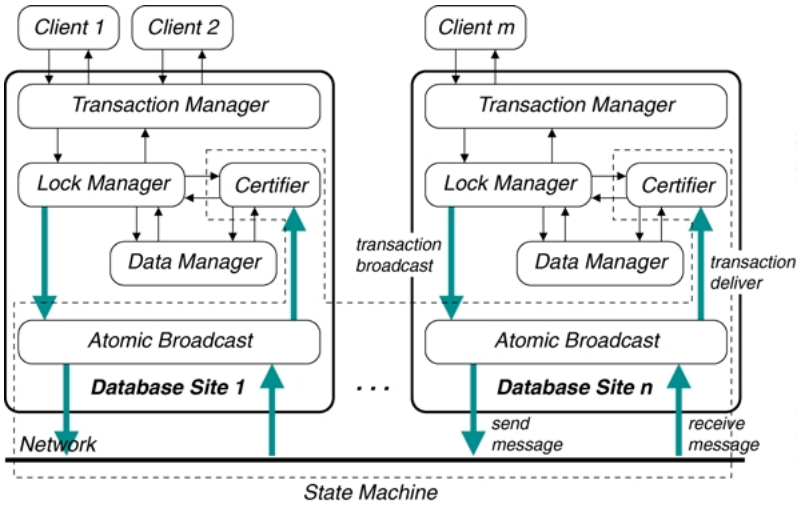

Figure 3. Termination protocol based on atomic broadcast.

is handled by the *Transaction Manager*, the *Lock Manager*, and the *Data Manager*. The *Certifier* executes the certification test for an incoming transaction. It receives the transactions delivered by the *Atomic Broadcast* module. On certifying a transaction, the Certifier may ask information to the Data Manager about already committed transactions (e.g., logged data). If the transaction is successfully certified, its write operations are transmitted to the Lock Manager, and once the write locks are granted, the updates can be performed.

To make sure that each database site will reach the same state after processing committing transactions, each Certifier has to guarantee that write-conflicting transactions are applied to the database in the same order (since transactions whose writes do not conflict are commutable). This is the only requirement from the Certifier, and can be attained if the Certifier ensures that write-conflicting transactions grant their locks following the order they are delivered. This requirement is straightforward to implement, nevertheless, it reduces concurrency in the Certifier.

4.2. The termination algorithm

The procedure executed on delivering the request of a committing update transaction t_a is detailed next. For the discussion that follows, the *readset* (*RS*) and the *writeset* (*WS*) are sets containing the identifiers of the data items read and written by the transaction during its execution. Transaction t_a was executed at database site s_i. Every database site s_j, after delivering t_a, performs the following steps.

1. *Certification test*. Database site s_j commits t_a (i.e., t_a passes from the committing state to the committed state at s_j) if there is no committed transaction t_b at s_j that conflicts

with t_a. The notion of conflicting operations defined in Section 3.4 is weakened, and just write operations performed by committed transactions and read operations performed by t_a are considered (i.e., write-read conflicts). Read-write conflicts are not relevant since only committed transactions take part in t_a's certification test, and write-write conflicts are solved by guaranteeing that all t_a's updates are applied to the database after all the updates performed by committed transactions (up to the current time).
The certification test is formalised next as a condition for a state transition from the committing state to the committed state (see figure 2).

$$Committing(t_a, s_j) \rightsquigarrow Committed(t_a, s_j) \equiv \left[\begin{array}{l} \forall t_b,\ Committed(t_b, s_j) : \\ t_b \rightarrow t_a \vee (WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset) \end{array}\right]$$

The condition for a transition from the committing state to the aborted state is the complement of the right side of the expression shown above.

Once t_a has been certified by database site s_i, where it was executed, s_i can inform t_a's outcome to the client that requested t_a's execution.

2. *Commitment*. If t_a is not aborted, it passes to the commit state, all its write locks are requested, and once granted, its updates are performed. On granting t_a's write locks, there are three cases to consider.

   (a) *There is a transaction t_b in execution at s_j whose read or write locks conflict with t_a's writes.* In this case t_b is aborted by s_j, and therefore, all t_b's read and write locks are released.
   (b) *There is a transaction t_b, that was executed locally at s_j and requested the commit, but has not been delivered yet.* Since t_b executed locally at s_j, t_b has its write locks on the data items it updated. If t_b commits, its writes will overwrite t_a's (i.e., the ones that overlap) and, in this case, t_a need neither request these write locks nor process the updates over the database. This is similar to Thomas' Write Rule [33]. However, if t_b is later aborted (i.e., it does not pass the certification test), the database should be restored to a state without t_b, for example, by applying t_a's redo log entries to the database.
   (c) *There is a transaction t_b that has passed the certification test and has granted its write locks at s_j, but it has not released them yet.* In this case, t_a waits for t_b to finish its updates and release its write locks.

An important aspect of the termination algorithm presented above is that the atomic broadcast is the only form of interaction between database sites. The atomic broadcast properties guarantee that every database site will certify a transaction t_a using the same set of preceding transactions. It remains to be shown how each database site builds such a set. If transactions t_a and t_b execute at the same database site, this can be evaluated by identifying transactions that execute at the same site (e.g., each transaction carries the identity of the site where it was initiated) and associating local timestamps to the committing events of transactions.

If t_a and t_b executed at different sites, this is done as follows. Every transaction commit event is timestamped with the order of deliver of the transaction (the atomic broadcast

ensures that each database site associates the same timestamps to the same transactions). Each transaction t has a *committing*(t) field that stores the commit timestamp of the last locally committed transaction when t passes to the committing state. The *committing*(t) field is broadcast to all database sites together with t. When a database site s_j certifies t_a, all committed transactions that have been delivered by s_j with commit timestamp greater than *committing*(t_a) take part in the set of committed transactions used to certify t_a. Such a set of committed transactions only contains transactions that do not precede t_a.

5. The reordering certification test

Transactions in the executing state are not synchronised between database sites, which may lead to high abort rates. In this section, we show how the certification test can be modified such that more transactions pass the certification test, and thus, do not abort.

5.1. General idea

The reordering certification test [26] is based on the observation that the serial order in which transactions are committed does not need to be the same order in which transactions are delivered to the certifier. The idea is to dynamically build a serial order (that does not necessarily follow the delivery order) in such a way that less aborts are produced. By being able to reorder a transaction t_a to a position other than the one t_a is delivered, the reordering protocol increases the probability of committing t_a.

The new protocol differs from the protocol presented in Section 4 in the way the certification test is performed for committing transactions (see figure 4). The certifier distinguishes between committed transactions already applied to the database and committed transactions in the *Reorder List*. The Reorder List contains committed transactions whose write locks have been granted but whose updates have not been applied to the database yet, and thus, have not been seen by transactions in execution. The bottom line is that transactions in the Reorder List may change their relative order.

The size of the Reorder List is defined by a constant, called *Reorder Factor*, determined empirically. Whenever the Reorder Factor is reached, the leftmost transaction t_a in the

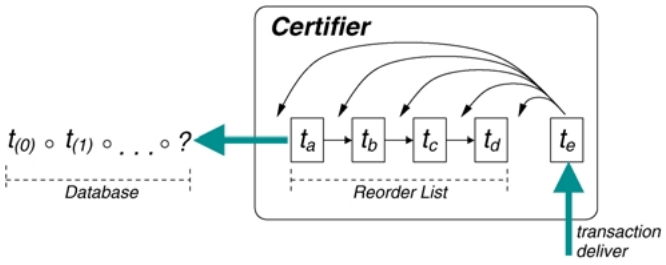

Figure 4. Reordering technique (reorder factor = 4).

Reorder List is removed, its updates are applied to the database, and its write locks are released. If no transaction in the Reorder List is waiting to acquire a write lock just released by t_a, the corresponding data item is available to executing transactions. The reordering technique reduces the number of aborts, however, introduces some data contention since data items remain blocked longer. This tradeoff was indeed observed by our simulation model (see Section 6.3).

5.2. The termination protocol based on reordering

Let $database_{s_i} = t_{(0)} \circ t_{(1)} \circ \cdots \circ t_{(last_{s_i}(\tau))}$ be the sequence containing all transactions on database site s_i, at time τ, that have passed the certification test augmented with the reordering technique (order of delivery plus some possible reordering). The sequence $database_{s_i}$ includes transactions that have been applied to the database and transactions in the Reorder List. We define $pos(t)$ the position transaction t is in $database_{s_i}$, and extend below the termination protocol described in Section 4.2 to include the reordering technique.

1. *Certification test*. Database site s_j commits t_a if there is a position in the Reorder List where t_a can be inserted. Transaction t_a can be inserted in position p in the Reorder List if both following conditions are true.
   (a) For every transaction t_b in the Reorder List such that $pos(t_b) < p$, either t_b precedes t_a, or t_b has not updated any data item that t_a has read.
   (b) For every transaction t_b in the Reorder List such that $pos(t_b) \geq p$, (b.1) t_b does not precede t_a, or t_a has not read any data item written by t_b, and (b.2) t_a did not update any data item read by t_b.

   The certification test with reordering is formalised in the following as a state transition from the committing state to the committed state.

$$
\begin{aligned}
&Committing(t_a, s_j) \rightsquigarrow Committed(t_a, s_j) \\
&\equiv \left[\begin{array}{l}
\exists \text{ position } p \text{ in the Reorder List s.t. } \forall t_b,\ Committed(t_b, s_j) : \\
(pos(t_b) < p \Rightarrow t_b \rightarrow t_a \vee WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset) \\
\qquad\qquad \wedge \\
\left(pos(t_b) \geq p \Rightarrow \left(\begin{array}{c} (t_b \not\rightarrow t_a \vee WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset) \\ \wedge \\ WS(t_a) \cap RS(t_b) = \emptyset \end{array} \right) \right)
\end{array} \right]
\end{aligned}
$$

   The condition for a transition from the committing state to the aborted state is the complement of the right side of the expression shown above.
2. *Commitment*. If t_a passes the certification test, t_a is included in the Reorder List at position p, that is, all transactions in the Reorder List that are on the right of p, including the one at p, are shifted one position to the right, and t_a is included. If, with the inclusion of t_a, the Reorder List reaches the Reorder Factor threshold, the leftmost transaction in Reorder List is removed and its updates are applied to the database.

6. Simulation model

The simulation model we have developed abstracts the main components of a replicated database system (our approach is similar to [3]). In this section, we describe the simulation model and analyse the behaviour of the database state machine approach using the output provided by the simulation model.

6.1. Database model and settings

Every database site is modelled as a processor, some data disks, and a log disk as local resources. The network is modelled as a common resource shared by all database sites. Each processor is shared by a set of execution threads, a terminating thread, and a workload generator thread (see figure 5). All threads have the same priority, and resources are allocated to threads in a first-in-first-out basis. Each execution thread executes one transaction at a time, and the terminating thread is responsible for doing the certification. The workload generator thread creates transactions at the database site. Execution and terminating threads at a database site share the database data structures (e.g., lock table).

Committing transactions are delivered by the terminating thread and then certified. If a transaction passes the certification test, its write locks are requested and its updates are performed. However, once the terminating thread acquires the transaction's write locks, it makes a log entry for this transaction (with its writes) and assigns an execution thread to execute the transaction's updates over the database. This releases the terminating thread to treat the next committing transaction.

The parameters considered by our simulation model with the settings used in the experiments are shown in figure 6. The workload generator thread creates transactions and assigns them to executing threads according to the profile described (percentage of *update transactions*, percentage of *writes in update transactions*, and number of operations). We have chosen a relative small *database size* in order to reach data contention quickly and avoid

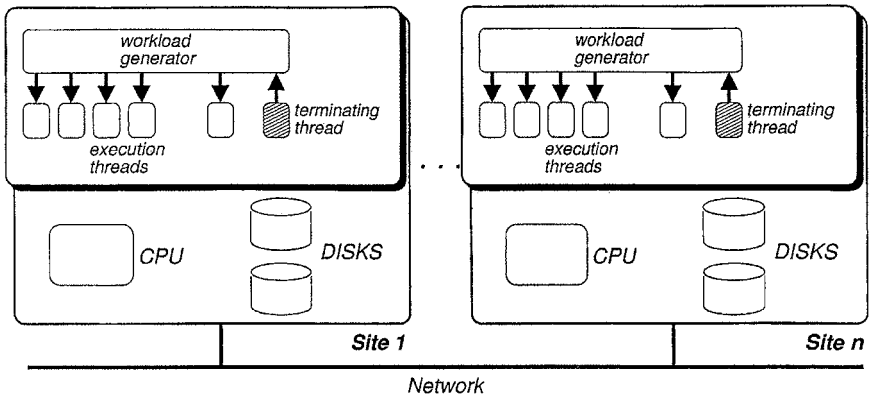

Figure 5. Simulation model.

Database parameters		Processor parameters	
Database size (data items)	2000	Processor speed	100 MIPS
Number of servers (n)	1..8	Execute an operation	2800 ins
Multiprogramming level (MPL)	8	Certify a transaction	5000 ins
Data item size	2 KB	Reorder a transaction	15000 ins
Transaction parameters		**Disk parameters (Seagate ST-32155W)**	
Update transactions	10%	Number of data disks	4
Writes in update transactions	30%	Number of log disks	1
Number of operations	5..15	Miss ratio	20%
Transaction timeout	0.5 sec	Latency	5.54 msec
Reorder factor	$0, n, 2n, 3n, 4n$	Transfer rate (Ultra-SCSI)	40 MB/sec
General parameters		**Communication parameters**	
Control data size	1 KB	Atomic Broadcasts per second	$\infty, 180, 800/n$
		Communication overhead	12000 ins

Figure 6. Simulation model parameters.

extremely long simulation runs that would be necessary to obtain statistically significant results.

We use a closed model, that is, each terminated transaction (committed or aborted) is replaced by a new one. Aborted transactions are sent back to the workload generator thread, and some time later resubmitted at the same database process. The *multiprogramming level* determines the number of executing threads at each database process. Local deadlocks are detected with a timeout mechanism: transactions are given a certain amount of time to execute (*transaction timeout*), and transactions that do not reach the committing state within the timeout are aborted.

Processor activities are specified as a number of instructions to be performed. The settings are an approximation from the number of instructions used by the simulator to execute the operations. The certification test is efficiently implemented by associating to each database item a version number [3]. Each time a data item is updated by a committing transaction, its version number is incremented. When a transaction first reads a data item, it stores the data item's version number (this is the transaction read set). The certification test for a transaction consists thus in comparing each entry in the transaction's read set with the current version of the corresponding data item. If all data items read by the transaction are still current, the transaction passes the certification test. We consider that version numbers are stored in main memory. The reordering test (Section 5.2) is more complex, since it requires handling read sets and write sets of transactions in the reorder list. The *control data size* contains the data structures necessary to perform the certification test (e.g., readset and writeset). Atomic broadcast settings are described in the next section.

6.2. Atomic broadcast implementation

The literature on atomic broadcast algorithms is abundant (e.g., [4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 25, 37]), and the multitude of different models (synchronous, asynchronous, etc.) and assumptions about the system renders any fair comparison difficult. However, known atomic broadcast algorithms can be divided into two classes. We say that an Atomic Broadcast algorithm

scales well, and belongs to the first class, if the number of messages delivered per time unit in the system is independent of the number of sites that deliver the messages. This class is denoted *class* k, where k determines the number of messages that can be delivered per time unit.

If the number of messages delivered per time unit in the system decreases with the number of database sites that deliver the messages, the Atomic Broadcast algorithm does not scale well, and belongs to the second class. This class is denoted *class* k/n, where n is the number of sites that deliver the messages, and k/n is the number of messages that can be delivered per time unit. In this case, the more sites are added, the longer it takes to deliver a message, and so, the number of messages delivered in the system per time unit decreases exponentially with the number of sites. Most Atomic Broadcast algorithms fall in this category.

As a reference, we also define an Atomic Broadcast that delivers messages instantaneously. Such an algorithm is denoted *class* ∞ (i.e., it would allow in theory an infinite number of messages to be delivered per time unit).

The values chosen for classes k and k/n in figure 6 are approximations based on experiments with SPARC 20 workstations running Solaris 2.3 and an FDDI network (100 Mb/s) using the UDP transport protocol with a message buffer of 20 Kbytes. Moreover, for all classes, the execution of an Atomic Broadcast has some *communication overhead* that does not depend on the number of sites (see figure 6).

6.3. Experiments and results

In the following, we discuss the experiments we conducted and the results obtained with the simulation model. Each point plotted in the graphs was determined from a sequence of simulations, each one containing 100000 submitted transactions. In order to remove initial transients [19], only after the first 1000 transactions had been submitted, the statistics started to be gathered.

In the following, we analyse update and read-only transactions separately, although the values presented were observed in the same simulations (i.e., all simulations contain update and read-only transactions).

6.3.1. Update transactions throughput. The experiments shown in figures 7 and 8 evaluate the effects of the Atomic Broadcast algorithm classes on the transaction throughput. In these experiments, each cluster of database sites processed as many transactions as possible, that is, transaction throughput was only limited by the resources available. Figure 7 shows the number of update transactions submitted, and figure 8 the number of update transactions committed. From figure 7, the choice of a particular Atomic Broadcast algorithm class is not relevant for clusters with less than five database sites: whatever the class, transaction throughput increases linearly with the number of database sites. This happens because until four database sites, all three configurations are limited by the same resource, namely, local data disks. Since the number of data disks increases linearly with the number of database sites, transaction throughput also increases linearly. For clusters with more than four database sites, contention is determined differently for each algorithm class. For class

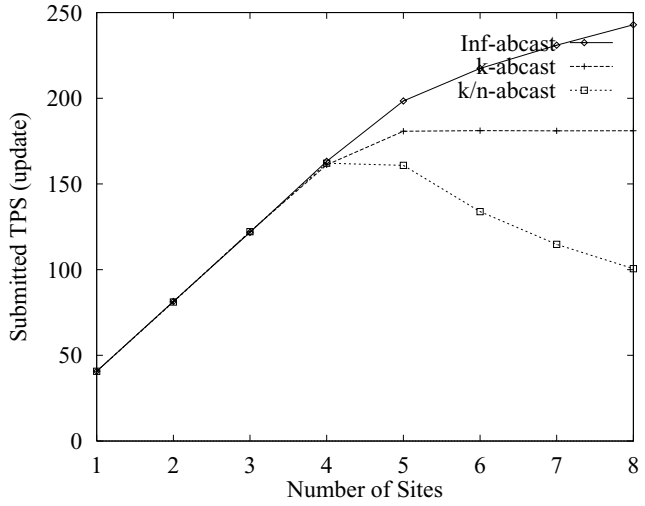

Figure 7. Submitted TPS (update).

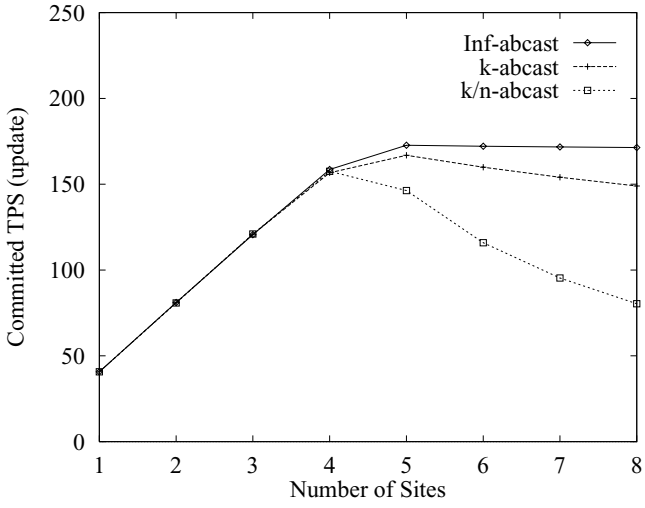

Figure 8. Committed TPS (update).

∞, data contention prevents linear throughput growth, that is, for more than five sites, the termination thread reaches its limit and it takes much longer for update transactions to commit. The result is that data items remain locked for longer periods of time, impeding the progress of executing transactions. For classes k and k/n, contention is caused by the network (the limit being 180 and $800/n$ messages delivered per second, respectively).

It was expected that after a certain system load, the terminating thread would become a bottleneck, and transaction certification critical. However, from figure 8, this only happens

for algorithms of class ∞ (about 170 update transactions per second), since for algorithms in the other classes, the network becomes a bottleneck before the terminating thread reaches its processing limit. Also from figure 8, although the number of transactions submitted per second for clusters with more than four sites is constant for class k, the number of transaction aborts increases as the number of database sites augments. This is due to the fact that the more database sites, the more transactions are executed under an optimistic concurrency control and thus, the higher the probability that a transaction aborts. The same phenomenon explains the difference between submitted and committed transactions for class k/n. For class ∞, the number of transactions committed is a constant, determined by the capacity of the terminating thread.

6.3.2. Queries throughput. Figures 9 and 10 show submitted and committed queries per second in the system. The curves in figure 9 have the same shape as the ones in figure 7 because the simulator enforces a constant relation between submitted queries and submitted update transactions (see figure 6, *update transactions* parameter). Update transactions throughput is determined by data and resource contention, and thus, queries are bound to exhibit the same behaviour. If update transactions and queries were assigned a fixed number of executing threads at the beginning of the simulation, this behaviour would not have been observed, however, the relation between submitted queries and update transactions would be determined by internal characteristics of the system and not by an input parameter, which would complicate the analysis of the data produced in the simulation. Queries are only aborted during their execution to solve local deadlocks they are involved in, or on behalf of committing update transactions that have passed the certification test and are requesting their write locks. As shown in figures 9 and 10, the values for submitted and committed queries, for all Atomic Broadcast algorithm classes, are very close to each other, which amounts to a small abort rate.

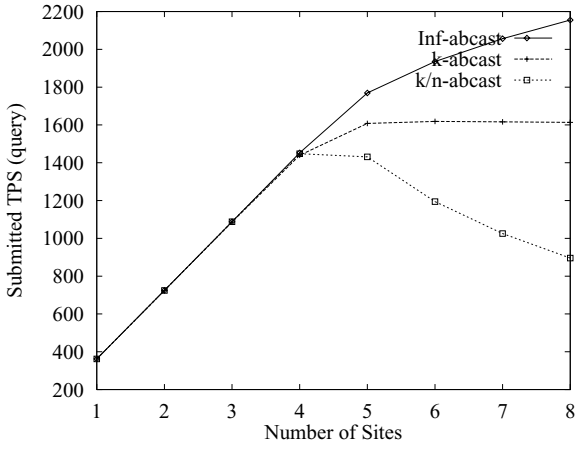

Figure 9. Submitted TPS (query).

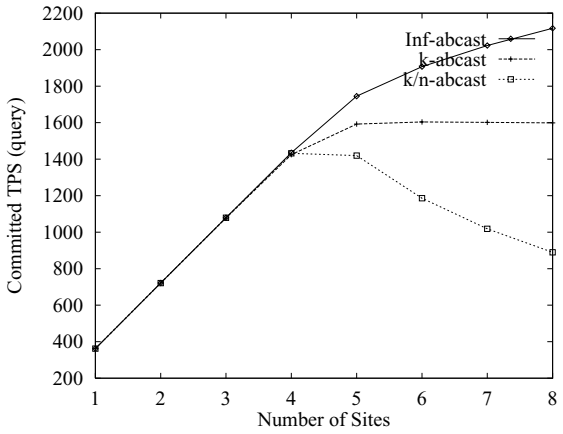

Figure 10. Committed TPS (query).

6.3.3. Reordering. Figures 11 and 12 show the abort rate for algorithms in the classes k and k/n respectively, with different reorder factors. We do not consider algorithms in the class ∞ because reordering does not bring any improvement to the abort rate in this case (even if more transactions passed the certification test, the terminating thread would not be able to process them). In both cases, reorder factors smaller than $4n$, have proved to reduce the number of aborted update transactions. For reordering factors equal to or greater than $4n$, the data contention introduced by the reordering technique leads to an increase on the abort rate that is greater than the reduction obtained with its use (i.e., the reordering technique increases the abort rate of update transactions). When the system reaches this point, most executing update and read-only transactions time out and are aborted by the system.

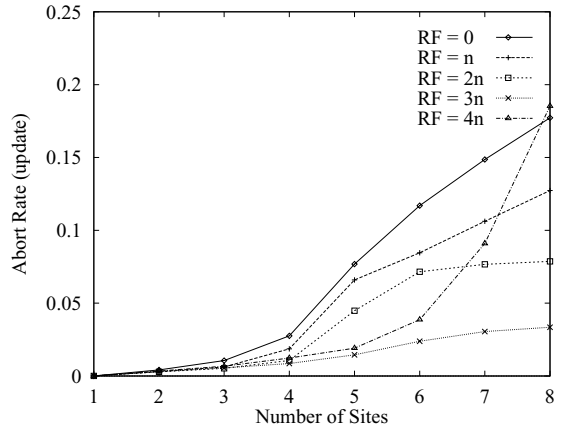

Figure 11. Reordering (*k-abcast*).

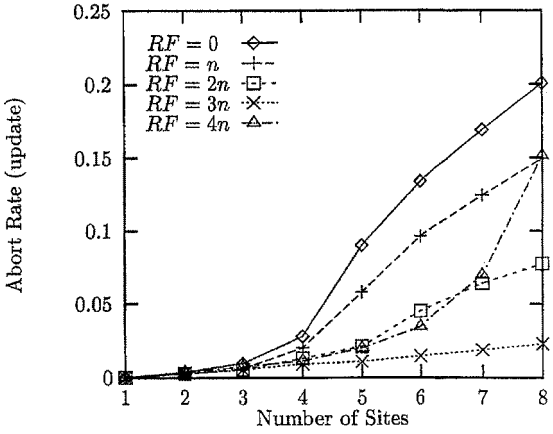

Figure 12. Reordering (k/n-*abcast*).

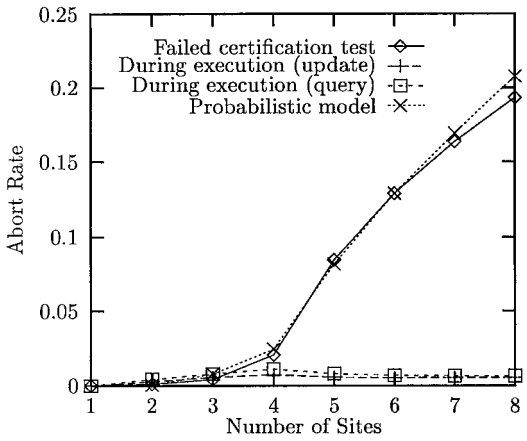

Figure 13. Abort rate (class k/n, $RF = 0$).

6.3.4. Abort rate. Figures 13 and 14 present the detailed abort rate for the Database State Machine based on algorithms of class k/n without and with the Reordering technique (reorder factor equal to $3n$). Figures 13 and 14 are not in the same scale because the results shown differ from more than one order of magnitude. The graphs only include the aborts during transaction execution, and, in the case of update transactions, due to a failed certification test. Aborts due to time out are not shown because in the cases presented they amount only to a small fraction of the abort rate. Without reordering (see figure 13), most transactions fail the certification test and are aborted.

When the Reordering technique is used, the number of transactions that fail the certification test is smaller than the number of transactions aborted during their execution (see figure 14).

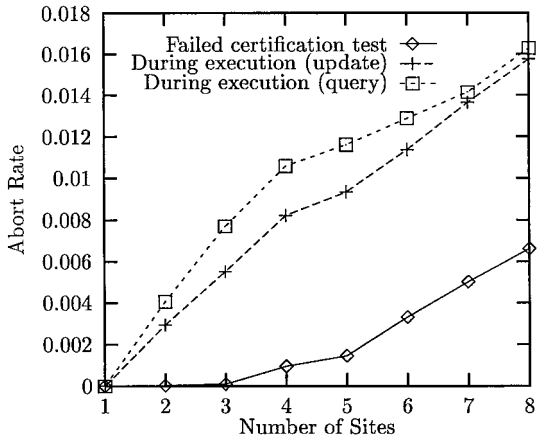

Figure 14. Abort rate (class k/n, $RF = 3n$).

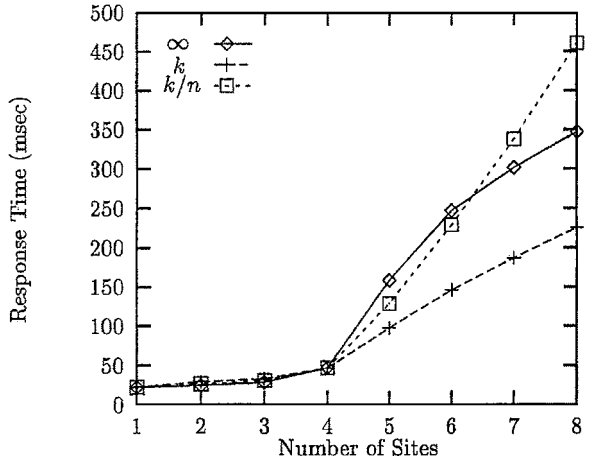

Figure 15. Response time vs. classes (update).

6.3.5. Response time. Figure 15 presents the response time for the executions shown in figures 7 and 8. The price paid for the higher throughput presented by algorithms of class ∞, when compared to algorithms of class k, is a higher response time. For algorithms in the class k/n, this only holds for less than 7 sites. When the number of transactions submitted per second is the same for all classes of Atomic Broadcast algorithms (see figure 16), algorithms in class ∞ are faster. Queries have the same response time, independently of the Atomic Broadcast class. Note that configurations with less than three sites are not able to process 1000 transactions per second. This explains why update transactions executed in a single database site have a better response time than update transactions executed in a

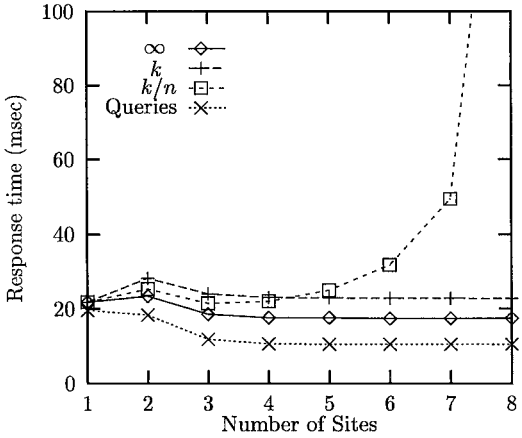

Figure 16. Response time ($TPS = 1000$).

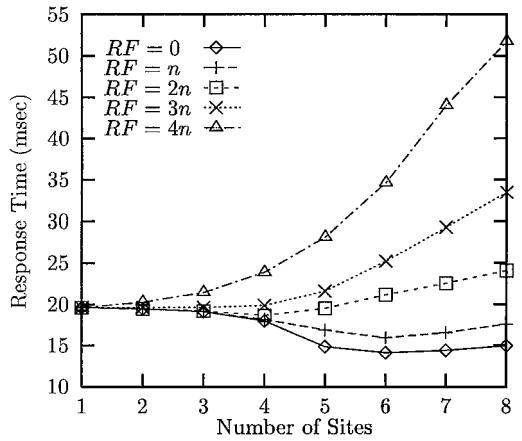

Figure 17. Response time vs. reordering (class k).

Database State Machine with two sites (a single site reaches no more than 403 TPS, and a Database State Machine with two sites reaches around 806 TPS).

Figures 17 and 18 depict the degradation of the response time due to the Reordering technique. The response time increases when data contention becomes a problem (i.e., $RF = 4n$).

6.3.6. Overall discussion. Besides showing the feasibility of the Database State Machine, the simulation model allows to draw some conclusions about its scalability. Update transactions scalability is determined by the scalability of the Atomic Broadcast algorithm class, which has showed to be a potential bottleneck of the system. This happens because the network is the only resource shared by all database sites (and network bandwidth does not increase as more database sites are added to the system). As for queries, only a slight grow

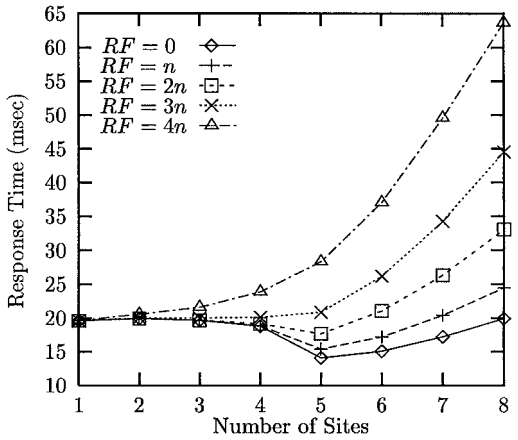

Figure 18. Response time vs. reordering (class k/n).

in the abort rate was observed as the number of sites increase. This is due to the fact that queries are executed only locally, without any synchronisation among database sites.

The above result about update transactions scalability deserves a careful interpretation since, in regard to network resource utilisation, techniques that fully synchronise transactions between database sites (e.g., distributed 2PL protocol [5]) probably will not outperform the Database State Machine. A typical Atomic Broadcast algorithm in the class k/n needs about $4n$ [27] messages to deliver a transaction, and a protocol that fully synchronises transaction operations needs around $m \times n$ messages, where m is the number of transaction operations (assuming that reads and writes are synchronised) [5]. Thus, unless transactions are very small ($m \leq 4$), the Database State Machine needs less messages than a technique that fully synchronises transactions.

Furthermore, the simulation model also shows that any effort to improve the scalability of update transactions should be concentrated on the Atomic Broadcast primitive. Finally, if on the one hand the deferred update technique has no distributed deadlocks, on the other hand its lack of synchronisation may lead to high abort rates. The simulation model has showed that, if well tuned, the reordering certification test can overcome this drawback.

7. Related work

The work presented here is at the intersection of two axes of research. First, relying on a certification test to commit transactions is an application of optimistic concurrency control. Second, terminating transactions with an atomic broadcast primitive is an alternative to solutions based on atomic commit protocols.

Although most commercial database systems are based on (pessimistic) 2PL synchronisation [14], optimistic concurrency control has received increasing attention since its

introduction in [23] (see [34] for a brief survey). It has been shown in [3] that if sufficient hardware resources are available, optimistic concurrency control can offer better transaction throughput than 2PL. This result is explained by the fact that an increase in the multiprogramming level, in order to reach high transaction throughput, also increases locking contention, and thus, the probability of transaction waits due to conflicts, and transaction restarts to solve deadlocks. The study in [3] is for a centralised single-copy database. One could expect that in a replicated database, the cost of synchronising distributed accesses by message passing would be non negligible as well. In fact, a more recent study [12] has shown that fully synchronising accesses in replicated database contexts (as required by 2PL) is *dangerous*, since the probability of deadlocks is directly proportional to the third power of the number of database sites in the system.

The limitations of traditional atomic commitment protocols in replicated contexts have been recognised by several authors. In [15], the authors point out the fact that atomic commitment leads to abort transactions in situations where a single replica manager crashes. They propose a variation of the three phase commit protocol [31] that commits transactions as long as a majority of replica managers are up.

In [10], a class of *epidemic* replication protocols is proposed as an alternative to traditional replication protocols. However, solutions based on epidemic replication end up being either a case of lazy propagation where consistency is relaxed, or solved with semantic knowledge about the application [18]. In [2], a replication protocol based on the deferred update model is presented. Transactions that execute at the same process share the same data items, using locks to solve local conflicts. The protocol is based on a variation of the three phase commit protocol to certificate and terminate transactions.

It is only recently that atomic broadcast has been considered as a possible candidate to support replication, as termination protocols (see [35] and [36] for brief surveys on the subject). Schiper and Raynal [29] pointed out some similarities between the properties of atomic broadcast and static transactions (transactions whose operations are known in advance). Atomically broadcasting static transactions was also addressed in [20].

Comparing distributed optimistic two-phase locking (O2PL) [7] with the Database State Machine helps to understand the advantages of using an atomic broadcast to terminate transactions. Like the Database State Machine, O2PL executes transactions locally using a strict two-phase locking scheduler, and then tries to commit these transactions globally. However, O2PL does not rely on any order guarantees, and may result in global deadlocks (i.e., additional aborts) while this is never the case with the Database State Machine.

In [1], a family of protocols for the management of replicated database based on the immediate and the deferred models is proposed. The immediate update replication consists in atomic broadcasting every write operation to all database sites. For the deferred update replication, two atomic broadcasts are necessary to commit a transaction. An alternative solution is also proposed, using a sort of multiversion mechanism to deal with the writes during transaction execution (if a transaction writes a data item, a later read should reflect this write).

More recent work [21] has exploited group communication to implement database replication using different levels of isolation to enhance performance. The authors have integrated some of their techniques into PostgreSQL [22].

8. Concluding remarks

This paper shows how the state machine approach can be used to implement replication in a cluster of database servers. Replication in this scenario is used to improve both fault tolerance (e.g., by increasing data availability), and performance (e.g., by sharing the workload among servers). The Database State Machine approach implements a form of deferred update technique. The agreement and order properties of the state machine approach are provided by an atomic broadcast primitive. This approach has the benefit that it encapsulates all communication between database sites in the atomic broadcast primitive. The paper also shows how transaction aborts, due to synchronisation reasons, can be reduced by the reordering certification test.

The Database State Machine approach is evaluated by means of a detailed simulation model. The results obtained show the role played by the atomic broadcast primitive, and its importance for scalability. In particular, the simulation model also evaluates the reordering certification test and shows that in certain cases, specifically for 8 database servers, it reduces the number of transactions aborted from 20% to less than 5%.

Finally, in order to simplify the overall approach, we did not address some issues that may deserve further analysis. For example, one such point concerns recoverability conditions for atomic broadcast primitives. Another issue concerns how clients choose the servers that will execute their requests.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank G. Alonso and B. Kemme for many helpful discussions on the topic.

Appendix: Proof of the algorithms

The database state machine algorithm is proved correct using the multiversion formalism of [5]. Although we do not explicitly use multiversion databases, our approach can be seen as so, since replicas of a data item located at different database sites can be considered as different versions of the data item.

DBSM without reordering

We first define $C(H)_{s_i}$ as a multiversion history derived from the system history H, just containing operations of committed transactions involving data items stored at s_i. We denote $w_a[x_a]$ a write by t_a (as writes generate new data versions, the subscript in x for data writes is always the same as the one in t) and $r_a[x_b]$ a read by t_a of data item x_b.

The multiversion formalism employs a multiversion serialization graph ($MVSG(C(H)_{s_i})$ or $MVSG_{s_i}$ for short) and consists in showing that all the histories produced by the algorithm have a multiversion serialization graph that is acyclic. We denote $MVSG^k_{s_i}$ a particular state of the multiversion serialization graph for database site s_i. Whenever a transaction is committed, the multiversion serialization graph passes from one state $MVSG^k_{s_i}$ into another $MVSG^{k+1}_{s_i}$.

We exploit the state machine characteristics to structure our proof in two parts. In the first part, Lemma 1 shows that, by the properties of the atomic broadcast primitive and the determinism of the certifier, every database site $s_i \in \Sigma_D$ eventually constructs the same $MVSG^k_{s_i}$, $k \geq 0$. In the second part, Lemmas 2 and 3 show that every $MVSG^k_{s_i}$ is acyclic.

Lemma 1. *If a database site $s_i \in \Sigma_D$ constructs a multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_i}$, $k \geq 0$, then every database s_j eventually constructs the same multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_j}$.*

Proof: The proof is by induction. *Basic step:* when the database is initialised, every database site s_j has the same empty multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^0_{s_j}$. *Inductive step* (*assumption*): assume that every database site s_j that has constructed a multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_j}$ has constructed the same $MVSG^k_{s_j}$. *Inductive step* (*conclusion*). Consider t_a the transaction whose committing generates, from $MVSG^k_{s_j}$, a new multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^{k+1}_{s_j}$. In order to do so, database site s_j must deliver transaction t_a, certify and commit it. By the order property of the atomic broadcast primitive, every database site s_j that delivers a transaction after installing $MVSG^k_{s_j}$, delivers t_a, and, by the agreement property, if one database site delivers transaction t_a, then every database site s_j delivers transaction t_a. To certify t_a, s_j takes into account the transactions that it has already locally committed (i.e., the transactions in $MVSG^k_{s_j}$). Thus, based on the same local state ($MVSG^k_{s_j}$), the same input (t_a), and the same (deterministic) certification algorithm, every database site eventually constructs the same $MVSG^{k+1}_{s_j}$. □

We show next that every history $C(H)_{s_i}$ produced by a database site s_i has an acyclic $MVSG_{s_i}$ and, therefore, is 1*SR* [5]. Given a multiversion history $C(H)_{s_i}$ and a version order $\ll$, the multiversion serialization graph for $C(H)_{s_i}$ and $\ll$, $MVSG_{s_i}$, is a serialization graph with read-from and version order edges. A read-from relation $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is defined by an operation $r_b[x_a]$. There are two cases where a version-order relation $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$: (a) for each $r_c[x_b]$, $w_b[x_b]$ and $w_a[x_a]$ in $C(H)_{s_i}$ (a, b, and c are distinct) and $x_a \ll x_b$, and (b) for each $r_a[x_c]$, $w_c[x_c]$ and $w_b[x_b]$ in $C(H)_{s_i}$ and $x_c \ll x_b$. The version order is defined by the delivery order of the transactions. Formally, a version order can be expressed as follows: $x_a \ll x_b$ iff $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$ and $t_a, t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$.

To prove that $C(H)_{s_i}$ has an acyclic multiversion serialization graph ($MVSG_{s_i}$) we show that the read-from and version-order relations in $MVSG_{s_i}$ follow the order of delivery of the committed transactions in $C(H)_{s_i}$. That is, if $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$ then $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$.

Lemma 2. *If there is a* read-from *relation $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$ then $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$.*

Proof: A read-from relation $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$ if $r_b[x_a] \in C(H)_{s_i}, a \neq b$. For a contradiction, assume that $deliver(t_b) \prec deliver(t_a)$. If t_a and t_b were executed at different database sites, by the time t_b was executed, t_a had not been committed at $site(t_b)$, and thus, t_b could not have read a value updated by t_a. If t_a and t_b were executed at the same database

site, t_b must have read uncommitted data from t_a, since t_a had not been committed yet. However, this contradicts the strict two phase locking rule. □

Lemma 3. *If there is a* version-order *relation* $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$ *then* $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$.

Proof: According to the definition of version-order edges, there are two cases to consider. (1) Let $r_c[x_b]$, $w_b[x_b]$ and $w_a[x_a]$ be in $C(H)_{s_i}$ (a, b and c distinct), and $x_a \ll x_b$, which implies $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$. It follows from the definition of version-order that $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$. (2) Let $r_a[x_c]$, $w_c[x_c]$ and $w_b[x_b]$ be in $C(H)_{s_i}$, and $x_c \ll x_b$, which implies $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$, and have to show that $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$. For a contradiction, assume that $deliver(t_b) \prec deliver(t_a)$. From the certification test, when t_a is certified, either $t_b \rightarrow t_a$ or $WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset$. But since $x \in RS(t_a)$, and $x \in WS(t_b)$, it must be that $t_b \rightarrow t_a$.

Assume that t_a and t_b were executed at the same database site. By the definition of precedence (Section 3.4), t_b requested the commit before t_a (that is, $committing(t_b) \stackrel{e}{\rightarrow} committing(t_a)$). However, t_a reads x from t_c, and this can only happen if t_b updates x before t_c, that is, $x_b \ll x_c$, contradicting that $x_c \ll x_b$. A similar argument follows for the case where t_a and t_b were executed at distinct database sites. □

Theorem 1. *Every history H produced by the database state machine algorithm is* 1*SR.*

Proof: By Lemmas 2 and 3, every database site s_i produces a serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_i}$ such that every edge $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG^k_{s_i}$ satisfies the relation $deliver(t_a) \prec deliver(t_b)$. Hence, every database site s_i produces an acyclic multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_i}$. By Lemma 1, every database site s_i constructs the same $MVSG^k_{s_i}$. By the *Multiversion Graph* theorem of [5], every history produced by database state machine algorithm is 1SR. □

DBSM with reordering

From Lemma 1, every database site builds the same multiversion serialization graph. It remains to show that all the histories produced by every database site using reordering have a multiversion serialization graph that is acyclic, and, therefore, 1SR.

We redefine the version-order relation $\ll$ for the termination protocol based on reordering as follows: $x_a \ll x_b$ iff $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$ and $t_a, t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$.

Lemma 4. *If there is a read-from relation* $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG_{s_i}$ *then* $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$.

Proof: A read-from relation $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$ if $r_b[x_a] \in C(H)_{s_i}, a \neq b$. For a contradiction, assume that $pos(t_b) < pos(t_a)$. The following cases are possible: (a) t_b was delivered and committed before t_a, and (b) t_b was delivered and committed after t_a but reordered to a position before t_a.

In case (a), it follows that t_b reads uncommitted data (i.e., x) from t_a, which is not possible: if t_a and t_b executed at the same database site, reading uncommitted data is avoided by the

strict 2PL rule, and if t_a and t_b executed at different database sites, t_a's updates are only seen by t_b after t_a's commit. In case (b), from the certification test augmented with reordering, when t_b is certified, we have that $(t_a \not\rightarrow t_b \vee WS(t_a) \cap RS(t_b) = \emptyset) \wedge WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset$ evaluates true. (Being t_b the committing transaction, the indexes a and b have been inverted, when compared to expression given in the previous section.) Since t_b reads-from t_a, $WS(t_a) \cap RS(t_b) \neq \emptyset$, and so, it must be that $t_a \not\rightarrow t_b$. If t_a and t_b executed at the same database site, $t_a \not\rightarrow t_b$ implies $committing(t_b) \stackrel{e}{\rightarrow} committing(t_a)$. However, this is only possible if t_b reads x from t_a before t_a commits, contradicting the strict 2PL rule. If t_a and t_b executed at different database sites, $t_a \not\rightarrow t_b$ implies $commit(t_a)_{site(t_b)} \stackrel{e}{\not\rightarrow} committing(t_b)$, and so, t_b passed to the committing state before t_a committed at $site(t_b)$, which contradicts the fact that t_b reads from t_a, and concludes the Lemma. □

Lemma 5. *If there is a* version-order *relation* $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG_s$ *then* $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$.

Proof: According to the definition of version-order edges, there are two cases of interest. (1) Let $r_c[x_b]$, $w_b[x_b]$, and $w_a[x_a]$ be in $C(H)_{s_i}$ (a, b and c distinct), and $x_a \ll x_b$, which implies $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$. It follows from the definition of version-order that $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$. (2) Let $r_a[x_c]$, $w_c[x_c]$, and $w_b[x_b]$ be in $C(H)_{s_i}$ (a, b and c distinct), and $x_c \ll x_b$, which implies $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b$ is in $MVSG_{s_i}$. We show that $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$. There are two situations to consider.

(a) t_c and t_b have been committed when t_a is certified. Assume for a contradiction that $pos(t_b) < pos(t_a)$. From the certification test, we have that either $t_b \rightarrow t_a$ or $WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset$. Since $x \in WS(t_b)$ and $x \in RS(t_a)$, $WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) \neq \emptyset$, and so, it must be that $t_b \rightarrow t_a$. However, t_a reads x from t_c and not from t_b, which can only happen if $x_b \ll x_c$, a contradiction.

(b) t_c and t_a have been committed when t_b is certified. Assume for a contradiction that $pos(t_b) < pos(t_a)$. From the certification test, we have that $(t_a \not\rightarrow t_b \vee WS(t_a) \cap RS(t_b) = \emptyset) \wedge WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) = \emptyset$ evaluates true, which leads to a contradiction since $x \in WS(t_b)$ and $x \in RS(t_a)$, and thus, $WS(t_b) \cap RS(t_a) \neq \emptyset$. □

Theorem 2. *Every history H produced by the database state machine algorithm augmented with the reordering technique is* 1*SR.*

Proof: By Lemmas 4 and 5, every database site s_i produces a serialization graph $MVSG^k_{s_i}$ such that every edge $t_a \hookrightarrow t_b \in MVSG^k_{s_i}$ satisfies the relation $pos(t_a) < pos(t_b)$. Hence, every database site produces an acyclic multiversion serialization graph $MVSG^x_s$. By Lemma 1, every database site s_i constructs the same $MVSG^k_{s_i}$. By the *Multiversion Graph* theorem of [5], every history produced by the reordering algorithm is 1SR. □

Notes

1. The notion of *forever up* is a theoretical assumption to guarantee that sites do useful computation. This assumption prevents cases where sites fail and recover successively without being up enough time to make the system evolve. *Forever up* may mean, for example, from the beginning until the end of a termination protocol.

2. Since local events are totally ordered at database sites, $t_a \not\rightarrow t_b$ is equivalent to $t_b \rightarrow t_a$.
3. In a database implementation, these distinctions may be much less apparent, and the modules more tightly integrated [14]. However, for presentation clarity, we have chosen to separate the modules.

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