

Relational and Non-relational databases for Big Data

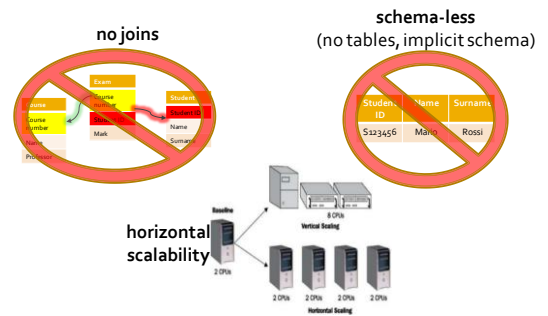
Relational vs Non-relational Databases

«NoSQL» birth

Not
Only SQL

- In 1998 Carlo Strozzi's lightweight, open-source relational database that did not expose the standard SQL interface
- In 2009 Johan Oskarsson's (Last.fm) organizes an event to discuss recent advances on non-relational databases. A new, unique, short hashtag to promote the event on Twitter was needed: #NoSQL

NoSQL main features



Comparison

Relational databases	Non-Relational databases
Table-based , each record is a structured row	Specialized storage solutions , e.g., document-based, key-value pairs, graph databases, columnar storage
Predefined schema for each table, changes allowed but usually blocking (expensive in distributed and live environments)	Schema-less , schema-free, schema change is dynamic for each document, suitable for semi-structured or un-structured data
Vertically scalable, i.e., typically scaled by increasing the power of the hardware	Horizontally scalable, NoSQL databases are scaled by increasing the databases servers in the pool of resources to reduce the load

Comparison

Relational databases	Non-Relational databases
Use SQL (Structured Query Language) for defining and manipulating the data, very powerful	Custom query languages, focused on collection of documents, graphs, and other specialized data structures
Suitable for complex queries , based on data joins	No standard interfaces to perform complex queries, no joins
Suitable for flat and structured data storage	Suitable for complex (e.g., hierarchical) data, similar to JSON and XML
Examples: MySQL, Oracle, Sqlite, Postgres and Microsoft SQL Server	Examples: MongoDB, BigTable, Redis, Cassandra, HBase and CouchDB

Relational DBMSs

- Pros
 - Work with structured data
 - Support strict ACID transactional consistency
 - Support joins
 - Built-in data integrity
 - Large eco-system
 - Relationships via constraints
 - Limitless indexing
 - Strong SQL
 - OLTP and OLAP
 - Most off-the-shelf applications run on RDBMS

Relational DBMSs

- Cons
 - Do not scale out horizontally (concurrency and data size) – only vertically, unless use sharding
 - Data is normalized, meaning lots of joins, affecting speed
 - Difficulty in working with semi-structured data
 - Schema-on-write

Non-relational/NoSQL DBMSs

- Pros
 - Work with semi-structured data (JSON, XML)
 - Scale out (horizontal scaling – parallel query performance, replication)
 - High concurrency, high volume random reads and writes
 - Massive data stores
 - Schema-free, schema-on-read
 - Support records/documents with different fields
 - High availability
 - Speed, due to not having to join tables

Non-relational/NoSQL DBMSs

- Cons
 - Do not support strict ACID transactional consistency
 - Data is denormalized, requiring mass updates (e.g., product name change)
 - Do not have built-in data integrity (must do in code)
 - No relationship enforcement
 - Limited indexing
 - Weak SQL
 - Slow mass updates
 - Use 10-50 more space (replication, denormalized, documents)
 - Difficulty tracking schema changes over time

Data Models

- (Logical) Data model
 - It is a set of constructs for representing the information
- Storage model
 - How the DBMS stores and manipulates the data internally
- A data model is usually independent of the storage model
 - In practice we need at least some insight to achieve good performances

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Data Models

- Data model for relational systems
 - Relational model
 - tables, columns and rows
- Data models for NoSQL systems
 - Aggregate models
 - key-value based model
 - Document based model
 - column-family based model
 - Graph-based models

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Relational Model

- The dominant data model of the last decades was the relational data model
- Relational data model
 - It can be represented as a set of tables
 - Each table has rows, with each row representing an object of interest
 - We describe objects through columns
 - A column may refer to another row in the same or different table (relationship)

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Relational Model

- The relational model takes the information that we want to store and divides it into tables and tuples (rows)
- However, a tuple is a limited data structure
 - It captures a set of values
 - We can't nest one tuple within another to get nested records
 - Nor we can put a list of values or tuple within another

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Aggregate Models

- Data are modeled as units that have a complex structure
 - A more complex structure than just a set of tuples
- Complex records with
 - Simple fields
 - Lists
 - Maps
 - Records nested inside other records

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Aggregate Models

- Aggregate is a term coming from Domain-Driven Design
 - An aggregate is a collection of related objects that we wish to treat as a unit for data manipulation, management, and consistency
- We work with data in terms of aggregates
- We like to update aggregates with atomic operations

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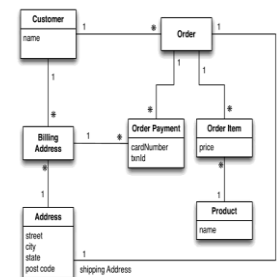
Aggregate Models

- With aggregates we can easier work on a cluster
 - They are "independent" units
- Aggregates are also easier for application programmer to work since solve the impedance mismatch problem of relational databases
 - There is a strict "matching" between the objects used inside programs and the "units/complex records" stored in the databases

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Example

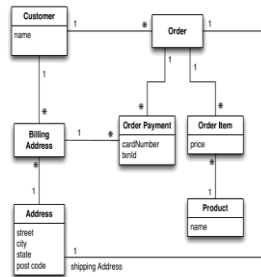
- We are building an e-commerce website
- Stored information
 - Users
 - Products
 - Orders
 - Shipping addresses
 - Billing addresses
 - Payment data



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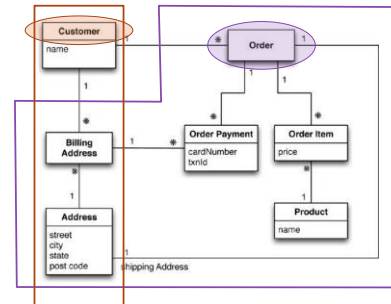
Example of Relational Model

- Relational model
 - Everything is normalized
 - No data is repeated in multiple tables
 - We have referential integrity



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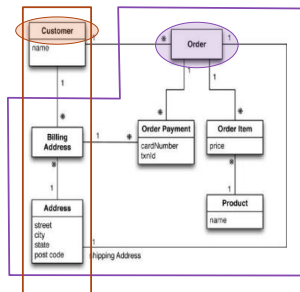
Example of Aggregate Model



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Example of Aggregate Model

- We have two aggregates in this example model
 - Customers and
 - Orders



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Aggregate implementation

```
//(Single) Customer
{
  "id": 1,
  "name": "Fabio",
  "billingAddresses": [
    {
      "city": "Bari"
    }
  ]
}

//(Single) Order
{
  "id": 99,
  "customerId": 1,
  "orderItems": [
    {
      "productId": 27,
      "price": 34,
      "productName": "Scala in Action"
    }
  ],
  "shippingAddress": [{"city": "Bari"}],
  "orderPayment": [
    {
      "ccinfo": "100-432423-545-134",
      "txnId": "afdfdsfsd"
    }
  ],
  "billingAddress": [{"city": "Bari"}]
}
```

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Aggregate implementation

- In the example aggregate model there are two "complex types" of records
 - Customer
 - Each customer record contains the customer profile, including his/her billing addresses
 - Order
 - Each order record contains all the data about one order
- Data are denormalized and some information is replicated

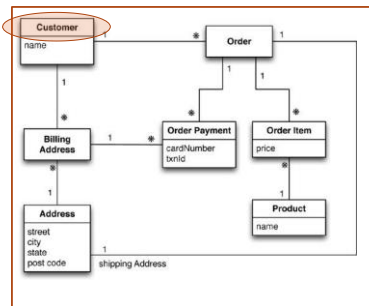
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Aggregate implementation

- The solution (data model) is domain-driven
 - The aggregates are related to the expected usage of the data
- In the reported example we suppose to frequently read/write
 - Customer profiles (including shipping addresses)
 - Orders, with all the related information

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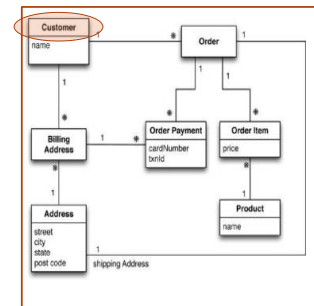
Another possible aggregation



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Another possible aggregation

- We have one aggregate in this model
 - Customers



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Another possible aggregation - implementation

```

// (Single) Customer
{
  "id": 1,
  "name": "Fabio",
  "billingAddresses": [
    {
      "city": "Bari"
    }
  ],
  "orders": [
    {
      "id": 99,
      "orderItems": [
        {
          "productId": 27,
          "price": 34,
          "productName": "Scala in Action"
        }
      ],
      "shippingAddress": [{"city": "Bari"}],
      "orderPayment": {
        "ccinfo": "120-432423-545-194",
        "card": "afdfdfdf",
        "billingAddress": [{"city": "Bari"}]
      }
    }
  ]
}

```

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Design strategy

- No universal answer for how to draw aggregate boundaries
- It depends entirely on how you tend to manipulate data
 - Accesses on a single order at a time and a single customer at a time
 - First solution
 - Accesses on one customer at a time with all her orders
 - Second solution
- Context-specific
 - Some applications will prefer one or the other

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Aggregate Model

- The focus is on the unit(s) of interaction with the data storage
- Pros:
 - It helps greatly when running on a cluster of nodes
 - The data of each "complex record" will be manipulated together, and thus should be stored on the same node
- Cons:
 - An aggregate structure may help with some data interactions but be an obstacle for others

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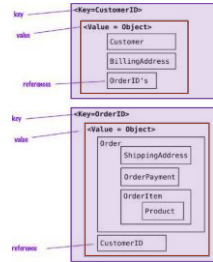
Solutions-based on Aggregate models

- Key-value model
- Column-family based model
- Document-based model

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Key-Value model

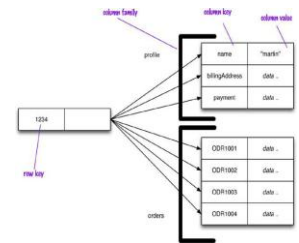
- Strongly aggregate-oriented
 - Lots of aggregates
 - Each aggregate has a key
- Data model:
 - A set of <key,value> pairs
 - Value: an aggregate instance
- The aggregate is opaque to the database
 - Just a big blob of mostly meaningless bit
- Access to an aggregate
 - Lookup based on its key



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Column-Family model

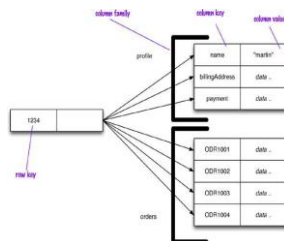
- Strongly aggregate-oriented
 - Lots of aggregates
 - Each aggregate has a key
- Data model: a two-level map structure:
 - A set of <row-key, aggregate> pairs
 - Each aggregate is a group of pairs <column-key,value>



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Column-Family model

- Columns can be organized in families
 - Columns of the same family are usually accessed together
- Access to an aggregate
 - Accessing the row as a whole
 - Picking out particular columns (of the same family)



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Properties of Column-Family model

- Operations also allow picking out a particular column
 - get('1234', 'name')
- Each column
 - Has to be part of a single column family
 - Acts as unit for access
- You can add any column to any row, and rows can have very different columns
- You can model a list of items by making each item a separate column

Properties of Column-Family model

- Two ways to look at data
 - Row-oriented
 - Each row is an aggregate
 - Column families represent useful chunks of data within that aggregate
 - Column-oriented
 - Each column family defines a record type
 - Row as the join of records in all column families

Document-based model

- Strongly aggregate-oriented
 - Lots of aggregates
 - Each aggregate has a key
- Data model:
 - A set of <key,document> pairs
 - Document: an aggregate instance
- Structure of the aggregate visible
 - Limits on what we can place in it
- Access to an aggregate
 - Queries based on the fields in the aggregate

```
# Customer object
{
  "customerId": 1,
  "name": "Martin",
  "billingAddress": [{"city": "Chicago"}],
  "payment": {
    ["type": "debit",
     "ccinfo": "1000-1000-1000-1000"]
  }
}

# Order object
{
  "orderId": 99,
  "customerId": 1,
  "orderDate": "Nov-20-2013",
  "orderItems": [{"productId": 27, "price": 32.45}],
  "orderPayment": [{"ccinfo": "1000-1000-1000-1000",
    "txnId": "a0e1f879-ft"}],
  "shippingAddress": [{"city": "Chicago"}]
}
```

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Key-Value vs Document-based

- Key-value model
 - A key plus a big blob of mostly meaningless bits
 - We can store whatever we like in the aggregate
 - We can only access an aggregate by lookup based on its key
- Document-based model
 - A key plus a structured aggregate
 - More flexibility in access
 - We can submit queries to the database based on the fields in the aggregate
 - We can retrieve part of the aggregate rather than the whole thing
 - Indexes based on the contents of the aggregate

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Relationships

- Relationship between different aggregates
 - Put the ID of one aggregate within the data of the other
- Join: **write a program** that uses the ID to link data
 - The database is ignorant of the relationships in the data

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Key Points

- An aggregate is a collection of data that we interact with as a unit
- Aggregates form the boundaries for ACID operations with the database

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Key Points

- Aggregates make it easier for the database to manage data storage over clusters
 - Aggregate-oriented databases work best when most data interaction is done with the same aggregate
 - Aggregate-ignorant databases are better when interactions use data organized in many different formations
- Key-value, document, and column-family databases can all be seen as forms of aggregate-oriented database

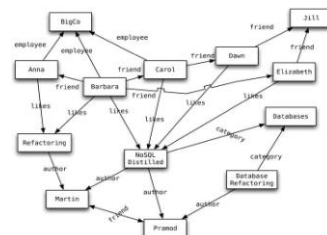
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Graph Databases

- Graph databases are motivated by a different frustration with relational databases
 - Complex relationships require complex join
- Goal
 - Capture data consisting of complex relationships
 - Data naturally modeled as graphs
- Examples
 - Social networks, Web data, product preferences

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A graph database



Query: "find the books in the Database category that are written by someone whom a friend of mine likes."

Data model of graph databases

- Basic characteristic
 - Nodes are connected by edges (also called arcs)
- Beyond this
 - A lot of variation in data models
 - Neo4J stores Java objects as nodes and edges in a schemaless fashion
 - InfiniteGraph stores Java objects, which are subclasses of built-in types, as nodes and edges.
 - FlockDB is simply nodes and edges with no mechanism for additional attributes

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Data model of graph databases

- Queries
 - Navigation through the network of edges
 - You do need a starting place
 - Nodes can be indexed by an attribute such as ID

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Graph vs Relational databases

- Relational databases
 - Implement relationships using foreign keys
 - Joins require to navigate around and can get quite expensive
- Graph databases
 - Make traversal along the relationships very cheap
 - Performance is better for highly connected data
 - Shift most of the work from query time to insert time
 - Good when querying performance is more important than insert speed

Graph vs Aggregate-oriented databases

- Very different data models
- Aggregate-oriented databases
 - Distributed across clusters
 - Simple query languages
 - No ACID guarantees
- Graph databases
 - More likely to run on a single server
 - Graph-based query languages
 - Transactions maintain consistency over multiple nodes and edges

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Some NoSQL databases

- Key-value databases
 - Redis, Riak, Memcached, ..
- Column-family databases
 - Cassandra, HBase, Hypertable, Amazon DynamoDB, ..
- Document databases
 - MongoDB, CouchDB, RavenDB, ..
- Graph databases
 - Neo4J, Infinite Graph, OrientDB, ..

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