The Jiffy Lube Quick Tune-up For Your Splunk Environment



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What Do These Guys Know Anyway?

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- 5+ Years at Splunk
- Former customer working in the security space
- Former PS consultant
- Leads the Splunk Architecture Council
- Taylor Swift super fan and Hawaiian shirt lover



Jeff Champagne

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- 2 Years at Splunk
- Former Splunk customer in the Financial Services Industry
- Lived previous lives as a Systems
 Administrator, Engineer, and Architect
- Loves Skiing, traveling, photography, and a good Sazerac



Am I In The Right Place?

Yes, if you are...

- A beginner/intermediate Splunk Admin
 - Not a total n00b
 - You should already be running Splunk
 - Advanced/Expert Admins, these are not the Droids you're looking for...
- Be familiar with configuration files
- Know what the DMC/Monitoring Console is
- Understand the basic Splunk Distributed Architecture

What Is A Splunk Tune-up?

- Identify Common Performance Issues
 - Time issues
 - Lagging events
 - Monitoring Indexer Queues
 - Identify slow and resource intensive searches
- Address Performance Issues via Configuration Changes

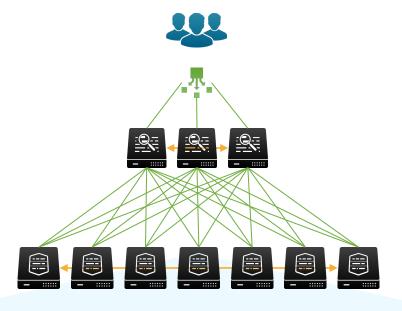
Splunk Distributed Architecture

Users

Load Balancer

Search Head Cluster

Index Cluster



Splunk Auto Load Balancing

Forwarders



Time





Time Is Important

- Events are indexed and saved to disk by time
- Searches are bound by a time range
- Events are retrieved based on the parsed time
 - Whatever is in the time field



The Side-effects

- Incorrectly time stamped events can:
 - Exclude key events from the result set
 - Exclude events from Real Time Window
 - Miss correlation of events
 - Missed alerts

- Throw off Summary Indexing results
- Produce incorrect reports
- Extend your retention windows
- Create an explosion of buckets
- Cause heart burn at audit time

Assigning Time

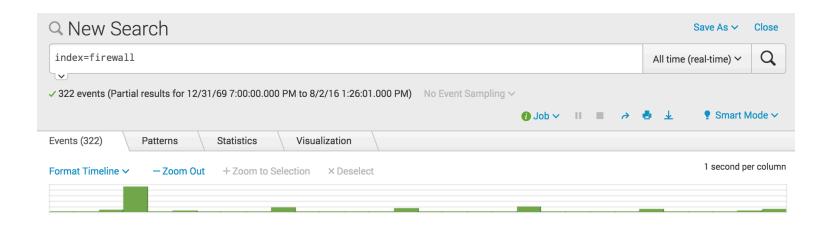
- Stored in the _time field in UTC time format
- Determined and set at index time
 - Munge-able at search time using EVAL
 - Requires wacky time ranges to capture events = inefficient
 - Permanent in the Index
 - No-do overs, you must re-index
- Where do we find the time?
 - 1. The raw event
 - 2. The local time on the Indexer

Time Zones

- Splunk converts _time to UTC
- TZ Offset is needed to display _time correctly to the user
- Where do we look for the TZ?
 - 1. The raw event
 - 2. TZ parameter in props.conf
 - 3. The TZ provided by the Universal Forwarder (Splunk 6+)
 - The TZ of the Indexer

Finding Time Parsing Issues

- Where are my events? Possibly in the future.
- Run a Real-Time All Time Search
 - One of the only times you should use this



Other Time Errors

Check splunkd.log for TimeParserVerbose warnings:

index=_internal source=*splunkd.log WARN DateParserVerbose

```
08-10-2014 05:59:14.488 +0000 WARN DateParserVerbose - Failed to parse timestamp. Defaulting to timestamp of previous event. Context="source::/log/applog.log|host::appserver|appserver_log|remoteport::58689" Text="columnCount = 6; ..."
```

These errors are normally due to incorrect TIME_FORMAT or LINE_BREAKER errors

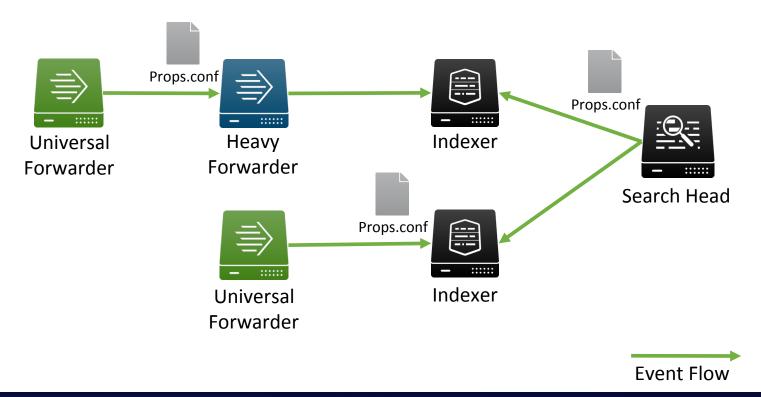
How Do I Fix Parsing Issues?

Props.conf

[Source::transaction.log]
TIME_PREFIX = ^ RegEX that tells Splunk where to
start looking for the timestamp
TIME_FORMAT = %Y-%m-%d %H:%M:%S Strptime format that tells Splunk
what the timestamp looks like

MAX_TIMESTAMP_LOOKAHEAD = 70 # of characters Splunk will read into
the log to locate the timestamp

Where To Apply Props.conf?



Verify Events Are Matching TIME_FORMAT

- 08-07-2014 14:33:09.566 -0700
- Use regex in your search to isolate events which don't match your TIME_FORMAT

```
index=x \ sourcetype=y \ | \ regex \ _raw!="^\d{2}-\d{2}-\d{4}\s\d{2}:\d{2}:\d{2}.\d{3}\s-\d{4}"
```

- Similar approach using the PUNCT field
 - Yay, you can use PUNCT for the first time ever!

```
index=x sourcetype=y punct!="_-_::__"
```

Want To Know More?

It's 10:00 PM. Do you know where your data is?

by Jason Timlin

- Thursday, Sept 29th 11:20AM - 12:05PM



Causes For Reported Indexing Lag

- Network throughput issues
- Universal Forwarder Throttling (limits.conf)
 - [thruput]maxKBps = 256
- Blocked indexer queues
- Buffered writing to log files
- Batch log files or historical log file loads
- Incorrect Timestamp extraction

Getting Data In On Time

- Events are slow getting into Splunk
- Evaluating your lag
 - _time = The time we parsed from the event
 - _indextime = The time we indexed the event

```
source=<your delayed source> | eval delay=_indextime-_time | fields delay
```



Create a new field called *delay* that is the difference between the index time and the timestamp on the event

Advanced Lag Monitoring

- Intensive Search
 - Don't run this all the time
 - Taken from S.O.S. Splunk on Splunk (RIP)

```
index=* OR index=_internal
    eval latency=round(( indextime - time),2)
    eval seconds elapsed=(time() - now())
    eval secs=if(seconds elapsed<0,"1",seconds elapsed)
    eval esize=((len( raw)/1024))
    eventstats max(secs) AS seconds
    eventstats count AS ecount, sum(esize) as sum esize by "sourcetype"
    stats last(ecount) AS "event count", last(eval(ecount/seconds)) AS eps, last(eval(sum esize/seconds)) AS KBps, min(latency) AS "minimum latency (seconds)", avg(latency) AS
avglat, max(latency) AS "maximum latency (seconds)" min(_time) AS oldestTime max(_time) AS newestTime by "sourcetype"
    eval avglat=round(avglat,2)
    eval eps=round(eps,2)
    eval KBps=round(KBps,2)
    convert timeformat="%m/%d/%Y %H:%M:%S" ctime(newestTime)
    convert timeformat="%m/%d/%Y %H:%M:%S" ctime(oldestTime)
   rename newestTime AS "Time stamp of newest event" oldestTime AS "Time stamp of oldest event" avglat AS "average latency (seconds)" eps AS "events per second" KBps AS
"indexing rate (KBps)"
```

sourcetype \$	event count \$	events per second ‡	indexing rate (KBps) ‡	minimum latency (seconds) ‡	average latency (seconds) ‡	maximum latency (seconds) ‡	Time stamp of oldest event \$	Time stamp of newest event \$
splunk_web_access	27	8.57	3.68	-0.59	0.58	2.18	08/02/2016 15:25:33	08/02/2016 15:25:52
splunk_web_service	9	2.86	0.40	-0.16	-0.05	0.07	08/02/2016 15:25:38	08/02/2016 15:25:39
splunkd_access	32	10.16	1.53	-0.56	0.71	2.17	08/02/2016 15:25:33	08/02/2016 15:25:52
splunkd_ui_access	77	24.44	25.23	-0.68	0.32	2.19	08/02/2016 15:25:33	08/02/2016 15:25:52

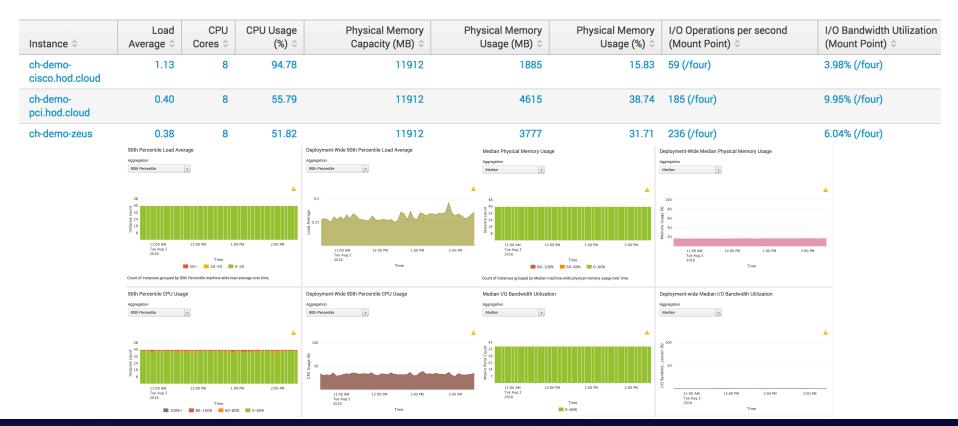
Indexer Health



Server Health

- Key Resources to Monitor
 - Memory Usage
 - CPU load
 - % consumed by Splunk processes
 - I/O throughput
- Commands that should be your friend
 - top
 - free/swap –l
 - lostat
- Splunk Monitoring Console

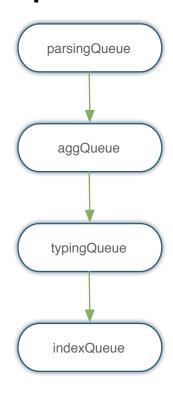
Resource Usage: Deployment



Resource Usage: Deployment

- Look at different levels of aggregation
 - Median, 90th Percentile, Maximum
- More detail: Resource Usage: Instance/Machine
- Load Average at or near 1
 - Indicate your system is at capacity
- I/O Bandwidth Utilization
 - Instances must be running Splunk 6.4+
 - Indicates bandwidth utilization <u>not</u> throughput
- I/O Operations Per Second
 - Sum of read & write requests sent per second to the mount point
 - Indicates throughput, but doesn't directly translate to what Splunk considers IOPS (random seeks)

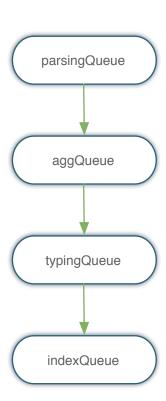
Important Indexer Queues



- UTF Encoding
- Line Breaking (single line)
- Header Processing
- Line Merging (identify single, multiline event)
- Timestamp extraction
- Regex Replacement (field extraction, routing)
- Punct Extraction
- Index and Forwarding
- Block Signature
- Writing to Disk

Indexer Queues

- Provide insight into an indexer's internal state
- Blocked queues
 - Indicate a processing bottleneck in the indexing process
 - Will delay the indexing of events
- Default max queue size = 1000
 - Queue will be blocked when limit is reached
- It's normal for queues to be temporarily blocked
 - Indicates that your indexer is doing work
 - Persistent blocked queues indicate a performance issue
 - Will block upstream queues as they fill (backpressure)



Looking For Bottlenecks

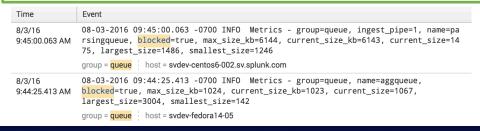
The Good 'ol Fashioned Way

View the current queue size by searching the metrics log:

index= internal source=*metrics.log group=queue | timechart median(current size) by name tcpout_defaulttcpout_sosdev-_time 💠 OTHER 0 aggqueue 🗘 auditqueue 💠 indexqueue 🗘 parsingqueue 0 autolb-group \$ idx 0 typingqueue 0 aea aq 🗘 exec 0 2016-08-03 09:30:30 0 0 n 0 n 18356 0 0 2016-08-03 09:30:40 0 0 0 0 0 0 1004 600 0 0 0 0 n 0 2016-08-03 09:30:50 238 n 5087 9336 143

Find blocked queue events

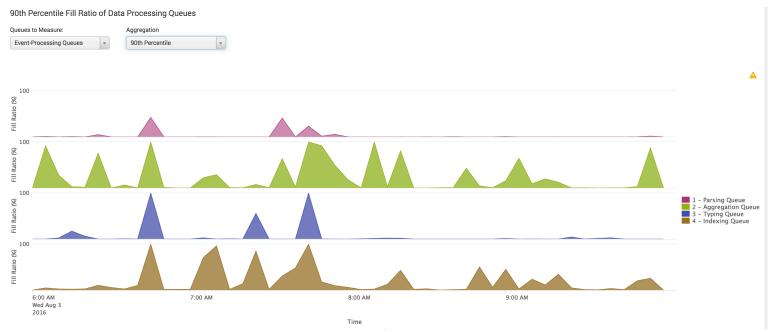
index=_internal source=*metrics.log group=queue blocked



Looking For Bottlenecks

Splunk Monitoring Console

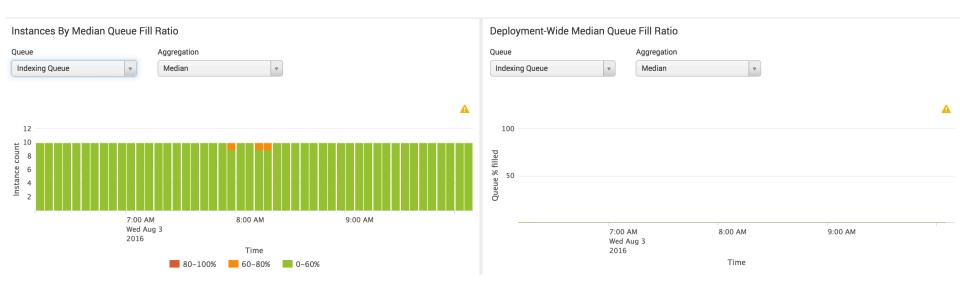
Indexing Performance: Instance



Looking For Bottlenecks

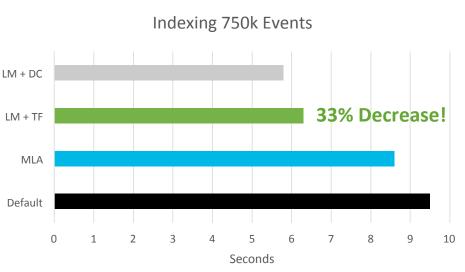
Splunk Monitoring Console

Indexing Performance: Deployment



Tuning Configs

Conf File	props.conf				
Parameter	<pre>line_breaker = (LM) should_linemerge = false time_prefix = (MLA) max_timestamp_lookahead = (TF) time_format = truncate = tz= (DC) datetime_config = current</pre>	LM + DC LM + TF MLA Default			
Splunk Version	5.x, 6.x		0	1	2



- Time spent in parsingQueue & aggQueue will SIGNIFICALY improve
 - line_breaker= goes hand-in-hand with should_linemerge=
 - [datetime_config = current] does not extract a timestamp, it sets _time to the local indexer time

Tuning Configs

typingQueue

- props.conf
 - TRANSFORMS-xxx
 - SEDCMD
- transforms.conf
 - SOURCE KEY
 - DEST KEY
 - REGEX
 - FORMAT

indexerQueue

- Index and Forwarding
- Block Signing
- indexes.conf settings
 - maxHotBuckets = 10
 - maxDataSize = auto_high_volume

- In most cases a blocked indexerQueue is due to more data being written to disk than can be serviced
- If the disk performance cannot be improved, consider adding additional indexers to offload this indexing workload

Search Performance



Tackling Search Performance

- Identify slow/resource intensive searches
 - Syntax efficiencies
 - Better utilization of MapReduce
- Summary Indexing & Search Accelerations
 - Considerations
 - Using time snaps
- Scheduler Efficiencies
 - Avoiding hot spots at the top/bottom of the hour
 - Scheduler Windows
- Bundle Replication White/Blacklists

Identifying Slow Searches

Splunk Monitoring Console

Search > Activity > Search Usage Statistics: Deployment

Search Activity by User



- Who is running the most searches?
- Which are taking the longest?

Frequently Run Searches

Report Name/Search String ‡	Search Runtime \$	Search Start ‡	Earliest Time \$	Latest Time 0	Type 🗘	User 0	Host 0	SID \$	
metadata type=sourcetypes search totalCount > 0	7.8 sec	08/03/2016 09:45:24 -0700	all time	all time	ad hoc	admin	dmc- demo.sv.splunk.com	rt_1470242724.57958	
search index=_internal earliest=-1d head 30000	2.9 sec	08/03/2016 10:15:01 -0700	all time	all time	ad hoc	admin	sosdev-sh1	1470244501.945967	

- Which searches are run often?
- Can they be improved?
- Can we move it to a scheduled search?

Long Running Searches

Report Name/Search String \$	Count 0	Median Runtime 🗘	Max Runtime 0	Users ¢	Hosts \$	Type 🗘
search index=_internal earliest=-1d head 30000	475	0.9 sec	2.9 sec	admin	sosdev-sh1	ad hoc
rest /services/licenser/slaves rename label AS indexer_name title AS indexer_guid table indexer_guid indexer_name	24	0.2 sec	0.3 sec	splunk-system-user	sosdev-sh1	ad hoc

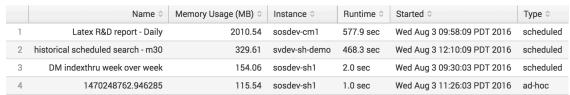
- Who are my worst offenders?
- Can they be improved?

Identifying Slow Searches

Splunk Monitoring Console

Search > Activity > Search Activity: Deployment

Top 20 Memory Consuming Searches



- Which searches are impacting system resources?
- Better ways to filter results?
- More efficient commands?
- Re-order commands?

Search > Activity > Search Usage Statistics: Instance

Common Search Commands

	Command \$	Count 0	Average Runtime \$	Max Runtime \$
1	search	5	2.3 sec	7.8 sec
2	metadata	1	7.8 sec	7.8 sec
3	timechart	1	0.5 sec	0.5 sec

- Alternatives for slow commands?
 - Join/Transaction → stats
- Efficient use of MapReduce?
 - Stats → prestats
 - − sort → presort



Skipped Searches

Splunk Monitoring Console

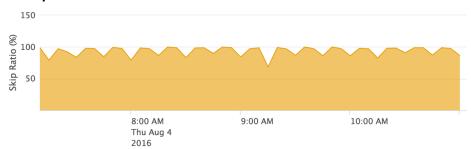
Search > Scheduler Activity: Deployment

Skip Ratio by Instance



- Where are jobs being skipped?
- When are they being skipped?
- Do I have enough capacity?
- Can I adjust schedules?

Skip Ratio Across All Instances



• What % of all jobs are being skipped across my deployment?

Skipped Searches

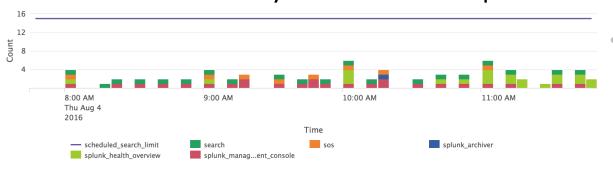
Splunk Monitoring Console

Search > Scheduler Activity: Instance

Runtime Statistics

Report Name ‡	App ‡	User 0	Cron Schedule 0	Schedule Interval (sec) 0	Average Runtime (sec) ‡	Interval Load Factor 0	Total Executions 0	Skipped Executions 0	Skip Ratio 0
sos_refresh_splunk_forwarders_cache	sos	nobody	3,18,33,48 ****	900	1	0.11 %	12	0	0.00 %
DMC Forwarder - Build Asset Table	splunk_management_console	nobody	3,18,33,48	900	1	0.11 %	12	0	0.00 %

Median Concurrency of Scheduled Reports



- Which jobs are getting skipped and how often?
- How long are these jobs running?

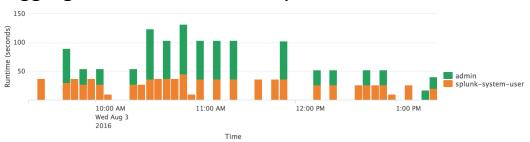
Which apps or users are generating the most searches?

Search Runtime

Splunk Monitoring Console

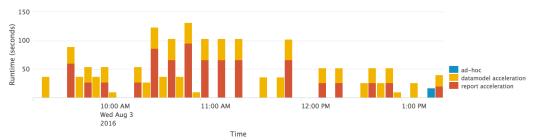
Search > Activity > Search Activity: Instance

Aggregate Search Runtime by User



- Who is consuming search capacity?
- When are jobs being run?
 - Can we avoid peak times?

Aggregate Search Runtime by Type



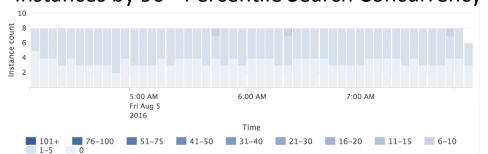
- What types are searches are consuming capacity?
- Can I move anything to search windows?

Search Concurrency

Splunk Monitoring Console

Search > Activity > Search Activity: Deployment

Instances by 90th Percentile Search Concurrency



- Helpful to look at 90th Percentile and Median Concurrency
- Look at SH & Indexers
- Instances are grouped by concurrency

Deployment-Wide Total Concurrent Searches



 Count of the unique searches running concurrently over time

Concurrent Search Limit

- Maximum # of Concurrent Searches per SH Instance
 - (max_searches_per_cpu x Logical # of CPUs) + base_max_searches

Conf File	limits.conf
Parameter	[search] base_max_searches = 6 max_searches_per_cpu = 1
Splunk Version	5.x, 6.x

- Logical # of CPUs as reported by OS
 - Hyper-threading enabled = 2 x physical cores
- Use caution before raising these settings
 - May increase the CPU load and the time taken for any search to complete!
 - Search Heads queue, indexers do not
 - Don't crash your indexers

Scheduled Search Limit

The ratio of jobs that the scheduler can use vs. ad-hoc searches

Conf File	limits.conf
Parameter	[scheduler] max_searches_perc = 25* max_searches_perc = 50
Splunk Version	*5.x, 6.x

- Default changed from 25% to 50% in Splunk 6.0+
 - In 6.0+, you can have different settings depending on the time/day
- If you have a large number of Scheduled Searches increasing this percentage may help with skipped searches
- The searches are NOT reserved for the scheduler this is just a limit
 - Ad-hoc user searches take priority over the scheduler

Scheduler Windows

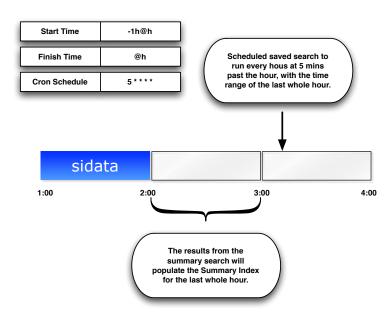
- Good for jobs that don't have to run at a specific time
 - Ex: Run this search anytime between midnight and 5am
- Search Windows help other searches
 - Free up scheduler time for searches that must run at a specific time
 - Helps Splunk determine long the search can be deferred
- Should not be used for searches that run every minute
- Search Window must be less than the search frequency
 - Ex: If my search needs to run every hour, but I set a 2 hour window, my search may be missed

Accelerations & Summaries

- Data Model Accelerations
 - Speed up reporting against the entire set of fields defined in the model
 - Fields/attributes in the model are stored in a special TSIDX (high-performance analytics store)
 - Backfill is handled automatically
- Report Accelerations
 - Speed up individual searches/reports
 - Pre-computed summaries from the report are stored in a special TSIDX
 - Backfill is handled automatically
- Summary Indexes
 - Speed up individual searches/reports
 - Pre-computed summaries or a subset of data is stored in a new index
 - Backfill must be handled manually
 - Allows for retention periods that are different from the source index

Summary Indexing

- Use time modifier offsets to snap-to-time
- For last hour "-1h@h to @h"
- Offset the scheduled time from the top of the hour to 5 mins after the hour "5 * * * *"
- This offset method can be applied to other scheduled searches



Bundle Replication

What are Knowledge Bundles?

- Replicated from Search Head to all Indexers every minute
 - Replication only happens if changes occur
 - Splunk attempts to replicate deltas when possible
- Indexers must have a common KB before a search can continue
- Large KBs can cause search execution to be delayed
 - Typically caused by very large lookup files that are updated frequently
 - Monitoring Console > Search > Distributed Search: Deployment
- You can limit the size of KBs by using whitelists/blacklists
 - Must understand where the knowledge object will be used before modifying
 - Ex: Is the lookup going to be used on the Indexers or on the Search Head?
 - ▶ This depends on how you've structured your search commands



Monitoring Console Health Check

16	1	4	1	11 0	
All	Error	Warning	Info	Success N/A	
Check 0				Category \$	Results ‡
Missing Forwa	arders			Data Indexing	1 (100%)
System hardw	are provisioning as	sessment		System and Environment	· 6 (100%)
Assessment of	of server ulimits			System and Environment	· 6 (100%)
Linux kernel tr	ansparent huge pag	ges		System and Environment	· 6 (100%)
Expiring or ex	pired licenses			Data Indexing	1 (100%)
Event-processing issues				Data Collection	2 (100%)
Local indexing on non-indexer instances				Data Indexing	4 (100%)
Distributed search health assessment				Data Search	4 (100%)
Search Scheduler Skip Ratio				Data Search	4 (100%)
Indexing status				Data Indexing	√ 5 (100%)
Near-critical d	isk usage			System	1 (16%) √ 5 (83%)
Saturation of event-processing queues				Data Indexing	√ 6 (100%)
Integrity check of installed files				Splunk Miscellaneous	6 (100%)
Orphaned scheduled searches				Splunk Miscellaneous	6 (100%)
Excessive Physical Memory Usage				Splunk Miscellaneous	√ 6 (100%)
License warnings and violations				Data Indexing	

- New in Splunk 6.5
- Checks for common issues
- Focused on Healthy/Unhealthy
 - When things are bad, we provide specific instructions for resolving the issue

Running Linux?

Turn Off Transparent Huge Pages

30% performance impact on search and indexing

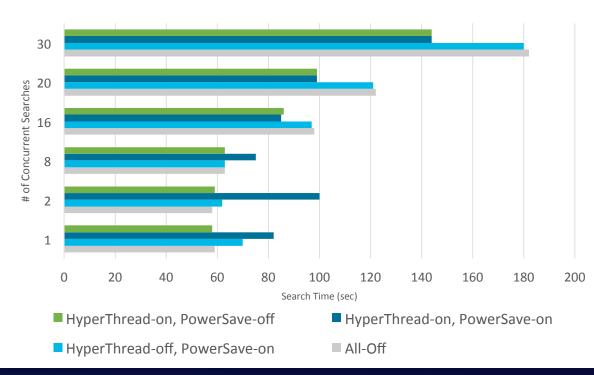
os	Linux
Paths	/sys/kernel/mm/transparent_hugepage/ enabled /sys/kernel/mm/transparent_hugepage/defrag
Splunk Version	5.x, 6.x

- Ensure your method for disabling THP survives a reboot
- https://answers.splunk.com/answers/188875/how-do-i-disable-transparent-huge-pages-thp-and-co.html
- Splunk will log THP status on startup in splunkd.log
 - Regularly check to ensure this is still off
 - SAMPLE: 11-18-2014 08:19:42.052 -0600 INFO ulimit Linux transparent hugetables support, enabled="never" defrag="never"

Running Intel Processors?

Enable Hyper-threading and Disable Power Saving in BIOS

- Power saving affects lowconcurrency workloads most
- HT and power saving can result in a 30% performance impact for high-concurrency workloads
- HT won't hurt you
 - SO TURN THAT \$h*t on!
- Test Details
 - 12-core Intel Xeon X5690 @ 3.33GHz
 - CPU-bound search jobs over the same sample data
 - Individual search could complete ~60s
 - https://answers.splunk.com/answers/7845/ splunk-and-hyper-threading-has-anyone-runbenchmarks.html



Where Can I Learn More?



What Now?

Related breakout sessions and activities...

- Worst Practices...and how to fix them by Jeff Champagne
 - Tuesday, Sept 27th 10:30AM 11:15AM
- Best and Better Practices for Admins by Burch Simon
 - Tuesday, Sept 27th 11:35AM 12:20 PM
- Architecting Splunk for High Availability and Disaster Recovery by Dritan Bitincka
 - Tuesday, Sept 27th 5:25PM 6:10PM
- Observations and Recommendations on Splunk Performance by Dritan Bitincka
 - Wednesday, Sept 28th 12:05PM 12:50PM
- Behind the Magnifying Glass: How Search Works by Jeff Champagne
 - Wednesday, Sept 28th 1:10PM 1:55PM
- Search: Under the Hood by Chris Pride
 - Wednesday, Sept 28th 4:35PM 5:20PM
- It's 10:00 PM. Do you know where your data is? by Jason Timlin
 - Thursday, Sept 29th 11:20AM 12:05PM
- Making the Most of the Splunk Scheduler by Paul Lucas
 - Thursday, Sept 29th 12:25PM 1:10 PM
- Best and Better Practices for Users by Burch Simon
 - Thursday, Sept 29th 12:25PM 1:10PM

Time Issues
Search
Admin



Resources

- Reporting Manual Scheduler Windows
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/Report/Schedulereports
- Making the Most of the New Splunk Scheduler (.conf 2015)
 - http://conf.splunk.com/session/2015/conf2015 PLucas Splunk SplunkEntWhatsNew MakingTheMostOf.pdf
- Splunk Data Pipeline
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/Deploy/Datapipeline
- Props.conf Spec File
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/Admin/Propsconf
- Limits.conf Spec File
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/Admin/Limitsconf
- Overview of summary-based search and pivot acceleration
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/Knowledge/Aboutsummaryindexing
- Modify the Knowledge Bundle
 - http://docs.splunk.com/Documentation/Splunk/latest/DistSearch/Limittheknowledgebundlesize

Questions?



THANK YOU

