

Performance Problems.. Server hardware smoked by \$500 box?

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Greets!

I'm pretty confused right now with trying to determine the nature of a performance problem I'm having on one of my servers. The server is a webserver with a separate db/file server sitting behind it. The issue is that in pulling up websites from the machine, my silly POS development box has nearly double performance although one would think it shouldn't.

Serving pages from the production machine over NFS or even the db/file server via local filesystem is slower than pages from the development machine over NFS. By that I mean that if you view the page on the development machine over the LAN, it appears instantly...Do that on the production machines and 1-2 seconds pass as you watch images flow in... With zero load. Now granted the development machine has the most Mhz, but we're talking *visible* differences in speed between a 1.5GhzAMD & ~1Ghz Intel Server Class machines. And to top it all off, with the miniscule amount of ram in the AMD box, it's paging around 50MB (with only a few K free of physical ram) by the time apache finishes spawning during the boot. By all rights, to me, this thing should be no better than equivalent to the production machines.

They are all plugged in to the same Cisco 3524 switch, and I've tried multiple cables (even swapping between the fast & slow machines to try to hurt the fast one) and the IOS reports no errors on the interfaces, all at 100/FullDuplex. I can reproduce the problem on any # of viewing machines at will.

Please tell me that I shouldn't toss these multi-thousand dollar servers and just buy a bunch of these silly do-it-yourself'ers..(*kidding*, but you get the idea)

The hardware involved:

Production Machine: (Dell PowerEdge 1U server 1G/UWSCSI)

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FreeBSD 5.1-Current (Was 4.8 Release, upgraded in attempt to find problem)

CPU: Intel Pentium III (927.11-MHz 686-class CPU) Origin = "GenuineIntel"

real memory = 1342111744 (1279 MB)

fxp0: <Intel 82557/8/9 EtherExpress Pro/100(B) Ethernet>

da0: <SEAGATE ST318305LC 2203> Fixed Direct Access SCSI-3 device

da0: 160.000MB/s transfers (80.000MHz, offset 63, 16bit)

da0: 17366MB (35566478 512 byte sectors: 255H 63S/T 2213C)

DB/File Server: (Dell PowerEdge 2U Server 768MB/RAID5)

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FreeBSD 4.8 Stable

CPU: Intel