

Re: Question on Unix FIFOs – why slow when on NFS?

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In article <cen70t\$m1j\$1@reader1.panix.com>,

gerg@panix.com (Greg Andrews) writes:

> v_borchert@despammed.com (Volker Borchert) writes:

>>Casper H.S. Dik wrote:

>>

>>|>>I've noticed that a FIFO (that is, a pseudo-file that shows up with a 'p'

>>|>>in the "permission bits") is very slow if it is created on an NFS share.

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>>|> The file only exists in memory,

>>

>>Probably a stupid question, but... how can that be? If the server sees

>>it and shows it, it must have gone over the wire?

>>

>

> The filename and inode information went over the wire, yes.

> But the interpretation of the major and minor device numbers

> happens in the NFS client machine's kernel. The mapping of

> the major/minor numbers to a device driver happens in the

> NFS client machine's kernel. The invocation of the device

> driver happens in the NFS client machine's kernel. So reads

> and writes are handled by the device driver in the NFS client

> machine's kernel – not the kernel in the NFS server.

>

> Reading the info about the device file happens over the wire.

> Other I/O happens in the local kernel, not over the wire.

But ISTR the timestamp updates going over the wire. That's very little volume, but with a slow connection or server, it could still slow things down.

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Lasik/PRK theme music:

"In the Hall of the Mountain King", from "Peer Gynt"