

Cloudera Flow Management 2.0.1

Sizing Your Flow Management cluster

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The Cloudera logo is displayed in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The word "CLOUDERA" is written in all caps, with a stylized 'E' that has a horizontal bar extending to the right.

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Sizing your Flow Management cluster

Learn about the factors that impact the resource requirements and the performance of your Flow Management cluster.

When considering how to size and configure Flow Management clusters, it is important that you keep each of the following considerations in mind.

- Data flow design
- Principles of NiFi design
- Cluster layout
- Disk configuration
- Memory and CPU intensive processors

Related Concepts

[Data flow design](#)

[NiFi design](#)

[Cluster layout](#)

[Disk configuration](#)

[Resource intensive processors](#)

[Recommendations](#)

Data flow design

Learn about the flow design factors that impact your cluster sizing needs and the performance of your data flow.



Note:

Flow design is the most important factor influencing the expected data flow performance, as well as the type and amount of resources used by NiFi.

You can use NiFi for a wide array of use cases, and the resource requirements are greatly determined by data flow design. Depending on the actions it performs in a data flow, each processor may or may not be required to read or to write the processed data from or on disks.

For example, a flow ingesting 100 MB of data per second with its first processor, may need to read and write this data on disks multiple times before the result is sent to the final destination. If the data flow has four processors writing the content on disks before being sent to the final destination, the disks used for the content repositories in the NiFi cluster should be able to handle 400 MB per second at the cluster level.

Related Concepts

[Sizing your Flow Management cluster](#)

[NiFi design](#)

[Cluster layout](#)

[Disk configuration](#)

[Resource intensive processors](#)

[Recommendations](#)

NiFi design

Learn about the NiFi design decisions that impact Flow Management cluster sizing.

NiFi is designed to use all the available resources of the nodes where it is running. NiFi takes advantage of:

- All available cores
- All the network capacity
- All the disk speed and capacities

**Note:**

It is crucial to understand that NiFi data flow behavior depends on three major factors:

- data flow source
- flow operations during data transfer
- data flow target

For more information about principles involved in the NiFi design, see the *Apache NiFi Overview*.

Related Concepts

[Sizing your Flow Management cluster](#)

[Data flow design](#)

[Cluster layout](#)

[Disk configuration](#)

[Resource intensive processors](#)

[Recommendations](#)

Related Information

[Apache NiFi Overview](#)

Cluster layout

Learn about Flow Management cluster layout recommendations to optimize your flow management cluster in production environments.

At least three nodes are recommended for a Flow Management cluster used in production environments. NiFi must be running on dedicated nodes.

When NiFi is clustered, you should use an external ZooKeeper cluster. In production deployments, the ZooKeeper instances should not be co-located with the NiFi instances.

Related Concepts

[Sizing your Flow Management cluster](#)

[Data flow design](#)

[NiFi design](#)

[Disk configuration](#)

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Disk configuration

Learn about NiFi disk configuration and how to optimize for the three repositories on disk.

On most modern systems, the disk throughput is lower than the network throughput, so the network is usually not a bottleneck. For most data movement use cases, the CPU usage is much lower than the disk I/O, but it is still important to monitor the CPU and tune the number of threads per processor. See *Tuning your Data Flow* for recommendations about fine tuning threads usage.

NiFi has three repositories on disk and the disk configuration is a very important performance factor:

- Content Repository
 - Contains the content of each FlowFile
 - Sequential disk I/O (ideally leveraging the OS cache)
- FlowFile (metadata) Repository
 - Contains the FlowFile attributes and current FlowFile state (which queue it is in) for each FlowFile
 - Sequential and random disk I/O
- Provenance (metadata) Repository
 - Contains a provenance log with entries for every action performed on a FlowFile (merge, drop, and so on).
 - Sequential and random disk I/O

Every FlowFile that NiFi receives or creates is immediately written to disk in the content repository for fault tolerance. Subsequent FlowFile content modifications (decompression, format conversion, and so on) are also written to the content repository. Processors that do not modify the content, such as `RouteOnAttribute`, do not impact the content repository. Instead, the FlowFile repository keeps a pointer for each FlowFile showing its state, such as which queue it is located in. This optimization eliminates the need for redundant writes to the content repository.

For higher performance, configure multiple disks for both the content and provenance repositories.

For more information, see *File System Content Repository Properties* and *Write Ahead Provenance Repository Properties* in the *NiFi System Properties documentation* and *Configuration Best Practices*.

Related Concepts

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[Data flow design](#)

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Related Information

[File System Content Repository Properties](#)

[Write Ahead Provenance Repository Properties](#)

[Configuration Best Practices](#)

[Tuning your Data Flow](#)

Resource intensive processors

Learn how to identify resource intensive processors.

In the Apache NiFi documentation, you can review information about whether a processor is CPU intensive or memory intensive.

For example, if you right-click the `CompressContent` processor to open its documentation, you can see that this processor can be both memory and CPU intensive.

The screenshot shows a 'CompressContent' processor card with a warning icon. The card displays the following statistics:

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| In | 0 (0 bytes) |
| Read/Write | 0 bytes / 0 bytes |
| Out | 0 (0 bytes) |
| Tasks/Time | 0 / 00:00:00.000 |

A context menu is open over the card, listing the following actions:

- Configure
- Disable
- View data provenance
- View status history
- View usage
- View connections
- Center in view
- Change color
- Group
- Create template
- Copy
- Delete

System Resource Considerations:

| Resource | Description |
|----------|--|
| CPU | An instance of this component can cause high usage of this system resource. Multiple instances or high concurrency settings may result a degradation of performance. |
| MEMORY | An instance of this component can cause high usage of this system resource. Multiple instances or high concurrency settings may result a degradation of performance. |

Related Concepts

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Recommendations

Learn how to configure your Flow Management cluster with sizing considerations in mind.

Cloudera recommends the following setup for on-premises, bare metal installations:

- 1 RAID 1 or 10 array for the OS
- 1 RAID 1 or 10 array for the FlowFile repository
- 1 or many RAID 1 or 10 array(s) for the content repository
- 1 or many RAID 1 or 10 array(s) for the provenance repository

For high performance setup, Cloudera recommends SSDs over spinning disks.

For cloud environments, larger disks usually provide better throughputs. Review your cloud provider documentation for more information.

In terms of memory, NiFi is optimized to support FlowFiles of any size. This is achieved by never materializing the file into memory directly. Instead, NiFi uses input and output streams to process events (there are a few exceptions with some specific processors). This means that NiFi does not require significant memory even if it is processing very large files. Most of the memory on the system should be left available for the OS cache. By having a large enough OS cache, many of the disk reads are skipped completely. Consequently, unless NiFi is used for very specific memory oriented data flows, setting the Java heap to 8 GB or 16 GB is usually sufficient.

The performance you can expect directly depends on the hardware and the flow design. For example, when reading compressed data from a cloud object store, decompressing the data, filtering it based on specific values, compressing the filtered data, and sending it to a cloud object store, you can achieve the following results:

| Nodes | Data rate per second | Events per second | Data rate per day | Events per day |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 192.5 MB | 946,000 | 16.6 TB | 81.7 billion |
| 5 | 881 MB | 4.97 million | 76 TB | 429.4 billion |
| 25 | 5.8 GB | 26 million | 501 TB | 2.25 trillion |
| 100 | 22 GB | 90 million | 1.9 PB | 7.8 trillion |
| 150 | 32.6 GB | 141.3 million | 2.75 PB | 12.2 trillion |

Data rates and event rates were captured running the flow described above on Google Kubernetes Engine. Each node has 32 cores, 15 GB RAM, and a 2 GB heap. The Content Repository is a 1 TB Persistent SSD (400 MB per second write, 1200 MB second read).

NiFi scales well, both vertically and horizontally. Depending on the number of data flows running in the NiFi cluster and your operational requirements, you can add nodes to the NiFi cluster over time to meet your needs.

With this information in mind, Cloudera recommends:

- At least 4 cores per NiFi node (more is better and 8 cores usually provides the best starting point for the most common use cases)
- At least 6 disks per NiFi node to ensure dedicated disks for repositories
- At least 4GB of RAM for the NiFi heap

Now that you have finished reviewing the Flow Management cluster sizing considerations, see *Processing one billion events per second with NiFi* for additional information and a use case walk through.

Related Concepts

[Sizing your Flow Management cluster](#)

[Data flow design](#)

[NiFi design](#)

[Cluster layout](#)

[Disk configuration](#)

[Resource intensive processors](#)

Related Information

[Processing one billion events per second with Apache NiFi](#)