

Multi-Master Replication Clusters in Kubernetes and Docker Swarm

For more examples visit – <https://github.com/franzinc/agraph-examples>

Introduction

In this document we primarily discuss running a [Multi-Master Replication cluster \(MMR\)](#) inside Kubernetes. We will also show a Docker Swarm implementation.

This directory and subdirectories contain code you can use to run an MMR cluster. The second half of this document is entitled *Setting up and running MMR under Kubernetes* and that is where you'll see the steps needed to run the MMR cluster in Kubernetes.

MMR replication clusters are different from distributed AllegroGraph clusters in these important ways:

1. Each member of the cluster needs to be able to make a TCP connection to each other member of the cluster. The connection is to a port computed at run time. The range of port numbers to which a connection is made can be constrained by the `agraph.cfg` file but typically this will be a large range to ensure that at least one port in that range is not in used.
2. All members of the cluster hold the complete database (although for brief periods of time they can be out of sync and catching up with one another).

MMR replication clusters don't quite fit the Kubernetes model in these ways

1. When the cluster is running normally each instance knows

the DNS name or IP address of each other instance. In Kubernetes you don't want to depend on the IP address of another cluster's pod as those pods can go away and a replacement started at a different IP address. We'll describe below our solution to this.

2. Services are a way to hide the actual location of a pod however they are designed to handle a set of known ports.. In our case we need to connect from one pod to a known-at-runtime port of another pod and this isn't what services are designed for.
3. A key feature of Kubernetes is the ability to scale up and down the number of processes in order to handle the load appropriately. Processes are usually single purpose and stateless. An MMR process is a full database server with a complete copy of the repository. Scaling up is not a quick and simple operation – the database must be copied from another node. Thus scaling up is a more deliberate process rather than something automatically done when the load on the system changes during the day.

The Design

1. We have a headless service for our controlling instance StatefulSet and that causes there to be a DNS entry for the name *controlling* that points to the current IP address of the node in which the controlling instance runs. Thus we don't need to hardwire the IP address of the controlling instance (as we do in our [AWS load balancer implementation](#)).
2. The controlling instance uses two PersistentVolumes to store: 1. The repo we're replicating and 2. The token that other nodes can use to connect to this node. Should the controlling instance AllegroGraph server die (or the pod in which it runs dies) then when the pod is started again it will have access to the data on those two persistent volumes.
3. We call the other instances in the cluster Copy

instances. These are full read-write instances of the repository but we don't back up their data in a persistent volume. This is because we want to scale up and down the number of Copy instances. When we scale down we don't want to save the old data since when we scale down we remove that instance from the cluster thus the repo in the cluster can never join the cluster again. We denote the Copy instances by their IP addresses. The Copy instances can find the address of the controlling instance via DNS. The controlling instance will pass the cluster configuration to the Copy instance and that configuration information will have the IP addresses of the other Copy instances. This is how the Copy instances find each other.

4. We have a load balancer that allows one to access a random Copy instance from an external IP address. This load balancer doesn't support sessions so it's only useful for doing queries and quick inserts that don't need a session.
5. We have a load balancer that allows access to the Controlling instance via HTTP. While this load balancer also doesn't have session support, because there is only one controlling instance it's not a problem if you start an AllegroGraph session because all sessions will live on the single controlling instance.

We've had the most experience with Kubernetes on the Google Cloud Platform. There is no requirement that the load balancer support sessions and the GCP version does not at this time, but that doesn't mean that session support isn't present in the load balancer in other cloud platforms. Also there is a large community of Kubernetes developers and one may find a load balancer with session support available from a third party.

Implementation

We build and deploy in three subdirectories. We'll describe

the contents of the directories first and then give step by step instructions on how to use the contents of the directories.

Directory ag/

In this directory we build a Docker image holding an installed AllegroGraph. The Dockerfile is

```
FROM centos:7
```

```
#  
# AllegroGraph root is /app/agraph  
#
```

```
RUN yum -y install net-tools iputils bind-utils wget hostname
```

```
ARG agversion=agraph-6.6.0  
ARG agdistfile=${agversion}-linuxamd64.64.tar.gz
```

```
# This ADD command will automatically extract the contents  
# of the tar.gz file  
ADD ${agdistfile} .
```

```
# needed for agraph 6.7.0 and can't hurt for others  
# change to 11 if you only have OpenSSL 1.1 installed  
ENV ACL_OPENSSL_VERSION=10
```

```
# so prompts are readable in an emacs window  
ENV PROMPT_COMMAND=
```

```
RUN groupadd agraph && useradd -d /home/agraph -g agraph  
agraph  
RUN mkdir /app
```

```
# declare ARGs as late as possible to allow previous lines to  
# be cached  
# regardless of ARG values
```

```
ARG user  
ARG password
```

```
RUN (cd ${agversion} ; ./install-agraph /app/agraph -- --non-
interactive \
    --runas-user agraph \
    --super-user $user \
    --super-password $password )

# remove files we don't need
RUN rm -fr /app/agraph/lib/doc /app/agraph/lib/demos

# we will attach persistent storage to this directory
VOLUME ["/app/agraph/data/rootcatalog"]

# patch to reduce cache time so we'll see when the controlling
instance moves.
# ag 6.7.0 has config parameter StaleDNSRetainTime which
allows this to be
# done in the configuration.
COPY dnspatch.cl /app/agraph/lib/patches/dnspatch.cl

RUN chown -R agraph.agraph /app/agraph
```

The Dockerfile installs AllegroGraph in /app/agraph and creates an AllegroGraph super user with the name and password passed in as arguments. It creates a user *agrap* so that the AllegroGraph server will run as the user *agrap* rather than as *root*.

We have to worry about the controlling instance process dying and being restarted in another pod with a different IP address. Thus if we've cached the DNS mapping of *controlling* we need to notice as soon as possible that the mapping has changed. The dnspatch.cl file changes a parameter in the AllegroGraph DNS code to reduce the time we trust our DNS cache to be accurate so that we'll quickly notice if the IP address of *controlling* changes.

We also install a number of networking tools. AllegroGraph doesn't need these but if we want to do debugging inside the container they are useful to have installed.

The image created by this Dockerfile is pushed to the Docker Hub using an account you've specified (see the Makefile in this directory for details).

Directory agrepl/

Next we take the image created above and add the specific code to support replication clusters.

The Dockerfile is

```
ARG DockerAccount=specifyaccount
```

```
FROM ${DockerAccount}/ag:latest
```

```
#  
# AllegroGraph root is /app/agraph
```

```
RUN mkdir /app/agraph/scripts  
COPY . /app/agraph/scripts
```

```
# since we only map one port from the outside into our cluster  
# we need any sessions created to continue to use that one  
port.
```

```
RUN echo "UseMainPortForSessions true" >>  
/app/agraph/lib/agraph.cfg
```

```
# settings/user will be overwritten with a persistent mount so  
copy
```

```
# the data to another location so it can be restored.
```

```
RUN cp -rp /app/agraph/data/settings/user  
/app/agraph/data/user
```

```
ENTRYPOINT ["/app/agraph/scripts/repl.sh"]
```

When building an image using this Dockerfile you must specify

```
--build-arg DockerAccount=MyDockerAccount
```

where MyDockerAccount is a Docker account you're authorized to push images to.

The Dockerfile installs the scripts repl.sh, vars.sh and accounts.sh. These are run when this container starts.

We modify the agraph.cfg with a line that ensures that even if we create a session that we'll continue to access it via port 10035 since the load balancer we'll use to access AllegroGraph only forwards 10035 to AllegroGraph.

Also we know that we'll be installing a persistent volume at /app/agraph/data/user so we make a copy of that directory in another location since the current contents will be invisible when a volume is mounted on top of it. We need the contents as that is where the credentials for the user we created when AllegroGraph was installed.

Initially the file settings/user/username will contain the credentials we specified when we installed AllegroGraph in first Dockerfile. When we create a cluster instance a new token is created and this is used in place of the password for the test account. This token is stored in settings/user/username which is why we need this to be an instance-specific and persistent filesystem for the controlling instance.

When this container starts it runs repl.sh which first runs accounts.sh and vars.sh.

accounts.sh is a file created by the top level Makefile to store the account information for the user account we created when we installed AllegroGraph.

vars.sh is

```
# constants need by scripts
port=10035
reponame=myrepl
```

```
# compute our ip address, the first one printed by hostname
myip=$(hostname -I | sed -e 's/ .*$/')
```

In vars.sh we specify the information about the repository we'll create and our IP address.

The script repl.sh is this:

```
#!/bin/bash
#
## to start ag and then create or join a cluster
##

cd /app/agraph/scripts

set -x
. ./accounts.sh
. ./vars.sh

agtool=/app/agraph/bin/agtool

echo ip is $myip

# move the copy of user with our login to the newly mounted
# volume
# if this is the first time we've run agraph on this volume
if [ ! -e /app/agraph/data/rootcatalog/$reponame ] ; then
    cp -rp /app/agraph/data/user/*
/app/agraph/data/settings/user
fi

# due to volume mounts /app/agraph/data could be owned by root
# so we have to take back ownership
chown -R agraph.agraph /app/agraph/data

## start agraph
/app/agraph/bin/agraph-control --config
/app/agraph/lib/agraph.cfg start

term_handler() {
    # this signal is delivered when the pod is
    # about to be killed. We remove ourselves
    # from the cluster.
```



```

    echo got term signal
    /bin/bash ./remove-instance.sh
    exit
}

sleepforever() {
    # This unusual way of sleeping allows
    # a TERM signal sent when the pod is to
    # die to then cause the shell to invoke
    # the term_handler function above.
    date
    while true
    do
        sleep 99999 & wait ${!}
    done
}

if [ -e /app/agraph/data/rootcatalog/$reponame ] ; then
    echo repository $reponame already exists in this
persistent volume
    sleepforever
fi

controllinghost=controlling

controllingspec=$authuser:$authpassword@$controllinghost:$port
/$reponame

if [ x$Controlling == "xyes" ] ;
then
    # It may take a little time for the dns record for
'controlling' to be present
    # and we need that record because the agtool program below
will use it
    until host controlling ; do echo controlling not in DNS
yet; sleep 5 ; done
    ## create first and controlling cluster instance
    $agtool repl create-cluster $controllingspec controlling

else
    # wait for the controlling ag server to be running

```

```

                                until          curl          -s
http://$authuser:$authpassword@$controllinghost:$port/version
; do echo wait for controlling ; sleep 5; done

    # wait for server in this container to be running
                                until          curl          -s
http://$authuser:$authpassword@$myip:$port/version ; do echo
wait for local server ; sleep 5; done

    # wait for cluster repo on the controlling instance to be
present
    until $agtool repl status $controllingspec > /dev/null ; do
echo wait for repo ; sleep 5; done
    myiname=i-$myip
    echo $myiname > instance-name.txt

    # construct the remove-instance.sh shell script to remove
this instance
    # from the cluster when the instance is terminated.
    echo $agtool repl remove $controllingspec $myiname >
remove-instance.sh
    chmod 755 remove-instance.sh
    #

    # note that
    # % docker kill container
    # will send a SIGKILL signal by default we can't trap on
SIGKILL.
    # so
    # % docker kill -s TERM container
    # in order to test this handler
    trap term_handler SIGTERM SIGHUP SIGUSR1
    trap -p
    echo this pid is $$

    # join the cluster
    echo joining the cluster
    $agtool repl grow-cluster $controllingspec
    $authuser:$authpassword@$myip:$port/$reponame $myiname
fi
sleepforever

```

This script can be run under three different conditions

1. Run when the Controlling instance is starting for the first time
2. Run when the Controlling instance is restarting having run before and died (perhaps the machine on which it was running crashed or the AllegroGraph process had some error)
3. Run when a Copy instance is starting for the first time. Copy instances are not restarted when they die. Instead a new instance is created to take the place of the dead instance. Therefore we don't need to handle the case of a Copy instance restarting.

In cases 1 and 2 the environment variable *Controlling* will have the value "yes".

In case 2 there will be a directory at `/app/agraph/data/rootcatalog/$reponame`.

In all cases we start an AllegroGraph server.

In case 1 we create a new cluster. In case 2 we just sleep and let the AllegroGraph server recover the replication repository and reconnect to the other members of the cluster.

In case 3 we wait for the controlling instance's AllegroGraph to be running. Then we wait for our AllegroGraph server to be running. Then we wait for the replication repository we want to copy to be up and running. At that point we can grow the cluster by copying the cluster repository.

We also create a script which will remove this instance from the cluster should this pod be terminated. When the pod is killed (likely due to us scaling down the number of Copy instances) a termination signal will be sent first to the process allowing it to run this remove script before the pod completely disappears.

Directory kube/

This directory contains the yaml files that create kubernetes resources which then create pods and start the containers that create the AllegroGraph replication cluster.

controlling-service.yaml

We begin by defining the services. It may seem logical to define the applications before defining the service to expose the application but it's the service we create that puts the application's address in DNS and we want the DNS information to be present as soon as possible after the application starts. In the repl.sh script above we include a test to check when the DNS information is present before allowing the application to proceed.

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
  name: controlling
spec:
  clusterIP: None
  selector:
    app: controlling
  ports:
    - name: http
      port: 10035
      targetPort: 10035
```

This selector defines a service for any container with a label with a key app and a value controlling. There aren't any such containers yet but there will be. You create this service with

```
% kubectl create -f controlling-service.yaml
```

In fact for all the yaml files shown below you create the object they define by running

```
% kubectl create -f filename.yaml
```

copy-service.yaml

We do a similar service for all the copy applications.

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
  name: copy
spec:
  clusterIP: None
  selector:
    app: copy
  ports:
    - name: main
      port: 10035
      targetPort: 10035
```

controlling.yaml

This is the most complex resource description for the cluster. We use a StatefulSet so we have a predictable name for the single pod we create. We define two persistent volumes. A StatefulSet is designed to control more than one pod so rather than a VolumeClaim we have a VolumeClaimTemplate so that each Pod can have its own persistent volume... but as it turns out we have only one pod in this set and we never scale up. There must be exactly one controlling instance.

We setup a liveness check so that if the AllegroGraph server dies Kubernetes will restart the pod and thus the AllegroGraph server. Because we've used a persistent volume for the AllegroGraph repositories when the AllegroGraph server restarts it will find that there is an existing MMR replication repository that was in use when the AllegroGraph server was last running. AllegroGraph will restart that replication repository which will cause that replication instance to reconnect to all the copy instances and become part of the cluster again.

We set the environment variable Controlling to yes and this causes this container to start up as a controlling instance (you'll find the check for the Controlling environment

variable in the repl.sh script above).

We have a volume mount for /dev/shm, the shared memory filesystem, because the default amount of shared memory allocated to a container by Kubernetes is too small to support AllegroGraph.

```
#
# stateful set of controlling instance
#

apiVersion: apps/v1beta1
kind: StatefulSet
metadata:
  name: controlling
spec:
  serviceName: controlling
  replicas: 1
  template:
    metadata:
      labels:
        app: controlling
    spec:
      containers:
      - name: controlling
        image: dockeraccount/agrepl:latest
        imagePullPolicy: Always
        livenessProbe:
          httpGet:
            path: /hostname
            port: 10035
          initialDelaySeconds: 30
        volumeMounts:
        - name: shm
          mountPath: /dev/shm
        - name: data
          mountPath: /app/agraph/data/rootcatalog
        - name: user
          mountPath: /app/agraph/data/settings/user
      env:
      - name: Controlling
```

```
    value: "yes"
  volumes:
    - name: shm
      emptyDir:
        medium: Memory
  volumeClaimTemplates:
    - metadata:
        name: data
      spec:
        resources:
          requests:
            storage: 20Gi
        accessModes:
          - ReadWriteOnce
    - metadata:
        name: user
      spec:
        resources:
          requests:
            storage: 10Mi
        accessModes:
          - ReadWriteOnce
```

copy.yaml

This StatefulSet is responsible for starting all the other instances. It's much simpler as it doesn't use Persistent Volumes

```
#
# stateful set of copies of the controlling instance
#
```

```
apiVersion: apps/v1beta1
kind: StatefulSet
metadata:
  name: copy
spec:
  serviceName: copy
  replicas: 2
  template:
    metadata:
```

```
labels:
  app: copy
spec:
  volumes:
    - name: shm
      emptyDir:
        medium: Memory
  containers:
    - name: controlling
      image: dockeraccount/agrepl:latest
      imagePullPolicy: Always
      livenessProbe:
        httpGet:
          path: /hostname
          port: 10035
          initialDelaySeconds: 30
      volumeMounts:
        - name: shm
          mountPath: /dev/shm
```

controlling-lb.yaml

We define a load balancer so applications on the internet outside of our cluster can communicate with the controlling instance. The IP address of the load balancer isn't specified here. The cloud service provider (i.e. Google Cloud Platform or AWS) will determine an address after a minute or so and will make that value visible if you run

```
% kubectl get svc controlling-loadbalancer
```

The file is

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Service
metadata:
  name: controlling-loadbalancer
spec:
  type: LoadBalancer
  ports:
    - port: 10035
      targetPort: 10035
```



```
selector:  
  app: controlling
```

copy-lb.yaml

As noted earlier the load balancer for the copy instances does not support sessions. However you can use the load balancer to issue queries or simple inserts that don't require a session.

```
apiVersion: v1  
kind: Service  
metadata:  
  name: copy-loadbalancer  
spec:  
  type: LoadBalancer  
  ports:  
  - port: 10035  
    targetPort: 10035  
  selector:  
    app: copy
```

copy-0-lb.yaml

If you wish to access one of the copy instances explicitly so that you can create sessions you can create a load balancer which links to just one instance, in this case the first copy instance which is named "copy-0".

```
apiVersion: v1  
kind: Service  
metadata:  
  name: copy-0-loadbalancer  
spec:  
  type: LoadBalancer  
  ports:  
  - port: 10035  
    targetPort: 10035  
  selector:  
    app: copy  
    statefulset.kubernetes.io/pod-name: copy-0
```

Setting up and running MMR under Kubernetes

The code will build and deploy an AllegroGraph MMR cluster in Kubernetes. We've tested this in Google Cloud Platform and Amazon Web Service. This code requires Persistent Volumes and load balancers and thus requires a sophisticated platform to run (such as GCP or AWS).

Prerequisites

In order to use the code supplied you'll need two additional things

1. A Docker Hub account (<https://hub.docker.com>). A free account will work. You'll want to make sure you can push to the hub without needing a password (use the docker login command to set that up).
2. An AllegroGraph distribution in tar.gz format. We've been using agraph-6.6.0-linuxamd64.64.tar.gz in our testing. You can find the current set of server files at <https://franz.com/agraph/downloads/server> This file should be put in the ag subdirectory. Note that the Dockerfile in that directory has the line ARG agversion=agraph-6.6.0 which specifies the version of agraph to install. This must match the version of the ...tar.gz file you put in that directory.

Steps

Do Prerequisites

Fullfill the prerequisites above

Set parameters

There are 5 parameters

1. Docker account – **Must Specify**
2. AllegroGraph user – **May want to specify**
3. AllegroGraph password – **May want to specify**
4. AllegroGraph repository name – **Unlikely to want to change**

5. AllegroGraph port – **Very unlikely to want to change**

The first three parameters can be set using the Makefile in the top level directory. The last two parameters are found in `agrepr/vars.sh` if you wish to change them. Note that the port number of 10035 is found in the `yaml` files in the `kube` subdirectory. If you change the port number you'll have edit the `yaml` files as well.

The first three parameters are set via

```
% make account=DockerHubAccount user=username  
password=password
```

The account must be specified but the last two can be omitted and default to an AllegroGraph account name of `test` and a password of `xyzyz`.

If you choose to specify a password make it a simple one consisting of letters and numbers. The password will appear in shell commands and URLs and our simple scripts don't escape characters that have a special meaning to the shell or URLs.

Install AllegroGraph

Change to the `ag` directory and build an image with AllegroGraph installed. Then push it to the Docker Hub

```
% cd ag  
% make build  
% make push  
% cd ..
```

Create cluster-aware AllegroGraph image

Add scripts to create an image that will either create an AllegroGraph MMR cluster or join a cluster when started.

```
% cd agrepl  
% make build  
% make push
```

```
% cd ..
```

Setup a Kubernetes cluster

Now everything is ready to run in a Kubernetes cluster. You may already have a Kubernetes cluster running or you may need to create one. Both Google Cloud Platform and AWS have ways of creating a cluster using a web UI or a shell command. When you've got your cluster running you can do

```
% kubectl get nodes
```

and you'll see your nodes listed. Once this works you can move into the next step.

Run an AllegroGraph MMR cluster

Starting the MMR cluster involves setting up a number of services and deploying pods. The Makefile will do that for you.

```
% cd kube  
% make doall
```

You'll see when it displays the services that there isn't an external IP address allocated for the load balancers. It can take a few minutes for an external IP address to be allocated and the load balancers setup so keep running

```
% kubectl get svc
```

until you see an IP address given, and even then it may not work for a minute or two after that for the connection to be made.

Verify that the MMR cluster is running

You can use AllegroGraph Webview to see if the MMR cluster is running. Once you have an external IP address for the controlling-load-balancer go to this address in a web browser

`http://external-ip-address:10035`

Login with the credentials you used when you created the Docker images (the default is user *test* and password *xyzyzy*). You'll see a repository *myrepl* listed. Click on that. Midway down you'll see a link titled

Manage Replication Instances as controller

Click on that link and you'll see a table of three instances which now serve the same repository. This verifies that three pods started up and all linked to each other.

Namespaces

All objects created in Kubernetes have a name that is chosen either by the user or Kubernetes based on a name given by the user. Most names have an associated namespace. The combination of namespace and name must be unique among all objects in a Kubernetes cluster. The reason for having a namespace is that it prevents name clashes between multiple projects running in the same cluster that both choose to use the same name for an object.

The default namespace is named *default*.

Another big advantage using namespaces is that if you delete a namespace you delete all objects whose name is in that namespace. This is useful because a project in Kubernetes uses a lot of different types of objects and if you want to delete all the objects you've added to a Kubernetes cluster it can take a while to find all the objects by type and then delete them. However if you put all the objects in one namespace then you need only delete the namespace and you're done.

In the Makefile we have this line

```
Namespace=testns
```

which is used by this rule

reset:

```
-kubectl delete namespace ${Namespace}  
kubectl create namespace ${Namespace}  
kubectl config set-context `kubectl config current-  
context` --namespace ${Namespace}
```

The reset rule deletes all members of the Namespace named at the top of the Makefile (here testns) and then recreates the namespace and switches to it as the active namespace. After doing the reset all objects created will be created in the testns namespace.

We include this in the Makefile because you may find it useful.

Docker Swarm

The focus of this document is Kubernetes but we also have a Docker Swarm implementation of an AllegroGraph MMR cluster. Docker Swarm is significantly simpler to setup and manage than Kubernetes but has far fewer bells and whistles. Once you've gotten the ag and agrepl images built and pushed to the Docker Hub you need only link a set of machines running Docker together into a Docker Swarm and then

```
% cd swarm ; make controlling copy
```

and the AllegroGraph MMR cluster is running Once it is running you can access the cluster using Webview at

```
http://localhost:10035/
```

Graphorum – Dr. Aasman

Presenting

Graph-Driven Event Processing for Intelligent Customer Operations

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

10:15 AM – 11:15 AM

Level: Case Study



Dr. Jans Aasman, CEO, Franz Inc.

In the typical organization, the contents of the actual chat or voice conversation between agent and customer is a black hole. In the modern Intelligent Customer Operations center, the interactions between agent and customer are a source of rich information that helps agents to improve the quality of the interaction in real time, creates more sales, and provides far better analytics for management. The Intelligent Customer Operations center is enabled by a taxonomy of the products and services sold, speech recognition to turn conversations into text, a taxonomy-driven entity extractor to take the important concepts out of conversations, and machine learning to classify chats in various ways. All of this is stored in a real-time Knowledge Graph that also knows (and stores) everything about customers and agents and provides the raw data for machine learning to improve the agent/customer interaction.

In this presentation, we describe a real-world Intelligent Customer Organization that uses graph-based technology for taxonomy-driven entity extraction, speech recognition, machine learning, and predictive analytics to improve quality of conversations, increase sales, and improve business visibility.

The Importance of FAIR Data in Earth Science

Franz's CEO, Jans Aasman's recent Marine Technology News:

Data's valuation as an enterprise asset is most acutely realized over time. When properly managed, the same dataset



supports a plurality of use cases, becomes almost instantly available upon request, and is exchangeable between departments or organizations to systematically increase its yield with each deployment.

These boons of leveraging data as an enterprise asset are the foundation of GO FAIR's Findable Accessible Interoperable Reusable (FAIR) principles profoundly impacting the data management rigors of geological science. Numerous organizations in this space have embraced these tenets to swiftly share information among a diversity of disciplines to safely guide the stewardship of the earth.

According to Dr. Annie Burgess, Lab Director of Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP), the "most pressing global challenges cannot be solved by a single organization. Scientists require data collected across multiple disciplines,

which are often managed by many different agencies and institutions.” As numerous members of the earth science community are realizing, the most effectual means of managing those disparate data according to FAIR principles is by utilizing the semantic standards underpinning knowledge graphs.

Read the [full article at Marine Technology News](#)

AllegroGraph Named to DBTA Top 100 That Matter Most in Data

Franz Inc., an early innovator in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and leading supplier of Graph and Document Database technology for Knowledge Graphs, today announced that it has been named to Database Trends and Applications (DBTA) – [2019 Top 100 That Matter Most in Data](#).

“We’re excited to announce our seventh annual list, as the industry continues to grow and evolve,” remarked Thomas Hogan, Group Publisher at Database Trends and Applications. “Today, more than ever, businesses are looking to increase their efficiency, agility and ability to innovate by managing and leveraging data in new and novel ways. This list seeks to highlight those companies that have been successful in establishing themselves as unique resources for data professionals and stakeholders.”

“We are honored to receive this acknowledgement for our efforts in delivering Enterprise Knowledge Graph Solutions,” said [Dr. Jans Aasman, CEO, Franz Inc.](#) “In the past year, we

have seen demand for Enterprise Knowledge Graphs take off across industries along with recognition from top technology analyst firms that Knowledge Graphs provide the critical foundation for artificial intelligence applications and predictive analytics. Our AllegroGraph Knowledge Graph Platform Solution offers a unique comprehensive approach for helping companies accelerate the creation of Enterprise Knowledge Graphs that deliver new value to their organization.”

Franz’s Knowledge Graph Platform Solution includes both technology and services for building industrial strength Knowledge Graphs based on best-of-class tools, products, knowledge, skills and experience. At the core of the solution is Franz’s graph database technology, AllegroGraph, which is utilized by dozens of the top F500 companies worldwide and enables businesses to extract sophisticated decision insights and predictive analytics from highly complex, distributed data that cannot be uncovered with conventional databases.

[Franz delivers the expertise](#) for designing ontology and taxonomy-based solutions by utilizing standards-based development processes and tools. Franz also offers data integration services from siloed data using W3C industry standard semantics, which can then be continually integrated with information that comes from other data sources. In addition, the Franz data science team provides expertise in custom algorithms to maximize data analytics and uncover hidden knowledge.

Companies Across the Globe Use Franz Knowledge Graph Solutions

Organizations in customer service, healthcare, life science, publishing and technology have relied on Franz to help develop their knowledge graph solutions.

Global B2B technology firm N3 Results has utilized Franz’s Knowledge Graph Solution to build an ‘Intelligent Sales

Organization,' which uses graph based technology for taxonomy driven entity extraction, speech recognition, machine learning and predictive analytics to improve quality of conversations, increase sales and improve business visibility.

"In a typical sales organization, the valuable content within the online chat or voice conversation between the agent and customer goes into a black hole," said Shannon Copeland, COO of N3. "Franz helped us build a modern Intelligent Sales Organization (ISO) by creating a real-time Knowledge Graph that knows everything about customers and agents and provides the raw data for machine learning to improve doing the business of ISO. Now we use the rich information between agents and customers to improve the quality of the interaction in real time, which ultimately creates more sales and provides far better analytics for management."

In 2015, Dr. Parsa Mirhaji, his colleagues and industry partners, including Franz Inc. embarked on a project to bring Knowledge Graph technology to Montefiore, a Bronx-based medical center. "Our strategy at Montefiore is to build a data-driven and evidence-based health system – essentially a learning healthcare system – that can understand its own population thoroughly, understand and improve its practices, and develop the highest quality of services for the people it serves," said Parsa Mirhaji, MD, PhD, Director of the Center for Health Data Innovations at Montefiore and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. "In order to accomplish that goal, we have created a system that harvests every piece of data that we can possibly find, from our own EMRs and devices to patient-generated data to socioeconomic data from the community. It's extremely important to use anything we can find that can help us categorize our patients more accurately." (Health IT Analytics, At Montefiore, Artificial Intelligence Becomes Key to Patient Care, September 10, 2018)

Wolters Kluwer is using graph analytic techniques to accelerate the knowledge discovery process for its clients.

“What we’re really interested in is achieving insights that today take a person to analyze and that are prohibitive computationally,” said Greg Tatham, Wolters Kluwer CTO of Global Platforms. “We’re providing this live feedback. As you’re typing, we’re providing question and suggestions for you live. AllegroGraph gives us a performant way to be able to just work our way through the whole knowledge model and come up with suggestions to the user in real time.” (Datanami, How AI Boosts Human Expertise at Wolters Kluwer, June 6, 2018)

Gartner Identifies Knowledge Graphs and Semantics as Key Technologies for AI

Gartner recently recognized knowledge graphs as a key new technology in both their Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence and Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies. Gartner’s Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence 2018 states, “The rising role of content and context for delivering insights with AI technologies, as well as recent knowledge graph offerings for AI applications have pulled knowledge graphs to the surface.”

Semantics has also been identified by Gartner as critical for effectively utilizing enterprise data assets. “Unprecedented levels of data scale and distribution are making it almost impossible for organizations to effectively exploit their data assets. Data and analytics leaders must adopt a semantic approach to their enterprise data assets or face losing the battle for competitive advantage.” (Gartner, How to Use Semantics to Drive the Business Value of Your Data, Guido De Simoni, November 27, 2018) For more information about the Gartner report, visit the [Gartner Report Order Page](#).

About Franz Inc.

Franz Inc. is an early innovator in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and leading supplier of Semantic Graph Database technology with expert knowledge in developing and deploying Knowledge Graph solutions. The foundation for Knowledge Graphs and AI lies in the facets of semantic technology provided by

AllegroGraph and Allegro CL. The ability to rapidly integrate new knowledge is the crux of the Knowledge Graph and Franz Inc. provides the key technologies and services to address your complex challenges. Franz Inc. is your Knowledge Graph technology partner.

About Database Trends and Applications

Database Trends and Applications (DBTA), published by Information Today, Inc., is a bimonthly magazine that delivers advanced trends analysis and case studies in data management and analysis developed by a team with more than 25 years of industry experience. Visit www.dbta.com for subscription information. DBTA also delivers groundbreaking market research exclusively through its Unisphere Research group.

Creating Explainable AI With Rules

Franz's CEO, Jans Aasman's recent Forbes article:

There's a fascinating dichotomy in artificial intelligence between statistics and rules, machine learning and expert systems. Newcomers to artificial intelligence (AI) regard machine learning as innately superior to brittle rules-based systems, while [the history of this field](#) reveals both rules and probabilistic learning are integral components of AI.

This fact is perhaps nowhere truer than in [establishing explainable AI](#), which is central to the long-term business value of AI front-office use cases.

Granted, simple machine learning can automate backend processes. However, the full extent of deep learning or

complex neural networks – which are much more accurate than basic machine learning – for mission-critical decision-making and action requires explainability.

Using rules (and rules-based systems) to explicate machine learning results creates explainable AI. Many of the far-reaching applications of AI at the enterprise level – deploying it to combat financial crimes, to predict an individual's immediate and long-term future in health care, for example – require explainable AI that's fair, transparent and regulatory compliant.

Rules can explain machine learning results for these purposes and others.

Read the [full article at Forbes](#)

New!!! AllegroGraph v6.5 – Multi-model Semantic Graph and Document Database

Download – [AllegroGraph v6.5](#) and [Gruff v7.3](#)

AllegroGraph – [Documentation](#)

Gruff – [Documentation](#)

Adding JSON/JSON-LD Documents to a Graph Database

Traditional document databases (e.g. MongoDB) have excelled at storing documents at scale, but are not designed for linking data to other documents in the same database or in different databases. AllegroGraph 6.5 delivers the unique power to

define many different types of documents that can all point to each other using standards-based semantic linking and then run SPARQL queries, conduct graph searches, execute complex joins and even apply Prolog AI rules directly on a diverse sea of objects.

AllegroGraph 6.5 provides free text indexes of JSON documents for retrieval of information about entities, similar to document databases. But unlike document databases, which only link data objects within documents in a single database, AllegroGraph 6.5 moves the needle forward in data analytics by semantically linking data objects across multiple JSON document stores, RDF databases and CSV files. Users can run a single SPARQL query that results in a combination of structured data and unstructured information inside documents and CSV files. AllegroGraph 6.5 also enables retrieval of entire documents.

There are many reasons for working with JSON-LD. The big search engines force ecommerce companies to mark up their webpages with a systematic description of their products and more and more companies use it as an easy serialization format to share data.

A direct benefit for companies using AllegroGraph is that they now can combine their documents with graphs, graph search and graph algorithms. Normally when you store documents in a document database you set up your documents in such a way that it is optimized for certain direct retrieval queries. Performing complex joins for multiple types of documents or even performing a shortest path through a mass of object (types) is too complicated. Storing JSON-LD objects in AllegroGraph gives users all the benefits of a document database AND the ability to semantically link objects together, run complex joins, and perform graph search queries.

Another key benefit for companies is that your application developers don't have to learn the entire semantic technology

stack, especially the part where developers have to create individual RDF triples or edges. Application developers love to work with JSON data as serialization for objects. In JavaScript the JSON format is syntactically identical to the code for creating JavaScript objects and in Python the most import data structure is the 'dictionary' which is also near identical to JSON.

Key AllegroGraph v6.5 Features:

- Support for loading JSON-LD and also some non-RDF data files, that is files which are not already organized into triples or quads. See [Loading non-RDF data](#) section in the [Data Loading](#) document for more information on loading non-RDF data files. Loading JSON-LD files is described along with other RDF formats in the [Data Loading](#) document. The section [Supported RDF formats](#) lists all supported RDF formats.
- Support for two phase commits (2PC), which allows AllegroGraph to participate in distributed transactions compromising a number of AllegroGraph and non-AllegroGraph databases (e.g. MongoDB, Solr, etc), and to ensure that the work of a transaction must either be committed on all participants or be rolled back on all participants. Two-phase commit is described in the [Two-phase commit](#) document.
- An event scheduler: Users can schedule events in the future. The event specifies a script to run. It can run once or repeatedly on a regular schedule. See the [Event Scheduler](#) document for more information.
- AllegroGraph is 100 percent ACID, supporting

Transactions: Commit, Rollback, and Checkpointing. Full and Fast Recoverability. Multi-Master Replication

- Triple Attributes – Quads/Triples can now have attributes which can provide fine access control.
- Data Science – Anaconda, R Studio
- 3D and multi-dimensional geospatial functionality
- SPARQL v1.1 Support for Geospatial, Temporal, Social Networking Analytics, Hetero Federations
- Cloudera, Solr, and MongoDB integration
- JavaScript stored procedures
- RDF4J Friendly, Java Connection Pooling
- Graphical Query Builder for SPARQL and Prolog – Gruff
- SHACL (Beta) and SPIN Support (SPARQL Inferencing Notation)
- AGWebView – Visual Graph Search, Query Interface, and DB Management
- Transactional Duplicate triple/quad deletion and suppression
- Advanced Auditing Support
- Dynamic RDFS++ Reasoning and OWL2 RL Materializer
- AGLoad with Parallel loader optimized for both traditional spinning media and SSDs.

Numerous other optimizations, features, and enhancements.

Read the release notes – <https://franz.com/agraph/support/documentation/current/release-notes.html>