Understanding Infinite Volumes

OnCommand Unified Manager 9.5

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Understanding Infinite Volumes

An Infinite Volume is a logical storage unit that you can use to provide a large, scalable data container with a single namespace and a single mount point. Understanding some of the basic concepts of Infinite Volumes helps you to monitor and manage your SVMs with Infinite Volume.

What an Infinite Volume is

An Infinite Volume is a single, scalable volume that can store up to 2 billion files and tens of petabytes of data.

With an Infinite Volume, you can manage multiple petabytes of data in one large logical entity and clients can retrieve multiple petabytes of data from a single junction path for the entire volume.

An Infinite Volume uses storage from multiple aggregates on multiple nodes. You can start with a small Infinite Volume and expand it nondisruptively by adding more disks to its aggregates or by providing it with more aggregates to use.

Maximum number of files an Infinite Volume can store

In most cases, an Infinite Volume can hold up to 2 billion files. If an Infinite Volume is relatively small, its maximum number of files might be less than 2 billion.

The maximum number of files that an Infinite Volume can hold is determined by the size of its namespace constituent. If the namespace constituent is 10 TB, the Infinite Volume can hold 2 billion files. If the namespace constituent is less than 10 TB, the Infinite Volume can hold proportionally fewer files.

The size of the namespace constituent is roughly proportional to the size of the Infinite Volume, depending on several factors, such as the namespace constituent's 10 TB maximum size, the available space in the aggregate that holds the namespace constituent, and the SnapDiff setting.

For a two-node Infinite Volume or a multi-node Infinite Volume without SnapDiff enabled, setting the Infinite Volume to a size of 80 TB or greater typically creates a namespace constituent of 10 TB.

The file count not only includes regular files, but also other file system structures, such as directories and symbolic links.

What a storage class is

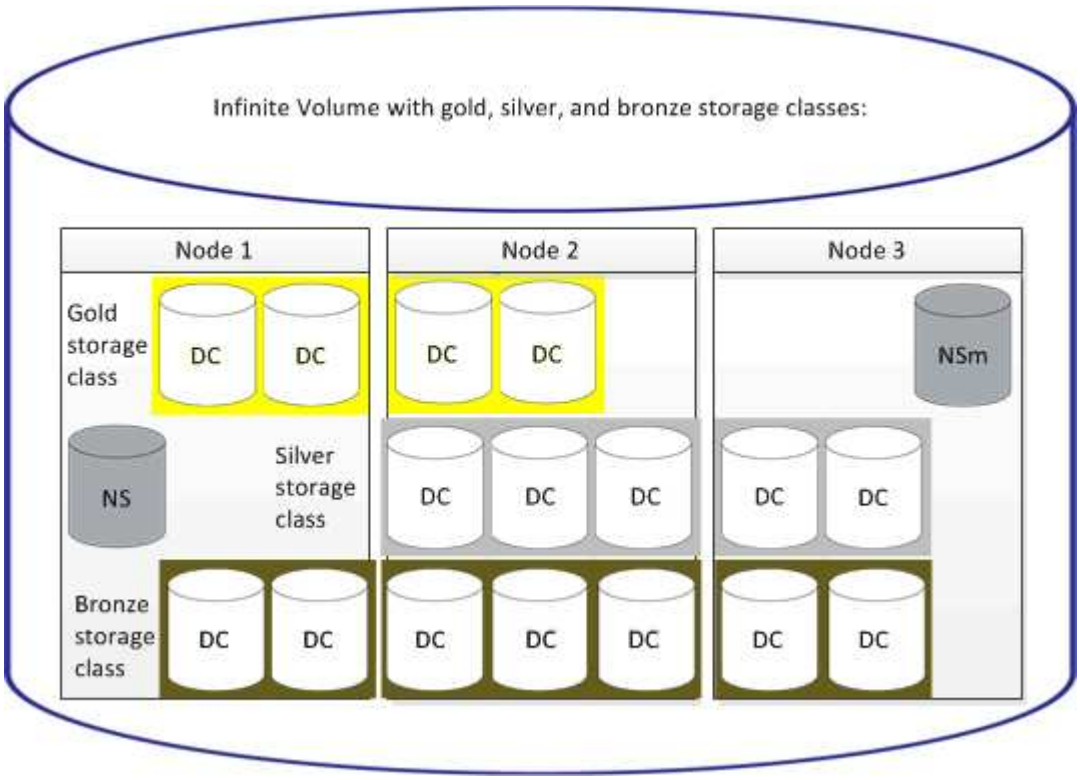
A storage class is a definition of aggregate characteristics and volume settings. You can define different storage classes and associate one or more storage classes with an Infinite Volume. You must use OnCommand Workflow Automation to define workflows for your storage class requirements and to assign storage classes to Infinite Volumes.

You can define the following characteristics for a storage class:

- Aggregate characteristics, such as the type of disks to use
- Volume settings, such as compression, deduplication, and volume guarantee

For example, you can define a storage class that uses only aggregates with SAS disks and the following volume settings: thin provisioning with compression and deduplication enabled.

The following diagram illustrates an Infinite Volume that spans multiple nodes and uses the following storage classes: gold, silver, and bronze. Each storage class can span two or more nodes within an Infinite Volume. The diagram also illustrates the placement of data constituents in each storage class.



What a namespace constituent is

Each Infinite Volume has a single namespace constituent that maps directory information and file names to the file's physical data location within the Infinite Volume.

Clients are not aware of the namespace constituent and do not interact directly with it. The namespace constituent is an internal component of the Infinite Volume.

What data constituents are

In an Infinite Volume, data is stored in multiple separate data constituents. Data constituents store only the data from a file, not the file's name.

Clients are not aware of data constituents. When a client requests a file from an Infinite Volume, the node retrieves the file's data from a data constituent and returns the file to the client.

Each Infinite Volume typically has dozens of data constituents. For example, a 6 PB Infinite Volume that contains 1 billion files might have 60 data constituents located on aggregates from 6 nodes.

What a namespace mirror constituent is

A namespace mirror constituent is an intracluster data protection mirror copy of the namespace constituent in an Infinite Volume. The namespace mirror constituent performs two roles: It provides data protection of the namespace constituent, and it supports SnapDiff for incremental tape backup of Infinite Volumes.

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