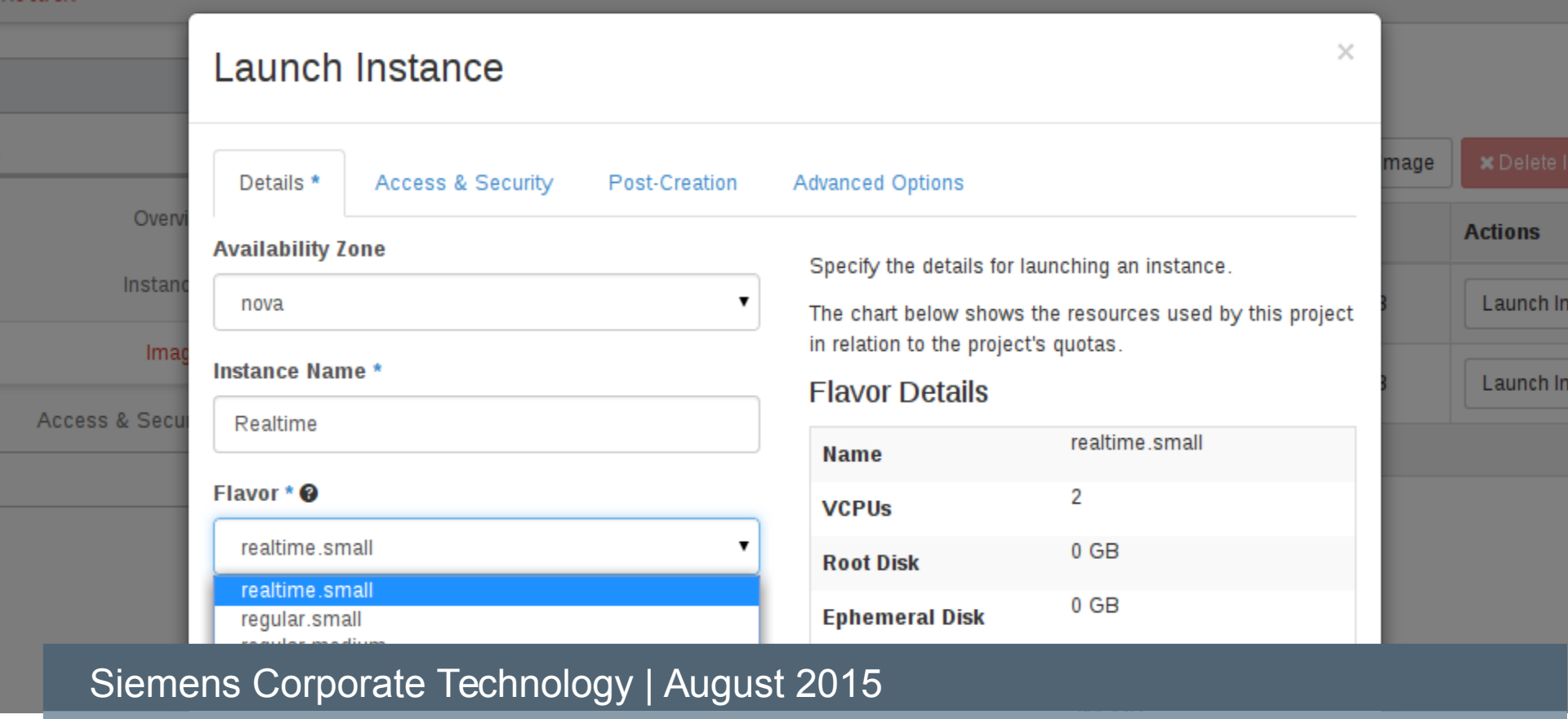


Siemens Corporate Technology | August 2015

Real-Time KVM for the Masses

Real-Time KVM for the Masses

Agenda

Motivation & requirements

Reference architecture

Compute node setup

Open Stack adaptions

Summary & outlook

Real-Time Virtualization Drivers

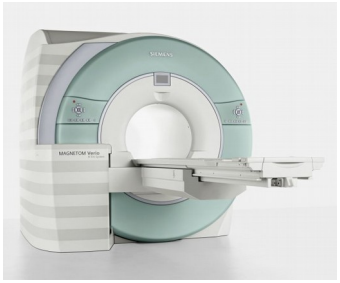
- **Communication systems**
  (media streaming & switching, etc.)
- **Trading systems**
  (stocks, goods, etc.)
- **Control systems**
  (industry, healthcare, transportation, etc.)

=> Consolidation

=> Hardware standardization

=> Simpler maintenance

=> Fast fail-over



Images: Ethernet switch by Ben Stanfield, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0, stock market by Katrina.Tuliao, licensed under CC BY 2.0

Real-Time KVM is working!

Can I have it in the cloud?

Real-Time Clouds?
No Problem!

Oh, you wanna do I/O as well...

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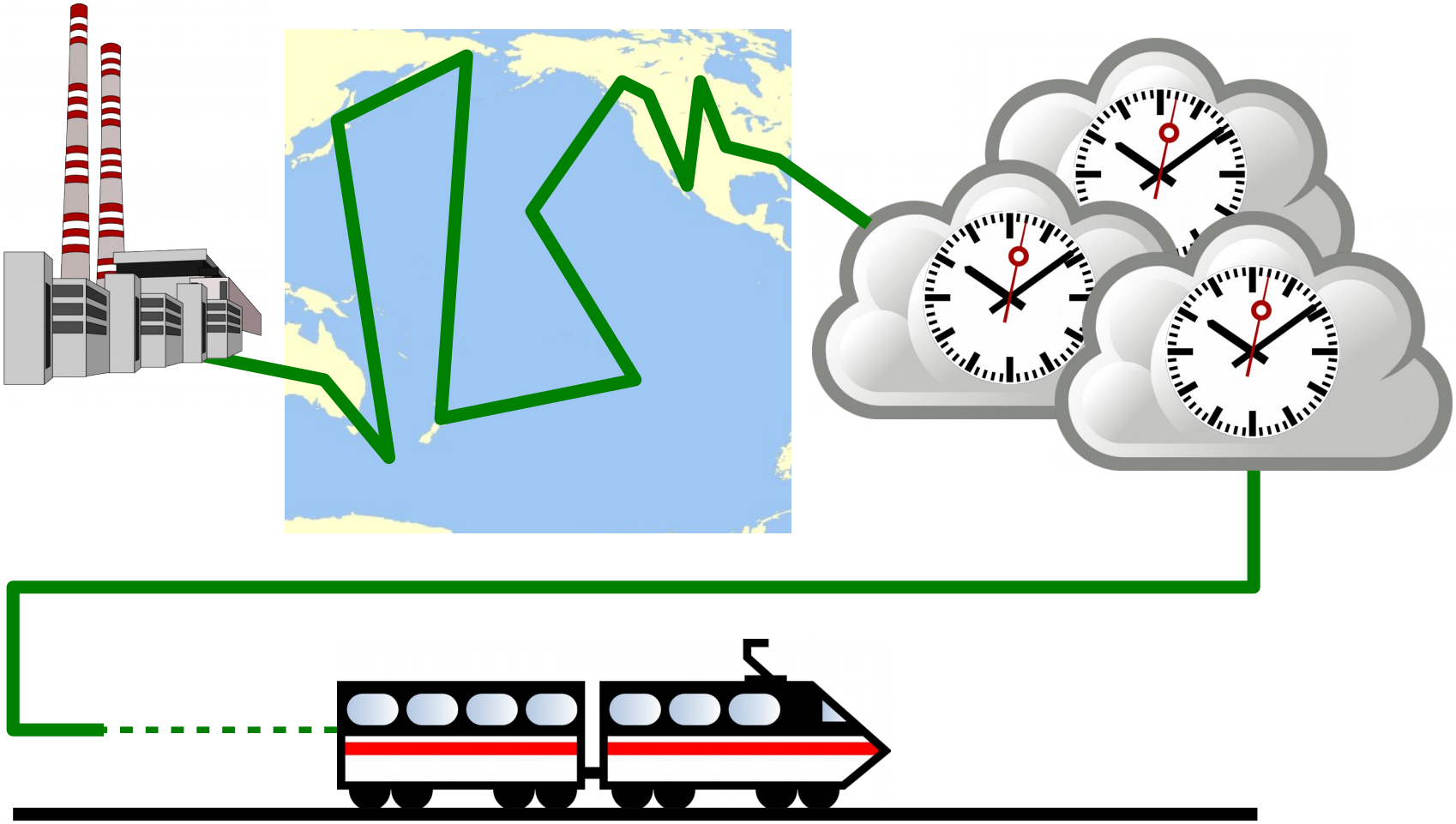
Real-Time Connectivity Required



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Realistic Deployments

- **Requirement: Fast enough links to close loops in time**
  - Data acquisition (physical world input)
  - Transfer to VM
  - Data processing (← in VM on RT-KVM)
  - Transfer back
  - Data application (physical world output)
- **That means**
  - Private cloud / data center / server cluster close to physical process
  - RT VMs will require access to special networks
    - Isolated standard networks
    - Real-time Ethernets
    - Field buses

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Confining the Real-Time Scope

- **No QEMU in the loop** (feasible but much harder)
- **No RT disks** (no use case yet, non-deterministic backends)
- **I/O via Ethernet** (common denominator)
- **No device pass-through** (feasible but complex)
- **No live migration while RT-operational** (out of reach so far)

- **The reduced RT bill of material**
  - RT CPUs
  - RT network

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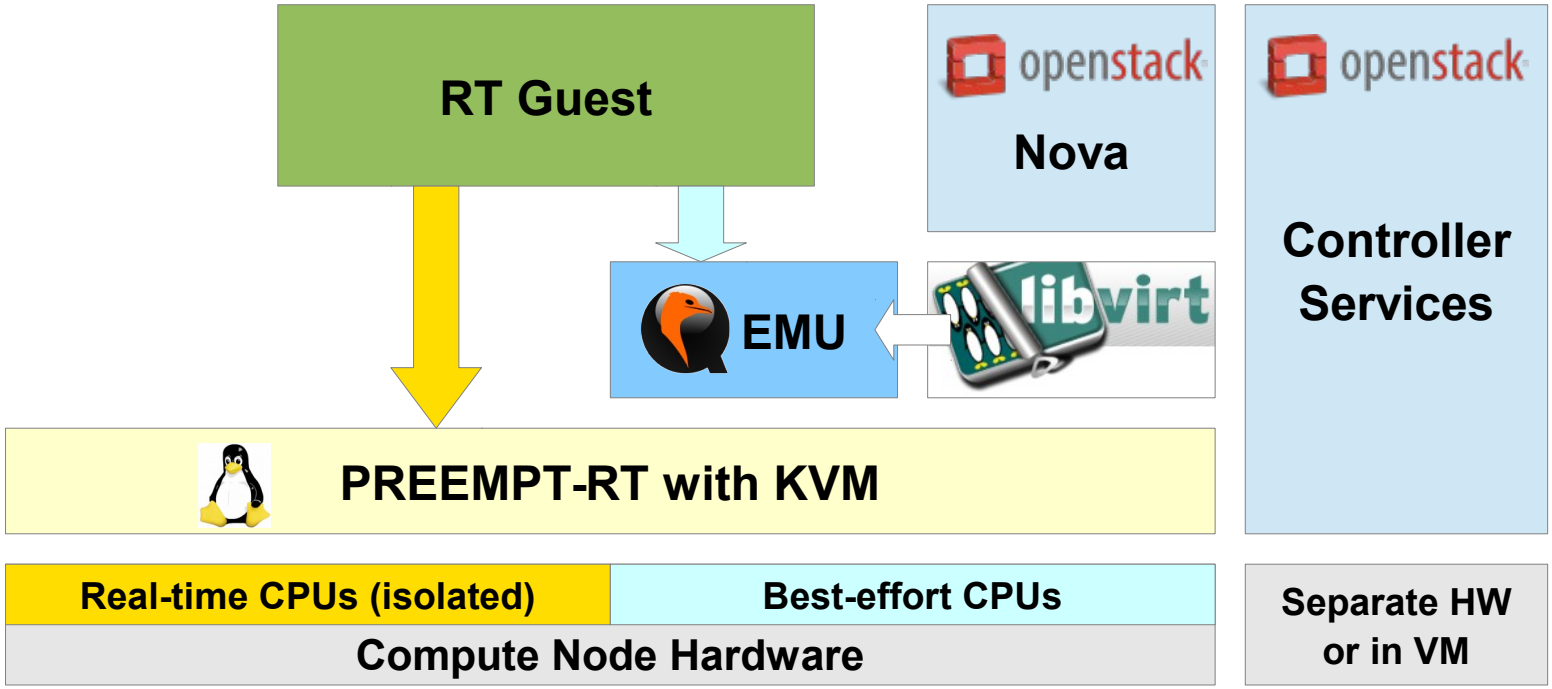
Management Layers

- **Moving from the lab...**
  - Hand-crafted deployments & starter scripts
  - Individual hosts
  - Some dozen VMs per host
- **...into the data center**
  - Hundreds of VMs, both RT and non-RT
  - Many networks, also both RT and non-RT
  - Flexible management and accounting models
- **Cloud-grade, RT-capable managements stack required**

  => OpenStack
  - Broadly used for private clouds
  - Good integration with KVM

Reference Architecture



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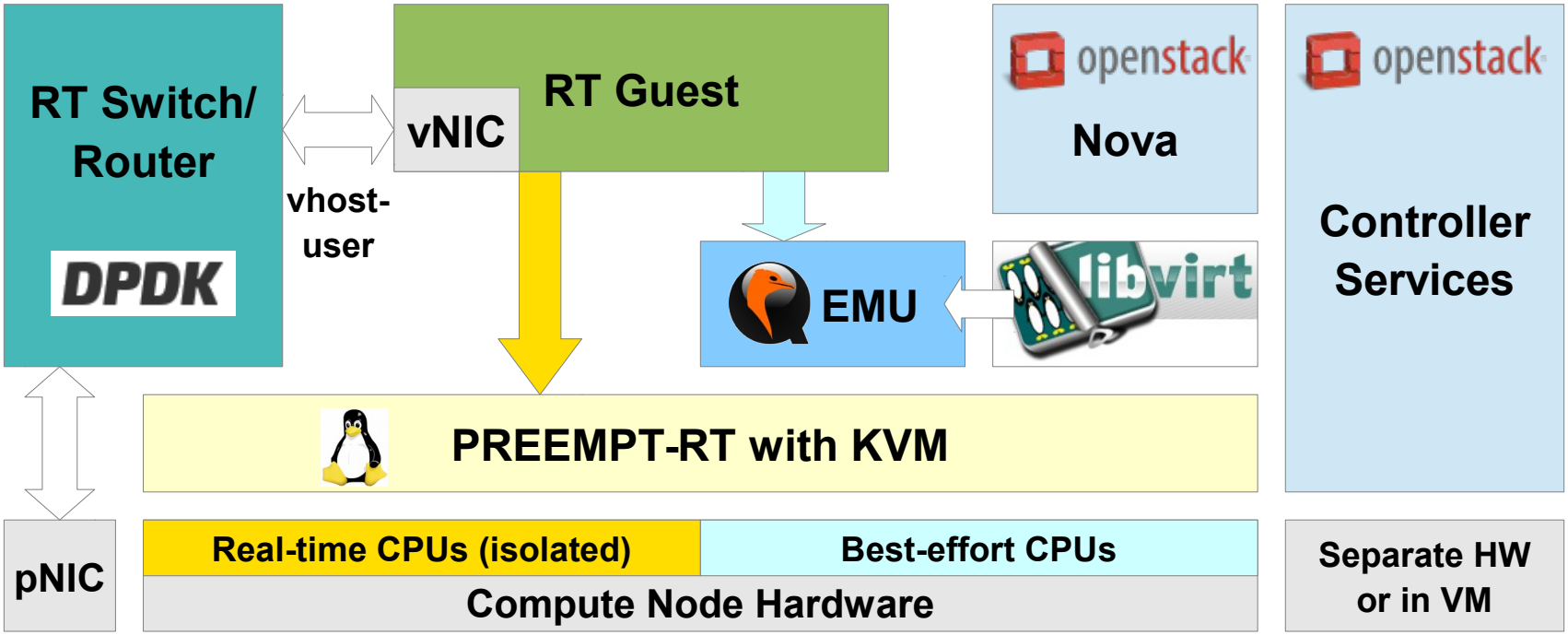
Real-Time Network Access

- **Options**
  - ~~Emulation~~
  - ~~Pass-through~~
  - Para-virtual devices => virtio
- **Need for RT data plane**
  - vhost-net: in host kernel
  - vhost-user: in separate userspace process
- **vhost-user enables more RT tuning**
  - DPDK-based switch/router
  - Aggressive polling on interfaces, less event signaling
  - Only irqfd (eventfd) from vhost process to vCPU thread

Reference Architecture (with Networking)



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Compute Node Setup

- **PREEMPT-RT as host kernel**
  - Configuration and tuning according to https://rt.wiki.kernel.org
  - Tune power management at kernel and also BIOS-level
  - See also Rik van Riel's slides (KVM Forum 2015)
- **Set up isolcpus for 2 sets**
  - vCPU threads
  - RT switch data plane threads
- **Sufficient non-isolated CPUs required**
  - Management processes & threads
  - QEMU event threads
- **We use rcu_nocbs == isolcpus so far**
  (but not nohz_full – found no relevant impact on worst-case latency)

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Compute Node Setup (2)

- **Think about RT thread throttling**
  `/proc/sys/kernel/sched_rt_period_us`
  `/proc/sys/kernel/sched_rt_runtime_us`
  - May suspend busy RT guests
  - But infinitely looping RT guests can starve the host!
- **isolcpus does not affect IRQ affinities**
  - Needs fine tuning via script and/or irqbalanced
- **Even more tuning feasible...**
  - But... do your guests need really this?

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Simplifying the Setup

- **Bad news:** Still lots of tuning...
- **Good news:** Can be replicated to similar hosts
- **Better news:** There is a tooling framework!
  - **https://github.com/OpenEneaLinux/rt-tools.git**

```
partrt - Create real time CPU partitions on SMP Linux

Usage:
partrt [options] <cmd>
partrt [options] create [cmd-options] [cpumask]
partrt [options] undo [cmd-options]
partrt [options] run [cmd-options] <partition> <command>
partrt [options] move [cmd-options] <pid> <partition>
partrt [options] list [cmd-options]
```

  - Uses cgroups + various tricks, avoids isolcpus (=> no reboot)
  - Pending full evaluation, seems reusable so far

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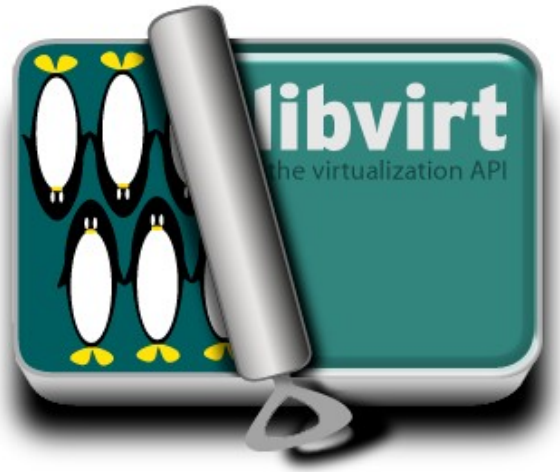
RT-KVM Control via libvirt

- **libvirt only executing higher layers' commands, no own policies**
- **All required controls upstream since 1.2.13**
- **For RT-vCPUs**
  - Pinning
  - Scheduling parameters setting (policy, priority)
  - Memory locking
- **For RT networks**
  - QEMU settings to allow sharing of guest RAM with vhost-user process
  - Connecting VM NICs to specific vhost-user ports (identification via socket path)



OpenStack Support for Real-Time – Nova Compute

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- **Several pieces already available**
  - vCPU pinning
  - pCPU dedication
- **RT Blueprint under discussion** (https://review.openstack.org/#/c/139688)
  - Introduces flavor property **`hw:cpu_realtime`**
  - Allows tagging of instances and images
  - Requires **`hw:cpu_policy = dedicated`**
  - Selects
    - QEMU memory locking
    - vCPU thread policy & priority tuning
- **Deficits**
  - Hard-coded and inappropriate policy/priority (RR, prio 1)
  - 2nd CPU mask required to differentiate between RT and non-RT pCPUs

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Real-Time Nova Compute Status

- **Patches by Sahid Ferdjaoui, Red Hat**
  - https://review.openstack.org/#/q/status:open+project:openstack/nova+branch:master+topic:bp/libvirt-real-time,n,z
  - Implements current blueprint over git master
- **Not accepted for Liberty**
  - Blueprint needs to be merged first but window already closed
  - New target: Mitaka
- **Currently integrating Sahid's patches into our deployment**
  - Plan to come up with extensions to blueprint and code

OpenStack Support for Real-Time – Neutron Networking

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- **If Neutron shall manage IP assignment for RT networks – all done**
- **But RT networks tend to be special**
  - Network addresses managed by guests or externally
  - Possibly no TCP/IP at all

  => new network type required
- **Neutron patches work in progress @Siemens**
  - Introduce “unmanaged” networks (IP-free, no DHCP, ...)
  - Agents on compute nodes will report connectivity (availability of specific physical networks)

Results?

```
void get_measurements(void);
```

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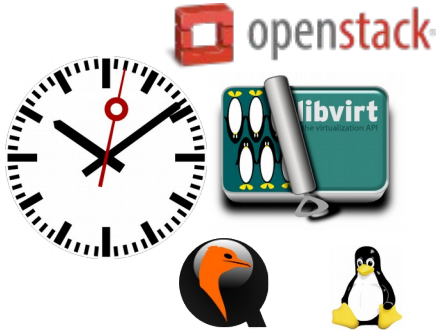
Summary & Outlook

- **Simplify real-time for data centers & similar setups**
  - Standardize setup of basic RT scenarios
  - Make RT VMs manageable and accountable
- **Full RT stack of KVM & OpenStack feasible**
  - Baseline: PREEMPT-RT
  - Standard QEMU & libvirt
  - Patches for Nova and Neutron required
  - Compute node tuning remains improvable
- **Future work**
  - RT PCI device assignment (challenge: IRQ management)
  - Compute node setup using rt-tools/partrt
  - RT device emulation (requires reworked QEMU patches)



Any Questions?

Thank you!

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