MQ High Availability

David Ware
IBM MQ Chief Architect

IBM MQ

Celebrating 25 years

High availability

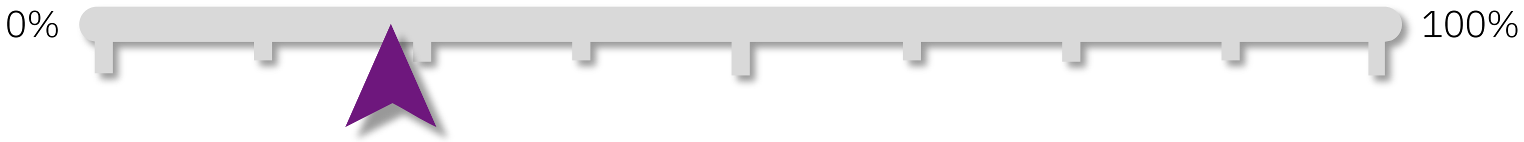
Available

A system is said to be available if it is able to perform its required function, such as successfully process requests from users.

Highly Available

A requirement, or a capability, of a system to be operational for a greater proportion of time than is common for other, less important, systems.

A sliding scale



Often, greater availability means greater complexity and cost

Measuring availability

Target	Yearly outage
95%	~ 18 days
99%	< 4 days
99.5%	< 2 days
99.9%	< 9 hours
99.99%	1 hour
99.999%	~ 5 minutes
99.9999%	~ 30 seconds

'5 nines'

Impacts on availability

- Applying maintenance
- Likelihood of outages (meantime to failure, and speed of recovery)
- Operational errors

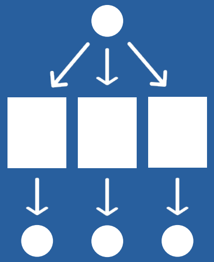
Overall availability is the combined availability of all components

- The platform
- The middleware
- The applications

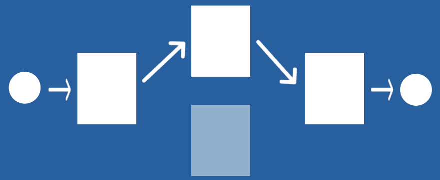
Messaging system availability

Asynchronous messaging can improve application availability by providing a buffer but the messaging system itself must be highly available to achieve that

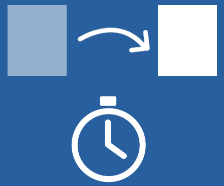
Redundancy
Multiple active options available for applications to connect



Routing
Ability to route messages around failures



Message availability
Critical messages are not locked to a single runtime and quickly available from elsewhere



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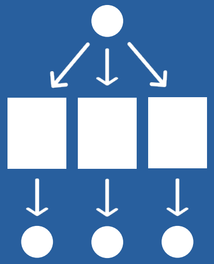

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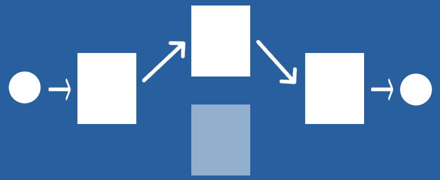

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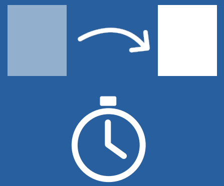

Required for highest system availabilities

Only required for certain message flows

Messaging system availability – **MQ**

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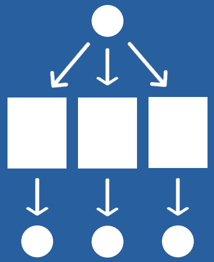
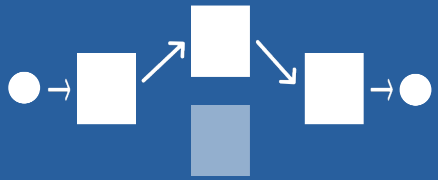


Application client connectivity

Routing

Ability to route messages around failures



MQ Cluster routing

Message availability

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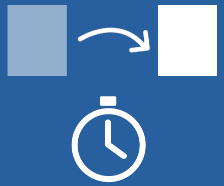


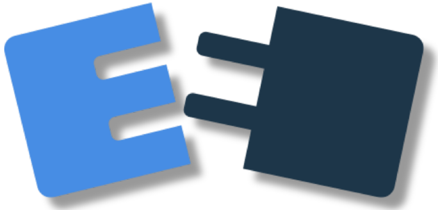
MQ 'HA'

Application client connectivity

Decouple the applications from queue managers

Applications locally bound to a queue manager will limit the availability of the solution.

Running applications remote from the queue managers, always connecting as MQ clients, decouples the application and system runtimes, enabling higher availability.



Decouple the applications from queue managers

Step 1

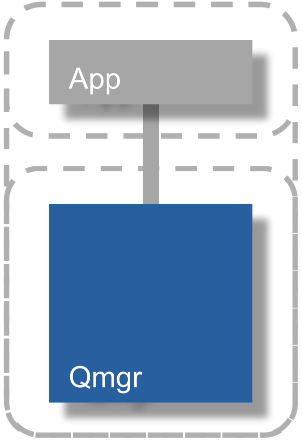
Connect the application as a client

Benefits:

- Ability to support solutions where a queue manager may fail-over between systems (more later).
- Separates application system requirements from the queue manager’s, reducing maintenance conflicts and therefore, availability.
- Restart times on either side can be reduced.

Should be relatively invisible to the application

- Don’t hardcode that connection configuration!
- Use **client auto-reconnect** to hide a queue manager restart from the application



Decouple the applications from queue managers

Step 2

Allow the application to connect to a set of queue managers

Benefits:

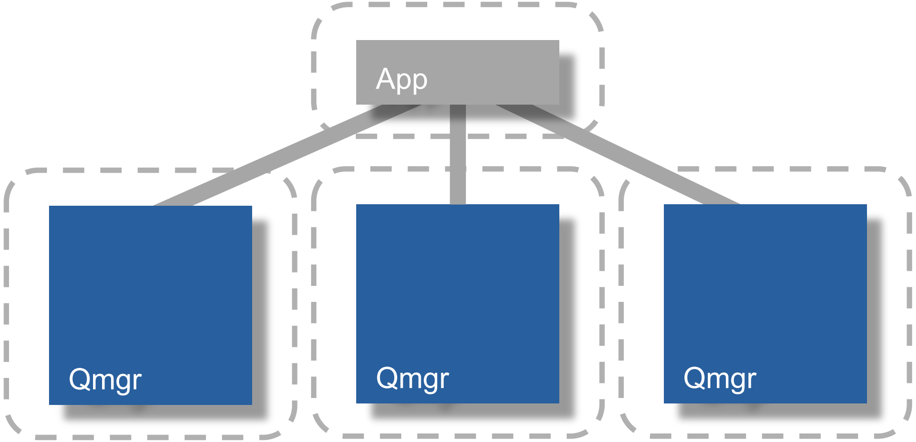
- Applications can continue to interact with MQ even whilst a queue manager is failing over or unavailable during maintenance
- With multiple applications connected, only a subset will be impacted by a queue manager outage

How does your application find the queue manager?

- Network routing
- Connection name lists
- Client Channel Definition Tables

The application may need to re-evaluate how it exploits all of MQ's capabilities

- Message ordering may change if it is currently expected across connections
- Applications may be reliant on transitory state:
  - Dynamic queues and subscriptions
  - Reply messages
  - XA transaction recovery



This might not work for all applications

What do CCDTs enable?

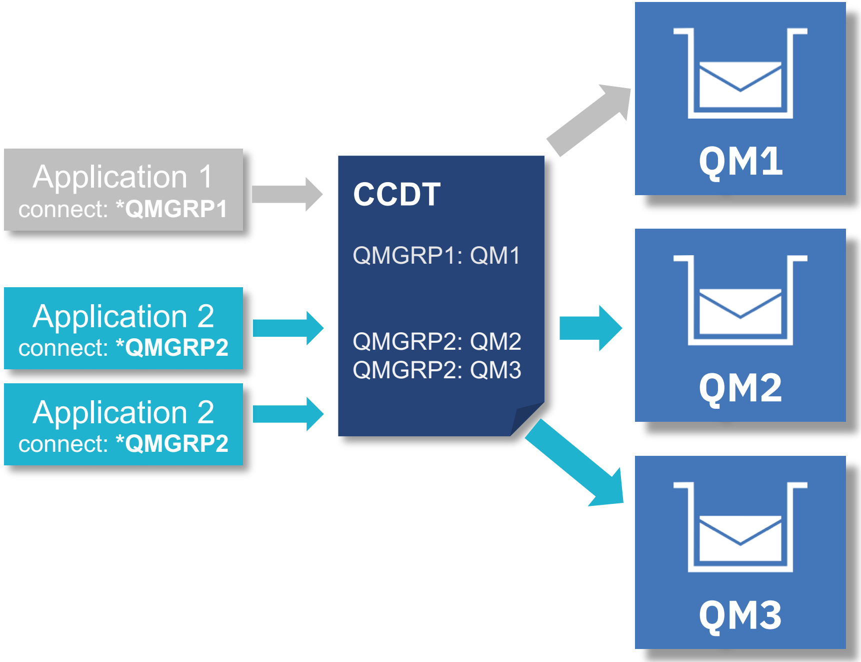
These provide encapsulation and abstraction of connection information for applications, hiding the MQ architecture and configuration from the application

They also enable security, high availability and workload balancing of clients

Applications simply connect to an abstracted "queue manager" name (which doesn't need to be the actual queue manager name – use an '*')

CCDT defines which real queue managers the application will connect to. Which could be a single queue manager or a group of

Across a group, selection can be ordered or randomised and weighted



Creating the CCDTs

CCDTs can represent connection details to multiple queue managers

CLNTCONN channels are defined to identify the **SVRCONN** channels

Define multiple CLNTCONNs in a central place to generate the CCDT

- It doesn't have to be any of the queue managers owning the SVRCONNs
- **Pre-MQ V8:** You needed a dedicated queue manager for this purpose
- **MQ V8+:** Use **runmqsc –n** to remove the need for a queue manager

A **single CCDT** for your MQ estate or **one per application**?

- A single CCDT can be easier to create but updates can be expensive
- Separate CCDTs make it easier to update when an application's needs change

Create the QMgrs and define their SVRCONNs

↓

Centrally define all the CLNTCONNs that represent all the QMgrs

↓

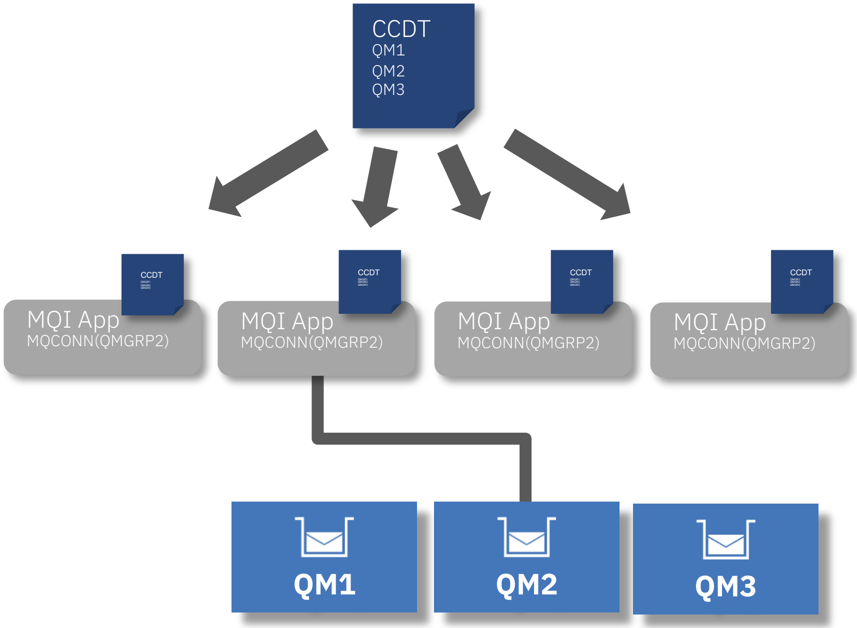
Take the CCDT and make available to the connecting applications

Accessing the CCDTs

CCDT files need to be accessible to the applications connecting to MQ

Either accessible through the client's filesystem

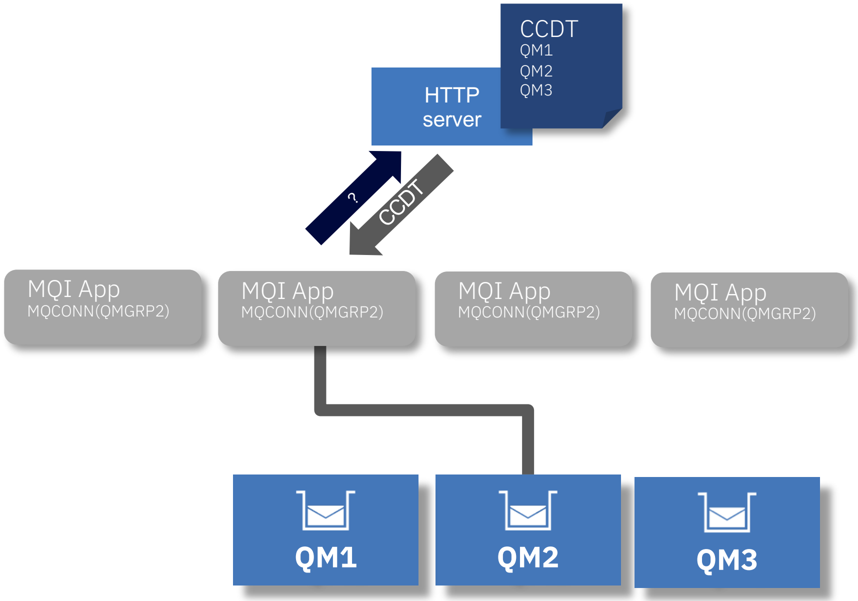
User needs to manage distribution of CCDT files themselves



Or remotely over HTTP or FTP

Available for JMS/XMS applications for a number of releases

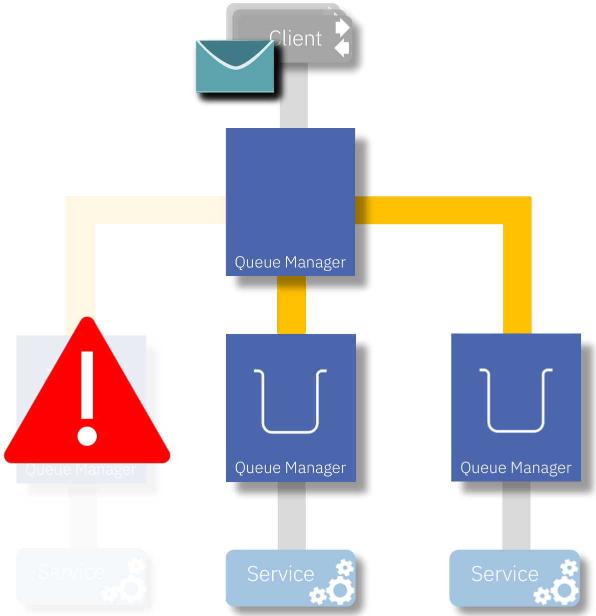
Added for MQI applications in MQ V9 LTS



MQ Cluster routing

Routing on availability with MQ Clusters

- MQ Clusters provide a way to route messages based on availability
- In a cluster there can be multiple potential targets for any message. This alone can improve the availability of the solution, always providing an option to process new messages.
- A queue manager in a cluster also has the ability to route new and old messages based on the availability of the channels, routing messages to running queue managers.
- Clustering can also be used to route messages to active consuming applications.
- Clustering is used by many customers who operate critical services at scale
- Available on all supported MQ platforms



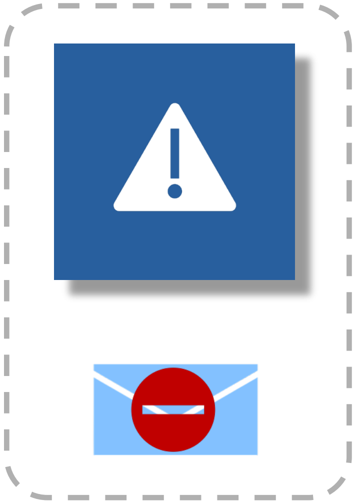
Session: Build Scalability and Availability into Your Messaging Solutions with IBM MQ Clustering

MQ ‘HA’

(message availability)

Message high availability

The problem



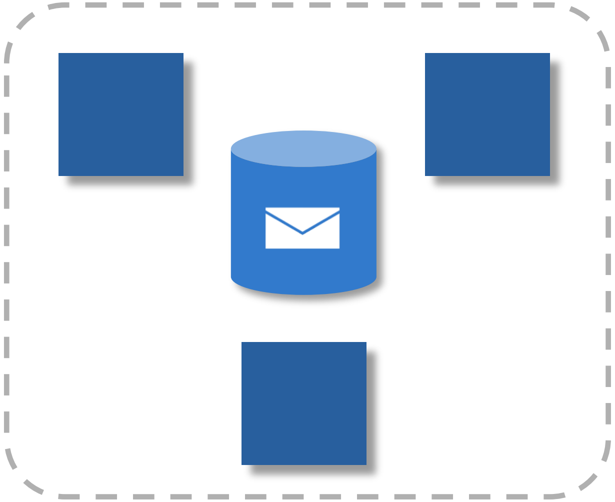
- Consider a single message
- Tied to a single runtime, on a single piece of hardware
- Any failure locks it away until recovery completes

The objective

- Messages are not tied to a single anything
- In the event of a failure, there is a fast route to access the message

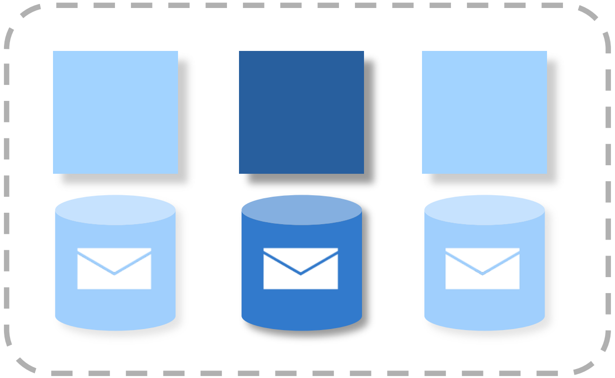
Message high availability

Active / active messages



- Any message is available from any runtime at any time
- Coordinated access to each message
- A failed runtime does not prevent access to a message by another runtime

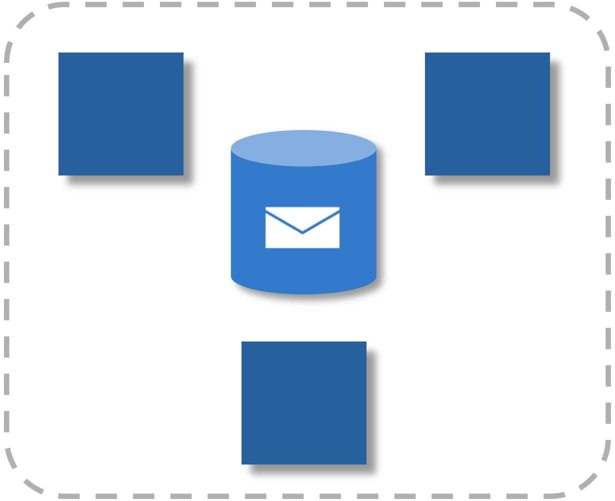
Active / passive messages



- Messages are highly available, through replication
- Only one runtime is the *leader* and has access to the messages at a time
- A failure results in a new leader taking over

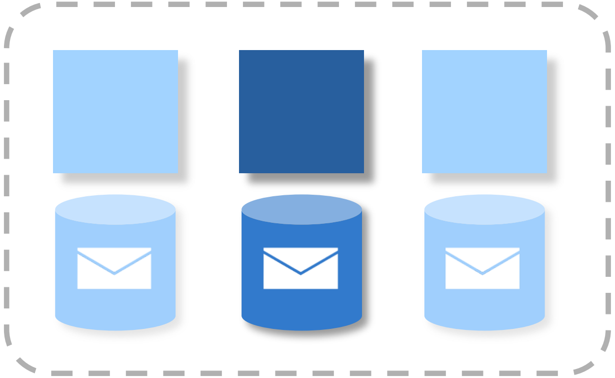
Message high availability

Active / active messages



IBM MQ for z/OS shared queues

Active / passive messages



IBM MQ Distributed HA solutions

MQ for z/OS shared queues

- Available with **z/OS parallel sysplex**
  - A tightly coupled cluster of independent z/OS instances
- Multiple queue managers are members of a **queue sharing group** (QSG)
- **Shared queues** are held in the **Parallel SysPlex Coupling Facility**
  - A highly optimised and resilient z/OS technology
- All queue managers in a QSG can access the same shared queues and their messages

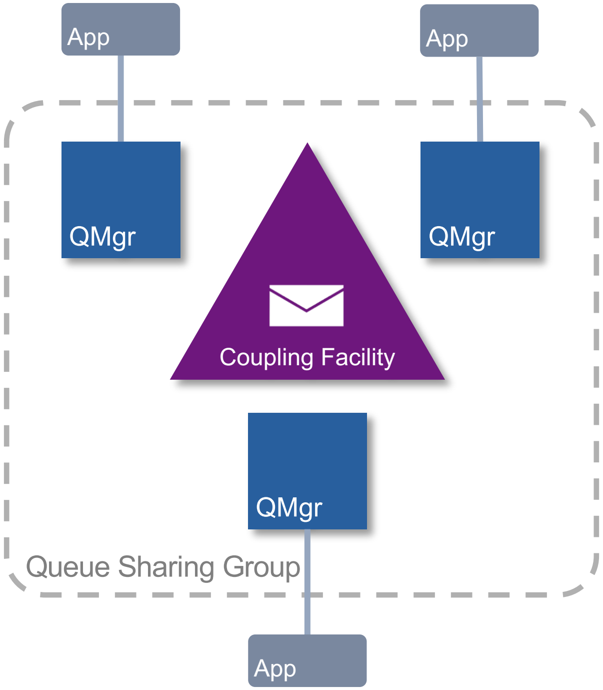
- Benefits:

✓ Messages remain available even if a queue manager fails

✓ Pull workload balancing

✓ Applications can connect to the group using a QSG name

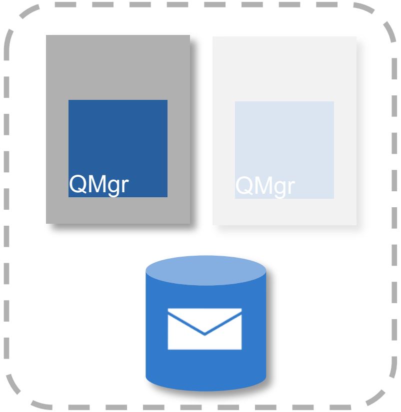
✓ Removes affinity to a specific queue manager



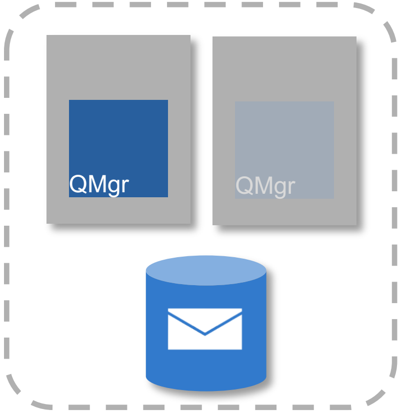
IBM MQ Distributed HA solutions

Externally managed

External mechanisms are relied on to protect the data and provide automatic takeover capabilities



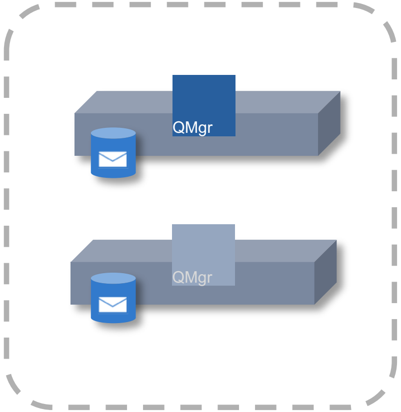
System managed HA



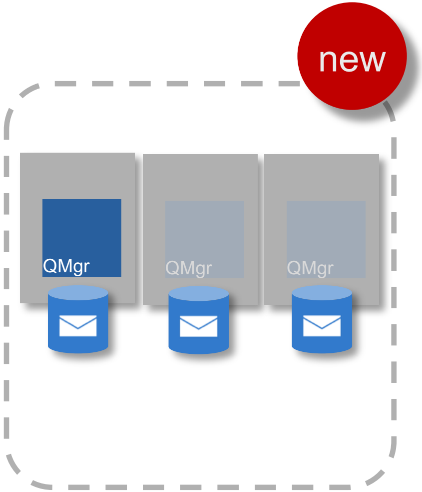
Multi-instance queue managers

MQ managed

The resilient data and the automatic takeover is provided by the MQ system



MQ Appliance



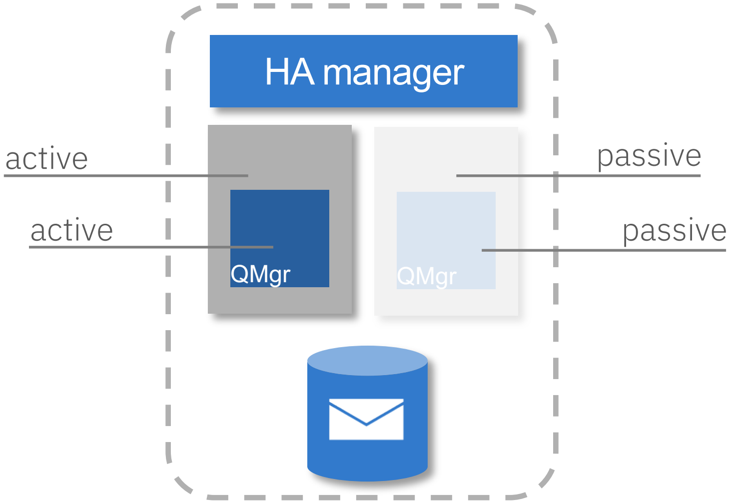
Replicated data queue managers

Externally managed HA

System managed HA

The HA manager monitors the MQ system (e.g. a queue manager in a VM or container), on detecting a failure it will start a new system, remount storage and reroute network traffic

- Relies on external, highly available, storage (e.g. SAN)
- A queue manager is unaware of the HA system
- Availability depends on speed to detect problems and to restart all layers of the system required (e.g. VM and queue manager)



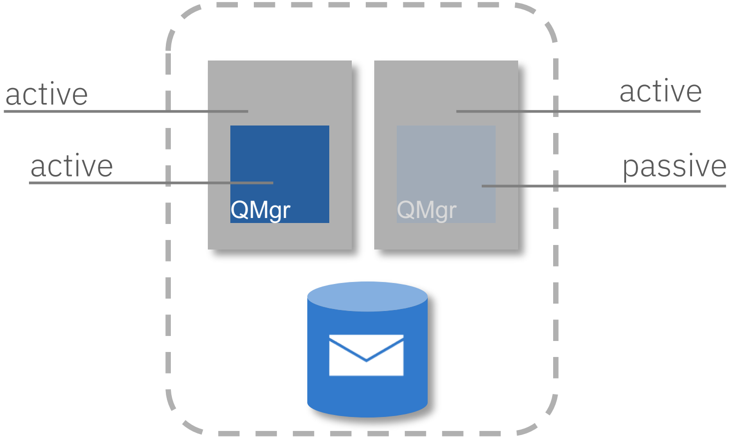
Examples:

- HA Clusters
  - Veritas Cluster Server, IBM PowerHA, Microsoft Cluster Server
- Cloud platforms
  - IBM Cloud, AWS EC2, Azure
- Containers
  - Kubernetes, Docker Swarm

- Some systems can be relatively slow to restart
- Additional cost of infrastructure
- Multiple moving parts to configure and manage

Multi-instance queue managers

- All queue manager data is held on **network attached storage** (e.g. NFS, IBM Spectrum Scale).
- **Two systems** are running, both have an instance of the same queue manager, pointed to the same storage. One is **active**, the other is in **standby**.
- A failure of the active instance is detected by the standby through regularly attempting to take filesystem locks.
- The queue manager with the locks is the active instance.



- Faster takeover, less to restart
- Cheaper – less specialised software or administration skills needed
- Wide platform coverage, Windows, Unix, Linux

- Only as reliable as the network attached storage
- Matching the MQ requirements to filesystem behaviour can be tricky
- No IP address takeover, use client configuration instead

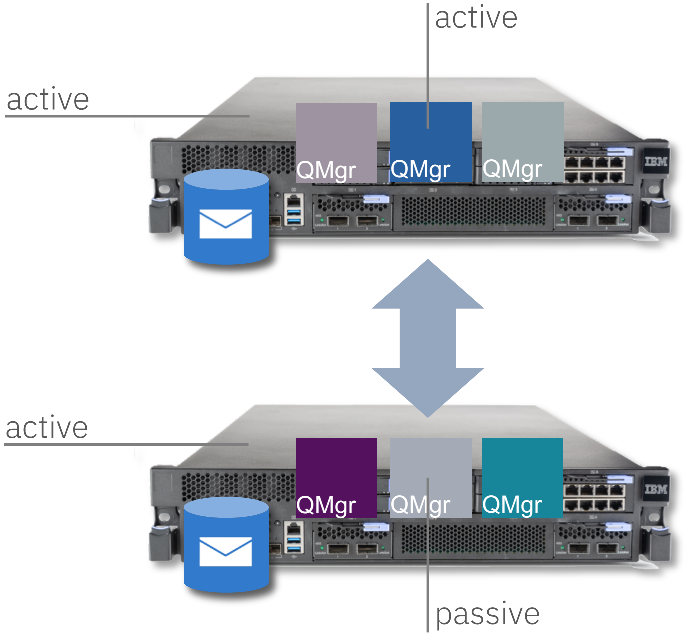
MQ managed HA

IBM MQ Appliance

- A pair of MQ Appliances are connected together and configured as an HA group
- Queue managers created on one appliance can be automatically replicated, along with all the MQ data, to the other
- Appliances monitor each other

- Automatic failover, plus manual failover for migration or maintenance
- Independent failover for queue managers so both appliances can run workload (active / active load)
- Optional IP address associated with an HA queue manager, automatically adopted by the active HA appliance – single logical endpoint for client apps

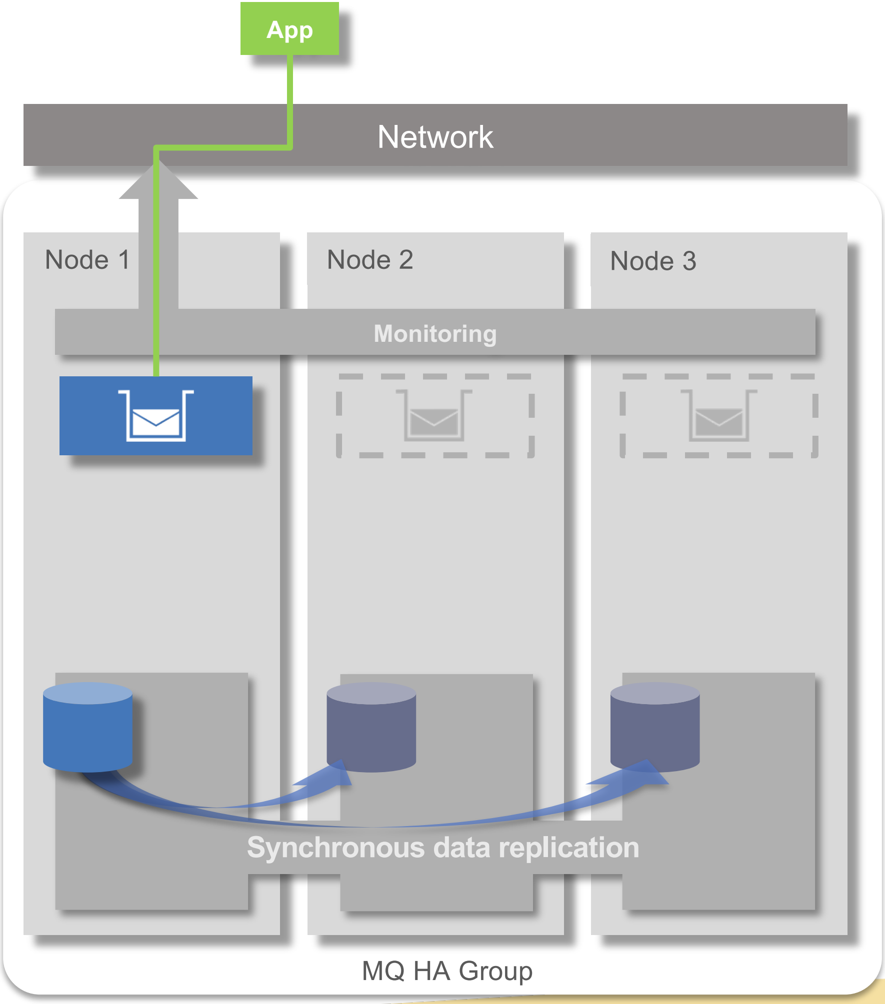
- No persistent data loss on failure
- No external storage
- No additional skills required



Replicated Data Queue Managers

- **Linux only, MQ Advanced** HA solution with no need for a shared file system or HA cluster
- MQ configures the underlying resources to make setup and operations natural to an MQ user
- Three-way replication for quorum support
- **Synchronous** data replication for once and once only transactional delivery of messages
- Active/passive queue managers with **automatic takeover**
- Per queue manager control to support active/active utilisation of nodes
- Per queue manager **IP address** to provide simple application setup
- Supported on **RHEL v7 x86-64 only**

New in V9.0.4 CD / V9.1 LTS MQ Advanced for Linux



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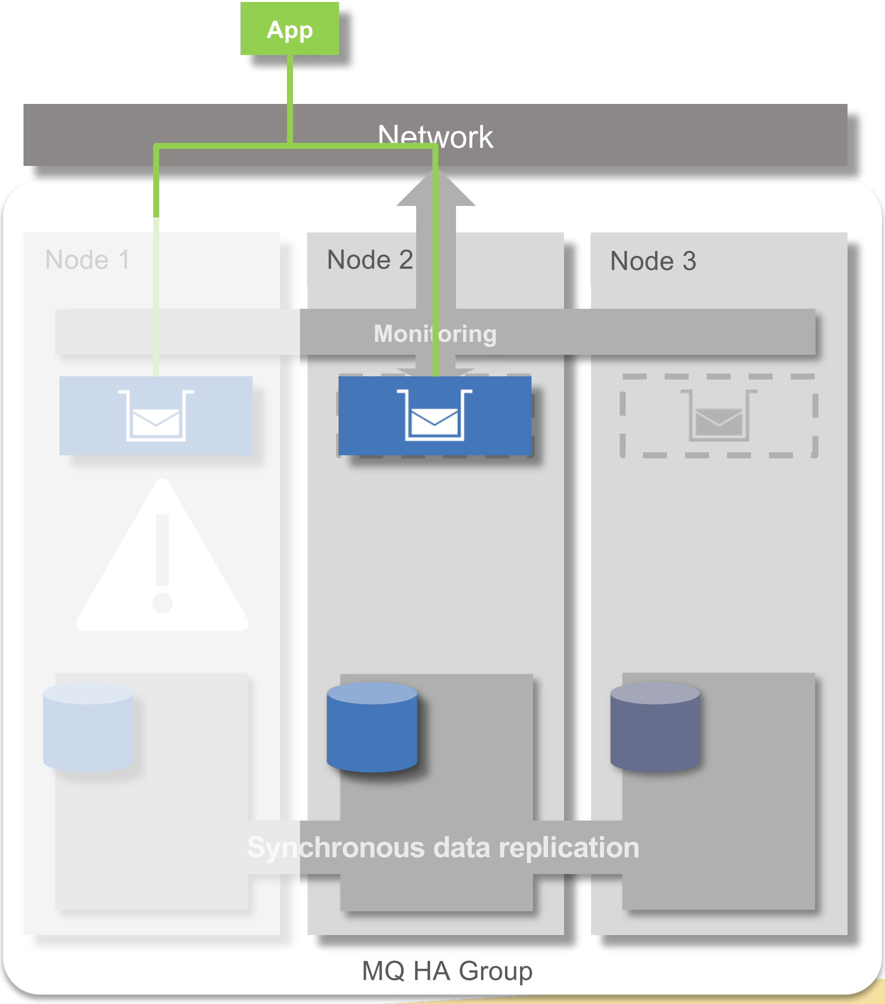


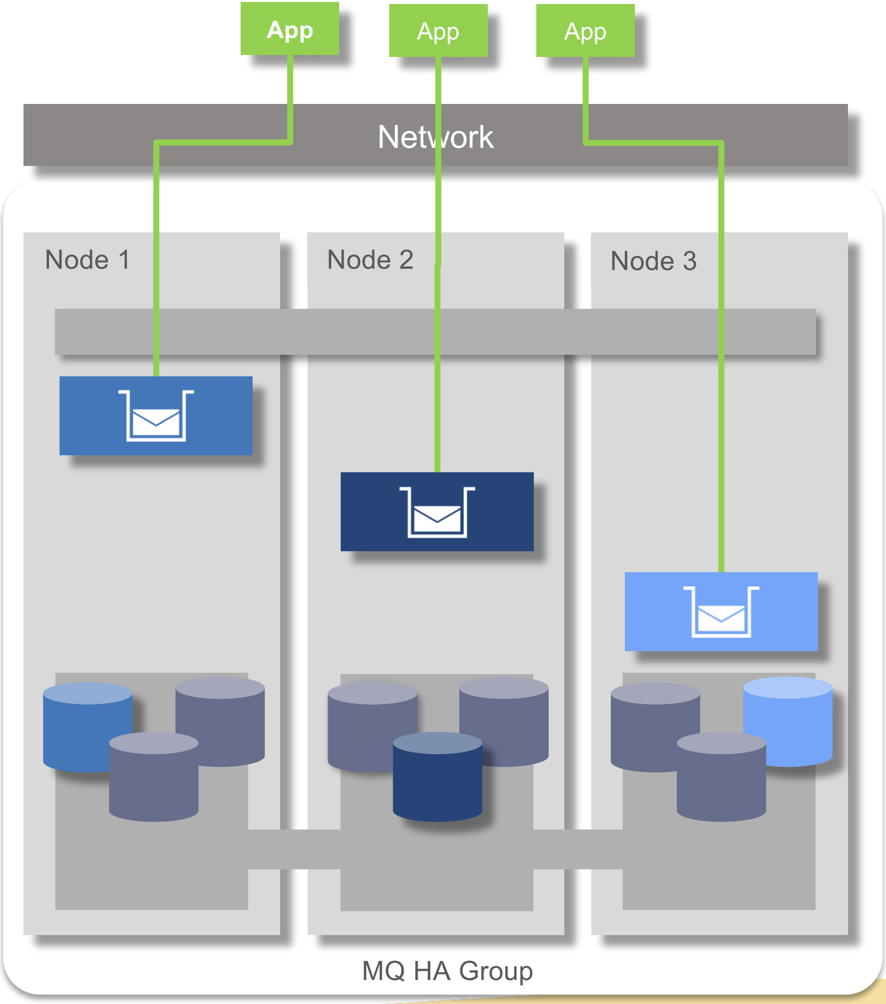
Replicated Data Queue Managers

Recommended deployment pattern:

- Spread the workload across multiple queue managers and distribute them across all three nodes
- Even better, more than one queue manager per node for better failover distribution
- Use MQ Clusters for additional routing of messages to work around problems

MQ **licensing** is aligned to maximise benefits

- **One full IBM MQ Advanced license and two High Availability Replica licenses** (previously named Idle Standby)



External/MQ managed HA with RDQM

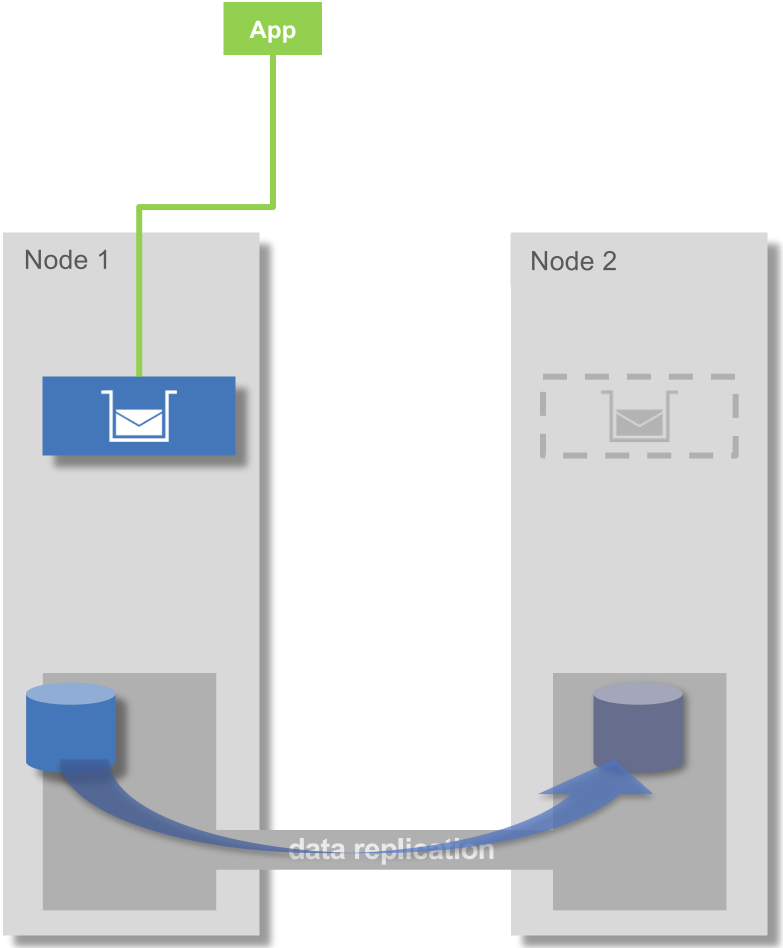
Disaster recovery

9.0.5 CD MQ Advanced added the ability to build a looser coupled pair of nodes for data replication with manual failover

Data replication can be

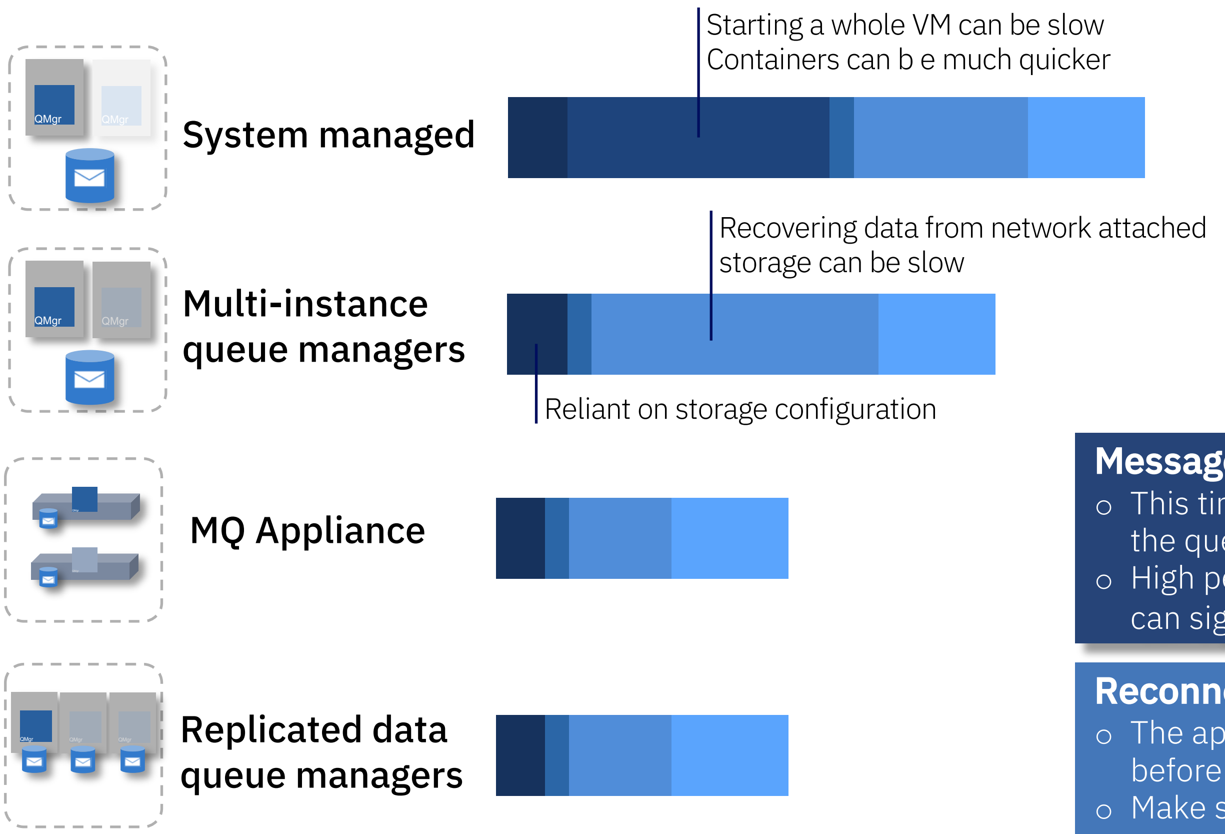
> **Asynchronous** for systems separated by a high latency network
>
> **Synchronous** for systems on a low latency network

No automatic takeover means no need for a third node to provide a quorum



Cost of a restart

Speed of failover



Message state recovery

- This time is very dependent on the workload of the queue manager
- High persistent traffic load and deep queues can significantly increase the time needed

Reconnecting applications

- The applications must also detect the failure before attempting to reconnect
- Make sure the channel **heartbeat interval** is set suitably low

Multi Instance vs. RDQM

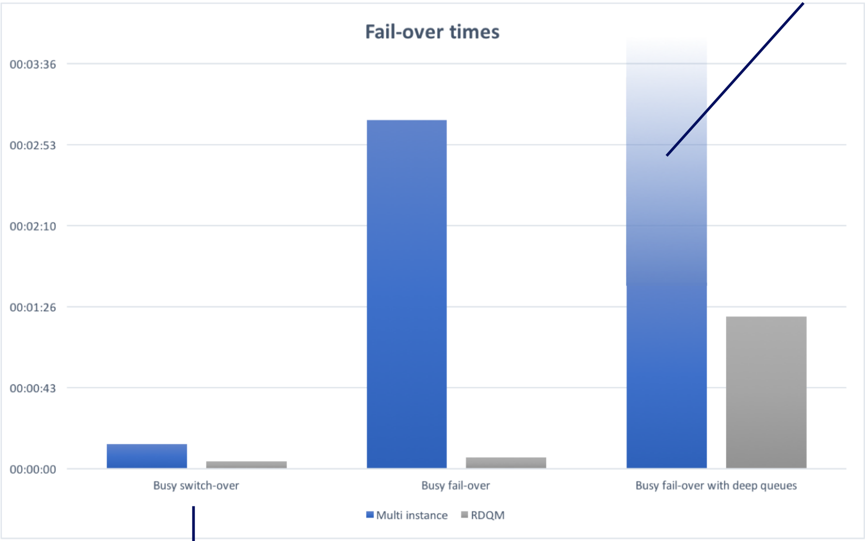
The speed of the filesystem plays a large part in the speed of failover

Two load factors effect the restart time:

- How much inflight message traffic at the time of the failure
- The amount of message data stored on active queues

The faster filesystem possible with RDQM can significantly reduce fail-over times

Misleading number due to reduction in load thanks to slower filesystem. Reality is that it'll be even slower



Even if the system is busy, a controlled switch-over gives MQ the chance to offload the inflight work

Multi instance
RDQM

What, where?

Which HA fits where

	Shared queues	System managed	Multi instance	RDQM	Appliance HA
z/OS	√				
Distributed platforms		√	√	√**	
Containers		√*	√		
MQ Appliance					√

* This will depend heavily on the capabilities of the container management layer

** RHEL x86 only

Pulling it all together

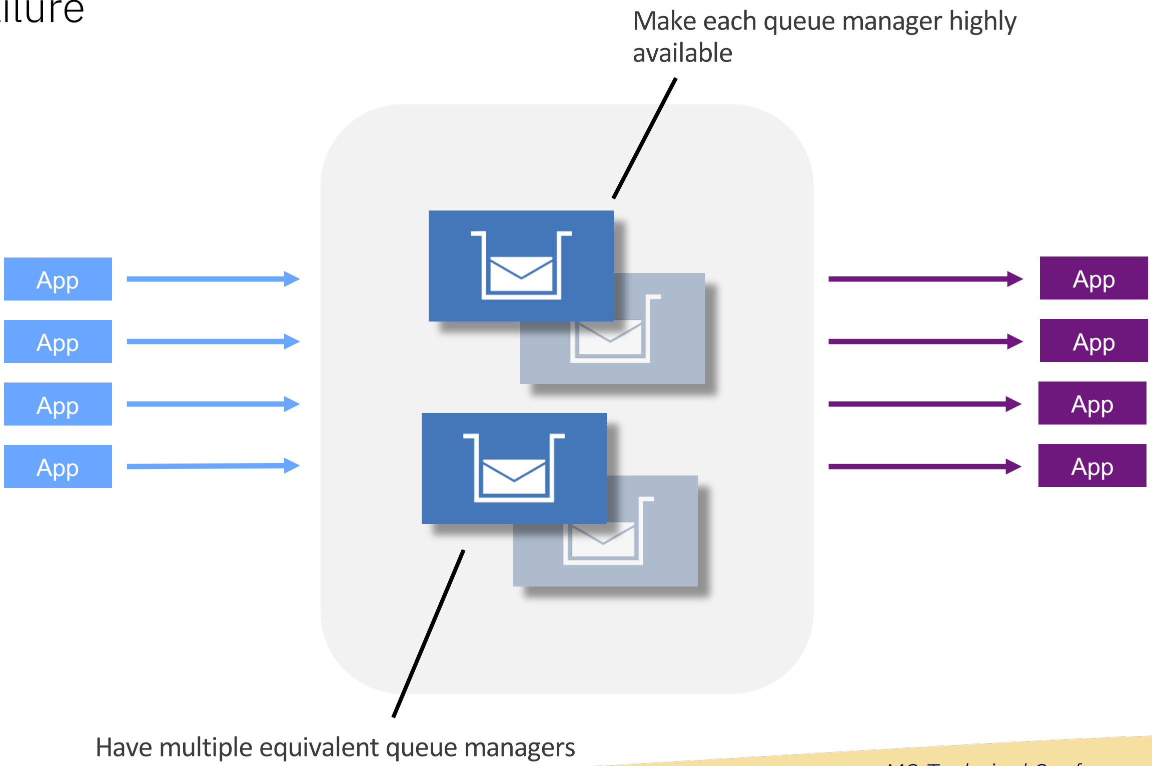
Building a highly available system

Decouple the applications from the underlying MQ infrastructure

Building a highly available system

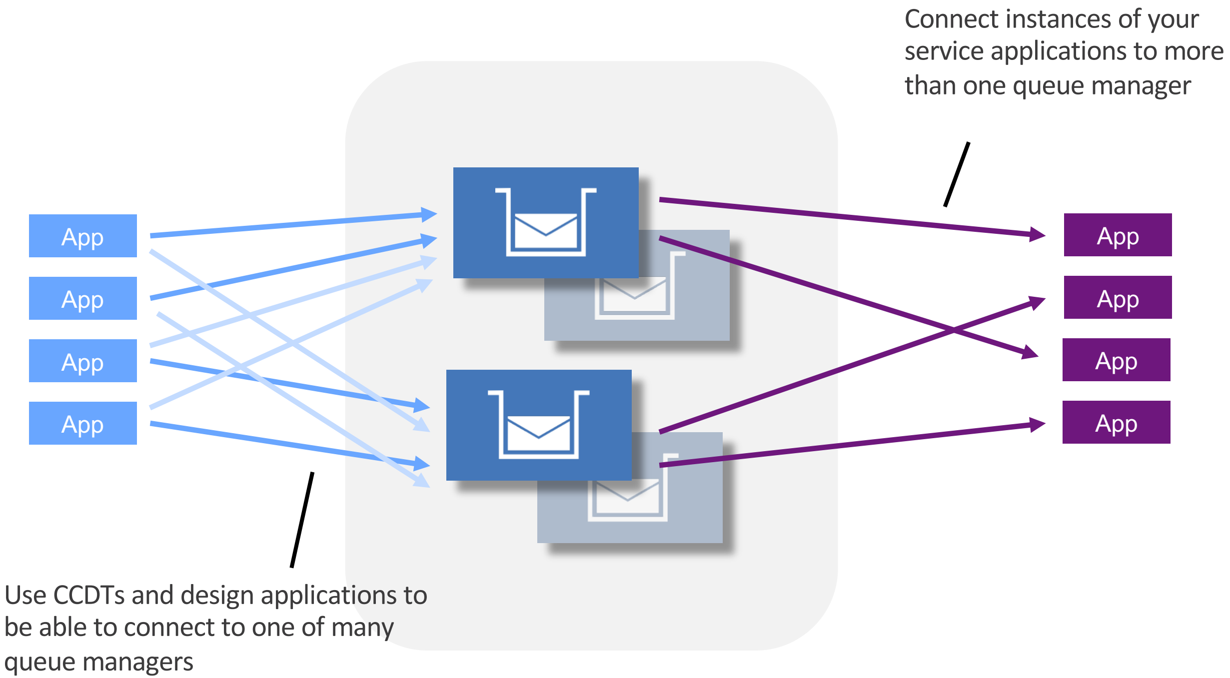
High availability of the individual MQ runtimes should be baked into the design

- Remove any single point of failure



Building a highly available system

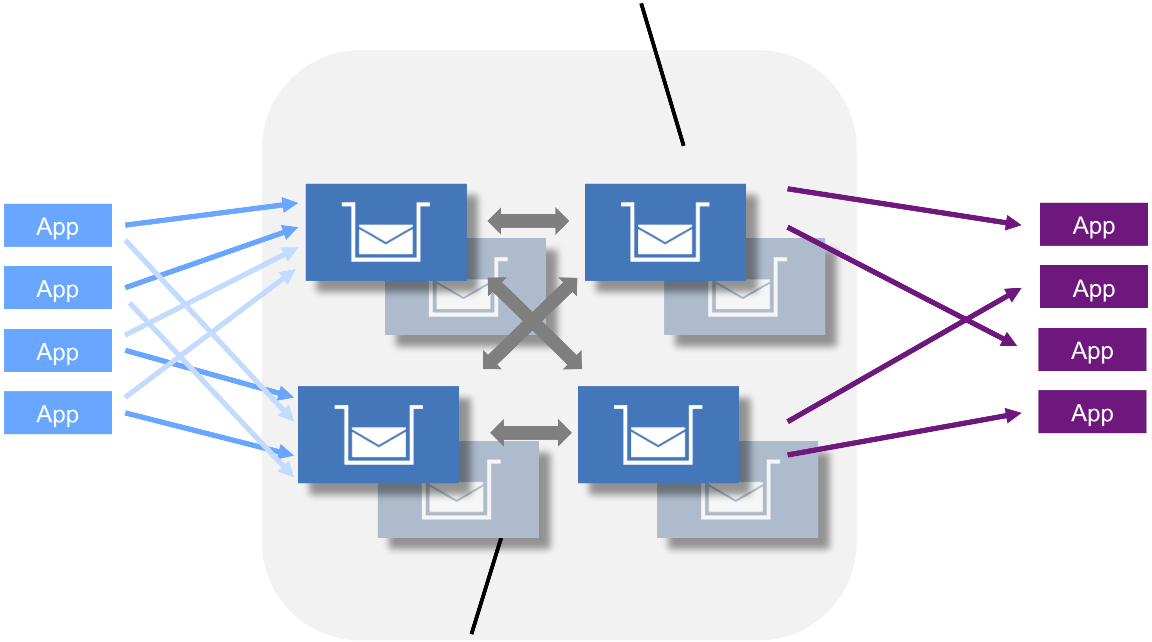
The applications should be designed and configured to maximise the availability of the MQ runtime



Building a highly available system

Separating out the MQ infrastructure into layers can be used to improve availability further by minimising impact to end users

Separate out the requestor/emitter queue managers from the service provider queue managers



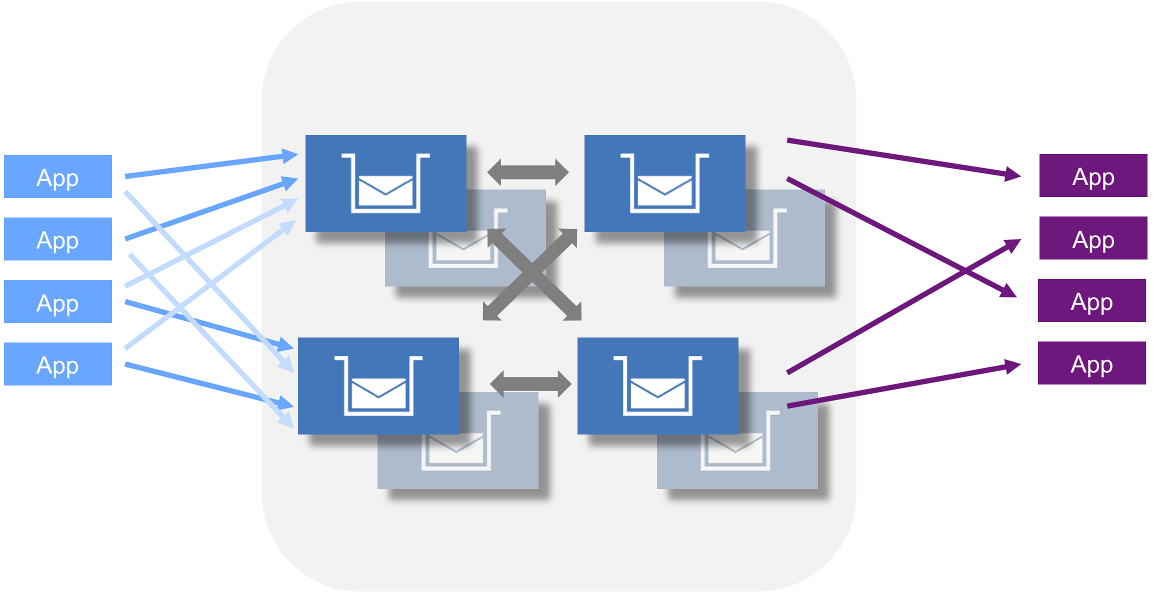
Use an MQ cluster to workload balance and dynamically route work to the service providers

Building a highly available system

Reading material

ibm.biz/mq_hubs

ibm.biz/mqaas_red



IBM **MQ**

Celebrating
25 years