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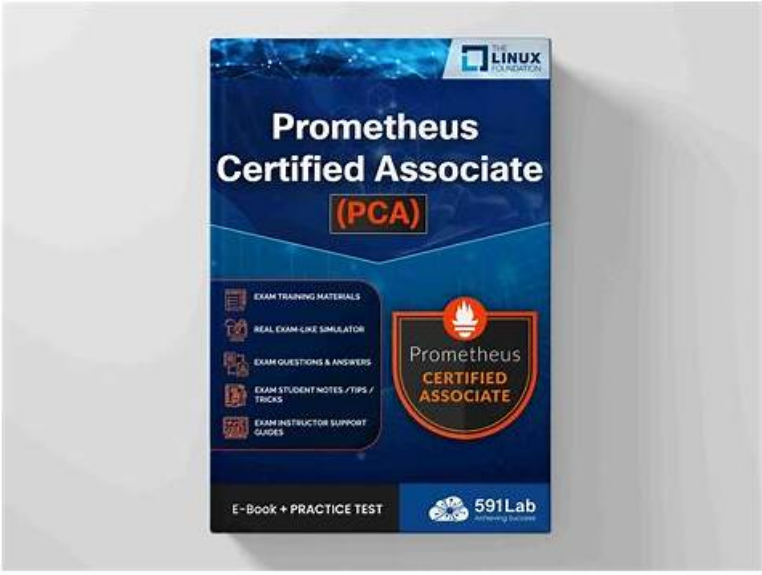

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Linux Foundation PCA Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• Prometheus Fundamentals: This domain evaluates the knowledge of DevOps Engineers and emphasizes the core architecture and components of Prometheus. It includes topics such as configuration and scraping techniques, limitations of the Prometheus system, data models and labels, and the exposition format used for data collection. The section ensures a solid grasp of how Prometheus functions as a monitoring and alerting toolkit within distributed environments.
Topic 2	• Instrumentation and Exporters: This domain evaluates the abilities of Software Engineers and addresses the methods for integrating Prometheus into applications. It includes the use of client libraries, the process of instrumenting code, and the proper structuring and naming of metrics. The section also introduces exporters that allow Prometheus to collect metrics from various systems, ensuring efficient and standardized monitoring implementation.
Topic 3	• PromQL: This section of the exam measures the skills of Monitoring Specialists and focuses on Prometheus Query Language (PromQL) concepts. It covers data selection, calculating rates and derivatives, and performing aggregations across time and dimensions. Candidates also study the use of binary operators, histograms, and timestamp metrics to analyze monitoring data effectively, ensuring accurate interpretation of system performance and trends.

Topic 4	• Alerting and Dashboarding: This section of the exam assesses the competencies of Cloud Operations Engineers and focuses on monitoring visualization and alert management. It covers dashboarding basics, alerting rules configuration, and the use of Alertmanager to handle notifications. Candidates also learn the core principles of when, what, and why to trigger alerts, ensuring they can create reliable monitoring dashboards and proactive alerting systems to maintain system stability.
Topic 5	• Observability Concepts: This section of the exam measures the skills of Site Reliability Engineers and covers the essential principles of observability used in modern systems. It focuses on understanding metrics, logs, and tracing mechanisms such as spans, as well as the difference between push and pull data collection methods. Candidates also learn about service discovery processes and the fundamentals of defining and maintaining SLOs, SLAs, and SLIs to monitor performance and reliability.

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Linux Foundation Prometheus Certified Associate Exam Sample Questions (Q15-Q20):

NEW QUESTION # 15
Which of the following metrics is unsuitable for a Prometheus setup?

- A. user_last_login_timestamp_seconds{email="john.doe@example.com"}
- B. promhttp_metric_handler_requests_total{code="500"}
- C. http_response_total{handler="static/*filepath"}
- D. prometheus_engine_query_log_enabled

Answer: A

Explanation:
The metric user_last_login_timestamp_seconds{email="john.doe@example.com"} is unsuitable for Prometheus because it includes a high-cardinality label (email). Each unique email address would generate a separate time series, potentially numbering in the millions, which severely impacts Prometheus performance and memory usage.
Prometheus is optimized for low- to medium-cardinality metrics that represent system-wide behavior rather than per-user data.
High-cardinality metrics cause data explosion, complicating queries and overwhelming the storage engine.
By contrast, the other metrics-prometheus_engine_query_log_enabled, promhttp_metric_handler_requests_total{code="500"}, and http_response_total{handler="static/*filepath"}-adhere to Prometheus best practices. They represent operational or service-level metrics with limited, manageable label value sets.
Reference:
Extracted and verified from Prometheus documentation - Metric and Label Naming Best Practices, Cardinality Management, and Anti-Patterns for Metric Design sections.

NEW QUESTION # 16
What is a difference between a counter and a gauge?

- A. Counters are only incremented, while gauges can go up and down.
- B. Counters change value on each scrape and gauges remain static.
- C. Counters and gauges are different names for the same thing.
- D. Counters have no labels while gauges can have many labels.

Answer: A

Explanation:
The key difference between a counter and a gauge in Prometheus lies in how their values change over time. A counter is a cumulative metric that only increases-it resets to zero only when the process restarts. Counters are typically used for metrics like total requests served, bytes processed, or errors encountered. You can derive rates of change from counters using functions like rate() or increase() in PromQL.
A gauge, on the other hand, represents a metric that can go up and down. It measures values that fluctuate, such as CPU usage, memory consumption, temperature, or active session counts. Gauges provide a snapshot of current state rather than a cumulative total.
This distinction ensures proper interpretation of time-series trends and prevents misrepresentation of one-time or fluctuating values as cumulative metrics.
Reference:
Extracted and verified from Prometheus official documentation - Metric Types section explaining Counters and Gauges definitions and usage examples.

NEW QUESTION # 17
What's "wrong" with the myapp_filG_uploads_total{userid=,,5123",status="failed"} metric?

- A. The _total suffix should be omitted.
- B. The metric name should consist of dashes instead of underscores.
- C. The userid should not be exposed as a label.
- D. The status should not be exposed as a label.

Answer: C

Explanation:
In Prometheus best practices, high-cardinality labels-especially those containing unique or user-specific identifiers-should be avoided. The metric myapp_filG_uploads_total{userid="5123",status="failed"} exposes the userid as a label, which is problematic. Each distinct value of a label generates a new time series in Prometheus. If there are thousands or millions of unique users, this would exponentially increase the number of time series, leading to cardinality explosion, degraded performance, and high memory usage.
The _total suffix is actually correct and required for counters, as per the Prometheus naming convention. The use of underscores in metric names is also correct, as Prometheus does not support dashes in metric identifiers. The status label, however, is perfectly valid because it typically has a low number of possible values (e.g., "success", "failed").
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus official documentation sections Instrumentation - Metric and Label Naming Best Practices and Writing Exporters.

NEW QUESTION # 18
What Prometheus component would you use if targets are running behind a Firewall/NAT?

- A. Pull Gateway
- B. HA Proxy
- C. Pull Proxy
- D. PushProx

Answer: D

Explanation:
When Prometheus targets are behind firewalls or NAT and cannot be reached directly by the Prometheus server's pull mechanism, the recommended component to use is PushProx.
PushProx works by reversing the usual pull model. It consists of a PushProx Proxy (accessible by Prometheus) and PushProx Clients (running alongside the targets). The clients establish outbound connections to the proxy, which allows Prometheus to "pull" metrics indirectly. This approach bypasses network restrictions without compromising the Prometheus data model.
Unlike the Pushgateway (which is used for short-lived batch jobs, not network-isolated targets), PushProx maintains the Prometheus "pull" semantics while accommodating environments where direct scraping is impossible.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation and official PushProx design notes - Monitoring Behind NAT/Firewall, PushProx Overview, and Architecture and Usage Scenarios sections.

NEW QUESTION # 19
What popular open-source project is commonly used to visualize Prometheus data?

- A. Grafana
- B. Kibana
- C. Thanos
- D. Loki

Answer: A

Explanation:
The most widely used open-source visualization and dashboarding platform for Prometheus data is Grafana. Grafana provides native integration with Prometheus as a data source, allowing users to create real-time, interactive dashboards using PromQL queries. Grafana supports advanced visualization panels (graphs, heatmaps, gauges, tables, etc.) and enables users to design custom dashboards to monitor infrastructure, application performance, and service-level objectives (SLOs). It also provides alerting capabilities that can complement or extend Prometheus's own alerting system.
While Kibana is part of the Elastic Stack and focuses on log analytics, Thanos extends Prometheus for long-term storage and high availability, and Loki is a log aggregation system. None of these tools serve as the primary dashboarding solution for Prometheus metrics the way Grafana does.
Grafana's seamless Prometheus integration and templating support make it the de facto standard visualization tool in the Prometheus ecosystem.
Reference:
Verified from Prometheus documentation - Visualizing Data with Grafana, and Grafana documentation - Prometheus Data Source Integration and Dashboard Creation Guide.

NEW QUESTION # 20
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