The joy of building large scale systems

Suhail Patel | @suhailpatel | https://suhailpatel.com



ChatGPT Prompt: Generate an image of a group of diverse software engineers being afraid of the on-call pager going off

Wait, but why?

Many of the systems (apps, services, databases, caches, queues etc.) that we build/rely on are grounded on quite poor assumptions for the hardware of today

Choose Boring Technology

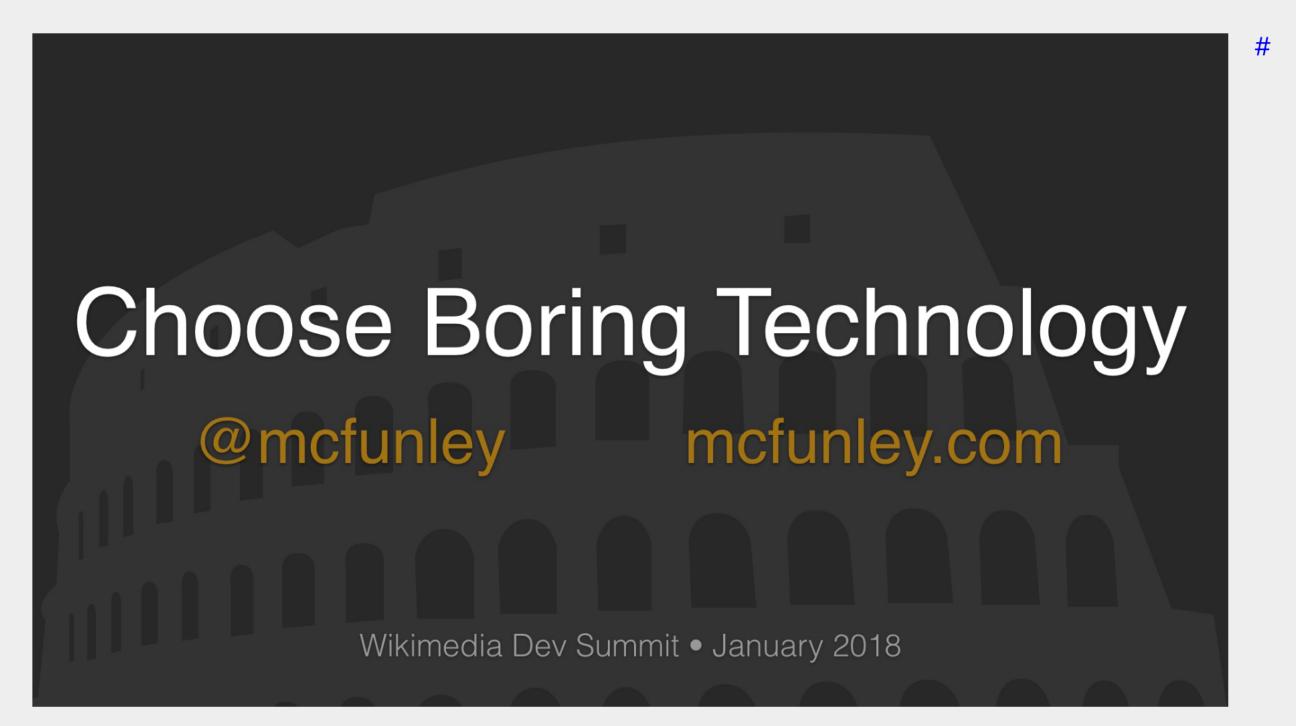
This is the spoken word version of my essay, Choose Boring Technology. I have largely come to terms with it and the reality that I will never escape its popularity.

I gave this most recently at the WikiMedia Foundation's developer conference, where Scott Ananian called it "how to be old, for young people."

Here are my other talks, my website, and some Medium posts.

正體中文翻譯在這裡









Suhail Patel
Senior Staff Engineer at Monzo
@suhailpatel

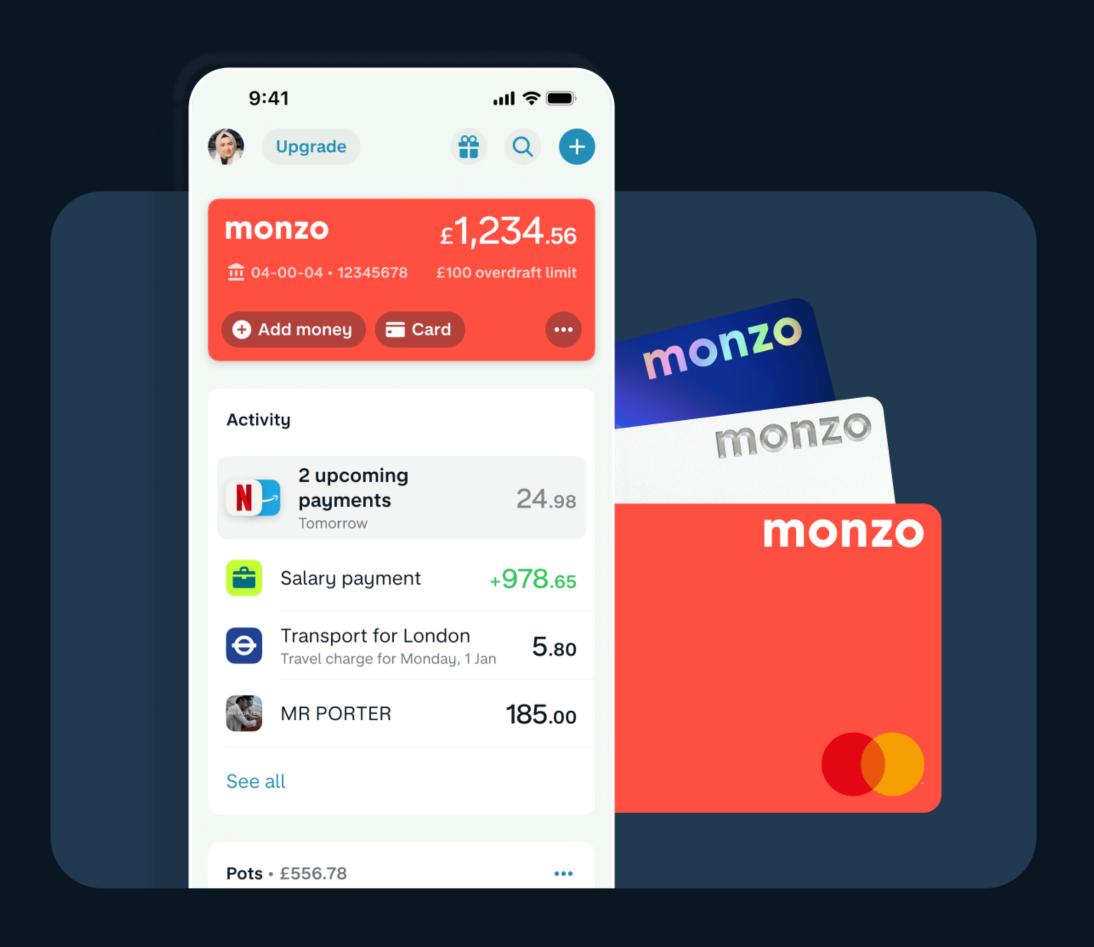
Banking made easy

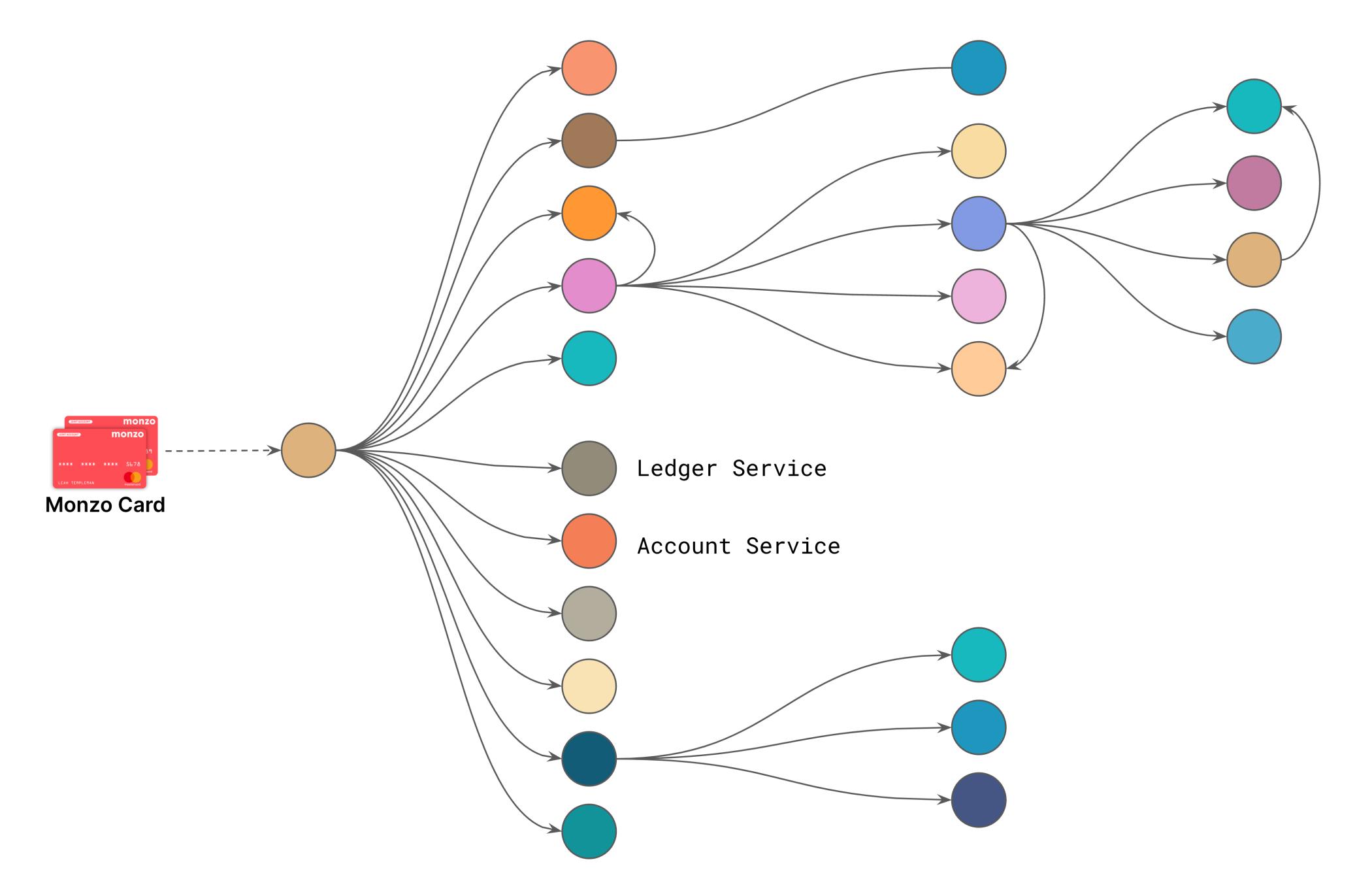
Spend, save and manage your money, all in one place. Open a full UK bank account from your phone, for free.

Open a Monzo account

UK residents only. Ts&Cs apply.







Latency numbers

L1 Cache Reference	0.5ns	
L2 Cache Reference	7ns	
Main Memory Reference	100ns	
Send 1K bytes over 1 Gbps network	10,000ns	
Read 4K bytes from SSD	150,000ns	
Read 1MB sequentially from memory	250,000ns	
Read 1MB from SSD	1,000,000ns	
Disk Seek	10,000,000ns	

Source: https://gist.github.com/jboner/2841832

Latency numbers

L1 Cache Reference	0.5ns	0.5 days
L2 Cache Reference	7ns	7.5 days
Main Memory Reference	100ns	100 days
Send 1K bytes over 1 Gbps network	10,000ns	27 years
Read 4K bytes from SSD	150,000ns	411 years
Read 1MB sequentially from memory	250,000ns	685 years
Read 1MB from SSD	1,000,000ns	2.7 millenniums
Disk Seek	10,000,000ns	27 millenniums

Source: https://gist.github.com/jboner/2841832

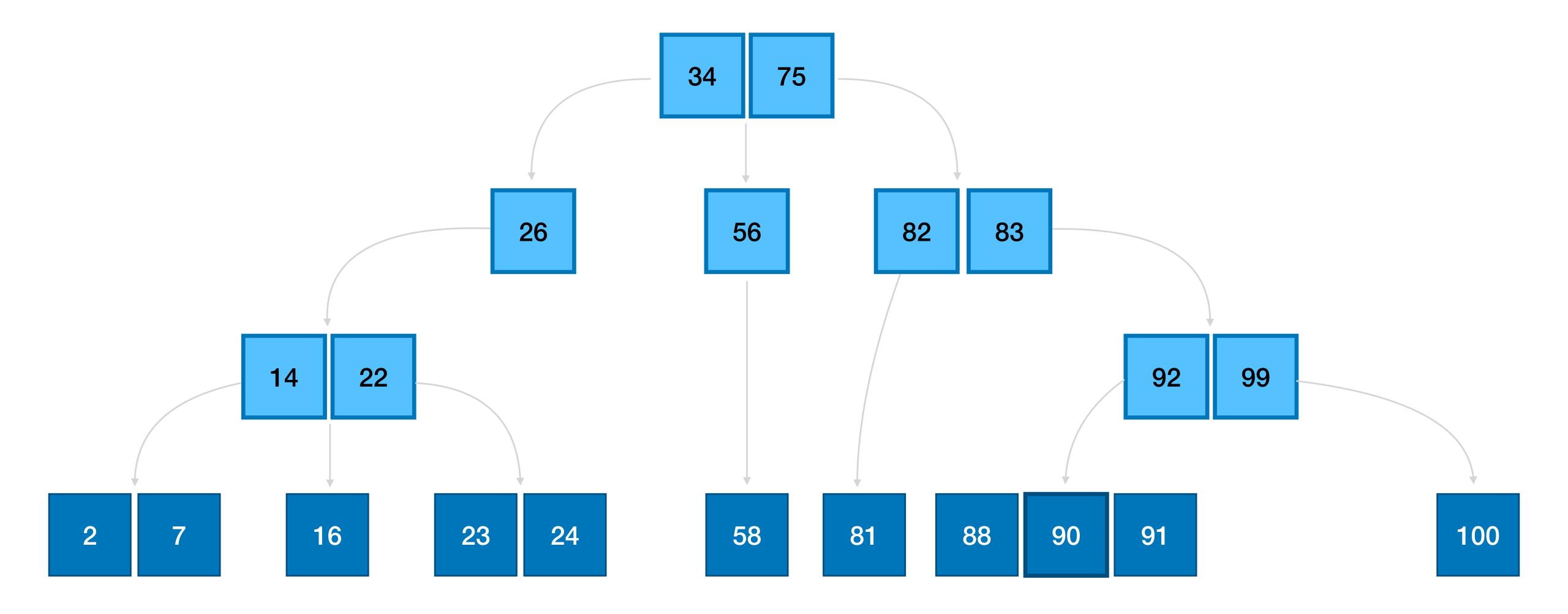
B-Trees are used in many index implementations



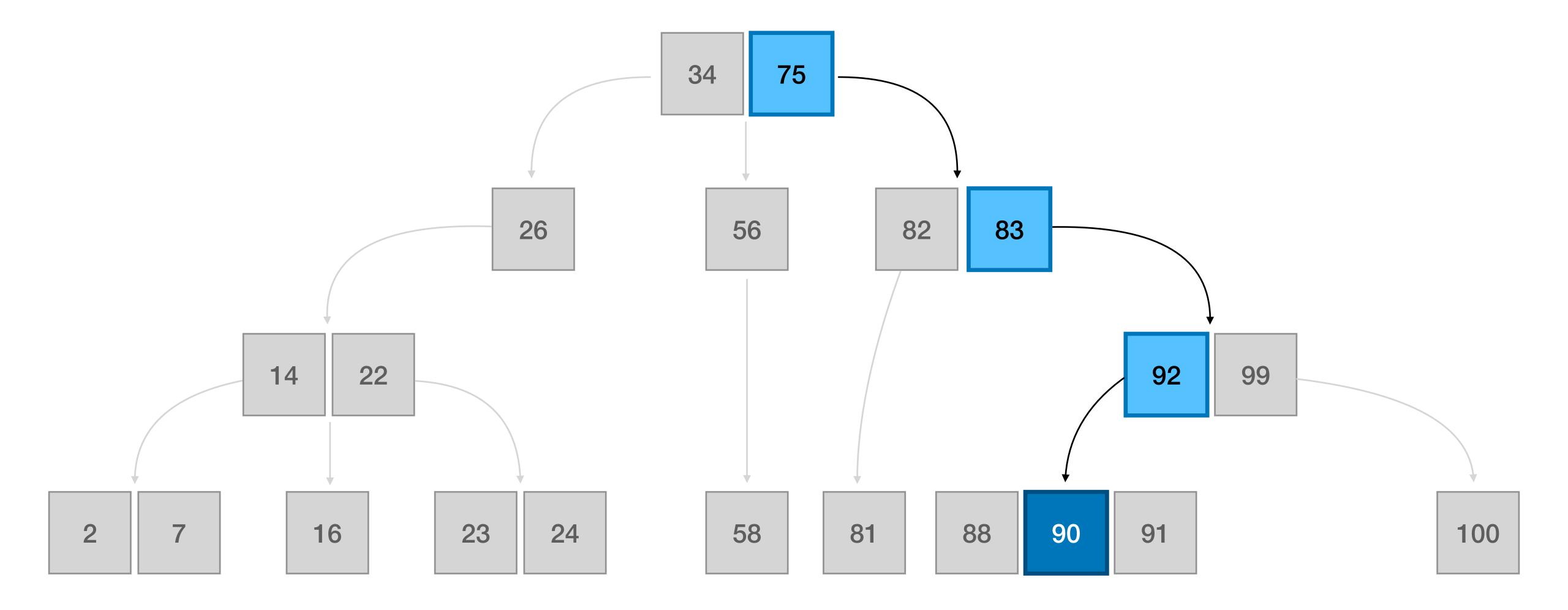




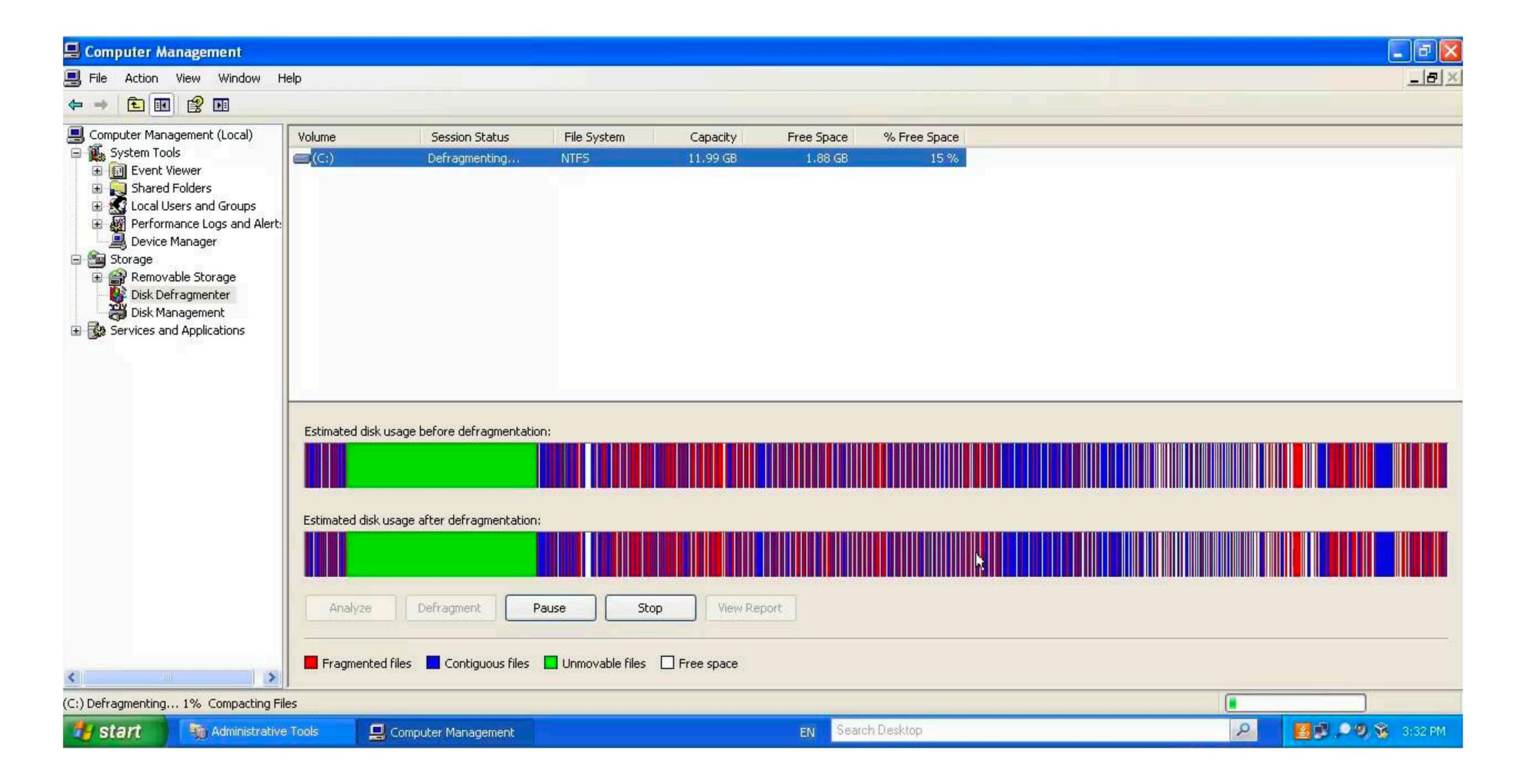
B-Tree



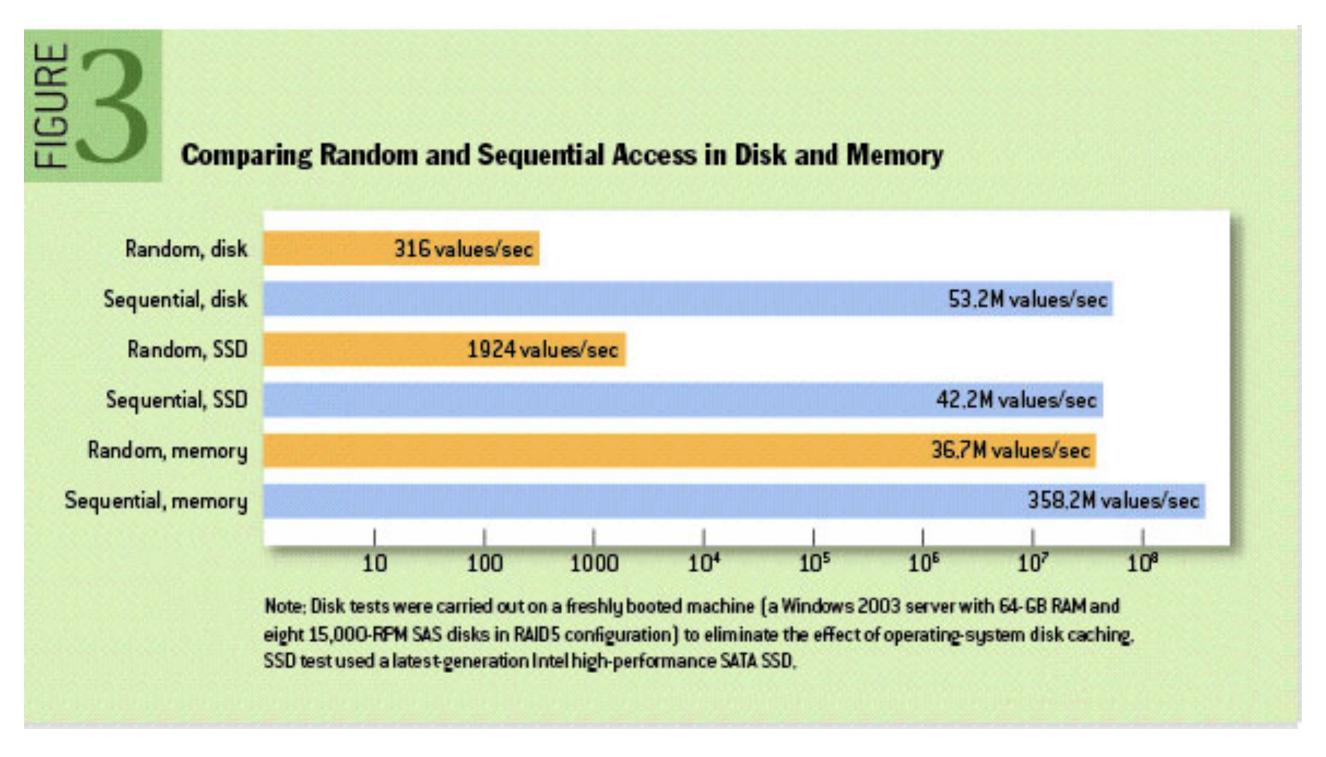
Searching within a B-Tree







Random & Sequential I/O



Source: The Pathologies of Big Data by Adam Jacobs (2009) https://queue.acm.org/detail.cfm?id=1563874

Disks are really fast nowadays!

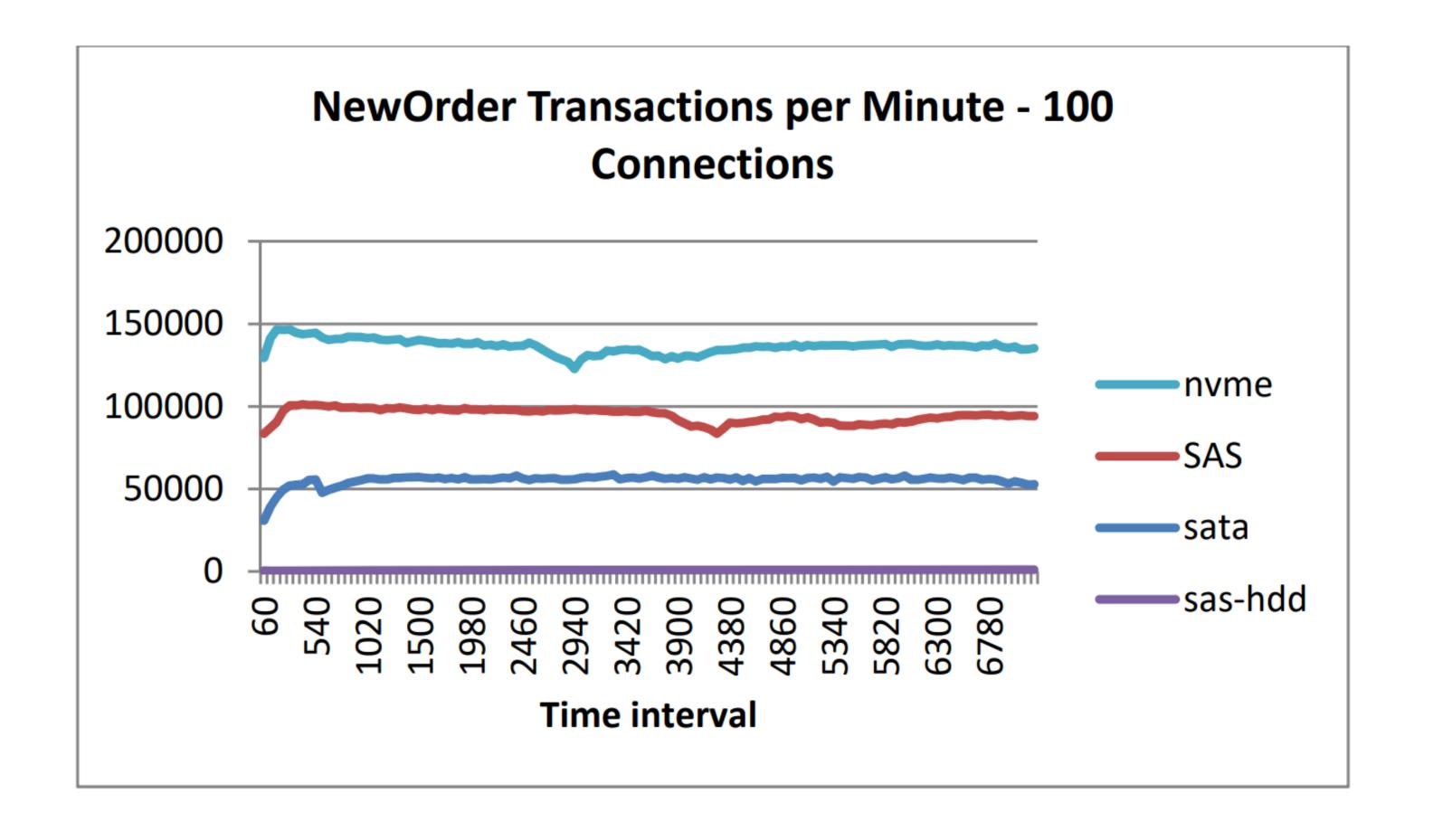


Disks are really fast nowadays!



Disk Throughput

Faster hardware = More throughput



Source: https://download.semiconductor.samsung.com/resources/white-paper/best-practices-for-mysql-with-ssds.pdf



Improving I/O Performance via Address Remapping in NVMe Interface

DONG KYU SUNG¹, YONGSEOK SON², HYEONSANG EOM¹, AND SUNGGON KIM³

Corresponding author: Sunggon Kim (sunggonkim@seoultech.ac.kr)

This work was supported in part by the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) through the Korean Government under Grant RS-2022-00166541, Grant NRF-2021R1C1C1010861, Grant NRF-2022R1A4A5034130, and Grant 2021R1F1A1106343812; and in part by the BK21 FOUR Intelligence Computing (Department of Computer Science and Engineering, SNU) funded by NRF under Grant 4199990214639.

ABSTRACT Recently, flash-based solid-state drives (SSDs) are widely used in industry and academia due to their higher bandwidth and lower latency compared with traditional hard disk drives (HDDs). Furthermore, SSDs with the Non-Volatile Memory Express (NVMe) interface can provide higher performance and ultralow latency compared with the Serial AT Attachment (SATA) SSDs. Due to their high performance, NVMe SSDs are adopted in many systems as fast storage devices. However, the performance of NVMe SSDs can be negatively affected by I/O access patterns. For example, random write access patterns can have negative impacts on performance due to the unique characteristics of SSDs such as out-of-place update and garbage collection. In this paper, we propose an address remapping scheme to improve the I/O performance of NVMe SSDs. Our proposed scheme transforms random access patterns into sequential access patterns in the NVMe device driver. This allows our scheme to improve the I/O performance of NVMe SSDs while supporting widely used file systems such as EXT4, XFS, BTRFS, and F2FS without any modification to the device. Experimental results show that our proposed scheme can improve the performance of NVMe SSD by up to 64.1% compared with the existing scheme.

INDEX TERMS Flash-based SSDs, NVMe interface, device driver, I/O performance, garbage collection.

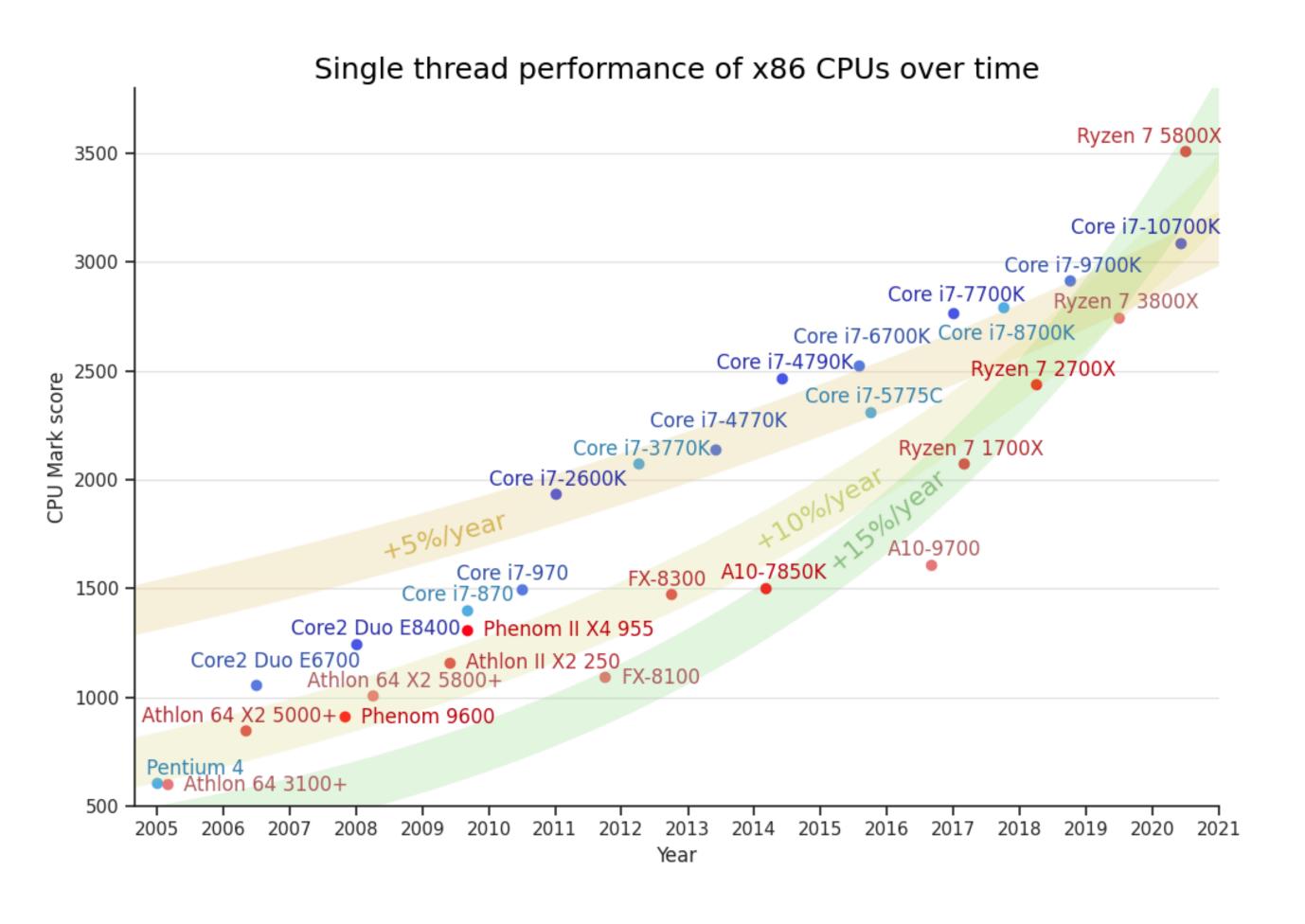
Source: Improving I/O Performance via Address Remapping in NVMe Interface https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=9947049

¹Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Seoul National University, Seoul 08826, South Korea

²Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Chung-Ang University, Seoul 06974, South Korea

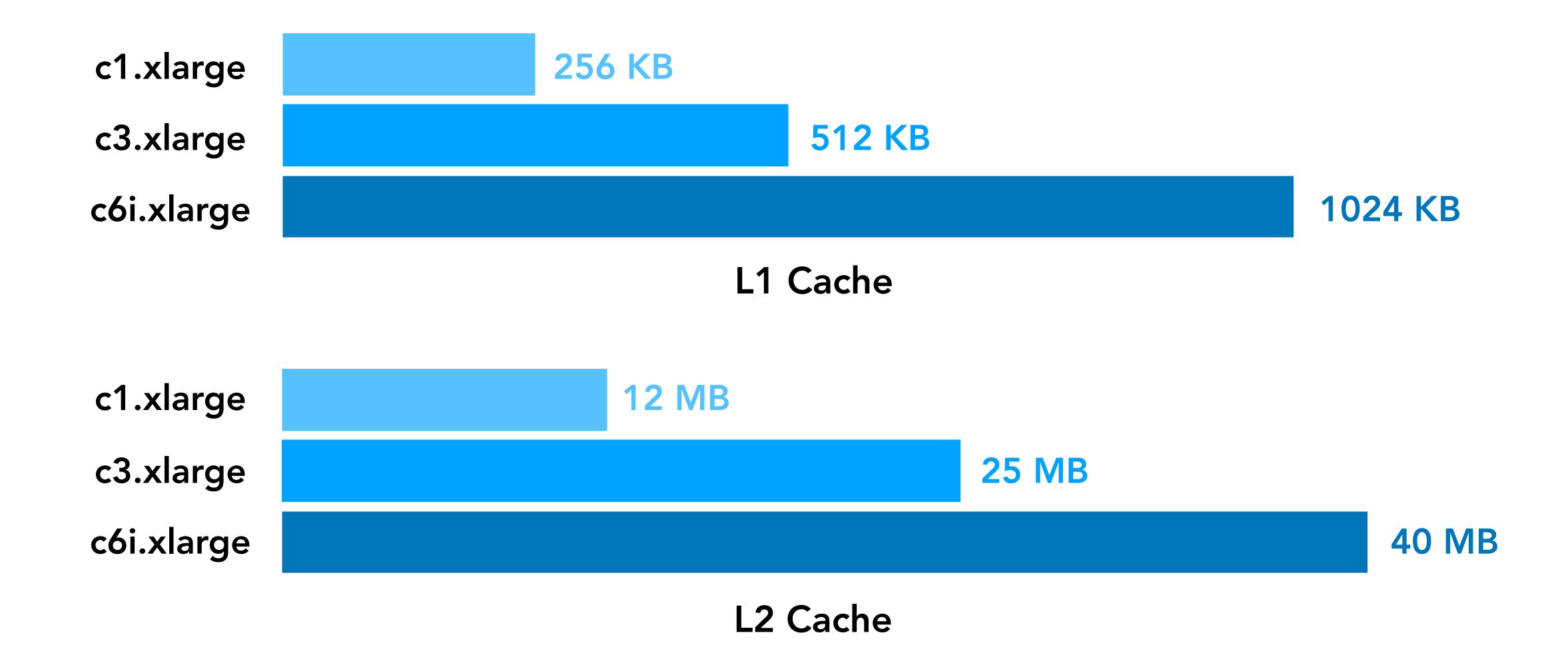
³Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Seoul National University of Science and Technology, Seoul 01811, South Korea

CPUs are getting faster

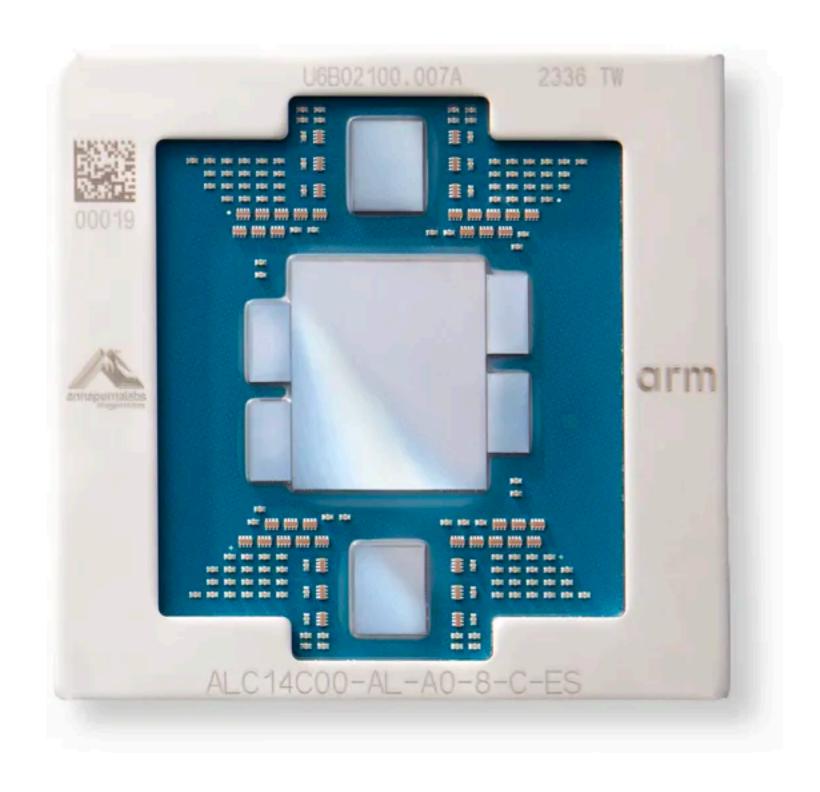


Source: Evolution of Single-threaded x86 CPU Performance https://mlech26l.github.io/pages/2020/12/17/cpus.html

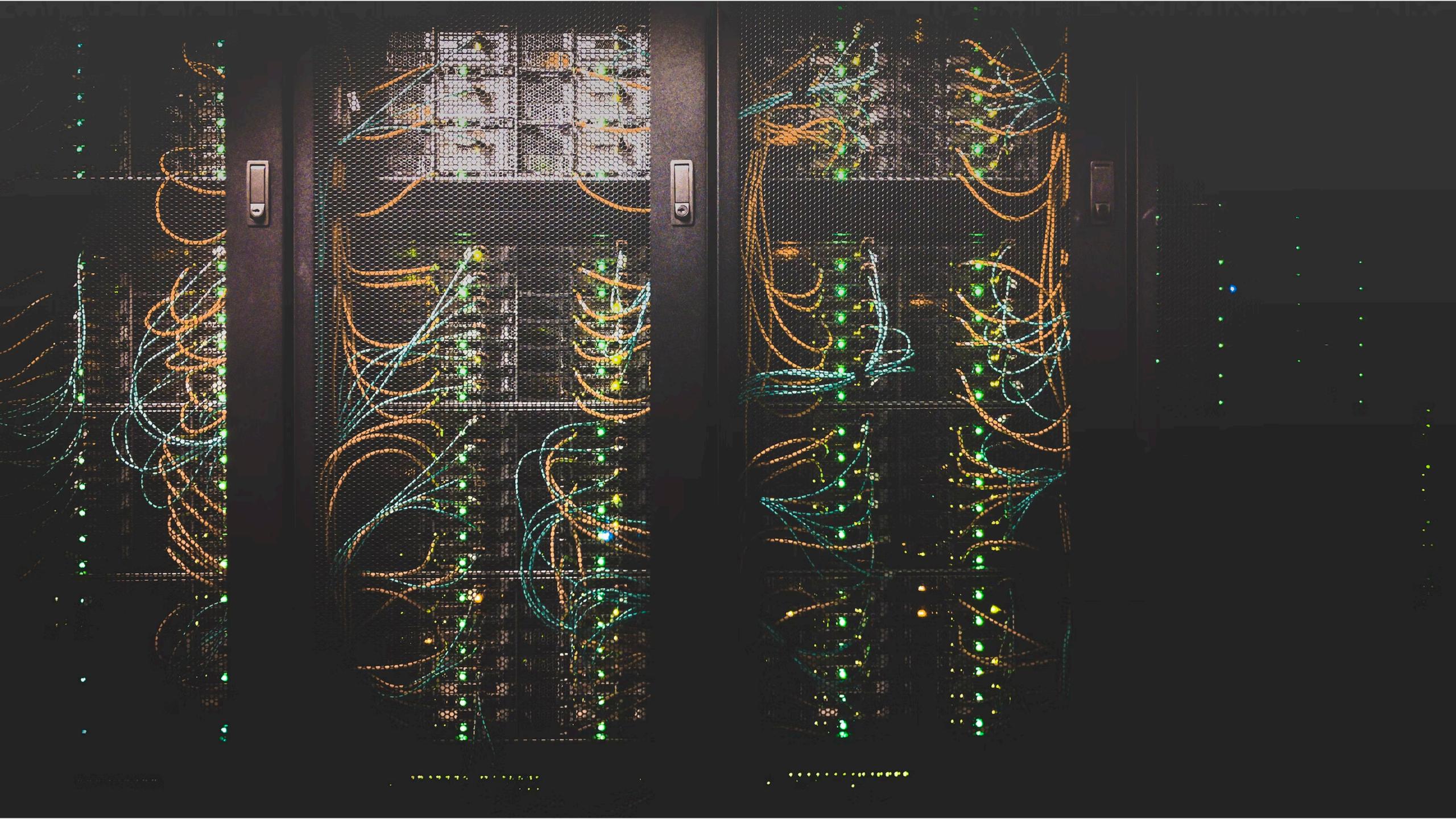
CPUs are getting faster



CPUs are evolving

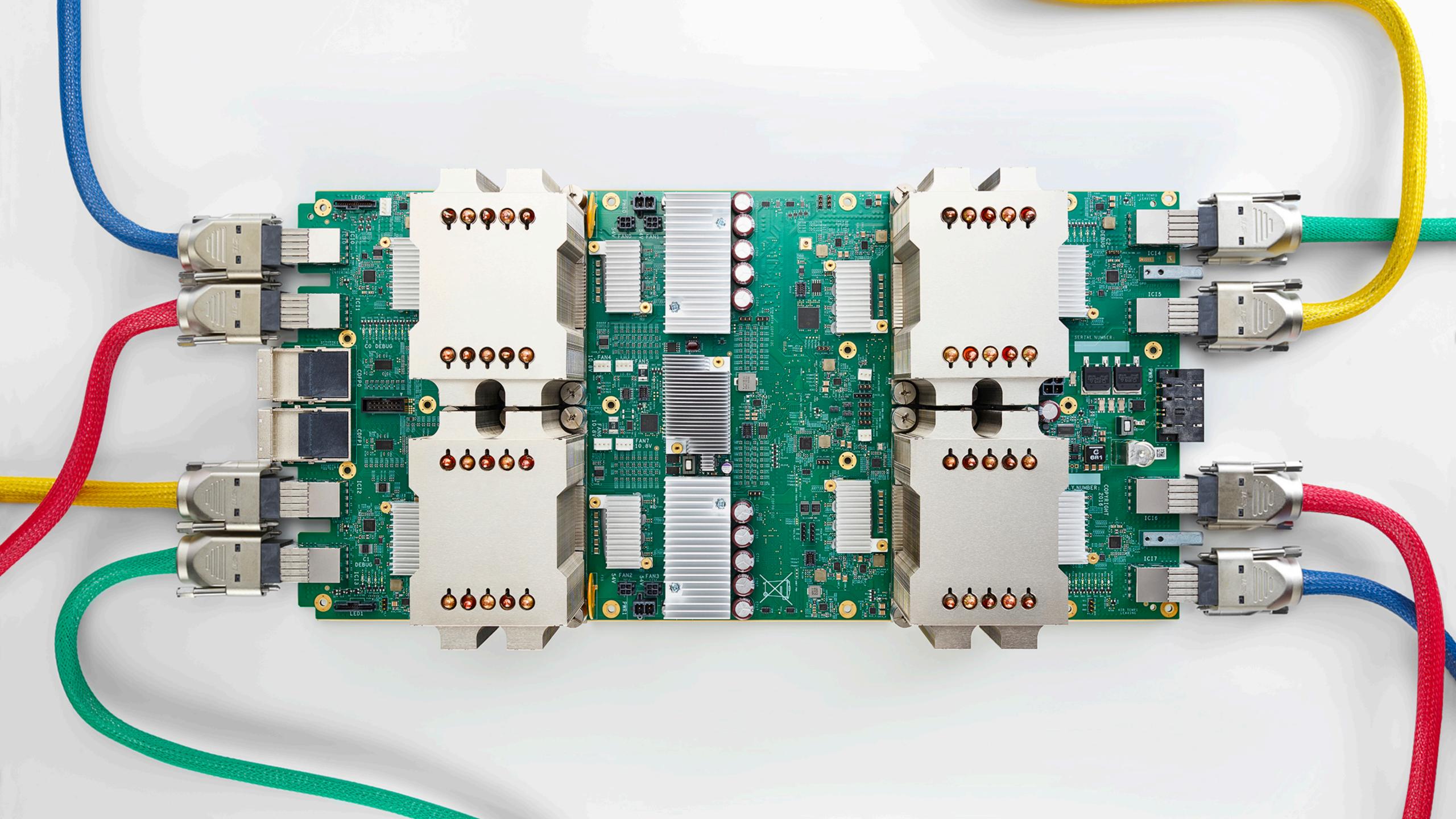






Networks are getting faster

Machine types	vCPUs*	Memory (GB)	Max number of persistent disks (PDs) [†]	Max total PD size (TB)	Local SSD	Default egress bandwidth (Gbps) [‡]	Tier_1 egress bandwidth (Gbps)#
c2-standard-4	4	16	128	257	Yes	10	N/A
c2-standard-8	8	32	128	257	Yes	16	N/A
c2-standard-16	16	64	128	257	Yes	32	N/A
c2-standard-30	30	120	128	257	Yes	32	50
c2-standard-60	60	240	128	257	Yes	32	100



Latency numbers

L1 Cache Reference	0.5ns	Much larger caches means
L2 Cache Reference	7ns	Much larger caches means we would hit these caches more often
Main Memory Reference	100ns	3-4x higher throughput
Send 1K bytes over 1 Gbps network	10,000ns	Much larger NICs
Read 4K bytes from SSD	150,000ns	Much faster NVMe drives
Read 1MB sequentially from memory	250,000ns	20,000ns with DDR5
Read 1MB from SSD	1,000,000ns	100,000ns with NVMe
Disk Seek	10,000,000ns	20,000ns with NVMe

Source: https://gist.github.com/jboner/2841832

The Free Lunch Is Over

A Fundamental Turn Toward Concurrency in Software

By Herb Sutter

The biggest sea change in software development since the OO revolution is knocking at the door, and its name is Concurrency.

This article appeared in <u>Dr. Dobb's Journal</u>, 30(3), March 2005. A much briefer version under the title "The Concurrency Revolution" appeared in <u>C/C++ Users Journal</u>, 23(2), February 2005.

Update note: The CPU trends graph last updated August 2009 to include current data and show the trend continues as predicted. The rest of this article including all text is still original as first posted here in December 2004.

Your free lunch will soon be over. What can you do about it? What are you doing about it?

The major processor manufacturers and architectures, from Intel and AMD to Sparc and PowerPC, have run out of room with most of their traditional approaches to boosting CPU performance. Instead of driving clock speeds and straight-line instruction throughput ever higher, they are instead turning *en masse* to hyperthreading and multicore architectures. Both of these features are already available on chips today; in particular, multicore is available on current PowerPC and Sparc IV processors, and is coming in 2005 from Intel and AMD. Indeed, the big theme of the 2004 In-Stat/MDR Fall Processor Forum was multicore devices, as many companies showed new or updated multicore processors. Looking back, it's not much of a stretch to call 2004 the year of multicore.

And that puts us at a fundamental turning point in software development, at least for the next few years and for applications targeting general-purpose desktop computers and low-end servers (which happens to account for the vast bulk of the dollar value of software sold today). In this article, I'll describe the changing face of hardware, why it suddenly does matter to software, and how specifically the concurrency revolution matters to you and is going to change the way you will likely be writing software in the future.

Arguably, the free lunch has already been over for a year or two, only we're just now noticing.

The Free Performance Lunch

There's an interesting phenomenon that's known as "Andy giveth, and Bill taketh away." No matter how fast processors get, software consistently finds new ways to eat up the extra speed. Make a CPU ten times as fast, and software will usually find ten times as much to do (or, in some cases, will feel at liberty to do it ten times less efficiently). Most classes of applications have enjoyed free and regular performance gains for several

Free lunch?

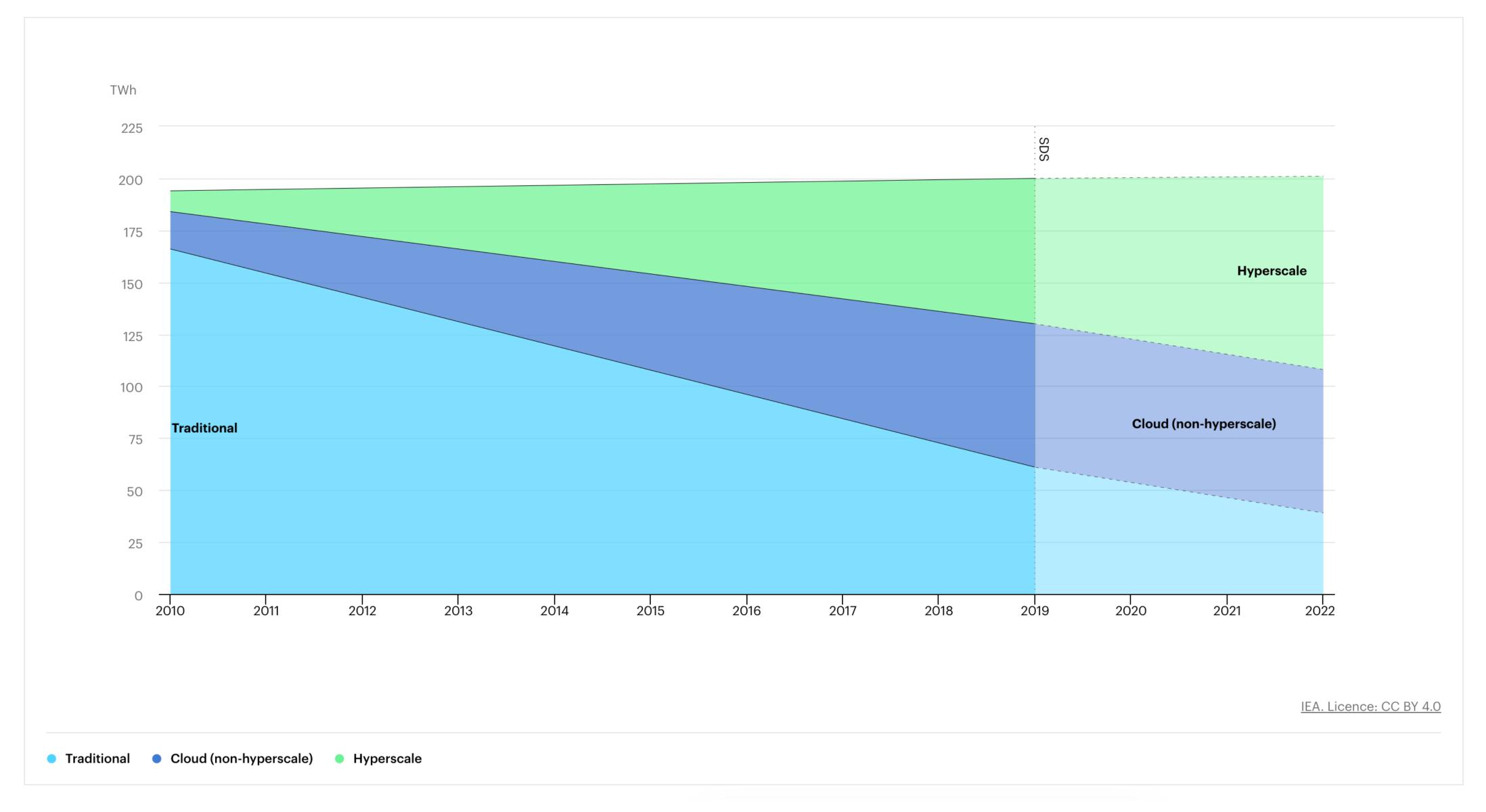
"No matter how fast processors get, software consistently finds new ways to eat up the extra speed. Make a CPU ten times as fast, and software will usually find ten times as much to do (or, in some cases, will feel at liberty to do it ten times less efficiently)"

Herb Sutter http://www.gotw.ca/publications/concurrency-ddj.htm

Free lunch?

"Efficiency and performance optimization will get more, not less, important"

Herb Sutter http://www.gotw.ca/publications/concurrency-ddj.htm



https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/charts/global-data-centre-energy-demand-by-data-centre-type-2010-2022

Four principles for writing energy and carbon-efficient software

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Jennifer_Huffstetler

04-20-2023

Employee

Intel is known for its industry leading hardware solutions and for decades we have been a strong environmental steward. This stewardship has included efforts to accelerate sustainability through increasingly efficient products to developing innovative energy conserving features for our processors and platforms. With this work, Intel is leading the enablement of a more sustainable data center and compute industry. With global data center energy consumption accounting for 0.9-1.3% of total global energy demand (IEA, Sept 2022), that's a great thing.

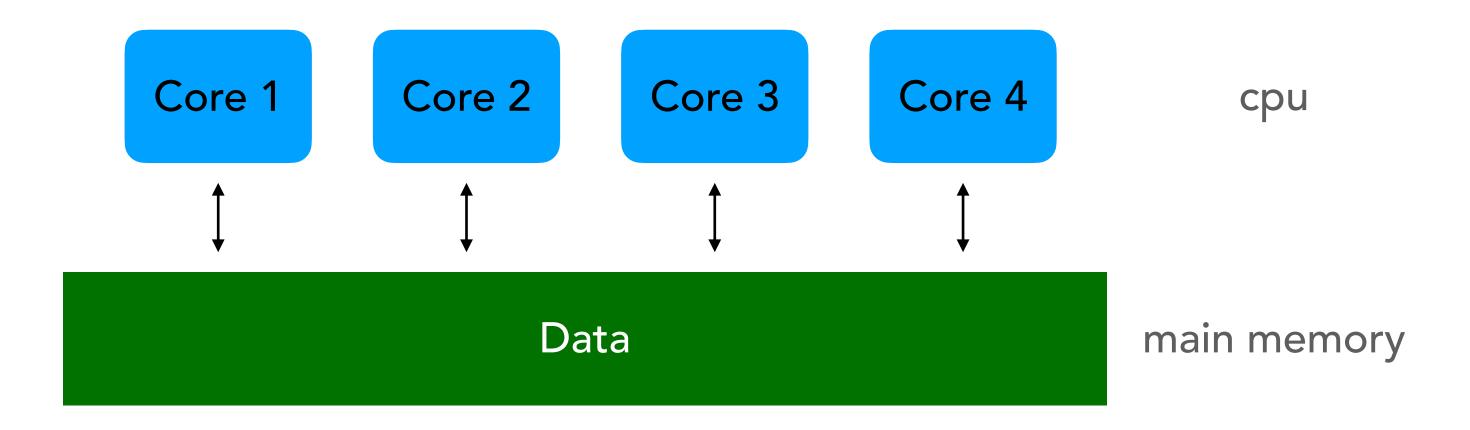
But global and substantial impact is best achieved by looking at all areas in compute that can provide sustainability value. According to Intel estimates, infrastructure and software inefficiency count for over 50% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the data center. This illuminates that it's not only what's in your data center that matters, but how you use it. For example, infrastructure inefficiency can be addressed through greater server utilization.

For this blog, though, I will focus on software inefficiency as there are ways to make your software more carbon and energy efficient without compromising its functionality or performance. In fact, making your software more energy and carbon efficient is likely the fastest way to improve the environmental impact of your IT operations. Here are four principles that can guide you in designing and developing software that minimizes its energy consumption and carbon footprint.

> https://community.intel.com/t5/Blogs/Thought-Leadership/Big-Ideas/ Four-principles-for-writing-energy-and-carbon-efficient-software

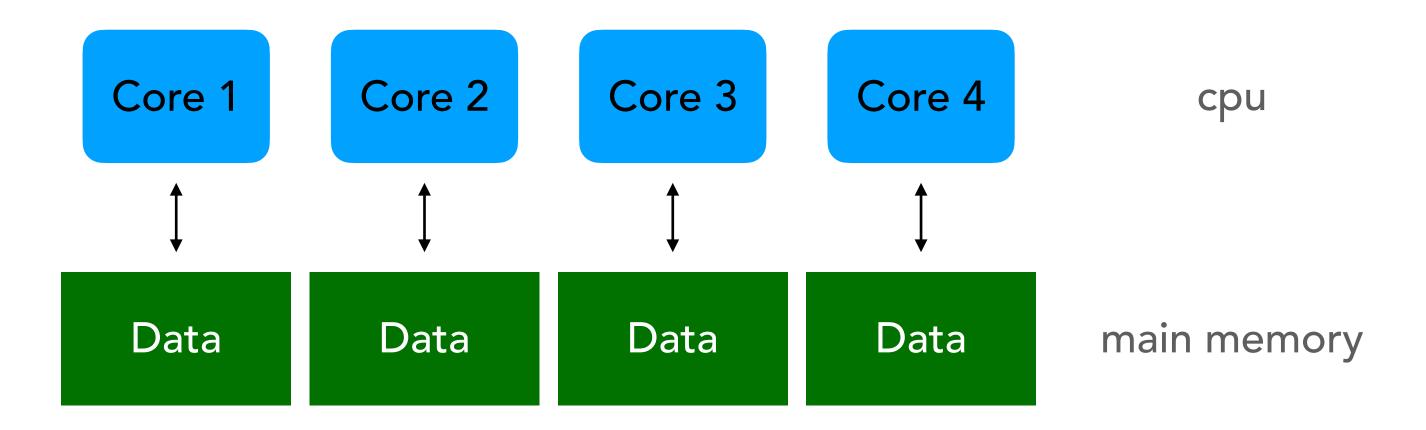


Thread per core



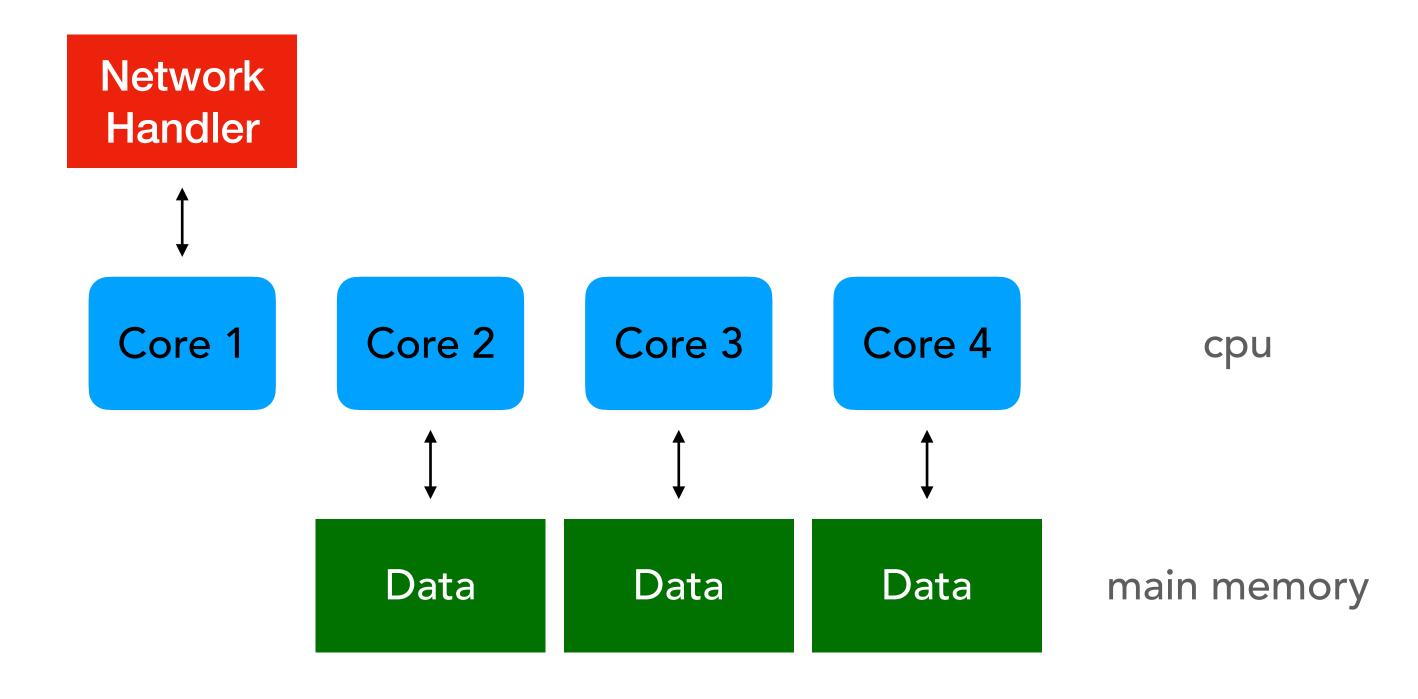
Shared Everything Architecture

Thread per core



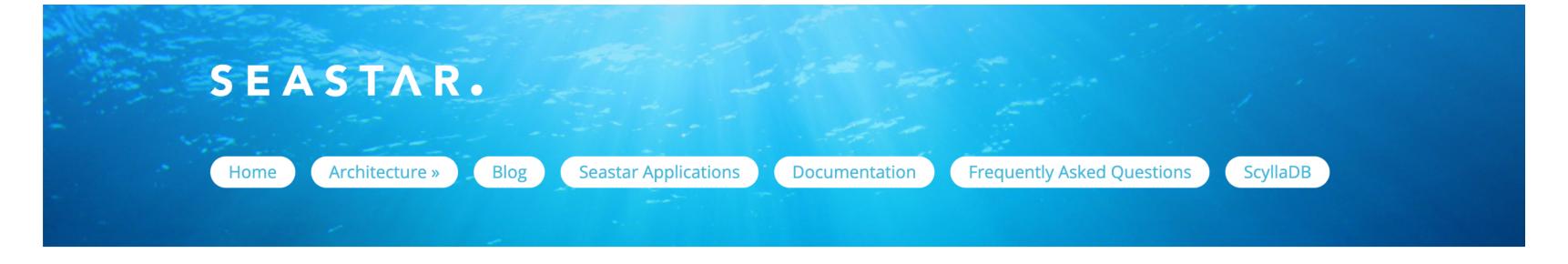
Shared Nothing Architecture

Thread per core



Shared Nothing Architecture

Source: The Impact of Thread-Per-Core Architecture on Application Tail Latency https://helda.helsinki.fi//bitstream/handle/10138/313642/tpc_ancs19.pdf



Seastar is an advanced, open-source C++ framework for high-performance server applications on modern hardware. Seastar is used in Scylla, a high-performance NoSQL database compatible with Apache Cassandra. Applications using Seastar can run on Linux or OSv.

Get Started

Seastar is the first framework to bring together a set of extreme architectural innovations, including:

Shared-nothing design: Seastar uses a shared-nothing model that shards all requests onto individual cores.

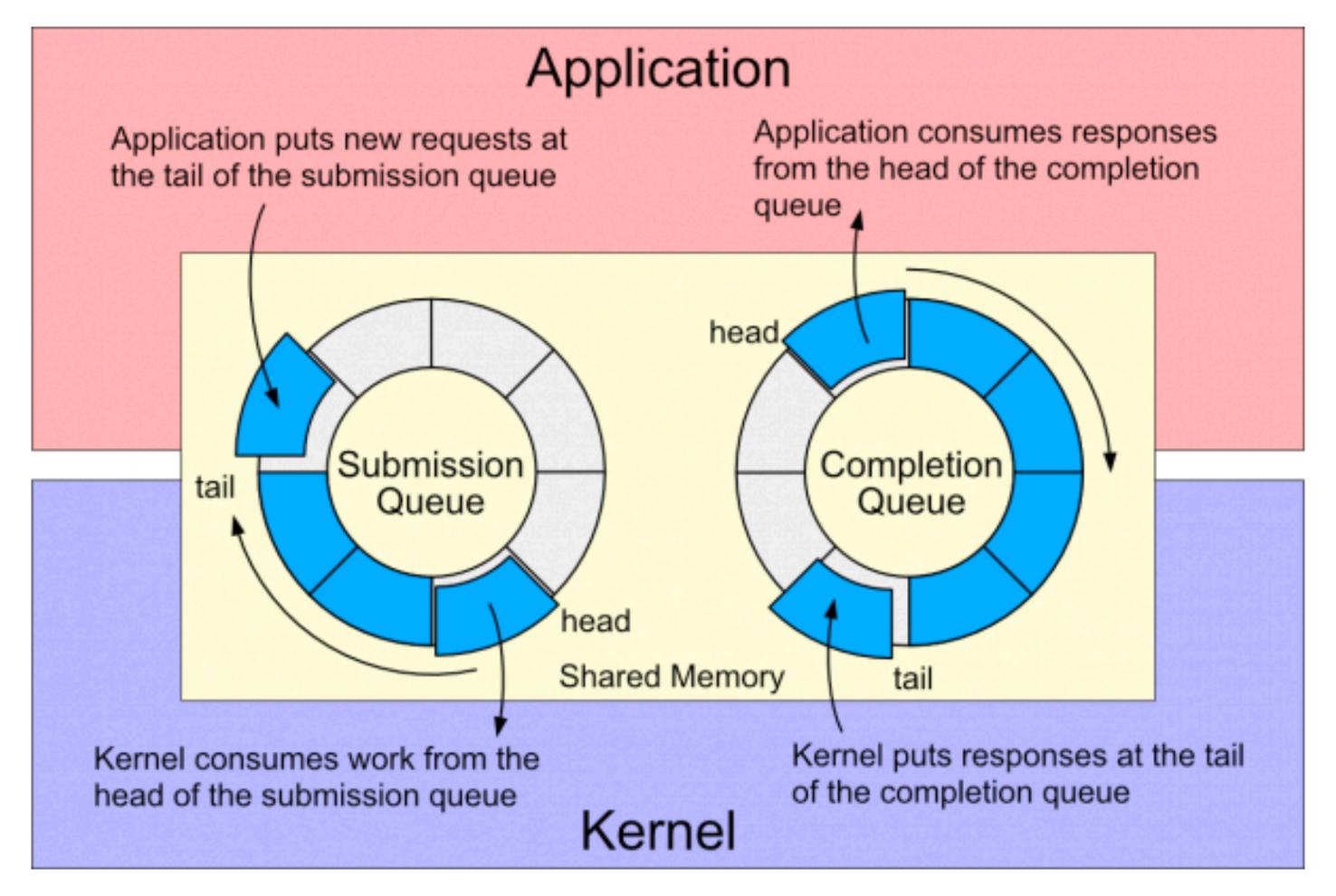
High-performance networking: Seastar offers a choice of network stack, including conventional Linux networking for ease of development, DPDK for fast user-space networking on Linux, and native networking on OSv.

Futures and promises: An advanced new model for concurrent applications that offers C++ programmers both high performance and the ability to create comprehensible, testable high-quality code.

Message passing: A design for sharing information between CPU cores without time-consuming locking

https://seastar.io

io_uring

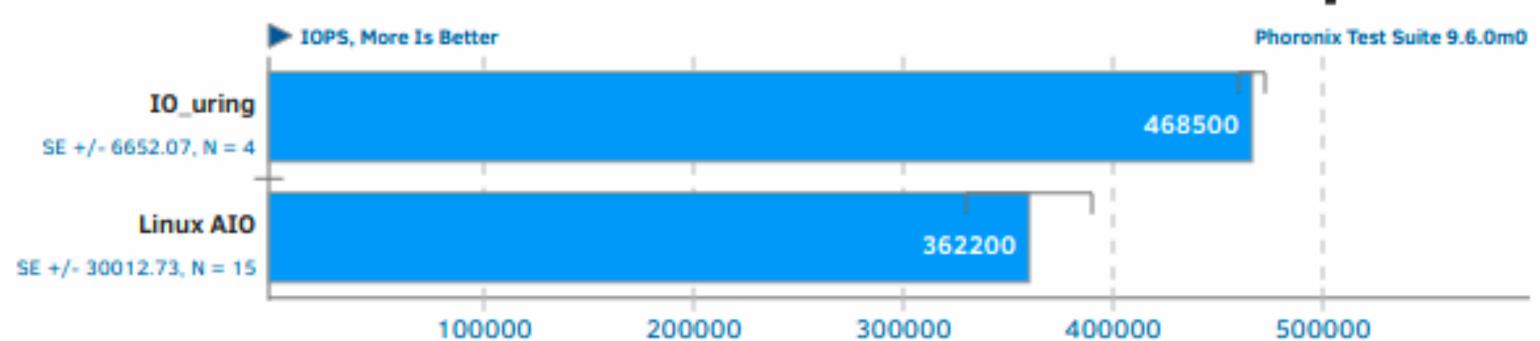


Source: https://developers.redhat.com/articles/2023/04/12/why-you-should-use-iouring-network-io

Flexible IO Tester v3.18

Engine Comparison (Type: Random Write - - Buffered: No - Direct: No - Block Size: 4KB - Disk Target: Default Test Directory)





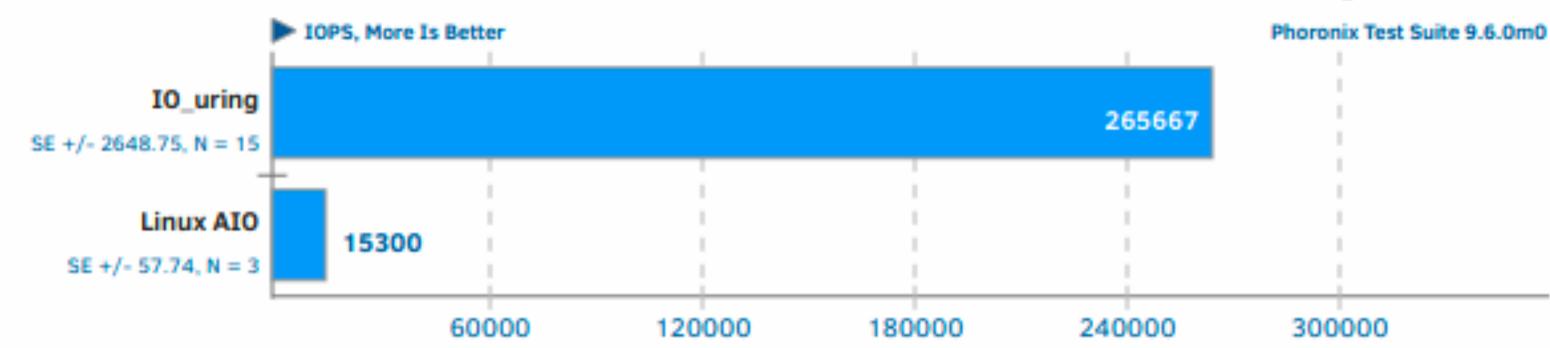
1. (CC) gcc options: -rdynamic -std=gnu99 -ffast-math -include -O3 -U_FORTIFY_SOURCE -march=native -Irt -laio -Iz -lpthread -lm -ldl

Flexible IO Tester v3.18

Engine Comparison (Type: Random Read - - Buffered: Yes - Direct: No - Block Size: 4KB - Disk Target: Default Test Directory)

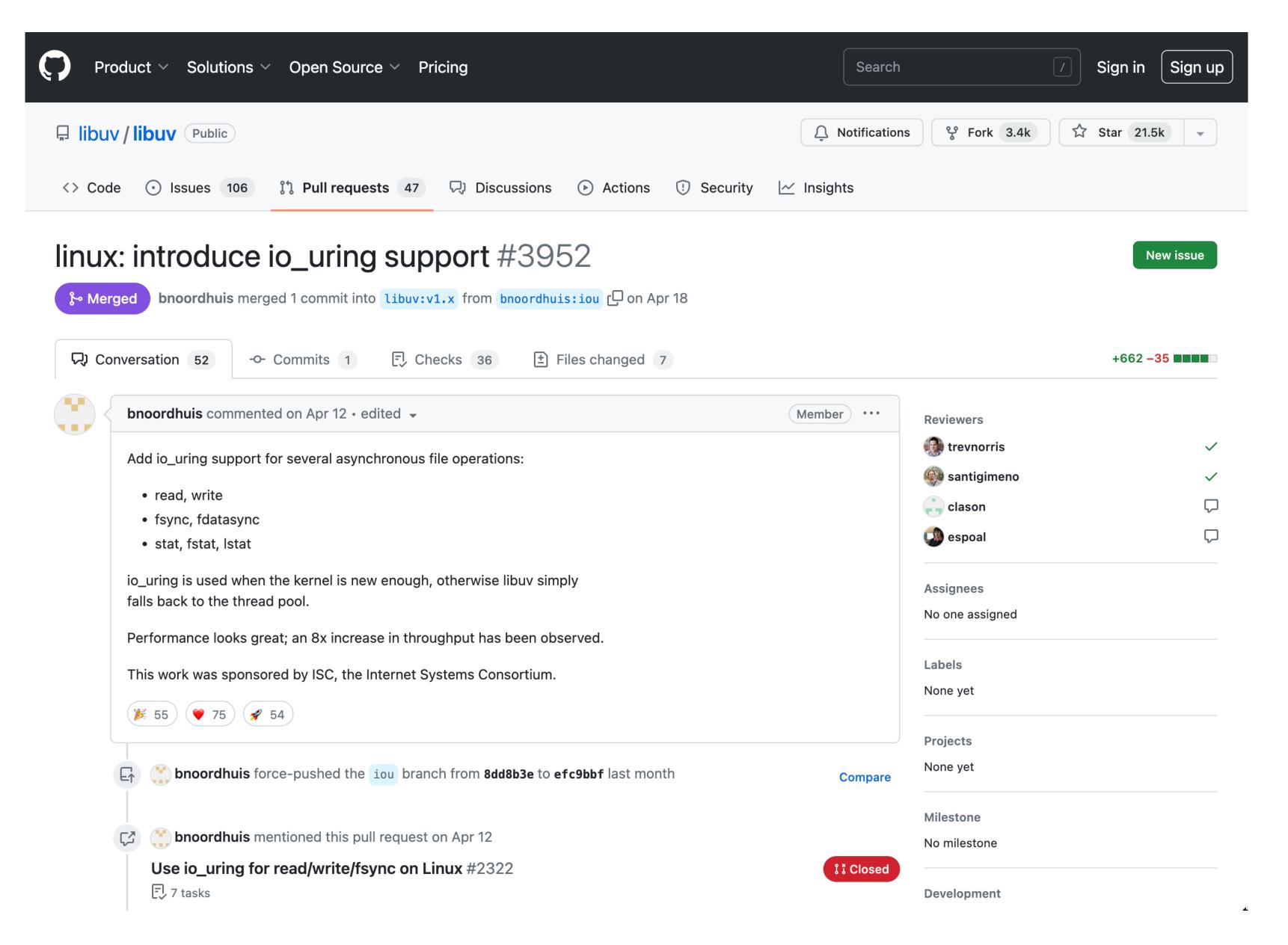


Phoronix Test Suite 9.6.0m0



1. (CC) gcc options: -rdynamic -std=gnu99 -ffast-math -include -O3 -U_FORTIFY_SOURCE -march=native -lrt -laio -lz -lpthread

https://www.phoronix.com/news/Linux-5.6-IO-uring-Tests



https://github.com/libuv/libuv/pull/3952

Systems programming languages





src/lib.rs

```
use pyo3::prelude::*;

/// Formats the sum of two numbers as string.
#[pyfunction]
fn sum_as_string(a: usize, b: usize) -> PyResult<String> {
    Ok((a + b).to_string())
}

/// A Python module implemented in Rust. The name of this function must match
/// the `lib.name` setting in the `Cargo.toml`, else Python will not be able to
/// import the module.
#[pymodule]
fn string_sum(_py: Python<'_>, m: &PyModule) -> PyResult<()> {
    m.add_function(wrap_pyfunction!(sum_as_string, m)?)?;
    Ok(())
}
```

Finally, run maturin develop. This will build the package and install it into the Python virtualenv previously created and activated. The package is then ready to be used from python:

```
$ maturin develop
# lots of progress output as maturin runs the compilation...
$ python
>>> import string_sum
>>> string_sum.sum_as_string(5, 20)
'25'
```

Table 4. Normalized global results for Energy, Time, and Memory

		Total			
	Energy		Time		Mb
(c) C	1.00	(c) C	1.00	(c) Pascal	1.00
(c) Rust	1.03	(c) Rust	1.04	(c) Go	1.05
(c) C++	1.34	(c) C++	1.56	(c) C	1.17
(c) Ada	1.70	(c) Ada	1.85	(c) Fortran	1.24
(v) Java	1.98	(v) Java	1.89	(c) C++	1.34
(c) Pascal	2.14	(c) Chapel	2.14	(c) Ada	1.47
(c) Chapel	2.18	(c) Go	2.83	(c) Rust	1.54
(v) Lisp	2.27	(c) Pascal	3.02	(v) Lisp	1.92
(c) Ocaml	2.40	(c) Ocaml	3.09	(c) Haskell	2.45
(c) Fortran	2.52	(v) C#	3.14	(i) PHP	2.57
(c) Swift	2.79	(v) Lisp	3.40	(c) Swift	2.71
(c) Haskell	3.10	(c) Haskell	3.55	(i) Python	2.80
(v) C#	3.14	(c) Swift	4.20	(c) Ocaml	2.82
(c) Go	3.23	(c) Fortran	4.20	(v) C#	2.85
(i) Dart	3.83	(v) F#	6.30	(i) Hack	3.34
(v) F#	4.13	(i) JavaScript	6.52	(v) Racket	3.52
(i) JavaScript	4.45	(i) Dart	6.67	(i) Ruby	3.97
(v) Racket	7.91	(v) Racket	11.27	(c) Chapel	4.00
(i) TypeScript	21.50	(i) Hack	26.99	(v) F#	4.25
(i) Hack	24.02	(i) PHP	27.64	(i) JavaScript	4.59
(i) PHP	29.30	(v) Erlang	36.71	(i) TypeScript	4.69
(v) Erlang	42.23	(i) Jruby	43.44	(v) Java	6.01
(i) Lua	45.98	(i) TypeScript	46.20	(i) Perl	6.62
(i) Jruby	46.54	(i) Ruby	59.34	(i) Lua	6.72
(i) Ruby	69.91	(i) Perl	65.79	(v) Erlang	7.20
(i) Python	75.88	(i) Python	71.90	(i) Dart	8.64
(i) Perl	79.58	(i) Lua	82.91	(i) Jruby	19.84

Source: Energy Efficiency across Programming Languages https://greenlab.di.uminho.pt/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/sleFinal.pdf

Date Parsing in Python

```
$ python3
Python 3.10.9 (main, Dec 15 2022, 17:11:09) [Clang 14.0.0 (clang-1400.0.29.202)] on darwin
Type "help", "copyright", "credits" or "license" for more information.
>>> import datetime
>>> datetime.datetime.fromisoformat('2023-06-15T09:00:00-05:00')
datetime.datetime(2023, 6, 15, 9, 0, tzinfo=datetime.timezone(datetime.timedelta(seconds=-18000)))
```

```
$ pip install maturin

$ maturin new riso8601

> Which kind of bindings to use?

Documentation: https://maturin.rs/bindings.html · pyo3

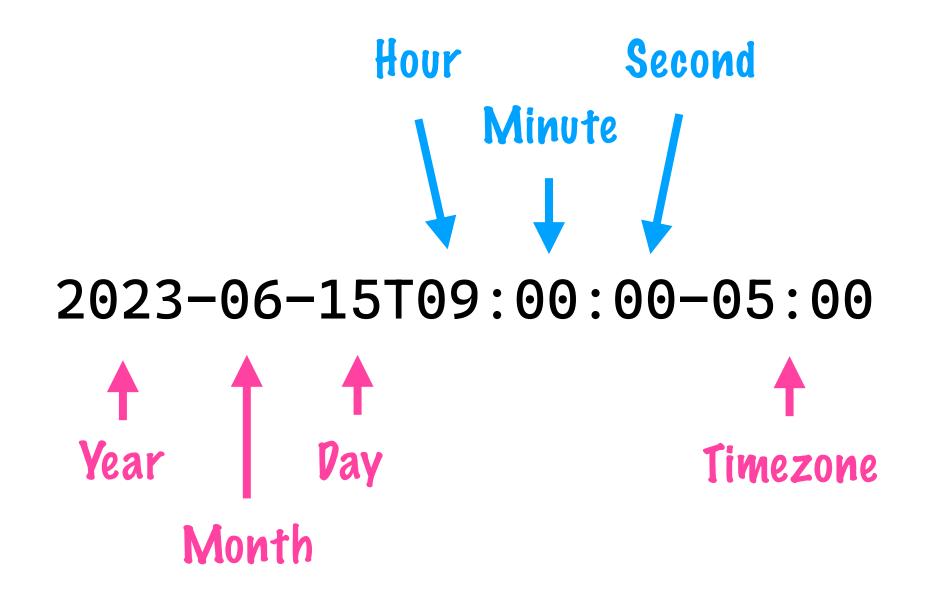
Done! New project created riso8601

$ cd riso8601

$ cd riso8601

$ cd riso8601

$ cd riso8601
```

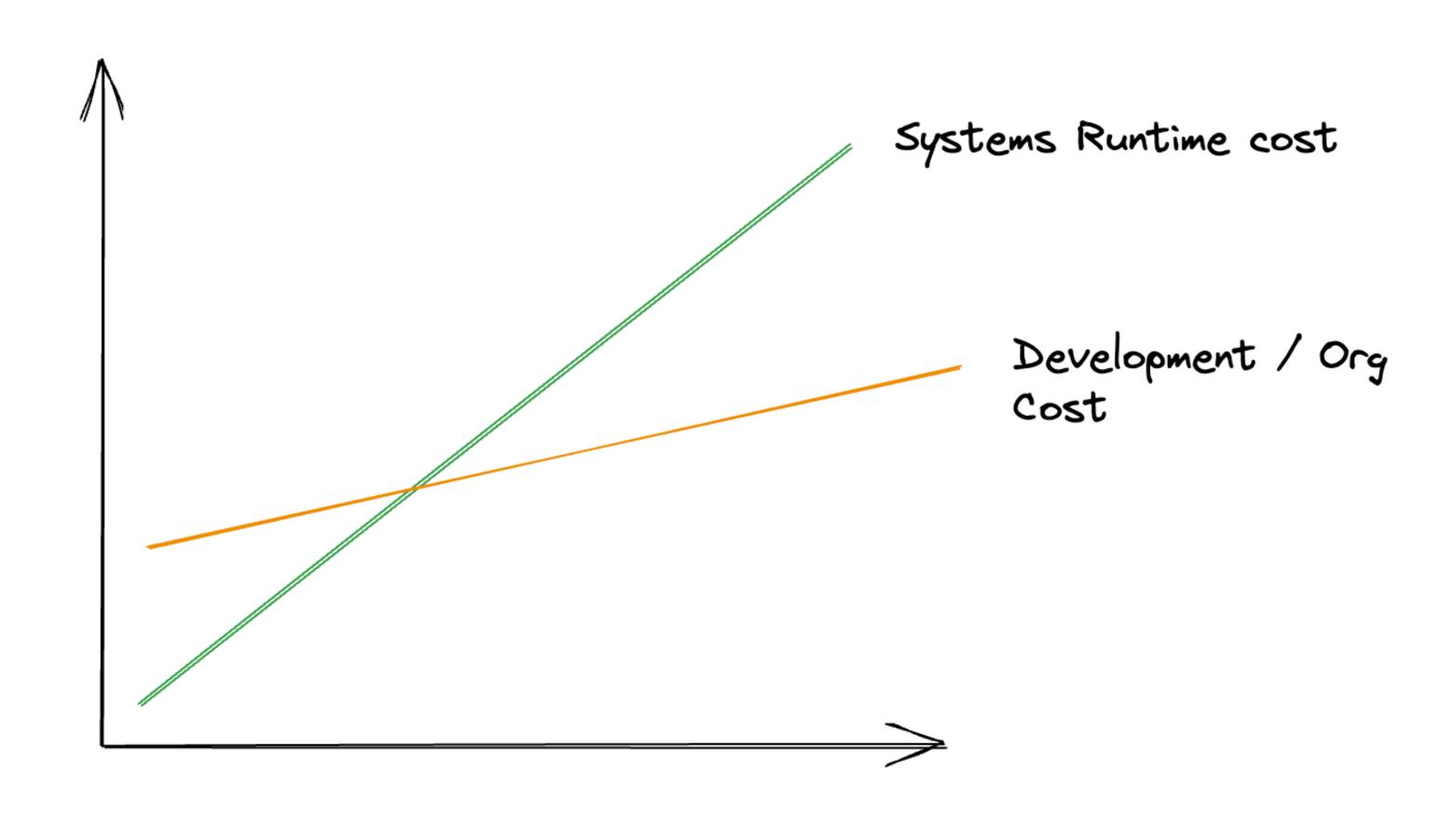


datetime.datetime(2023, 6, 15, 9, 0, tzinfo= datetime.timezone(datetime.timedelta(days=-1, seconds=68400)))

```
#[pyfunction]
fn parse_datetime<'p>(py: Python<'p>, input: &str) \rightarrow PyResult<&'p PyDateTime> {
    let year: i32 = match input[point..point + 4].parse() {
        Ok(val) if val > 0 \implies val,
        Ok(\_) \Rightarrow return Err(ParseError::new\_err("year needs to be above 0")),
        _ ⇒ return Err(ParseError::new_err("invalid time string (year)")),
    };
    // Do a dash check, advance our point position accordingly
    match input[point + 4..point + 5].as_ref() {
        "-" \Rightarrow point = point + 5,
        \rightarrow point = point + 4,
    let month: u8 = match input[point..point + 2].parse() {
        Ok(val) if (1..=12).contains(&val) \Rightarrow val,
        Ok(\_) \Rightarrow return Err(ParseError::new\_err("month needs to be between 1-12")),
        _ ⇒ return Err(ParseError::new_err("invalid time string (month)")),
    };
    // More code to split out the primary components from the date string ...
    return PyDateTime::new(py, year, month, day, hour, minute, second, ms, Some(tz));
                        https://github.com/suhailpatel/riso8601/blob/master/src/lib.rs
```

```
$ python3
Python 3.10.9 (main, Dec 15 2022, 17:11:09) [Clang 14.0.0 (clang-1400.0.29.202)] on darwin
Type "help", "copyright", "credits" or "license" for more information.
>>> import riso8601
>>> riso8601.parse_datetime("2023-06-15T09:00:00-05:00")
datetime.datetime(2023, 6, 15, 9, 0, tzinfo=datetime.timezone(datetime.timedelta(seconds=-18000)))
>>> riso8601.parse_datetime("bad timestamp")
Traceback (most recent call last):
   File "<stdin>", line 1, in <module>
   riso8601.ParseError: invalid time string (year)
```

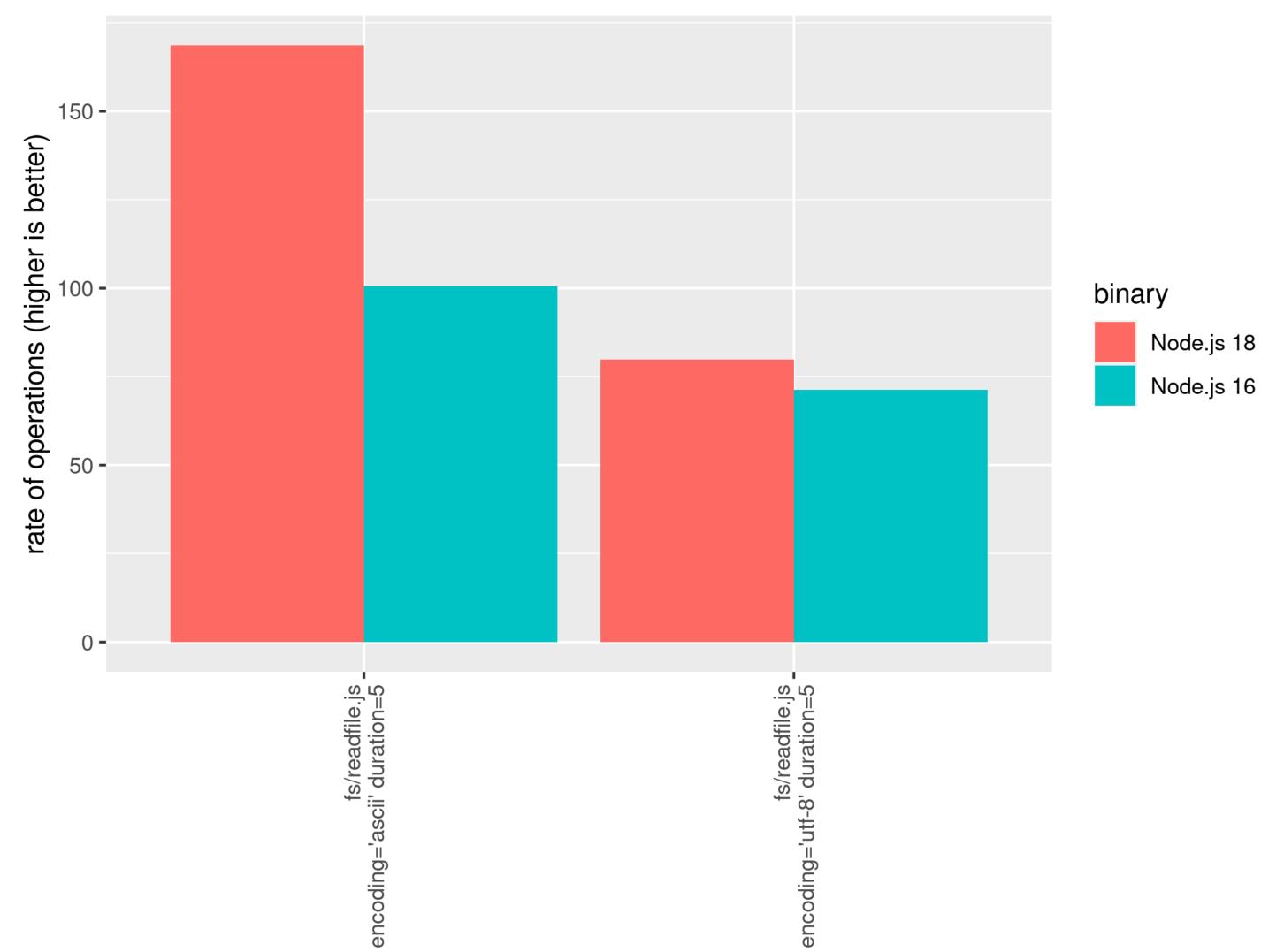
Inflection points





-XX:+UseZGC -Xmx=<max heap size>



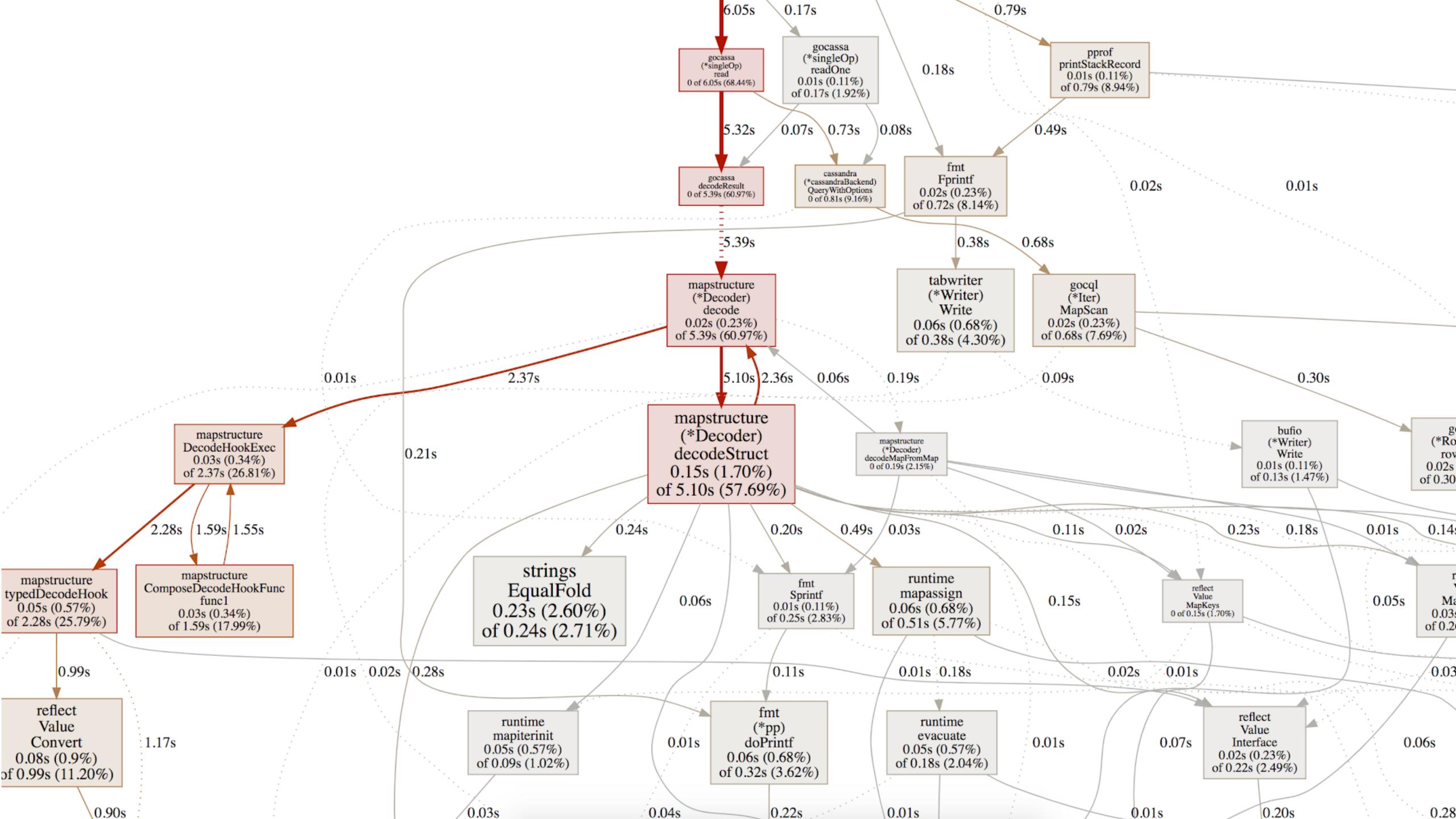


Faster CPython

CPython 3.11 is an average of 25% faster than CPython 3.10 as measured with the pyperformance benchmark suite, when compiled with GCC on Ubuntu Linux. Depending on your workload, the overall speedup could be 10-60%.

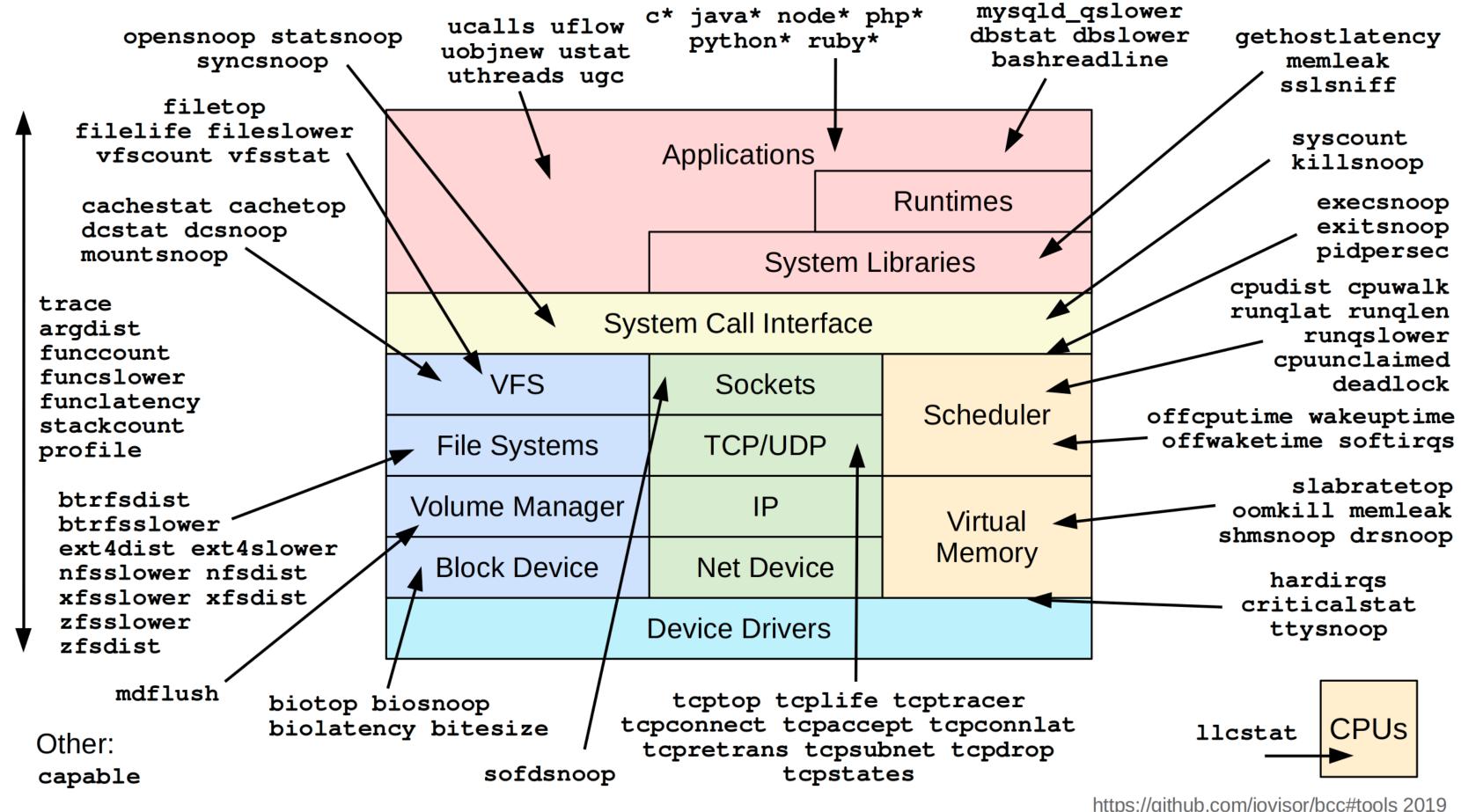
This project focuses on two major areas in Python: Faster Startup and Faster Runtime. Optimizations not covered by this project are listed separately under Optimizations.

https://docs.python.org/3/whatsnew/3.11.html



eBPF

Linux bcc/BPF Tracing Tools

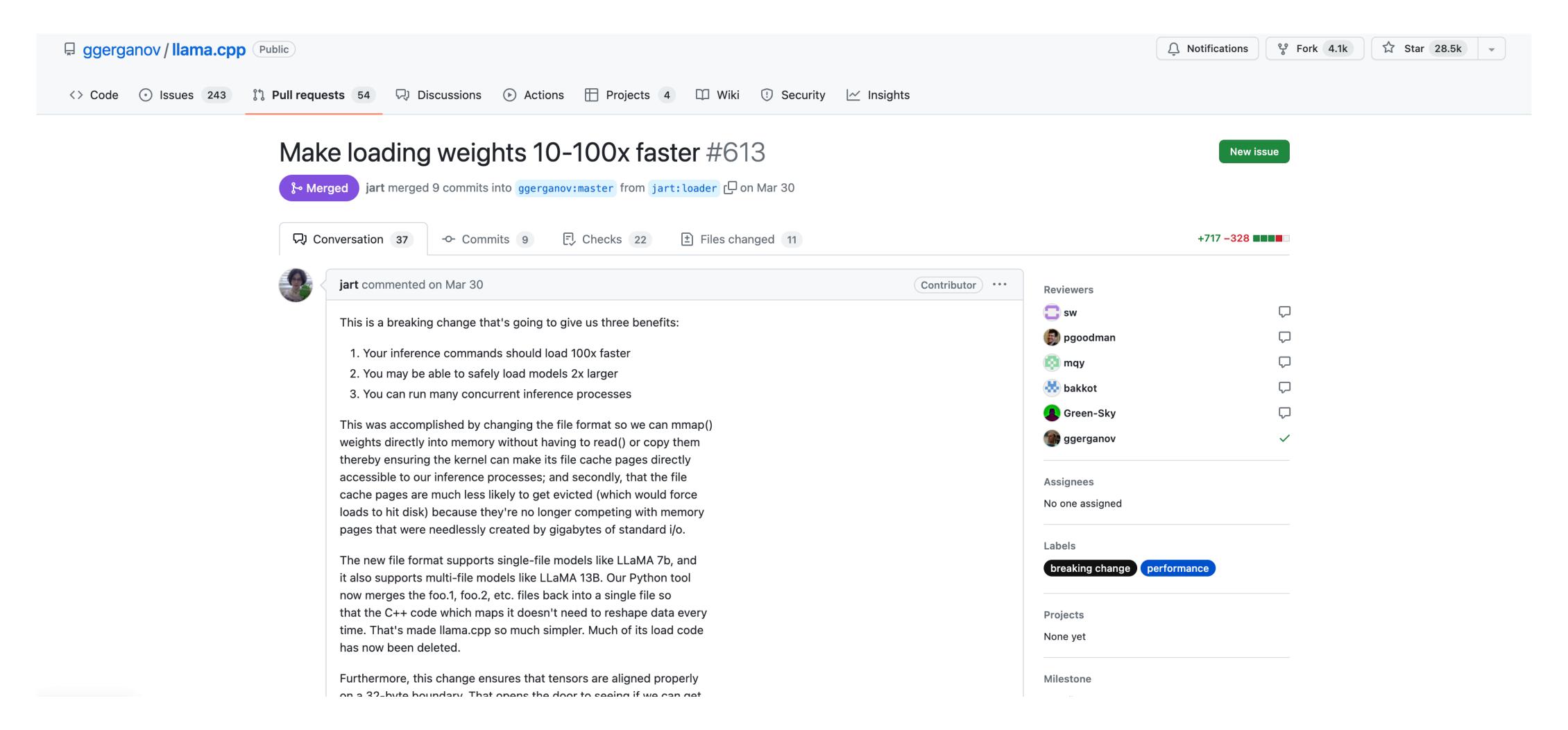


https://github.com/iovisor/bcc#tools 2019

https://github.com/iovisor/bcc



llama.cpp optimisations



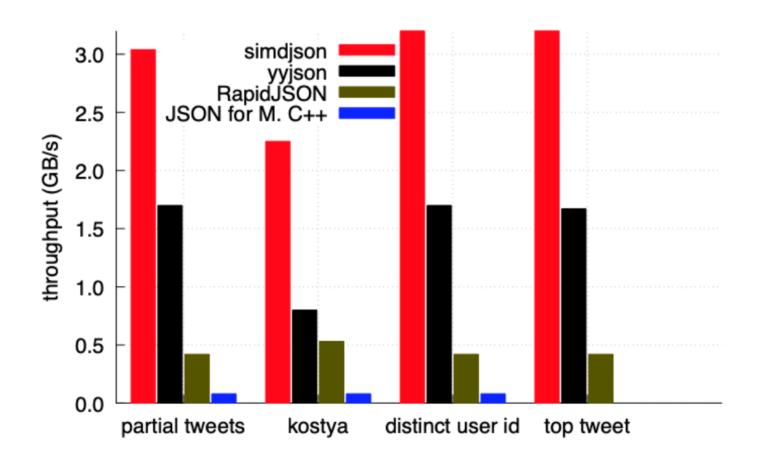
https://github.com/ggerganov/llama.cpp/pull/613

Faster JSON parsing with simdjson

Performance results

The simdjson library uses three-quarters less instructions than state-of-the-art parser RapidJSON. To our knowledge, simdjson is the first fully-validating JSON parser to run at gigabytes per second (GB/s) on commodity processors. It can parse millions of JSON documents per second on a single core.

The following figure represents parsing speed in GB/s for parsing various files on an Intel Skylake processor (3.4 GHz) using the GNU GCC 10 compiler (with the -O3 flag). We compare against the best and fastest C++ libraries on benchmarks that load and process the data. The simdjson library offers full unicode (UTF-8) validation and exact number parsing.



The simdjson library offers high speed whether it processes tiny files (e.g., 300 bytes) or larger files (e.g., 3MB). The following plot presents parsing speed for synthetic files over various sizes generated with a script on a 3.4 GHz Skylake processor (GNU GCC 9, -O3).

https://github.com/simdjson/simdjson

Wait, but why?

Many of the systems (apps, services, databases, caches, queues) that we build/rely on are grounded on quite poor assumptions for the hardware of today

Wait, but why?

Many of the systems (apps, services, databases, caches, queues) that we build/rely on are grounded on quite poor assumptions for the hardware of today

Software can keep pace, but there's some work needed to yield huge results, power new kinds of systems and reduce compute costs

The Joy of Building Large Scale Systems

Thank you!

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