Performance

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These slides are the product of many rounds of teaching CS 3410 by Professors Weatherspoon, Bala, Bracy, and Sirer.
Performance

Complex question

- How fast is the processor?
- How fast your application runs?
- How quickly does it respond to you?
- How fast can you process a big batch of jobs?
- How much power does your machine use?
### Performance: Latency vs. Throughput

**Latency (execution time):** time to finish a fixed task

**Throughput (bandwidth):** # of tasks in fixed time

- Different: exploit parallelism for throughput, not latency (e.g., bread)
- Often contradictory (latency vs. throughput)
  - Will see many examples of this
- Use definition of performance that matches your goals
  - Scientific program: latency; web server: throughput?
**iClicker Question #1: Car vs. Bus**

**Car:** speed = 60 miles/hour, capacity = 5

**Bus:** speed = 20 miles/hour, capacity = 60

**Task:** transport passengers 10 miles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latency (min)</th>
<th>Throughput (PPH)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
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**2 CLICKER QUESTIONS (Throughput):**

- A. 10
- B. 15
- C. 20
- D. 60
- E. 120
iClicker Question #1: Car vs. Bus

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<td><strong>Car</strong></td>
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<td>15 PPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bus</strong></td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>60 PPH</td>
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**Single-cycle datapath**: true “atomic” fetch/execute loop
Fetch, decode, execute one instruction/cycle

+ Low CPI (see later slides): 1 by definition
  – Long clock period: to accommodate slowest instruction
    (PC $\rightarrow$ I$\rightarrow$ RF $\rightarrow$ ALU $\rightarrow$ D$\rightarrow$ RF)
**Multi-cycle datapath**: attacks slow clock
Fetch, decode, execute one insn over multiple cycles

**Allows insns to take different number of cycles** (main point)
±Opposite of single-cycle: short clock period, high CPI
Single- vs. Multi-cycle Performance

Single-cycle
- Clock period = 50ns, CPI = 1
- Performance = 50ns/insn

Multi-cycle: opposite performance split
- Shorter clock period
  - Higher CPI

Example
- branch: 20% (3 cycles), load: 20% (5 cycles), ALU: 60% (4 cycle)
- Clock period = 11ns, CPI = (20%*3)+(20%*5)+(60%*4) = 4
  - Why is clock period 11ns and not 10ns?
- Performance = 44ns/insn

Aside: CISC makes perfect sense in multi-cycle datapath
Processor Performance Equation

Program runtime:

\[
\frac{\text{seconds}}{\text{program}} = \frac{\text{instructions}}{\text{program}} \times \frac{\text{cycles}}{\text{instruction}} \times \frac{\text{seconds}}{\text{cycle}}
\]

**Instructions per program:** “dynamic instruction count”
- Runtime count of instructions executed by the program
- Determined by program, compiler, ISA

**Cycles per instruction:** “CPI” (typical range: 2 to 0.5)
- How many cycles does an instruction take to execute?
- Determined by program, compiler, ISA, micro-architecture

**Seconds per cycle:** clock period, length of each cycle
- Inverse metric: cycles/second (Hertz) or cycles/ns (Ghz)
- Determined by micro-architecture, technology parameters

For lower latency (=better performance) minimize all three
- Difficult: *often pull against one another*
Cycles per Instruction (CPI)

CPI: Cycle/instruction for on average

- **IPC = 1/CPI**
  - Used more frequently than CPI
  - Favored because “bigger is better”, but harder to compute with

- Different instructions have different cycle costs
  - E.g., “add” typically takes 1 cycle, “divide” takes >10 cycles

- Depends on relative instruction frequencies

CPI example

- Program has equal ratio: integer, memory, floating point
- Cycles per insn type: integer = 1, memory = 2, FP = 3
- What is the CPI? \((33\% \times 1) + (33\% \times 2) + (33\% \times 3) = 2\)
- **Caveat**: this sort of calculation ignores many effects
  - Back-of-the-envelope arguments only
Assume a processor with instruction frequencies and costs

- Integer ALU: 50%, 1 cycle
- Load: 20%, 5 cycle
- Store: 10%, 1 cycle
- Branch: 20%, 2 cycle

Which change would improve performance more?

A: “Branch prediction” to reduce branch cost to 1 cycle?
B: “Cache” to reduce load cost to 3 cycles?

Compute CPI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INT</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>BR</th>
<th>CPI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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- A. A better
- B. B better
- C. C equal
- D. D can’t say
Mhz (MegaHertz) and Ghz (GigaHertz)

1 Hertz = 1 cycle/second
1 Ghz = 1 cycle/nanosecond, 1 Ghz = 1000 Mhz

General public (mostly) ignores CPI
  • Equates clock frequency with performance!

Which processor would you buy?
  • Processor A: CPI = 2, clock = 5 GHz
  • Processor B: CPI = 1, clock = 3 GHz
  • Probably A, but B is faster (assuming same ISA/compiler)

Classic example
  • 800 MHz PentiumIII faster than 1 GHz Pentium4!
  • Example: Core i7 faster clock-per-clock than Core 2
  • Same ISA and compiler!

Meta-point: danger of partial performance metrics!
(Micro) architects often ignore dynamic instruction count

- Typically have one ISA, one compiler → treat it as fixed

CPU performance equation becomes

\[
\text{Latency: } \frac{\text{seconds}}{\text{insn}} = \frac{\text{cycles}}{\text{insn}} \times \frac{\text{seconds}}{\text{cycle}}
\]

\[
\text{Throughput: } \frac{\text{insn}}{\text{seconds}} = \frac{\text{insn}}{\text{cycles}} \times \frac{\text{cycles}}{\text{second}}
\]

**MIPS** (millions of instructions per second)

- **Cycles / second**: clock frequency (in MHz)
- Ex: CPI = 2, clock = 500 MHz → 0.5 * 500 MHz = 250 MIPS

**Pitfall**: may vary inversely with actual performance

- Compiler removes insns, program faster, but lower MIPS
- Work per instruction varies (multiply vs. add, FP vs. integer)
How to make the computer faster?

Decrease latency

Critical Path

• Longest path determining the minimum time needed for an operation
• Determines minimum length of clock cycle i.e. determines maximum clock frequency
Goal: Make Multi-Cycle @ 30 MHz CPU (15MIPS) run 2x faster by making arithmetic instructions faster

**Instruction mix** (for P):
- 25% load/store, CPI = 3
- 60% arithmetic, CPI = 2
- 15% branches, CPI = 1

What is CPI?

Goal: Make processor run 2x faster (30 → 15 MIPS)
Try: Arithmetic 2 → 1? (2)
(2 → x what would x have to be?)
Amdahl’s Law

Execution time after improvement =
\[
\frac{\text{execution time affected by improvement}}{\text{amount of improvement}} + \text{execution time unaffected}
\]

Or: Speedup is limited by popularity of improved feature

Corollary: **build a balanced system**

- Don’t optimize 1% to the detriment of other 99%
- Don’t over-engineer capabilities that cannot be utilized

Caveat: Law of diminishing returns