T4: A Highly Threaded Server-on-a-Chip with Native Support for Heterogeneous Computing

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Agenda

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  • Block Diagram
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T4 Design Objectives

- Optimize Software and Hardware for Oracle Workloads and Engineered Systems
  - Extend SPARC ISA
- Performance
  - Much better singlethread performance vs T3
  - Double T3’s per thread throughput performance
  - Enhance overall crypto performance vs T3
- Compatibility
  - Maintain SPARC V9 and CMT model compatibility
  - Maintain current T3 system scalability
- Reliability
  - Extend T3’s RAS capabilities
T4 Chip Overview

- 8 SPARC S3 cores
  - 8 threads each
- Shared 4 MB L3
  - 8-banks
  - 16-way associative
- Two dual-channel DDR3-1066 memory controllers
- Two PCI-Express x8 2.0 ports
- Two 10G Ethernet ports
- TSMC
  - 40 nm
  - ~855 million transistors
S3 Core Overview

• Out-of-order
• Dual-issue
• Dynamically threaded
• Balanced pipeline design
  • Singlethread performance
    • Estimate ~5X S2’s SPECint2006* performance
    • Estimate ~7X S2’s SPECfp2006* performance
  • Throughput performance
    • ~2X S2’s per thread throughput performance
• High frequency, deep pipeline
  • 16 stage integer pipe
  • 3+ GHz

*SPEC, SPECfp, SPECint are registered trademarks of the Standard Performance Evaluation Corporation. Estimates as of 8/18/2011, see www.spec.org for more about SPEC.
S3 Core Overview

• Extensive branch prediction
  • Perceptron direction predictor
  • Return Stack to predict return addresses
  • Far and Indirect target predictors
  • BTC to reduce taken branch penalty

• Hardware / Software optimizations for Oracle applications
  • User level crypto instructions
  • PAUSE instruction
  • Fused compare-branch instruction

• HW prefetchers
  • Instruction cache sequential line prefetcher
  • Data cache stride based prefetcher

• 16 KB, 4-way, L1 instruction and data cache
• 128 KB, 8-way, unified private L2 cache
S3 Core Pipeline

16 Stage Integer Pipeline

F1 F2 F3 S D1 D2 R1 R2 R3 P I1 I2 I3 I4 E W

3-cycle Crypto Pipeline

X1 X2 X3

5-cycle Load-Use

C1 C2 C3 B W

11-cycle Floating-Point Pipeline

FX1 FX2 FX3 FX4 FX5 FX6 FX7 FX8 FX9 FX10 FB FW

Pipeline Key

F Fetch R Rename E Execute B Bypass FX Floating-point execute
S Select P Pick W Write-back X Crypto execute FB Floating-point bypass
D Decode I Issue C Data-cache FW Floating-point writeback
Threaded S3 Core Pipeline View

- Before Pick
  - Only 1 thread per pipe stage

- Pick to Commit
  - Multiple threads per pipe stage

- Commit
  - Only 1 thread per pipe stage

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T4 Relative Performance

Relative Performance T4 vs T1-T3*

- T1 - 8 S1 cores, 32 threads
- T2 - 8 S2 cores, 64 threads
- T3 - 16 S2 cores, 128 threads
- T4 - 8 S3 cores, 64 threads

*All performance estimates are relative to T1 performance.
T4 Relative Performance

Estimated SPECint2006* Relative Performance T4/T3

Estimated SPECfp2006* Relative Performance T4/T3

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Dynamic Threading

- Many of the resources on S3 are shared between threads
  - Load-buffers, store-buffers, pick-queue, working-register-file, reorder-buffer, etc.

- Thread sharing of resources
  - Static resource allocation
    - Not optimal for heterogeneous workloads
  - Dynamic resource allocation
    - Better for heterogeneous workloads
    - Improves overall application scaling
    - Resources are dynamically configured between threads each cycle
      - No synchronization required
Dynamic Threading – Thread Hogs

• Thread hog definition
  • A thread which fails to release its shared resources in a timely fashion

• Thread hog mitigation using watermarks
  • High and low watermarks defined for each shared resource
    • High watermark reached by allocation
    • Low watermark reached by deallocation
  • Upon reaching high watermark, thread resource allocation stalls
  • Thread resource allocation remains stalled until low watermark is reached
Dynamic Threading – Thread Hogs

• Thread hog mitigation using rate of deallocation
  • Pick Queue (PQ) mitigation technique
    • PQ is most critical shared resource on S3
  • Threads are expected to deallocate PQ entries in a timely fashion
    • If not, thread is considered a PQ thread hog
• If thread is a PQ thread hog
  • PQ resource available to thread is reduced and made available to other threads
    • If hogging behavior continues, PQ resource is further reduced and made available to other threads
  • If thread deallocates PQ entries in a timely fashion, PQ resource is increased
Dynamic Threading – Thread Hogs

• Thread hog mitigation using flushes
  • Flush on L3 miss
    • When a load misses the L3, flush the thread
    • Flushing releases any allocated shared resources for that thread
  • Load/Store timeout
    • Some events are not covered by other thread hog mitigation policies
      • Load that RAWs to a previous store that misses the L3
      • Flush any load/store that is the oldest and does not commit for N cycles
  • Flush after IO
    • Flush thread after an IO access reaches Commit
Crypto Overview

• Crypto programmed via user instructions
• Instructions are either “in-pipe” or “out-of-pipe”
  • “in-pipe” set supports 3 cycle internal latency
    • AES, DES, Kasumi, Camellia, CRC32c
  • “out-of-pipe” set has long latency
    • MD5, SHA-1, SHA-256, SHA-512, MPMUL, MONTMUL, MONTSQR
• MPMUL, MONTMUL, MONTSQR have separate state machine
  • Stall Pick Queue to inject crypto multiplies
  • Fairness heuristic between crypto and non-crypto threads
Crypto Relative Performance

Relative Core Performance T4/T3

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Summary

• Next-generation processor for Oracle servers
  • Significantly improved per thread throughput performance
  • Much better singlethread performance

• Dynamic threading
  • Better for heterogeneous workloads
  • Improves overall application scaling

• Excellent overall crypto performance
  • Enables transparent encryption across Oracle software stack
Glossary

- SPC – SPARC core
- CCX – crossbar
- BTC – branch target cache
- IRF – integer register file
- WRF – working register file
- FRF – floating-point register file
- FGU – floating-point / graphics unit
- IB – instruction buffer