Chapter 13: I/O Systems
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- Overview
- I/O Hardware
- Application I/O Interface
- Kernel I/O Subsystem
- Transforming I/O Requests to Hardware Operations
- STREAMS
- Performance
Objectives

- Explore the structure of an operating system’s I/O subsystem
- Discuss the principles of I/O hardware and its complexity
- Provide details of the performance aspects of I/O hardware and software
Overview

- I/O management is a major component of operating system design and operation
  - Important aspect of computer operation
  - I/O devices vary greatly
  - Various methods to control them
  - Performance management
  - New types of devices frequent
- Ports, busses, device controllers connect to various devices
- **Device drivers** encapsulate device details
  - Present uniform device-access interface to I/O subsystem
I/O Hardware

- Incredible variety of I/O devices
  - Storage
  - Transmission
  - Human-interface

- Common concepts – signals from I/O devices interface with computer
  - **Port** – connection point for device
  - **Bus - daisy chain** or shared direct access
    - PCI bus common in PCs and servers, PCI Express (**PCIe**)
    - **expansion bus** connects relatively slow devices
  - **Controller (host adapter)** – electronics that operate port, bus, device
    - Sometimes integrated
    - Sometimes separate circuit board (host adapter)
    - Contains processor, microcode, private memory, bus controller, etc
      - Some talk to per-device controller with bus controller, microcode, memory, etc
A Typical PC Bus Structure

- **PCI bus**
  - Monitor
  - Processor
  - Bridge/memory controller
  - Cache
  - Memory
  - IDE disk controller
    - Disk
    - Disk
    - Disk
  - Expansion bus interface
    - Parallel port
    - Serial port
  - Expansion bus
  - SCSI controller
    - Disk
    - Disk
    - Disk
  - SCSI bus
I/O Hardware (Cont.)

- I/O instructions control devices
- Devices usually have registers where device driver places commands, addresses, and data to write, or read data from registers after command execution
  - Data-in register, data-out register, status register, control register
  - Typically 1-4 bytes, or FIFO buffer
- Devices have addresses, used by
  - Direct I/O instructions
  - **Memory-mapped I/O**
    - Device data and command registers mapped to processor address space
    - Especially for large address spaces (graphics)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I/O address range (hexadecimal)</th>
<th>device</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>000–00F</td>
<td>DMA controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>020–021</td>
<td>interrupt controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>040–043</td>
<td>timer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200–20F</td>
<td>game controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2F8–2FF</td>
<td>serial port (secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320–32F</td>
<td>hard-disk controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>378–37F</td>
<td>parallel port</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D0–3DF</td>
<td>graphics controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3F0–3F7</td>
<td>diskette-drive controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3F8–3FF</td>
<td>serial port (primary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Polling

- For each byte of I/O
  1. Read busy bit from status register until 0
  2. Host sets read or write bit and if write copies data into data-out register
  3. Host sets command-ready bit
  4. Controller sets busy bit, executes transfer
  5. Controller clears busy bit, error bit, command-ready bit when transfer done

- Step 1 is **busy-wait** cycle to wait for I/O from device
  - Reasonable if device is fast
  - But inefficient if device slow
  - CPU switches to other tasks?
    - But if miss a cycle data overwritten / lost
Interrupts

- Polling can happen in 3 instruction cycles
  - Read status, logical-and to extract status bit, branch if not zero
  - How to be more efficient if non-zero infrequently?
- CPU **Interrupt-request line** triggered by I/O device
  - Checked by processor after each instruction
- **Interrupt handler** receives interrupts
  - **Maskable** to ignore or delay some interrupts
- **Interrupt vector** to dispatch interrupt to correct handler
  - Context switch at start and end
  - Based on priority
  - Some **nonmaskable**
  - Interrupt chaining if more than one device at same interrupt number
Interrupt-Driven I/O Cycle

1. CPU
   - device driver initiates I/O
   - CPU executing checks for interrupts between instructions
   - CPU receiving interrupt, transfers control to interrupt handler
   - interrupt handler processes data, returns from interrupt
   - CPU resumes processing of interrupted task
2. I/O controller
   - initiates I/O
   - input ready, output complete, or error generates interrupt signal
## Intel Pentium Processor Event-Vector Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vector number</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>divide error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>debug exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>null interrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>breakpoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>INTO-detected overflow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>bound range exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>invalid opcode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>device not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>double fault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>coprocessor segment overrun (reserved)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>invalid task state segment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>segment not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>stack fault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>general protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>page fault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>(Intel reserved, do not use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>floating-point error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>alignment check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>machine check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–31</td>
<td>(Intel reserved, do not use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32–255</td>
<td>maskable interrupts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interrupts (Cont.)

- Interrupt mechanism also used for **exceptions**
  - Terminate process, crash system due to hardware error
- Page fault executes when memory access error
- System call executes via **trap** to trigger kernel to execute request
- Multi-CPU systems can process interrupts concurrently
  - If operating system designed to handle it
- Used for time-sensitive processing, frequent, must be fast
Direct Memory Access

- Used to avoid *programmed I/O* (one byte at a time) for large data movement
- Requires **DMA** controller
- Bypasses CPU to transfer data directly between I/O device and memory
- OS writes DMA command block into memory
  - Source and destination addresses
  - Read or write mode
  - Count of bytes
  - Writes location of command block to DMA controller
  - Bus mastering of DMA controller – grabs bus from CPU
    - **Cycle stealing** from CPU but still much more efficient
  - When done, interrupts to signal completion
- Version that is aware of virtual addresses can be even more efficient - **DVMA**
Six Step Process to Perform DMA Transfer

3. disk controller initiates DMA transfer
4. disk controller sends each byte to DMA controller
Application I/O Interface

- I/O system calls encapsulate device behaviors in generic classes
- Device-driver layer hides differences among I/O controllers from kernel
- New devices talking already-implemented protocols need no extra work
- Each OS has its own I/O subsystem structures and device driver frameworks
- Devices vary in many dimensions
  - Character-stream or block
  - Sequential or random-access
  - Synchronous or asynchronous (or both)
  - Sharable or dedicated
  - Speed of operation
  - read-write, read only, or write only
# Characteristics of I/O Devices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>aspect</th>
<th>variation</th>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>data-transfer mode</td>
<td>character block</td>
<td>terminal disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access method</td>
<td>sequential random</td>
<td>modem CD-ROM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transfer schedule</td>
<td>synchronous asynchronous</td>
<td>tape keyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing</td>
<td>dedicated sharable</td>
<td>tape keyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>device speed</td>
<td>latency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seek time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>transfer rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>delay between operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I/O direction</td>
<td>read only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>write only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>read–write</td>
<td>CD-ROM graphics controller disk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of I/O Devices (Cont.)

- Subtleties of devices handled by device drivers
- Broadly I/O devices can be grouped by the OS into
  - Block I/O
  - Character I/O (Stream)
  - Memory-mapped file access
  - Network sockets
- For direct manipulation of I/O device specific characteristics, usually an escape / back door
  - Unix `ioctl()` call to send arbitrary bits to a device control register and data to device data register
Block and Character Devices

- Block devices include disk drives
  - Commands include read, write, seek
  - **Raw I/O, direct I/O**, or file-system access
  - Memory-mapped file access possible
    - File mapped to virtual memory and clusters brought via demand paging
  - DMA
- Character devices include keyboards, mice, serial ports
  - Commands include `get()`, `put()`
  - Libraries layered on top allow line editing
Network Devices

- Varying enough from block and character to have own interface
- Linux, Unix, Windows and many others include socket interface
  - Separates network protocol from network operation
  - Includes `select()` functionality
- Approaches vary widely (pipes, FIFOs, streams, queues, mailboxes)
Clocks and Timers

- Provide current time, elapsed time, timer
- Normal resolution about 1/60 second
- Some systems provide higher-resolution timers
- **Programmable interval timer** used for timings, periodic interrupts
- `ioctl()` (on UNIX) covers odd aspects of I/O such as clocks and timers
Nonblocking and Asynchronous I/O

- **Blocking** - process suspended until I/O completed
  - Easy to use and understand
  - Insufficient for some needs

- **Nonblocking** - I/O call returns as much as available
  - User interface, data copy (buffered I/O)
  - Implemented via multi-threading
  - Returns quickly with count of bytes read or written
  - `select()` to find if data ready then `read()` or `write()` to transfer

- **Asynchronous** - process runs while I/O executes
  - Difficult to use
  - I/O subsystem signals process when I/O completed
Two I/O Methods

Synchronous

Asynchronous
**Vectored I/O**

- **Vectored I/O** allows one system call to perform multiple I/O operations.
- For example, Unix `readve()` accepts a vector of multiple buffers to read into or write from.
- This scatter-gather method better than multiple individual I/O calls:
  - Decreases context switching and system call overhead.
  - Some versions provide atomicity:
    - Avoid for example worry about multiple threads changing data as reads / writes occurring.
Kernel I/O Subsystem

- Scheduling
  - Some I/O request ordering via per-device queue
  - Some OSs try fairness
  - Some implement Quality Of Service (i.e. IPQOS)

- Buffering - store data in memory while transferring between devices
  - To cope with device speed mismatch
  - To cope with device transfer size mismatch
  - To maintain “copy semantics”
  - Double buffering – two copies of the data
    - Kernel and user
    - Varying sizes
    - Full / being processed and not-full / being used
    - Copy-on-write can be used for efficiency in some cases
## Device-status Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keyboard</td>
<td>idle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laser printer</td>
<td>busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>idle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disk unit 1</td>
<td>idle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disk unit 2</td>
<td>busy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Request for laser printer**
- address: 38546
- length: 1372

**Request for disk unit 2**
- file: xxx
- operation: read
- address: 43046
- length: 20000

**Request for disk unit 2**
- file: yyy
- operation: write
- address: 03458
- length: 500
Sun Enterprise 6000 Device-Transfer Rates

- System bus
- HyperTransport (32-pair)
- PCI Express 2.0 (×32)
- Infiniband (QDR 12X)
- Serial ATA (SATA-300)
- Gigabit Ethernet
- SCSI bus
- FireWire
- Hard disk
- Modem
- Mouse
- Keyboard
Kernel I/O Subsystem

- **Caching** - faster device holding copy of data
  - Always just a copy
  - Key to performance
  - Sometimes combined with buffering
- **Spooling** - hold output for a device
  - If device can serve only one request at a time
  - i.e., Printing
- **Device reservation** - provides exclusive access to a device
  - System calls for allocation and de-allocation
  - Watch out for deadlock
Error Handling

- OS can recover from disk read, device unavailable, transient write failures
  - Retry a read or write, for example
  - Some systems more advanced – Solaris FMA, AIX
    - Track error frequencies, stop using device with increasing frequency of retry-able errors
- Most return an error number or code when I/O request fails
- System error logs hold problem reports
I/O Protection

- User process may accidentally or purposefully attempt to disrupt normal operation via illegal I/O instructions
  - All I/O instructions defined to be privileged
  - I/O must be performed via system calls
    - Memory-mapped and I/O port memory locations must be protected too
Use of a System Call to Perform I/O

1. Trap to monitor
2. Perform I/O
3. Return to user
Kernel Data Structures

- Kernel keeps state info for I/O components, including open file tables, network connections, character device state.

- Many, many complex data structures to track buffers, memory allocation, “dirty” blocks.

- Some use object-oriented methods and message passing to implement I/O:
  - Windows uses message passing:
    - Message with I/O information passed from user mode into kernel.
    - Message modified as it flows through to device driver and back to process.
    - Pros / cons?
UNIX I/O Kernel Structure

- System-wide open-file table
  - File-system record
    - Inode pointer
    - Pointer to read and write functions
    - Pointer to select function
    - Pointer to ioctl function
    - Pointer to close function

- User-process memory
  - File descriptor
  - Per-process open-file table

- Kernel memory
  - Networking (socket) record
    - Pointer to network info
    - Pointer to read and write functions
    - Pointer to select function
    - Pointer to ioctl function
    - Pointer to close function

- Active-inode table

- Network-information table
Power Management

- Not strictly domain of I/O, but much is I/O related
- Computers and devices use electricity, generate heat, frequently require cooling
- OSes can help manage and improve use
  - Cloud computing environments move virtual machines between servers
    - Can end up evacuating whole systems and shutting them down
- Mobile computing has power management as first class OS aspect
For example, Android implements

- Component-level power management
  - Understands relationship between components
  - Build device tree representing physical device topology
  - System bus -> I/O subsystem -> {flash, USB storage}
  - Device driver tracks state of device, whether in use
  - Unused component – turn it off
  - All devices in tree branch unused – turn off branch
- Wake locks – like other locks but prevent sleep of device when lock is held
- Power collapse – put a device into very deep sleep
  - Marginal power use
  - Only awake enough to respond to external stimuli (button press, incoming call)
Consider reading a file from disk for a process:

- Determine device holding file
- Translate name to device representation
- Physically read data from disk into buffer
- Make data available to requesting process
- Return control to process
Life Cycle of An I/O Request

1. request I/O
   - system call
   - user process

2. can already satisfy request?
   - yes: transfer data (if appropriate) to process, return completion or error code
   - no: send request to device driver, block process if appropriate

3. process request, issue commands to controller, configure controller to block until interrupted
   - device-controller commands

4. monitor device, interrupt when I/O completed
   - device controller

5. receive interrupt, store data in device-driver buffer if input, signal to unblock device driver
   - interrupt handler

6. determine which I/O completed, indicate state change to I/O subsystem

7. I/O completed, generate interrupt
   - I/O completed, input data available, or output completed
   - return from system call
STREAMS

- **STREAM** – a full-duplex communication channel between a user-level process and a device in Unix System V and beyond

- A STREAM consists of:
  - STREAM head interfaces with the user process
  - driver end interfaces with the device
  - zero or more STREAM modules between them

- Each module contains a *read queue* and a *write queue*

- Message passing is used to communicate between queues
  - *Flow control* option to indicate available or busy

- Asynchronous internally, synchronous where user process communicates with stream head
The STREAMS Structure
I/O a major factor in system performance:

- Demands CPU to execute device driver, kernel I/O code
- Context switches due to interrupts
- Data copying
- Network traffic especially stressful
Improving Performance

- Reduce number of context switches
- Reduce data copying
- Reduce interrupts by using large transfers, smart controllers, polling
- Use DMA
- Use smarter hardware devices
- Balance CPU, memory, bus, and I/O performance for highest throughput
- Move user-mode processes / daemons to kernel threads
Device-Functionality Progression

increased time (generations)

device code (hardware)
device-controller code (hardware)
device-driver code
kernel code
application code
End of Chapter 13