

Lisp machines and the analysis of their high-level language computer architecture

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Abstract—The high-level capabilities that Lisp affords programmers makes it very useful in certain applications, but also causes it to run slow on most computers, which were designed for different types of executions. To account for the incompatibility between Lisp and the hardware it runs on, computers called Lisp Machines have been designed specifically to run Lisp programs by designing processor hardware to accommodate the language features Lisp possesses. Achieving greater efficiency in running Lisp was accomplished using various methods, both in the hardware and in how data would be represented in the software. Hardware changes mostly consisted of changes to the circuitry in the processor itself as well as the number and purpose of processors in the machine. Software changes mostly corresponded to the representation of lists, the main data structure in Lisp. Lisp machines were largely deprecated in the 1990s, giving way to traditional computers which were fast enough to run Lisp with reasonable speed, but remain a popular subject for study and discussion amongst those who are familiar with Lisp.

Keywords—Lisp, Lisp Machine, computer engineering, vintage computing, computer organization.

I. INTRODUCTION

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II. CONCLUSION

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APPENDIX A

PROOF OF THE FIRST ZONKLAR EQUATION

Some text for the appendix.

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