

Hardware Architectures for processing
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning processes

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1 Traditional Architecture Artificial Intelligence Chip Technology

This publication is authored by Qinze Jiang and Jiajun Zhan who presented their work at the 2nd International Conference on Computer Science and Management Technology (ICCSMT) held in 2021.

The main goal of this paper is to try to compare different hardware architectures for handling AI and ML tasks and looking at various ways to improve performance for each. There are a total of 3 different types of architectures discussed:

- GPUs
- FPGAs
- ASIC Chips

These different technologies all have different purposes for being used. GPUs are the classical solution to handling ML tasks. They are capable of handling the complex tensor computations due to their many simplistic designed cells (processing units). This simplistic design is contrasted by that of the FPGA, which is more complex and allows them to be programmed via logical blocks (gates) and can be configured before usage. This enables them to be more efficient than the classical GPU which is more general purpose. An alternative to both would be the ASIC chips which are specifically designed to the purpose instead of being programmed for it. By instead designing the hardware for the particular task for AI/ML processing, this can further improve performance.

To improve each of these technologies, the authors propose a series of solutions. For GPUs, they suggest combining their operation via more sophisticated software such as Kubernetes and Docker. For FPGAs, they suggest to use FPGA Accelerators to improve performance for a particular type of ML model. For ASIC chips, they suggest a design using Word Lines and particular charges on each side of the line for maintaining a highly optimized form of calculating Matrix vector multiplication.

The main weaknesses of this paper are that it contains some false information, as Multiple GPUs don't need to be connected via Docker/Kubernetes, and that it focuses primarily on only Neural Networks. Perhaps other ML algorithms may see some improvement so these technologies would be used more regularly. This paper does excel at providing several viable implementations of these various technologies to improve performance.

2 NVIDIA Hopper H100 GPU: Scaling Performance

This paper is presented by Jack Choquette from NVIDIA and is published by the IEEE Computer Society in 2023.

This paper focuses specifically on GPUs and how they can be improved to be utilized for ML tasks. The particular model that is discussed is the novel H100 generation of GPU hardware architecture. This applies improvements by featuring larger L2 caches, more HBM3 sites, higher memory bandwidth, and twice of the throughput when compared to the previous generation A100 GPU.

The author suggests that the new H100 architecture, named the Hopper architecture, is capable of handling better data and parallel execution. By improving the spatial locality of the logical sections on the chip, i.e. the placement and connections between the functional components, they can vastly improve it's performance. This is further improved when connected to another novel technology created by NVIDIA, the NVLink network interconnect. The NVLink is a network of interconnect switches alongside the hardware CPU and GPU hardware to improve the way that the hardware utilizes the data on the network.

In the H100 architecture, they add a fourth layer to the structure of how it operates to oversee the thread block clusters. This new layer utilizes the redesign changes of the chipset, and allows for a more sophisticated connection to the network via NVLink. This allows for faster asynchronous data transfer and execution, which allows for major improvements with DL models and other tensor-based calculations.

This paper relies heavily on NVIDIA's previous technology as a basepoint to then extend from. As a singular product from NVIDIA, this is massively beneficial, but seeing as this is proprietary information only held and utilized for NVIDIA means that other hardware developers cannot utilize these improvements directly to their own devices. As such, it remains subject to scrutiny as to whether the presented metrics are truthful.

To give NVIDIA fair credit, they have outlined a novel model for designing GPU chips. These chips can directly connect to the network through a series of interconnected network switches, most likely at the third layer of the OSI model. Furthermore, with AI/ML/DL tasks continuously being used by many groups for a wide array of tasks, it necessitates innovation for improving performance and connectivity to data sources. With these advancements from NVIDIA, it is expected to only propagate the AI craze even further. As to whether this is a net positive for society is up to debate, however.

3 Paper 3

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4 Paper 4

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References

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