

**Adaptive Compression for Online Computer Vision: an Edge Reinforcement Learning Approach**

Journal:	<i>Transactions on Multimedia Computing Communications and Applications</i>
Manuscript ID	TOMM-2020-0161.R2
Manuscript Type:	Regular Paper
Date Submitted by the Author:	23-Oct-2020
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Computing Classification Systems:	Deep learning inference, Edge computing, Reinforcement learning, Adaptive image compression, Machine learning service

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Adaptive Compression for Online Computer Vision: An Edge Reinforcement Learning Approach

(Manuscript ID: TOMM-2020-0161.R1)

Response to the editor and reviewers

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the editor and the reviewers for advising minor revision and providing valuable comments. Guided by the comments, we have tried our best to address the comments, and the amendments are highlighted in blue in the revised manuscript. In what follows, we include a detailed response to the reviewer and discuss how we have addressed the comments.

We hope that the revision has satisfactorily addressed all of the concerns raised by the review team. We look forward to hearing back from you soon.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Zhaoliang He, Hongshan Li, Zhi Wang,
Shutao Xia, and Wenwu Zhu.

Response to Reviewer 1

Comment *This paper presented a unique method to select the JPEG configuration adaptively to reduce the upload traffic load, it proves the ability of the RL. The highlights of the paper is to use the RL algorithm to adaptively select the compression quality level, but why can the RL algorithm be applied to this, the author's description is not detailed enough. Especially when calculating the y_i in section 3.3, in RL settings y_i is calculated in this way because the agent need to perform a series of actions to accomplish a task, so the agent maximize the reward received over the episode. But in the setting of the paper, each compression is a complete task, and the correlation and continuity of the adjacent tasks can not be seen. So the aurthor should go into details about how the RL sttings can be applied to this.*

Response: Thanks for your comment. We agree our description is not detailed enough and have added more detailed explanations. In our study, we borrow the reinforcement learning (RL) idea and design our adaption framework, in which each compression is treated as a complete RL task that only has one step, and the agent performs the action only once to accomplish the task. The agent is able to learn across consecutive tasks, because the input sequence (i.e., consecutive images likely to be captured by the same camera) shares similar contextual characteristics (see Sec. 3.6.1)-- y_i is calculated in this way so that the agent maximizes each task's reward. The similar design has also been used in previous studies, including RL-based cache strategy [1,2,3]. More details of the revision are provided in Section 3.3.

Comment *what is $s(t+1)$ in the algorithm 1, the compressed next image to be uploaded or what?*

Response: In Algorithm1, s_{t+1} is the set of features extracted by the feature extractor \mathcal{E} from the image x_{t+1} . We have clarified this in the revised Algorithm 1.

Comment *what is phi in the algorithm 1, the RL network or the parameters of the network, how can phi be stored in the experience if it is the network or the parameters of the network.*

Response: In our study, the “RL network” and “parameters of the network” are used exchangeably, and Phi represents the model of the RL network. For the storage of Phi issue, Phi is actually not stored in the experience, and there was a typo by placing Phi in the transition. We have corrected this in the revision: we only store $(s_t, c_t, r_t, s_{t+1}, \mathcal{A}_t)$ in the experience at each iteration t . Sorry about the mistake and we have also carefully proofread this revision.

Response to Reviewer 2

Comment *Most of my previous comments are well addressed. I think this paper can be accepted now.*

Response: Thanks for your approval.

References:

- [1] Wang, Fangxin, et al. "Intelligent Video Caching at Network Edge: A Multi-Agent Deep Reinforcement Learning Approach." *IEEE INFOCOM 2020-IEEE Conference on Computer Communications*. IEEE, 2020.
- [2] Zhong, Chen, M. Cenk Gursoy, and Senem Velipasalar. "A deep reinforcement learning-based framework for content caching." *2018 52nd Annual Conference on Information Sciences and Systems (CISS)*. IEEE, 2018.
- [3] Sadeghi, Alireza, Gang Wang, and Georgios B. Giannakis. "Deep reinforcement learning for adaptive caching in hierarchical content delivery networks." *IEEE Transactions on Cognitive Communications and Networking* 5.4 (2019): 1024-1033.

Adaptive Compression for Online Computer Vision: an Edge Reinforcement Learning Approach

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With the growth of computer vision-based applications, an explosive amount of images have been uploaded to cloud servers that host such online computer vision algorithms, usually in the form of deep learning models. JPEG has been used as the *de facto* compression and encapsulation method for images. However, standard JPEG configuration does not always perform well for compressing images that are to be processed by a deep learning model, e.g., the standard quality level of JPEG leads to 50% of size overhead (compared with the best quality level selection) on ImageNet under the same inference accuracy in popular computer vision models (e.g., InceptionNet and ResNet). Knowing this, designing a better JPEG configuration for online computer vision-based services is still extremely challenging: 1) Cloud-based computer vision models are usually a black box to end-users; thus, it is challenging to design JPEG configuration without knowing their model structures. 2) The “optimal” JPEG configuration is not fixed; instead, it is determined by confounding factors, including the characteristics of the input images and the model, the expected accuracy and image size, etc. In this paper, we propose a reinforcement learning (RL)-based adaptive JPEG configuration framework, AdaCompress. In particular, we design an edge (i.e., user-side) reinforcement learning agent that learns the optimal compression quality level to achieve an expected inference accuracy and upload image size, only from the online inference results, without knowing details of the model structures. Furthermore, we design an *explore-exploit* mechanism to let the framework fast switch an agent when it detects a performance degradation, mainly due to the input change (e.g., images captured across daytime and night). Our evaluation experiments using real-world online computer vision-based APIs from Amazon Rekognition, Face++, and Baidu Vision, show that our approach outperforms existing baselines by reducing the size of images by 1/2 – 1/3 while the overall classification accuracy only decreases slightly; Meanwhile, AdaCompress adaptively re-trains or re-loads the RL agent promptly to maintain the performance.

CCS Concepts: • Networks → Network components; • Computer systems organization → Real-time systems.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Edge Computing, Reinforcement Learning, Adaptive Compression, Machine Learning Service

1 INTRODUCTION

With the great success of deep learning in computer vision, this decade has witnessed an explosion of deep learning-based computer vision-based applications. Because of the enormous computational resource consumption for deep learning applications (e.g., inferring an image on VGG19 [49] requires 20 GFLOPs of GPU resource), in today’s online computer vision-based applications, users

The preliminary version of this paper was published in ACM Multimedia 2019 [33].

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usually have to upload the input images to the central cloud service providers (e.g., SenseTime, Baidu Vision and Google Vision, etc.), leading to a significant upload traffic load.

To reduce the upload traffic load, one should compress the image before uploading it. Though JPEG has been used as the *de facto* image compression and encapsulation method, its performance for the deep computer vision models is not satisfactory. Liu et al. [36] showed that by re-designing the quantization table in the default JPEG configuration, one can compress an image to a smaller version while maintaining the comparable inference accuracy for a deep computer vision model. However, such quantization solutions usually assume the inference model is fixed.

We then raise an intuitive question: to make it practically useful, can we select the JPEG configuration adaptively for different online computer vision-based services, without any prior knowledge of the original model? In this paper, we propose a reinforcement learning-based framework to select JPEG configurations adaptively. In our solution, we tackle the following design challenges.

- *Lack of information about the cloud-based computer vision models.* Previous studies [21, 36, 56], generally assume that the details of the computer vision models are available so that they can adjust the JPEG configuration according to the model structure, e.g., one can train a model to determine the JPEG configuration by plugging the original computer vision model into it. However, the structural details of online computer vision models are usually proprietary and not open to the users.
- *Different cloud-based computer vision models need different JPEG configurations.* As an adaptive JPEG configuration solution, we target to provide a solution that is adaptive to different online computer vision-based services, i.e., it can generate JPEG configuration for different models. However, today's cloud-based computer vision algorithms, based on deep and convolutional computations, are quite hard to understand. The same compression quality level could lead to a different accuracy performance. Some examples are shown in Figure 1: picture 1a and 1b, 2a and 2b are visually similar for human beings, but the deep learning model gives different inference results, only because they are compressed at different quality levels. And such a relationship is not apparent, e.g., picture 3b is highly compressed and looks destroyed comparing to picture 3a, but the deep learning model can still recognize it. This phenomenon is also presented in [11] and commonly seen in adversarial neural network researches [15, 59].
- *Lack of well-labeled training data.* In our problem, one is not provided the well-labeled data on which image should be compressed at which quality level, as in conventional supervised deep learning tasks. In practice, such an image compression module is usually utilized in an online manner, and the solution has to learn from the images it uploads automatically.

To address the above challenges, we present a reinforcement learning-based solution, called AdaCompress¹, to choose a proper compression quality level for an image to a computer vision model on the cloud-end, in an online manner. This paper is an extension of our earlier conference paper [33], with the following contributions:

- We design an interactive training environment that can be applied to different online computer vision-based services. We propose a Deep Q-learning Network-based [37] agent to evaluate and predict the performance of a compression quality level on an input image. In real-world application scenarios, this agent can be highly efficient to run on today's edge infrastructures (e.g., Google edge TPU [20], Huawei Atlas 500 edge station [28]).
- We build a reinforcement learning-based framework to train the agent in the above environment. The agent can learn to choose a proper compression quality level for an input image after iteratively interacting with the environment by feeding the carefully designed

¹We open-sourced AdaCompress that works with online computer vision-based APIs at <https://github.com/hosea1008/AdaCompress>

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13 (1a) Q=75
14 Face++ prediction = ["donut"]
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13 (1b) Q=55
14 Face++ prediction = ["biscuit"]
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16 (2a) Q=75
17 Baidu prediction = ["chameleon"]
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16 (2b) Q=55
17 Baidu prediction = ["electric fan"]
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26 (3a) Q=75
27 Baidu prediction = ["leopard"]
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26 (3b) Q=5
27 Baidu prediction = ["leopard"]
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38 Figure 1. The prediction of a deep learning model is not completely related to the input image's quality,
39 making it difficult to use a fixed compression quality for all images. For image 1a, 1b and 2a, 2b, minor changes
40 cause different predictions though they are visually similar; for image 3a and 3b, the cloud-based model still
41 output correct label from a severely compressed image though they look very different
42

43 reward that considers both accuracy and data size. We further propose an *explore-exploit*
44 mechanism to let the agent switch between "sceneries". In particular, after deploying the
45 agent, an *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* solution is designed to switch the RL agent
46 intelligently once the scenery changes and the existing running agent cannot guarantee the
47 original accuracy performance.

- 48
- 49 • In this journal extension, we provide more analysis and insights on our design. We notice
50 that the Deep Q-learning Network-based agent's behaviors are various for different input
51 image "sceneries" and backend cloud services. By analyzing the agent's behaviors using
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Grad-Cam [48], we provide the reasons that the agent chooses a specific compression quality level. We reveal that images containing large smooth areas are more sensitive to compression, while images with complex textures are more robust to compression for computer vision models.

- We evaluate our system on representative cloud-based deep learning services, including Amazon Rekognition [2], Face++ [16] and Baidu Vision [5]. We show that our design can reduce the upload traffic load by up to 1/2 while maintaining comparable overall accuracy. Compared to baseline DeepN-JPEG [36], the overall accuracy of AdaCompress is 8% higher when they have similar compressed image size.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. We discuss related works in Section 2. We present our framework and detailed design in Section 3. We present our solution’s performance in Section 4 and conclude the paper in Section 5.

2 RELATED WORKS

As online computer vision-based services have become the norm for today’s applications [1, 29], many studies have been devoted to improving the cloud-based model execution, including model compression and data compression.

2.1 Model Compression

Though the accurate term is still for the community to debate, we use “model compression” to represent the studies on *compressing* and *moving* the deep learning models close to users. Many studies tried to compress the deep learning models and deploy them *locally* [3, 4, 19, 22, 23, 30], i.e., running an alternative “smaller version” of a computer vision model at the user-side, to avoid the image upload so that to improve the inference efficiency. Other studies proposed to run a part of a deep learning model *locally* [14, 26, 31, 34], by decoupling the deep learning model into different parts, e.g., based on the layers in the deep learning model, so that a part of the inference is done *locally* to save some execution time. However, these solutions usually need to re-train the model using the original dataset of the model, which is not practical for today’s online computer vision-based services that are merely a black box to end-users, e.g., in the form of a RESTful API.

2.2 Data Compression

Data compression solutions study how to compress the original data (e.g., a video or image) to be inferred by the cloud-based deep learning model so that less traffic is used to upload the data to improve inference speed. In recent years, researchers found that conventional human visually optimized-based data compression solutions (e.g., JPEG [57], WebP [7] and JPEG2000 [40], etc.) and some recent neural network-based compression solutions [43, 53–55] are not usually applicable to deep learning vision models. Liu et al. [36] revealed that the conventional JPEG image compression framework is designed for the Human-Visual System, which is not suitable for the deep neural network, leading to the computer vision model’s inference performance degradation. Dodge et al. [13] further discovered that besides the JPEG compression, four types of quality distortions (blur, noise, contrast, and the JPEG2000 compression [40]) can also affect the inference performance of the deep learning models. Delac et al. [11] observed that, in some cases, a high compression quality level does not always reduce the model inference accuracy.

Based on these insights, Robert et al. [56] tried to train the deep neural network from the compressed representations of an auto-encoder. Chao et al. [10] proposed using variable quantization, which is supported by the JPEG standard extension syntax [12] to compress the macroblocks in

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5 images. Furthermore, they [9] designed a quantization table based on the observed impact of scale-
6 space processing on the discrete cosine transform (DCT) basis functions for JPEG images, achieving
7 similar inference performance while reducing the image size overhead effectively. Liu et al. [36]
8 proposed DeepN-JPEG that re-designs the quantization table by linking statistical information
9 of defined features and defined quantization values so that the compressed image size is reduced
10 for deep learning models. Chamain et al. [8] proposed a joint optimization of image classification
11 network coupled with the image quantization, achieving image size reduction of JPGE2000 [40]
12 encoded images. Recently, Lionel et al. [21] presented a new type of neural network that infers
13 directly from the discrete cosine transform coefficients in the middle of the JPEG codec. Baluja et
14 al. [6] proposed task-specific compression that compresses images based on the end-use of images.

15 However, such proposals all need one to understand the characteristics of the cloud-based
16 deep learning model and have access to the original training dataset, generating the appropriate
17 compression schemes. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first to propose an adaptive
18 compression configuration solution that learns the optimal compression quality level to achieve an
19 expected inference accuracy and upload image size, only from the online inference results, without
20 knowing details of the model structures.

21 In this journal extension, we improve the previous *inference-estimate-retrain* mechanism to
22 cut down the upload image size overhead effectively, add DeepN-JPEG comparative experiment,
23 and amend the manuscript significantly. Especially in the DeepN-JPEG comparative experiment,
24 since Liu et al. [36] evaluated the DeepN-JPEG framework on ImageNet by using four state-of-
25 the-art DNN models (AlexNet [32], VGG [50], GoogLeNet [52] and ResNet [25]) on local edge
26 devices, which are different from online computer vision-based services, for comparison purpose,
27 we implement the DeepN-JPEG framework according to their paper and evaluate the size reduction
28 and accuracy performance using ImageNet and the metrics in Subsection 4.3 on three cloud-based
29 deep learning services (Amazon Rekognition, Face++ and Baidu Vision).

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33 **3 DETAILED DESIGN**
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35 A brief framework of AdaCompress is shown in Figure 2. Briefly, it is a reinforcement learning-
36 based system to train an agent to choose a proper compression quality level c for one image to
37 be compressed by JPEG. We discuss the formulation, agent design, reinforcement learning-based
38 framework, reward feedback, *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism, and insight of
39 RL agent's behaviors separately in the following subsections. We provide experimental details of
40 all the hyperparameters in Section 4.

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44 **3.1 Problem Formulation**
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46 Without loss of generality, we denote the cloud-based deep learning service as $\vec{y}_i = M(x_i)$ that
47 provides a predicted result list \vec{y}_i for each input image x_i . It has a baseline output $\vec{y}_{\text{ref}} = M(x_{\text{ref}})$ for
48 each reference input image $x \in X_{\text{ref}}$. We use this \vec{y}_{ref} as the ground truth label. For each image x_c
49 compressed at compression quality level c , the output $\vec{y}_c = M(x_c)$. Therefore, we have an accuracy
50 metric \mathcal{A}_c by comparing \vec{y}_{ref} and \vec{y}_c . In general, we use the top-5 accuracy as the following \mathcal{A} , the
51 same as the classification metric of ILSVRC2012 [38].

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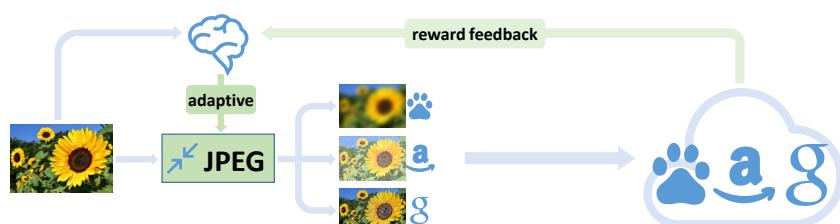
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(a) Conventional solution: fixed user-defined compression quality level



(b) AdaCompress solution: input image and model aware compression

Figure 2. Comparing to the conventional solution, our solution can update the compression strategy based on the backend model feedback

$$\mathcal{A} = \frac{1}{k} \sum_k \max_j d(l_j, g_k) \quad (1)$$

$$l_j \in \vec{y}_c, \quad j = 1, \dots, 5 \quad (2)$$

$$g_k \in \vec{y}_{\text{ref}}, \quad k = 1, \dots, \text{length}(\vec{y}_{\text{ref}}) \quad (3)$$

$$d(x, y) = 1 \text{ if } x = y \text{ else } 0 \quad (4)$$

Where $j = 1, \dots, 5$ indicates the prediction labels at the top-5 score, meaning that if any one of the top-5 predicted labels matches the ground truth label \vec{y}_{ref} , it would be regarded as a correct prediction. In general, we cannot get the cloud-based deep learning model's in-layer details (e.g., softmax probabilities) for a cloud-based deep learning service. Therefore we use a binary hard label $d(x, y) \in \{0, 1\}$ to evaluate the accuracy.

We also denote JPEG input images as $f_{ic} = J(x_i, c)$ that for an input image x_i and a given compression quality level c , and it outputs a compressed file f_{ic} at the size of \hat{s}_{ic} . For a reference compression quality level c_{ref} , the compressed file size is \hat{s}_{ref} . Besides, the input image from a specific scenery usually belongs to a particular contextual group [24]. For example, in the daytime, the input images are expected to have a bright background, while nighttime images are usually gray-scaled thermal images. Therefore, the agent in one scenery does not need to know all the contextual features in all "sceneries". We formulate this as contextual group X .

Initially, the agent tries different compression quality levels $c_{\min} < c < c_{\max}, c \in \mathbb{N}$ to obtain compressed image x_c from input image x . To obtain cloud-end recognition results $\{\vec{y}_{\text{ref}}, \vec{y}_c\}$, the agent uploads the compressed image x_c and the reference image x_{ref} to the cloud-end. Comparing the two uploaded instances $\{x_{\text{ref}}, x_c\}$ and cloud-end recognition results $\{\vec{y}_{\text{ref}}, \vec{y}_c\}$, the agent obtains the reference file size \hat{s}_{ref} and compressed file size \hat{s}_c , and computes the file compression ratio $\Delta s = \frac{\hat{s}_c}{\hat{s}_{\text{ref}}}$ and accuracy metric \mathcal{A}_c .

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5 **3.2 RL Agent Design**

6 The RL agent is expected to give a proper compression quality level c for minimizing the file size
 7 \hat{s}_c while keeping the accuracy \mathcal{A} . In our design, each compression is treated as a complete RL
 8 task that only has one step, and the agent performs the action only once to accomplish the task.
 9 The agent is able to learn across consecutive tasks, because the input sequence (i.e., consecutive
 10 images likely to be captured by the same camera) shares similar contextual characteristics. The
 11 similar design has also been used in previous studies, including RL-based cache strategy [45, 58, 60].
 12 For the RL agent, the input features are continuous numerical vectors, and the expected output is
 13 discrete compression quality level c . Therefore we can use the Deep Q-learning Network as the
 14 RL agent. But the naive Deep Q-learning Network can not work well in this task because of the
 15 following challenges:

- 17 • The state space of reinforcement learning is too large. To preserve enough details, we have to
 18 add many layers and nodes to the neural network, making the RL agent extremely difficult
 19 to converge.
- 20 • It takes a long time to train one step in a large inference neural network, making the training
 21 process too time-consuming.
- 22 • The RL agent starts training from random trials and learns afterward from the reward
 23 feedback. When training from a randomly initialized neural network, the reward feedback is
 24 very sparse, making it difficult for the agent to learn.

25 To address these challenges, we use the early layers of a pre-trained neural network to extract the
 26 structural information of an input image. This is a commonly used strategy in training a deep neural
 27 network [18, 41]. Therefore instead of training a RL agent directly from the input image, we use a
 28 pre-trained small neural network to extract the features from the input image to reduce the input
 29 dimension and accelerate the training procedure. In this work, we use the early convolution layers
 30 of MobileNetV2 [46] as the image feature extractor $\mathcal{E}(\cdot)$ for its efficiency in image classification.
 31 The Deep Q-learning Network ϕ is connected to the feature extractor's last convolution layer. We
 32 update the RL agent's policy by changing the parameters of the Deep Q-learning Network ϕ while
 33 fixing the feature extractor \mathcal{E} .

35 **3.3 Reinforcement Learning-based Framework**

36 In a specific scenery where the user input image x belongs to the contextual group X , we define the
 37 contextual group X , along with the backend cloud model M , as the *emulator environment* $\{X, M\}$
 38 of the reinforcement learning problem.

39 We formulate the feature extractor's output $s = \mathcal{E}(J(X, c))$ as *states* and the compression
 40 quality level c as discrete *actions*. In our system, to accelerate training, we define 10 discrete
 41 actions to indicate 10 compression quality levels of JPEG ranging from 5, 15, ..., 95. We denote
 42 the *action-value function* as $Q(\mathcal{E}(f_t), c; \theta)$ and the optimal compression quality level at time t as
 43 $c_t = \text{argmax}_c Q(\mathcal{E}(f_t), c; \theta)$ where θ indicates the parameters of the Deep Q-learning Network ϕ .
 44 In such reinforcement learning formulation, the training phase is to minimize the loss function
 $L_i(\theta_i) = \mathbb{E}_{s, c \sim \rho(\cdot)} [(y_i - Q(s, c; \theta_i))^2]$ that changes at each iteration i where *state* $s = \mathcal{E}(f_i)$ and target
 $y_i = \mathbb{E}_{s' \sim \{X, M\}} [r + \gamma \max_{c'} Q(s', c'; \theta_{i-1}) \mid s, c]$. Especially, r is the reward feedback, and $\rho(s, c)$ is a
 47 probability distribution over *state* s and the compression quality level c [37]. When minimizing the
 48 distance of *action-value function*'s output $Q(\cdot)$ and target y_i , the *action-value function* $Q(\cdot)$ outputs
 49 a more accurate estimation of an action.

50 Different from conventional reinforcement learning, the interactions between the agent and
 51 environment are infinite, i.e., there is no signal from the environment telling that an episode has
 52

Algorithm 1 Training RL agent ϕ in environment $\{\mathcal{X}, \mathcal{M}\}$

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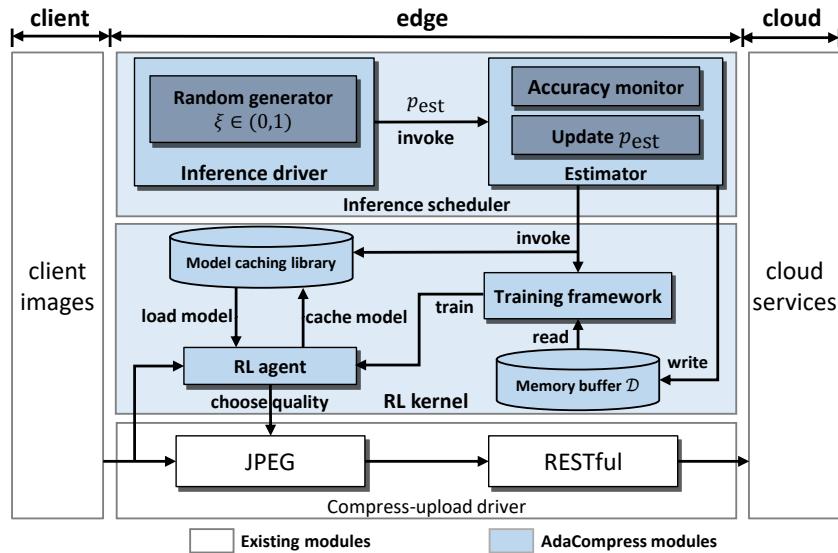
1: Initialize replay memory buffer  $\mathcal{D}$  to capacity  $N$ 
2: Initialize action-value function  $Q$  with random weights  $\theta$ 
3: Initialize state  $s_1 \leftarrow \mathcal{E}(J(x_1, c_{ref}))$ ,  $x_1 \in \mathcal{X}$ 
4: for  $t \in 1, 2, \dots, K$  do
5:   1) Exploration
6:   With probability  $\epsilon$ :
7:      $c_t \leftarrow$  a random valid value
8:   Otherwise:
9:      $c_t \leftarrow \text{argmax}_c Q(\mathcal{E}(f_t), c; \theta)$ 
10:
11:  2) Reward calculation
12:  Compress image  $x_t$  at quality  $c_t$  to upload
13:  Receive  $(\vec{y}_{\text{ref}}, \vec{y}_c)$  from the cloud service
14:  Compute reward  $r \leftarrow R(\Delta s, \mathcal{A}_c)$  according to 3.4 Reward Feedback Design
15:
16:  3) Gradient descent
17:  Obtain next image  $x_{t+1}$ 
18:  Generate next state  $s_{t+1} \leftarrow \mathcal{E}(J(x_{t+1}, c_{ref}))$ 
19:   $\mathcal{D} \leftarrow \mathcal{D} \cup \{(s_t, c_t, r_t, s_{t+1}, \mathcal{A}_t)\}$ 
20:  if  $t \bmod T = 0$  and  $t \geq T_{\text{start}}$  then
21:    Sample a randomly mini-batch of transitions  $(s_j, c_j, r_j, s_{j+1}, \mathcal{A}_j)$  from memory buffer  $\mathcal{D}$ 
22:     $y_j \leftarrow r_j + \gamma \max_{c'} Q(s_{j+1}, c'; \theta)$ 
23:    Compute decay exploration rate  $\epsilon \leftarrow \begin{cases} \mu_{\text{dec}} \cdot \epsilon & \text{if } \mu_{\text{dec}} \cdot \epsilon > \epsilon_{\min} \\ \epsilon_{\min} & \text{if } \mu_{\text{dec}} \cdot \epsilon \leq \epsilon_{\min} \end{cases}$ 
24:    Perform a gradient descent step on  $(y_j - Q(s_j, c_j; \theta))^2$  according to [37]
25:  end if
26: end for

```

finished. Therefore, we train the RL agent intermittently at a manual interval of T after the condition $t \geq T_{\text{start}}$ guaranteeing that there are enough transitions in the memory buffer \mathcal{D} . In the training phase, the RL agent firstly takes some random trials to observe the environment's reaction and decreases the randomness when training afterward. In iteration t , we leverage the feature extractor \mathcal{E} to obtain state $s_t = \mathcal{E}(J(x_t, c_{ref}))$. The RL agent ϕ generates a compression quality level c_t . The framework compresses image x_t at quality c_t to upload and obtains reward r_t . Then the framework obtains the next image x_{t+1} and generates the next state $s_{t+1} = \mathcal{E}(J(x_{t+1}, c_{ref}))$. The framework stores transition $(s_t, c_t, r_t, s_{t+1}, \mathcal{A}_t)$ in a memory buffer \mathcal{D} . Especially, (s_t, c_t, r_t, s_{t+1}) is used to compute the loss function, and (r_t, \mathcal{A}_t) is used in the inference-estimation-querying-retraining mechanism to be discussed in Section 3.5. All transitions are saved into a memory buffer \mathcal{D} , and the agent learns to optimize its *action* by minimizing the loss function L on a mini-batch from \mathcal{D} . The training procedure would converge when the agent's randomness keeps decaying. Finally, the agent's action is based on its historical "optimal" experiences. The training procedure is presented in Algorithm 1.

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23 Figure 3. Diagram of AdaCompress architecture
24

25 3.4 Reward Feedback Design

26 In our solution, the agent is trained by the reward feedback from the environment $\{\mathcal{X}, M\}$. In the
27 above formulation, we define compression rate $\Delta s = \frac{s_c}{s_{ref}}$ and accuracy metric \mathcal{A}_c at compression
28 quality level c . Basically, we want the agent to choose a proper compression quality level for
29 minimizing the upload image size while remaining acceptable accuracy. Therefore the overall
30 reward r should be positively correlated with the accuracy \mathcal{A} while negatively with the compression
31 ratio Δs . We introduce two linear factors α and β to form a linear combination $r = \alpha\mathcal{A} - \Delta s + \beta$ as
32 the *reward function* $R(\Delta s, \mathcal{A})$.

33 3.5 Inference-Estimation-Querying-Retraining Mechanism

34 As a running system, we introduce an *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism to cope
35 with the scenery change in the inference phase, building a system with different components to
36 inferring, capturing the scenery change, then either re-loading or re-training the RL agent based
37 on the performance of the cached model. The overall system diagram is illustrated in Figure 3.

38 We build up the memory buffer \mathcal{D} and reinforcement learning training kernel based on the
39 compression and upload driver. When the RL training kernel is called, it would load transitions
40 from the memory buffer \mathcal{D} to train the compression quality level predictor ϕ . When the system is
41 deployed, the pre-trained RL agent ϕ guides the compression driver to compress the input image at
42 an adaptive compression quality level c , then uploads the compressed image to cloud-end.

43 After the AdaCompress is deployed, the input image scenery context \mathcal{X} may change (e.g., day
44 to night, sunny to rainy). When the scenery changes, the older RL agent's compression selection
45 strategy may not be suitable anymore, causing the overall accuracy to decrease. To cope with the
46 scenery change, AdaCompress invokes an estimator with a probability p_{est} . AdaCompress does this
47 by generating a random value $\xi \in (0, 1)$ and comparing it to p_{est} . If $\xi \leq p_{est}$, the estimator would be
48 invoked. AdaCompress would upload the reference image x_{ref} along with the compressed image x_i
49 to obtain \bar{y}_{ref} and \bar{y}_i , calculate \mathcal{A}_i and save the transition $(s_i, c_i, r_i, s_{i+1}, \mathcal{A}_i)$ to the memory buffer
50 \mathcal{D} . The estimator also compares the recent n steps' average accuracy $\bar{\mathcal{A}}_n$ and the initial accuracy
51 to determine if re-training is needed. If so, AdaCompress would invoke the "Training framework"
52 to re-train the RL agent ϕ using the saved transitions in \mathcal{D} .

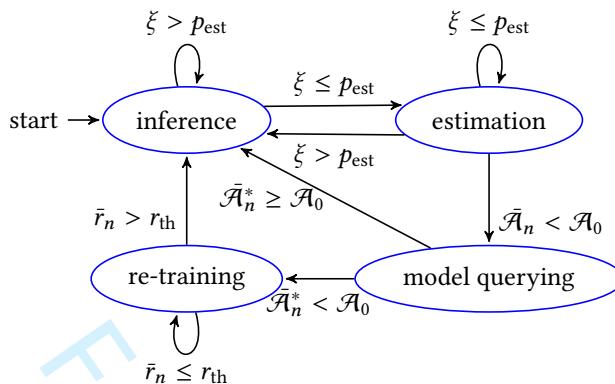


Figure 4. State switching policy

threshold θ_0 . Once the recent average accuracy is lower than the initial accuracy threshold, the estimator would query a RL agent model to replace the current agent model and test the performance of the loaded model. To test the loaded model's performance, the estimator computes the average accuracy $\bar{\theta}_n^*$. If $\bar{\theta}_n^*$ is still lower than the accuracy threshold, the estimator would invoke the RL training kernel to re-train the agent. Once the estimator discovers that the trained reward is higher than the reward threshold, it would stop the training kernel, cache the trained RL agent, and switch to the normal inference state.

Since the reference image x_{ref} and the compressed image x_i are both needed in the re-training phase, causing a large upload image size overhead, especially when the scenery changes frequently (e.g., day to night, then night to day). To avoid unnecessary upload traffic load in the re-training phase, we build up the model caching library to cache the trained RL agent models. When capturing the scenery change, we firstly query a pre-trained model from the model caching library rather than re-training from scratch.

The *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism has four states, including inference, estimation, model querying and re-training. AdaCompress switches to these states adaptively. The state switching policy is shown as Figure 4.

3.5.1 Inference: Most of the time, AdaCompress runs in this state. In this state, only the compressed images are uploaded to the cloud-end to achieve less upload image size overhead. To keep a stable accuracy performance even the input image scenery changes, the agent would occasionally switch to the estimation state with probability p_{est} since the estimator uploads the reference image to maintain inference accuracy, or remain in the inference state with probability $1 - p_{\text{est}}$.

3.5.2 Estimation: In this state, the reference image x_{ref} and compressed image x_i are uploaded to the cloud-end simultaneously to obtain \vec{y}_{ref} and \vec{y}_i which are used to calculate θ_i . In each epoch i , the transition $(s_i, c_i, r_i, s_{i+1}, \theta_i)$ is logged in the memory buffer \mathcal{D} . When the average accuracy $\bar{\theta}_n$ of the latest n steps is higher than the accuracy threshold θ_0 , the agent would stay in the estimation state with probability p_{est} or switch to the inference state with probability $1 - p_{\text{est}}$. Once the average accuracy $\bar{\theta}_n$ is lower than the initial accuracy threshold θ_0 , indicating that the current agent is no more suitable for the current input image scenery, AdaCompress would turn into the model querying state and re-load a new RL agent model from the model caching library.

Therefore, the estimation probability of p_{est} is vital to the whole system. On the one hand, the estimator should be invoked occasionally to estimate the current agent's accuracy for capturing the

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scenery change on time. On the other hand, the estimator uploads the reference image along with the compressed image. Therefore, the upload image size overhead is greater than the conventional benchmark solution, causing a high upload traffic load.

To achieve trade-off between the risk of the scenery change and the objective of reducing upload traffic load, we design an accuracy-aware dynamic solution. We first define that after running for N steps, the average accuracy of recent n steps is:

$$\bar{\mathcal{A}}_n = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=N-n+1}^N \mathcal{A}_i & \text{if } N \geq n \\ \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \mathcal{A}_i & \text{if } N < n \end{cases}$$

With this definition, the change of p_{est} should be negatively correlated with the gradient of \mathcal{A} , meaning that when the recent accuracy decreases, the estimation probability p_{est} would increase. We define that $p'_{\text{est}} = p_{\text{est}} + \omega \nabla \mathcal{A}$ where ω is a negative scaling factor. With this recursive formula, we have the general term of $p_{\text{est}} = p_0 + \omega \sum_{i=1}^N \nabla \mathcal{A}_i$ where p_0 is an initial estimation probability.

3.5.3 Model Querying: The model querying state is designed to cope with the scenery change before re-training. It re-loads a new RL agent model from the model caching library and tests whether the loaded agent model is suitable for the current scenery by re-calculating the average accuracy. If the new average accuracy $\bar{\mathcal{A}}_n^*$ is higher than the accuracy threshold \mathcal{A}_0 , indicating that the loaded agent model is suitable for the current scenery, AdaCompress would switch to the normal inference state and use the loaded agent model to infer. Otherwise, AdaCompress would switch to the re-training state and invoke the RL training kernel to re-train a new RL agent for the current scenery.

In this way, AdaCompress is capable to cope with the scenery change in a cached “memory” manner, avoiding re-training the agent model at every scenery change to cut down the upload image size overhead. However, the agent caching strategy would cause a little storage overhead on local edge devices.

3.5.4 Re-training: This state is to adapt the agent to the current input image scenery by re-training it with the memory buffer \mathcal{D} , which is similar to the training procedure. The re-training phase has finished upon the recent n steps' average reward \bar{r}_n is higher than the user-defined threshold r_{th} . And when the re-training procedure finishes, the memory buffer \mathcal{D} would be flushed, preparing to save new transitions for the re-training of a next scenery change. The trained RL agent model would be cached in the model caching library and be used to switch to the inference state.

3.6 Insight of RI Agent's Behaviors

In the inference phase, the pre-trained RL agent chooses a proper compression quality level according to the input image's features and the backend service. The reference image is not uploaded to the cloud-end anymore; only the compressed image is uploaded. Therefore, the upload traffic load is reduced. We notice that the RL agent's behaviors are various for different input image "sceneries" and backend cloud services. Therefore we try to make further investigations by plotting the RL agent's "attention map" (i.e., visual explanations why the agent chooses a specific compression quality level).

3.6.1 Compression Quality Level Choice Variation: As shown in Figure 5, we find that in different cloud-based application environments, the agent’s chosen compression quality levels can be quite different. We compute the *mean* and *standard deviation* of compression quality levels. The mean is 33.4, 24.7 and 31.6 on Baidu Vision, Face++ and Amazon Rekognition, respectively. For Face++, the *mean* of compression quality levels is lower than that for Baidu Vision. The standard deviation is

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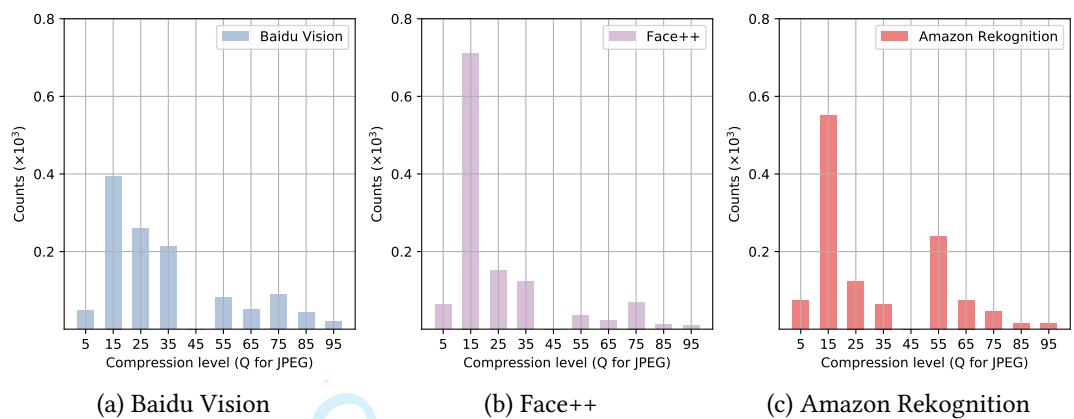


Figure 5. Histogram of RL agent's best compression quality level selection for different cloud services

22.77, 19.19 and 22.46 on Baidu Vison, Face++ and Amazon Rekognition, respectively. The “optimal”
 23 compression strategies are different for different backend cloud services. This variation is caused
 24 by the interaction between the agent and the backend cloud model in the training phase. Since the
 25 agent’s training procedure is based on a specific backend cloud model M_1 , for another backend
 26 cloud model M_2 , the interaction between the agent and M_2 is quite different. Therefore the agent’s
 27 best compression quality level selection presents variation for different backend cloud models.

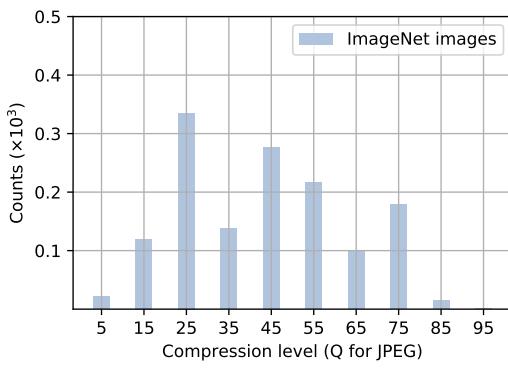
28 Moreover, in our experiment, the agent presents different behaviors when the input image
 29 changes from one dataset to another. Figure 6 shows the agent’s choices for the same backend
 30 cloud model (Baidu Vision) but different image datasets. We prepare two datasets indicating two
 31 contextual “sceneries”. We randomly sample images from ImageNet [44] whose images are mostly
 32 taken in the daytime, to act as a daytime scenery, and randomly select nighttime images from the
 33 FLIR Thermal Dataset [17] to form another dataset to act as a nighttime scenery. The histogram
 34 shown in Figure 6 points out that the distribution of compression quality levels is different on
 35 ImageNet and FLIR Thermal Dataset. For ImageNet and FLIR, the mean is 43.3 and 47.5, respectively;
 36 and the standard deviation is 19.52 and 26.56, respectively. To maintain high accuracy when the input
 37 image’s contextual group X changes, the agent’s compression quality level selection should change
 38 as well. This phenomenon presents that the agent can adaptively choose a proper compression
 39 quality level based on the input image’s features.

40 We can also find that Figure 5(a) and Figure 6(a) is different, even if we use the same cloud service
 41 (Baidu Vision) and image dataset (ImageNet). When we use the same cloud service at different times,
 42 the cloud service commonly invokes different backend cloud models. Therefore the interaction
 43 between the agent and the backend cloud model is different. This variation presents that the agent
 44 can adaptively make a proper compression strategy in different complex environments, indicating
 45 our solution’s generality and practicality.

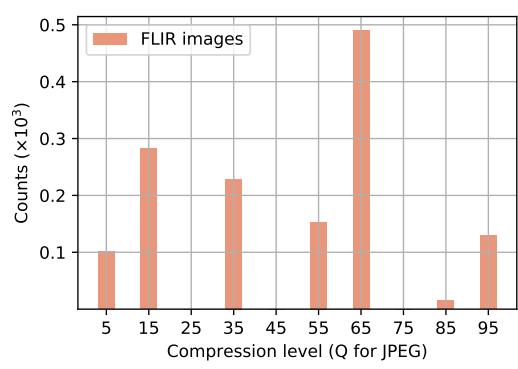
46 **3.6.2 Attention Map Variation:** To make insight investigations, we plot the importance map of a
 47 chosen compression quality level. We leverage a conventional visualization algorithm, Grad-Cam, to
 48 observe the Deep Q-Learning Network-based agent’s interest when choosing compression quality
 49 levels. Grad-Cam is a widely used effective solution to present the importance map of a deep
 50 neural network by calculating the gradients of each target concept and backtracking to the final
 51 convolution layer. In this work, we plot the RL agent’s attention map by Grad-Cam in Figure 7.
 52

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(a) ImageNet images



(b) FLIR images

Figure 6. Histogram of RL agent's best compression quality level selection for different scenery image inputs

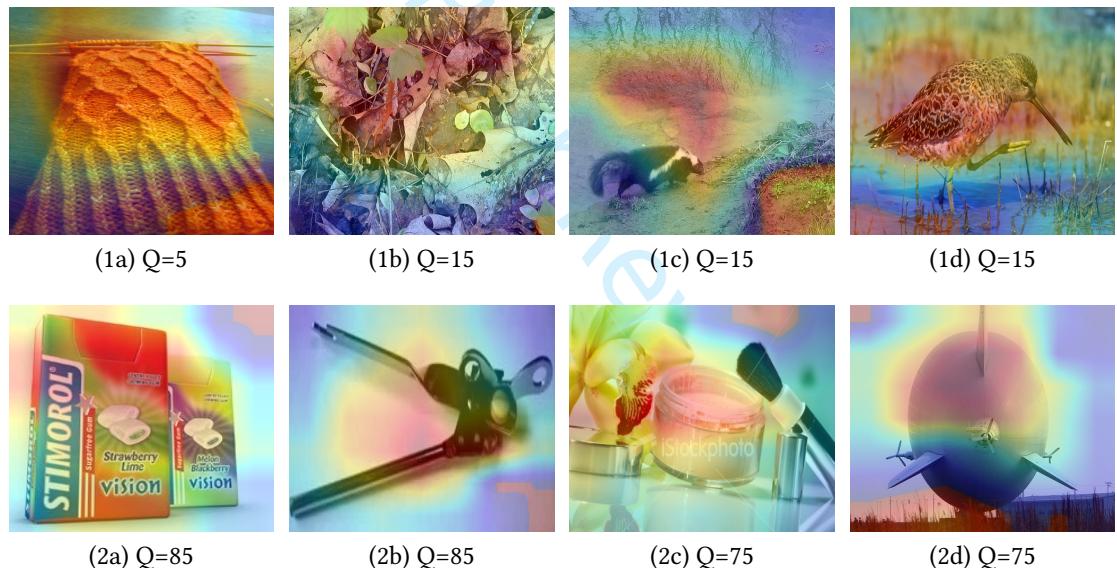


Figure 7. Visualization of the importance map for the RL agent to choose a compression quality level

In our investigations, we find that in different environments $\{X, M\}$, the RL agent selects compression quality levels based on the visual textures of different regions in the image. As shown in Figure 7, picture 1a – 1d are some pictures which the agent chooses to compress aggressively. The agent selects low compression quality levels based on the complex texture of the images. On the contrary, for pictures 2a – 2d, the agent chooses relatively higher compression quality levels to preserve more details since its interest falls on some smooth regions. Especially for 1a and 2a, for picture 1a, the agent chooses a low compression quality level based on the rough central region though there are smooth regions around it, for picture 2a, the agent chooses a relatively higher compression quality level based on the surrounding smooth region rather than the central region.

Table 1. Experiment parameter

Notation	Value	Notation	Value
c_{ref}	75	K	1000
ϵ_{min}	0.02	p_0	0.2
γ	0.95	ω	-3
μ_{dec}	0.99	T	5
r_{th}	0.45	n	10
\mathcal{A}_0	0.8	T_{start}	128
α	1	β	0

4 EVALUATION

In this section, we present AdaCompress's behaviors and effectiveness by some real-world experiments.

4.1 Experiment Setup

We carry out real-world experiments to verify our solution's performance. We use a desktop PC with an NVIDIA 1080ti graphic card as the edge infrastructure. For the cloud-based deep learning services, we choose Baidu Vision, Face++ object detection services and Amazon Rekognition. In the experiments, we use two datasets mentioned before in Subsection 3.6. The ImageNet dataset indicates daytime scenery, and the FLIR Thermal Dataset indicates nighttime scenery. Some important hyperparameters in our experiments are given in Table 1.

4.2 Dataset

We use two datasets, the ImageNet dataset and the FLIR Thermal Dataset. The ImageNet dataset is a Large-Scale Hierarchical Image, in which each node of the hierarchy is depicted by hundreds and thousands of images. Its images are mostly taken in the daytime. Therefore we use it as a daytime scenery. Usually, a surveillance camera captures colored pictures in the daytime and gray-scaled thermal images in the night. Therefore we choose a thermal image dataset to act as a nighttime image dataset. The FLIR Thermal Dataset is such a dataset having more than 14000 images collected by thermal sensors.

We use the ImageNet dataset in size reduction and accuracy performance experiment, DeepN-JPEG comparative experiment and end-to-end latency simulation experiment. Moreover, we use ImageNet and the FLIR Thermal Dataset alternately to simulate the scenery change in the *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism experiment.

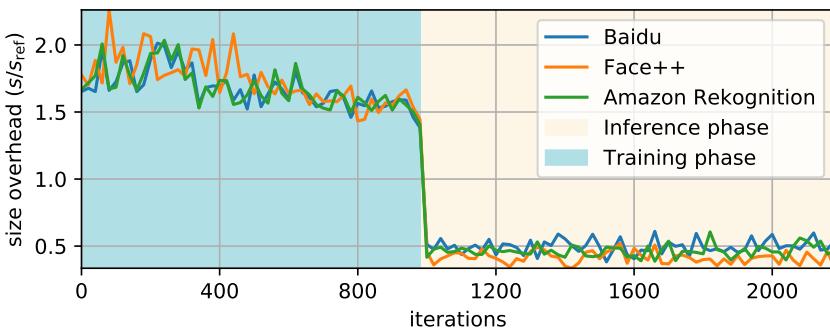
4.3 Metrics

The default compression quality level for JPEG is usually 75 [35, 42]. Therefore we regard this as a reference value $c_{\text{ref}} = 75$ of the conventional benchmark.

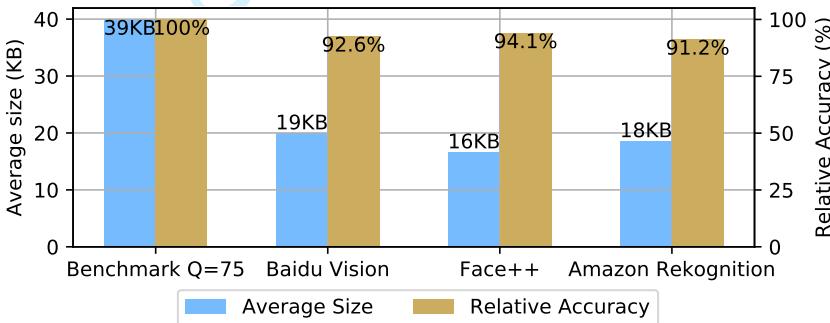
In our experiments, we measure the compressed and reference image's file size to obtain the compression rate Δs . Since we do not have the real ground truth label of an image, we use the output \vec{y}_{ref} from a reference image as the ground truth label, and calculate the relative top-5 accuracy \mathcal{A} as the accuracy metric. The formula of \mathcal{A} is presented in Subsection 3.1.

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16 Figure 8. Size overhead in the training and inference phase



30 Figure 9. Average size and relative accuracy on different cloud services

33 4.4 Upload Image Size Overhead

34 Figure 8 presents the upload traffic load of the training and inference phase. To be more intuitionistic,
35 we plot the size overhead $\frac{\hat{S}}{S_{ref}}$ as the y -axis where \hat{S} is the real upload size of AdaCompress and S_{ref}
36 is the benchmark upload size. Therefore $y \geq 1$ means that our solution uploads more data than
37 benchmark, and $y < 1$ means the compression rate of AdaCompress. From Figure 8, we can see
38 that as the training procedure runs, the upload image size decreases because the RL agent learns
39 to choose better compression quality levels to upload less data. In the training phase, to train the
40 agent while remaining a convincing recognition result, AdaCompress has to upload the original
41 image along with the compressed image to the cloud-end, obtaining the real result and the reward
42 feedback. Therefore the upload traffic load is even higher than the conventional solution. But once
43 the training phase has finished, the upload traffic load is lower than the benchmark. As shown in
44 Figure 9, in the inference phase, AdaCompress's upload size is only 1/2 of the benchmark's.
45

46 4.5 Size Reduction and Accuracy Performance

47 Figure 9 presents the compression performance in the inference phase for each cloud service. We
48 test AdaCompress on Face++, Baidu Vision and Amazon Rekognition. Comparing to the benchmark
49 compression quality level, our solution can reduce the upload size by more than 1/2 for all tested
50 cloud services, meanwhile maintain the relative accuracy that only decreases about 7% on average,
51 proving the efficiency of our design.
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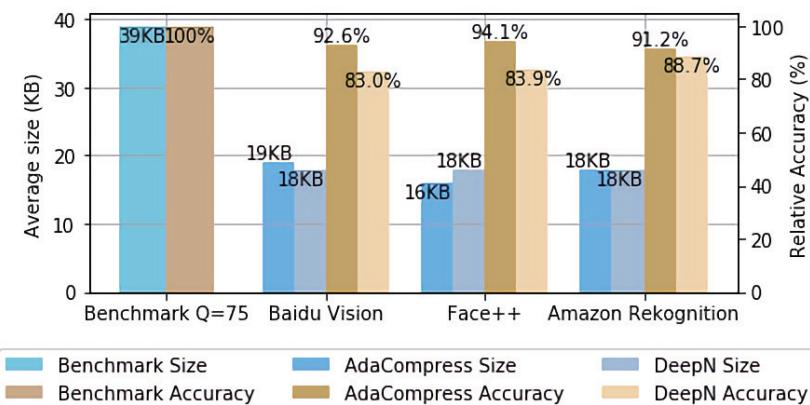


Figure 10. Comparative compression performance between DeepN-JPEG and AdaCompress

4.6 DeepN-JPEG Comparative Experiment

Figure 10 presents a comparison performance between DeepN-JPEG and AdaCompress for each cloud service. As we can see, both DeepN-JPEG and AdaCompress cut down the upload size overhead more than 1/2. However, for all tested cloud services, AdaCompress's accuracy is higher than DeepN-JPEG's slightly. Compared with DeepN-JPEG's average accuracy is about 85% on three cloud services, AdaCompress achieves a better average accuracy of 93%. In a word, comparing to the DeepN-JPEG framework, AdaCompress presents a similar size reduction performance but achieving higher inference accuracy for online computer vision-based services.

AdaCompress compresses images in a more adaptive manner rather than DeepN-JPEG. (i.e., the explanation why AdaCompress achieves a better accuracy). As shown in Figure 11, for picture 1a, compared to DeepN-JPEG, AdaCompress compresses the image at a more aggressive compression quality level of 15, reducing upload size overhead. On the contrary, for picture 2a of Figure 11, DeepN-JPEG compresses the image with the same quantization table, but AdaCompress chooses a relatively higher compression quality level to preserve more details so that the backend deep learning model can still recognize the picture. Compared with DeepN-JPEG compresses all images with the same quantization table, AdaCompress chooses a low compression quality level for picture 1a and a relatively higher compression quality level for picture 2a based on the features of the input image.

Comparing to DeepN-JPEG, AdaCompress has two advantages and one disadvantage as following:

- AdaCompress and DeepN-JPEG both decrease the upload size overhead more than 1/2, but AdaCompress maintains higher inference accuracy.
- For different “sceneries” or cloud services, DeepN-JPEG compresses images with the same quantization table, while AdaCompress makes a more proper compression strategy adaptively.
- DeepN-JPEG re-designs the quantization table *locally*, while AdaCompress needs to upload reference images and compressed images to the cloud-end in the training phase, leading some upload size overhead at the beginning.

4.7 Adaptively Cope With the Scenery Change

To evaluate the efficiency of the *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism, we feed AdaCompress with a combined dataset whose first 2000 images from FLIR Thermal images, the next 3000 images randomly sampled from ImageNet and the last 2000 images from FLIR Thermal

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(1a) Origin Image (Q=75)
Baidu prediction = ["parrot"]



(1b) AdaCompress (choose Q=15)
Baidu prediction = ["parrot"]



(1c) DeepN-JPEG
Baidu prediction = ["parrot"]



(2a) Origin Image (Q=75)
Baidu prediction = ["cake"]



(2b) AdaCompress (choose Q=65)
Baidu prediction = ["cake"]



(2c) DeepN-JPEG
Baidu prediction = ["fossil"]

28 Figure 11. Comparative compressed images of DeepN-JPEG and AdaCompress
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31 images. We adapt AdaCompress's current RL agent to FLIR nighttime scenery by training it on the
32 FLIR dataset, and run AdaCompress on the combined dataset, observing AdaCompress's behaviors
33 upon the scenery changes at step 2000 and 5000.

34 We illustrate AdaCompress's behaviors in Figure 12. The x -axis indicates steps, and the reference
35 line indicates the scenery change. We plot AdaCompress's overall accuracy and the estimation
36 probability p_{est} . At the bottom of Figure 12, we also plot the scaled upload size of AdaCompress
37 and benchmark solution to illustrate the upload size overhead.

38 From Figure 12, we can see that AdaCompress can adaptively update the estimation probability
39 p_{est} . When the overall accuracy decreases, AdaCompress would increase the estimation probability,
40 trying to capture the scenery change. When the overall accuracy is stable and high enough, the
41 estimation probability p_{est} decreases to reduce transmission.

42 Upon the first image scenery changes (i.e., night to day) shown as the first reference line in
43 Figure 12, comparing to the earlier steps, the accuracy decreases dramatically and the estimation
44 probability p_{est} raises to determine whether the scenery changes. The accuracy keeps dropping in
45 the following steps, indicating that the current RL agent is no more suitable for the current input
46 scenery. At the moment, AdaCompress should switch to the model querying state and re-load a
47 new RL agent model from the model caching library. However, there is no model except the current
48 RL agent at that time. Therefore, AdaCompress starts to re-train at once to adapt the RL agent to
49 the current scenery. In the re-training phase, AdaCompress uses the reference image's prediction
50 label \vec{y}_{ref} as the output result. Therefore the accuracy \mathcal{A} and p_{est} are locked to 1. After finishing
51 re-training the agent in the daytime scenery, the trained agent is cached in the model caching
52 library. In the following steps, sometimes the accuracy decreases accidentally, and the estimation
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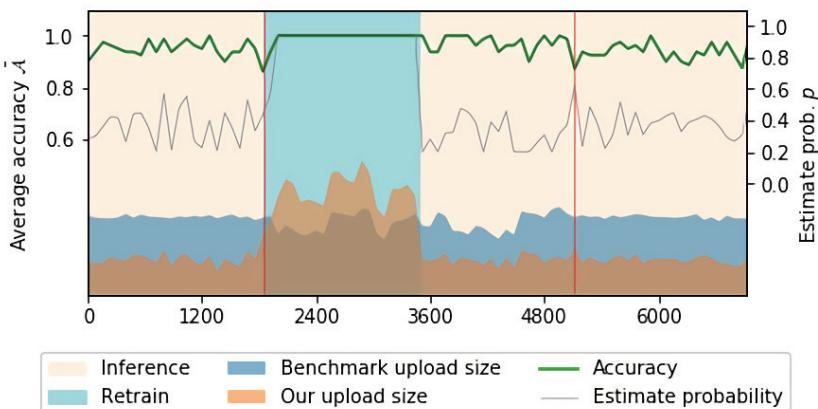


Figure 12. AdaCompress's reactions upon scenery change

probability p_{est} also raises. The accuracy is not lower than the accuracy threshold \mathcal{A}_0 . Therefore the re-training phase would not be triggered again until the second image scenery changes.

Upon the second image scenery changes (i.e., day to night) shown as the second reference line in Figure 12, like the first scenery change, the accuracy decreases and p_{est} raises, indicating that the current RL agent is no more suitable again. AdaCompress switches to the model querying state at once and re-loads a new RL agent model (the initial model trained on the FLIR Thermal images) from the model caching library. When using the new agent in this scenery, the accuracy stops decreasing and maintains more than the accuracy threshold, indicating the current RL agent is suitable for the current scenery.

From Figure 12, we can also observe the upload size overhead in different phases. In the re-training phase, AdaCompress uploads more data than the conventional benchmark. But in the inference phase, AdaCompress's upload size is only half of the benchmark's. Especially once the second image scenery changes, AdaCompress achieves a low upload traffic load by re-loading a suitable RL agent model rather than re-training from scratch.

4.8 End-to-End Latency Simulation

Comparing to the conventional solution that uploads the image directly, in our solution, the image is passed to the RL agent firstly to estimate the compression quality level. Running this RL agent brings extra latency to the whole system. In this subsection, we evaluate the end-to-end latency.

We compute compressed file size for batches of images, and test the RL agent's inference time and the latency of uploading such compressed images. We respectively test the average inference latency on 1000 ImageNet images and 1000 FLIR images, and simulate the network bandwidth as 27.64 Mbps according to the global average fixed broadband upload speed [51] in Feb. 2019, to verify the end-to-end latency performance. The latency comparison is listed in Table 2.

Our solution brings in inference latency to the end-to-end latency, but the transmission latency is low by reducing the upload file size. In today's network architecture where the edge infrastructure's computational power is increasing significantly [27, 47], we can use the computing power of the edge infrastructure in exchange for the reduction of upload traffic load and transmission latency. Compared with the benchmark solution, our solution effectively reduces the end-to-end latency on both ImageNet and FLIR dataset.

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5 Table 2. Latency of edge device to cloud service
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Dataset	Solution	Average upload size	Inference latency	Transmission latency	End-to-end latency
ImageNet	Benchmark	42.68 KB	0 ms	12.35 ms	12.35 ms
ImageNet	AdaCompress	18.64 KB	2.09 ms	5.34 ms	7.43 ms
FLIR	Benchmark	44.66 KB	0 ms	12.93 ms	12.93 ms
FLIR	AdaCompress	17.07 KB	2.03 ms	4.94 ms	6.97 ms

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13 **4.9 Overall Memory and Latency Overhead**
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15 **4.9.1 Memory Overhead:** The memory overhead is divided into two parts: the static occupied
16 memory space and dynamic memory usage. Firstly, the static occupied memory space is the memory
17 of the model's size. We use Keras to construct and save MobileNetV2 and the RL agent. We check
18 file size of the saved model as the model's size. A RL agent model's size is 1 MB, and the feature
19 extractor MobileNetV2's size is 8.9 MB. The model caching library stores the most recent five
20 RL agents. The overall memory of the model's size is at most 13.9 MB. Secondly, the dynamic
21 memory usage is the memory usage during AdaCompress runs. The overall memory usage mainly
22 includes the memory buffer of transitions and the memory usage caused by the RL agent and
23 feature extractor. When caching transitions of 1000 images in the memory buffer, it occupies about
24 500 KB. We use Psutil to measure the peak memory usage during AdaCompress runs. The peak
25 memory usage is about 367 MB. Thirdly, in real-world edge-application scenarios, common edge
26 infrastructures have enough memory to deploy this algorithm, such as Raspberry Pi 4 Model B's
[39] memory is 2/4/8 GB, and Huawei Atlas 500 edge station's memory is 4/8 GB.
27

28 **4.9.2 Training and Re-loading Latency:** Although AdaCompress can be highly efficient to run on
29 today's edge infrastructures, it would cause extra latency overhead, such as training and re-loading
30 latency. In this subsection, we evaluate the latency overhead.
31

32 In our experiments, the convergence condition of training is that the recent average accuracy
33 over 0.8 meanwhile the recent average reward over 0.45. The experiment results show the number
34 of training images is 898 and 910 on ImageNet and FLIR, respectively. The time cost mainly depends
35 on the frequency of sending images and the inference speed of the cloud service. If the end-user
36 sends images continuously, and cloud service's inference speed is about 10 images per second,
37 the time costs are 197.3s and 200.8s on ImageNet and FLIR, respectively. In the training phase, we
38 need to upload reference images and compressed images. We consider the time cost of uploading
39 reference images and obtaining the feedbacks as the benchmark latency. If we minus this benchmark
40 latency, the real training time cost is not over 100s. It is worth to spend such upload size overhead
41 and time cost at the beginning when we need to infer thousands of images.
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43 The *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism would either re-load or re-train a RL
44 agent intelligently when capturing the scenery change. The re-training time cost is similar to the
45 training time cost which is described above. The latency of re-loading a RL agent model is about
46 1.85s. To *reduce* this latency, we use another process to re-load the model in our experiments. The
47 mechanism still uses the old RL agent to choose a compression quality level before the re-loading
48 process has finished.
49

50 **5 CONCLUSION**
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52 To reduce the upload traffic load of deep learning applications, most researchers focus on modifying
53 the deep learning model, but this does not apply to the industry because the backend deep learning
54 model is usually inaccessible to users. We present a heuristic solution using a reinforcement
55 learning agent to decide the proper compression quality level for each image according to the
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image's features and the backend service. Our experiment results show that for different backend deep learning cloud services and different input image "sceneries", using different compression strategies can significantly reduce the upload file size overhead while keeping comparable accuracy. Moreover, we design the *inference-estimation-querying-retraining* mechanism to cope with the input image scenery change and make a proper compression strategy for the current scenery. Our experiment results show that once the scenery changes, the mechanism would either re-load a pre-trained agent or re-train a new agent intelligently to achieve low upload image size overhead while maintaining the inference accuracy.

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