

NETMF for STM32 (F4 Edition)

Tour d'Horizon

Cuno Pfister & Beat Heeb

www.oberon.ch



Overview

- 1. Architecture Qualities
- 2. Hardware
- 3. Solutions
- 4. Bootstrap
- 5. System Assemblies
- 6. CLR
- 7. PAL
- 8. HAL

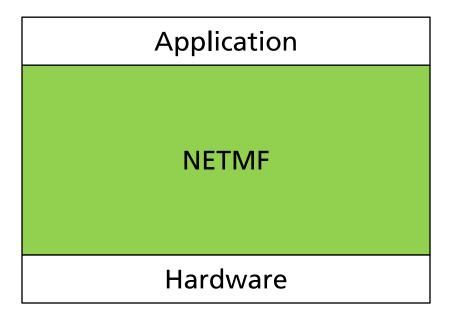


1. Architecture Qualities

- Decomposing software systems into smaller components is driven by the desired architecture qualities
 - What are the main components of NETMF?
 - Which architecture qualities have led to this decomposition of NETMF?



NETMF as a Platform



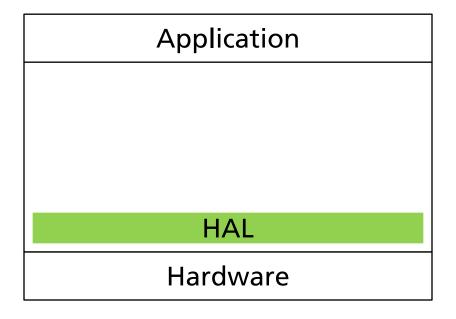
One C# or Visual Basic application runs at a time

The .NET Micro Framework (NETMF) is a «bootable runtime», i.e., no separate operating system is required

32-bit processor starting at < \$10



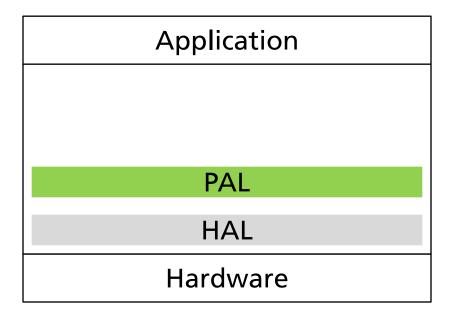
Hardware Independence



The Hardware Abstraction Layer (HAL) makes NETMF more portable by concentrating all devicedependent code in this layer. It consists of a collection of device drivers written in C/C++.



OS Independence

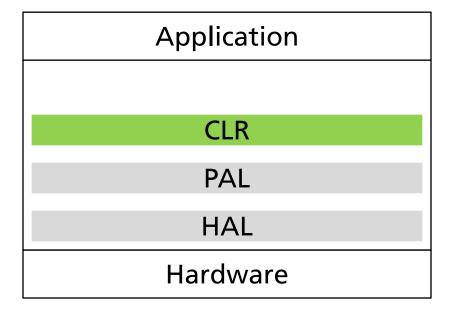


The *Platform Abstraction Layer* (PAL) is a rudimentary embedded operating system. It provides the minimal set of services necessary for executing .NET code. It is written in C/C++ and need not be modified when porting NETMF to different hardware. It needs modifications only if NETMF is ported onto an existing operating system, which is not a

relevant scenario for us here.



Reliability and Security



The Common Language Runtime (CLR) executes Common Intermediate Language (CIL) instructions, supports multi-threading, exceptions, allows debugging in Visual Studio, and manages memory (including automatic garbage collection). It is written in C/C++.

The CLR «manages» code in the sense that it guarantees memory and type safety of application code (e.g., no buffer overruns, no dangling pointers), even if the code contains accidental errors (reliability) or intentional errors (security).



Know-How, Tool and Code Reusability

Application					
System Assemblies					
CLR					
PAL					
HAL					
Hardware					

System assemblies form a class library, partially written in C# and partially in C/C++, implements a (small) subset of the full .NET API, plus some special classes for the interaction with peripheral devices via GPIOs, analog inputs, PWMs, UARTs, I2C or SPI buses, etc. This allows reuse of existing C# know-how, of the Visual Studio tools, and to some degree also of actual C# code.



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2. Hardware

- Instruction Set Architectures
- Cores
- Microcontroller Chips
- Boards



ARMv7 Architectures

- ARMv7A
 - Application processors, high performance, for smartphones, tablets, servers etc.
- ARMv7R
 - Realtime processors, medium performance, for automative apps etc.
- ARMv7M

 this is our focus!
 - Microcontrollers for low-cost applications



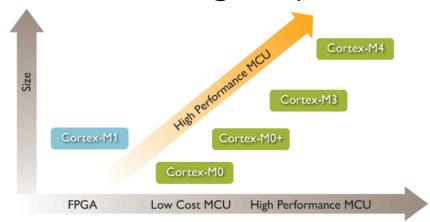
ARMv7M Architecture

- Thumb2 Instruction Set
 - 16/32 bit instructions \rightarrow high code density
- No MMU, typically no FPU and Caches
 - Optional Memory Protection Unit, 32-bit FPU
- Interrupt Controller
 - Flexible but complicated



ARM Cortex-Mx Cores

- A Core is an *Implementation* of an Architecture (as a design, not yet as silicon)
- Different ARMv7M Cores are called Cortex and numbered from M0 to M4
 - Higher numbers = higher performance



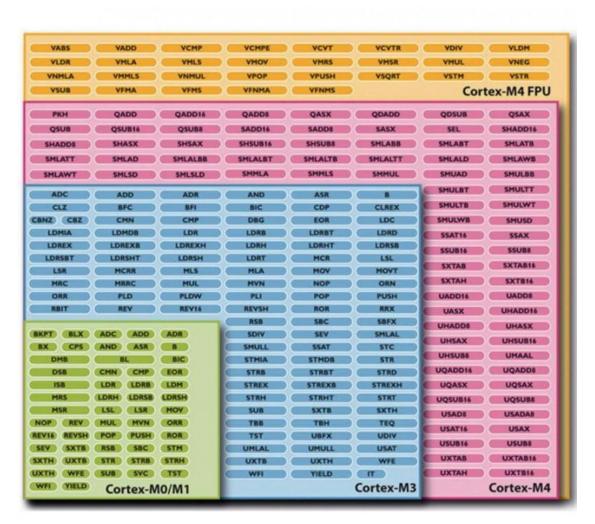


ARM Cortex-M4 Core

- Currently Highest End ARMv7M Core
 - Faster than Cortex-M3, e.g., 32-bit FPU
- Adds Specialized Instructions for Digital Signal Processing (DSP) Algorithms
 - Not relevant for NETMF
- Memory Protection Unit
 - Not relevant for NETMF



ARMv7M Instruction Subsets

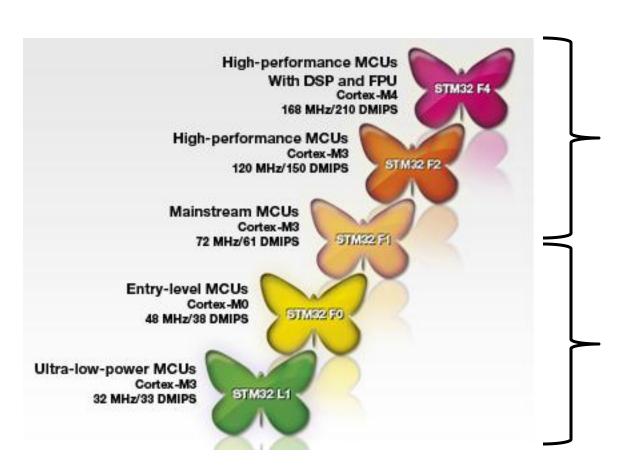


Instruction subset differences are largely transparent when working with the ARM/Keil C compiler (compiler switches), except for the DSP instructions

Source: www.elektroniknet.de



STM32 by STMicroelectronics



Required for NETMF

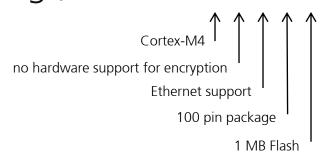
- ≥ 32 KB RAM
- $\geq 256 \text{ KB Flash}$
- STM32F101RC or better

Not suited for NETMF



STM32F4

- High End Microcontroller Family
 - Cortex-M4 core
 - 168 MHz
 - 192 KB RAM
 - 512 1024 KB Flash
 - e.g., STM32F407VG



Overview <u>here</u> and more infos here





STMicroelectronics

- STM3240G-Eval Evaluation Board
 - Breakout board for STM32F407IG, with connectors, external RAM, LCD display, etc.
- NETMF for STM32
 - Available, limited peripheral support (e.g., not for LCD)





STMicroelectronics

- Low-Cost <u>STM32F4DISCOVERY</u> Kit
 - STM32F407VG, audio DACs, etc.
- NETMF for STM32
 - Available

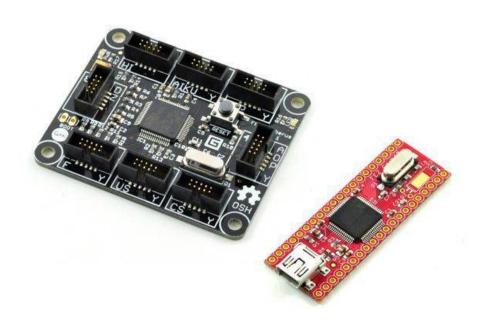


Note the separate ST-LINK debugging subsystem in the top third of the board, with its own STM32F1 microcontroller



GHI Electronics

- FEZ Cerberus
 - NET Gadgeteer compatible open source hardware
 - Firmware will be based on NETMF for STM32 (F4 Edition)
 - STM32F405RG
- FEZ Cerb40
 - Breakout board for STM32F405RG
 - Same firmware





SecretLabs

- Netduino Go
 - Firmware is derived from Oberon microsystems' NETMF for STM32 (F1 Edition)
 - STM32F405RG
- NETMF for STM32 (F4 Edition)
 - Could be used as a firmware alternative

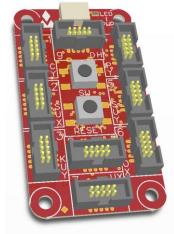




Mountaineer Boards

- Designed by <u>CSA Engineering</u> and <u>Oberon</u> <u>microsystems</u>
 - STM32F407VG
 - Primary targets for NETMF for STM32 (F4 Edition)







NETMF for STM32

- NETMF runs on some STM32F1 Chips
 - NETMF for STM32 available since Oct. 2011
- NETMF runs on almost all STM32F2 Chips
 - Drivers had to be extended, rewritten (USB) or added (Ethernet)
- NETMF runs on all STM32F4 Chips
 - Same as F2 edition, except for recompilation and larger RAM (identical peripherals to F2)
- NETMF could even run on some STM32L1 Chips
 - But CLR not optimal for ultra low-power applications



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3. Solutions

- A Solution is one possible firmware configuration for a particular device
 - Usually there is one reference solution for a particular device, but there could be more than one, optimized for different purposes
 - e.g., one with and another one without Ethernet/TCP support
 - C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\Solutions

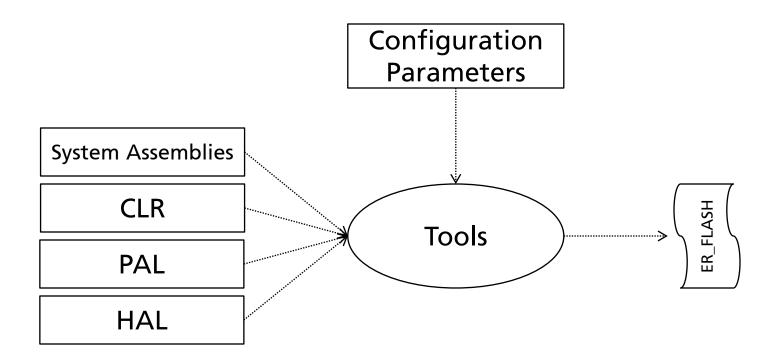


Creating New Solutions

- Select and Configure NETMF Components
 - Select components
 - Configure memory map
 - Configure peripheral drivers
- Build Firmware Image
 - Generate ER_FLASH file



Build Firmware Image



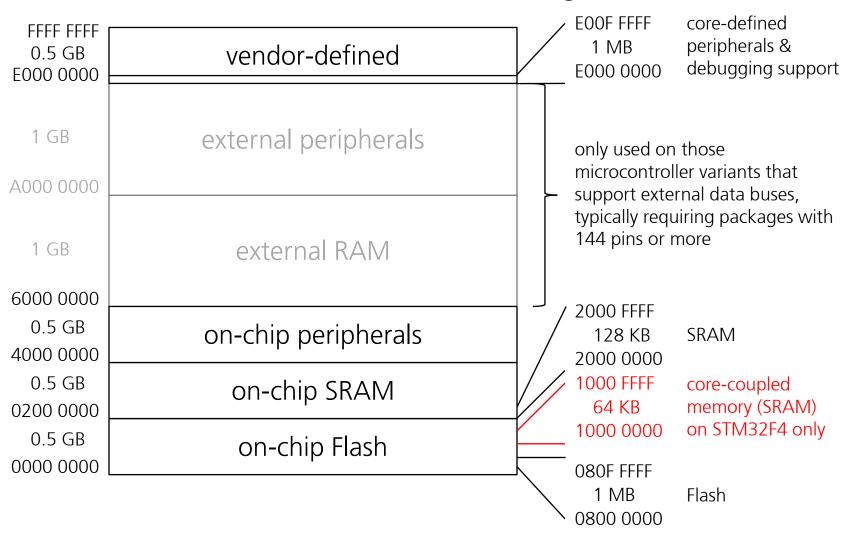


Select Components

- System Assemblies
 - Select assemblies that you want to provide
- CIR
 - Use entire CLR
- PAL Drivers
 - Use drivers for all supported OS functions
 - Use empty «stub» drivers for unsupported OS functions
- HAL Drivers
 - Use suitable drivers for all supported hardware
 - Use empty «stub» drivers for unsupported hardware

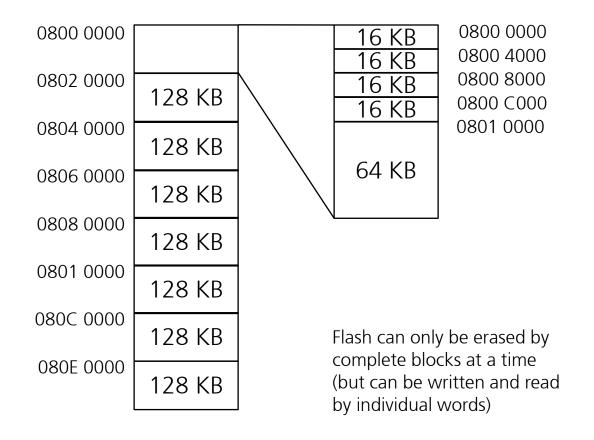


Cortex-M Memory Map



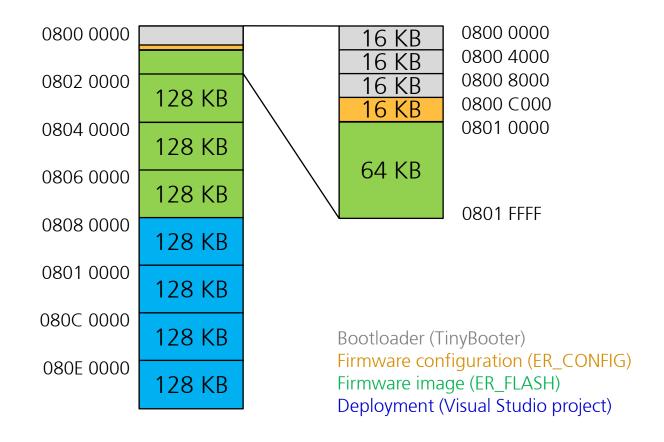


STM32F4 Flash Blocks





Example of Flash Usage





Example Memory Map

Address Range	Туре	~Size	Content	Comments
0800 0000 – 0800 BFFF	Flash	48 KB	Bootloader	TinyBooter (native code)
0800 C000 – 0800 FFFF	Flash	16 KB	Firmware config	MAC address, IP address, etc.
0801 0000 – 0807 FFFF	Flash	448 KB	Firmware image	NETMF (native & managed code)
0808 0000 – 080F FFFF	Flash	512 KB	Deployment	Application (managed code)
1000 0000 – 1000 3FFF	RAM	16 KB	Stack (NETMF)	Growing towards lower addresses
1000 4000 – 1000 FFFF	RAM	48 KB	Global variables and some buffers	UARTs, USB, etc.
2000 0000 – 2001 DFFF	RAM	120 KB	Неар	Application (objects & thread stacks)
2001 E000 – 2001 FDFF	RAM	7 KB	Buffers	Ethernet
2001 FE00 – 2001 FFFF	RAM	0.5 KB	Reserved	Interrupt handler table

This is a Flash and RAM memory map for the *Mountaineer Ethernet Mainboard*. We don't provide space for Extended Weak References, as they are marginally usable in practice.



STM32F4 Memory-Mapped I/O

Address Range	Interface Type	Comments
4000 0000 – 4000 23FF	Timer	Registers for timers 27, 1214
4000 3800 – 4000 43FF	SPI	Registers for SPI 23
4000 4400 – 4000 53FF	USART	Registers for USART 25
4000 5400 – 4000 5FFF	I2C	Registers for I2C 13
4000 7400 – 4000 77FF	DAC	Registers for DAC
4001 0000 – 4000 07FF	Timer	Registers for timers 1, 8
4001 1000 – 4001 17FF	USART	Registers for USART 1, 6
4001 2000 – 4001 23FF	ADC	Registers for ADC 13
4001 3000 – 4001 33FF	SPI	Registers for SPI 1
4001 4000 – 4001 4BFF	Timer	Registers for timers 911
4002 0000 – 4002 23FF	GPIO	Registers for using GPIO A0A15 to GPIO I0I15
4002 3C00 – 4002 3FFF	Flash	Registers for programming the on-chip Flash
4002 8000 – 4002 93FF	Ethernet MAC	Registers for programming the on-chip Ethernet MAC
4004 0000 – 5003 FFFF	USB OTG	Registers for programming the on-chip USB interfaces



Pin Assignment

- Assign Peripheral Functions to Pins
 - All I/O pins of an STM32 can be configured as digital inputs or outputs (GPIO)
 - Some pins can alternatively be configured as other peripheral pins, e.g., as Tx of a UART
 - Complication:
 the same peripheral may be accessible
 through several pins
 - More possible configurations for larger packages



Solution Example

Flash	RAM	Binary file	Remarks
40	0	IO_Init_ <sol>.lib</sol>	Initialize GPIO pins, external memory bus, etc.
250	0	usb_pal_config_ <sol></sol> .lib	Initialize USB endpoints, used protocols, etc.
148	68	STM32F2_blconfig_ <sol>.lib</sol>	Configure Flash memory map
24	0	BlockStorage_AddDevices_ <sol>.lib</sol>	Register Flash areas (only changed for external Flash)
28	12	DebuggerPort_SSL_config_stubs.lib	SSL is not supported (empty stub)
2	0	FS_Config_stubs.lib	File system is not supported (empty stub)
492	80	Total size in bytes	

This is a solution used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard



Where to Change?

- In C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\Solutions\<sol>\
 - platform_selector.h
 - <sol>.settings
 - DeviceCode\
 - Blockstorage\addDevices\Bl_addDevices.cpp
 - Init\IO_Init.cpp
 - USB\usb_config.cpp
 - TinyBooter\
 - if boot behavior should be modified, e.g. stay in TinyBooter upon key press
 - TinyCLR\
 - scatterfile_tinyclr_mdk.xml
 - TinyCLR.proj



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4. Bootstrap

TinyBooter → NETMF → Application



TinyBooter

- Processor starts TinyBooter after Reset
 - At the beginning of the Flash (0x0800 0000)
 - See <sol>\TinyBooter\TinyBooterEntry.cpp
 - TinyBooter either goes into a command interpreter, or
 - Starts the CLR
 - by looking for a Flash sector that starts with a CLR marker word
 - performs optional verification of CLR signature
 - C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\Application\TinyBooter\ Commands.cpp



NETMF

- Start NETMF Firmware
 - Marker word is first instruction
 - Performs a second initialization of the hardware
 - NETMF either goes into a command interpreter, or
 - starts the managed application
 - by calling the *Main* method of the *Startup object* that had been set in the properties of the Visual Studio project
 - performs optional verification of application signature
 - NETMF firmware is a self-contained application, i.e., it could be started by any bootloader, not just TinyBooter – or directly after reset



Application

Start Application



How to Deploy

- TinyBooter
 - Deploy tinybooter.bin using
 STMicroelectronics' Flash Loader Demo or its
 ST-LINK utility (for boards with ST-LINK)
- NETMF
 - Deploy ER_CONFIG and ER_FLASH using MFDeploy
- Application
 - Deploy a C# project using Visual Studio



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5. System Assemblies

No Changes Needed!



System Assemblies Overview

Flash	RAM	Binary file	Remarks
C0000			 Consists of mscorlib Microsoft.SPOT.Native Microsoft.SPOT.Hardware Microsoft.SPOT.Hardware.PWM Microsoft.SPOT.Hardware.SerialPort Microsoft.SPOT.Net
69900	Ü	tinyclr_dat.obj	• System
69900	0		

These are the system assemblies as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard



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6. CLR

- No Changes Needed!
 - The CLR can be regarded as a black box...
 - but if you are interested:
 - CLR sources are in C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\CLR
 - For the bootstrap, see
 - ...\STM32\DeviceCode\CortexM3\TinyHa\FirstEntry.s
 - ...\STM32\DeviceCode\STM32_Bootstrap\ STM32_bootstrap.cpp
 - C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\ Initialization\tinyhal.cpp



Common Language Runtime

- Interpreter
- Garbage collector
 - With heap compaction
 - Custom heap allows non-collected objects
- Light-weight C# threads
 - About 400 bytes per thread
 - Stack frames are threaded within heap
 - Interpreter reschedules every 20 ms



Sleep When Idle

- Typical NETMF applications wait for I/O events
- NETMF goes into a power-saving sleep mode until some event occurs
 - e.g., GPIO input has changed its state,
 Socket.Receive has new data available



I/O: Synch vs. Asynch

- APIs for the System Assemblies are mostly synchronous
 - e.g., blocking Socket.Receive operations
- API of the PAL is mostly asynchronous
 - Ethernet, WiFi, USB, USART, I2C, GPIO (int.)
 - Driver completes I/O upon interrupt
 - Driver signals completed I/O to interpreter
 - Interpreter schedules an application thread



Cooperative Multitasking

- PAL uses a single native thread
 - Thus a single C/C++ stack is sufficient (shared with the interrupts, see below)
- HAL drivers may use interrupts
 - All interrupts run at the same level
 - Interrupt handlers may run at most for 20 ms
 - Interrupt handlers may spawn «completions» if they need to do more work later on



Completions & Continuations

- Timed «Run To Completion» Tasks
 - Completions for critical tasks
 - Executed within timer interrupt handler
 - Continuations for non-critical tasks
 - Executed after the timeout has expired and the CLR is idle (i.e., has no thread to schedule)
 - In our drivers, we didn't need any such tasks
 - Except for Ethernet: detect cable (completion), receive data (continuation)



CLR Example

Flash	RAM	Binary file	Remarks
22	13888	InteropAssembliesTable.lib	Method resolution caches, can be configured in size
164	0	tinyclr.obj	
149945	2798	tmp_tinyclr.lib	The actual language runtime (virtual machine)
150131	16686		

This is the CLR as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard



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7. PAL

- No Changes Needed!
 - When porting NETMF onto the «bare metal», the PAL is not touched (but some functions may be stubbed)
 - A TCP/IP stack (<u>IwIP</u>) is contained in
 C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\pa\\
 Iwip
 - PAL sources are contained in
 C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\pal



PAL Example

Flash	RAM	Binary file
24	0	heap_pal.lib
76	16	palevent_pal.lib
396	44	events_pal.lib
436	580	Buttons_pal.lib
468	4	tinycrt_pal.lib
486	0	native_double_pal.lib
810	0	COM_pal.lib
920	24	asyncproccall_pal.lib
1543	0	config_pal.lib
1716	44	Time_pal.lib
1956	20	blockstorage_pal.lib
2640	3600	usart_pal.lib
3046	66	usb_pal.lib
3841	140	system_initialization_hal.lib

Flash	RAM	Binary file
4	0	ssl_pal_stubs.lib
8	0	piezo_pal_stubs.lib
12	0	Gesture_pal_stubs.lib
12	0	Ink_pal_stubs.lib
12	0	TimeService_pal_stubs.lib
12	0	fs_pal_stubs.lib
16	0	Watchdog_pal_stubs.lib
38	0	sockets_pal_stubs.lib
40	0	MFUpdate_PAL_stubs.lib
19250	4554	Total size in bytes

This is the PAL as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard

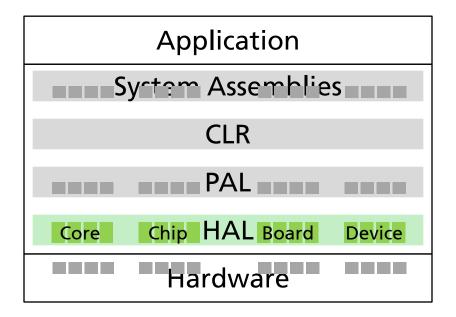


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8. HAL



We can distinguish between different types of HAL components, according to the kind of hardware components that they support. These are the so-called *drivers*. Usually there is a driver counterpart in the PAL for every HAL driver, often also in the system assemblies.



Core Support Components

- Core Initialization
 - Interrupt controller
- How about SysTimer?
 - This in-core timer is not used
 - NETMF needs a higher resolution «real-time» timer (ideally with 100 ns precision)
 - We combine two timers for 48 bit resolution
 - C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\ Targets\Wative\STM32\DeviceCode\STM32_Time



Core Support Components

- Global Lock Mechanism
 - Use object constructors/destructors to enter/exit monitors
 - Implemented by disabling/enabling interrupts
- C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\
 DeviceCode\Targets\Native\STM32\
 DeviceCode\CortexM3
 - Also valid for Cortex-M4



Chip Support Components

- Drivers for on-chip peripherals
- Interrupts used by their respective drivers
 - Timer, GPIO, USART, I2C, USB, Ethernet
- C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\ Targets\Native\STM32\DeviceCode\ STM32_*
- F1 drivers can differ from F2/F4 drivers
 - F1"XL" chips have newer peripherals as well



Board Support Components

- Drivers for on-board Peripherals
- C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\Solutions



Device Support Components

- Drivers for off-board Peripherals
- C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\Solutions
 - e.g., driver for Micron M25P64 serial Flash
- or
 C:\MicroFrameworkPK_v4_2\DeviceCode\
 Drivers\
 - e.g., driver for Microchip ENC28J60 external Ethernet controller



HAL Example

Flash	RAM	Binary file
122	0	GlobalLock_hal_Cortex.lib*
412	356	TinyHal_Cortex.lib*
192	0	STM32F2_Power.lib**
200	0	STM32F2_Analog.lib**
204	0	STM32F2_IntC.lib**
224	0	STM32F2_bootstrap.lib**
402	52	STM32F2_Flash.lib**
476	8	STM32F2_time.lib**
752	0	STM32F2_PWM.lib**
879	12	STM32F2_SPI.lib**
984	8	STM32F2_I2C.lib**
1356	24	STM32F2_USART.lib**
1404	144	STM32F2_GPIO.lib**
1446	3502	STM32F2_USB.lib**

Flash	RAM	Binary file
2	0	cpu_watchdog_stubs.lib
2	0	cpu_cache_stubs.lib
4	0	cpu_prestackinit_stubs.lib
6	0	virtualkey_hal_stubs.lib
8	0	LargeBuffer_hal_stubs.lib
8	0	SimpleHeap_config_stubs.lib
8	0	SimpleHeap_stubs.lib
8	0	backlight_hal_stubs.lib
8	0	LargeBuffer_hal_stubs.lib
8	0	SimpleHeap_config_stubs.lib
8	0	SimpleHeap_stubs.lib
18	0	batterycharger_hal_stubs.lib
26	0	lcd_hal_stubs.lib
46	0	batterymeasurement_hal_stubs.lib
9189	4106	Total size in bytes

This is the HAL as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard

^{*} Core support for Cortex-M3 / Cortex-M4

^{**} Chip support for STM32F2 / STM32F4



CLib

Flash	RAM	Binary file
6346	0	fz_ws.l
8133	70	c_w.l
13104	0	m_ws.l
27583	70	Total size in bytes

CLib mainly used for formatted output. Could probably still be optimized.

Several versions available, e.g., one that does not use floating point numbers.

This is the CLib as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard



Total Size of NETMF

Flash	RAM	Binary file
69900	0	System Assemblies
27583	70	CLib
492	80	Solution
9189	4106	HAL
19250	4554	PAL
150131	16686	CLR
276545	25496	Total size in bytes

This is NETMF as used for the Mountaineer USB Mainboard



End of our Tour!

