

Dawid: A Cost-effective I/O Scheduling Scheme for SSDs under Capacitance Constraints

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Abstract

Enterprise-class SSDs realize a persistent buffer within device using the capacitors. This approach reached a limit as the SSD density outpaces the scaling capability of the capacitors. This paper presents a novel buffer architecture for SSDs under capacitance constraints. We re-order the write requests in a way of minimizing the memory footprint that needs protection. This design reduces the required capacitance to ensure persistence in SSDs at the modest performance loss. We implemented Dawid in an open-source SSD development framework. Performance evaluation shows that Dawid has only 10% more flash writes than full-protection SSD, while the required capacitance is reduced by 70%.

1 Introduction

The SSD has increased significantly in density for the past decade. As an example, in 2011, a typical 2.5-inch SSD had 256GB capacity, but by 2018, a high-capacity SSD boasted a 30TB, expanding by 100x over the past ten years [?, ?]. This remarkable growth of the device-capacity is thanks to the advanced scaling technologies such as nanoscale fabrication [?] and multi-layer stacking [?].

Unfortunately, not all components of the SSDs have kept up with the scaling rate. The capacitor, which is adopted in enterprise-class SSDs for power-loss protection (PLP), fails to proceed at the pace. Historically, storage devices have been equipped with a small size of volatile buffer in front of the persistent disk. By using them as a read cache and a write buffer, they hide a long latency of the physical storage medium as well as mitigating an endurance limitation of the worn-out devices. However, the volatile buffer loses all data in the event of power crash. To prevent a data loss or corruption by this, enterprise-class SSDs rely on the capacitors; it reserves energy to persist data in volatile buffer in the unforeseen

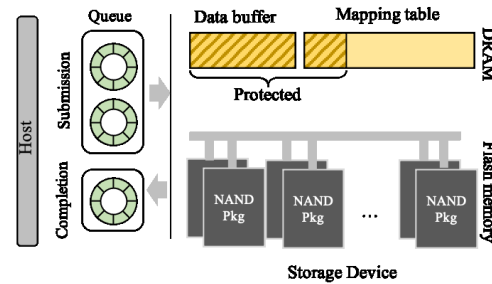


Figure 1: SSD architecture with Dawid buffer.

event of a power crash. In addition, the adoption of capacitors enables an SSD to ignore the FLUSH command that explicitly requests all data in the volatile buffer to be made durable. This property increases the buffering effect in SSD significantly, leading to both less write traffic and a shorter operation latency.

The reliance on capacitors, however, has reached its limit. Although the capacitance density has also steadily improved, it is not as rapid as the SSD scaling speed. Al(aluminum) and Ta(tantalum)-electrolytic capacitors used in SSDs have increased in density by tenfold from 1960 to 2005. This is approximately 50x slower than the SSD density increase rate. Given that the internal buffer size increases in proportion to the storage capacity (typically 0.1% of storage capacity [?, ?]), the density gap between capacitance and memory technologies imposes an intrinsic limitation on the current architecture wherein the entire buffer is protected by capacitors.

This paper presents a device-internal buffer architecture called Dawid for the SSDs under capacitance constraints. Fig. ?? shows the SSD architecture targeted in our study. The data maintained in the buffer can be classified into two types: the actual user data and the meta-data for SSD management (i.e, mapping table). When the buffer is partially protected, the number of dirty pages is limited to the maximum amount of data that the on-board

capacitance can protect. If the number of dirty pages goes beyond the limit, changes should be flushed to the flash memory immediately to meet the durability constraint for SSDs. Dawid applies this compromise only to the metadata, while protecting the user data entirely. The data write is not only synchronous with the user request, which hampers user experiences seriously when delayed, but also unrecoverable in the event of the power crash.

For this architecture, the problem boils down to how to reduce the write traffic to persist the mapping table to flash memory under capacitance constraints. Reducing the synchronization overhead of the mapping table is a well-known problem and has been extensively studied for a past decade [?, ?]. However, they mostly focus on the SSDs without PLP, which have different properties to the PLP-SSDs with capacitance constraints. As opposed to the SSDs without capacitors, (1) the PLP-SSDs ensure data persistency immediately, and (2) there is no need to write-back the buffered data when protected. In this regard, the Dawid buffer aims at minimizing the *dirty memory footprint* of the mapping table at any point in time. To this end, Dawid processes outstanding requests in the order that least increases the number of dirty pages in the mapping table. This scheme not only reduces the number of flushes for the mapping table partially protected but also increases the efficiency of flush operation by aggregating more translation updates into the smaller translation pages.

The Dawid buffer is built upon the current trend of increasing queue depth of the storage interfaces. SATA and SAS support a single queue with 32 and 245 commands, but NVMe has up to 65,535 queues with as many as 65,536 commands per queue. This extension allows SSDs to further optimize the internal activities by taking advantage of the outstanding request information. By re-scheduling the requests in a way of reducing the write-back cost of the mapping table, the Dawid buffer achieves high IOPS and low latency of SSDs at a small amount of capacitance.

To evaluate the effectiveness of Dawid, we implement the proposed buffer design in FEMU, which is an open-source SSD development framework [?]. The performance evaluation with various workloads shows that Dawid reduces the write traffic by up to 78% and provides 25% higher IOPS compared to the FIFO scheduling scheme when only 10% of the mapping table is protected. Compared to the full-protection architecture, Dawid has 20% more writes and 9% of performance overhead, while reducing the required capacitance by 90%.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we briefly review the requirements and constraints for SSD with respect to reliability. Section 3 explains the design of SpartanSSD and Section 4 describes

the implementation and performance evaluation results. Section 5 quantitatively analyzes the energy consumption of SSDs. Section 6 discusses our proposed design in relation to prior work, and Section 7 concludes.

Notes