vNUIOA: Optimizing Non-Uniform I/O Access in Virtualized Environment for Multicore Systems

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ABSTRACT

This document is intended to serve as a sample for submissions to HPCA 2016. We provide some guidelines that authors should follow when submitting papers to the conference. In an effort to respect the efforts of reviewers and in the interest of fairness to all prospective authors, we request that all submissions follow the formatting and submission rules detailed below.

1. INTRODUCTION

Driven by the rapid growth of big data applications and cloud computing, most of today's applications are computing intensive or data intensive and these applications are running in the cloud to make full use of multi-core resources. To efficiently transfer data between high performance servers and these cloud applications become significantly important. Especially in the current high performance network environment, such inefficiency will cause huge performance degradation. However, the underlying topology of multi-core systems and virtualization pose great challenge in solving this problem. Several observations of performance degradation are reported because of hardware resources affinity[1, 2, 3]. Existing researches focusing on the memory locality [4, 5, 6] to reducing the remote access and virtual machine scheduling to minimize uncore penalty [7, 8, 9].

Each CPU socket accesses faster to the directly attached hardware devices than the remote ones, such as Non-Uniform memory Access (NUMA). However, directly attached devices are not limited to memory and CPU, I/O devices such as high speed Ethernet network adapter also connect to the CPU socket through the interconnect bus. When a thread access I/O devices remotely, latency will increased and internode maximum bandwidth decreased. This access asymmetry becomes main bottleneck of todayars high performance computing. Especially in the current high performance virtualized environment such as Network Function Virtualization (NFV)[], I/O latency in the host NUMA machine can cause a huge performance degradation of the latency sensitive NFV workloads, which are running in the virtual machines (VMs). This significantly impacts the performance data center infrastructures.

Although previous studies presented several affinity models to optimizing NUMA system, these models are not suitable for current high performance virtualized environment for following reasons.

- Existing NUMA affinity models are 2-dimension and mainly focusing on the memory and virtual CPU locality, the consideration of high speed interconnections affinity such as I/O devices locality are poor. since almost the cloud space applications frequent transfer data with high speed I/O devices, current affinity model must take I/O into consideration.
- Many traditional NUMA performance model use the hop distance to introduce the access penalty between two devices. However, hop distance is not accurate for modeling, especially for the I/O performance modeling due to: First, the hop distance contain less details about the underlying topology such as the access latency, so it can not be used in the accurate performance measurement. Second, hop distance always be a constant in the system. When the performance of the system changing in real time, the hop distance can not reflect this change and cause the performance prediction inaccurate.
- Furthermore, previous work only optimizing the Non-Uniform I/O access by performance tuning. They just binding the virtual machine threads and its memory together to the I/O device attached nodes to ensure local I/O access. This static method is not always efficient because too many threads in one node will increase the CPU load and hurt the performance significantly when the system load is too high.

In this paper, we present a novel locality model, vNUIOA, which mainly optimizing IO locality in the high performance virtualized system and both taking thread to thread affinity in to consideration. We first install SR-IOV technology into our system to providing high performance I/O virtualization, then we implement a hardware monitor by change the performance monitor units (PMU) both in physical machine and virtual machines. Based on the PMU hardware resource usages such as IO requests, VM address distribution and CPU utilization, we analyzed We evaluated our model on Intel multi-core machine and conduct a series of experimental. Results show that

The contributions of this paper include:

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 provides an overview of NUIOA architecture, I/O virtualization technology and motivation for this research. Section 3 characterizes performance in NUIOA virtualized systems. Sections 4 and 5 present our design and implementation. Section 6

evaluates our prototype and compares with existing methods. Section 7 discusses related work and Section 8 concludes this paper.

2. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In this section, we begin with a brief introduction to asymmetric access architecture in multicore systems, Then we show performance degradation due to asymmetric access in high performance network environment. Lastly, we talk about that virtualization also aggravate the performance degradation.

2.1 Asymmetric Access in Multicore Syetems

Traditional multicore processor shared with one memory controller. With the number of cores per socket increases, one memory controller results in high memory controller contention and bandwidth competition. In order to improve the utilization of multicore system, each CPU socket has been designed with its own integrated memory controller (IMC) which have faster access to local memory bank than the remote ones. This Non-Uniform Memory Access (NU-MA) characteristic fully take advantage of multicore system and high speed memory bandwidth.

Besides the asymmetric memory access, this architecture also result in asymmetric accesses of other devices. One of the most important one is I/O devices, because I/O devices are also directly connected to one or more nodes in the multicore system. local cores and devices have privilegiert access to the I/O device, remote ones must use interconnection to transfer data to the I/O devices, resulting in extra inter-node bandwidth occupation and access latency. This asymmetry I/O access is called Non-Uniform I/O Access (NUIOA)[]. AMD processors have exhibited NUIOA effects when AMD introduced the OPTERON processor in 2003 [], Intel processors have began to appear NUIOA characteristic when the advent of *sandy-bridge* architecture in 2011 []. Figure 1 shows a ubiquitous four-sockets NUIOA architecture based on the Intel Xeon E5 Family processors. Each socket consists of eight cores that share the last level cache (L3 cache), memory controller and physical memory bank. sockets link with each other via a high-speed, point-to-point interconnection such as Intel Quick Path Interconnect (QPI)[]. Network adapter is directly attached to the socket 0 with the Intel Data Direct I/O (DDIO) technology [], consequently, data transfer remotely to other sockets and increase access latency and bandwidth consumption.

2.2 Performance Degradation Due to Asymmetric Access

With the data transfer speed of current network adapter become higher and higher, such as Mellanox 40,56 and 100 Gigabit Ethernet adapter [] is being adopted broadly in the data center. The speed of these network adapter is higher than the memory and interconnection bandwidth, and result in shifting of system bottleneck from asymmetric memory access to asymmetric I/O access in the NUMA architecture. Finally, without consideration of the asymmetric I/O access in high speed networking environment, the performance of data center servers degrade significantly. To measure the Performance degradation due to asymmetric access, we con-

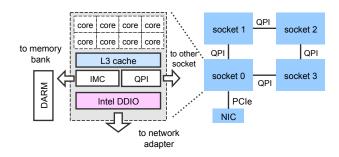


Figure 1: Asymmetric I/O access architecture with four 8-cores Intel Xeon E5-4610 processors.

duct a set of experiments. First we evaluate the performance degradation of asymmetric I/O Access independently, then we combine asymmetric memory access and asymmetric I/O access and study the factors of performance degradation.

Table 1 shows the configuration details of our test hardware. We select Netperf [] benchmark provides network bandwidth testing between two host on a network.

Table 1: Configuration details of our test server.

Item	Configuration
CPU	Intel Xeon E5-4610 v2
	2.3GHz (8 cores)
Memory	128G RAM DDR3
	4 sockets, each with 32GB
QPI	7.2 GT/s, 2 links
Network Adapter	Mellanox ConnectX-3 Dual-Port
	40 Gigabit Ethernet adapter
Hypervisor	KVM 2.0.0

2.2.1 Evaluation of Asymmetric I/O Access

To study the impact on performance of asymmetric I/O access independently, the VM vCPU and memory should be mapping to the same node to ensure local memory access. we simply run a number of VMs based on the asymmetric I/O access architecture by varying vCPU and memory mappings together among the multiple sockets. As shown in figure 2, a Four-sockets Intel Ivy Bridge NUMA architecture with ethernet adapter. Firstly, we banding vCPU of the VM to a specific core on the socket 0 and mapping all the memory of the VM to the memory bank attached to socket 0, then we change the VM vCPU banding to the core on the socket 2 and mapping memory of VM to the socket 2. Traditionally, these two kinds of mapping strategy ensure the VM vCPU thread is locally access to the VM memory, so the affinity between VM vCPU and memory can achieve best. However, we observe a huge I/O performance difference between this two kinds of VM vCPU and memory mapping strategy by using the Netperf benchmark.

Figure 3 gives the performance difference of these two kinds mapping strategies with Intel 10 Gigabit Ethernet adapter and Mellanox 40 Gigabit Ethernet adapter. As for the Intel 10 Gigabit Ethernet adapter, we observe a little bit of throughtput improvement (average 3%) because the speed

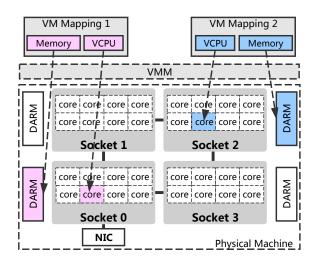


Figure 2: Different VM mapping strategies based on the asymmetric I/O Access architecture.

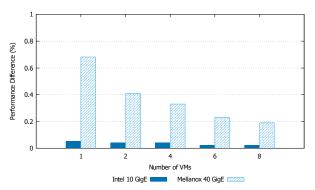


Figure 3: Performance degradation of different VM mapping strategies (VM mapping 2 relative to VM mapping 1) by using Intel 10 Gigabit Ethernet adapter and Mellanox 40 Gigabit Ethernet adapter.

of this network adapter can be fully taken advantage of. But for 40 Gigabit network adapter I/O throughtput of first kind of mapping (VM mapping 1) is average 35.1% (max up to 68.1%) higher than the I/O throughtput of second kind of mapping (VM mapping 2). The main reason of this huge performance difference is that when transfer data with 40 Gigabit network adapter, the speed of the network adapter is higher than QPI bandwidth. The second kind of mapping need to use two hops interconnection between sockets, this increase the QPI bandwidth consumption and memory access latency, finally, throughput will be decreased.

2.2.2 Evaluation of Asymmetric I/O Access and Memory Access

To study the factors of performance degradation in more complex scenarios, we consider the asymmetric I/O access and remote memory access simultaneously. Figure 4 shows three testing scenarios to characterize these two factors. In the Figure 4(A), we bind all the VM vCPUs to the cores on socket 0 and mapping the memory respectively to socket 1, 2 and 3. This scenario ensure all the VM vCPUs in the I/O device attached socket and its memory are remote access.

Similar in the Figure 4(B), we consolidate all the VM vC-PUs on the socket 1 and mapping the memory respectively to socket 0,2 and 3. This scenario is testing the performance of vCPU binding to the 1-hop distance socket and memory are remote access. Figure 4(C) show the VMs vCPU pining to 2-hops distance socket and memory mapping to socket 0,1 and 3. Not that we do not consider the VM vCPU and memory mapping to socket 3 because of that in our test bed socket 1 and socket 3 are symmetrical.

Figure 5 gives the evaluation results of these three scenarios.

2.3 Complexity in Virtualized Systems

Virtualization poses additional abstraction of the underlying topology and the mapping of VM vCPU and memory in the virtualized environment is more complexity. This complexity speedup the performance degradation seriously. Current VMMs tries hard to keep VM memory and vCPU as local as possible (like Xen and VMware ESXi), but mapping between virtual and machine resources must consider all kinds of factors as much as possible and different factors may disturb the distribution of VM vCPUs and memory. According to the white paper of VMware [], the main reason of chaotic mapping in the virtualized system can be listed as follows:

- The heterogeneity of the virtual machine will impact the mapping strategies. Different kinds of application running on the VM changes the resources requirement. For example, memory intensive applications running in the virtual machine will result in the VM need lager size of memory, and these large amount of VM memory may distribute across multiple nodes.
- 2. The load balancing mechanism cause the VM memory and vCPU threads migration. Guest OS shutdown and reboot both trigger load balancing in the host OS, the prior mapping relationship will be changed. This will affect the affinity between vCPU, memory and network adapter. Finally, the system performance degrades.

The asymmetric I/O assess degrade the I/O performance significantly in today's high speed network environment. Virtualization also poses a great challenge for optimizing the affinity among the vCPU, memory and network adapter. These motivate our work and in the next section,we further explore performance degradation in details by a set of experiments.

3. ANALYSIS OF OPTIMAL AFFINITY MOD-ELING

In this section, we begin with the necessity and benefits of modeling the affinity in asymmetric access architecture. We then introduce a set of metrics that can be used to model the affinity in the asymmetric access architecture.

3.1 Necessity of optimal Affinity Modeling

Poor Affinity Affect Performance: As we experimented and analyzed in the section 2, asymmetric access architecture can not guarantee local access, frequently remote access will cause the performance degradation in high performance networking environment. Nontransparent management in

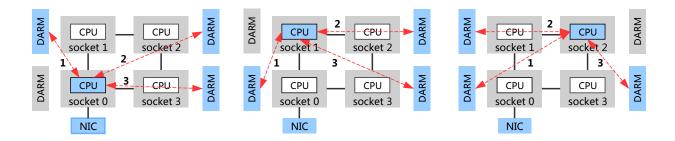


Figure 4: Three scenarios that we use to evaluate performance degradation of the asymmetric I/O access and remote memory access.

the virtualized system disturb the distribution of all kinds of resources. All these factors finally result in poor affinity among the VM vCPU, memory and network adapter, consequently, the inaccurate affinity model affects the networking performance, poor network performance result in the inefficient of data center servers. Therefore, optimal affinity model in the asymmetric access architecture is necessary.

Inaccurate of Previous Affinity Model: Historically, on the one hand, the previous affinity model in the asymmetric architecture mainly focus on optimizing the asymmetric memory access. Undoubtedly, these affinity models are no longer suitable for our asymmetric I/O access affinity modeling. On the other hand, previous affinity models are empirical [], they just characterize the penalty of asymmetric access by using the hop distances. Hop distances are typically recorded as a table in the BIOS Advanced Configuration and Power Interface (ACPI) to measure the distance between NUMA nodes. However, the hop distances lack details in some cases and are insufficient for affinity modeling in asymmetric access architecture.

3.2 Affinity Classes and Metrics

We now discuss different affinity classes in the asymmetric access architecture. To accurately determine the affinity among vCPU, memory and network adapter, we adopt more detailed metrics to describe the access behavior in the virtualized systems.

3.2.1 VCPU to Memory Affinity

VCPU to memory affinity refers to the traditional NU-MA affinity between VM vCPU and its memory. Based on the previous work [], we standing in the point of view of the vCPU and expect the memory access locally as much as possible. The potential for NUMA affinity of vCPU is proportional to the amount of memory access to each NUMA node. That is, if a vCPU access most to the memory of a NUMA node, it has high affinity with this node. The NUMA affinity for vCPU can be calculated with equation 1, where A_m is the affinity between vCPU and each NUMA node n, NC_k is a vector containing the number of memory access from vCPU k to each node, and N is the number of nodes.

$$A_m = \max(NC_k) / (\sum_{i=1}^N NC_k^i)$$
 (1)

This affinity is minimal when the number of memory access from vCPU to each node is equal, in this case, the affin-

ity equal to 1/N. The affinity achieve maximum when all the memory access to one NUMA node, in this caes, NUMA affinity is 1.

3.2.2 VCPU to NIC Affinity

The vCPU to NIC affinity is defined as the physical access latency between NIC and the node which vCPU running on. Obviously, the node near to the NIC has best vCPU to NIC affinity. For latency sensitive virtual machines, it is better to binding all their vCPUs to the node near to the network adapter so as to achieve optimal performance. We calculate this affinity with the equation 2, where *delay[N]* is a vector which records the access latency from each node to the NIC, N is the number of NUMA nodes.

$$A_n = \max(T_0) / (\sum_{i=1}^{N} T_i^m)$$
 (2)

3.2.3 NIC to Memory Affinity

The NIC to memory affinity is the affinity between NIC ring buffer and VM memory buffer. When a NIC receives incoming packets, it copies the data packets into the buffers using DMA. Obviously, if the DMA buffer is allocated in the memory attached to the node which near to NIC, the access latency of NIC to memory is lowest. Otherwise, NIC access to memory buffer of the remote node by using the QPI link, in this caes, the QPI bandwidth consume quickly. We define the affinity between NIC buffer and memory by using the equation 3, where D is the VM memory distribution table D_0^m is memory of virtual machine m distribute on node 0 (which is near to the NIC), and $\sum_{i=1}^N D^m$ is the total number of VM memory.

$$A_b = \max(D_0^m) / (\sum_{i=1}^N D_i^m)$$
 (3)

This affinity achieve best when we allocate the VM memory on the node near to the NIC as much as possible.

3.3 Optimal Affinity Model Function

After calculate these three classes of affinity metric, we now discuss the optimal affinity model. In consideration of complexity in the virtualized envionment, we first simply defined our optimal affinity model function as follows:

$$\max f(A_m, A_n, A_b) \tag{4}$$

4. DESIGN

In this section, we describe the detail design of our vNUIOA system. We enabling three parts for incorporating NUIOA overheads awareness with hypervisor: namely, online performance analzyer, VM threads affinity manager and VM memory affinity manager.

4.1 Overview

An overview of vNUIOA is shown in Figure 5. It consists of the following three parts: the *runtime performance monitor* modules collects host server and guest system information since the system booting, then the module classify and store these information of each VM. After these information are obtained, we build the NUIOA overheads awareness affinity model according to per-VM statistics information and the current system load. If the system load is not balanced and a certain node's load is very high, we should going to the *threads affinity manager* module and using I/O intensive aware migration strategy to migrate the VM vCPU threads to the appropriate NUMA node. Otherwise, the system load is balanced, we will going to the *memory affinity manager* module to optimizing the memory affinity and achieving high performance.

4.2 Runtime Performance monitor

To periodically collect the performance information of virtual machines and host server, it is imperative to analyze memory and threads activities of all the nodes. To end this, we use the Linux performance monitoring tool perfmon [] to detect each virtual machine's memory and threads activities and store these information in the VMinfo table. Each table entry contains information about each NUMA node access to VM pages vector(NodeAcc Vector), VM memory distribution table (VMD table) and VM I/O request times vector (VIOR Vector). The detail of these three information listed as follows:

- NodeAcc vector: The NodeAcc[n][p] records the number of memory access from node n to each page p of the VM. The OS has a methods to measure if the pages has been accessed by the page fault, While the page is not set as present in the page table, the OS is noticed about the faulting virtual address, as well as the thread ID that caused the fault. By tracking page faults, it possible to detect which vCPU threads are accessing the memory page. We apply this memory access vector to vCPU thread to memory affinity modeling.
- VMD table: The VM memory distribution table, denoted as VMD[m][n], collects the number of VM m memory references to NUMA node n. We analysis the VM guest physical address (GPA) and translate it to host physical address (HPA). Based on the HPA, we can obtain the distribution of virtual machine memory to the physical server nodes. The VMD table provide data distribution information for our NIC to vCPU thread affinity modeling.
- VIOR vector: The virtual machine I/O request times vector records the I/O request times per second. This information used to identify whether the virtual machine is I/O intensive. If the I/O operations of a virtual

machine are too frequent, we should take a special consideration of these kinds of virtual machine in the NIC to vCPU thread affinity modeling.

System load balance is also important for performance of physical server. As shown in the section 3.2.1, physical machine system load imbalance will cause a huge performance degradation. So in our design, we must take the system load into consideration. In this paper, we mainly consider two kinds of system load of each NUMA node, the per-node CPU load NCL_n and the per-node memory load NML_n . These two kinds of load can be calculate as follows:

$$L_n = NCL_n + NML_n \tag{5}$$

we test that when the system load per node exceed the 80% of the max load, the system performance begin to goes down. Based on this experimental value, if the system load per node up to 80%, the load of the node is high.

Because of the hop-distance result in the previous NUMA affinity modeling inaccurate, in this work, we use a more accurate system information for NUIOA affinity modeling. We measure the average access latency between NIC and every NUMA node ,then we record it in a ACL vector (*ACL[n]*). Based on the ACL vector, the data transfer latency between NIC and nodes can be accurate measured and we this information in the following affinity modeling.

4.3 NUIOA Affinity Modeling

We now discuss the affinity modeling of NUIOA architecture. NUIOA affinity measure the Based on the evaluation of performance degradation in the section 3, we divide the entire affinity modeling into two parts: the NIC to VCPU Threads Affinity Modeling and the VCPU Threads to Memory Affinity Modeling.

4.3.1 NIC to vCPU Thread Affinity Modeling

The NIC to vCPU thread affinity model mainly measure the affinity between NIC and vCPU thread running in each NUMA node. After the VM system boots up, we first To optimize the mapping of vCPU threads to the processing cores on the NUMA node, VM vCPU affinity manager periodically receive the VIOR vector and VMD table from the performance analyzer. We also periodically update these information per second to reduce the influence of old values.

The I/O intensive virtual machine always have frequent I/O operation and the asymmetric I/O access hurt the system performance significant, so we must give priority to calculating the I/O intensive vCPU threads mapping. We first identify whether the virtual machine is I/O intensive by looking the value in the VIOR vector. Previous research [] has shown that the I/O request of CPU intensive is less than 100 times per second and I/O intensive is more than 1000 time per second, so we choose a threshold value of 500 times per second in consideration of practical application attributes. Once the number of I/O request exceeds the threshold, the VM is regarded as I/O intensive. After classify these VM threads by using the threshold, we first migrate I/O intensive VM vCPU threads to the node near to high performance network adapter according to the equation 2.

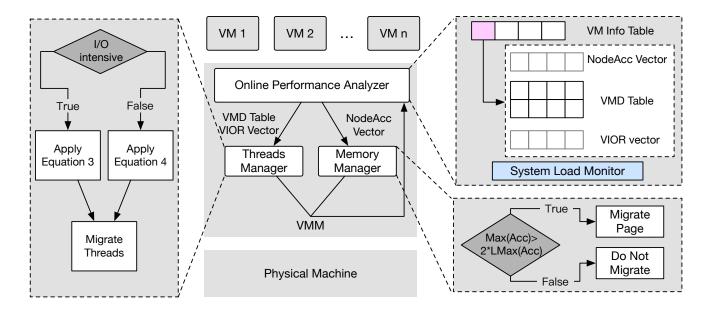


Figure 5: Architecture of vNUIOA.

$$Aff_{THR}[n] = \frac{VMD[m][n]}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} VMD[m][i]} ACL[n]$$
 (6)

Where the $Aff_{THR}[n]$ is the VM affinity vector of the NIC to each NUMA node. VMD[m][n] is the number of VM m memory distribute in node n and $\sum_{i=1}^{n} VMD[m][i]$ is total number of VM m memory. ACL[n] is the access latency from the NIC to node n. We can regard this affinity as the distance of NIC to the node and it is more accurate than the hop-distance.

If this mapping result in the load imbalance, then we should calculate remapping strategy of the VM vCPU threads to other nodes by using the NIC to vCPU thread affinity model:

$$remapping = \begin{cases} true & ifAff_{THR}[k] > Aff_{THR}[p] \\ false & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$
 (7)

This equation implies that remapping the VM m vCPU thread from the original node to node k instead of the node p is beneficial only if the affinity to node k is better than affinity to node p.

4.3.2 VCPU Thread to Memory Affinity Modeling

VCPU thread to memory affinity modeling is deigned to model the affinity between vCPU thread and VM memory. We first identify which page of a VM are frequently accessed by calculating the access number of every memory page. After obtain the NodeAcc table from the performance analzyer, we calculate the Aff_{MEM} vector for each VM by following equation:

$$Aff_{MEM}[n] = \sum_{p=1}^{m} NodeAcc[n][p]$$
 (8)

We use the total number of memory access from vCPU thread to NUMA node measure the vCPU thread to memory affinity. $Aff_{MEM}[n]$ is the VM total access number to each other

node n which VM original running on. For example, N-odeAcc[0] is the total local access number and NodeAcc[1] is the total number of memory access to node 1). If the number of remote access to a node is double than the number of local access, the page in the remote node will be migrate to the local node. Equation 4 formalizes this behavior, where $\max(Aff_{MEM}[n])$ is the highest number of remote access and the NodeAcc[0] is number of local memory access.

$$Migrate = \begin{cases} true & \text{if } \max(Aff_{MEM}[n]) > 2*Aff_{MEM}[0] \\ false & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

(9)

The reason why we select double than the number of local access is that frequent memory migration also bring high overheads. We test several value and found that when select 2 times than the number of local access, we can achieve max benefits.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

We implemented the vNUIOA prototype in the KVM virtualized platform. The online performance analyzer, the threads migration manager and the memory migration manager are implemented as individual daemous in the KVM system. We describes the implementation details of these three modules.

We use the KVM 2.0.0 as virtual machine monitor with the Intel VT-d and VT-x technology enable. Each VM run the Ubuntu 14.04LTS system and configured with one vC-PUs and 1GB memory. In order to achieve high performance I/O virtualization, we enable SR-IOV technology and assigned a virtual function to each VM. We select a set of I/O and memory performance testing benchmarks,listed as table 2. The Netperf [] benchmark provides network bandwidth testing between two host on a network. Memcached [] is an in-memory key-value store for small chunks of arbitrary data to improve the performance of cloud applications.

5.1 Online Performance Analyzer

The performance analyzer accesses the hardware performance counters via Linux performance monitor tool *perfmon*. We using As for number of I/O request per second, we count the execution number of *ixgbevf_clean_tx_irq* or *ixgbevf_clean_rx_irq* function for every second. Because every time a VM handles a packet, the SR-IOV vf driver invokes these two functions.

5.2 Threads Migration Manager

5.3 Memory Migration Manager

6. EVALUATION

In this section we present experimental evaluation of the proposed vNUIOA system, we compare the performance of vNUIOA with KVM's default scheduler and a hand-optimized binding strategy. Then we study the stability of our vNUIOA system. Finally, we characterize vNUIOA runtime overhead.

6.1 Experimental Environment

All experiments are conducted in a 4-sockets machine with Mellanox ConnectX-3 40 GigE adapter placed on the PCIe Gen3 x16 slots which directly connect to the socket 0. Each socket contains a Intel Xeon E5 4610 v2(Ivy Bridge architecture) processor and 32GB DDR3 memory bank. Each processor with 8 cores running at 2.3GHz and max turbo frequency can up to 2.7GHz. Each core has 32KB L1 data cache and 32KB L1 instruction cache, 256KB L2 cache and 16MB last level cache (LLC). Each socket equipped with 2 ways QPI with the communication speed 7.2GT/s. In our experiments, we enable the Intel Hyper-threading [](16 logical cores per socket). Therefor, we have total 64 cores and 128GB memory. we also configure the storage with 300G disk, the experiment configuration details are listed in the table 1.

6.2 Improvement of Performance

6.3

- 7. RELATED WORK
- 8. CONCLUSION
- 9. PRIOR/CONCURRENT SUBMISSIONS
- 10. REFERENCES