Operating Systems

Part 8

Operating Systems

- Master controller for all of the activities that take place within a computer
- Basic Duties:
  - manage the physical resources of the system
  - load and execute programs
  - controlling I/O devices

What is an operating system?

- The operating system is simply another program executing on the processor
- But, it runs in *privileged (or supervisor) mode*
  - knows about all the hardware in the computer
  - has it the ability to run special instructions
- Other programs run in *user mode*

Interact with Applications

- The operating reserves many activities for itself – for stability and reliability
- These include:
  - input/output – keyboard, screen ports
  - memory
  - special registers
  - etc…

Interact with Applications

- So, programs need to "talk" to the OS using *Application Program Interface (API)*
- Benefits:
  - makes applications faster and smaller
  - also makes the system more secure since apps do not directly talk to IO
  - Application → Operating System → IO

Vector Tables

- Programs (and hardware) often need to talk to the operating system
- Examples:
  - software needs talk to the OS – in other words: API
  - USB port notifies the OS that a device was plugged in

Vector Tables

- But how does this happen?
- The processor can be *interrupted* - alerted that something must be handled
- Each type interrupt has a unique number – which identifies the type of alert

Vector Table

- When interrupted, the processor looks up the number in the *"vector table"*
- Table contains the address of the subroutine to execute
- The interrupt number is an index into this table

How it Works

- When interrupted, the processor uses the interrupt number (index into the table) and looks up the address
- It then executes that address *(like a function you call in your Java programs)*

How it Works

- These subroutines belong to the *kernal* – the core of the operating system
- So, software can interrupt itself with a specific number *(designated for software to use)* when it needs to talk to the operating system

Instruction: Interrupt

- Interrupt Instruction allows your program to "interrupt" itself and pass information to the operating system *kernal*
- How you use it
  1. fill registers with values that will tell Linux what do to
  2. call Linux by using interrupt 0x80 (or a special *software interrupt* instruction)

Instruction: Interrupt (32-bit)

0x80

```
INT number
```

Instruction: syscall (64-bit)

SYSCALL

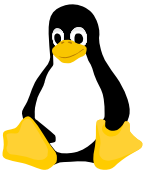
Calls vector reserved for OS

Linux System Calls

How software and hardware "talk"

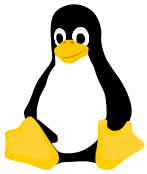
Interrupts on the Linux

- Linux, like other operating systems communicate with applications using *interrupts*
- Applications do not know where (in memory) to contact the kernal – so they ask the processor to do it



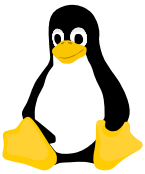
How It Works

1. Fill the registers
2. Interrupt using 0x80 (or the special *software interrupt* instruction in 64-bit)
3. Any results will be stored in the registers



Kernals are Simple!

- Linux only has **1** write and **1** read system call
- The location, number of bytes, and device only change
- It basically states *"write x many bytes from y to device z"*
- So, writing to the screen, a file, a port, etc…use the same call!



How to Call Linux – 32 bit

- In the 32-bit version of Linux, the kernal uses eax to identify the system call
- Each call has a unique constant
- Interrupt 0x80 activates the kernal (well, the code that handles app requests)

How to Call Linux – 32 bit

- Often a system call needs additional information to work
- Registers ebx, ecx, edx, etc… will contain this information

Linux 32 – Sys Write

```
mov   $4, %eax
mov   $1, %ebx
mov   $address, %ecx
mov   $length, %edx
int   $0x80
```

Linux 32 call for WRITE

1 = Screen

How many bytes

Call Linux

Linux 32: Sys Read

```
mov   $3, %eax
mov   $0, %ebx
mov   $address, %ecx
mov   $maxBytes, %edx
int   $0x80
```

Linux 32 call for READ

0 = Keyboard

Maximum number of bytes to read

Call Linux

How to Call Linux – 64 bit

- The 64-bit version of Linux changed the system calls
- The rax register still holds the system call number
- However, the "kernal call" numbers are different now
- There are 329 total calls

How to Call Linux – 64 bit

- Different registers are used to hold data
- The order is also quite different: *rdi, rsi, rdx, r10, r8*
- The new instruction syscall talks to the OS

Some Linux 64 Calls

System Call	rax	rdi	rsi	rdx
read	0	fd (device)	address	max bytes
write	1	fd (device)	address	count
open	2	address	flags	mode
close	3	fd (device)		
get pid	39			
exit	60	error code		

Linux 64: Sys Write

```
mov   $1, %rax
mov   $1, %rdi
mov   $address, %rsi
mov   $length, %rdx
syscall
```

Linux command for WRITE

1 = Screen

Call Linux

Linux 64: Sys Read

```
mov   $0, %rax
mov   $0, %rdi
mov   $address, %rsi
mov   $maxBytes, %rdx
syscall
```

Linux command for READ

0 = Keyboard

Maximum number of bytes to read

Call Linux