

# GPU Benchmarking Report

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# 1 VISION AND SCOPE

In this project, a set of well-defined test cases for GPU have been used to compare the performances of different graphics cards across different platforms. The main focus of the project has been to use the various test cases with similar settings on multiple graphics cards, keeping everything else the same. We perform benchmarking on three different NVIDIA Graphic Cards and profile the test cases using an NVIDIA profiler **nvprof** [1]. We show the results of each of the test cases and further perform analysis.

The project involved searching of well-known, published test cases, which could be tested on Linux platforms. All benchmarks have been performed using the release 3.1 version of the Rodinia [2]. Several test cases from Rodinia were profiled using nvprof (NVIDIA profiling tool), which is a command-line profiler available for Linux, Windows, and OS X. It helps users to understand and optimize the performance of CUDA applications and easily compare and analyze the result of benchmarks on different GPUs [4]. A CUDA version of 7.5 was used to benchmark all three graphic cards in this project. The three NVIDIA graphics cards benchmarked are GTX 630, GTX 650 & Quadro M6000.

We chose seven different test cases and profiled several parameters for each test case. We compare and analyze these values across all three different GPU cards. We profiled the following parameters:

- *Total time for all API calls:* We added up the duration of all API calls together to get the total amount of time spending by API calls.
- *Total time for all Kernel calls:* We added up the duration of all kernel calls together to get the total amount of time spending by kernel calls.
- *Number of registers per thread for each Kernel call:* The number of registers in use affects the occupancy of your GPU since the total number of registers per multiprocessor is limited. In fact it's dependant on the problem but we will want to have our occupancy as high as possible, to avoid resources from being wasted. On the other hand it is possible that the code is slowed down if the number of registers is restricted.
- *Temperature:* We understand that temperature and fan-speed would be more relevant for benchmarking mobile GPU's, but for completeness we profiled them both.
- *Fan Speed:* All the graphics cards requires a robust fan to keep it from overheating under a load. This parameter is the percentage of the total amount of fan power depending on how much you tax the graphics card in the system. You may want to adjust its fan speed to provide better cooling or produce less noise when not pushing it to its limits.

## 2 DESCRIPTION OF BENCHMARKS

This section provides a brief description of all the seven test cases used to benchmark the three NVIDIA GPU cards.

### 2.1 BREADTH FIRST SEARCH

Graph algorithms are fundamental and widely used in many disciplines and application areas. Large graphs involving millions of vertices are common in scientific and engineering applications. This benchmark suite provides the GPU implementations of breadth-first search (BFS) algorithm which traverses all the connected components in a graph.

### 2.2 K-NEAREST NEIGHBOR

NN (Nearest Neighbor) finds the k-nearest neighbors from an unstructured data set. The sequential NN algorithm reads in one record at a time, calculates the Euclidean distance from the target latitude and longitude, and evaluates the k nearest neighbors. The parallel versions read in many records at a time, execute the distance calculation on multiple threads, and the master thread updates the list of nearest neighbors.

### 2.3 B+TREE

B+ Tree application has many internal commands that maintain database and process queries. Only J and K commands had enough parallelism to be ported to parallel languages (OpenMP, CUDA, OpenCL). In these implementations, in case of both J and K, the same algorithms (optimized for exposing fine-grained parallelism) were used for fair comparison purposes. For C/OpenMP execution, it is possible to use the original algorithm.

### 2.4 PATHFINDER

PathFinder uses dynamic programming to find a path on a 2-D grid from the bottom row to the top row with the smallest accumulated weights, where each step of the path moves straight ahead or diagonally ahead. It iterates row by row, each node picks a neighboring node in the previous row that has the smallest accumulated weight, and adds its own weight to the sum. This kernel uses the technique of ghost zone optimization.

### 2.5 LU DECOMPOSITION

LU Decomposition is an algorithm to calculate the solutions of a set of linear equations. The LUD kernel decomposes a matrix as the product of a lower triangular matrix and an upper triangular matrix.

## 2.6 GAUSSIAN ELIMINATION

Gaussian Elimination computes result row by row, solving for all of the variables in a linear system. The algorithm must synchronize between iterations, but the values calculated in each iteration can be computed in parallel.

## 2.7 HOTSPOT

HotSpot is a widely used tool to estimate processor temperature based on an architectural floorplan and simulated power measurements. The thermal simulation iteratively solves a series of differential equations for block. Each output cell in the computational grid represents the average temperature value of the corresponding area of the chip. Our CUDA implementation re-implements the transient thermal differential equation solver from HotSpot.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this project is to use same test cases, with similar settings on three different NVIDIA GPU graphics cards. During benchmarking with the seven test cases, we made sure that no other programs, code etc were running on these three machines. We further ensured that all the settings were as similar as possible e.g GPU architecture settings, CUDA settings etc.

Instead of profiling the total execution time, which collectively sums up the CPU & GPU running time, we only profiled the time for all the API calls and the Kernel calls. Since we are only concerned with GPU benchmarking, this seems reasonable as all three machines have different processors (Table 3.2), which would lead to different CPU running times. We also profiled the number of registers used per thread for each kernel call in each program. And lastly we profiled the GPU temperature and fan speed. Though we understand that for desktop machine people are not that concerned about them, however when setting up different servers temperature and fan speed play an important role.

#### 3.1 GPU PARALLELIZATION

The GPU computing approach uses graphic card to perform the calculation in parallel. This approach is based on CUDA which is made by NVIDIA and works on NVIDIA graphic cards that have Compute Capability 2.0 or higher. The point is worth mentioning that only hydrodynamic calculations are performed on the GPU and the additional calculations are run on the CPU. Then these calculations are parallelised using shared memory approach, OpenMP.

#### 3.2 HARDWARE

The following are the specifications of the three NVIDIA graphic cards which were benchmarked using the seven test cases.

Table 3.1: GPU specifications

GPU	Compute Capability	Number of CUDA cores	Memory (GB)
GeForce GT 630	2.1	96	1.8
Geforce GTX 650	3.0	384	5
Quadro 6000	2.0	448	6

The specifications of the machines in which the graphic cards resided are shown in the below table:

Table 3.2: Hardware Platforms

	Processor	Memory (GB)	Operating system
1	Intel Xeon(R) E5405 (4 cores, 2.00GHz)	2	ubuntu 14.04
2	Intel Core i5-4460 (4 cores, 3.20GHz)	16	ubuntu 14.04
3	Intel Core 2 Quad Q9400 (4 cores, 2.66GHz)	7.8	ubuntu 14.04

### 3.3 SOFTWARE

All benchmarks have been performed using the release 3.1 version of the Rodinia: accelerating Compute-Intensive Applications with Accelerators. It released to address some concerns in which platforms face. For example, there are many suites for parallel computing on general-purpose CPU architectures, but accelerators fall into a gap that is not covered by previous benchmark development.

## 4 COMPARISON OF THE GRAPHIC CARDS

Here we compare the performance of GTX 650, GT 630 and Quadro 600 based on already published evaluations [3]. Later we will compare this evaluation with our results to show how they match with the expected values.

### 4.1 OVERAL EVALUATION

We have used overall evaluations for the aforementioned graphics cards reported by Game Debate. Following is a brief explanation of each parameter in Table 4.1. Performance score reflects how well you feel the hardware meets your expectations on performance. Lifespan score reflects how long you feel this hardware will last and perform its function. Value score represents how well the graphics card is placed with regards to its price to performance.

Table 4.1: Evaluation published by Game Debate

	Geforce GTX 650	Quadro 6000	Geforce GT 630
GPU Architecture	1	1.3	1
GPU Memory	0.5	1	0.3
GPU Display	0.4	0.8	0.2
GPU Outputs	1	0.7	1
GPU Features	1	1.3	1

A more detailed explanation:

The GTX 650 has a 484 MHz higher core clock speed but 24 fewer Texture Mapping Units than the Quadro 6000. The lower TMU count doesn't matter, though, as altogether the GTX 650 manages to provide 1.8 GTexel/s better texturing performance. This still holds weight but shader performance is generally more relevant, particularly since both of these GPUs support at least DirectX 10. The GTX 650 has a 248 MHz higher core clock speed and 16 more Texture Mapping Units than the GeForce GT 630. This results GT 630 performs worse than the other two.

The GTX 650 has a 484 MHz higher core clock speed than the Quadro 6000, but the Quadro 6000 has 32 more Render Output Units than the GTX 650. As a result, the Quadro 6000 exhibits a 10.7 GPixel/s better Pixel Fill Rate than the GTX 650. However, both GPUs support DirectX 9 or above, and pixeling performance is only really relevant when comparing older cards. These two graphics cards have higher core clock speed and more Render Output Units than the GeForce GT 630. This results GT 630 again to perform the worst.

The GTX 650 was released over a year more recently than the Quadro 6000, and so the GTX 650 is likely to have better driver support, meaning it will be more optimized for running the latest games when compared to the Quadro 6000. The GTX 650 was released less than a year after the GeForce GT 630, and so they are likely to have similar driver support for optimizing



performance when running the latest games.

The Quadro 6000 has 4096 MB more video memory than the GTX 650, so is likely to be much better at displaying game textures at higher resolutions. This is supported by the fact that the Quadro 6000 also has superior memory performance overall. The GeForce GTX 650 1GB and the GeForce GT 630 have the same amount of video memory, but are likely to provide slightly different experiences when displaying game textures at high resolutions.

The Quadro 6000 has 63.4 GB/sec greater memory bandwidth than the GTX 650, which means that the memory performance of the Quadro 6000 is much better than the GTX 650. These two have greater memory bandwidth than the GeForce GT 630, which means that the memory performance of the GTX 630 is much worse than the other two.

The GeForce GTX 650 2GB has 384 Shader Processing Units, the Quadro 6000 has 448 and the GeForce GT 630 has 96. However, the actual shader performance of the GTX 650 is 406, the actual shader performance of the Quadro 6000 is 514 and the actual shader performance of the GeForce GT 630 is 156. The Quadro 6000 having 108 better shader performance and an altogether better performance when taking into account other relevant data means that the Quadro 6000 delivers a significantly smoother and more efficient experience when processing graphical data than the GTX 650 and GT 630.

The GTX 650 transistor size technology is 12 nm (nanometers) smaller than the Quadro 6000 as well as GT 630. This means that the GTX 650 is expected to run slightly cooler and achieve higher clock frequencies than both the Quadro 6000 and GT 630.

The GeForce GTX 650 2GB requires 64 Watts to run, the GeForce GT 630 requires 65 Watts and the Quadro 6000 requires 204 Watts. We would recommend a PSU with at least 400 Watts for the GTX 650 and a PSU with at least 600 Watts for the Quadro 6000. The Quadro 6000 requires 140 Watts more than the GTX 650 to run. The difference is significant enough that the Quadro 6000 may have an adverse affect on your yearly electricity bills in comparison to the GTX 650. The GeForce GT 630 requires 1 Watts more than the GTX 650 to run. The difference is not significant enough for the GeForce GT 630 to have a noticeably larger impact on your yearly electricity bills than the GTX 650.

In terms of overall gaming performance, the graphical capabilities of the Nvidia Quadro 6000 are noticeably better than the Nvidia GeForce GTX 650 2GB and massively better than the GT 630.

Here we also have user evaluation on the same graphics cards published by Game Debate. Here is a brief description of the three graphics cards we used.

Table 4.2: User evaluation

	Geforce GT 630	Geforce GTX 650	Quadro 6000
Performance	6.0	8.5	9.4
Life Span	7.3	8.5	7.9
Value	6.9	8.7	5.4
Overall	7.0	8.6	7.4

#### 4.2 REVIEW ON GT 630

GeForce GT 630 is Middle-Class Graphics Card based on the first revision of the Fermi Architecture. The Fermi Architecture is manufactured with a 40nm technology and uses a technique known as Hot Clocking: The Shaders are clocked twice as fast as the Central Unit. While this leads to a reasonable performance boost, it causes enormous amounts of energy dissipation, leading, ultimately, to a significantly higher operating temperature. Fermi is also the first GPU architecture with fully cached memory access which increases memory performance.

#### 4.3 REVIEW ON GTX 650

GeForce GTX 650 2GB is a fast-middle-class GPU part of the 600 Series released by NVIDIA in 2012. This version features a frame buffer of 2GB. It's known that this GPU does not benefit in any way from a 2GB frame buffer and so this GPU's performance is on level with the 1GB variant. Check the page of the 1GB version for more information about but please note this GPU is just a fast GT 640, paired with GDDR5. Its performance is nothing like next in series - GeForce GTX 650 Ti and barely any fast than previous GTX 550 Ti.

#### 4.4 REVIEW ON QUADRO 6000

Quadro 6000 is a high-end professional card based on the 40nm, Fermi architecture. It's based on the Fermi GF100 GPU and thus offers 448 Shader Processing Units, 56 TMUs and 48 ROPs, on a 384-bit memory interface of fast GDDR5. The central unit runs at 574MHz and the memory clock operates at up to 747MHz. It has a L2 Cache of 768KB and a rated board TDP of 204 Watts. Despite exhibiting similarities to GeForce GTX 470, due to being under-clocked and because Quadro 6000's drivers are only certified for professional applications only, its gaming performance is up to 10 percent slower than GeForce GTX 470.

## 5 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

The below figures summarize all the results from all three different NVIDIA GPUs. As described in the methodology section, we ran seven different test cases on 3 different GPU cards keeping all the setting same. We profiled for the total API time, total kernel time, number of registers-per-thread for each kernel, temperature & fan speed.

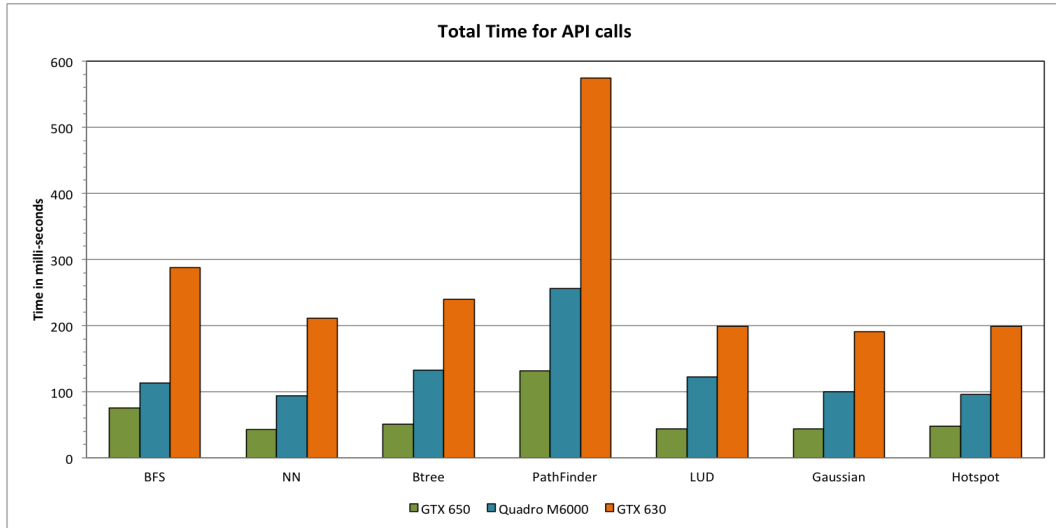


Figure 5.1: Total time for API calls for seven test cases

The above figure represents the total API time for each testcase on all three NVIDIA GPU's. On the Y-axis is the total time in milli-seconds, while on the X axis are the different test cases.

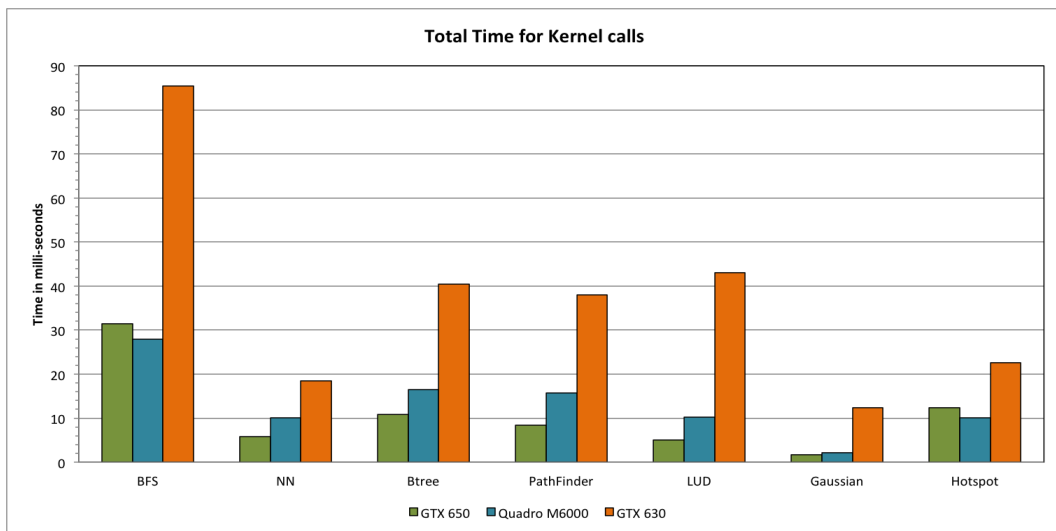


Figure 5.2: Total time for kernel calls for seven test cases

The above figure represents the total kernel time for each testcase on all three NVIDIA GPU's. On the Y-axis is the total time in milli-seconds, while on the X axis are the different test cases. This was computed by adding the time from all kernel calls.

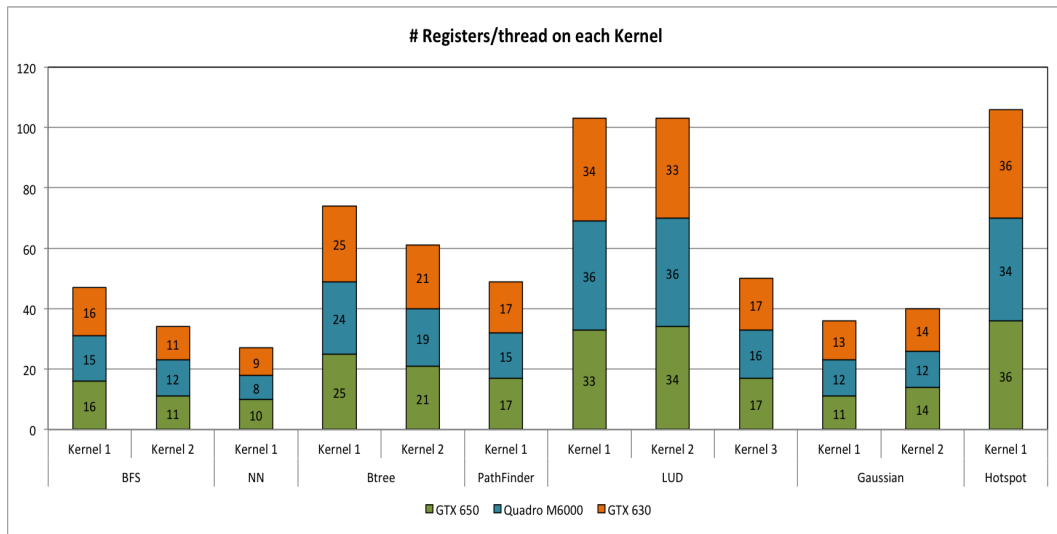


Figure 5.3: Number of registers per thread on each kernel for seven test cases

The above figure represents the number of registers used per thread for each kernel. e.g Breadth first search had two kernel calls and the number of registers used by GTX 650, GTX 630 & Quadro M6000 for kernel 1 are 16, 15 & 16 and for kernel 2 are 11, 12 & 11 respectively.

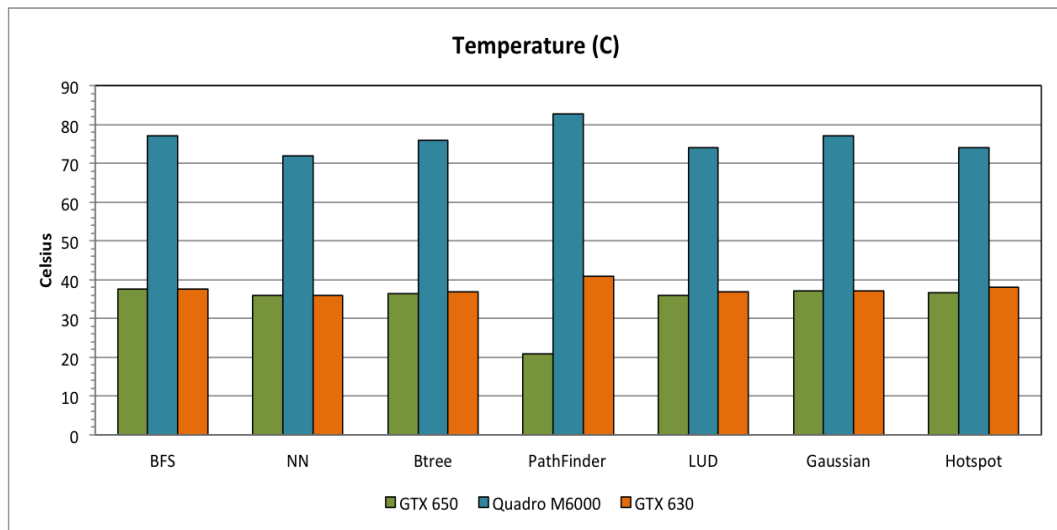


Figure 5.4: Temperature (C) for seven test cases

The above figure represents the temperature of the machines (and in turn GPU's) while

running individual testcases. The temperature is measure in celsius. Like mentioned before, we profiled these parameters considering that in future they maybe used for setting up huge computer clusters.

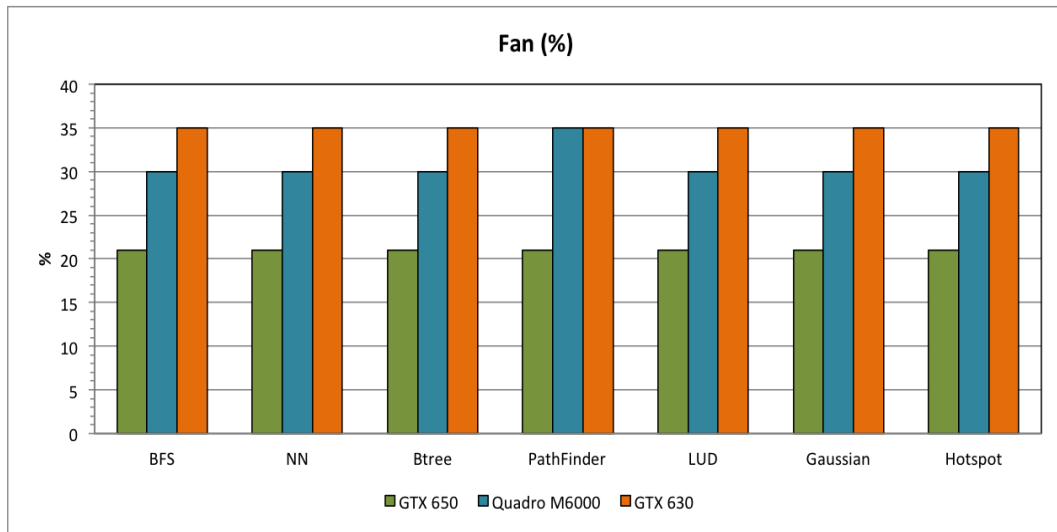


Figure 5.5: Fan spean for seven test cases

The above figure represents the fan speed in percentage for each test case. This depicts the percentage of total fan power.

*For more detailed results, we ask the readers to refer to the appendix where we present individual results of each test case on each NVIDIA GPU card.*

## 6 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

There were several key observations made during this project. One can deduce a lot of information regarding GPU processing from the above graphs. The first key observation is no matter what GPU card it is, most of the API time is consumed by allocating memory inside GPU (cudaMalloc) and copying data from CPU to GPU (cudaMemcpy). As can be seen in Figures 8.1,8.2,8.3 (in the appendix section) nearly 80% of the time was taken by cudaMalloc & cudaMemcpy.

The second observation which can be deduced by running all the seven test cases is that in general, among total time for API calls, GTX 650 performed the best and GTX 630 performed the worst as shown in Figure 5.1. Among the testcases, depending on the complexity of the arguments, the total time varied. For example, the total time for *PathFinder* was considerably higher for all three GPU's as compared to any other test case.

The third observation can be drawn from Figure 5.2. The total time for all kernel calls was in general lower for GTX 650 and Quadro M6000 as compared to GTX 630. Among both these GPU's their performance varied, probably due to the implementation of the test the cases.

Figure 5.3 provides us with not only the number of register per thread but also the number of different kernel calls for each of the test cases. In general Quadro M6000 had higher threads-per-kernel than the other two GPU's. And probably this might be one of the reasons for their improved performance like shown in Figure 5.2.

Now as mentioned in the introduction, we also profiled the temperature of the GPU and the fan speed. It was extremely difficult to do so as needed to be certain that these numbers are a true indicator of the GPU performance. Hence, while conducting experiments, we made sure that all the programs/processes were killed and *only* the particular test case was running. Secondly one can argue that while benchmarking desktop GPU's, why profile fan speed and temperature. However, we are thinking in the lines of assembling huge cluster of machines with high-end graphics card such as these. In those circumstances, one would not only care for the best performing GPU card, but also for a one which does not dissipate a lot of heat or produce excess noise etc. From Figures 5.4 it seems like Quadro M6000 dissipates a lot of heat while GTX 630 & GTX 650 dissipated equal amounts of heat. One would assume from Figure 5.4 that the fan speed for Quadro M6000 would be the highest as it had the highest temperature. However we observed that GTX 630 had the highest fan percentage, while GTX 650 the lowest percentage.

## 7 CONCLUSION

Though it was extremely challenging to get three machines with different NVIDIA GPU card's, setting up of all the experiments and maintaining similar settings throughout the experiments, we managed to successfully benchmark GTX 630, GTX 650, Quadro M6000. Further one may say that since execution time for most of the test cases was in seconds, this benchmark study is not sufficient. However we argue that even with test cases with execution times in seconds, we were successfully able to show differences both in speed & performance. This difference would only magnify on much complex programs and bigger datasets.

From our results we conclude that NVIDIA GTX 650 performed best both in terms of speed and & performance. It showed the least time for API calls, was comparable to Quadro M6000 in terms of kernel calls and had the least temperature and fan speed. Hence both for personal desktop machines and serves, we would recommend buying NVIDIA GTX 650 over NVIDIA GTX 630 or NVIDIA Quadro M6000.

We did literature survey about specifications of these three GPUs which we used and extracted some evaluations done by most trusted users available in GAME DEBATE webpage [3]. Our results some how match with the previous benchmarkings and as we stated above, NVIDIA GTX 650 performs better than the other two. Although comparing performance of different graphics cards using different benchmarks would not be accurate and we are not sure what were the programs which others used to get these results. One GPU could perform better with executing some programs and weaker on some others. But in general, considering the average we can rely on the reported data and evaluate our benchmarking project with them. According to the Table 4.2 the overall score for NVIDIA GTX 650 is ranked as 8.6 out of 10 while GT 630 and Quadro 6000 have score 7.0 and 7.0 respectively. Using the literature, GTX 650 has much better life span rather than the other two and this can be proved by our results as well. Because according to our findings GTX 650 performs better by less temperature and fan speed in comparison with those two which could be a great clue for having more life span. Also in online evaluations we found that users are more satisfied with GTX 650 regarding to its price and the value for GTX 650 is reported 8.7 out of 10 which means it worths buying whereas this value for GT 630 and Quadro 6000 are 6.9 and 5.4 respectively.

In a nutshell, although it is not an accurate way to compare the results of few benchmarks on different graphics cards with the overall performance of those graphics cards, NVIDIA GTX 650 performs better than NVIDIA 630 and Quadro 6000. We have profiled and compared total time for all API calls as well as Kernel calls. We also monitored number of registers per thread for each Kernel call for different GPU for the same programs. Temperature and speed were also profiled in the aforementioned graphics cards.

## 8 APPENDIX

Here we present the individual results of each test case on each NVIDIA GPU card. We show graphs depicting the time taken for individual API calls for each test case on all three graphic cards. In order to make them concise we have integrated all the graphs from one GPU. Kindly zoom in.

### 8.1 BENCHMARKING USING A GEFORCE GT 630

These tests have been performed using a NVIDIA GeForce GT 630 and hardware platform 1 specified in Table 3.2. The below figures depict the time taken for each individual API call for all the seven test cases.

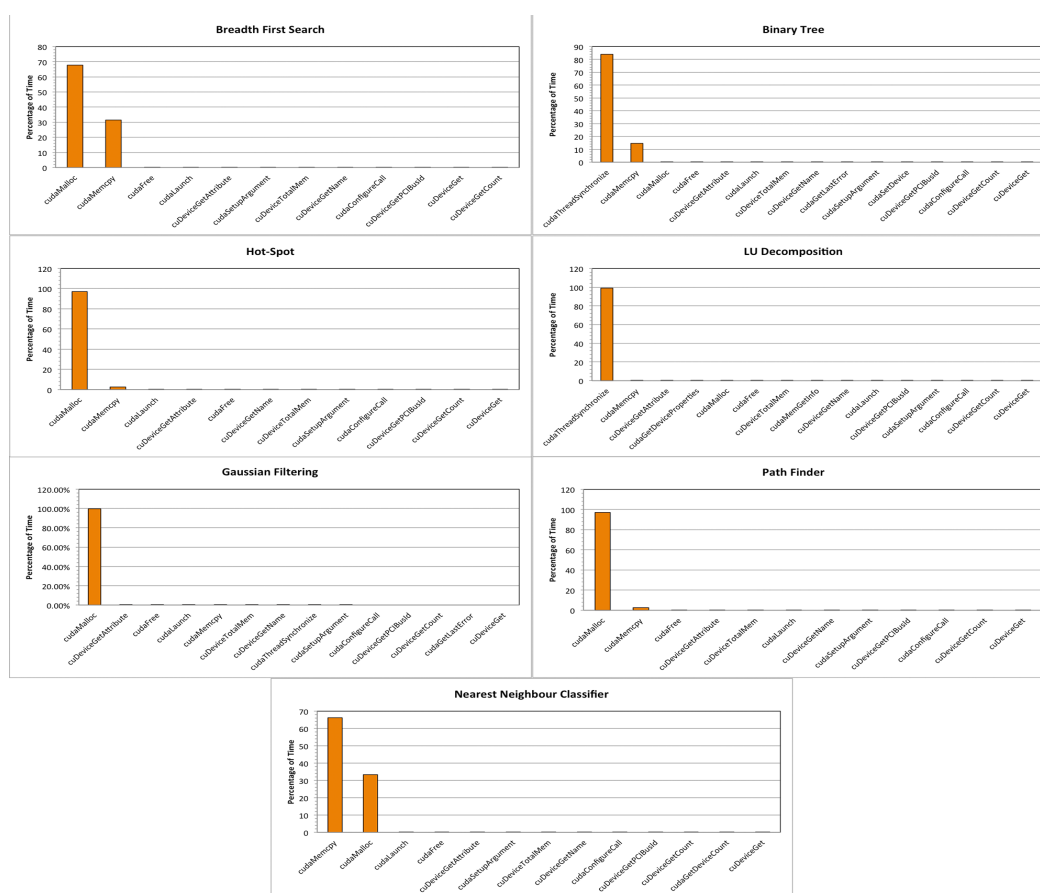


Figure 8.1: Time take for each API for seven test cases (please zoom in)



## 8.2 BENCHMARKING USING A GEFORCE GTX 650

These tests have been performed using a GeForce GTX 650 and hardware platform 2 specified in Table 3.2. The below figures depict the time taken for each individual API call for all the seven test cases.

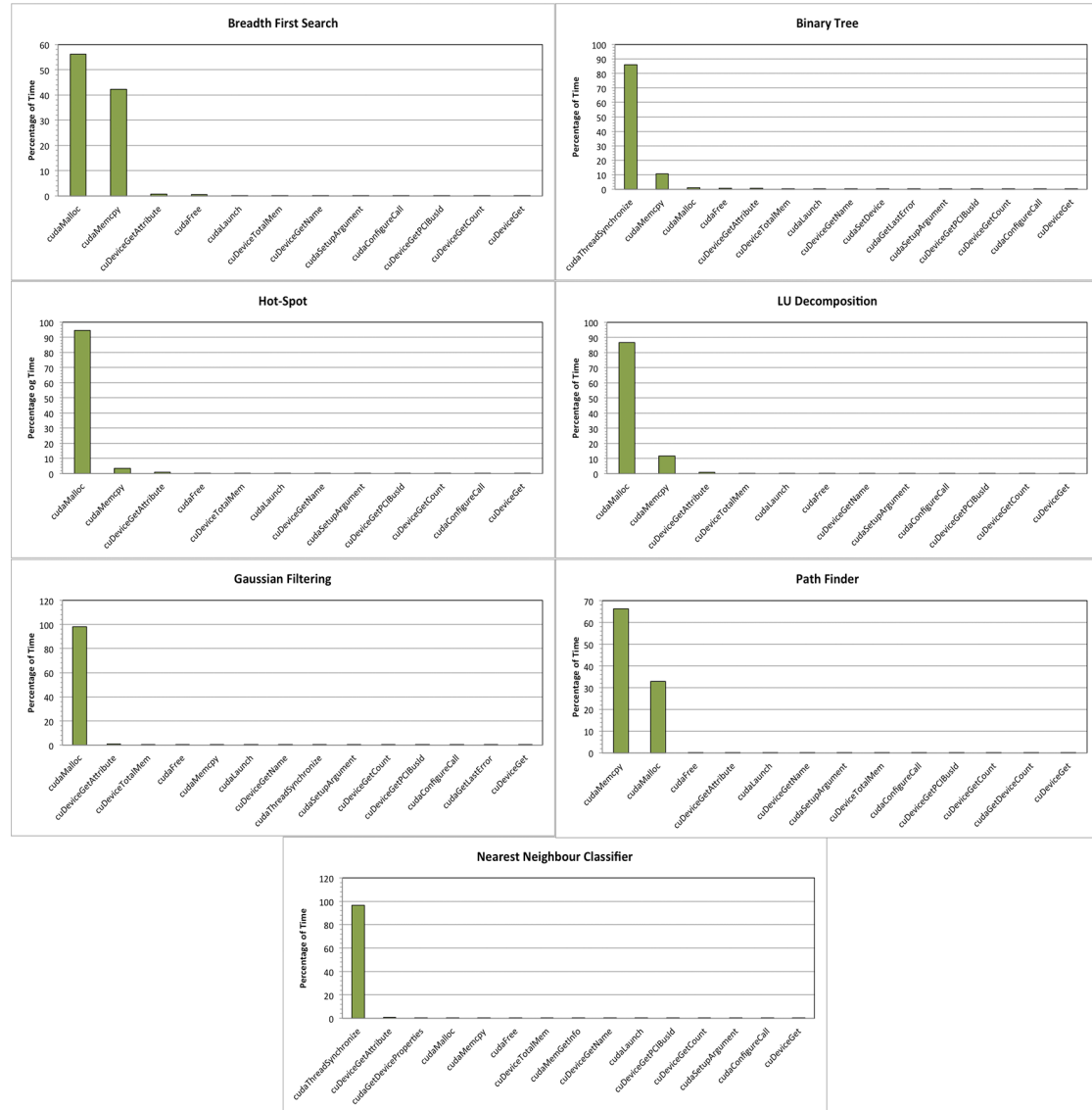


Figure 8.2: Time take for each API for seven test cases (please zoom in)

### 8.3 BENCHMARKING USING A QUADRO 6000

These tests have been performed using a Quadro 6000 and hardware platform 3 specified in Table 3.2. The below figures depict the time taken for each individual API call for all the seven test cases.

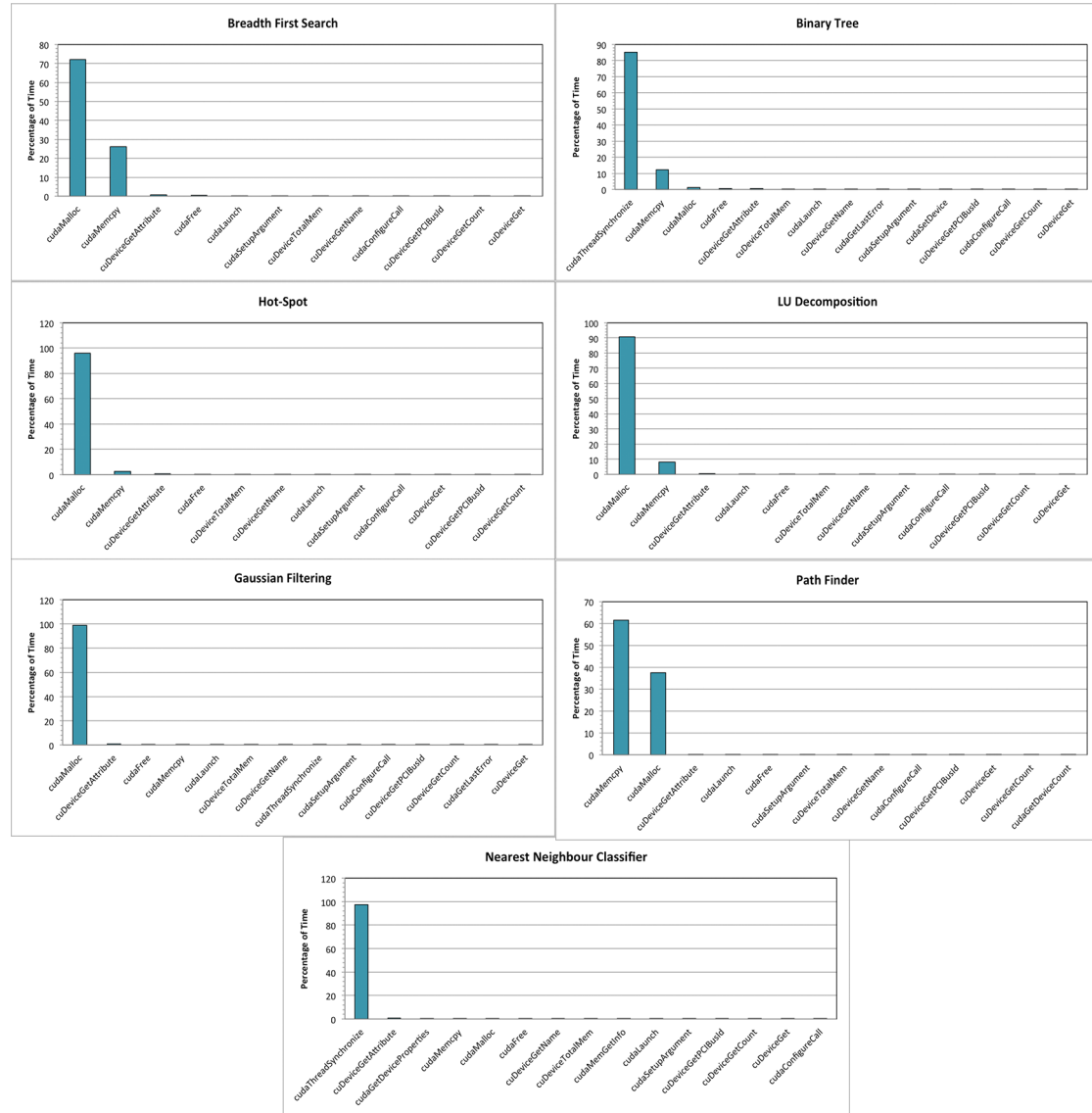


Figure 8.3: Time take for each API for seven test cases (please zoom in)

## REFERENCES

- [1] nvprof, NVIDIA profiling tool
- [2] Rodinia GPU Benchmark
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- [4] NVIDIA CUDA documentation
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