



Foreign Function Interfaces for Web Developers

Tristan Fisher - August 2015

Slides and code: github.com/tristanfisher/ffi4wd

a.k.a. Language interoperability for coders with
impatient users.

About me



/tristanfisher



/users/559633



tristanfisher.com

- * Been using Python for roughly 3 years
- * Employed by SinglePlatform (one of this year's Gold Sponsors)

This talk is focused on using
programming language
interoperability to make
web applications faster.

(Generalizations made; examples not exhaustive)

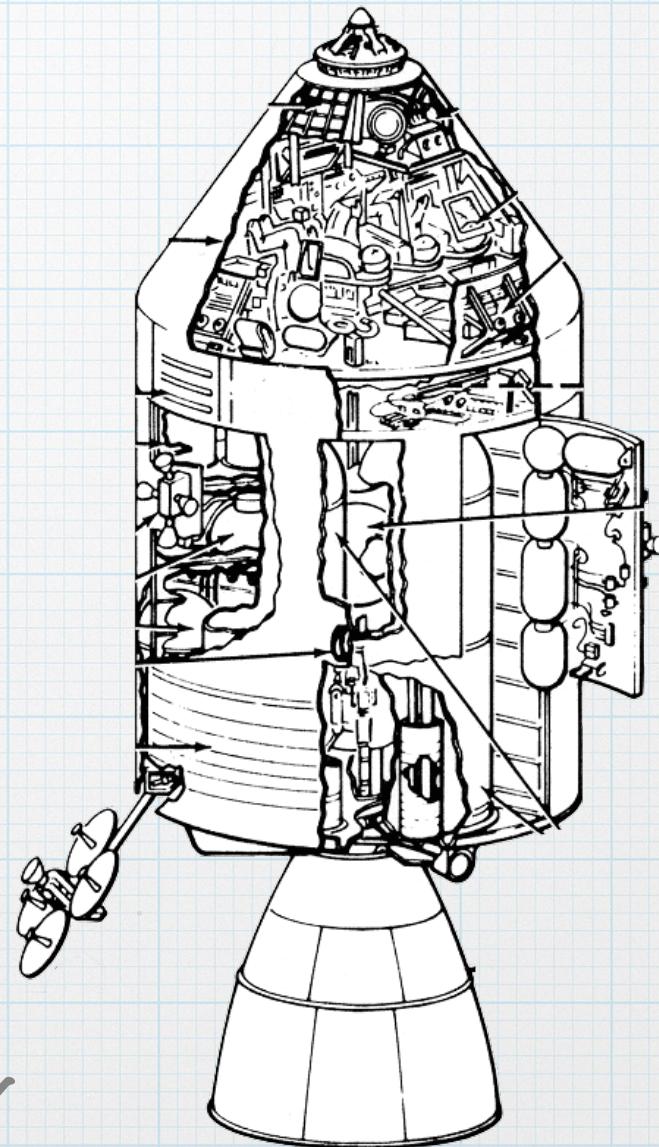
Target audience

- * General understanding of Python
- * Some Web Development experience
- * Linux or systems experience beneficial

Effort was made to be approachable for people newer to these topics.

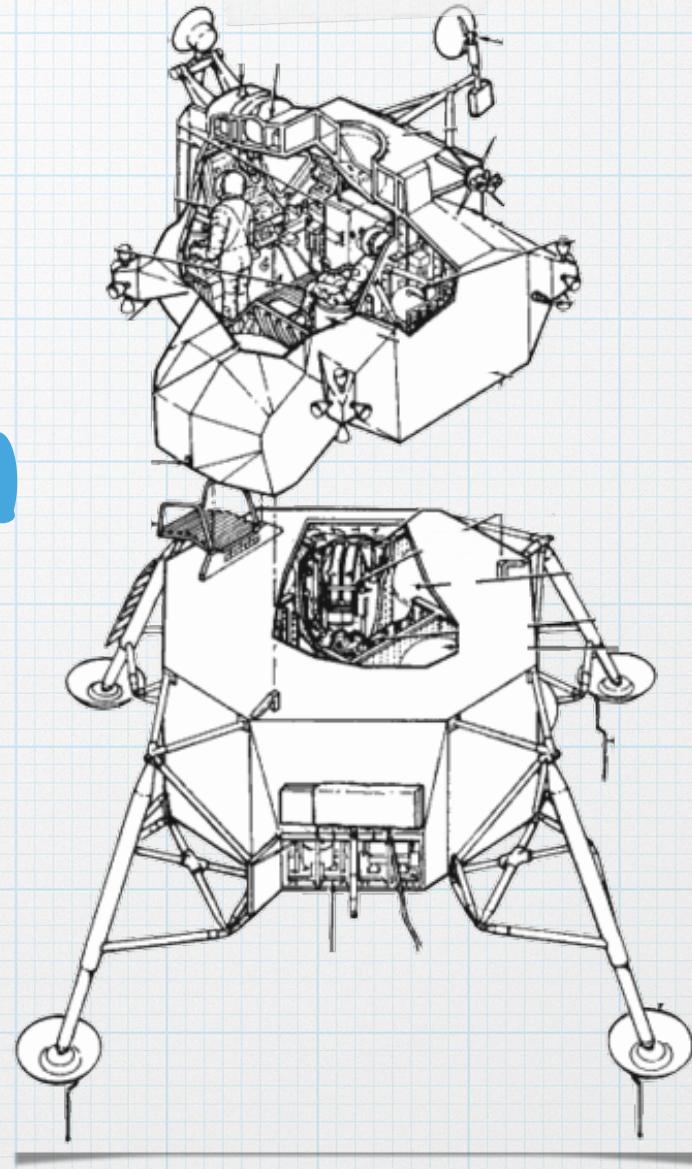
Talk objectives

- * Remind you of the real-world constraints your code faces
- * Show how abstractions affect us
- * Introduce ways of making your Python application code run faster



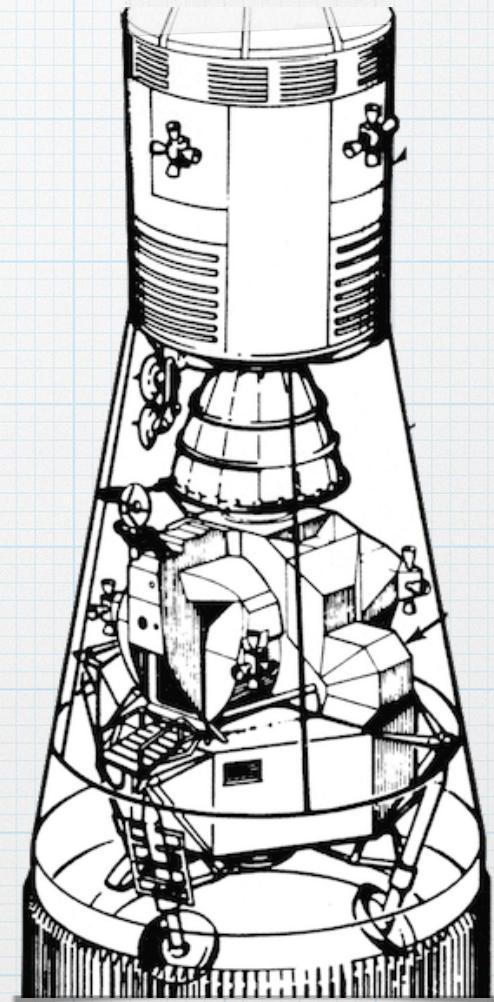
Plan of approach

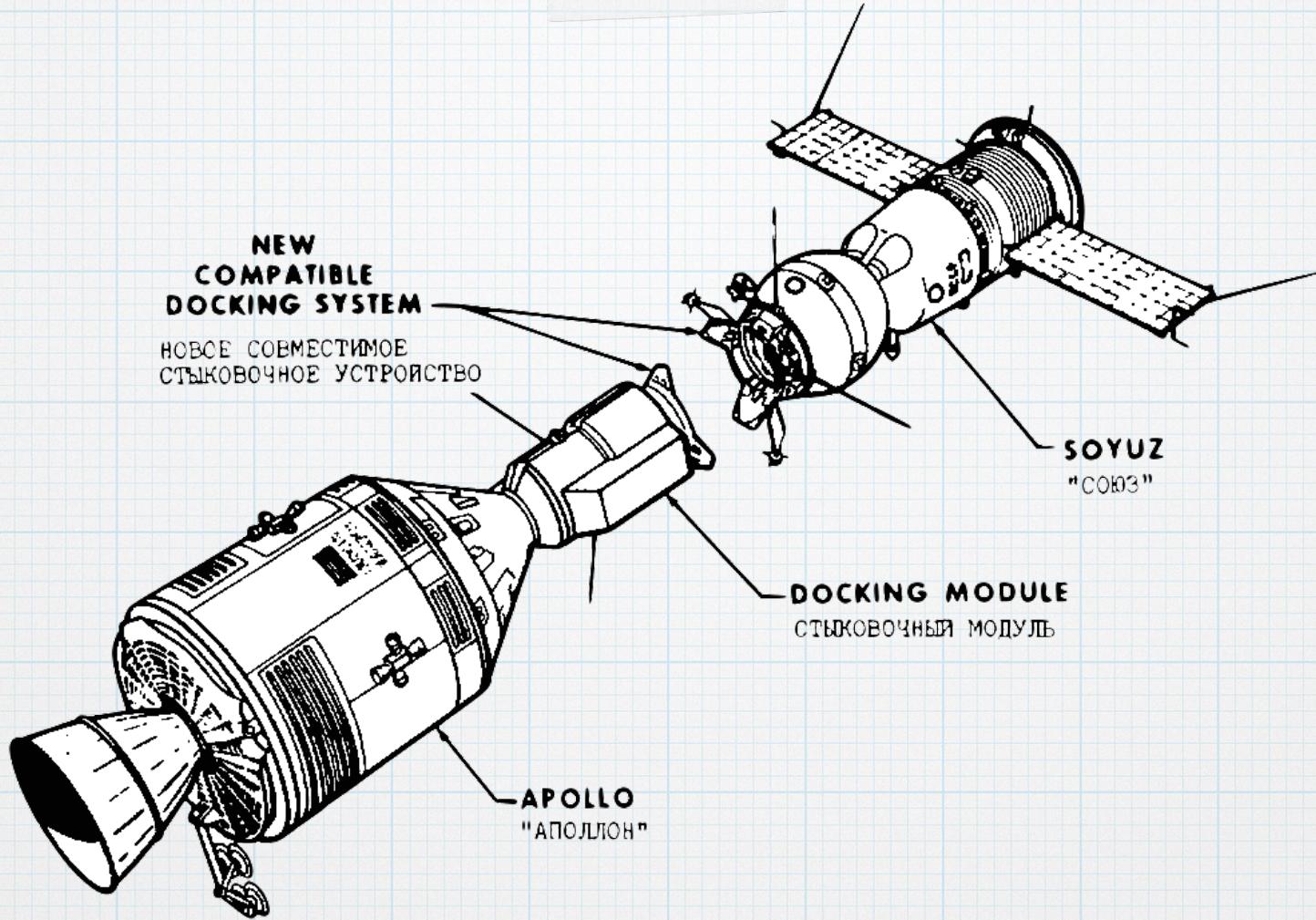
- * Shared-vocabulary and background
- * Overview of Python code at runtime
- * Introduce a real-world example
- * Talk about Python and Foreign Function Interfaces (FFI)
- * Topic review and close with some notes



This talk and its source code is online

Grab the FFI playground
after the talk:
github.com/tristanfisher/ffi4wd





Establishing a shared vocabulary
and background

Talk environment

- * **C^{Python}[*]**: The Python language implemented in the C programming language. We'll use version 3.4.3.
- * **Flask**: A web application framework
- * **Virtual Machine (VM)**: A software emulation of the critical details of the underlying computer hardware

[*] Most popular, default implementation (also the reference specification)

In this talk, I may use “Python” meaning
“CPython version 3.4.3.”

Expressing effort

- * Work: Effort (use of energy) that returns a result
- * Efficiency: The ratio of results from work in relation to effort expended (low to high)
- * Latency: The time between when a request for work is made and when result is perceived

Expressing effort

- * Deadline: Expectation of work finished by a given time
- * Consequence: Result of a deadline being met or missed

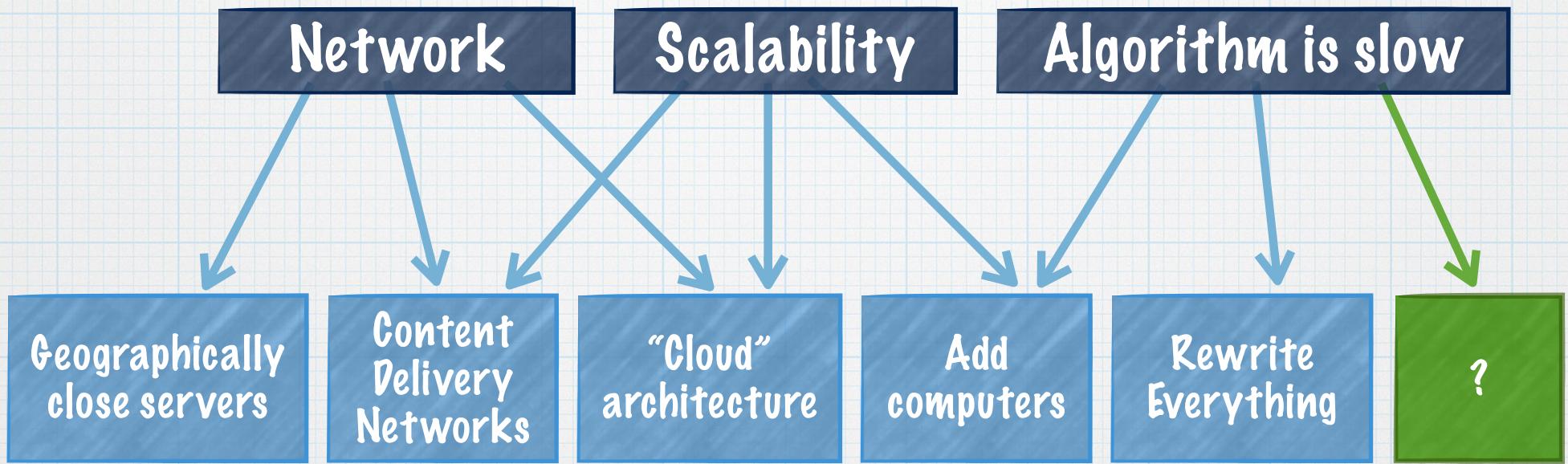
Web Application users start losing context after 1 second of latency and give up after 10 seconds^[1].

User request deadlines

Deadline Seconds	Deadline Type	Consequence If Met	Consequence If Failed
$0 \leq 1$	Soft	User happy	User loses focus
$> 1 \leq 10$	Hard	User placated	User is gone. Work done is wasted.

Your application not allowed to take more than 10 seconds for 'real-time' actions.

Overcoming bottlenecks we can control

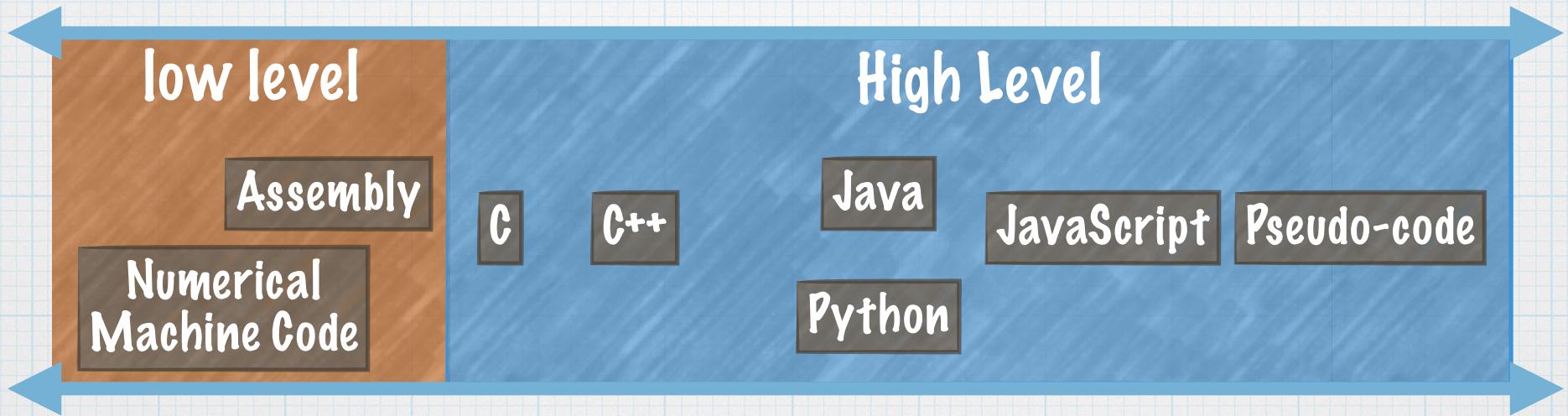


Maybe we can make the same
algorithm more efficient for the computer?

Language “levels”

More Efficient
for Machines

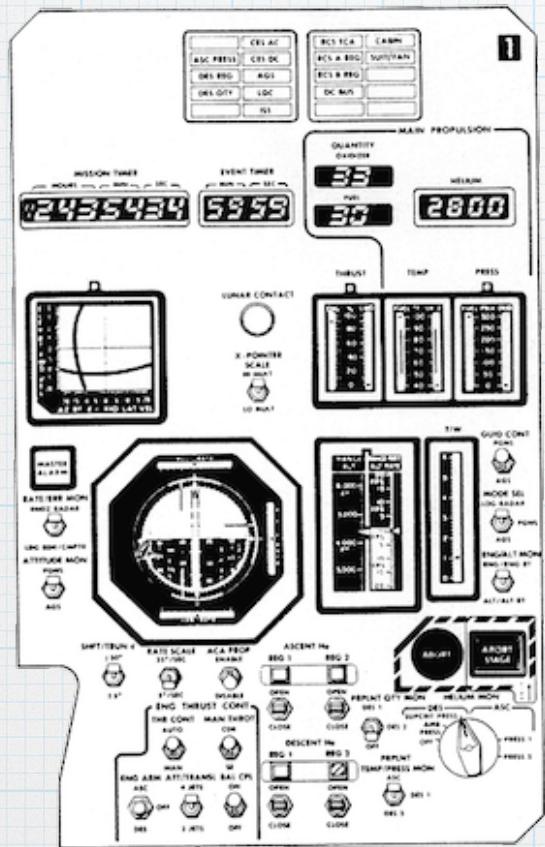
More Efficient for
Programmers



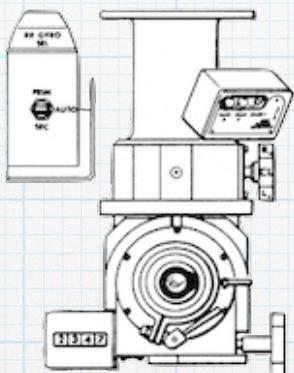
Efficiency: “The ratio of results from work in relation to effort expended (low to high)”

Python, C, C++ are all
high-level languages

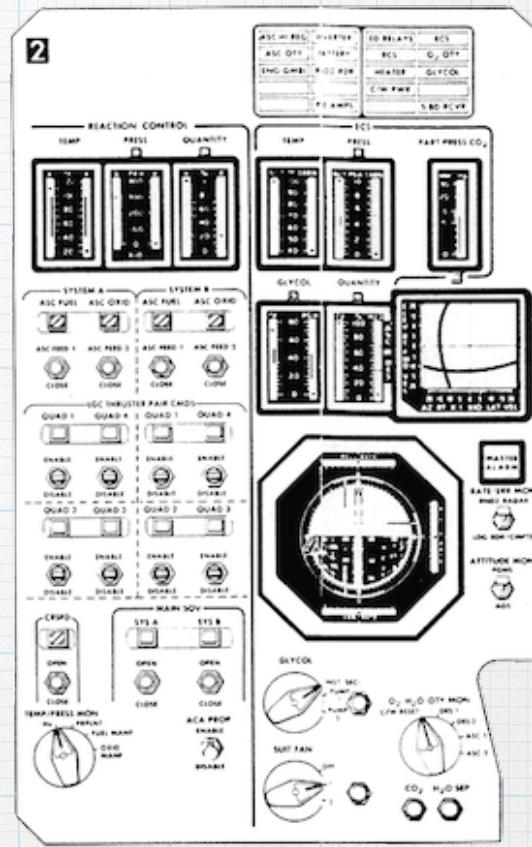
Computers require
code in lower-level
languages to operate



UTILITY LIGHT SWITCH ASSEMBLY



ALIGNMENT OPTICAL TELESCOPE (AOT)



Overview of High Level Languages at runtime

Python compiles its code to run on a “Virtual Machine” (VM)

Our Python code

```
>>> hello = """  
... print("Hello, world")  
... """
```

Compiler^[*]

```
>>> code_object = compile(hello, "<string>", "eval")
```

CPython bytecode

```
>>> code_object.co_code  
b'e\x00\x00d\x00\x00\x83\x01\x00S'
```

Python Virtual Machine

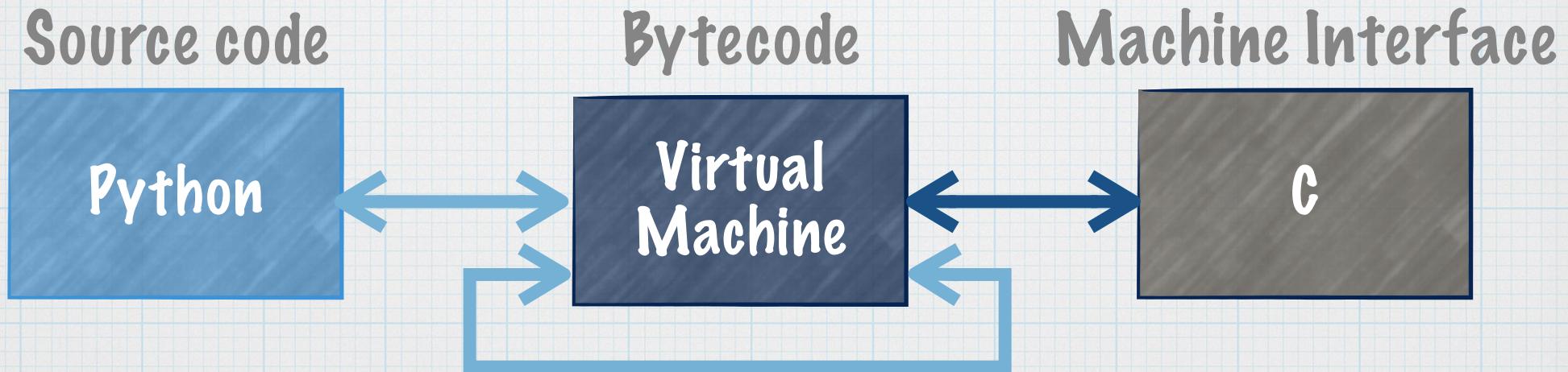
[*] Bytecode compilation implementation here: <https://hg.python.org/cpython/file/3.4/Python/ceval.c>

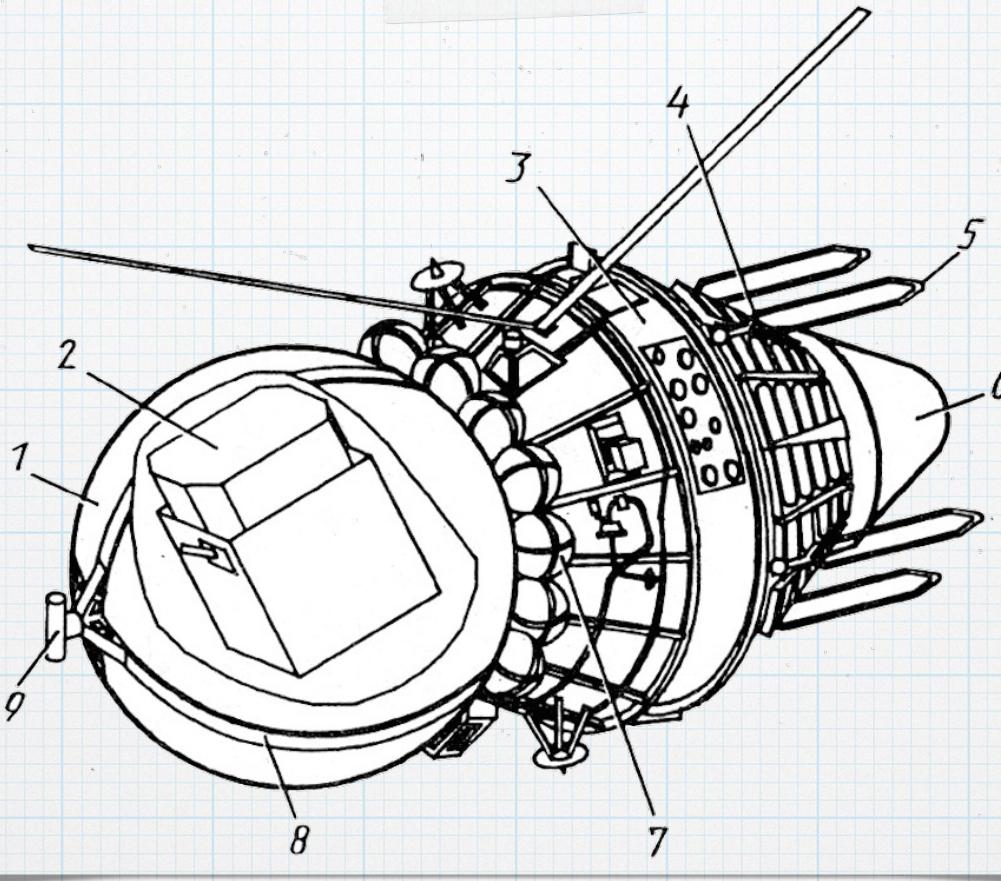
Python bytecode

- * Python code is converted to bytecode when the interpreter reads source files (e.g. `python app.py`)
- * Conversion to bytecode makes portability between platforms easier — software emulation handles hardware interaction

Python bytecode

- * Python always compiles to bytecode.
- * Makes a “Virtual Machine” abstraction more efficient
- * Where Global Interpreter Lock and threading happens





Solving an example problem

Efficiently visit these cities and return home

new york, ny, usa

portland, me, usa

seattle, wa, usa

san francisco, ca, usa

denver, co, usa

austin, tx, usa

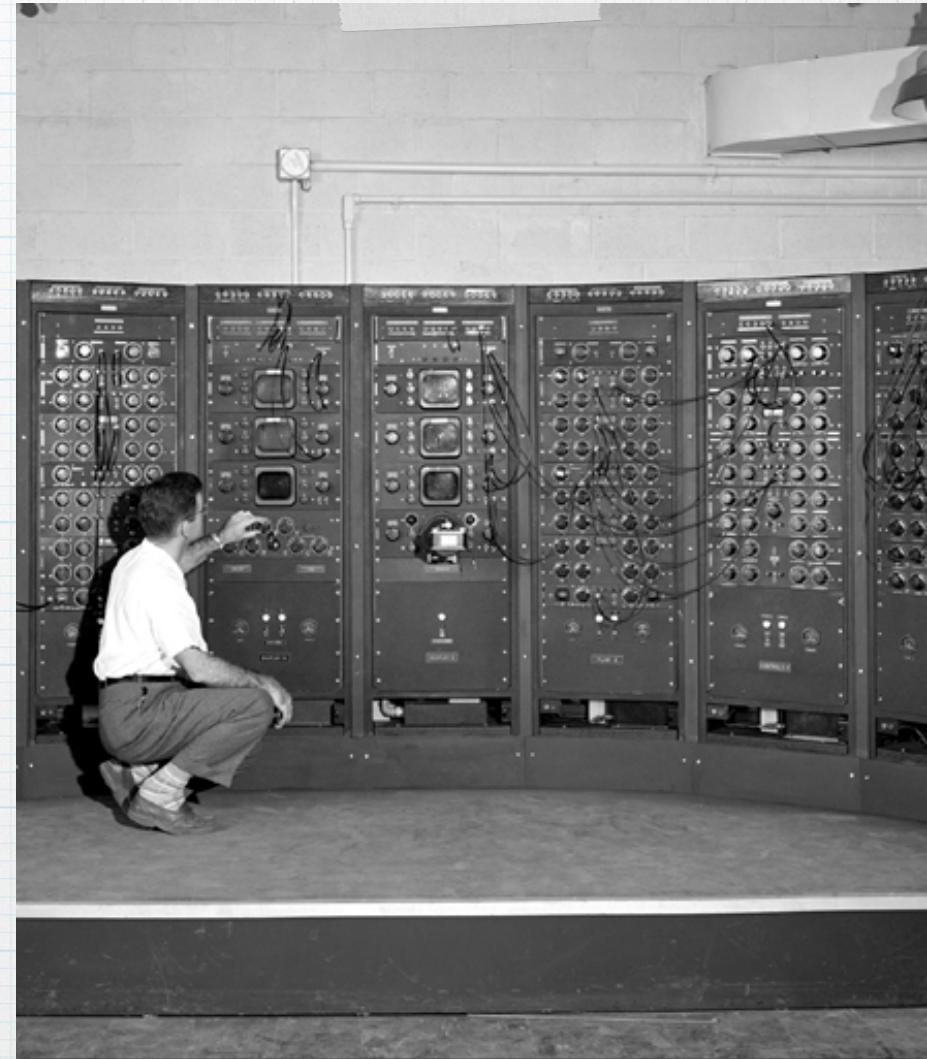
montreal, qc, ca

vancouver, bc, ca

anchorage, ak, usa

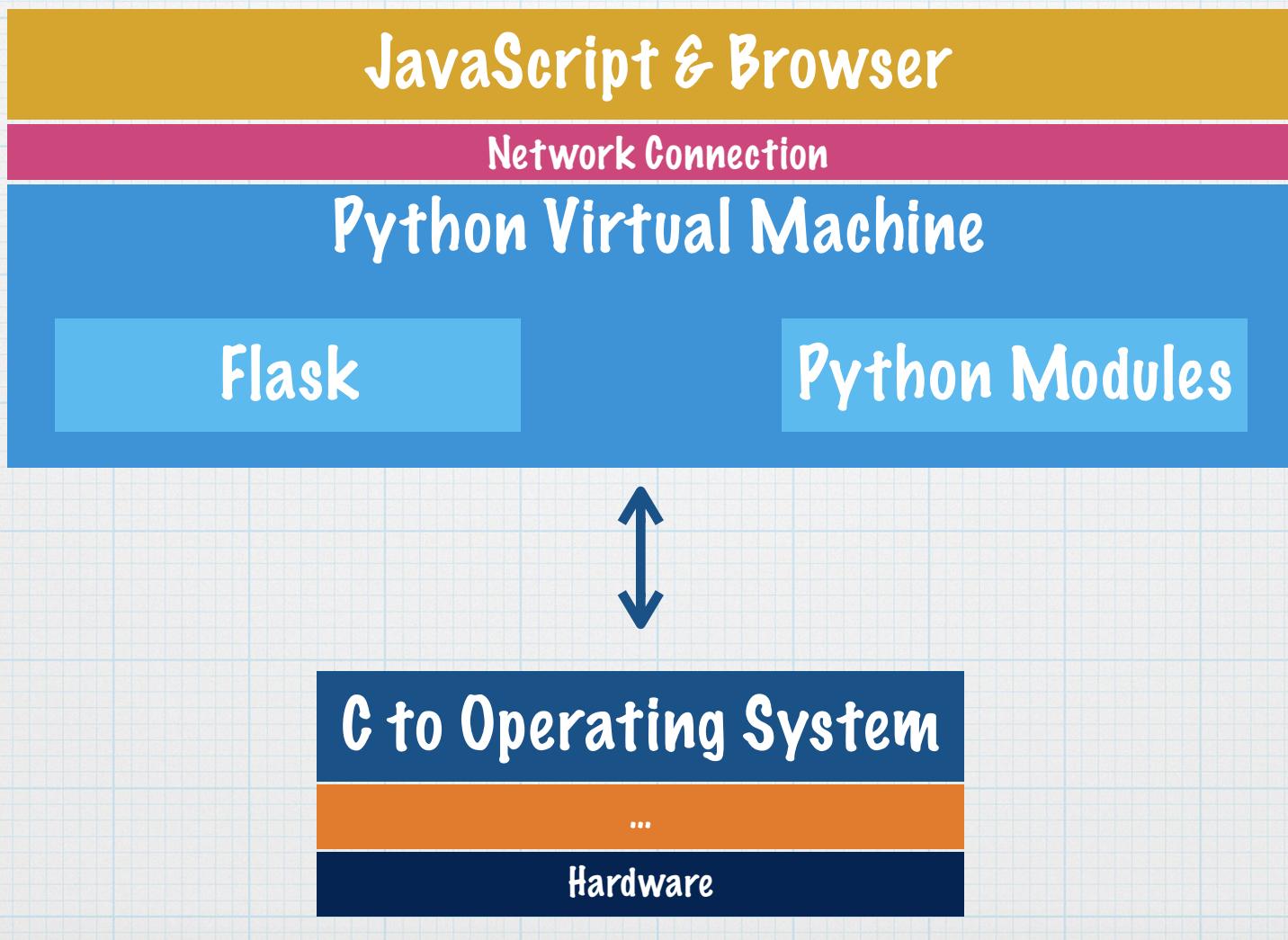
toronto, on, ca

berlin, germany



Let's make it a web service.

Our Python web stack



Connection overview

- * User browser talks to the web server
- * Web Server talks to Flask
- * Flask calls backend code to return to the web server
- * Web server sends content to user browser
- * User browser decodes and renders content, runs JavaScript code
- * This feedback loop repeats



Flask and backend code

- * Flask gets/sends data from its interpreter/service gateway
- * Flask talks to the Python VM
- * VM calls code that may not be aware of computer networks
- * VM calls on compiled code, abstractions continue to diminish



Quick Flask overview

Python Virtual Machine

Bind a Flask Object

Add routes (e.g. “/api”)

< execute code >

Handle request data

Return a response

C

Middleware / Web Service Gateway Interface

Web Server

Operating System

...

Hardware

Network Connection

JavaScript & Browser

Our Web Application

ffi4wd::jumper

Select the cities you want to travel between

11 locations selected

- new york, ny, usa
- portland, me, usa
- seattle, wa, usa
- san francisco, ca, usa
- denver, co, usa
- austin, tx, usa
- montreal, qc, ca
- vancouver, bc, ca
- anchorage, ak, usa
- toronto, on, ca
- berlin, germany

Python

CTypes

Cython

Python FFI

Python Approximation

Select All

Select None

Flask serves the content

Form Object
with city
names, lat/long

```
@app.route("/", methods=["GET", "POST"])
def index():
    form = IndexForm(request.form)

    if request.method == "POST" and form.validate():
        flash("Click the buttons!")

    return render_template("index.html", form=form)
```

User data

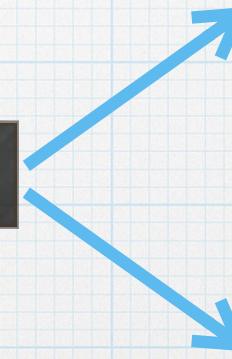
Jinja2
Template

JavaScript is loaded by the browser and executes

```
(function(){  
    main();  
})()
```



```
main() { ... }
```



User experience
interactions

XMLHttpRequest
request
dispatching

XMLHttpRequest to RESTful endpoint

```
function calculate_trip(backend_name, checkbox_list, backend_list, output){  
  
    dispatch_endpoint_array = {  
        "backend_python": "/api/python",  
        "backend_ctypes": "/api/ctypes",  
        [...]  
    }  
    ...  
    var city_arrays = get_city_selections(checkbox_list);  
    ...  
    var request = $.ajax({  
        method: "POST",  
        url: endpoint,  
        dataType: 'json',  
        data: { "json": JSON.stringify(city_arrays) },  
        success: function(data, textStatus, jqXHR){[...]  
    })  
    ...
```

API Endpoints

```
blueprint_api = Blueprint("blueprint_python", __name__, url_prefix="/api")

@blueprint_api.route("/python_approximation", methods=["POST"])
...
@blueprint_api.route("/python", methods=["POST"])
...
@blueprint_api.route("/cython", methods=["POST"])
...
@blueprint_api.route("/ctypes", methods=["POST"])
...
@blueprint_api.route("/ffi", methods=["POST"])
...
```

Call Python backend, reply to request

```
from .backends.backend_dispatcher import backend_python  
...  
@blueprint_api.route("/python", methods=["POST"])  
def api_python():  
  
    user_data = req_to_tuple(request.form)  
    start = time()  
    result = backend_python(user_data)  
    end = time()  
    time_elapsed_seconds = format(end - start, '.6f')  
  
    return jsonify(  
        backend='python',  
        result=result[0],  
        backend_runtime=result[1],  
        total_runtime=time_elapsed_seconds  
    )
```

The backend doesn't know about the internet

```
def backend_python(data, approach='dfs', debug=False):
    graph_vertices_and_edges = generate_weights(data)
    start_time = time()
    if approach=='dfs':
        iteration_limit = factorial(len(graph_vertices_and_edges))
        result = calculate_dfs(graph_vertices_and_edges,
                               'new york, ny, usa',
                               iteration_limit,
                               debug)
    else:
        iteration_limit = calculate_number_edges(len(graph_vertices_and_edges))
        result = calculate_shortest_neighbors_trip(graph_vertices_and_edges, 'new york, ny, usa',
                                                    iteration_limit, debug)
    end_time = time()
    time_elapsed_seconds = format(end_time - start_time, '.6f')
    return result, time_elapsed_seconds
```

Pure Python solution

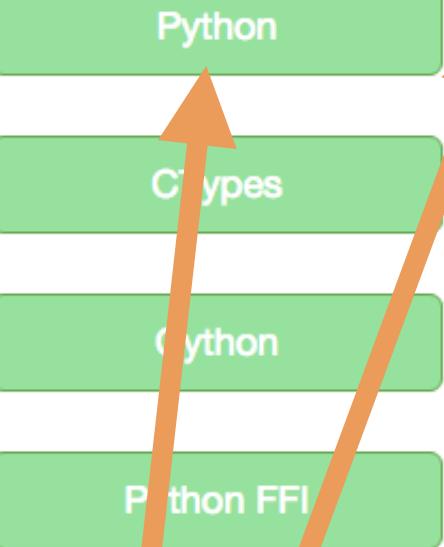
Select the cities you want to travel between

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- austin, tx, usa
- montreal, qc, ca
- vancouver, bc, ca
- anchorage, ak, usa
- toronto, on, ca
- berlin, germany

Select All

Select None



> 10 seconds

Run time: 24.090447s

Distance: 22999.26931015208km

1 : new york, ny, usa

2 : portland, me, usa

3 : montreal, qc, ca

4 : berlin, germany

5 : anchorage, ak, usa

6 : vancouver, bc, ca

7 : seattle, wa, usa

8 : san francisco, ca, usa

9 : denver, co, usa

10 : austin, tx, usa

11 : toronto, on, ca

12 : new york, ny, usa

Python is efficient for the programmer...

	9 cities	10 cities	11 Cities
User Perceived Latency (seconds)	~0.19-0.23	~1.9-2.05	~20.5-24
Hard/Soft Deadline	Pass/Pass	Pass/Fail	Fail/Fail
Consequence	Happy user	User loses focus	Waste of work

(Run on 1.7Ghz Intel i7 - a ridiculously over-powered CPU for a "web server")

Confirm a bottleneck exists

Check the system your code is running on first.

```
$ ps -eo %cpu,%mem,command | grep "[pP]ython"  
100.0 0.3 /usr/.../3.4/.../Python ./manage.py runserver
```

100% of a CPU core for the process, no multi-processing in use;
bottleneck exists.

Find the bottleneck

```
def test_backend_python():
    #test_11_cities is test data
    cmd = "backend_python(test_11_cities)"
    cProfile.run(cmd)
```

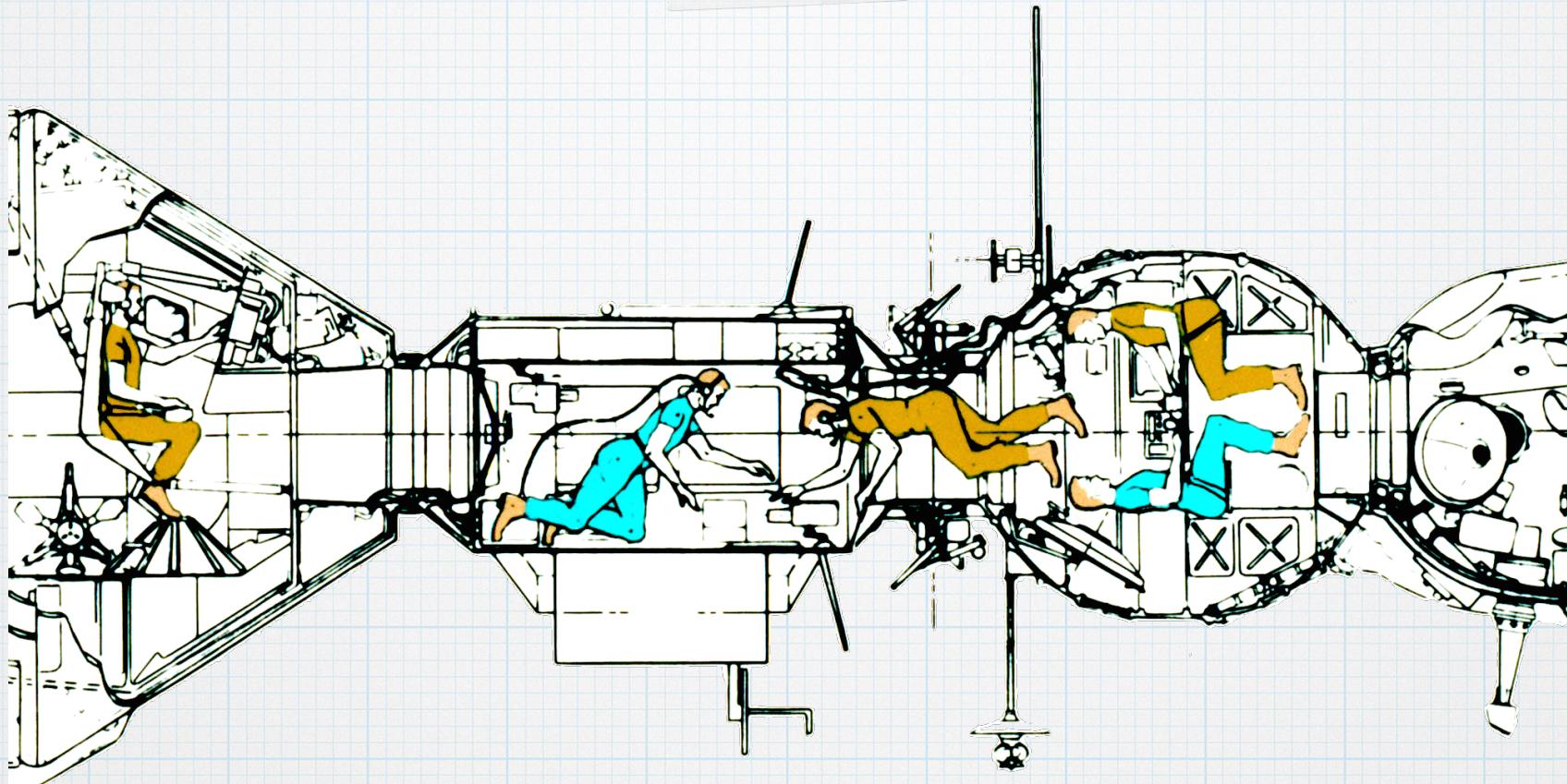
ncalls	tottime	percall	cumtime	percall	filename:lineno(function)
1	0.000	0.000	32.305	32.305	<string>:1(<module>)
110	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	backend_python.py:11(haversine)
1	0.000	0.000	32.305	32.305	backend_python.py:249(backend_python)
1	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	backend_python.py:42(generate_weights)
1	27.663	27.663	32.305	32.305	backend_python.py:73(calculate_dfs)
110	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method asin}
220	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method cos}
1	0.000	0.000	32.306	32.306	{built-in method exec}
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method factorial}
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method format}
19728203	1.638	0.000	1.638	0.000	{built-in method len}
440	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method radians}
220	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method sin}
110	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method sqrt}
2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{built-in method time}
13493010	1.866	0.000	1.866	0.000	{method 'append' of 'list' objects}
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{method 'disable' of '_lsprof.Profiler' objects}
9864101	1.137	0.000	1.137	0.000	{method 'pop' of 'list' objects}

More consequences of the bottleneck

- * When the thread is running, no other work can happen (due to G.I.L.)
- * This means no other work can happen in this process. Requests will stack up.

I don't want to redesign the algorithm.

I want it to be more efficient to meet the deadline.

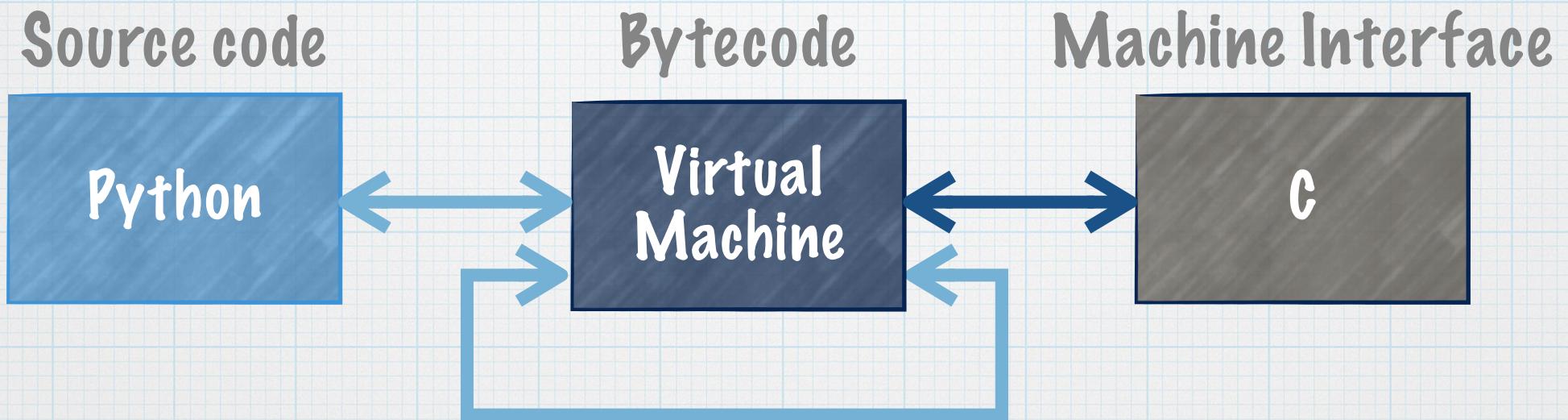


Python and Foreign Function Interfaces

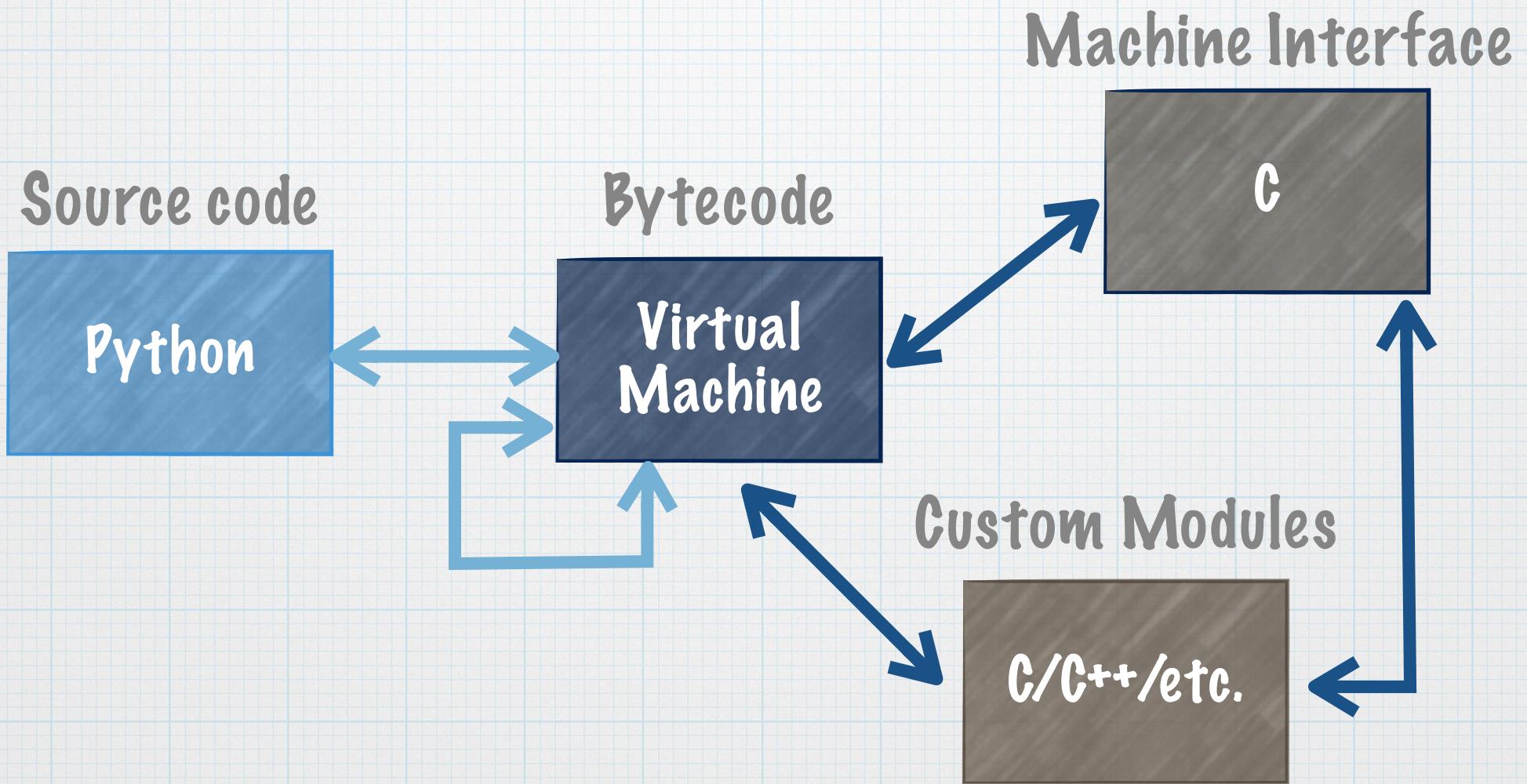
Foreign Function Interfaces allow code written in one programming language to call another within the same process.

e.g. Python and C++ in the same process.

Python already indirectly calls code in lower level languages



We can add custom lower-level extensions



C^{Py}thon Foreign Function Interfaces Overview

- * Write required functions for Python<->C compatibility
- * Write your application/logic code
- * Pass all interactions with Python through your compatibility functions
- * Compile your code to a shared object
- * Call your code from Python

cPython Extension Requirements

1) `#include <Python.h>` for your code to call cPython functions

2) A C function to interface with Python

```
static PyObject *
FunctionName( PyObject *self, PyObject *args ){
-(or)-
FunctionName(PyObject *self, PyObject *args, PyObject *kwargs){
-(or)-
FunctionName( PyObject *self ){
...
    return PyLong_FromLong(return_code);
}
```

cPython Extension Requirements

3) A mapping table of C to Python-callable names

```
static PyMethodDef FFICppMethods[] = {
    {"system", ffcpp_system, METH_VARARGS, "Execute a command shell."},
    {NULL, NULL, 0, NULL} /* sentinel to mark end of function structs */
};
```

char *ml_name

Function
name

PyCFunction
ml_meth

Function

int ml_flags

Argument
type

char *ml_doc

Docstring

cPython Extension Requirements

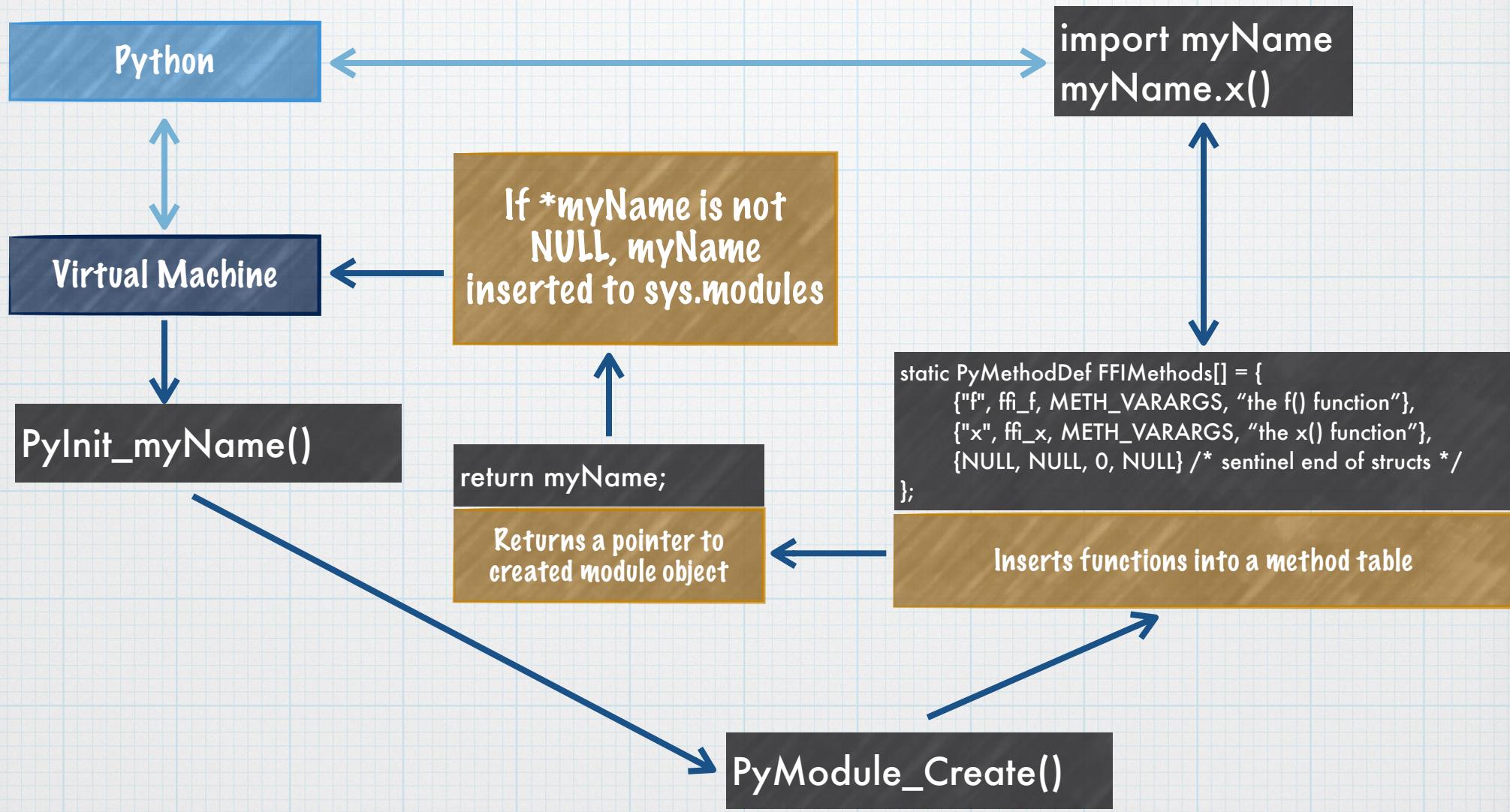
4) A module definition

```
static struct PyModuleDef fficppmodule = {  
    PyModuleDef_HEAD_INIT,  
    "fficpp", /* module name */  
    NULL, /* module documentation (e.g. static char docs[] = "blah") */  
    -1, /* size of per-interpreter module state. -1 for state in global vars */  
    FFI_CppMethods /* module mapping table */  
};
```

5) An initialization function

```
PyMODINIT_FUNC  
PyInit_fficpp(void)  
{  
    return PyModule_Create(&fficppmodule);  
}
```

Extension import process



We must compile our lower-level extensions

- * Compiling decreases abstractions and improves performance at the cost of portability
- * Code must be compiled for each platform
(`git clone app_repo` & `./source.cc` won't work)

Makefiles 101

Makefiles are great for unambiguous build scripts

```
#example makefile section:  
...  
cython:  
    @echo "Making Cython required files..."  
    cd ${SRC_CYTHON}; ${PYTHON} setup.py build_ext -inplace;  
    mv ${SRC_CYTHON}*.so ${DST_CYTHON}.  
...
```

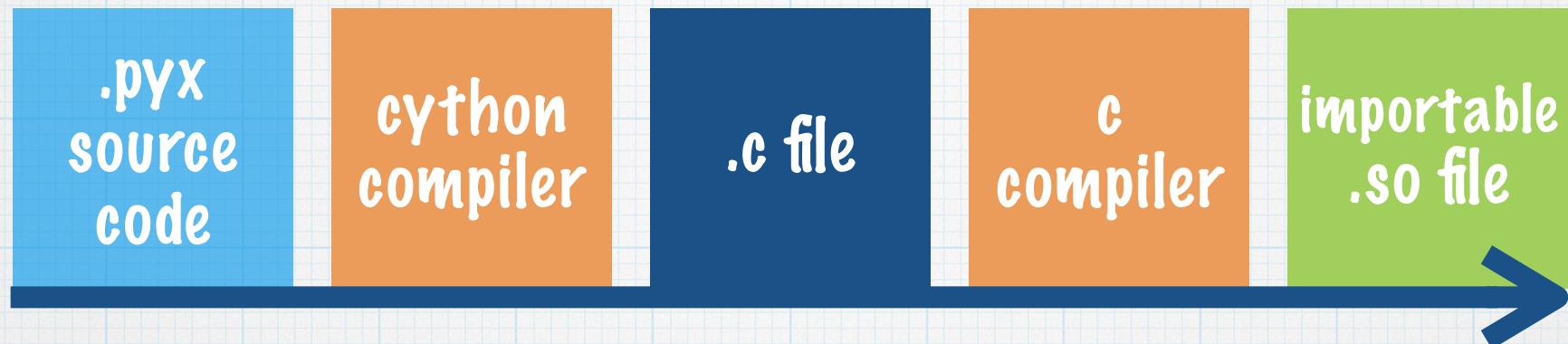
\$ make cython

“Change into the source code directory and use Python’s great
distutils module”

We'll cover FFI via tools

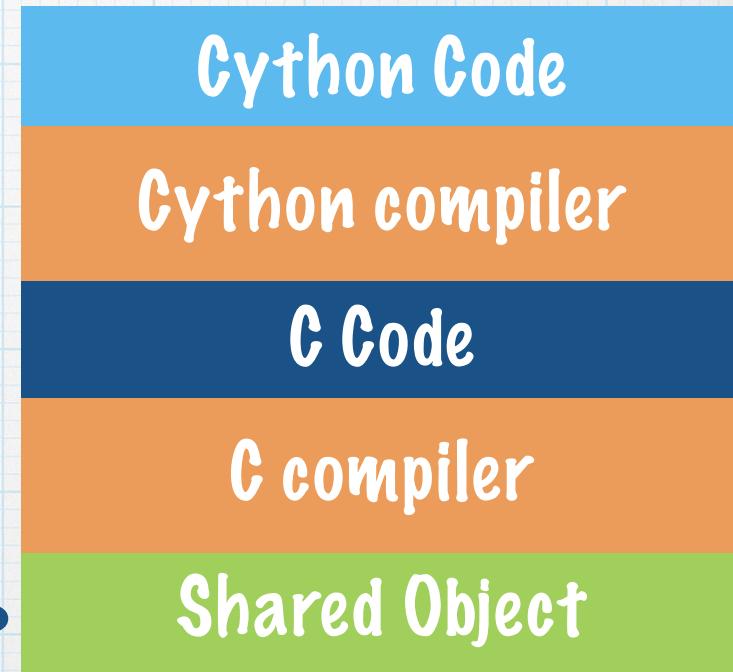
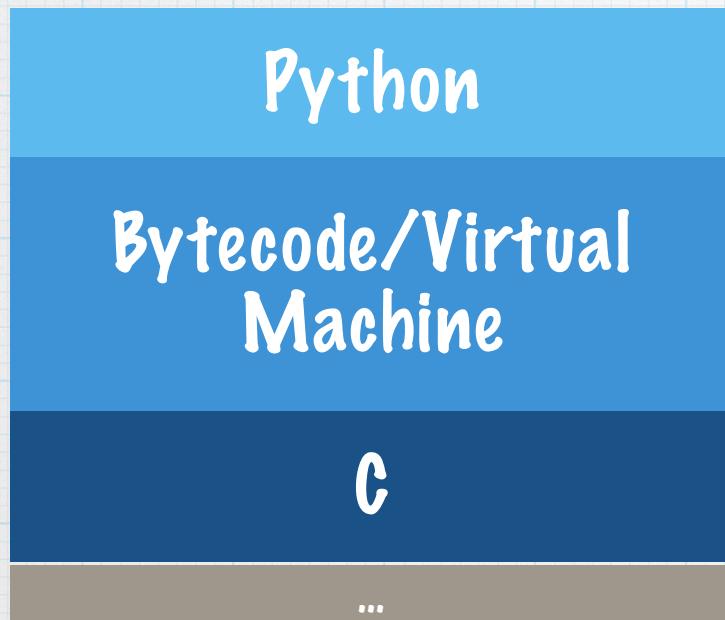
- * Cython - Superset of Python with C data types and code compiled to C instead of bytecode.
- * CTypes (stdlib) - Library that gives access to C data types, libc functions, and calling shared objects

Cython



- * Nearly all Python code is valid Cython
- * You can write Cython-specific code (not compatible with Python) to get further performance increases
- * Commonly distinguished with a .pyx extension
- * Cython code must be compiled

Cython overview



Cython (.pyx) source code is compiled to a shared object (.so), which is imported in Python as a native module.

Cython can be normal Python that you compile

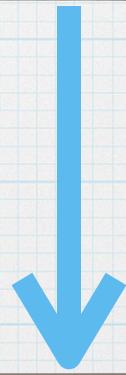
```
def haversine(lat1, long1, lat2, long2, planet_radius=EARTH_RADIUS_KM):
    phi_Lat = radians(lat2 - lat1)
    phi_Long = radians(long2 - long1)
    lat1 = radians(lat1)
    lat2 = radians(lat2)

    a = sin(phi_Lat/2)**2 + \
        cos(lat1) * cos(lat2) * \
        sin(phi_Long/2)**2

    c = 2 * asin(sqrt(a))
    return planet_radius * c
```



compile to C



```
...
static PyObject *__pyx_pw_20ffi_cython_py_compat_1haversine(PyObject *__pyx_self, PyObject *__pyx_args, PyObject *__pyx_kwds); /*proto*/
static char __pyx_doc_20ffi_cython_py_compat_haversine[] = "";
static PyMethodDef __pyx_mdef_20ffi_cython_py_compat_1haversine = {"haversine", (PyCFunction)__pyx_pw_20ffi_cython_py_compat_1haversine,
METH_VARARGS|METH_KEYWORDS, __pyx_doc_20ffi_cython_py_compat_haversine};
static PyObject *__pyx_pw_20ffi_cython_py_compat_1haversine(PyObject *__pyx_self, PyObject *__pyx_args, PyObject *__pyx_kwds) {
    PyObject *__pyx_v_lat1 = 0;
    PyObject *__pyx_v_long1 = 0;
    PyObject *__pyx_v_lat2 = 0;
    ...
}
```

Or Python-incompatible Cython

```
cdef float EARTH_RADIUS_KM = 6372.8  
cdef extern from "math.h":  
    float sinf(float x)  
    float cosf(float x)
```

...

```
cdef float haversine(float lat1, float long1, float lat2,  
                     float long2, float planet_radius=EARTH_RADIUS_KM):
```

```
    phi_Lat = radians(lat2 - lat1)  
    phi_Long = radians(long2 - long1)  
    lat1 = radians(lat1)  
    lat2 = radians(lat2)
```

```
a = sinf(phi_Lat/2)**2 + cosf(lat1) * cosf(lat2) * sinf(phi_Long/2) ** 2
```

...

```
static float __pyx_v_10ffi_cython_EARTH_RADIUS_KM;  
static float __pyx_f_10ffi_cython_haversine(float, float, float, struct __pyx_opt_args_10ffi_cython_haversine *__pyx_optional_args); /*proto*/  
...  
#define __Pyx_MODULE_NAME "ffi_cython"
```

Interfacing
directly with C

Declaring return
and argument types



compile to C



\$ make cython

After running our makefile, we have shared-object binaries:

```
jumper/blueprints/backends/modules/cython  
├── ffi_cython.so  
└── ffi_cython_py_compat.so
```

```
$ file jumper/blueprints/backends/modules/cython/*.so
```

```
ffi_cython.so: Mach-O 64-bit bundle x86_64  
ffi_cython_py_compat.so: Mach-O 64-bit bundle x86_64
```

Calling our Cython module

```
from .backends.modules.cython.ffi_cython_py_compat \
import backend_cython as backend_cypy

...
@blueprint_api.route("/cython", methods=["POST"])
def api_cython():

    user_data = req_to_tuple(request.form)
    start = time()
    result = backend_cypy(user_data)
    end = time()
    time_elapsed_seconds = format(end - start, '.6f')

    return jsonify(
        backend='cython',
        result=result[0],
        backend_runtime=result[1],
        total_runtime=time_elapsed_seconds
    )
```

Only the bottleneck-code is being replaced!

Cython (Python compatible)

Select the cities you want to travel between

11 locations selected

- new york, ny, usa
- portland, me, usa
- seattle, wa, usa
- san francisco, ca, usa
- denver, co, usa
- austin, tx, usa
- montreal, qc, ca
- vancouver, bc, ca
- anchorage, ak, usa
- toronto, on, ca
- berlin, germany

[Select All](#) [Select None](#)

Python

CTypes

Cython

Python FFI

Closer, but still
> 10 seconds

Run time: 11.948986s

Distance: 22999.26931015208km

1 : new york, ny, usa

2 : portland, me, usa

3 : montreal, qc, ca

4 : berlin, germany

5 : anchorage, ak, usa

6 : vancouver, bc, ca

7 : seattle, wa, usa

8 : san francisco, ca, usa

9 : denver, co, usa

10 : austin, tx, usa

11 : toronto, on, ca

12 : new york, ny, usa

Cython (superset features)

Select the cities you want to travel between

11 locations selected

- new york, ny, usa
- portland, me, usa
- seattle, wa, usa
- san francisco, ca, usa
- denver, co, usa
- austin, tx, usa
- montreal, qc, ca
- vancouver, bc, ca
- anchorage, ak, usa
- toronto, on, ca
- berlin, germany

[Select All](#) [Select None](#)

Python

CTypes

Cython

Python FFI

Run time: 10.333267s

Distance: 22999.267578125km

1 : new york, ny, usa

2 : portland, me, usa

3 : montreal, qc, ca

4 : berlin, germany

5 : anchorage, ak, usa

6 : vancouver, bc, ca

7 : seattle, wa, usa

8 : san francisco, ca, usa

9 : denver, co, usa

10 : austin, tx, usa

11 : toronto, on, ca

12 : new york, ny, usa

Even closer, but still
> 10 seconds



Cython has varying efficiency

Python-compatible Cython

	9 cities	10 cities	11 Cities
User Perceived Latency (seconds)	~0.10-0.13	~1.0-1.3	~11.9-13.8
Hard/Soft Deadline	Pass/Pass	Pass/Pass-Fail	Fail/Fail
Consequence	Happy user	User may lose focus	Waste of work

Cython using superset features

	9 cities	10 cities	11 Cities
User Perceived Latency (seconds)	~0.09-0.12	~0.98-1.1	10.3-11.5
Hard/Soft Deadline	Pass/Pass	Pass/Pass-Fail	Fail/Fail
Consequence	Happy user	User may lose focus	Waste of work

(still 100% CPU utilization)

Has the bottleneck changed?

```
4 function calls in 12.786 seconds
Ordered by: standard name

ncalls  tottime   percall   cumtime   percall filename:lineno(function)
      1    0.000     0.000    12.786    12.786 <string>:1(<module>)
      1    0.000     0.000    12.786    12.786 {built-in method exec}
      1   12.786   12.786    12.786    12.786 {ffi_cython_py_compat.backend_cython}
      1    0.000     0.000     0.000     0.000 {method 'disable' of '_lsprof.Profiler' objects}
```

Python compatible

```
4 function calls in 10.731 seconds
Ordered by: standard name

ncalls  tottime   percall   cumtime   percall filename:lineno(function)
      1    0.000     0.000    10.730    10.730 <string>:1(<module>)
      1   10.730   10.730    10.730    10.730 {built-in method backend_cython}
      1    0.000     0.000    10.731    10.731 {built-in method exec}
      1    0.000     0.000     0.000     0.000 {method 'disable' of '_lsprof.Profiler' objects}
```

Cython specific

```
$ ps -eo %cpu,%mem,command | grep "[pP]ython"
100.1  0.1 /usr/../3.4/Python ./manage.py runserver
```

More info how to debug: <http://docs.cython.org/src/userguide/debugging.html>

'built-in' means 'not bytecode'

4 function calls in 12.786 seconds

Python compatible

Ordered by: standard name

ncalls	tottime	percall	cumtime	percall	filename:lineno(function)
1	0.000	0.000	12.786	12.786	<string>:1(<module>)
1	0.000	0.000	12.786	12.786	{built-in method exec}
1	12.786	12.786	12.786	12.786	ffi_cython_py_compat.backend_cython
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{method 'disable' of '_lsprof.Profiler' objects}

4 function calls in 10.731 seconds

Cython specific

Ordered by: standard name

ncalls	tottime	percall	cumtime	percall	filename:lineno(function)
1	0.000	0.000	10.730	10.730	<string>:1(<module>)
1	10.730	10.730	10.730	10.730	{built-in method backend_cython}
1	0.000	0.000	10.731	10.731	{built-in method exec}
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	{method 'disable' of '_lsprof.Profiler' objects}

Cython tips

Instead of:

Use closures and argument passing:

Use distutils to save time generating compile flags.

There's treasure in /usr/include/

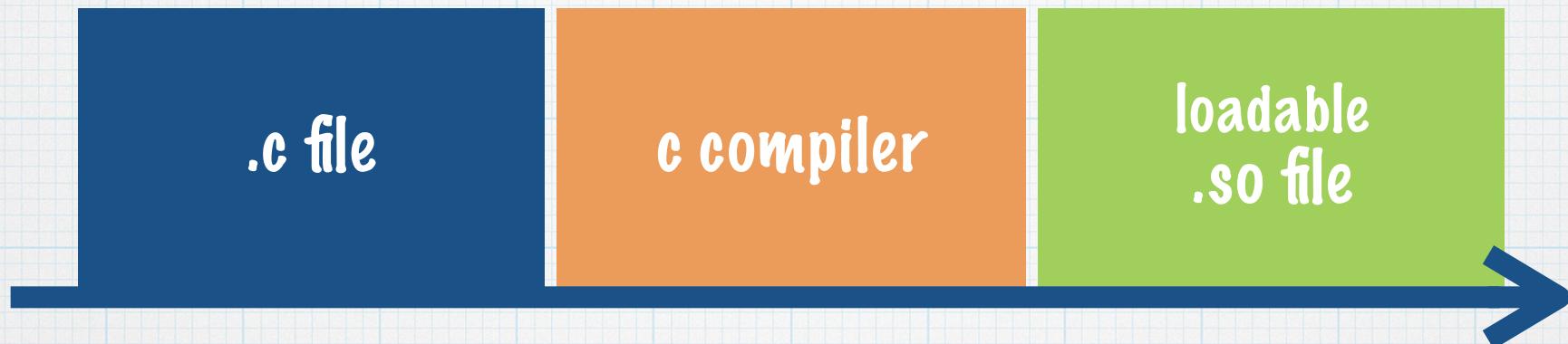
```
from x.y.z import my_data  
def generate_weights(my_data):  
    ...
```

```
def generate_weights(data):  
    ...
```

```
python setup.py build_ext -inplace  
clang ... -fno-commo -dynamic ... ffi_cython.o  
clang -bundle -undefined dynamic_lookup -L ... ffi_cython.so
```

```
cdef extern from "(alternative function to call).h"
```

cTypes



- * Great making C data types available and for calling shared objects
- * Handles most CPython FFI-interface setup and initialization for you
- * Including shared-objects is a function call, not just an import

CTypes: write, compile, load in Python

C++

```
#include <iostream>
class HelloWorld{
public:
    void example_world(){
        std::cout << "hello world" << std::endl;
    }
};

// name mangling, make sure we can call this from Python
extern "C" {
    HelloWorld* HelloWorld_new(){
        return new HelloWorld();
    }

    void HelloWorld_example_world(HelloWorld* world){
        world->example_world();
    }
}
```

Python

```
from ctypes import cdll

path = "libffi_ctypes.so"
lib = cdll.LoadLibrary(path)

class FFICTypes:
    def __init__(self):
        self.obj = lib.HelloWorld_new()

    def example_world(self):
        lib.HelloWorld_example_world(self.obj)

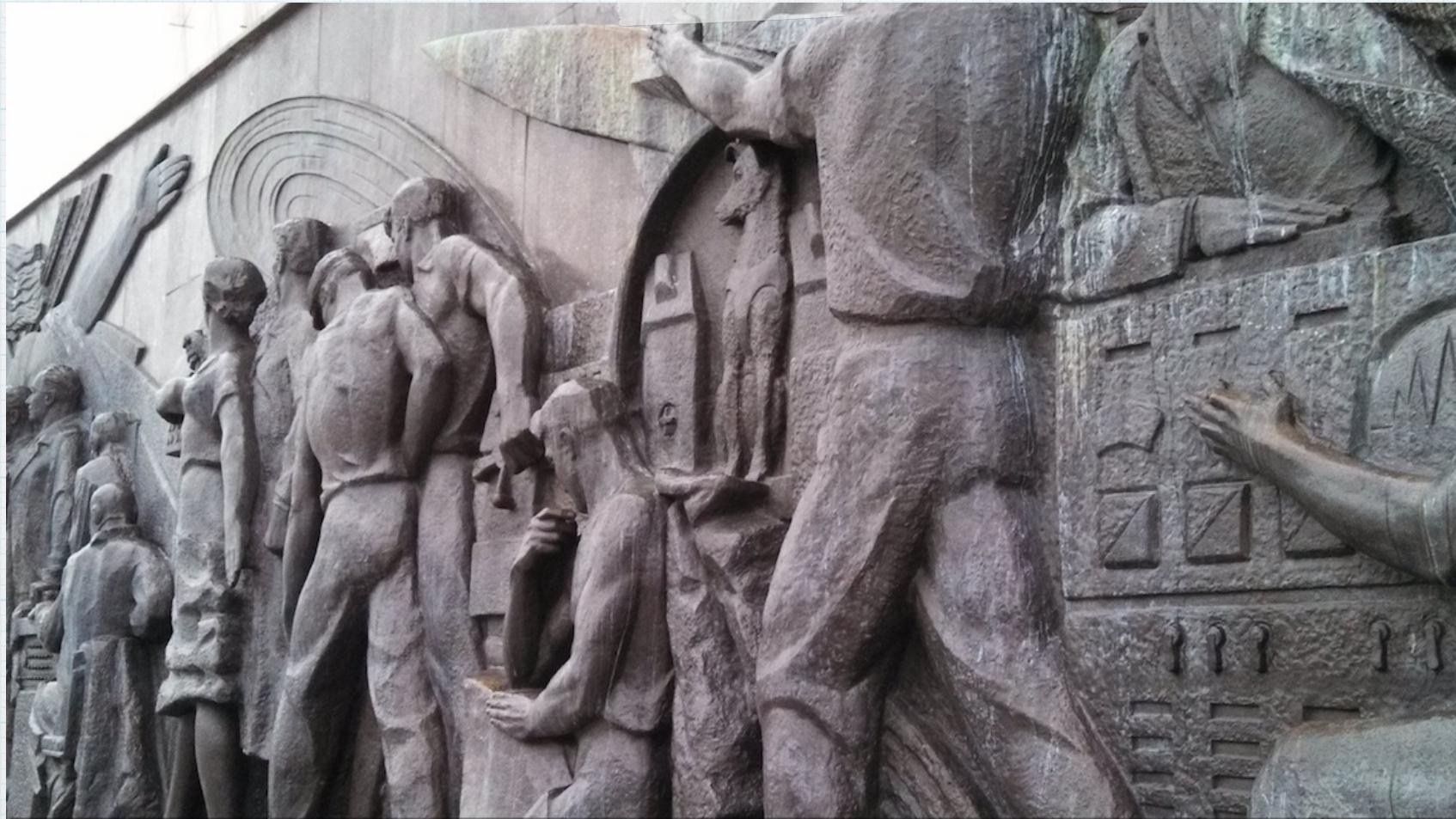
t = FFICTypes()
t.example_world()
```

Note that we didn't need to manually fulfill any of the CPython extension requirements.

“Raw” C++ FFI development

- * You only need to ‘wrap’ the functions called by Python
- * C++ does “name-mangling”; the C++ to C FFI has to be used for Python-callable functions:

```
extern "C" {
PyMODINIT_FUNC
PyInit_modname(){
    return PyModule_Create(&fficppmodule);
}
```



Topic review and closing notes

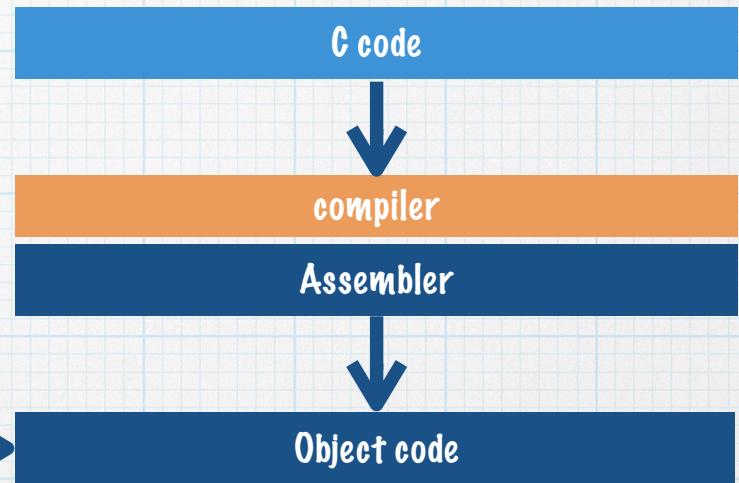
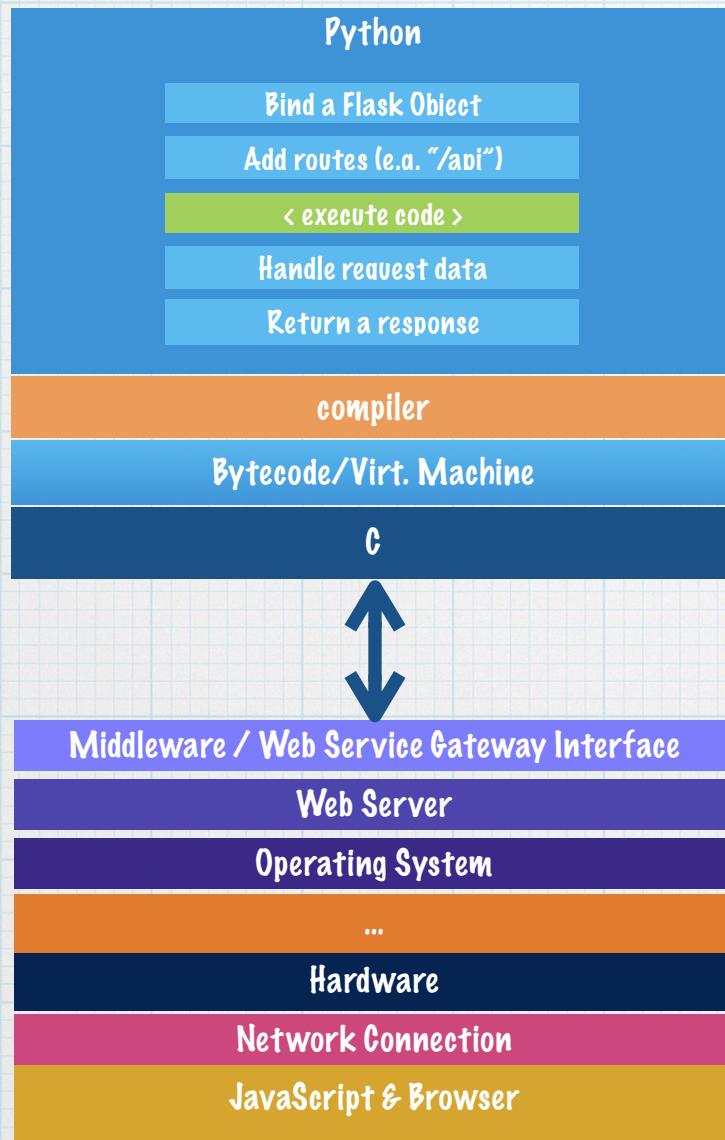
Stay in Python when you
can, which is almost always
for Web Development.

Python is efficient for programmers, meets most deadlines

- * Application plumbing fast enough to not be worth mentioning in this talk
- * Web framework not compiled, only machine-inefficient parts
- * Python amazing for logic validation — write, refactor, improve



The Foreign Function Interface



Use highly machine-efficient approximations if possible

ffi4wd::jumper

Select the cities you want to travel between

11 locations selected

- new york, ny, usa
- portland, me, usa
- seattle, wa, usa
- san francisco, ca, usa
- denver, co, usa
- austin, tx, usa
- montreal, qc, ca
- vancouver, bc, ca
- anchorage, ak, usa
- toronto, on, ca
- berlin, germany

[Select All](#) [Select None](#)

Python

CTypes

Cython

Python FFI

Python Approximation

Run time: 0.000241s

Distance: 24189.975385858408km

1 : new york, ny, usa

2 : portland, me, usa

3 : montreal, qc, ca

4 : toronto, on, ca

5 : denver, co, usa

6 : austin, tx, usa

7 : san francisco, ca, usa

8 : seattle, wa, usa

9 : vancouver, bc, ca

10 : anchorage, ak, usa

11 : berlin, germany

12 : new york, ny, usa

Very fast, but not exact

Foreign Function Interfaces are useful for more than performance

- * Creativity
- * Pragmatic education - prototype in Python and use the “guest language” for interesting components
- * Intellectually satisfying

Closing notes

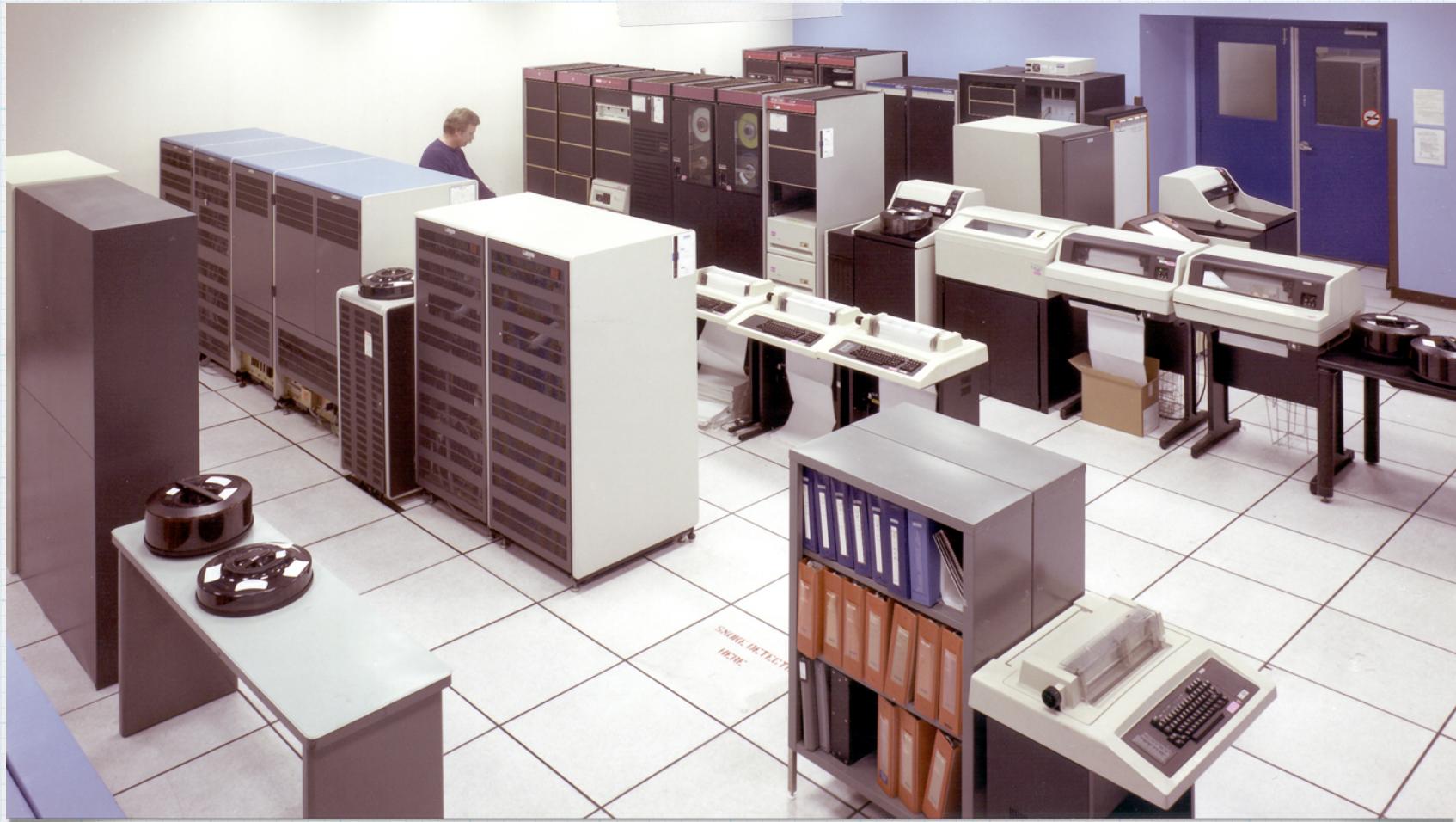
- * Profile your code before trying to optimizations
(is `print()` expensive?)
- * Only optimize and use lower level languages for the slow parts
- * Offloading easy to write, often-called functions isn't a bad idea
- * When lost, source dive: <https://hg.python.org/cpython/file/3.4/Modules/>

Q & A

Image credits and references

Images from NASA	Other Images	References
"Shuttle Atlantis returning to Kennedy Space Center"	"Voskhod-3KD" D.I. Kozlov et al., Конструирование Автоматических Космических Аппаратов, Mashinstroenie, 1996	[1] https://www.igvita.com/slides/2013/breaking-1s-mobile-barrier.pdf
Apollo Service Module		[2] derived from http://norvig.com/21-days.html#answers
Apollo Lunar Lander		
Apollo Launch Configuration		
"Apollo-Soyuz Rendezvous and Docking Test Project"		
Lunar Module Controls and Displays		
Analog Computing Machine in Fuel Systems Building		
"IBM Electronic Data Processing Machine"		
S74-05269 (Internal Arrangement of Docked Configuration)		
40 x 80 Foot Data Acquisition System		

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Thank you!

Code and presentation: github.com/tristanfisher/ffi4wd



/tristanfisher



tristanfisher.com