# Profiler

## Version 0.2.0 8/04/04

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#### 1 Profiler Mechanism

#### 1.1 Profile Feature

mwccarm.exe, the C compiler from Metrowerks, is set up to support the profile feature. This feature automatically inserts the code for a specific function call in the entry and exit of the function. By taking records and statistics about the call from within the function, you can acquire profile information; which is especially useful for things like debugging.

The profile feature can be enabled by adding the option -profile in mwccarm.exe and compiling.

The profiler typically created lines of code like the following example.

```
u32 test( u32 a )
{
    return a + 3;
}
```

If this function is compiled, usually an object with the following code is output.

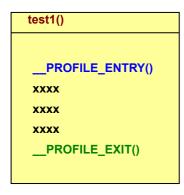
3 is simply added to the argument r0. (Return value is also stored in r0.)

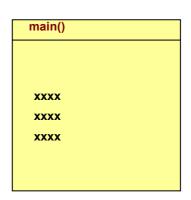
Next, the case in which compiling with the profile feature ON is shown. \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT are called during entry and exit respectively. The following is an example of code created by this feature for a stack operation.

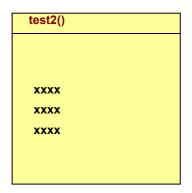
```
test:
stmfd sp!,{r0,lr}
ldr r0,[pc,#32]
                          // Assign the pointer to the character string
"test" to r0
           PROFILE ENTRY // PROFILE ENTRY Call
 ldmfd
          sp!, {r0, lr}
          r0,r0,#3
                          // Add 3
 add
 sub
          sp, sp, #4
 stmfd
          sp!, {lr}
          __PROFILE_EXIT // __PROFILE_EXIT Call
 ldmfd
          sp!,{lr}
 add
          sp, sp, #4
          lr
 bx
                          // pointer to the character string "test"
 dcd
          XXXX
 xxxx: 74 65 73 74 00 // character string "test"
```

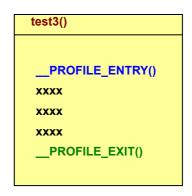
<code>\_PROFILE\_ENTRY</code> and <code>\_PROFILE\_EXIT</code> have only the code for calling functions, and the entity of the function must be created in the application. For NITRO-SDK, they are defined in <code>os\_callTrace.c</code> and <code>os\_functionCost.c</code> so that you can link them into your code if necessary.

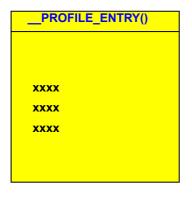
Functions that call \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT and functions that do not call \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT can exist in the link object. Since the compiler enters profiling calls function by function, there are no function that calls only \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY or \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT unless such function is created deliberately.

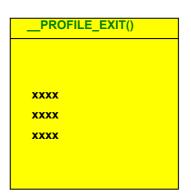










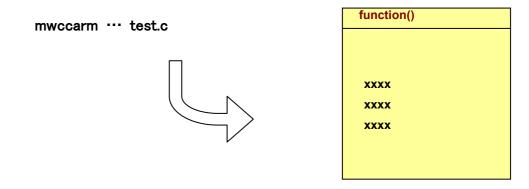


The object that has the \_PROFILE function and the object that do not have the \_PROFILE function can be mixed. (The \_PROFILE function itself does not have the calls to the \_PROFILE function.)

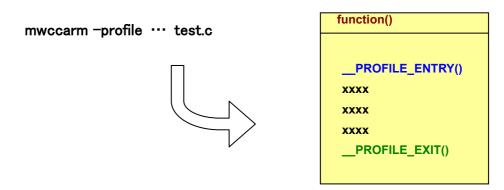
#### 1.2 Specifying During a Compile

If NITRO\_PROFILE is defined in NitroSDK the -profile option is added during the C source compile. For the function in the source compiled with -profile added, the calls for \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT are entered at the beginning and the end of the function of the object.

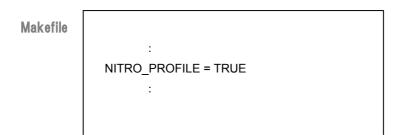
# If a simple make is executed



#### If make NITRO\_PROFILE=TRUE is executed



It is okay to write this in the Makefile.



#### 1.3 Switching with pragma

When temporarily switching the profile feature in the C source use #pragma.

#pragma profile on turns it ON.

#pragma profile off turns it OFF.

#pragma profile reset returns it to the original status before switching to ON or OFF.

```
(Example)

void test1( void )
{
    :
}

void test2( void )
{
    :
}

#pragma profile off
void test3( void )
{
    :
}

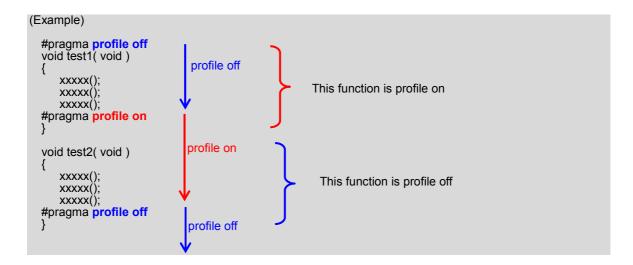
#pragma profile reset

void test4( void )
{
    :
}
```

If this source is compiled with -profile, the profile feature for test1(), test2(), and test4() are ON. (without -profile, the profile feature will be OFF with all functions.)

#### 1.3.1 Where to Place Pragma

If the function is turned ON before it ends, the profiler feature will be turned ON for that function. If the function is OFF at the moment it ends, the profile feature will be turned OFF. Normally it should be set outside the function so that it is easier to follow.



## 2 Nitro-SDK profiler

By setting up PROFILE functions for objects with calls for \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT(), the following mechanisms for debugging with Nitro-SDK are available:

- Function Call Trace (OS CallTrace)
- Function Cost Measurement (OS FunctionCost)

These features are built separately from the OS library. More specifically, the OS library is libos.a (or libos.thumb.a). The function call trace library is libos.CALLTRACE.a (or libos.CALLTRACE.thumb.a), and the function cost measurement is libos.FUNCTIONCOST.a (or libos.FUNCTIONCOST.thumb.a).

#### 2.1 Function Call Trace

There are two modes for the mechanism that records the results of a PROFILE function to a specified memory location.

One is a stack mode that records the call of the function with \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and deletes the record with \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT(). By checking the record at a certain point you can find out what function wrote to the record at that point (what type of call was used).

The other is a log mode that records the call of the function with \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and does nothing with \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT(). The buffer for recording is used repeatedly so the most recent record is always maintained. This allows display of the function that was called (was being called when the record was written).

To enable this profile feature, you must specify NITRO\_PROFILE\_TYPE=CALLTRACE in the make option. (It can be specified in the Makefile also.)

#### 2.2 Function Cost Measurement

This mechanism measures the time in the ENTRY and EXIT areas of the PROFILE function and checks the duration of the function based on the difference between the two.

If you are using a thread system, the time while the thread is switched and another thread is running is subtracted from the duration. This allows you to compare the cost of a particular function. In addition, the number of calls is recorded so it is useful for measuring the frequency of calls.

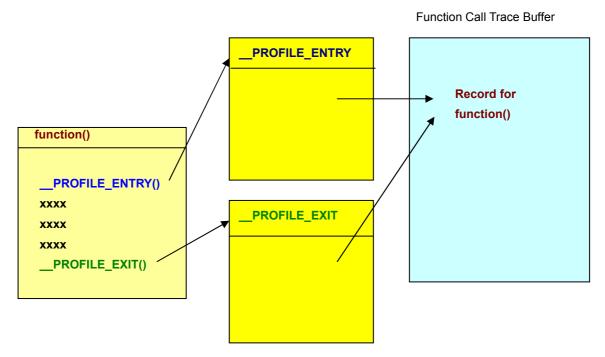
To enable this profile feature, you must specify NITRO\_PROFILE\_TYPE=FUNCTIONCOST in the make option. (It can be specified in the Makefile also.)

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### 3 Function Call Trace

#### 3.1 Mechanism of Trace Recording

The function call trace works in the following way.



#### \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY()

Records that "function was called" in the function call trace buffer. Specifically, the pointer to the function name character string, return address from the function, and argument (options) are recorded together.

#### \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT()

 $({\tt Stack\ Mode}) \begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Mode} \end{tabular} \begin{tab$ 

(Log Mode) — Performs no processes.

#### 3.2 Saved Information

The following information is saved with the function call trace:

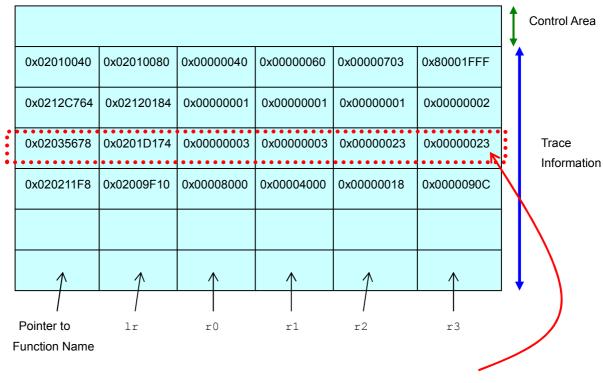
- Pointer to the function name character string
- Value of lr Register at the point from which the function was called
- Value of r0 Register at the point from which the function was called (optional)
- Value of r1 Register at the point from which the function was called (optional)
- Value of r2 Register at the point from which the function was called (optional)
- Value of r3 Register at the point from which the function was called (optional)

The memory address from which the function was called is stored in the 1r register. In other words, if the value of the 1r register is known, you can use that value to determine the address from which the function was called.

The r0 - r3 registers are used for the passing of the values of argument for the function that has arguments. This allows you to see what type of argument was specified when the function is called. However, the values of registers not used in passing arguments do not have much meaning. Saving the values of r0 - r3 is optional. These require a dedicated 4-byte area for each register. Keep these memory requirements in mind when allocating your buffer.

The buffer is used in the following manner.

#### **Function Call Trace Buffer**



In the preceding diagram, r0 - r3 are saved so a 24-byte information region is required for one call. If r0 - r3 do not need to be saved, the buffer size required for one call is 8 bytes.

Information such as the area of the buffer currently in use and the location of the upper limit is stored in the Control Area.

#### 3.3 Two Modes of Function Call Trace

There are two modes for the function call trace, stack mode and log mode. In stack mode, information is saved by \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and deleted by \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT(). In log mode, \_\_PROFILE() does not delete the information. Also, the same region is used for saving information and the old information is deleted.

The buffer stores the following information:

#### Stack Mode

# main() function() subrouting()

#### Function Call Trace Buffer

```
main()
function()
subroutine()
```

If you check the function call trace buffer, you can view the information about a function call at a particular point. In the diagram above, you can see that main() called function(), and function() called subroutine().

#### Log Mode

```
main()
function()
subroutine()
function()
subroutine()
```

#### **Function Call Trace Buffer**

```
main()
function()
subroutine()
function()
subroutine()
```

If you check the function call trace buffer, you can view the information for functions called up to that point. In the diagram above, you can see that main(), function(), subroutine(), function(), and subroutine() were called.

#### 3.4 Implementing in the Program

The call trace begins with the initialization of the call trace buffer at the beginning of the program. In stack mode, the functions carrying out initialization must be at the highest level (not called from within other functions). This consideration is not particularly necessary in log mode.

```
// Function call trace initialization
void OS_InitCallTrace( void* buf, u32 size, OSCallTraceMode mode );

buf Function call trace buffer
   size Buffer size
   mode stack mode or log mode
```

As described previously, the function call trace buffer stores the information necessary for controlling the buffer and the actual trace information. The mode is specified by OSCallTraceMode with a value of either OS\_CALLTRACE\_STACK (stack mode) or OS\_CALLTRACE\_LOG (log mode).

If you know the size of a CallTrace buffer and want to know how many lines it can store, use the following function.

Use the following function to determine the minimum size required for your buffer based on the number of lines you want it to contain.

The following function is used for displaying the contents of a trace buffer. The displayed content is described later in this document.

```
// Function call trace display
u32 OS_DumpCallTraceBufferSize( void );
```

You can temporarily stop recording information or restore the setting by using the following functions. Recording of information remains disabled even if \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() or \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() are called. If you are using stack mode, the information inside the buffer may be invalid or corrupt depending on when the \_\_PROFILE function is stopped.

To clear the contents of the buffer in log mode, use the following function. (You can also use this function in stack mode. However, it is strongly recommended that you develop a full understanding of the way in which this function operates before using it in stack mode.)

```
// Function call trace buffer clear
void OS_ClearCallTraceBuffer ( void );
```

The following are actual in-program examples.

In stack mode:

```
#define TRACEBUFSIZE 0x300
u32 traceBuffer[ TRACEBUFSIZE / sizeof(u32) ];

void NitroMain( void )
{
   OS_Init();

   //---- init callTrace (STACK mode)
   OS_InitCallTrace( &traceBuffer, TRACEBUFSIZE, OS_CALLTRACE_STACK );
   :
}

void function()
{
   //---- display callTrace
   OS_DumpCallTrace(); // Displays status of function call at this point
}
```

In log mode:

```
#define TRACEBUFSIZE 0x300
u32 traceBuffer[ TRACEBUFSIZE / sizeof(u32) ];

void NitroMain( void )
{
   OS Init();

   //---- init callTrace (LOG mode)
   OS_InitCallTrace( &traceBuffer, TRACEBUFSIZE, OS_CALLTRACE_LOG );
   : // Location to be logged

//---- display callTrace
   OS_DumpCallTrace();
}
```

#### 3.5 Display Example with Dump

#### 3.5.1 In Stack Mode

The following is an example of the output from a OS DumpCallTrace() function call.

```
OS_DumpCallTrace: lr=0200434c test3: lr=02004390, r0=00000103, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test2: lr=020043c4, r0=00000101, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test1: lr=02004254, r0=00000100, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f
```

In this example, the lr= value shows that  $OS_DumpCallTrace()$  was called immediately before 0x0200434c. You can also see that test1() calls test2() and test2() calls test3(). The position returning from test3() is before 0x2004390.

The example also shows that when test3 () is called, r0 is  $0 \times 103$ , r1 is  $0 \times 80$ , r2 is  $0 \times 80$ , and r3 is  $0 \times 2000001f$ . Therefore, if test3 () is a function that uses an argument, you can apply these values and figure out the arguments when the functions are called. The same analysis is possible with other functions.

(Note) In the example above, descriptions like "test1() called test2()" are based on the premise that this executable file has the profile feature enabled for all the objects and is compiled. So, if test1() calls test4() when test4() does not have an enabled profile feature. Then, test4() calls test2() which does have an enabled profile feature. The result will be what you see in the example—test2() above test1() with no test4() displayed at all.

The display above was output from the program below.

```
int test1( int a ) {    return test2( a + 1 );  }
int test2( int a ) {    return test3( a + 2 );  }
int test3( int a ) {    OS_DumpCallTrace();    return a + 4;  }

void NitroMain( void )
{
    OS_Init();
    :
    OS_InitCallTrace( &buffer, BUFFERSIZE, OS_CALLTRACE_STACK );
    (void) test1( 0x100 );
    :
}
```

#### 3.5.2 In Log Mode

The following is an example of the output from a OS DumpCallTrace() function call.

```
test3: lr=020043a0, r0=00000103, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test2: lr=020043d4, r0=00000101, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test1: lr=0200423c, r0=00000100, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test3: lr=020043a0, r0=00000203, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test2: lr=020043d4, r0=00000201, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f test1: lr=02004244, r0=00000200, r1=00000080, r2=00000080, r3=2000001f
```

Since the newest information is displayed first, you can see that for the functions that have an active profile feature, the calling order is test1, test2, test3, test1, test2, and test3. Return address, argument and other information can be determined from the 1r register or r0 - r3 registers at that point.

Looking at the display of test1, test2, and test3 you can see that test2 and test3 are indented. This happens because test2 was called before the \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() of test1, and test3 was called before the \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() of test2.

The display above was output from the program below.

```
int test1( int a ){  return test2( a + 1 ); }
int test2( int a ){  return test3( a + 2 ); }
int test3( int a ){  return a + 4; }

void NitroMain( void )
{
    OS_Init();
        :
    OS_InitCallTrace( &buffer, BUFFERSIZE, OS_CALLTRACE_LOG );
    (void) test1( 100 );
    (void) test1( 100 );
    OS_DumpCallTrace();
}
```

#### 3.6 Specification When Linking

To enable the function call trace feature, <code>NITRO\_PROFILE\_TYPE=CALLTRACE</code> must be specified for the make option. Due to this requirement, <code>libos.CALLTRACE.a</code> (or <code>libos.CALLTRACE.thumb.a</code>) is included when linking. This can also be described in the Makefile.

#### 3.7 Operation on Thread

If a thread system is being used, the function call trace information runs independently for each thread. Therefore, initialization of a particular buffer declared with OS\_InitCallTrace() only records information from the thread in which it was generated. Status settings for functions like OS EnableCallTrace() are also independent for each thread.

Avoid declaring the same buffer with a different thread using OS InitCallTrace().

#### 3.8 Cost

Because the function calls are saved in the buffer, function calls cost more than the normal operation. Since every function must include the \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY/EXIT calls, the optimization during compile is not as much as expected, compared to a situation where there is no restrictions. Further, to save the pointer to the function name in the buffer, the function name string is placed on the memory, which causes additional memory usage.

The operational cost varies based on factors such as: whether there is a thread or not, the information saved, and the mode. With \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() extra 60 – 70 instructions are passed, and with \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() an extra 20 – 40 instructions.

**Function Cost Measurement** 

#### 4 Function Cost Measurement

#### 4.1 Cost Measurement Mechanism

Two buffers are used with function cost measurement. As shown below, they are the "Function Cost Measurement Buffer" and "Function Cost Statistics Buffer".

PROFILE\_ENTRY

function()

\_\_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY()

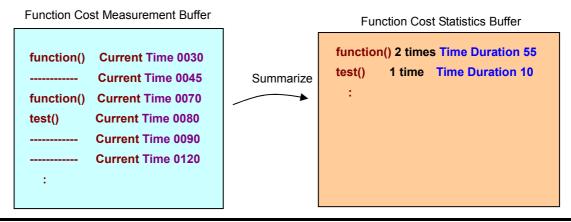
xxxx
xxxx
xxxx
\_\_PROFILE\_EXIT()

PROFILE\_EXIT()

This records the pointer to the function name character string and the current time to the cost measurement buffer the user specified.

#### \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT()

This records the tag written by PROFILE EXIT() and the current time.



#### 4.2 Saved Information

The following information is recorded with the function cost measurement.

With PROFILE ENTRY:

- · Pointer to function name character string
- Current time, value of OS GetTickLo()

With PROFILE EXIT:

- Special value for area where pointer was saved with \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY (called the EXIT tag value.).
- Current time, value of OS\_GetTickLo()
- · Interval due to thread switch if required (optional)

The current time is a value that can be obtained with OS\_GetTickLo(). The Tick feature of the OS has a 64-bit value, but it is sufficient to only check the lower half when calling a function so it is managed as a 32-bit value.

The special value (called the EXIT tag) for distinguishing the pointer to the character string of \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY with PROFILE EXIT is secured in the pointer to the function name character string.

The amount of time it takes to change threads (including the time spent in any other thread) is deducted from the total time elapsed from \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY to \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT.

**Function Cost Measurement Buffer** 

Control Area 0x02010040 0x00008000 0 0xFFFFFFFF 0x02120184 300 Measurement 0x02035678 0x0201D174 0 Information 0xFFFFFFFF 0x02009FC0 0 Time Pointer to function Interval due to thread switch name Information for one set of \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT **EXIT Tag** 

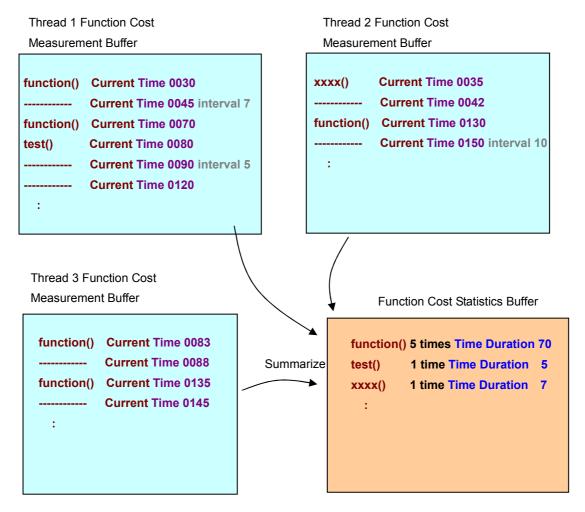
Types of information stored in the "Control Area" include: the part of the buffer currently being used, location of the upper limit of the buffer, the counter value for the duration of a thread switch, etc.

#### 4.3 Conversion to Statistics Buffer

It is difficult to obtain cost information only with the function cost measurement data since the measurement data needs to be summarized as statistics buffer data.

The summary relates the call information of the function and the EXIT tag, then totals the number of calls and the time spent in the function. When the control is transferred to a separate thread due to a switch in threads, the amount of time until it returns to the original thread is recorded as an interval line of the EXIT tag. Calculations are carried out to take this into consideration.

Summarizations must be carried out explicitly. When summarized, the contents of the function cost measurement buffer are cleared. Repeatedly storing these results in the summarization buffer (before the function cost measurement buffer overflows) helps to ensure accurate measurement for long processes. Since the same summarization buffer can be shared with multiple threads, avoid summarizing a separate thread while summarizing on another thread



The results of multiple measurements can be written to the statistics buffer

#### 4.4 Implementing in the Program

Cost measurement begins recording to the buffer as soon as a function is initialized.

The Tick system of the OS is used for cost measurement so you must call OS\_InitTick() before initializing any cost measurement buffers.

```
// Function cost measurement initialization
void OS_InitFunctionCost( void* buf, u32 size );

buf Function cost measurement buffer
    size Buffer size (byte)
```

As described previously, the information for controlling the buffer and the actual time information are stored.

If you know the size of a buffer and want to know how many lines it can store, use the following function.

Use the following function to determine the minimum size required for your buffer based on the number of lines you want it to contain.

Initialize the cost statistics buffer with the following function.

```
// Function cost statistics buffer initialization
void OS InitStatistics( void* statBuf, u32 size );

statBuf Buffer
size Buffer size (bytes)
```

The following function stores the value of the cost statistics buffer.

```
// Summarize function cost
OS_CalcStatistics( void* statBuf );
statBuf Statistics buffer
```

The current contents of the function cost measurement buffer are cleared when OS\_CalcStatistics() is called.

The following function displays the summarization results. The output of this function is described later in this document.

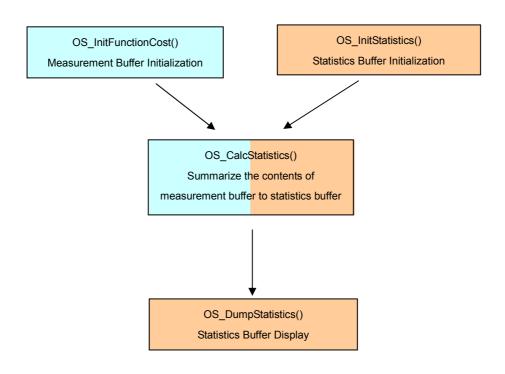
You can temporarily stop recording profiling data or restore the setting by using the following functions. Recording of information remains disabled even if \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() or \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() are called. If a thread switch takes place so that only the information recorded with \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() or the information recorded with \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() is written to the buffer, the cost measurement data may be invalid. It is strongly suggested that you pay particular attention when using these functions.

If you want to explicitly clear the contents of the function cost measurement buffer, call the following function.

```
// Function cost measurement buffer clear
void OS ClearFunctionCostBuffer ( void );
```

The following is an in-program example.

```
#define COSTSIZE 0x3000
   #define STATSIZE 0x300
   u32 CostBuffer[ COSTSIZE / sizeof(u32) ]
   u32 StatBuffer[ STATSIZE / sizeof(u32) ];
   void NitroMain( void )
    OS Init();
    OS InitTick();
     //--- init functionCost
    OS InitFunctionCost( &CostBuffer, COSTSIZE );
    OS InitStatistics ( &StatBuffer, STATSIZE ); // This initialization can be
done after measurement
        : // This is the location to be measured
     //--- calculate cost
     OS CalcStatistics( &StatBuffer );
     //--- display functionCost
    OS DumpStatistics ( &StatBuffer );
```



#### 4.5 Display Example with Dump

A following is an example of the output of an  $OS_DumpStatistics()$  function call.

```
test1: count 1, cost 25
test2: count 3, cost 185
test3: count 4, cost 130
```

In the example, there was one call for test1 () with an elapsed time (duration) of 25. (The units of this value are the same as those used in the Tick system of the OS.)

There were three calls for test2() with a total duration of 185. For test3(), there were four calls with a total duration 130.

#### 4.6 Specification When Linking

To enable the function cost measurement feature, NITRO\_PROFILE\_TYPE=FUNCTIONCOST must be specified for the make option. Due to this setting, libos.FUNCTIONCOST.a (or libos.FUNCTIONCOST.thumb.a) is included when linking. This can also be described in the makefile.

#### 4.7 Operation on Thread

If a thread system is being used, the function cost measurement information runs independently for each thread. Therefore, initialization of a particular buffer declared with  $OS_InitFunctionCost()$  only records information from the thread in which it was generated. Status settings for functions like  $OS_EnableFunctionCost()$  are also independent for each thread.

Avoid declaring the same measurement buffer with a different thread using OS InitFunctionCost().

#### 4.8 Cost

Because time information is saved in the buffer every time the function is called, function calls cost more than the normal operation. Since every function must include the \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY/EXIT calls, the optimization during compile is not as much as expected, compared to a situation where there is no restrictions. Further, to save the pointer to the function name in the buffer, the function name string is placed on the memory, which causes additional memory usage.

The operational cost changes based on factors such as if there is a thread or not. With  $\__PROFILE\_ENTRY()$  an extra 25-35 instructions, and with  $\__PROFILE\_EXIT()$  an extra 20-30 instructions are passed. Also, interval calculation is done when the thread is switched so an extra 30-40 instructions are required. The time is obtained by reading the 32-bit timer value from the IO register so the cost of obtaining the time is not significant.

# 5 Other Profilers (non-Nitro-SDK)

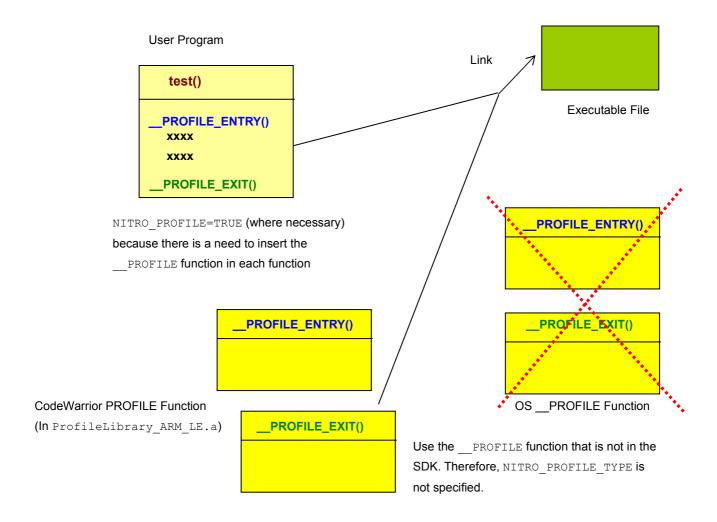
Preparing \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() allows you to use a Profiler other than the one provided in the Nitro-SDK OS.

For example, if you use the Profiler offered as the CodeWarrior Example, \_\_PROFILE\_ENTRY() and \_\_PROFILE\_EXIT() are defined within it so the ones provided in the OS should not be defined..

#### 5.1 Specification When Linking

NITRO\_PROFILE\_TYPE must be specified for elements other than CALLTRACE or FUNCTIONCOST during an OS compile (In other words, nothing needs to be specified). Due to this, the profile library such as libos.XXXX.a ( XXXX = either CALLTRACE or FUNCTIONCOST) will not be linked.

Be aware that in order to insert the \_\_PROFILE function at the beginning and end of each function NITRO PROFILE=TRUE must be specified.



**Revision History** 

08/11/2004 Revised the error in 3.4 where "stack mode" was "trace mode"