Advanced Cache Architectures and Virtual Memory

**Advanced Cache Architectures**

- Hiding cache miss latencies
  - Non-blocking caches – do not stall, or stop accessing cache, on a miss.
- DM hit time + set-associative hit rate
  - Victim caches
- High instruction fetch bandwidth
  - Trace caches

**Victim Cache**

**Trace Cache**

```
A
B
C
beq J:
D
E
F
G
H
jsr I
J
K
L
M
N
W
X
ret
```

```
A
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```

Conventional Cache

Trace Cache
Other Cache Accelerators

- Software transformations (e.g., tiling) which change memory access order to increase locality.
- **Software Cache Prefetching** – bring data into the cache before the code executes the load.
  - Prefetch(A)
  - Helper thread prefetching
- **Hardware Cache Prefetching**
  - Next-line prefetcher – on a cache miss, or first access to a prefetched line, prefetch next line.
  - Stream buffers – detects address stride, and keeps a fifo full of next n (e.g., 4) accesses.

Virtual Memory

- It’s just another level in the cache/memory hierarchy
- *Virtual memory* is the name of the technique that allows us to view main memory as a cache of a larger memory space (on disk).

Virtual Memory

- is just caching, but uses different terminology (and different storage/lookup techniques)
  - cache VM
  - block page
  - cache miss page fault
  - address virtual address
  - index physical address (sort of)
Virtual Memory

• What happens if another program in the processor uses the same addresses that yours does?
• What happens if your program uses addresses that don’t exist in the machine?
• What happens to “holes” in the address space your program uses?

So, virtual memory provides
– performance (through the cacheing effect)
– protection
– ease of programming/compilation
– efficient use of memory

What makes VM different than memory caches

• \textbf{MUCH} higher miss penalty (millions of cycles)!
• Therefore
  – large pages [equivalent of cache line] (4 KB to MBs)
  – associative mapping of pages (typically fully associative)
  – software handling of misses (but not hits!!)
  – \textit{write-through} not an option, only write-back
Address translation via the page table

- all page mappings are in the page table, so hit/miss is determined solely by the valid bit (i.e., no tag)
- so why is this fully associative???
- Biggest problem – this is slow. Why?

Making Address Translation Fast

- A cache for address translations: translation lookaside buffer (TLB)

TLBs and caches

Virtual Memory & Caches

- Cache lookup is now a serial process
  1. V->P translation through TLB
  2. Get index
  3. Read tag from cache
  4. Compare
- How can we make this faster?
  1.
  2.
Virtual Caches

• Which addresses are used to lookup data in cache/store in tag?
  – Virtual Addresses?
  – Physical Addresses?
• Pros/Cons?
  – Virtual
  – Physical

Fast Index Translation

• Can do
  1. V->P translation through TLB
  2. Get index
     in parallel, if the “virtual” index and the “physical” index are the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>virtual page number</th>
<th>page offset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tag</td>
<td>index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>block offset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Virtual Memory Key Points

• How does virtual memory provide:
  – protection?
  – sharing?
  – performance?
  – illusion of large main memory?
• Virtual Memory requires twice as many memory accesses, so we cache page table entries in the TLB.
• Three things can go wrong on a memory access: cache miss, TLB miss, page fault.