Hardware and Device Drivers

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Outline

- What's so different about device drivers?
- How to access hardware?
- L4 services for writing drivers
- Reusing legacy drivers
- Device virtualization
Some statistics

- [Swift03]: Drivers cause 85% of Windows XP crashes.

- [Chou01]:
  - Error rate in Linux drivers is 3x (maximum: 10x) higher than for the rest of the kernel
  - Bugs cluster (if you find one bug, you're more likely to find another one pretty close)
  - Life expectancy of a bug in the Linux kernel (~2.4): 1.8 years

- [Rhyzyk09]: Causes for driver bugs
  - 23% programming error
  - 38% mismatch regarding device specification
  - 39% OS-driver-interface misconceptions
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  - NVRAM got mapped to same location
  - Scary cmpxchg() behavior on I/O memory
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- **Nov 2nd 2008** dynamic ftrace reworked for Linux 2.6.28-rc3
Idea: User-level Drivers

- Isolate components
  - device drivers (disk, network, graphic, USB cruise missiles, ...)
  - stacks (TCP/IP, file systems, ...)

- Separate address spaces each
  - More robust components

- Problems
  - Overhead
    - HW multiplexing
    - Context switches
  - Need to handle I/O privileges
• Need special care for device drivers.

• Next: A closer look on how hardware works.
System Layout

- Devices connected by buses (USB, PCI, PCIX)
- Host chipset (DMA logic, IRQ controller) connects buses and CPU
Real World Example

Intel 925x Chipset
(source: http://www.intel.com)

1 Hyper-Threading (HT) Technology requires a computer system with an Intel® Pentium® 4 processor supporting HT Technology and a HT Technology enabled chipset, BIOS and operating system. Performance will vary depending on the specific hardware and software you use. See www.intel.com/info/hyperthreading for more information including details on which processors support HT Technology.
Buses and Devices

- A long long time ago:
  - device architecture hard-coded
- Problem: more and more devices
  - need means of dynamic device discovery
- Probing
  - try out every driver to see if it works
- Plug&Play:
  - first try of dynamic system description
  - device manufacturers provide unique IDs
- PCI: dedicated config space
- ACPI: system description without relying on underlying bus/chipset
Buses: PCI

- Peripheral Component Interconnect
- Hierarchy of buses, devices and functions
- Configuration via I/O ports
  - Address + data register (0xcf8-0xcff)
Buses: PCI (2)

- PCI configuration space

- 64 byte header
  - Busmaster DMA
  - Interrupt line
  - I/O port regions
  - I/O memory regions
  - + 192 byte additional space

- must be provided by every device function

- must be managed to isolate device drivers
Buses: USB

- Intel, 1996
- One bus to rule them all?
  - Firewire has always been faster
- Tree of devices
  - root = Host Controller (UHCI, OHCI, EHCI)
  - Device drivers use HC to communicate with their device via USB Request Blocks (URBs)
  - USB is a serial bus
    - HC serializes URBs
- Wide range of device classes (input, storage, peripherals, ...)
  - classes allow generic drivers
• Someone (BIOS) organizes physical hierarchy of devices → buses.

• Devices need to interact with the rest of the system
  – Interrupts
  – I/O ports
  – Memory-mapped I/O registers
Interrupts

- Signal device state change
- Programmable Interrupt Controller (PIC, APIC)
  - map HW IRQs to CPU's IRQ lines
  - prioritize interrupts
Interrupts (2)

- Handling interrupts involves
  - examine / manipulate device
  - program PIC
- acknowledge/mask/unmask interrupts
L4: Interrupt handling

- IRQ kernel object
  - Represents arbitrary async notification
  - Kernel maps hardware IRQs to IRQ objects
- Exactly one waiter per object
  - call `l4_irq_attach()` before
  - wait using `l4_irq_receive()`
- Multiple IRQs per waiter
  - attach to multiple objects
  - use `l4_ipc_wait()`
- IRC sharing
  - Many IRQ objects may be `chain()`ed to a master IRQ object
Disabling interrupts

- CLI – only with IO Privilege Level (IOPL) 3

- Should not be allowed for every user-level driver
  - untrusted drivers
  - security risk

- Observation: drivers often don't need to disable IRQs globally, but only access to their own IRQ
  - Just don't receive from your IRQ
I/O ports

- x86-specific feature
- I/O ports define own I/O address space
  - Each device uses its own area within this address space
- Special instruction to access I/O ports
  - in / out: I/O read / write
  - Example: read byte from serial port
    \[
    \text{mov} \ $0x3f8, \ %edx \\
    \text{in} \ (\%dx), \ %al
    \]
- Need to restrict I/O port access
  - Allow device drivers access to I/O ports used by its device only
I/O Bitmap

- Per task IO privilege level (IOPL)
- If IOPL > current PL, all accesses are allowed (kernel mode)
- Else: I/O bitmap is checked
- 1 bit per I/O port
  - 65536 ports -> 8kB
- Controls port access (0 == ok, 1 == GPF)
- L4: per-task I/O bitmap
  - Switched during task switch
  - Allows per-task grant/deny of I/O port access
I/O Flexpages

- Reuse kernel's map/grant mechanism for mapping I/O port rights -> I/O flexpages
- Kernel detects type of flexpage and acts accordingly
- Task with all I/O ports mapped is raised to IOPL 3

L4.Fiasco I/O flexpage format
• Devices often contain on-chip memory (NICs, graphics cards, ...)
• Instead of accessing through I/O ports, drivers can map this memory into their address space just like normal RAM
  - no need for special instructions
  - increased flexibility by using underlying virtual memory management
I/O memory (2)

- Device memory looks just like phys. memory
- Chipset needs to
  - map I/O memory to exclusive address ranges
  - distinguish physical and I/O memory access
I/O memory in L4

- Like all memory, I/O memory is owned by sigma0
- Sigma0 implements protocol to request I/O memory pages
- Abstraction: Dataspaces containing I/O memory
Direct Memory Access (DMA)

- Bypass CPU by directly transferring data from device to RAM
  - improved bandwidth
  - relieved CPU

- DMA controller either programmed by driver or by device's DMA engine (Busmaster DMA)
Problems with DMA

- DMA uses physical addresses.
  - I/O memory regions need to be physically contiguous → supported by L4Re dataspace manager
  - Buffers must not be paged out during DMA → L4Re DS manager allows “pinning” of pages

- DMA with phys. addresses bypasses VM management
  - Drivers can overwrite any phys. Address

- DMA is a security risk.
Idea: I/O MMU

- Like traditional MMU maps virtual to physical addresses
  - implemented in PCI bridge
  - manages a page table
  - I/O-TLB

- Drivers access buffers through virtual addresses
  - I/O MMU translates accesses from virtual to IO-virtual addresses (IOVA)
  - restrict access to phys. memory by only mapping certain IOVAs into driver's address space
I/O MMUs

- Per-Bus IOMMU

- Per-device IOMMU (not available yet)
I/O MMU Architecture

- I/O MMU managed by yet another resource manager
- Before accessing I/O memory, drivers use manager to establish a virt->phys mapping
Summary: Driver support in L4

- Interrupts -> Kernel object + IPC
- I/O ports and memory -> flexpage mappings
- User-level resource manager -> IO
Untrusted Device Drivers

- How to enforce device access policies on untrusted drivers?
Untrusted Device Drivers

- How to enforce device access policies on untrusted drivers?
- I/O manager needs to manage device resources – Virtual buses
• Device drivers are hard.
• Hardware is complex.
• L4 hardware support
• Virtual buses for isolating device resources

• Next: Implementing device drivers on L4 without doing too much work
Implementing Device Drivers

• Just like in any other OS:
  – Specify a server interface
  – Implement interface, use the access methods provided by the runtime environment

• Highly optimized code possible

• Hard to maintain

• Implementation time-consuming

• Unavailable specifications

• Why reimplement drivers if they are already available on other systems?
  – Linux, BSD – Open Source
  – Windows – Binary drivers
• Exploit virtualization: Device Driver OS

Source: LeVasseur et. al.: "Unmodified Device Driver Reuse and Improved System Dependability via Virtual Machines", OSDI 2004
• NDIS-Wrapper: Linux glue library to run Windows WiFi drivers on Linux

• Idea is simple: provide a library mapping Windows API to Linux

• Implementation is a problem.
• Generalize the idea: provide a Linux environment to run drivers on L4
  → Device Driver Environment (DDE)
Emulating Linux: DDE/Linux

- Multiple L4 threads provide a Linux environment
  - Workqueues
  - SoftIRQs / Bottom Halves
  - Timers
  - Jiffies
- Emulate SMP-like system (each L4 thread assumed to be one processor)
- Wrap Linux functionality
  - kmalloc() → L4 Slab allocator library
  - Linux spinlock → pthread mutex
- Handle in-kernel accesses (e.g., PCI config space)
DDE Structure

- **Hardware**
  - CPU
  - Chipset
  - Devices
  - Memory

- **Software**
  - Kernel: Fiasco Microkernel
  - L4 Server Code
    - Linux Driver Source Code
    - Emulation Library (dde_linux)
      - lib_l4io
      - lib_dm
    - Work Queues
    - SoftIRQs
    - Timer
    - IRQs

- **Client Application**
  - Client Library
Multiple Donator OSes

Donator Driver / Linux

Donator Driver / FreeBSD

DDE/Linux

DDE/FreeBSD

Host runtime environment
DDEKit – another abstraction

- Pull common abstractions into dedicated library
  - Threads
  - Synchronization
  - Memory
  - IRQ handling
  - I/O port access
  → **DDE Construction Kit (DDEKit)**

- Implement DDEs against the DDEKit interface
• Implementation overhead for single DDEs gets much smaller
• Performance overhead still reasonable
  – e.g., no visible increase of network latency in user-level ethernet driver
• L4-specific parts (sloccount):
  – standalone DDE Linux 2.4: ~ 3,000 LoC
  – DDEKit ~ 2,000 LoC
  – DDEKit-based DDE Linux 2.6: ~ 1,000 LoC
  – Standalone Linux VM (DD/OS): > 500,000 LoC
• Highly customizable: implement DDE base library and support libs (net, disk, sound, …)
DDEKit (3)

Diagram showing the structure of DDEKit, with layers of software and hardware.

Software:
- Client Application
- Client Library
- L4 Server Code
- Linux Driver Source Code
  - Linux-specifics (SoftIRQs, KThreads)
  - dde_linux
- Emulation Library (ddekit)
- L4IO
- Dataspaces Manager
- Kernel
  - Fiasco Microkernel

Hardware:
- CPU
- Chipset
- Devices
- Memory
DDEKit: portability

- Reversing the DDE idea: port DDEKit to host environment → reuse whole Linux support lib

- Has been done for:
  - L4Env, L4Re
  - Genode OS Framework
  - Minix 3
  - GNU/Hurd
  - Linux [Weisbach'11]
DDE(Kit): Use Cases

- **DDELinux 2.4**
  - IDE Disk Driver
  - Virtual Ethernet Interface
  - USB Webcam
  - TCP/IP Network Stack
  - OSS sound server

- **DDELinux 2.6**
  - Virtual Ethernet Interface
  - ALSA sound server
  - USB host controller, web cams, disks, ...

- **DDEFreeBSD**
  - ATA disk driver
• Device driver support library
  – Reuse donator drivers
  – Split into generic and donator-specific parts
  – Portable on both directions

• Next: Securing device drivers
• Failure model: transient failure of driver

• Run drivers in lightweight protection domain
  – still ring0
  – switch page table before executing driver code
    (make kernel data read-only)

• Need to wrap all driver-kernel function calls
  – Track and update duplicate objects

• 22,000 LoC, performance near native
Figure 2: A sample shadow driver operating in passive mode. Taps inserted between the kernel and sound driver ensure that all communication between the two is passively monitored by the shadow driver.

Figure 3: A sample shadow driver operating in active mode. The taps redirect communication between the kernel and the failed driver directly to the shadow driver.
• **Observations:**
  – drivers fail to obey device spec
  – developers misunderstand OS interface
  – multithreading is bad

• **Tingu:** state-chart-based specification of device protocols
  – Event-based state transition
  – Timeouts
  – Variables
Dingo (2)

- **Dingo**: device driver architecture

- **Single-threaded**
  - Built-in atomicity
  - Not a performance problem for most drivers

- **Event-based**
  - Developers implement a Tingu specification

- **Can use Tingu specs to generate runtime driver monitors**
Various Cool Things™

- **DevIL (OSDI 2000):** generate driver from an IDL spec of the device interface
  
  “…our vision is that Devil specifications either should be written by device vendors or should be widely available as public domain libraries…”

- **Termite (SOSP 2009):** use device driver spec (VHDL) to generate
  - Lets vendors generate drivers on their own

- **RevNIC (EuroSys 2010):**
  - Obtain I/O trace from existing driver (Windows)
  - Analyse driver binary
  - Generate Linux driver
**Device drivers, problems, and solutions**

- N. Palix et al.: "Faults in linux – 10 years later", ASPLOS 2011

**DDE-related**

• Nov 20th
  - Lecture: Resource Management