Executive Overview

Intel's silicon design engineers need significant increases in computing capacity—both on their workstations and on data center servers—to deliver each new generation of silicon chips. To meet those requirements, Intel IT conducts ongoing throughput performance tests, using the Intel® silicon design workloads, to analyze the benefits of introducing compute servers based on new, more powerful processors in the field of electronic design automation (EDA).

We recently tested a dual-socket server based on the latest Intel® Xeon® Platinum 8168 processor running single-threaded and multi-threaded EDA applications operating on more than 200 hours of Intel design workloads. By utilizing all available cores, the server completed the workloads up to 86x faster than a server based on a 64-bit Intel Xeon processor (3.6 GHz) with a single core. The Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 processor-based server was up to 24x faster than a server based on the Intel Xeon processor 5160 (3.0 GHz) with two cores.

Based on our performance assessment and our refresh cycle, we plan to deploy servers based on the new Intel Xeon processor Scalable family, completing our replacement of servers based on the 8-core Intel Xeon processor E5-2600 series that are more than four years old. By doing so we expect to significantly increase EDA throughput while realizing savings, because we can avoid data center construction and reduce additional power consumption.

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For more complete information about performance and benchmark results, visit intel.com/benchmarks. Performance results based on testing details and system configuration. See the full disclaimer and system configurations on page 6.
Background

Silicon chip design engineers at Intel face ongoing challenges: integrating more features into ever-shrinking silicon chips, bringing products to market faster, and keeping design engineering and manufacturing costs low.

As design complexity increases, the requirements for compute capacity also increase, so refreshing servers and workstations with higher performing systems is cost-effective and offers a competitive advantage by enabling faster chip design. Refreshing older servers also enables us to realize data center cost savings. By taking advantage of the performance and power-efficiency improvements in new server generations, we can increase computing capacity within the same data center footprint, avoiding expensive data center construction and achieving operational cost savings due to reduced power consumption.

Intel IT conducts ongoing performance tests, based on the latest Intel® silicon design data, to analyze the potential performance and data center benefits of introducing servers based on new processors into our electronic design automation (EDA) computing environment. Table 1 illustrates some of the architectural enhancements.

Table 1. A Comparison of Dual-Socket Servers Based on Intel® Xeon® Processors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Processor/Chipset</th>
<th>Process Technology</th>
<th>Cores per Socket</th>
<th>Cache</th>
<th>Interconnect Speed</th>
<th>DIMMs</th>
<th>Memory Type</th>
<th>Memory Bandwidth</th>
<th>Maximum Memory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>E7520</td>
<td>90nm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 MB or 2 MB1</td>
<td>6.4 GB/s</td>
<td>Up to 8</td>
<td>DDR2-400 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 6.4 GB/s</td>
<td>16 GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2008</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>65nm and 45nm</td>
<td>2 or 4</td>
<td>4 MB or 6 MB shared between 2 cores</td>
<td>21-25 GB/s</td>
<td>Up to 16</td>
<td>FB-DIMM/DDR2-667 MHz or FB-DIMM/DDR2-800 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 21-25 GB/s</td>
<td>64 GB or 128 GB2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>5520</td>
<td>45nm and 32nm</td>
<td>4 or 6</td>
<td>8 MB or 12 MB shared</td>
<td>25.6 GB/s per Intel® QuickPath Interconnect</td>
<td>Up to 18</td>
<td>DDR3-800/1066 MHz or DDR3-1333/1600 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 32 GB/s</td>
<td>144 GB or 288 GB2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>C600</td>
<td>32nm</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20 MB shared</td>
<td>32 GB/s per Intel® QuickPath Interconnect</td>
<td>Up to 24</td>
<td>DDR3-1333/1600 MHz or DDR3-1866 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 51.2 GB/s</td>
<td>Up to 144 GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>C610</td>
<td>22nm</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30 MB shared</td>
<td>38.4 GB/s per Intel® QuickPath Interconnect</td>
<td></td>
<td>DDR4-1600/1866 MHz or DDR4-2133 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 59.7 GB/s</td>
<td>144 GB or 288 GB3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>C620</td>
<td>14nm</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45 MB shared</td>
<td>41.6 GB/s per Intel® UltraPath Interconnect</td>
<td></td>
<td>DDR4-2400 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 68 GB/s</td>
<td>1536 GB4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55 MB shared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DDR4-2666 MHz</td>
<td>Up to 76.8 GB/s</td>
<td>1536 GB4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38.5 MB shared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 128 GB/s</td>
<td>3072 GB5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Data provided only for 1 MB cache. 2 128 GB support with Intel® 5400 Chipset introduced in 2007. 3 144 GB assumes 18 memory slots populated with 8-GB DIMMs; 288 GB assumes 18 memory slots populated with 16-GB DIMMs, and validated only with Intel® Xeon® processor 5600 series. 4 768 GB assumes 24 memory slots populated with 32-GB DIMMs. 5 1536 GB assumes 24 memory slots populated with 64-GB DIMMs. 6 3072 GB assumes 24 memory slots populated with 128-GB DIMMs.
Faster Servers Process More EDA Jobs in Less Time

The architectural enhancements shown Table 1 illustrate how the Intel® Xeon® processor has evolved over the last few years. We have found that refreshing data center servers to use the latest processor technology substantially improves EDA throughput.

While our assessments focus on EDA applications, throughput improvements may also be achieved with other applications used in high-performance computing environments where simulation and verification are large parts of the workflow, including:

- Computational fluid dynamics and simulation in the aeronautical and automobile industries
- Synthesis and simulation applications in the life sciences industry
- Simulation in the oil and gas industries

Test Methodology

We ran tests on dual-socket servers based on the Intel® Xeon® Platinum 8168 processor. This processor includes new features designed to increase throughput compared with previous processor generations, including 14nm process technology, 24 cores, and 33 MB L3 cache.

We ran several tests using industry-leading EDA single-threaded and multi-threaded EDA applications comprising Intel Xeon processor and chipset design workloads.

Our goal was to assess throughput improvement by measuring the time taken to complete a specific number of design workloads. To maximize throughput, we configured each application to utilize all available cores, resulting in one job or process per core. The test configuration is shown in Table 2. We then compared our results with previous tests conducted using the same approach on servers based on the processors.

Table 2. Test Configuration for Dual-Socket Servers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3.6 GHz</td>
<td>3.0 GHz</td>
<td>3.0 GHz</td>
<td>3.16 GHz</td>
<td>2.93 GHz</td>
<td>3.06 GHz</td>
<td>2.7 GHz</td>
<td>2.8 GHz</td>
<td>2.6 GHz</td>
<td>2.2 GHz</td>
<td>2.7 GHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cache</td>
<td>1 MB</td>
<td>4 MB</td>
<td>8 MB</td>
<td>12 MB</td>
<td>8 MB</td>
<td>12 MB</td>
<td>20 MB</td>
<td>25 MB</td>
<td>35 MB</td>
<td>55 MB</td>
<td>33 MB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interconnect</td>
<td>800 MHz Shared FSB</td>
<td>1333 Dual Independent FSB</td>
<td>1333 Dual Independent FSB</td>
<td>1333 Dual Independent FSB</td>
<td>25.6 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>25.6 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>32.0 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>32.0 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>38.4 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>38.4 GB/s per Intel® QPI link</td>
<td>41.6 GB/s per Intel® UPI link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>16 GB</td>
<td>16 GB</td>
<td>32 GB</td>
<td>32 GB</td>
<td>48 GB</td>
<td>96 GB</td>
<td>128 GB</td>
<td>256 GB</td>
<td>256 GB</td>
<td>256 GB</td>
<td>768 GB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory Type</td>
<td>DDR2-400 MHz</td>
<td>FB-DIMM/DDR2-667 MHz</td>
<td>FB-DIMM/DDR2-667 MHz</td>
<td>FB-DIMM/DDR2-667 MHz</td>
<td>DDR3-1333 MHz</td>
<td>DDR3-1333 MHz</td>
<td>DDR3-1333 MHz</td>
<td>DDR3-1600 MHz</td>
<td>DDR4-2133 MHz</td>
<td>DDR4-2400 MHz</td>
<td>DDR4-2666 MHz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DDR = double data rate; FB-DIMM = fully buffered dual in-line memory module; FSB = front side bus; Intel® QPI = Intel® QuickPath Interconnect; Intel® UPI = Intel® UltraPath Interconnect

7 DDR3-1333 RAM running at 1666 MHz. 8 DDR4-2133 RAM running at 1866 MHz.
Results

Results are shown in Figure 1; actual runtimes are on the following page in Table 3. The Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 processor-based server completed the tests up to 1.37x faster than a previous-generation Intel Xeon processor E5-2699 v4-based server. For historical purposes, we also show that the latest processor-based server is up to 24x faster than a server based on the Intel Xeon processor 5160 and up to 86x faster than a server based on a single-core 64-bit Intel Xeon processor.

![24x Faster](image1)

![86x Faster](image2)

For more complete information about performance and benchmark results, visit [intel.com/benchmarks](http://intel.com/benchmarks). Performance results based on testing details and system configuration. See the full disclaimer and system configurations on page 6.
Conclusion

The new Intel Xeon processor Scalable family delivers significant improvements in throughput performance for Intel design workloads across a range of EDA applications in the data center.

Using a weighted performance measure of end-to-end EDA applications based on Intel silicon design tests, we found that the effective refresh ratio to replace servers based on the 8-core Intel Xeon processor E5-2600 series with servers based on the Intel Xeon processor Scalable family is approximately 3.2:1. Based on our performance assessment and our refresh cycle, we plan to deploy servers based on the new Intel Xeon processor Scalable family, which will enable us to achieve greater throughput while realizing operational benefits such as cost avoidance of data center construction and reduced power consumption.

Our test results suggest that other technical applications with large memory requirements — such as simulation and verification applications in the auto, aeronautical, oil and gas, and life sciences industries — could see similar throughput improvements, depending on their workload characteristics.

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The following system configurations and performance tests are discussed in this paper. For more information go to intel.com/performance.

Intel® Xeon® Platinum 8168 processor improves throughput up to 1.37x compared to a previous-generation Intel Xeon processor E5-2699 v4-based server. Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 Processor (24 cores, 2.7 GHz, 33 MB cache, 768 GB RAM, DDR4-2666 MHz) vs. Intel® Xeon® Processor E5-2699 v4 (2.2 GHz, 55 MB cache, 256 GB RAM, DDR4-2400 MHz).

Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 processor completed the workloads up to 86x faster than a server based on a 64-bit Intel Xeon processor. Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 Processor (24 cores, 2.7 GHz, 33 MB cache, 768 GB RAM, DDR4-2666 MHz) vs. 64-bit Intel® Xeon® Processor with 1 MB L2 cache (1 core, 3.6 GHz, 16 GB RAM, DDR2-400 MHz).

Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 processor-based server was up to 24x faster than a server based on the Intel Xeon processor 5160. Intel Xeon Platinum 8168 Processor (24 cores, 2.7 GHz, 33 MB cache, 768 GB RAM, DDR4-2666 MHz) vs. Intel® Xeon® Processor 5160 (2 cores, 3.0 GHz, 4 MB cache, 16 GB RAM, FB-DIMM/DDR2-667 MHz).

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