

**Lecture 1:**

# **Why Parallelism? Why Efficiency?**

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**Parallel Computer Architecture and Programming  
CMU 15-418/15-618, Spring 2021**

# Hi!



**Brian Railing**

**Plus ...**

**An evolving collection of teaching assistants**



**Nathan Beckmann**

# Getting into the Class

- **Status (Mon Feb 1, 10:00)**
  - **151 students enrolled**
  - **27 on wait list**
  - **160 max. enrollment**
  - **~10 slots**
- **If you are registered**
  - **Do Assignment 1**
    - **Due Feb 12**
  - **If find too challenging, then please drop by Feb 12**
- **Clearing Wait List**
  - **Complete Assignment 1 by Feb 8, 23:00**
  - **No Autolab account required**
  - **We will enroll top-performing students**
  - ***It's that simple!***
  - **You will know by Feb 12**

**What will you be doing in this course?**

# Assignments

- **Four programming assignments**
  - **First assignment is done individually, the rest will be done in pairs**
  - **Each uses a different parallel programming environment**
  - **Each also involves measurement, analysis, and tuning**



**Assignment 1: SIMD and multi-core parallelism**



**Assignment 2: CUDA programming on NVIDIA GPUs**



**Assignment 3: Parallel Programming via a Shared-Address Space Model**



**Assignment 4: Parallel Programming via a Message Passing Model**

# Final project

- **6-week self-selected final project**
- **Performed in groups (by default, 2 people per group)**
- **Keep thinking about your project ideas starting TODAY!**
- **Poster session at end of term**
  
- **Check out previous projects:**

<http://15418.courses.cs.cmu.edu/spring2016/competition>

<http://15418.courses.cs.cmu.edu/fall2017/article/10>

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/academic/class/15418-s18/www/15418-s18-projects.pdf>

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/academic/class/15418-s19/www/15418-s19-projects.pdf>

# Exercises

- **Five\* homework exercises**
  - **Scheduled throughout term**
  - **Designed to prepare you for the exams**
  - **Peer graded**
    - **Connecting with peers, learning by analyzing answers**
    - **1/3 effort**
    - **1/3 max of three peer grades**
    - **1/3 completing three peer grades**

\* Could be more than five exercises. Length will scale, so more assignments will be shorter assignments.

# Grades

**40% Programming assignments (4)**

**24% Exams (2)**

**25% Final project**

**11% Quizzes and Exercises**

**Each student gets up to five late days on programming assignments (see syllabus for details)**



# Getting started

- **Visit course home page**
  - **<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~418/>**
- **Sign up for the course on Piazza**
  - **<http://piazza.com/cmu/spring2021/15418618>**
- **Textbook**
  - **There is no course textbook, but please see web site for suggested references**
- **Find a Partner**
  - **Assignments 2–4, final project**

# Regarding the class meeting times

- **Class MWF 4:00-5:20**
  - **Lectures (mostly)**
  - **Some designated “Recitations”**
    - **Targeted toward things you need to know for an upcoming assignment**
- **No classes last part of the term**
  - **Let you focus on projects**

# Collaboration (Acceptable & Unacceptable)

- **Do**

- **Become familiar with course policy**

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~418/academicintegrity.html>

- **Talk with instructors, TAs, partner**

- **Brainstorm with others**

- **Use general information on WWW**

- **Don't**

- **Copy or provide code to anyone**

- **Use information specific to 15-418/618 on WWW**

- **Leave your code in accessible place**

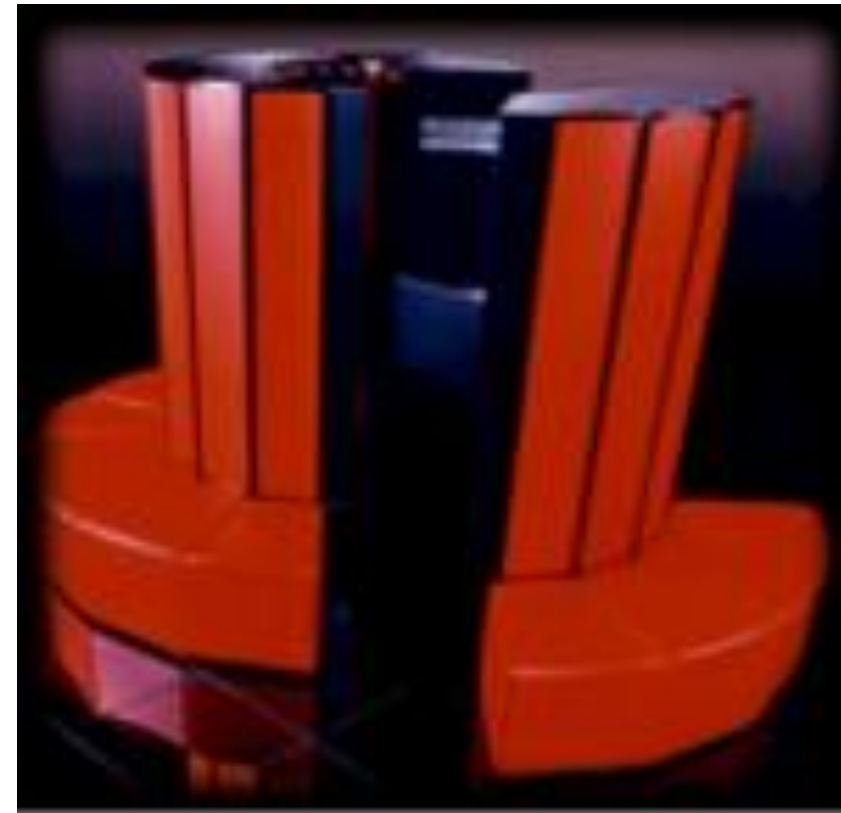
- **Now or in the future**

# A Brief History of Parallel Computing

- Initial Focus (starting in 1970s): “Supercomputers” for Scientific Computing



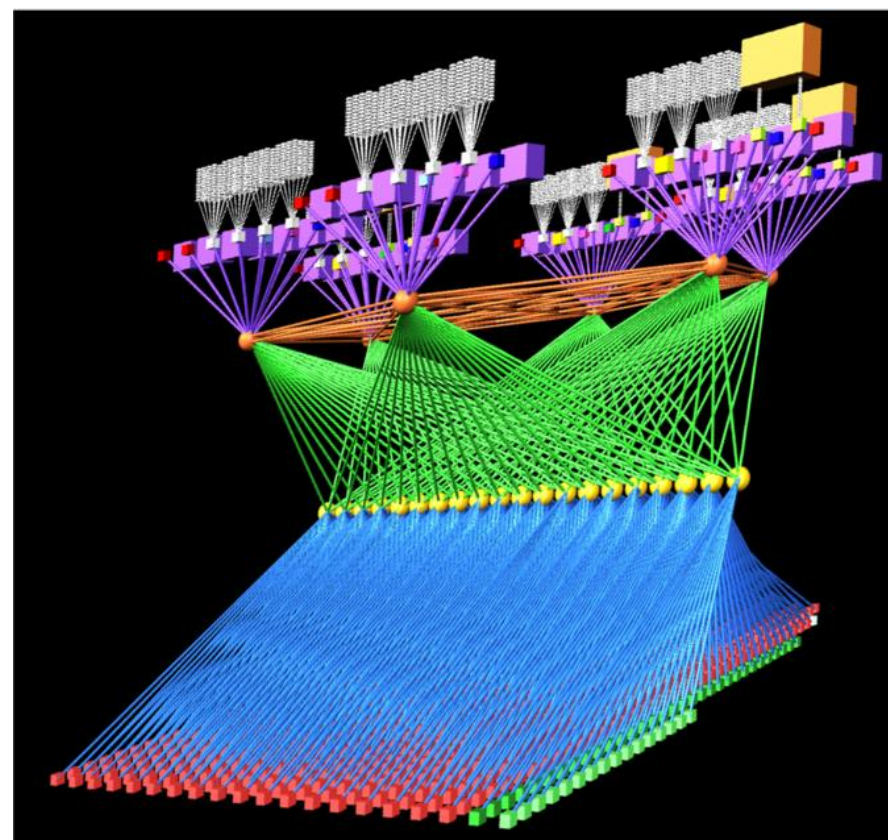
**C.mmp at CMU (1971)**  
**16 PDP-11 processors**



**Cray XMP (circa 1984)**  
**4 vector processors**



**Thinking Machines CM-2 (circa 1987)**  
**65,536 1-bit processors +**  
**2048 floating-point co-processors**



**800+ compute nodes**  
**Heterogenous Structure**

← **Bridges at the Pittsburgh  
Supercomputer Center**



# A Brief History of Parallel Computing

- Initial Focus (starting in 1970s): “Supercomputers” for Scientific Computing
- Another Driving Application (starting in early ‘90s): **Databases**
  - Especially, handling millions of transactions per second for web services



**Sun Enterprise 10000** (circa **1997**)  
**16** UltraSPARC-II processors



**Oracle Supercluster M7** (**today**)  
**4 X 32-core** SPARC M2 processors

- **RIP 2019. Killed by cloud computing**



# A Brief History of Parallel Computing

- **Cloud computing (2000–present)**
- **Build out massive centers with many, simple processors**
  - **Connected via LAN technology**
- **Program using distributed-system models**

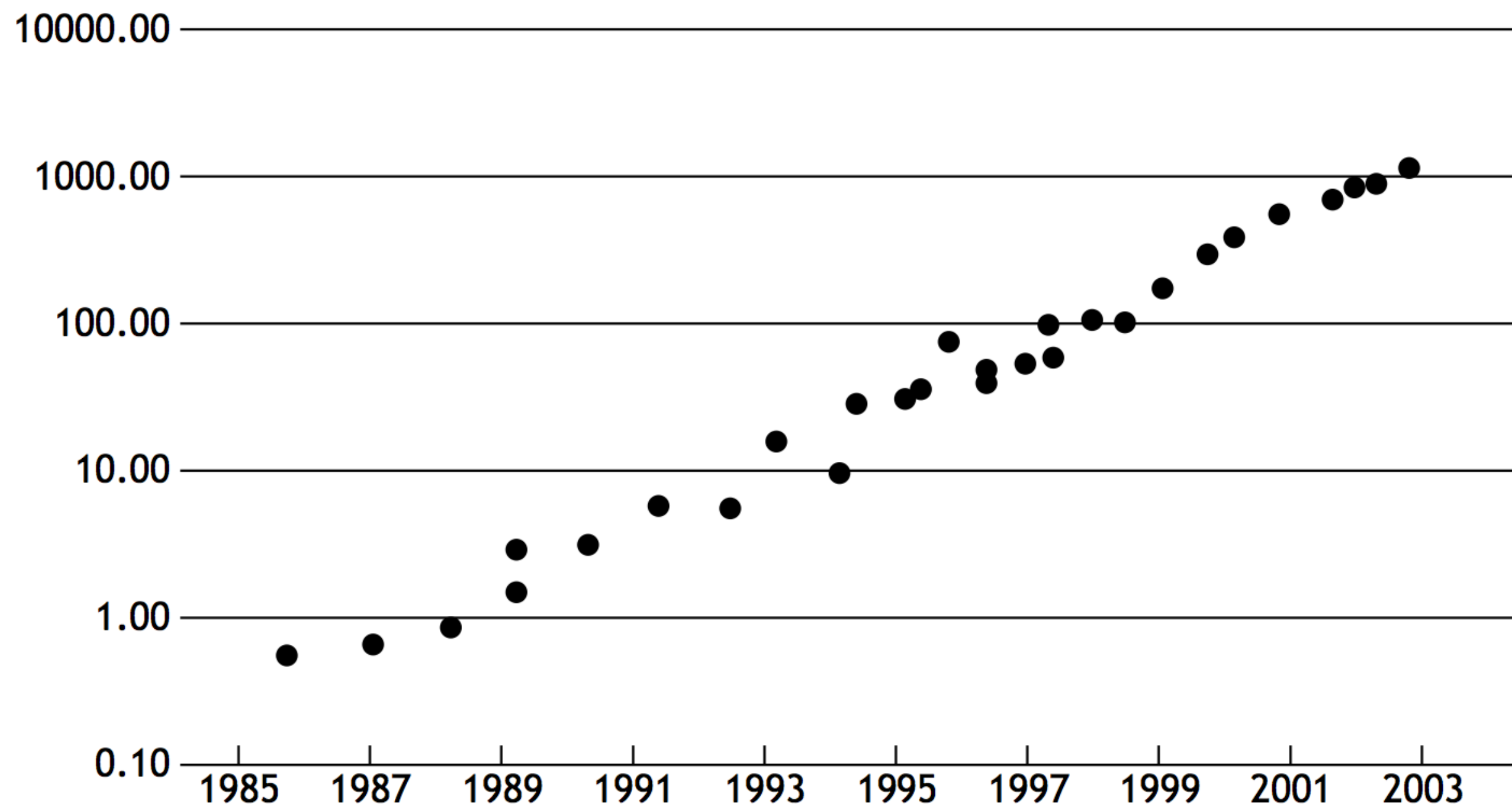


- **Not really the subject of this course (take 15-440)**



# Setting Some Context

- Before we continue our multiprocessor story, let's pause to consider:
  - Q: what had been happening with single-processor performance?
- A: since forever, they had been getting **exponentially faster**
  - Why?



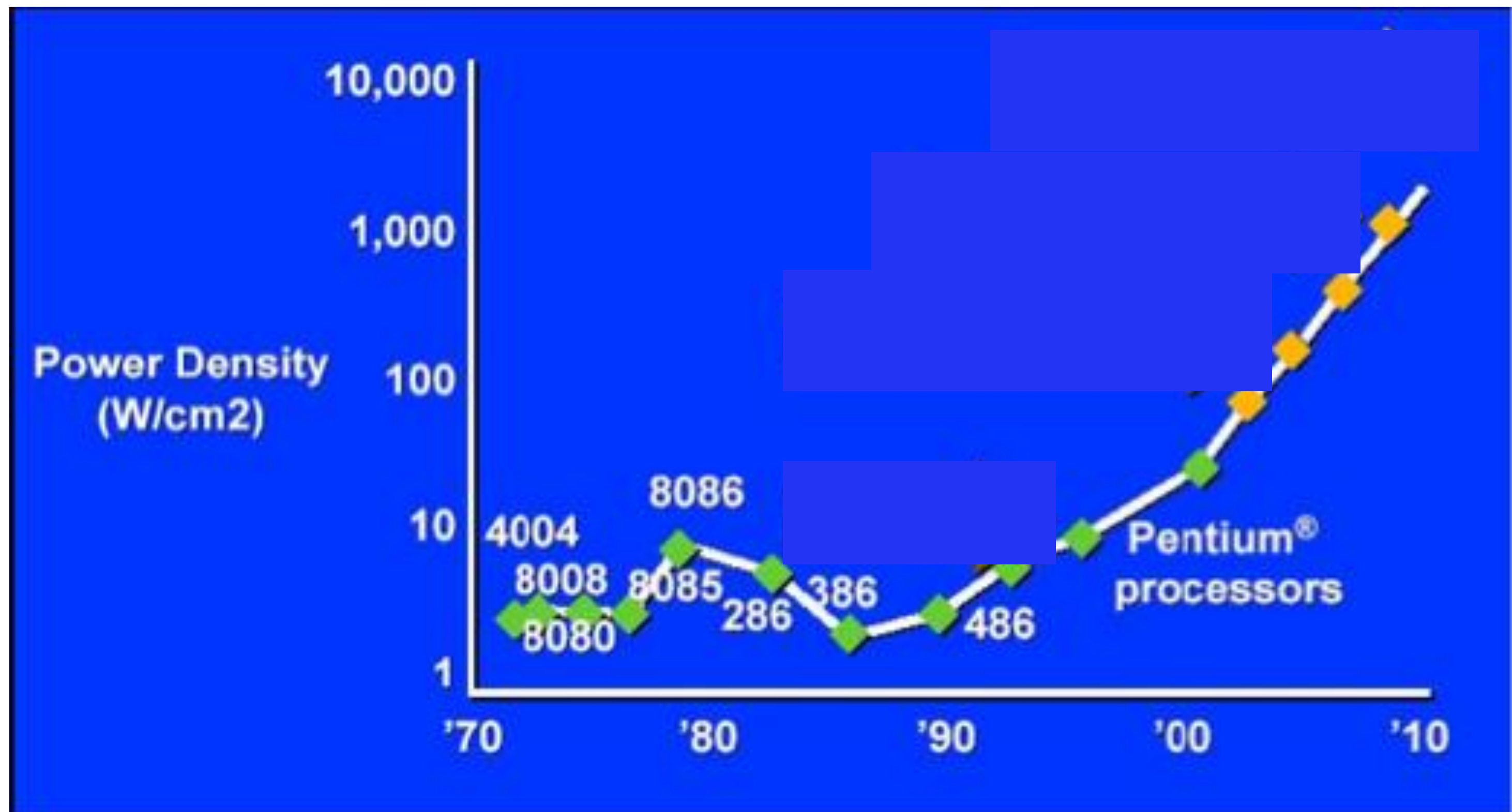
# A Brief History of Processor Performance

- **Wider data paths**
  - 4 bit → 8 bit → 16 bit → 32 bit → 64 bit
- **More efficient pipelining**
  - e.g., 3.5 Cycles Per Instruction (CPI) → 1.1 CPI
- **Exploiting instruction-level parallelism (ILP)**
  - “Superscalar” processing: e.g., issue up to 4 instructions/cycle
  - “Out-of-order” processing: extract parallelism from instruction stream
- **Faster clock rates**
  - e.g., 10 MHz → 200 MHz → 3 GHz
- **During the 80s and 90s: large exponential performance gains**
  - and then...



# A Brief History of Parallel Computing

- Initial Focus (starting in 1970s): “Supercomputers” for Scientific Computing
- Another Driving Application (starting in early ‘90s): Databases
- Inflection point in 2004: Intel hits the Power Density Wall



Pat Gelsinger, ISSCC 2001

# From the New York Times

## Intel's Big Shift After Hitting Technical Wall

The warning came first from a group of hobbyists that tests the speeds of computer chips. This year, the group discovered that the Intel Corporation's newest microprocessor was running slower and hotter than its predecessor.

What they had stumbled upon was a major threat to Intel's longstanding approach to dominating the semiconductor industry - relentlessly raising the clock speed of its chips.

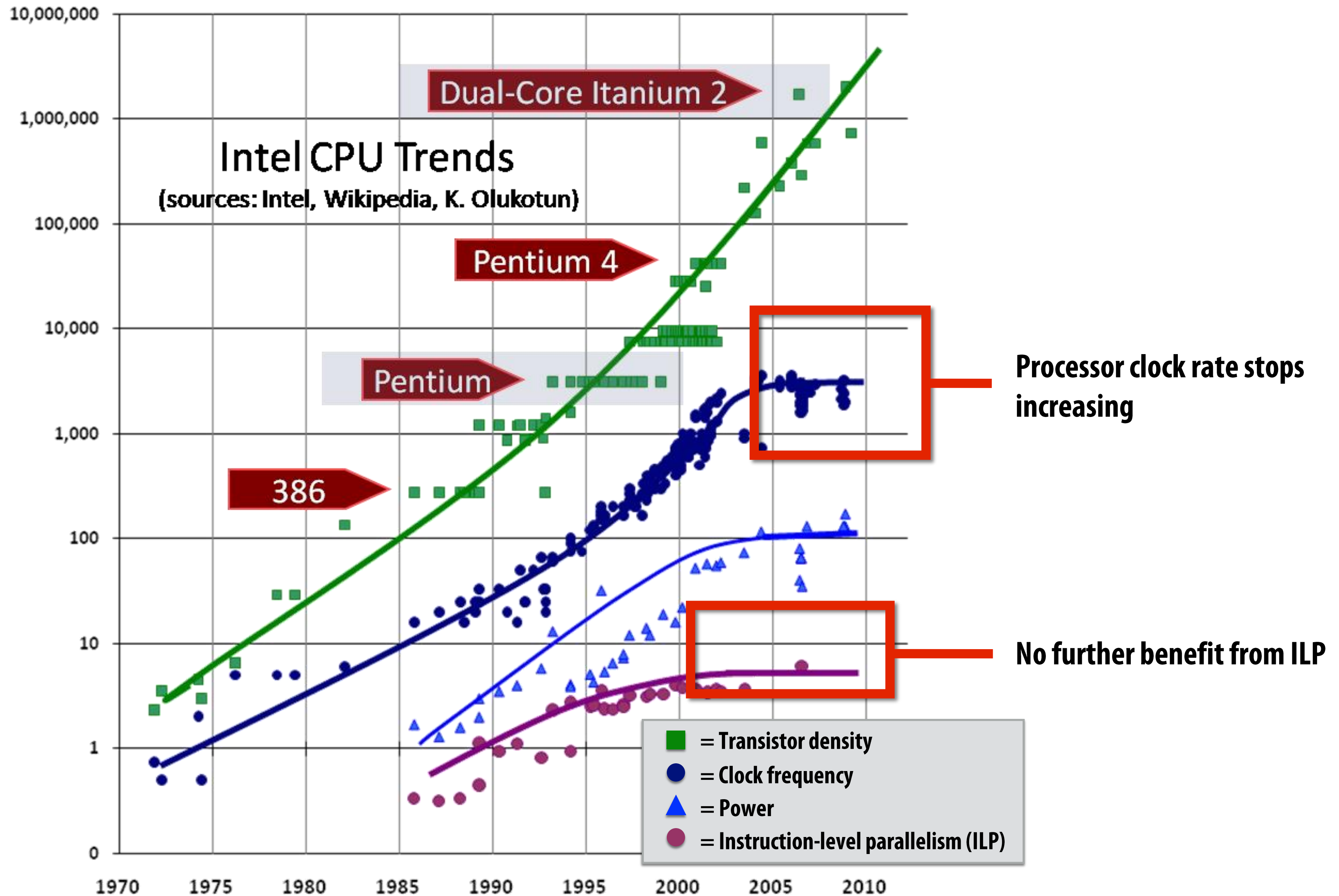
Then two weeks ago, Intel, the world's largest chip maker, publicly acknowledged that it had hit a "thermal wall" on its microprocessor line. As a result, the company is changing its product strategy and disbanding one of its most advanced design groups. Intel also said that it would abandon two advanced chip development projects, code-named Tejas and Jayhawk.

Now, Intel is embarked on a course already adopted by some of its major rivals: obtaining more computing power by stamping multiple processors on a single chip rather than straining to increase the speed of a single processor.

...

John Markoff, New York Times, May 17, 2004

# ILP tapped out + end of frequency scaling



# Programmer's Perspective on Performance

Question: **How do you make your program run faster?**

Answer before 2004:

- **Just wait 6 months, and buy a new machine!**
- *(Or if you're really obsessed, you can learn about parallelism.)*

Answer after 2004:

- **You need to write fast / parallel software.**



# Parallel Machines Today

## Examples from Apple's product line:



**Mac Pro**  
**28 Intel Xeon W cores**



**iMac Pro**  
**18 Intel Xeon W cores**



**MacBook Pro Retina 15"**  
**8 Intel Core i9 cores**



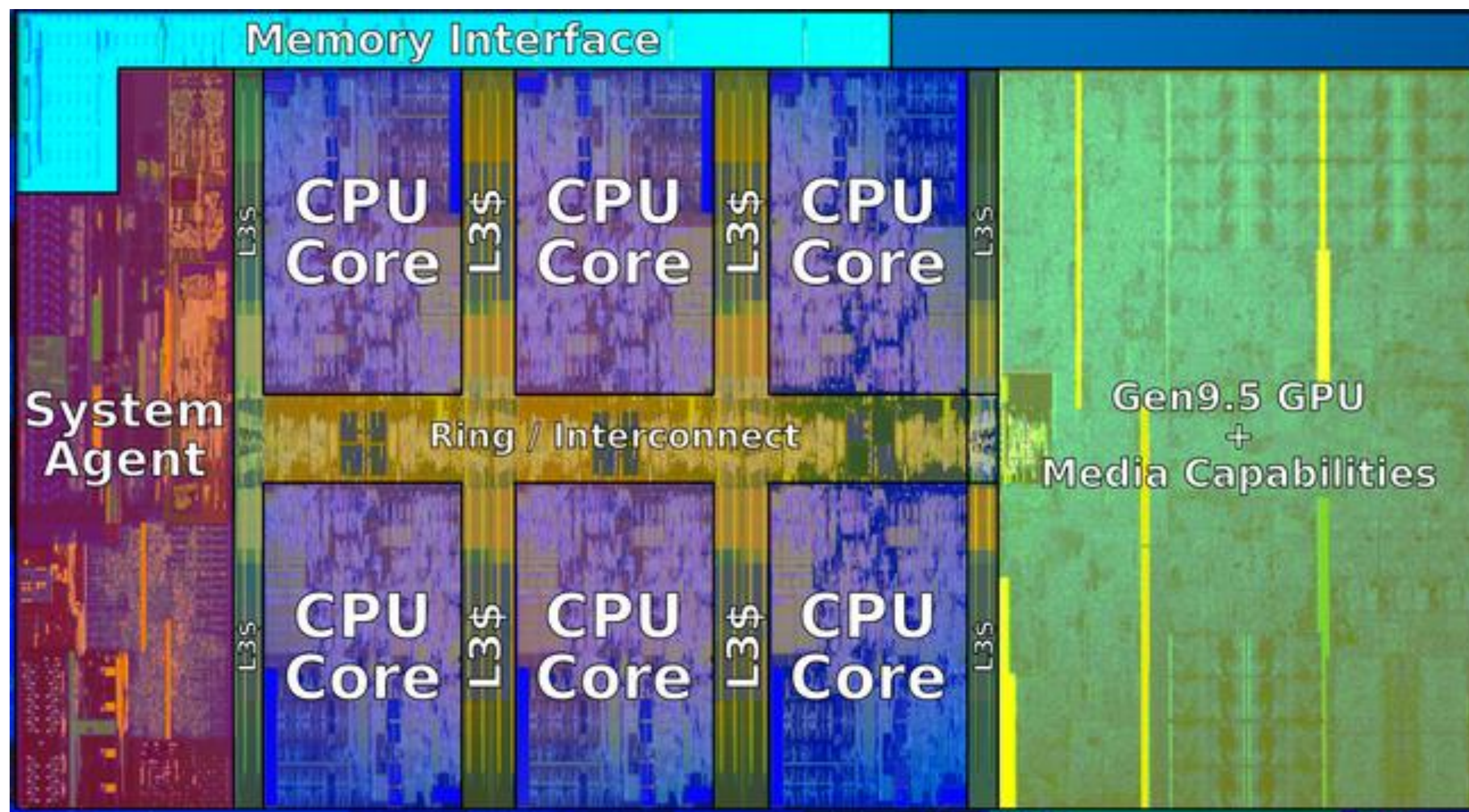
**iPhone XS**  
**6 CPU cores**  
**(2 fast +**  
**4 low power)**  
**6 GPU cores**

*(images from [apple.com](https://www.apple.com))*



# Intel Coffee Lake Core i9 (2019)

6-core CPU + multi-core GPU integrated on one chip

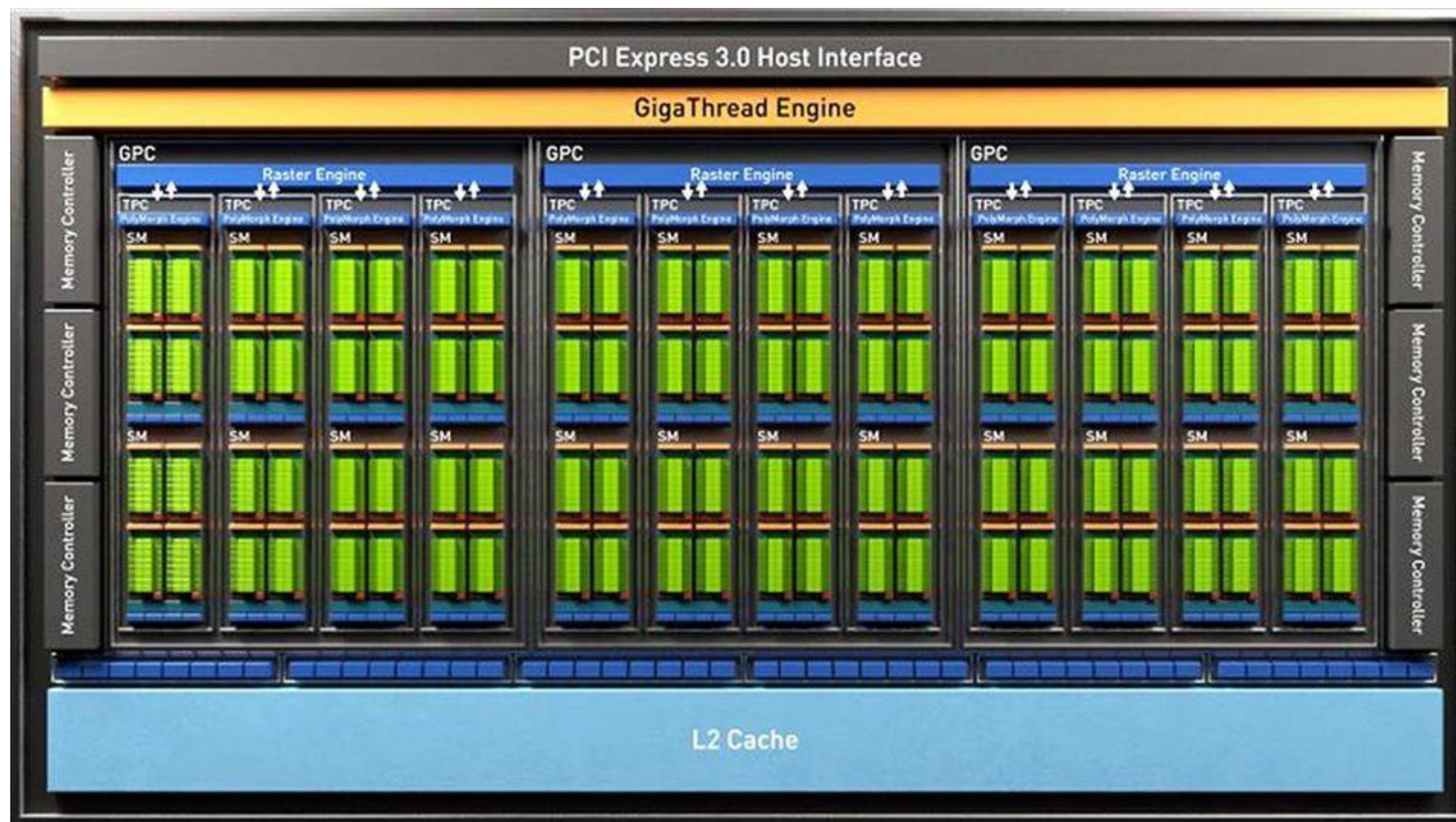




# NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1660 Ti GPU (2019)

24 major processing blocks

(but much, much more parallelism available... details coming soon)





# Mobile parallel processing

Power constraints heavily influence design of mobile systems



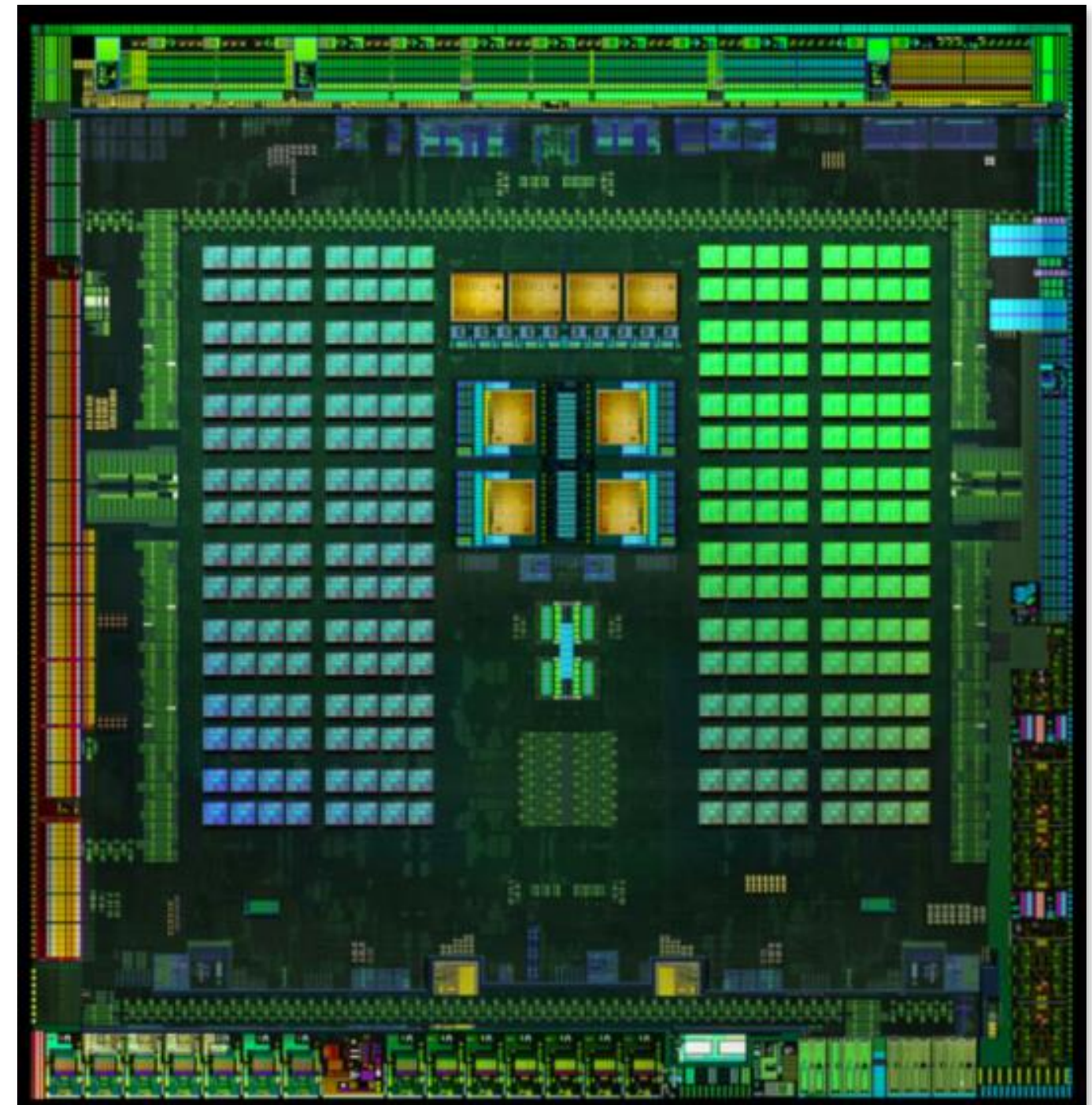
**Apple A12: (in iPhone XR)**

**4 CPU cores**

**4 GPU cores**

**Neural net engine**

**+ much more**



**NVIDIA Tegra K1:**

**Quad-core ARM A57 CPU + 4 ARM A53 CPUs +**

**NVIDIA GPU + image processor...**



# Supercomputing

- **Today: clusters of multi-core CPUs + GPUs**
- **Oak Ridge National Laboratory: Summit (#1 supercomputer in world)**
  - **4,608 nodes**
  - **Each with two 22-core CPUs + 6 GPUs**



# Supercomputers vs. Cloud Systems

## Supercomputers

## Data Center Clusters

### Target Applications

- Few, big tasks

- Many small tasks

### Hardware

- Customized

- Consumer grade

- Optimized for reliability

- Optimized for low cost

- Low latency interconnect

- Throughput-optimized interconnect

### Run-Time System

- Minimal

- Provides reliability

- Static scheduling

- Dynamic allocation

### Application Programming

- Low-level, processor-centric model

- High level, data-centric model

- Programmer manages resources

- Let run-time system manage resources

# Supercomputer / Data Center Overlap

- **Supercomputer features in data centers**
  - **Data center computers sometimes used to solve problem**
    - **E.g., learn neural network for language translation**
  - **Data center computers sometimes equipped with GPUs**
- **Data center features in supercomputers**
  - **Also used to process many small–medium jobs**

# **What is a parallel computer?**

# One common definition

A parallel computer is a **collection of processing elements** that **cooperate to solve problems quickly**



**We care about performance \***  
**We care about efficiency**

**We're going to use multiple  
processors to get it**

# **DEMO 1**

**(This semester's first parallel program)**

# DEMO 1 – Remote Version

7

15

4

21

6

18

9

2

11

5

# Speedup

**One major motivation of using parallel processing: achieve a speedup**

**For a given problem:**

$$\text{speedup( using } P \text{ processors )} = \frac{\text{execution time (using 1 processor)}}{\text{execution time (using } P \text{ processors)}}$$



# Class observations from demo 1

- **Communication limited the maximum speedup achieved**
  - In the demo, the communication was telling each other the partial sums
- **Minimizing the cost of communication improves speedup**
  - Moving students (“processors”) closer together (or let them shout)

# **DEMO 2**

**(scaling up to two “processors”)**

# Demo 2 – Remote Version

- **Pick Left or Right**

# Demo 2 – Remote Version

**Left:**

**5**

**2**

**8**

**11**

**4**

**9**

**12**

**Right:**

**3**

**7**

**18**

**4**

# **Class observations from demo 2**

- **Imbalance in work assignment limited speedup**
  - **Some students (“processors”) ran out work to do (went idle), while others were still working on their assigned task**
- **Improving the distribution of work improved speedup**

# **DEMO 3**

**(massively parallel execution)**

# Class observations from demo 3

- **The problem I just gave you has a significant amount of communication compared to computation**
- **Communication costs can dominate a parallel computation, severely limiting speedup**

# Course theme 1:

## Designing and writing parallel programs ... that scale!

- **Parallel thinking**
  1. **Decomposing work into pieces that can safely be performed in parallel**
  2. **Assigning work to processors**
  3. **Managing communication/synchronization between the processors so that it does not limit speedup**
  
- **Abstractions/mechanisms for performing the above tasks**
  - **Writing code in popular parallel programming languages**



# Course theme 2:

## Parallel computer hardware implementation: how parallel computers work

- **Mechanisms used to implement abstractions efficiently**
  - Performance characteristics of implementations
  - Design trade-offs: performance vs. convenience vs. cost
- **Why do I need to know about hardware?**
  - Because the characteristics of the machine really matter  
(recall speed of communication issues in earlier demos)
  - Because you care about efficiency and performance  
(you are writing parallel programs after all!)

# Course theme 3:

## Thinking about efficiency

- **FAST  $\neq$  EFFICIENT**
- **Just because your program runs faster on a parallel computer, it does not mean it is using the hardware efficiently**
  - **Is 2x speedup on computer with 10 processors a good result?**
- **Programmer's perspective: make use of provided machine capabilities**
- **HW designer's perspective: choosing the right capabilities to put in system (performance/cost, cost = silicon area?, power?, etc.)**

# Fundamental Shift in CPU Design Philosophy

## Before 2004:

- within the chip area budget, maximize **performance**
  - increasingly aggressive speculative execution for ILP

## After 2004:

- **area *within* the chip matters** (limits # of cores/chip):
  - maximize **performance per area**
- **power consumption** is critical (battery life, data centers)
  - maximize **performance per Watt**
- upshot: major focus on **efficiency** of cores

# Summary

- **Today, single-thread performance is improving very slowly**
  - **To run programs significantly faster, programs must utilize multiple processing elements**
  - **Which means you need to know how to write parallel code**
- **Writing parallel programs can be challenging**
  - **Requires problem partitioning, communication, synchronization**
  - **Knowledge of machine characteristics is important**
- **I suspect you will find that modern computers have tremendously more processing power than you might realize, if you just use it!**
- **Welcome to 15-418!**