

BFQ, Multiqueue-Deadline, or Kyber?

Performance Characterization of Linux Storage Schedulers in the NVMe Era

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This paper won the **best paper award** in ICPE'24.

Background



kafka



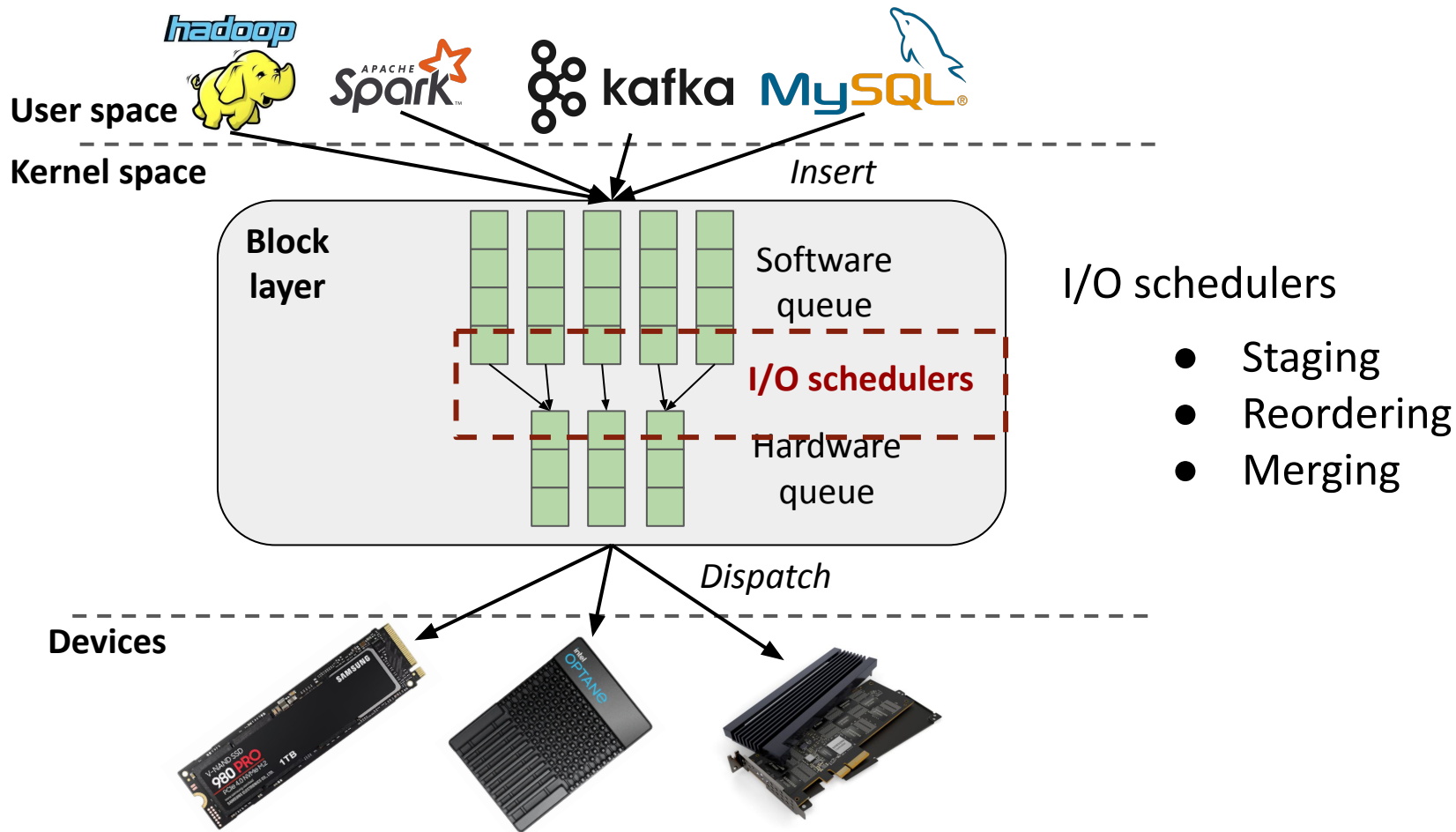
QoS guarantees

- Latency
- Throughput



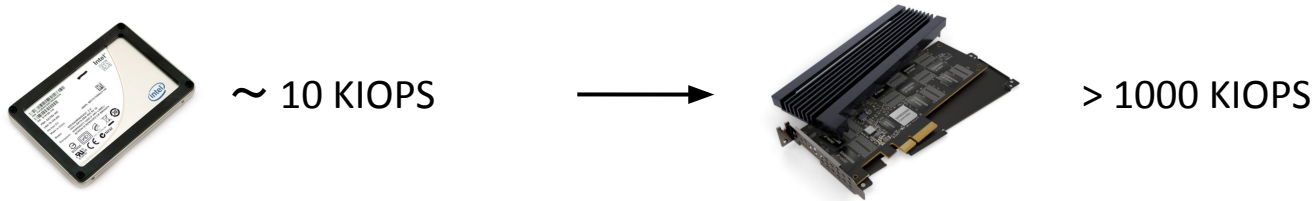
Up to millions of IOPS
< 10 μ s latency

Background: I/O Schedulers

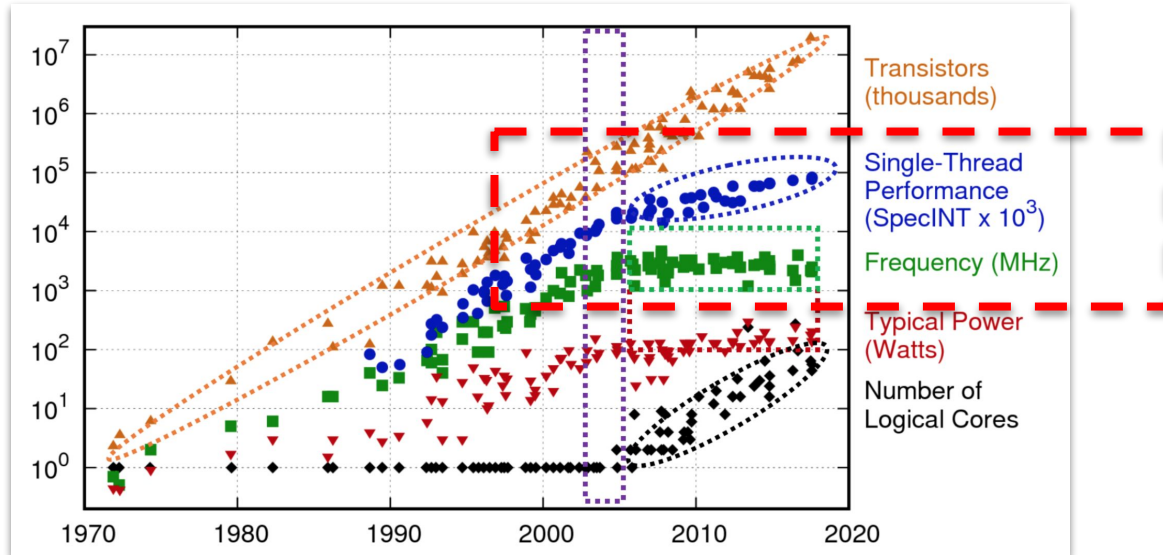


Background: What has Changed?

1. Huge improvement of storage performance.



2. Improvement of CPU performance stalls.



Background: What has Changed?

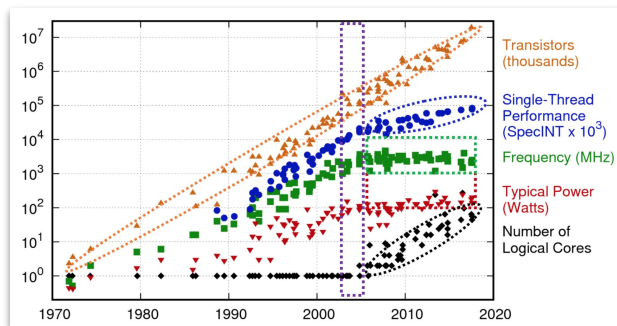
1. Huge improvement of storage performance.



~ 10 KIOPS



2. Improvement of CPU performance stalls.



3. Research on I/O schedulers for these SSDs^[1-4]

D2FQ: Device-Direct Fair Queueing for NVMe SSDs

Jiwoo Woo, Minwoo Ahn, Gyun Lee, Jinkyu Jeong
Sungkyunkwan University

Rearchitecting Linux Storage Stack for μ s Latency and High Throughput

Jaehyun Hwang, Midul Vuppapapati, Simon Peter, Rachi Agarwal
Cornell University, Cornell University, UT Austin, Cornell University

K2: Work-Constraining Scheduling of NVMe-Attached Storage

Till Miemietz, Hannes Weisbach, Michael Reitzsch, Hermann Härtig
Operating Systems Group, Burkhausen Institut

Multi-Queue Fair Queueing

Mohammad Hedayati, Kai Shen, Michael L. Scott, Mike Marty
University of Rochester, Google, University of Rochester, Google

Abstract

Modern high-speed devices (e.g., network adapters, storage, accelerators) use new host interfaces, which expose multiple software queues directly to the device. These multi-queue interfaces allow mutually distrusting applications to access the device without any cross-core interaction, enabling throughput in the order of millions of IOPs on multicore systems. Unfortunately, while independent device access is scalable, it also introduces a new problem: unfairness. Mechanisms that were used to provide fairness for older devices are no longer tenable in the wake of multi-queue design, and straightforward attempts to re-introduce it would require cross-core synchronization that undermines the scalability for which multiple queues were designed.

To address these challenges, we present Multi-Queue Fair Queueing (MQFQ), the first fair, work-conserving scheduler suitable for multi-queue systems. Specifically, we (1) reformulate a classical fair queueing algorithm to accommodate multi-queue designs, and (2) describe a scalable implementation that bounds potential unfairness while minimizing synchronization overhead. Our implementation of MQFQ in Linux 4.15 demonstrates both fairness and high throughput. Evaluation with an NVMe over RDMA fabric (NVMD) device shows that MQFQ can reach up to 3.1 Million IOPs on a single machine—20x higher than the state-of-the-art Linux Budget Fair Queueing. Compared to a system with no fairness, MQFQ reduces the slowdown caused by an antagonist from 3.78x to 1.33x for the FlashX workload and from 6.57x to 1.03x for the Aerospike workload (2x is considered “fair slowdown”).

1 Introduction

Recent years have seen the proliferation of very fast devices for I/O, networking, and computing acceleration. Commodity solid-state disks (e.g., Intel Optane DC P4800X [22] or Samsung PM1725a [33]) can perform at or near a million I/O operations per second. System-area networks (e.g., InfiniBand) can sustain several million remote operations per second over a single link [25]. RDMA delivers data across fab-

ric within a few microseconds. GPUs and machine learning accelerators may offload computations that run just a few microseconds at a time [30]. At the same time, the proliferation of multicore processors has necessitated architectures tuned for independent I/O across multiple hardware threads [4, 36]. These technological changes have shifted performance bottlenecks from hardware resources to the software stacks that manage them. In response, it is now common to adopt a multi-queue architecture in which each hardware thread owns a dedicated I/O queue, directly exposed to the device, giving it an independent path over which to send and receive requests. Examples of this architecture include multi-queue SSDs [22, 38, 50] and NICs [42], and software like the Windows and Linux NVMe drivers, the Linux multi-queue block layer [5], SCSI multi-queue support [8], and data-plane OSes [4, 36]. A recent study [51] demonstrated up to 8x performance improvement for YCSB on Cassandra, using multi-queue NVMe instead of single-queue SATA.

To support the full bandwidth of modern devices, multi-queue I/O systems are designed to incur no cache-coherence traffic in the common case when sending and receiving requests. It’s easy to see why: a device supporting millions of IOPs sees each new request in a fraction of a microsecond—a time interval that allows for fewer than 10 cross-core cache coherence misses, and is comparable to the latency of a single inter-processor interrupt (IPI). Serializing requests at such high speeds is infeasible now, and will only become more so as device speeds continue to increase while single-core performance stays relatively flat. As a result, designers have concluded that conventional fair-share I/O schedulers, including fair queueing approaches [35, 40], which reorder requests in a single queue, are unattractive for modern fast devices.

Unfortunately, by cutting out the OS resource scheduler, direct multi-queue device access undermines the OS’s traditional responsibility for fairness and performance isolation. While I/O devices (e.g., SSD firmware, NICs) may multiplex hardware queues, their support for fairness is hampered by their inability to reason in terms of system-level policies for resource principals (applications, virtual machines, or Linux

block layer of
its three steps
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I/O scheduling
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The Linux I/O Schedulers

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No plug-and-play implementations.

The most available I/O schedulers?



Linux I/O schedulers!

block layer of
keeps three steps
(Figure 1a).
IO scheduling
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the storage de-
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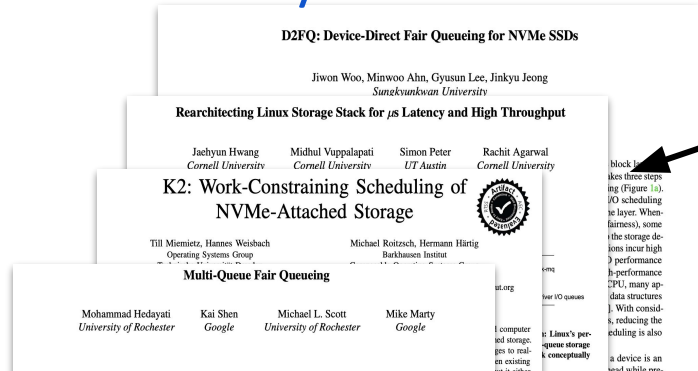
fair queuing
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The Linux I/O Schedulers



No plug-and-play implementations.

The most available I/O schedulers?



Linux I/O schedulers!

None

- Least overhead.
- No performance guarantees.

BFQ

- Fair-share between apps.
- Complex, high overhead.

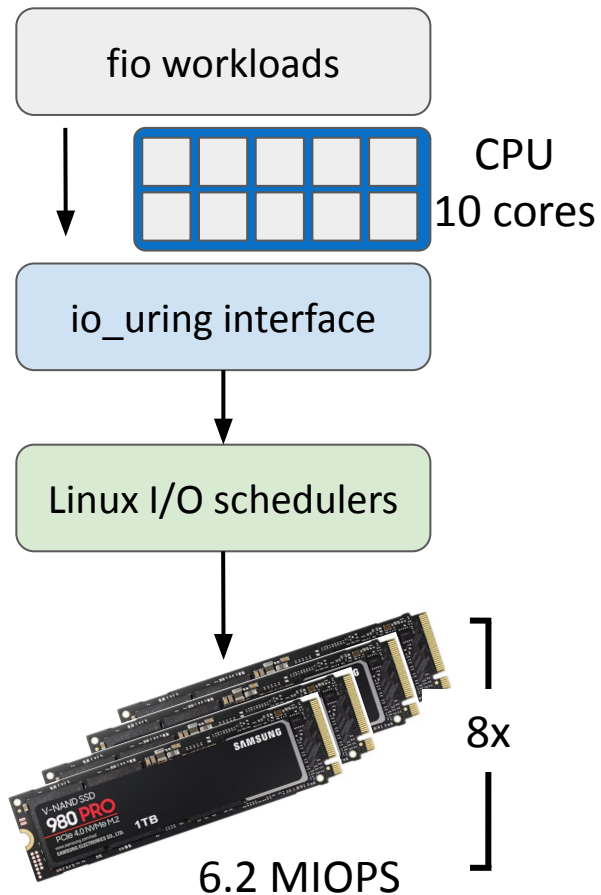
Kyber

- Designed for fast SSDs.
- Balancing between read and write.

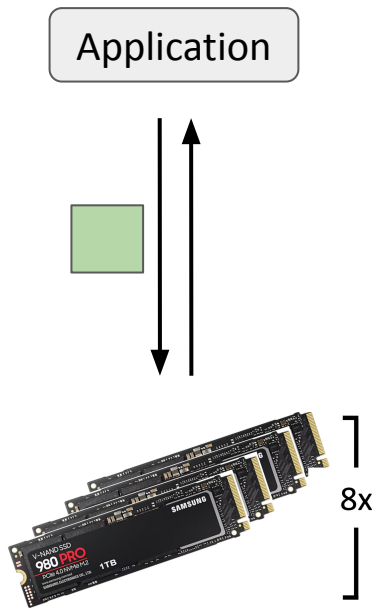
MQ-Deadline

- Issues request with increasing sector order.
- Soft latency deadlines.

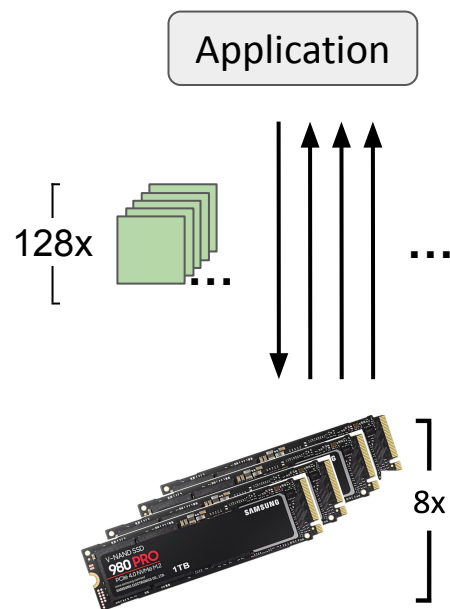
Setup



Latency-sensitive application (L-app)

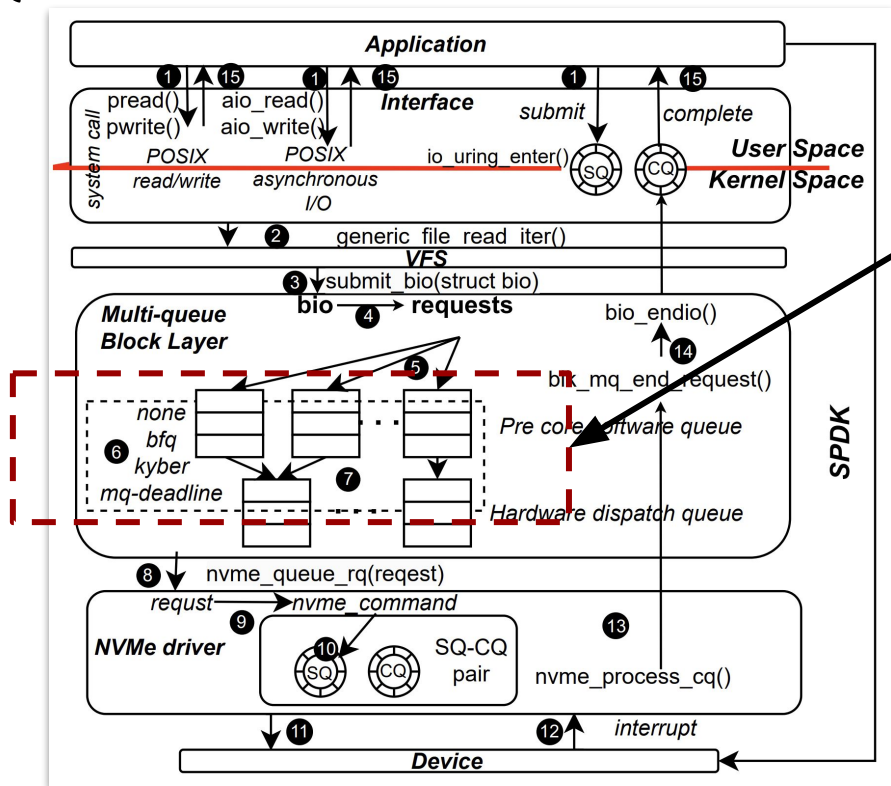


Throughput-bound application (T-app)



Research Questions

RQ1: Overhead



I/O schedulers

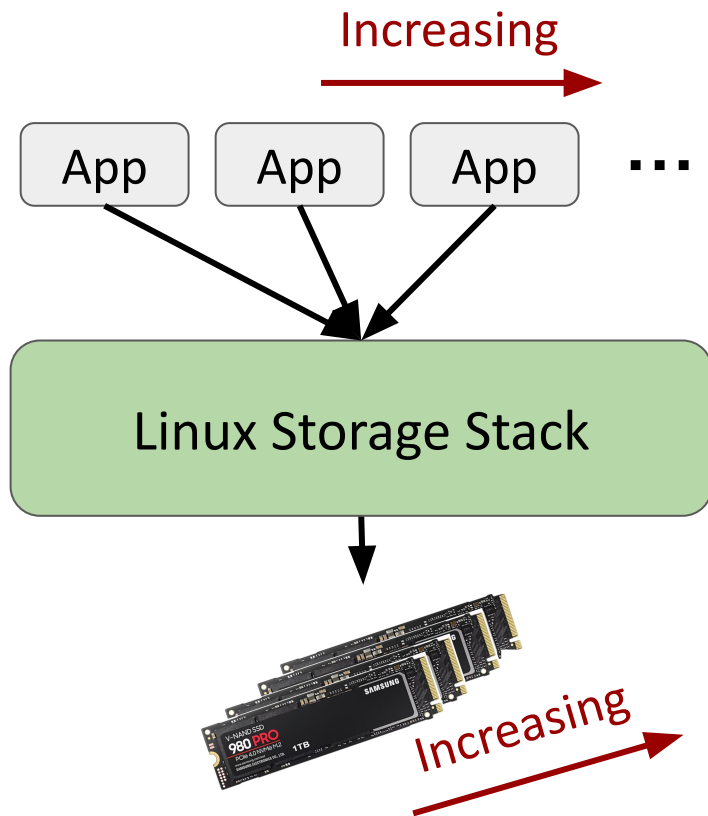
- Latency?
- Throughput?

Research Questions

RQ1: Overhead

- Latency?
- Throughput?

RQ2: Scalability



Research Questions

RQ1: Overhead

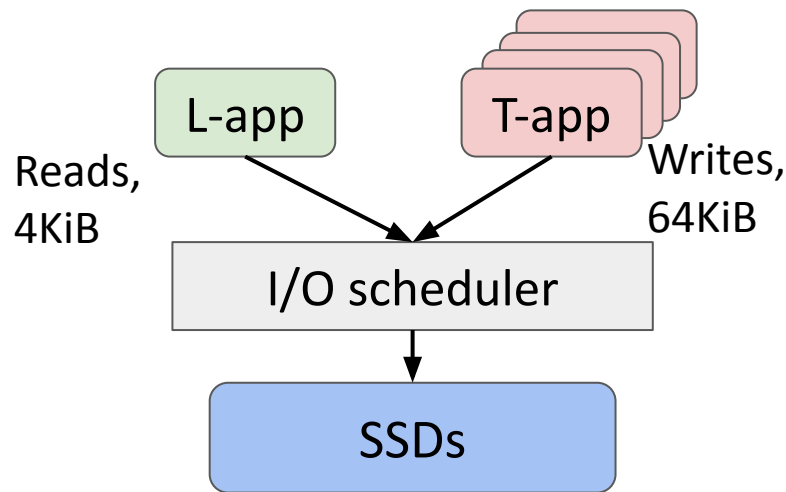
- Latency?
- Throughput?

RQ2: Scalability

- L-apps.
- T-apps.
- SSDs.

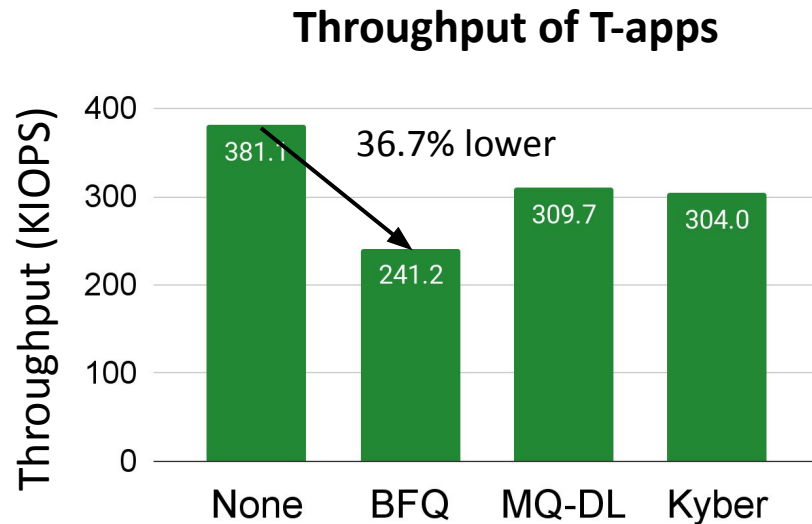
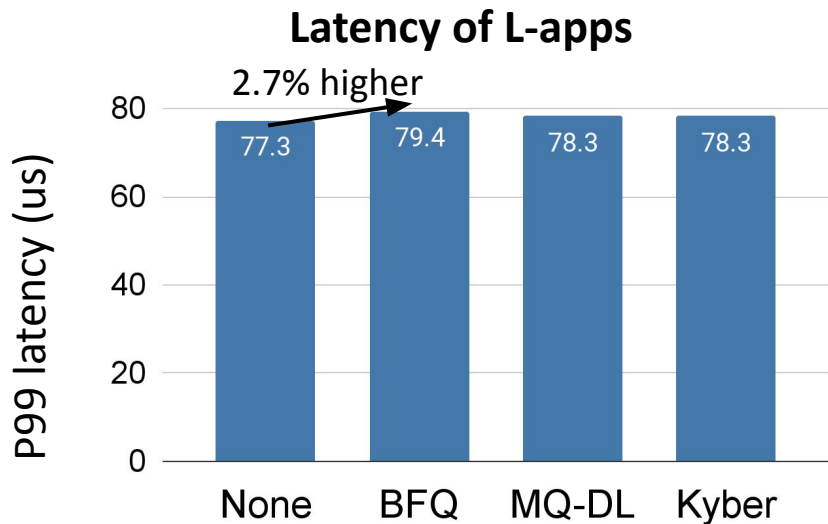
RQ3: Interference

- Read L-app + increasing write T-apps.



RQ1. Overheads

Overhead



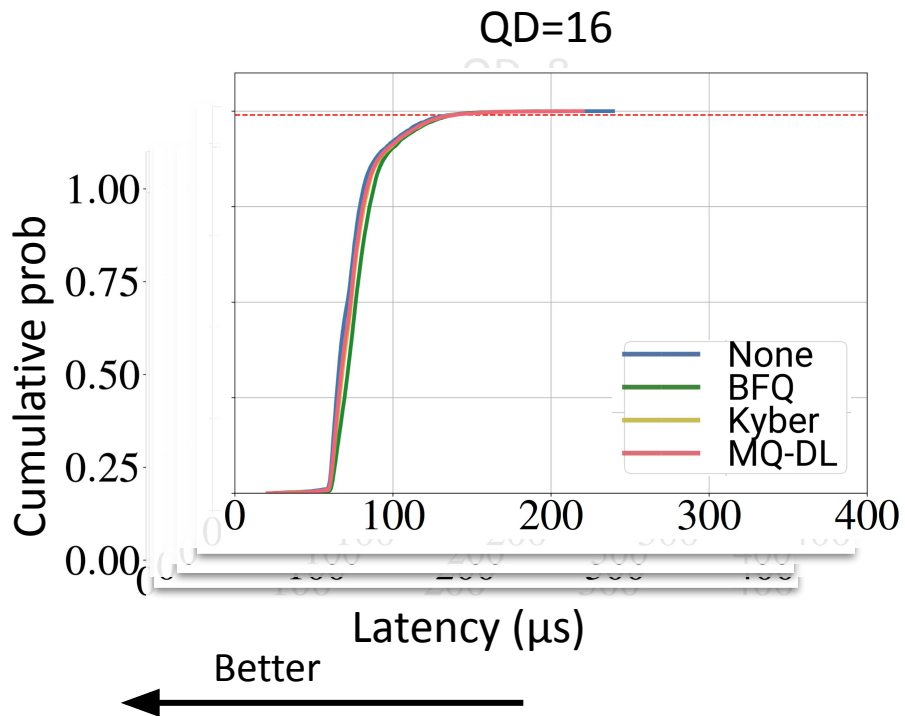
Slightly higher latency, up to 2.7% higher latency.

Significantly lower throughput, up to 36.7% lower.

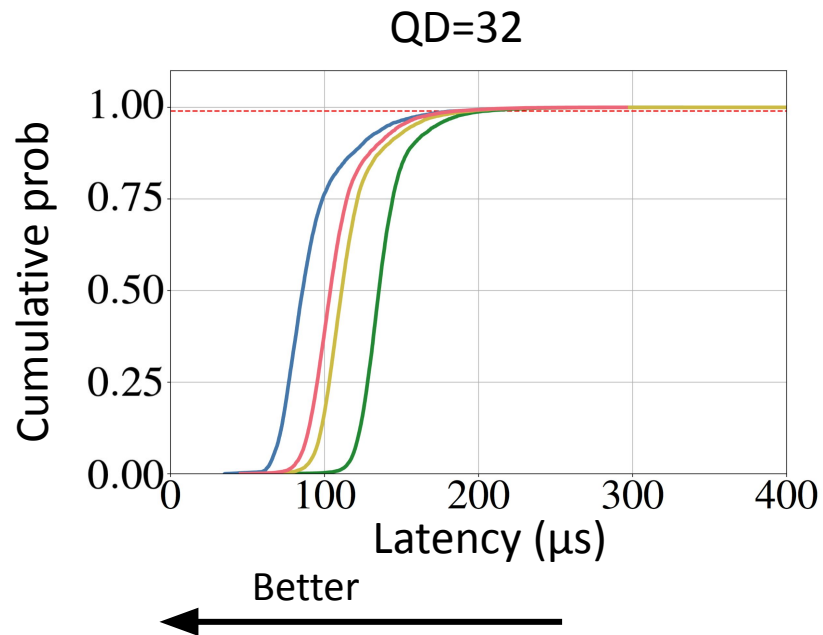
I/O schedulers → Significantly higher throughput overhead.

RQ2. Scalability

Scalability of L-apps

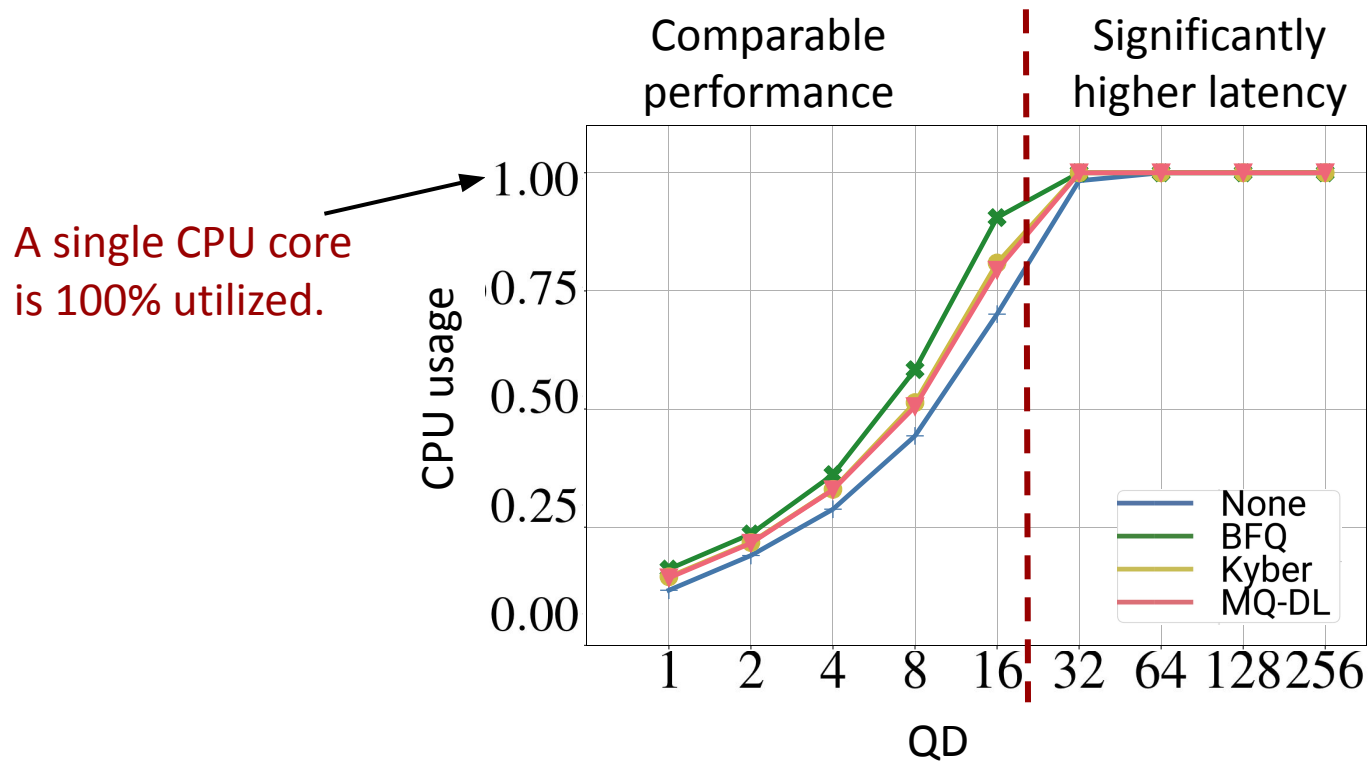


Higher workload \rightarrow higher overhead.



Why?

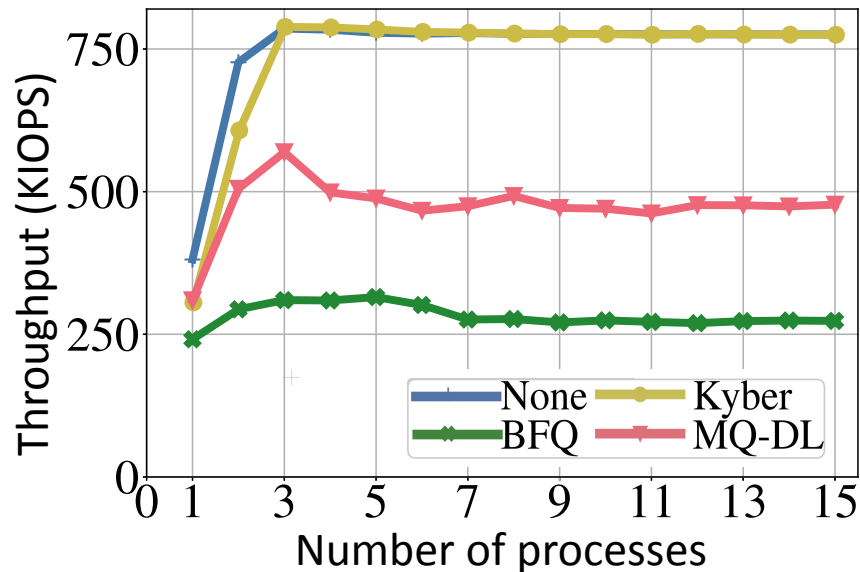
Scalability of L-apps: CPU Usage



When CPU bottlenecked → higher latency overheads.

Scalability of T-apps: 1 SSD vs. 8 SSDs

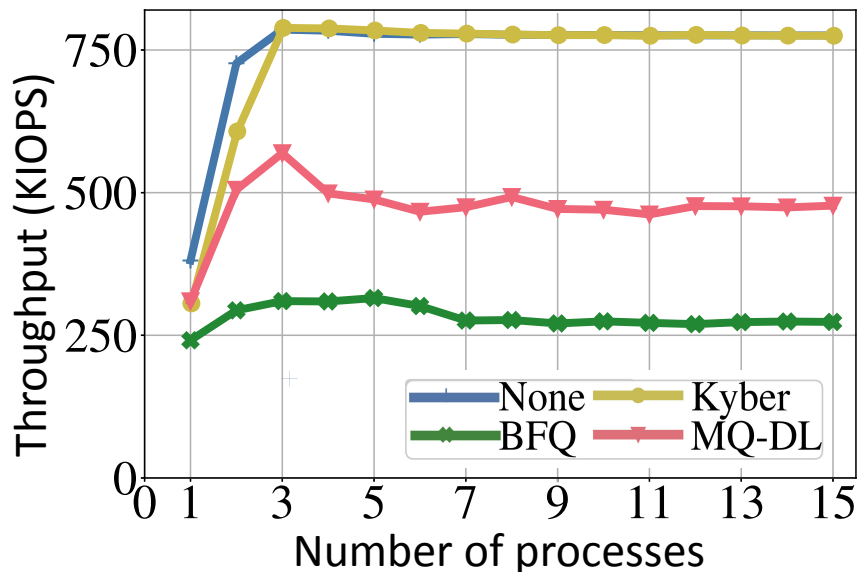
1 SSD



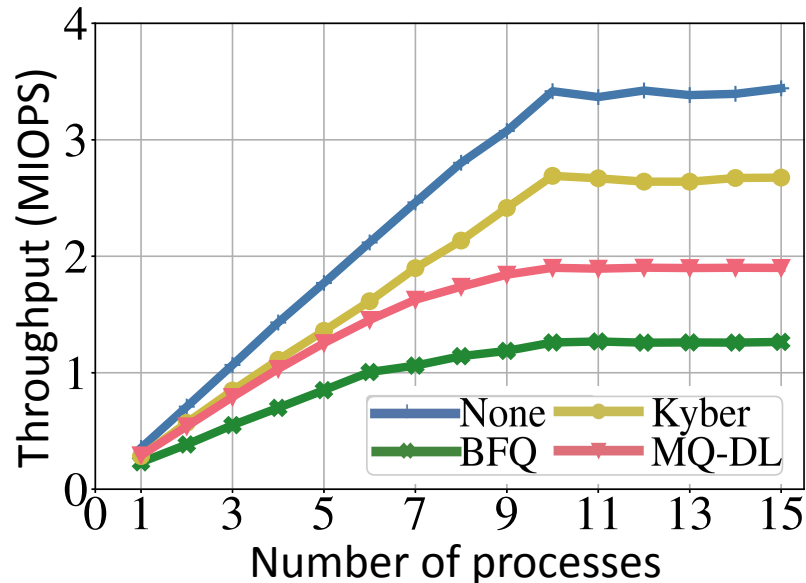
Big gap of scalability on throughput between different I/O schedulers.

Scalability of T-apps: 1 SSD vs. 8 SSDs

1 SSD



8 SSDs

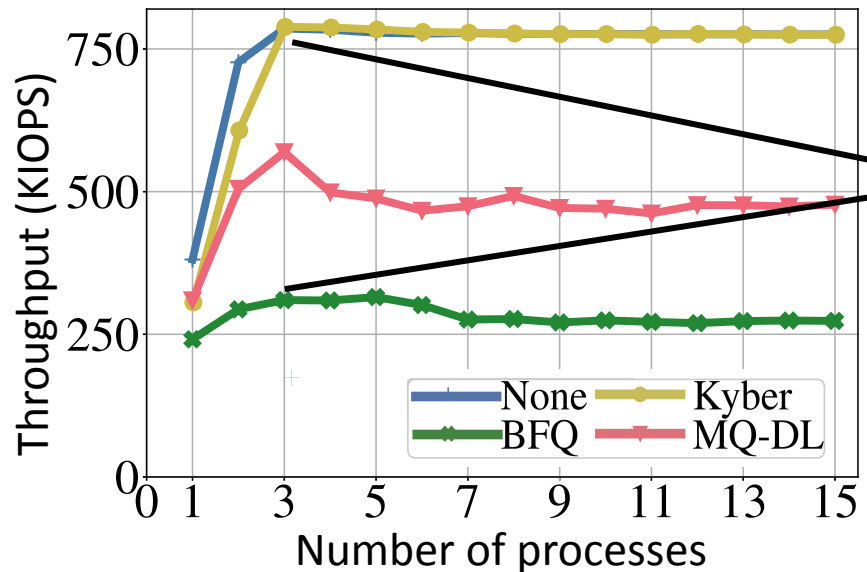


Big gap of scalability on throughput between different I/O schedulers.

More devices → better scalability.

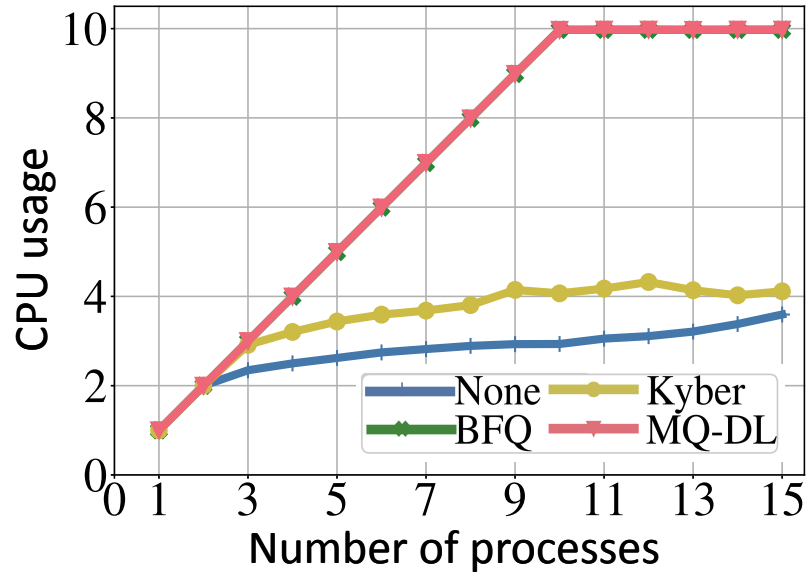
Scalability of T-apps: 1 SSD vs. 8 SSDs

1 SSD



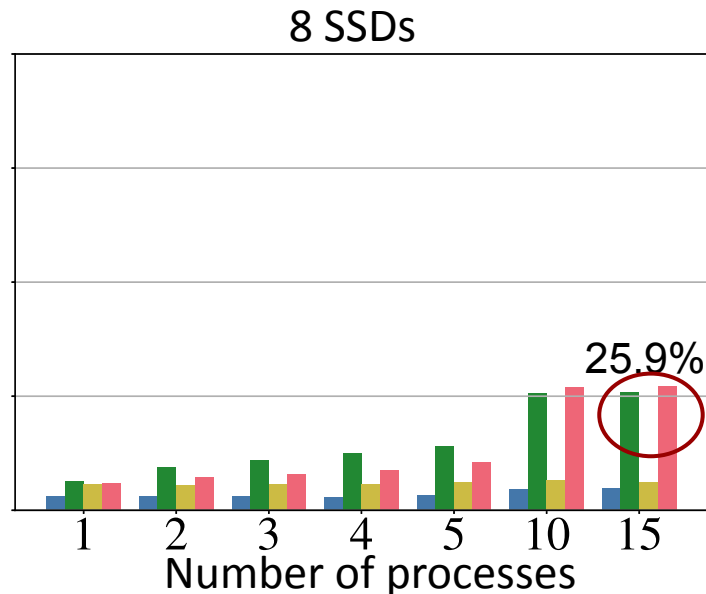
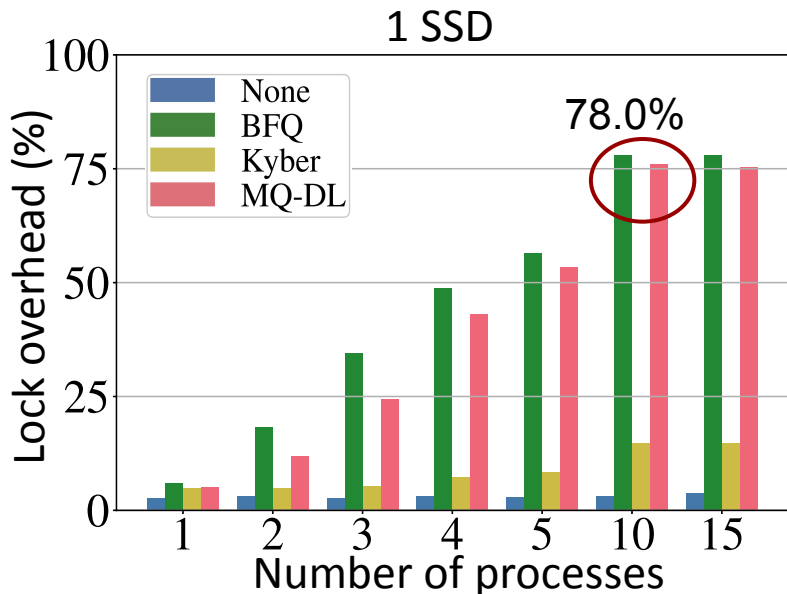
What cause this scalability issue?

Scalability of T-apps: CPU Usage



The scalability issues are caused by high CPU contention.

Lock Overhead of I/O Schedulers



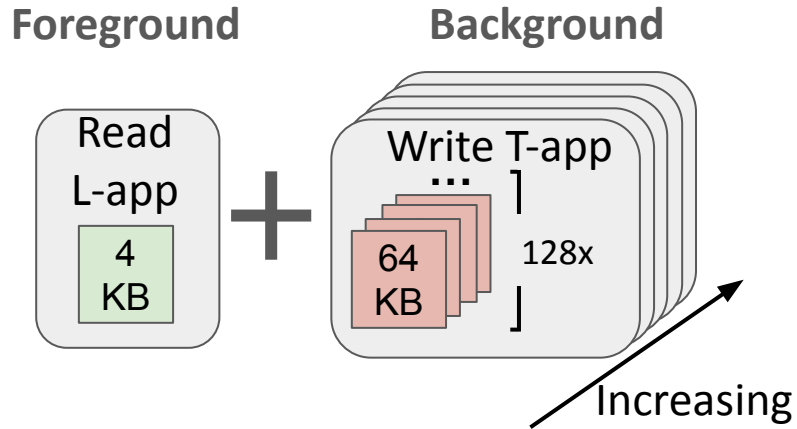
BFQ and MQ-Deadline → high CPU lock overhead.

Adding devices mitigates the lock overhead.

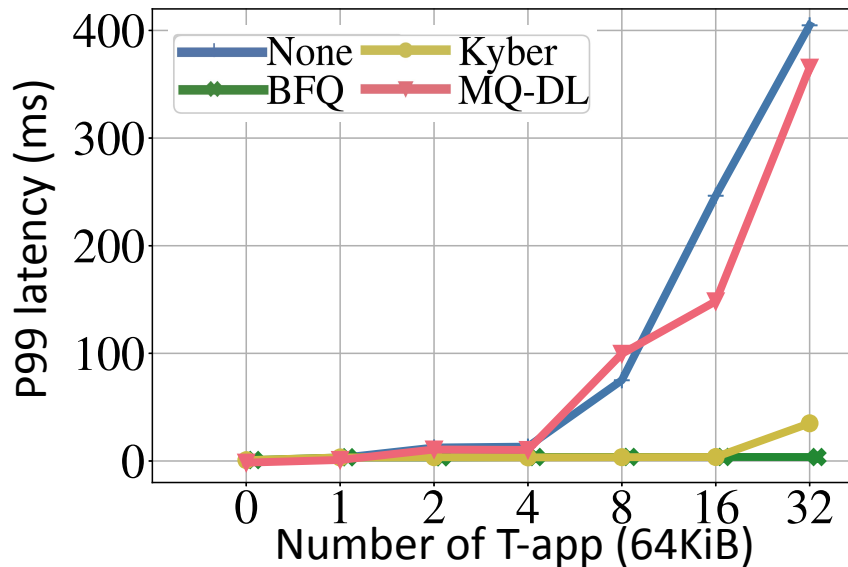
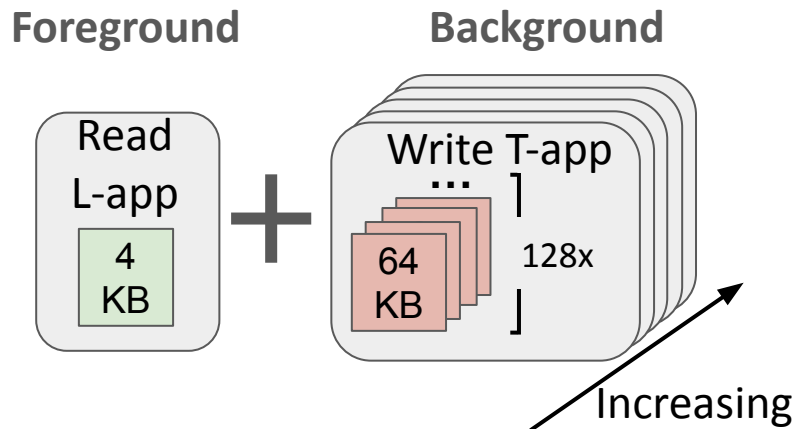
January, 2024: Identified by the Linux kernel developers^{[5][6]}.

RQ3. Taming I/O Interference

1 L-app (R) + Increasing T-apps (W)



1 L-app (R) + Increasing T-apps (W)

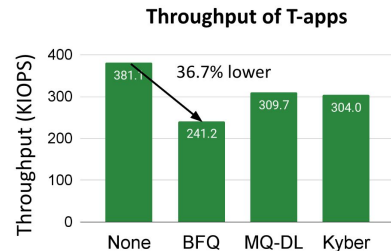


BFQ and Kyber → low latency for the foreground L-app.

Conclusions

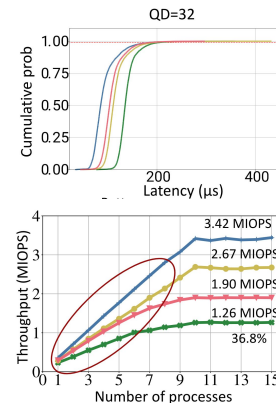
RQ1: What is the overhead of Linux I/O schedulers?

- Minor latency overhead.
- Significantly throughput overhead.



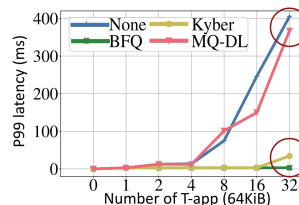
RQ2: What is the scalability of Linux I/O schedulers?

- Latency → depends on CPU.
- Throughput, BFQ and MQ-DL → high lock contention.
- Throughput, Kyber → good, similar to None.



RQ3: Can the Linux I/O schedulers tame I/O inference?

- Only BFQ and Kyber can provide bounded performance.

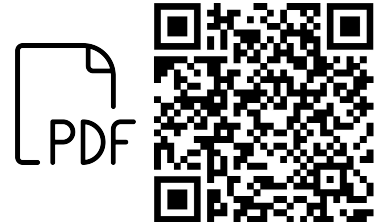


Take-Home Messages

1. *I/O Schedulers can influence the performance significantly.*
None has the lowest overhead and highest scalability.
BFQ has the highest overhead and lowest scalability.
2. *Different schedulers have different locking and scaling overheads.*
BFQ = MQ-Deadline > Kyber > None.
3. Use **Kyber** to prioritize **foreground reads with background writes**.
HotCloudPerf'24 A Systematic Configuration Space Exploration of the
Linux Kyber I/O Scheduler



Paper: <https://atlarge-research.com/pdfs/2024-io-schedulers.pdf>
Source code: https://github.com/ZebinRen/icpe24_io_scheduler_study_artifact



Thank you!

Questions?



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Resources

Images used:

<https://www.samsung.com/nl/memory-storage/nvme-ssd/980-pro-pcle-4-0-nvme-m-2-ssd-1tb-mz-v8p1t0bw/>
<https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/products/details/memory-storage/data-center-ssds/optane-dc-ssd-series.html>
<https://www.anandtech.com/show/12376/samsung-launches-zssd-sz985-up-to-800gb-of-znand>
<https://www.storagereview.com/review/intel-x25-v-ssd-review-40gb>

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- [2] Mohammad Hedayati, Kai Shen, Michael L. Scott, Mike Marty: Multi-Queue Fair Queuing. USENIX Annual Technical Conference 2019: 301-314 2018
- [3] Jaehyun Hwang, Midhul Vuppalapati, Simon Peter, Rachit Agarwal: Rearchitecting Linux Storage Stack for μ s Latency and High Throughput. OSDI 2021: 113-128
- [4] Jiwon Woo, Minwoo Ahn, Gyun Lee, Jinkyu Jeong: D2FQ: Device-Direct Fair Queueing for NVMe SSDs. FAST 2021: 403-415
- [5] <https://www.phoronix.com/news/BFQ-IO-Better-Scalability>
- [6] <https://www.phoronix.com/news/MQ-Deadline-Scalability>

Resources

Linux I/O schedulers

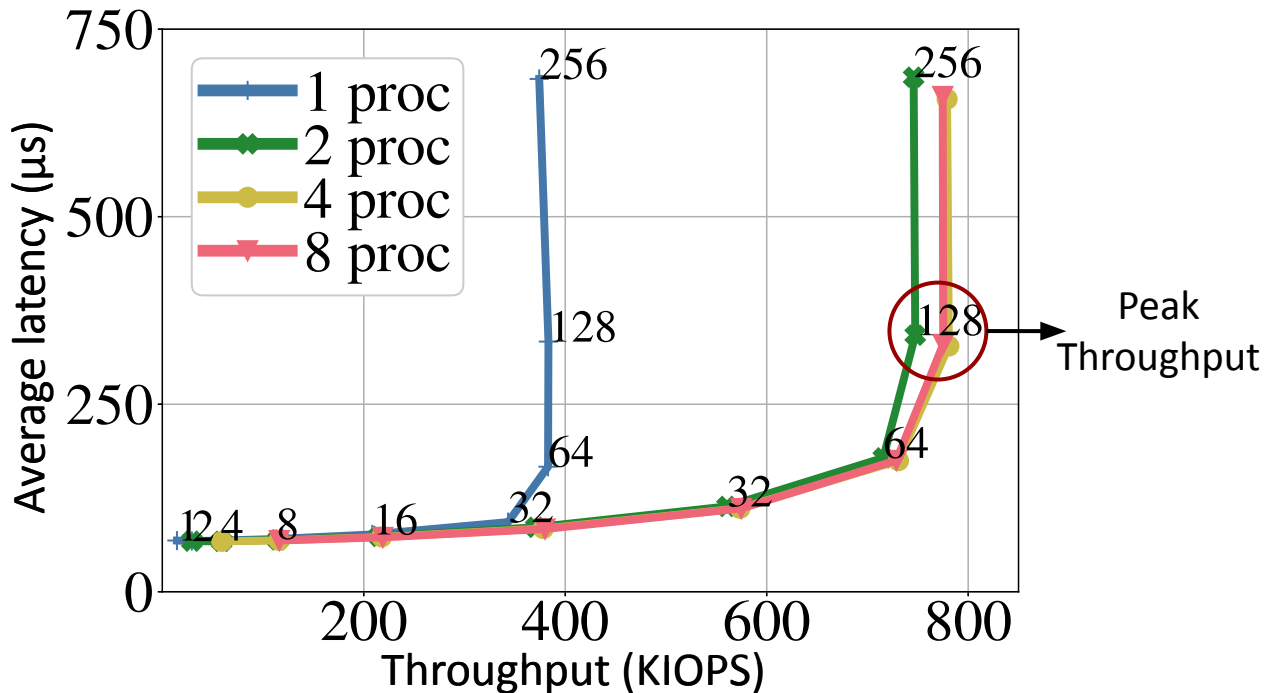
1. BFQ (Budget Fair Queueing) <https://www.kernel.org/doc/html/latest/block/bfq-iosched.html>
2. Two new block I/O schedulers for 4.12 <https://lwn.net/Articles/720675/>
3. Deadline IO scheduler tunables
<https://docs.kernel.org/block/deadline-iosched.html#:~:text=The%20goal%20of%20the%20deadline,value%20in%20units%20of%20milliseconds.>
4. BFQ I/O Scheduler For Linux Sees Big Scalability Improvement <https://www.phoronix.com/news/BFQ-IO-Better-Scalability>
5. MQ-Deadline Scheduler Optimized For Much Better Scalability

New I/O schedulers

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2. Mingyang Wang and Yiming Hu. An I/O Scheduler Based on Fine-Grained Access Patterns to Improve SSD Performance and Lifespan. In Symposium on Applied Computing, SAC 2014.
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4. Jiayang Guo, Yiming Hu, Bo Mao, and Suzhen Wu. Parallelism and Garbage Collection Aware I/O Scheduler with Improved SSD Performance. IPDPS 2017.
5. Minhoon Yi, Minho Lee, and Young Ik Eom. 2017. CFFQ: I/O Scheduler for Providing Fairness and High Performance in SSD Devices. IMCOM 2017.
6. Mohammad Hedayati, Kai Shen, Michael L. Scott, and Mike Marty. Multi-Queue Fair Queuing. In 2019 USENIX Annual Technical Conference, USENIX ATC 2019.
7. Till Miemietz, Hannes Weisbach, Michael Roitzsch, and Hermann Härtig. K2: Work-Constraining Scheduling of NVMe-Attached Storage. RTSS 2019.
8. Jaehyun Hwang, Midhul Vuppalapati, Simon Peter, and Rachit Agarwal. Rearchitecting Linux Storage Stack for μ s Latency and High Throughput. OSDI 2021.
9. Jiwon Woo, Minwoo Ahn, Gyusun Lee, and Jinkyu Jeong. D2FQ: Device-Direct Fair Queueing for NVMe SSDs. FAST 2021.
10. Jieun Kim, Dohyun Kim, and Youjip Won Fair I/O Scheduler for Alleviating Read/Write Interference by Forced Unit Access in Flash Memory. HotStorage 2022.
11. Caeden Whitaker, Sidharth Sundar, Bryan Harris, and Nihat Altiparmak. Do We Still Need I/O Schedulers for Low-Latency Disks?. HotStorage 2023.

Backup Slides

CPU or NVMe SSD, What is the Bottleneck?

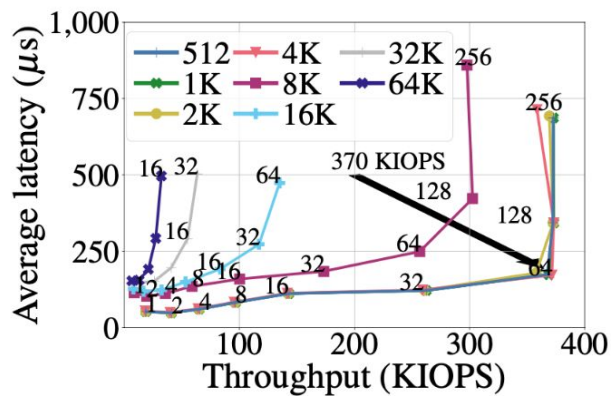


To saturate a SSD:

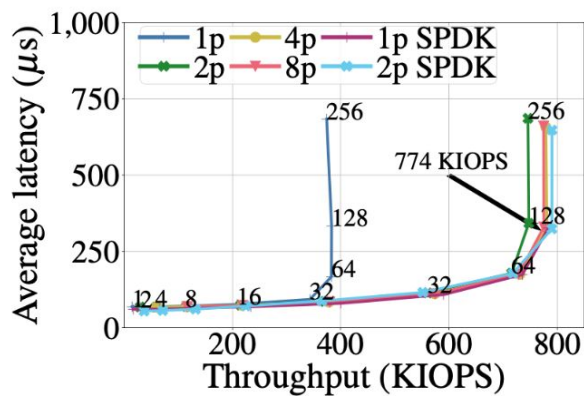
Multiple I/O requests

Enough CPU resources → 4 processes

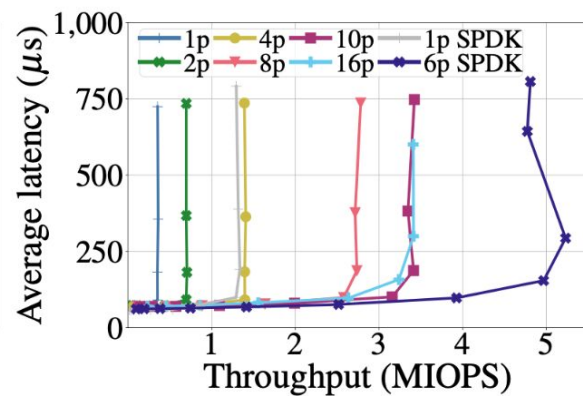
SSD Performance



(a) Vary request sizes, 1 SSD.



(b) Vary # processes with 1 SSD.



(c) Vary # processes with 8 SSDs.

L-app Scalability

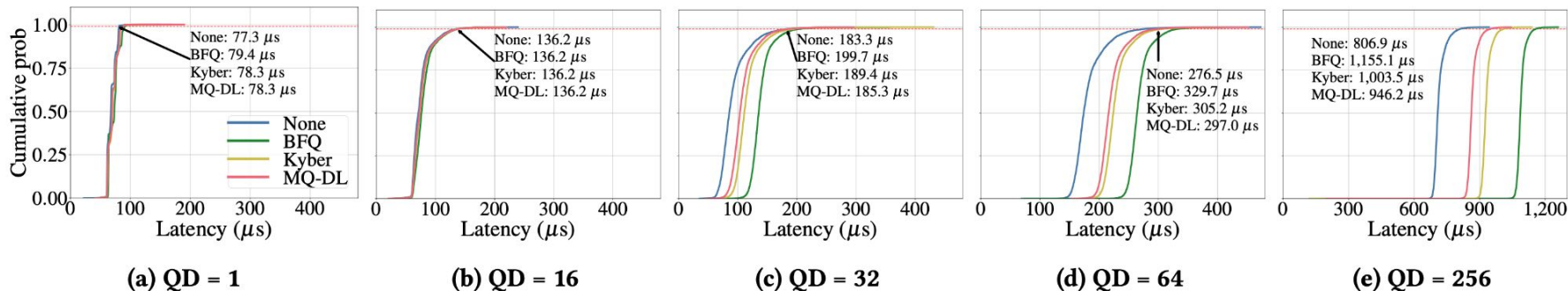


Figure 2: Intra-process scalability latency CDFs with increasing queue depth (QD); Note the different x-axis scale for (e).

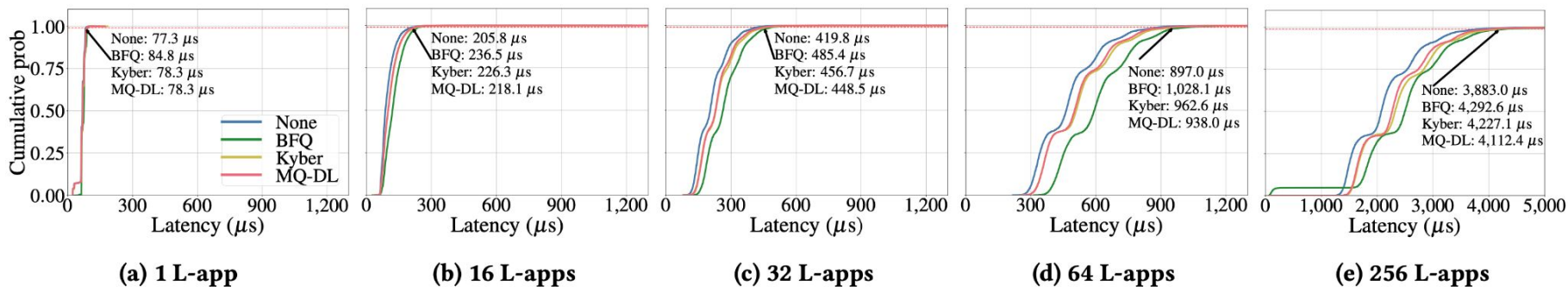
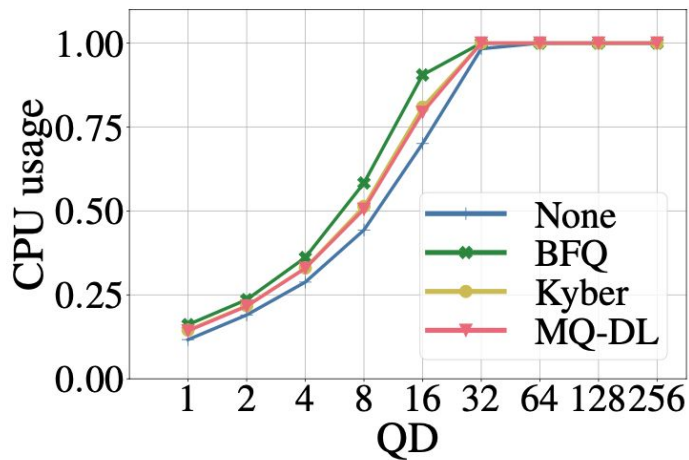
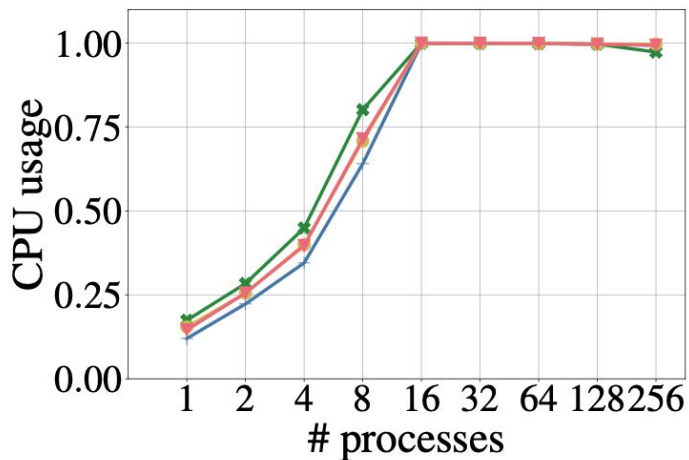


Figure 3: Inter-process scalability latency CDFs with increasing number of L-apps; Note the different x-axis scale for (e).

L-app CPU cost



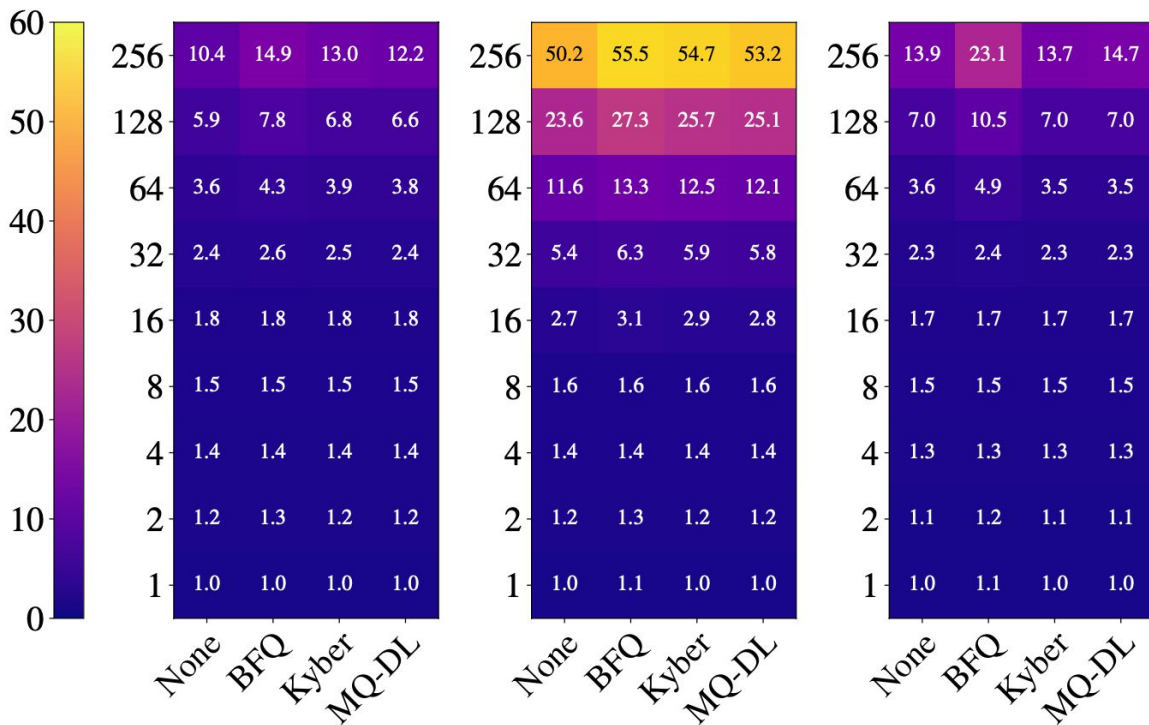
(a) Intra-process



(b) Inter-process

Figure 4: CPU usage for intra/inter-process concurrency.

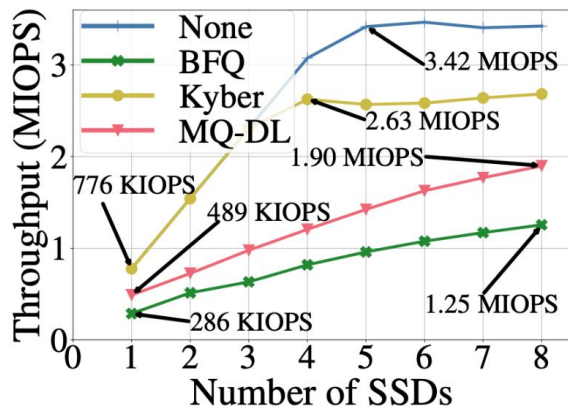
L-app Scalability Heatmap



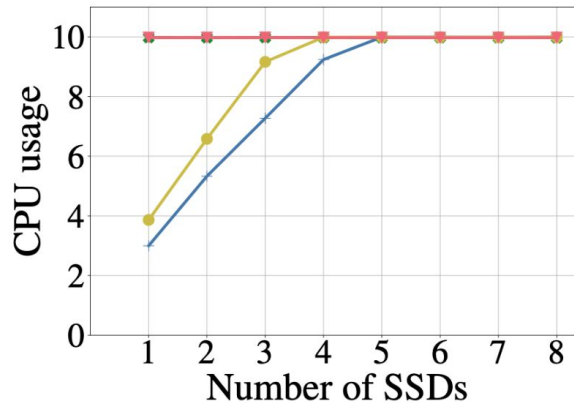
(a) 1 core, 1 process
y-axis: QD

(b) 1 core, QD 1 **(c) 10 cores, QD 1**
y-axis: # processes y-axis: # processes

SSD Scalability



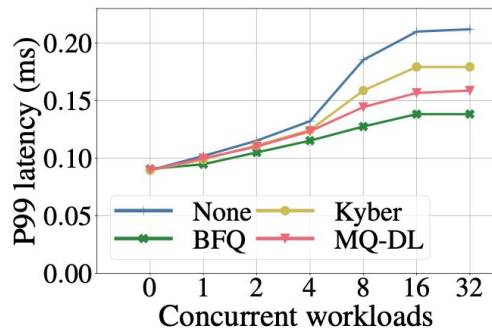
(a) Total throughput



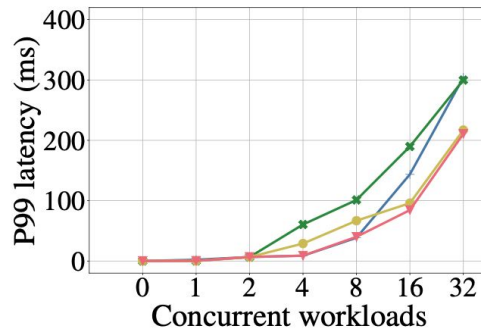
(b) Total CPU usage

Figure 9: T-app inter-process scalability (10 cores, 10 concurrent T-4KiB-apps) with an increasing number of SSDs.

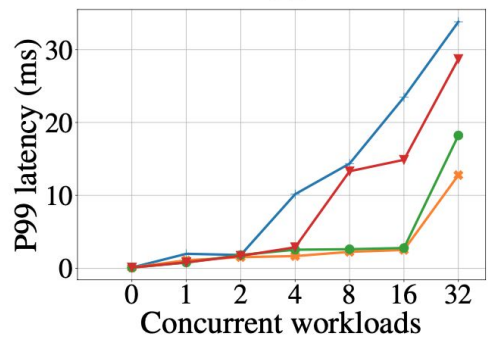
L-app Interference



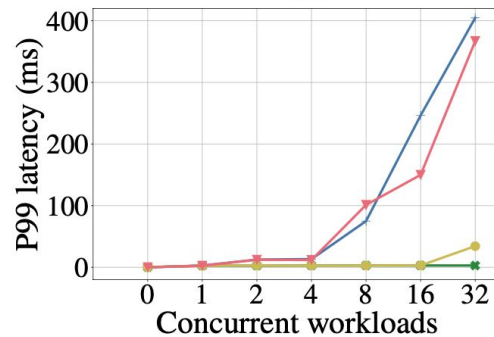
(a) T-4KiB-app (reads)



(b) T-64KiB-app (reads)



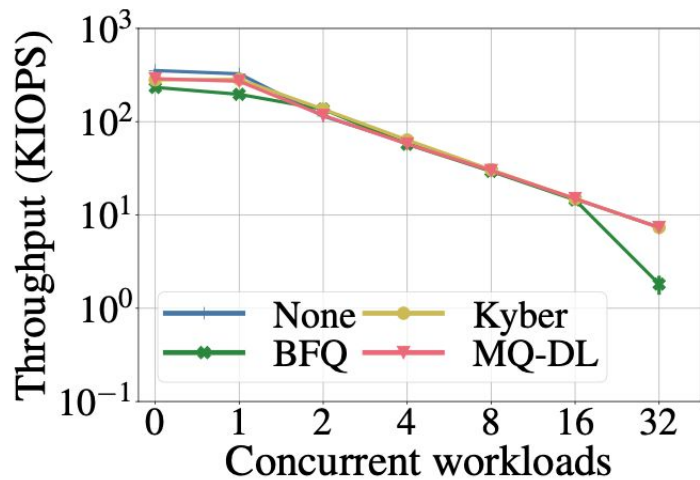
(c) T-4KiB-app (writes)



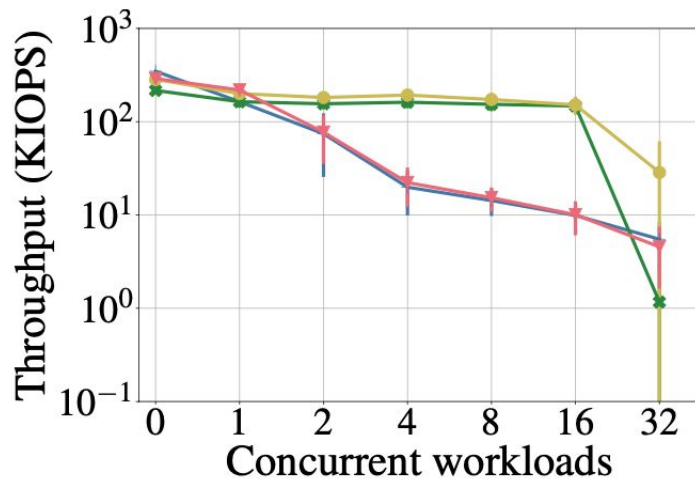
(d) T-64KiB-app (writes)

Figure 11: L-app tail latency with an increasing number of interfering background applications; *Note: scales differ on the y-axis and they are in Milliseconds!*

T-app Interference



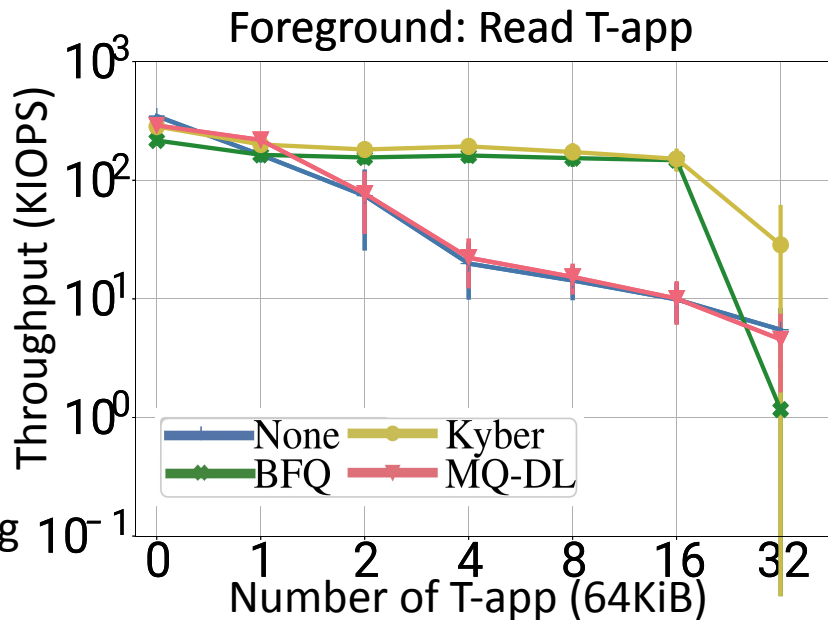
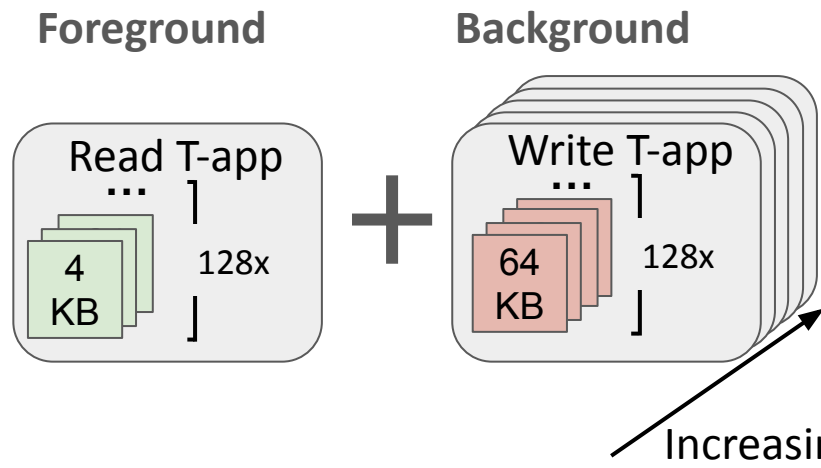
(a) T-64KiB-apps (reads)



(b) T-64KiB-apps (writes)

Figure 12: Read throughput (IOPS) of a T-4KiB-app workload with an increasing number of interfering background T-64KiB-app workload. Note: The y-axis is log-scale.

1 T-app (R) + Increasing T-apps (W)



BFQ and Kyber → higher bandwidth for the foreground T-app.

Lock in the I/O Schedulers

In block/mq-deadline.c

```
84 struct deadline_data {
85     /*
86      * run time data
87      */
88
89     struct dd_per_prio per_prio[DD_
90
91     /* Data direction of latest dis
92     enum dd_data_dir last_dir;
93     unsigned int batching;
94     unsigned int starved;
95
96     /*
97     * settings that change how the
98     */
99     int fifo_expire[DD_DIR_COUNT];
100    int fifo_batch;
101    int writes_starved;
102    int front_merges;
103    u32 async_depth;
104    int prio_aging_expire;
105
106    spinlock_t lock;
107    spinlock_t zone_lock;
108 };
109
```

```
826 */
827 static void dd_insert_requests(struct blk_mq_hw_ctx *hctx,
828                               struct list_head *list, bool at_head)
829 {
830     struct request_queue *q = hctx->queue;
831     struct deadline_data *dd = q->elevator->elevator_data;
832
833     spin_lock(&dd->lock);
834     while (!list_empty(list)) {
835         struct request *rq;
836
837         static struct request *dd_dispatch_request(struct blk_mq_hw_ctx *hctx)
838         {
839             struct deadline_data *dd = hctx->queue->elevator->elevator_data;
840             const unsigned long now = jiffies;
841             struct request *rq;
842             enum dd_prio prio;
843
844             spin_lock(&dd->lock);
845             rq = dd_dispatch_prio_aged_requests(dd, now);
846             if (rq)
847                 goto unlock;
848         }
849     }
850 }
```


Lock in the I/O Schedulers

Reduced lock contention

Dispatch

```
/* Maps an I/O priority class to a deadline scheduler priority. */
@@ -600,6 +607,15 @@ static struct request *dd_dispatch_request(struct blk_mq_hw_ctx *hctx)
    struct request *rq;
    enum dd_prio prio;

+   /*
+    * If someone else is already dispatching, skip this one. This will
+    * defer the next dispatch event to when something completes, and could
+    * potentially lower the queue depth for contended cases.
+    */
+   if (test_bit(DD_DISPATCHING, &dd->run_state) ||
+       test_and_set_bit(DD_DISPATCHING, &dd->run_state))
+       return NULL;
+
    spin_lock(&dd->lock);
    rq = dd_dispatch_prio_aged_requests(dd, now);
    if (rq)
@@ -616,6 +632,7 @@ static struct request *dd_dispatch_request(struct blk_mq_hw_ctx *hctx)
    }
}
```

Lock in the I/O Schedulers

Reduced lock contention

Insertion

```

+/*
+ * If we can grab the dd->lock, then just return and do the insertion as per
+ * usual. If not, add to one of our internal buckets, and afterwards recheck
+ * if if we should retry.
+ */
+static bool dd_insert_to_bucket(struct deadline_data *dd,
+                               struct list_head *list, int *seq)
+
+    __acquires(&dd->lock)
+{
+    struct dd_bucket_list *bucket;
+    int next_seq;
+
+    *seq = atomic_read(&dd->insert_seq);
+
+    if (spin_trylock(&dd->lock))
+        return false;
+    if (!test_bit(DD_INSERTING, &dd->run_state)) {
+        spin_lock(&dd->lock);
+        return false;
+    }
+
+    *seq = atomic_inc_return(&dd->insert_seq);
+
+    bucket = &dd->bucket_lists[get_cpu() & DD_CPU_BUCKETS_MASK];
+    spin_lock(&bucket->lock);
+    list_splice_init(list, &bucket->list);
+    spin_unlock(&bucket->lock);
+    put_cpu();
+
+}
```

Lock in the I/O Schedulers

Reduced lock contention

Results

```
Device           QD      Jobs    IOPS    Lock contention
=====
null_blk         4       32     1090K    92%
nvme0n1          4       32     1070K    94%
```

With that in place, the same test case now does:

```
Device           QD      Jobs    IOPS    Contention    Diff
=====
null_blk         4       32     2250K    28%           +106%
nvme0n1          4       32     2560K    23%           +112%
```

Who Are We/Am I?