Using MMX™ Instructions to implement 2X 8-bit Image Scaling

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The MMX™ technology uses the Single Instruction, Multiple Data (SIMD) technique to speed up software, by processing multiple data elements in parallel. This application note exploits the SIMD instructions to implement the 2X image scaling algorithm. The MMX instructions are used to read pixels from the video memory area. After duplicating the pixels in the registers MM0 through MM7, the results are written out to the destination memory area. The end result is a 2X expanded view of the upper left rectangle of the original image. Specifically, the MMX instruction MOVQ is used to transfer packed 64-bit data per cycle to/from memory. The PUNPCKHBW/PUNPCKLBW instructions are used to duplicate multiple pixels in parallel.

The MMX technology implementation is compared with a C implementation and a scalar implementation and the results are summarized.
2.0. 2X IMAGE SCALING

The 2X image scaling algorithm takes an 8-bit image as an input. The algorithm can be defined as follows:

\[
P_{d}(x_d, y_d) = P_{d}(x_d+1, y_d) = P_{d}(x_d, y_d+1) = P_{d}(x_d+1, y_d+1) = P_{s}(x_s, y_s)
\]

Where:
- \(x_s\) = horizontal position of the source pixel,
- \(x_d\) = horizontal position of the destination pixel,
- \(y_s\) = vertical position of the source pixel,
- \(y_d\) = vertical position of the destination pixel,
- \(P_s\) = source pixel and \(P_d\) = destination pixel.

For each pixel in the source image, the destination image contains four pixels with the same value. The resulting image is a 2X expanded view of the upper left rectangle of the source image.

2.1. C IMPLEMENTATION

Two surfaces are created in the video memory area -- the primary surface and the backbuffer surface. After copying the image to both surfaces, the primary surface is displayed. A pointer to the backbuffer surface memory is passed to the function `image2x` (see listing 1). The two surfaces are flipped once the image is expanded using `image2x` function.

The rest of this section explains the C implementation of the `image2x` function. As the code shows, the `srcptr` pointer is set to the end of the upper left rectangle of the original image described by dimensions (0, 0, \(x_{res}/2\), \(y_{res}/2\)). The `destptr` pointer points to the end of the surface memory. During each iteration of the inner loop, a pixel is read using `strptr` pointer and is expanded by writing to four destination locations.

```c
void image2x (byte *lpBackbufferMemory, int x_res, int y_res )
// lpBackbufferMemory: Points to the beginning of the surface
// x_res: Surface width
```
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// y_res: Surface height
// NOTE: This program assumes surface width to be equal to the source
// // pitch
{
    byte *srcptr, *destptr;
    int i, j;
    srcptr = ((y_res/2) * x_res) - (x_res/2) + lpBackbufferMemory;
    // srcptr points to the end of the source rectangle to be expanded
    destptr = (y_res * x_res) + lpBackbufferMemory;
    // destptr points to the end of the source memory
    // In the loop below, pixels are processed starting from the high memory
    // locations and moving to lower memory locations.
    for (j=y_res/2; j>0; j--)
    {
        for (i=0; i< (x_res/2); i++)
        {
            destptr = destptr - 2;
            srcptr = srcptr - 1;
            *destptr = *srcptr;
            *(destptr + 1) = *srcptr;
            *(destptr-x_res) = *srcptr;
            *(destptr+1-x_res) = *srcptr;
        }
        srcptr = srcptr - (x_res/2);
        destptr = destptr - x_res;
    }
}

Code Listing 1: C Implementation of the 2X Image Scaling Algorithm

2.2. SCALAR IMPLEMENTATION

Code listing 2 shows the scalar implementation of the function image2x.

Notice the main loop is unrolled four times compared to the C version. In each loop iteration, four pixels are read and operated on, as opposed to one in the C implementation.

In this implementation, the pixels are duplicated using two scalar registers before being written to the video memory. A scalar 32-bit register is used to hold two pixels in the lower word, the upper word is cleared. The BSWAP instruction is used to transfer the same pixel data to the upper word of another register. The lower word is cleared. The duplication is complete after both registers are added and the result is rotated 8-bits. The entire duplication process consumes five instructions.

TITLE image2x
;**************************************************************************
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************************************************************************/

; prevent listing of iammx.inc file
.nolist
;INCLUDE iammx.inc ; IAMMX Emulator Macros
.list
.586
.model FLAT
*************************************************************************

; Data Segment Declarations
*************************************************************************
.data
x_half DWORD 0H
x2_res DWORD 0H
cmptr DWORD 0H
*************************************************************************

; Constant Segment Declarations
*************************************************************************
.const
*************************************************************************

; Code Segment Declarations
*************************************************************************
.code
;COMMENT ^
;void image2x ( 
; BYTE *lpBackbufferMemory, 
; int x_res, 
; int y_res);
^ 
; lpBackbufferMemory: Points to the beginning of the surface 
; x_res: Surface width 
; y_res: Surface height 
; NOTE: This program assumes surface width to be equal to the surface pitch
image2x PROC NEAR C USES eax ebx ecx edx edi esi,

lpBackbufferMemory: PTR BYTE,
x_res: DWORD,
y_res: DWORD

mov    edi, x_res       ; edi = x_res
mov    edx, x_res
mov    eax, edi
mov    esi, edi
shr    edx, 1           ; edx = x_res /2

image2x ENDP

*************************************************************************/
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imul       eax, y_res     ; edx:eax = x_res * y_res
; But since x_res * y_res does not exceed 65536 (individual)
; The results in edx are ignored

mov        ebx, eax
add        eax, lpBackbufferMemory
shr        ebx, 1          ; ebx = (y_res/2) * x_res
sub        eax, edi        ; eax = end destination - x_res

mov        x_half, edx
add        ebx, lpBackbufferMemory ; ebx = source end + x_half
mov        ecx, eax
sub        ebx, x_half     ; ebx = source end
shl        esi, 1          ; esi = 2*x_res
sub        ecx, edi        ; ecx = end destination - 2*x_res
mov        x2_res, esi

mov        cmpptr, ecx
mov        ecx, edi        ; ecx = x_res
; Pointer initialization is completed here.
; The main loop starts here

loopstart:

mov        edx, [ebx - 4] ; Read first 32-bit -- from source cache line
sub        ebx, 4         ; Update pointer ebx and eax
sub        eax, 8
mov        esi, edx       ; Copy original data [4321] to esi and edi
mov        edi, edx       ; where [4321] each no. represent byte position
; using little-endian convention
bswap      esi            ; esi = [1234]
and        edx, 0000ffffh ; edx = [0021]
and        esi, 0ffff0000h; esi = [1200]
add        esi, edx       ; esi = 1221
mov        edx, edi       ; edx = [4321]

bswap      edx            ; edx = [1234]
rol        esi, 8         ; esi = 2211 -- result no. 1
mov        [eax], esi     ; write result no. 1 to the first row

and        edi, 0ffff0000h; edi = [4300]
and        edx, 0000ffffh ; edx = [0034]

mov        [eax + ecx], esi ; write result no. 1 to the second row
add        edi, edx       ; edi = [4334]
ror        edi, 8          ; edi = [4433] -- result no. 2
cmp        cmpptr, eax
mov        [eax + 4], edi       ; write result no. 2 to the first row
mov        [eax + ecx + 4], edi ; write result no. 2 to the second row

jne        loopstart
mov        edx, x2_res
2.3. MMX TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION

The MMX technology implementation of the function image2x exploits the use of 64-bit registers and the MMX instructions to operate in parallel on multiple pixels. Using the MOVQ instruction, eight pixels are loaded in a single cycle to a 64-bit register. Once data is copied to another register, the PUNPCKLBW/PUNPCKHBW instructions are used to unpack the pixels. The results are stored to the video memory using the MOVQ instruction (see figure 1). Since the above described operations use only two registers, a block of 8 x 4 pixels can be operated on in a single iteration using all 64-bit registers.
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Code listing 3 shows the function utilizing MMX instructions. Major implementation differences are highlighted below:

- The availability of eight 64-bit registers permits operation on an 8 x 4 pixel block in a single loop iteration. This results in eight times more unrolling of the loop when compared to the scalar implementation. The book-keeping cycles are reduced and better pairing of instructions is achieved due to unrolling.

The availability of registers also reduces the use of memory cycles because less variables are defined and stored in the memory.
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- The PUNPCKHBW/PUNPCKLBW instructions are used to duplicate pixels. As shown in the previous section, similar operation implemented in the scalar code consumes five instructions.

- The use of the MOVQ instruction results in a transfer of 64-bit of data per cycle, reducing instructions in the main loop when compared with the scalar implementation.

Both the scalar version and the MMX technology implementation have been optimized. Several optimization techniques are listed below:

- To avoid excessive write buffer stalls during memory write cycles, selected destination memory locations are first read to bring in a cache line and then data written out to the memory location. This results in better performance since cache line writes are faster than four 64-bit individual writes.

- All memory access are 64-bit aligned.

- The long latency read cycles from the main memory are scheduled first followed by the write operations. Writes before reads are avoided as this results in poor performance.

TITLE image2x
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;************************************************************************/

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.model FLAT
;************************************************************************
; Data Segment Declarations
;************************************************************************
.data
x_half DWORD 0H
;*************************************************************************
;    Constant Segment Declarations
;*************************************************************************
.const
;*************************************************************************
;    Code Segment Declarations
;*************************************************************************
.code
;COMMENT ^

void image2x (  
    BYTE *lpBackbufferMemory,  
    int x_res,  
    int y_res); ^
; lpBackbufferMemory: Points to the beginning of the surface  
; x_res: Surface width  
; y_res: Surface height  
; NOTE: This program assumes surface width to be equal to the surface pitch  
image2x PROC NEAR C USES eax ebx ecx edx edi esi,  
    lpBackbufferMemory: PTR BYTE,  
    x_res: DWORD,  
    y_res: DWORD  
mov    edi, x_res     ; edi = x_res  
mov    edx, x_res  
mov    eax, edi  
shr    edx, 1          ; edx = x_res /2  
mov    esi, edi  
imul   eax, y_res     ; edx:eax = x_res * y_res  

; But since x_res * y_res does not exceed 65536 (individual)  
; The results in edx are ignored  
mov    ebx, eax  
add    eax, lpBackbufferMemory  
shr    ebx, 1          ; ebx = (y_res/2) * x_res  
sub    eax, edi        ; eax = end destination - x_res  
mov    x_half, edx  
add    ebx, lpBackbufferMemory ; ebx = source end + x_half  
mov    ecx, eax  
sub    ebx, x_half     ; ebx = source end  
shl    esi, 1          ; esi = 2*x_res  
sub    ecx, edi        ; ecx = end destination - 2*x_res  

; Pointer initialization is completed here.  
; The main loop starts here  
loopstart:  
movq   mm0, [ebx - 32]  
movq   mm1, mm0  
mov    edx, [eax - 64] ; Cache read -- better performance
image2x ENDP
END image2x

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```
sub        ebx, 32
mov        edx, [eax - 32] ; Cache read -- better performance
sub        eax, 64
punpcklwb mm0, mm0
movq       mm2, [ebx + 8] ; 2nd read
punpckhwb mm1, mm1
movq       [eax + edi], mm0 ; 2a write -- row no. 2
movq       [eax + edi + 8], mm1 ; 2b write -- row no. 2
movq       [eax], mm0 ; 1a write -- row no. 1
punpcklwb mm2, mm2
movq       [eax + 8], mm1 ; 1b write
movq       [eax + 16], mm2 ; 1c write
punpckhwb mm3, mm3
movq       mm4, [ebx + 16] ; 3rd read
movq       [eax + 24], mm3 ; 1d write
movq       mm5, mm4
movq       [eax + edi + 16], mm2 ; 2c write
punpcklwb mm4, mm4
movq       [eax + edi + 24], mm3 ; 2d write
punpckhwb mm5, mm5
movq       [eax + 32], mm4 ; 1e write
movq       mm6, [ebx + 24] ; 4th read
movq       [eax + 40], mm5 ; 1f write
movq       mm7, mm6
movq       [eax + edi + 32], mm4 ; 2e write
punpcklwb mm6, mm6
movq       [eax + edi + 40], mm5 ; 2f write
punpckhwb mm7, mm7
movq       [eax + 48], mm6 ; 1g write
movq       [eax + 56], mm7 ; 1h write
movq       [eax + edi + 48], mm6 ; 2g write
movq       [eax + edi + 56], mm7 ; 2h write
cmp        ecx, eax
jne        loopstart
sub        ecx, esi
sub        eax, edi
```
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    sub        ebx, x_half
    cmp        eax, lpBackbufferMemory
    ja         loopstart
    emms
    ret
image2x ENDP
END

Code Listing 3: MMX Technology Implementation of the 2X Image Scaling Algorithm
### 3.0. PERFORMANCE RESULTS

All performance analysis is done using Intel's vTune 2.0 Beta 3.0 visual tuning software. A pointer to a 640 x 480 x 8 resolution image stored in the video memory is given as an input to each of the routines listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Performance Results Using Intel's vTune Visual Tuning Software</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C Routine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Instructions Executed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cycle Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count Per Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Pairing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Gain compared to C Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Gain compared to Scalar Implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

1) C routine is compiled using Microsoft Visual C++ with the compiler options set to produce Pentium code and optimization set to maximum speed.
2) MMX technology routine assembled with MASM 6.11d.
3) Performance gain compared to C implementation = (Total Cycle Count of C routine) / Total Cycle Count.
4) Performance Gain compared to Scalar Implementation = ( Total Cycle Count of Optimized Scalar Routine) / Total Cycle Count.
5) Results listed in the table are obtained using dynamic analysis environment of the Intel's vTune Visual Tuning Software.
4.0. CONCLUSION

This application note has shown a successful use of MMX instructions to implement a 2X image scaling algorithm. The MMX technology implementation demonstrated greater than two times performance gain when compared to the scalar implementation. The gain can be attributed to the additional availability of eight 64-bit registers, efficient MMX instructions to manipulate pixels at byte level and the assembly level code optimization.

Although the MMX technology routine presented in this application note strictly applies to 8-bit images. The implementation can easily be changed to suit greater color depth images.