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Multimedia

COMPUTING,
COMMUNICATIONS

&

APPLICATIONS

多媒体技术:

计算、通信及应用

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Foreword

Multimedia computing and communications are areas of intense current interest, software and hardware development, and future promise. Residential, institutional and business applications are emerging at a fast pace. Multimedia standards organizations are actively producing new standards for the field. Yet, the term "multimedia" and the subject areas it covers remain, to many people who hear, read and even use the term, clouded in mystery. Some recent books have attempted to define the essential elements of this fascinating area with various degrees of success.

This book is fully successful in its enterprise; it will certainly fill a void in the emerging field of multimedia. The book covers all the important topics involved in the new area, from the operating system and hardware aspects to the user interface, the applications and the programming abstractions. Such a wealth of information is not found in any of the few other books published thus far in the field.

The book is organized in 18 chapters, all of which are very informative and essential. The first five chapters define multimedia terminology and review the fundamentals of sound/audio, images and graphics, video and animation. An excellent treatise on image and video data compression follows, introducing and describing in detail such important standards as H.261, JPEG, MPEG-1 and MPEG-2. Chapters in optical storage media and computer technology give the reader up-to-date information about CD standards and pertinent hardware technology.

The chapter on operating system issues really makes this book unique. Resource and process management are covered in detail. All the important algorithms for real-time scheduling (rate monotonic, earliest-deadline-first and so on) are given.

File systems management is discussed in detail, and future aspects of multimedia operating systems are also covered.

Networking systems are the subject of another chapter. All the technologies relevant to multimedia networking are described. A chapter on protocols and quality of service issues follows, giving an overview of important multimedia protocols.

A brief description of multimedia databases is followed by a complete treatment of document architectures and standards such as ODA, SGML, hypertext and MHEG. Important design issues concerning multimedia interfaces are then presented. A very rich chapter on multimedia synchronization describes the heart of a multimedia system. This treatment is another major contribution of the authors that cannot be found in other books. A discussion of important programming abstractions follows, and the book concludes with an interesting chapter on multimedia applications and one on future directions.

We expect that this book will become a standard text in multimedia courses as well as a standard reference for all people working in the field. We congratulate the authors for their laborious but worthwhile and successful endeavor, and wish the readers a most pleasant journey into the field of multimedia!

Nicolas D. Georganas, University of Ottawa
Domenico Ferrari, University of California at Berkeley

February 1995

Preface

There has been an explosive growth of multimedia computing, communication and applications during the last decade. Computers and networks process and transmit currently more than just text and images. Video, audio and other continuous media data, as well as additional discrete media such as graphics became part of integrated computer applications. In the future, all computers and networks will support multimedia computing and communication to provide appropriate services for multimedia applications.

This book aims to achieve a complete and balanced view on the multimedia field covering three main domains: *devices*, *systems* and *applications*. In the device domain, basic concepts for processing of video, audio, graphics and images are presented (Chapters 2 through 5). Because of the currently available technology and quality requirements, the original data rates of these media demand compression methods. The corresponding approaches are described in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 presents the optical storage media which have contributed significantly to the current development of computer-based multimedia systems. On the other hand, the high-speed networks, described in Chapter 10, with their higher bandwidth and transmission possibilities of all media kinds, have led to networked multimedia systems. In the system domain, Chapters 8 through 12 provide information on *computer technology* as an interface between the device and the system domain, *operating system*, *communication system* and *database system*. The application domain includes topics such as *programming abstractions* (Chapter 16), which represent the interface between the application and the system domain, *document handling* (Chapter 13), *tools and applications* (Chapter 17), and *user interfaces* through which the document handling, tools and applications are made accessible to humans. To all three

domains, one area is common: the *synchronization* of multimedia. This topic is covered separately in Chapter 15.

This book has the character of a *reference book*, covering a wide scope. It has evolved from the first multimedia technology book, published in German in 1993 [Ste93b] (Figures from this book were reused with permission of the Springer Verlag.). However, substantial areas have changed and enhancements have been made. The results, presented in this book, serve as groundwork for the development of individual components of a multimedia system. The book can be used by computer professionals who are interested in multimedia systems and applications. The book can also be used as a text for beginning or advanced graduate students in computer science, and related disciplines, although the absence of exercises for each chapter may put more load on the instructor. All discussions present the handling of multimedia in the corresponding domains and assume that the reader is familiar with the basic concepts of the systems: for example, scheduling in operating systems, layering in communication systems, etc. Since the amount of material in the book is too much for a one-semester course, it can be taught during two or more semesters. For example, the instructor could choose to emphasize the multimedia computing or communication aspect, including synchronization and application issues.

Many people have helped us with the preparation of this book. We would especially like to thank David Farber, Jonathan Smith, Ruzena Bajcsy, Craig Reynolds, Gerold Blakowski, Andreas Mauthe and Doris Meschzan. We would also like to thank Klara's colleagues from the Distributed System Laboratory for their comments and discussions during the writing process. Special thanks go to John Shaffer, Brendan Traw, Jean McManus and Anshul Kantawala. Acknowledgment is also due the National Science Foundation and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (#NCR-8919038) for supporting Klara's research reported here.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our families for their support and patience.

Contents

Foreword	xxi
Preface	xxiii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Branch-overlapping Aspects of Multimedia	2
1.2 Content	3
1.3 Global Structure	4
1.4 Multimedia Literature	6
2 Multimedia: Media and Data Streams	9
2.1 Medium	10
2.1.1 The Perception Medium	10
2.1.2 The Representation Medium	10
2.1.3 The Presentation Medium	11
2.1.4 The Storage Medium	11
2.1.5 The Transmission Medium	11
2.1.6 The Information Exchange Medium	12
2.1.7 Representation Values and Representation Spaces	12
2.1.8 Representation Dimensions	13
2.2 Main Properties of a Multimedia System	14

2.2.1	Multimedia System Definition	14
2.2.2	Combination of Media	15
2.2.3	Independence	15
2.2.4	Computer-supported Integration	16
2.2.5	Communication Systems	16
2.3	Multimedia	17
2.4	Traditional Data Streams Characteristics	18
2.4.1	Asynchronous Transmission Mode	18
2.4.2	Synchronous Transmission Mode	19
2.4.3	Isochronous Transmission Mode	19
2.5	Data Stream Characteristics for Continuous Media	20
2.5.1	The Time Interval Between a Complete Transmission of Consecutive Packets	20
2.5.2	Variation of Consecutive Packet Amount	21
2.5.3	Contiguous Packets	23
2.6	Information Units	25
3	Sound / Audio	27
3.1	Basic Sound Concepts	28
3.1.1	Computer Representation of Sound	29
3.1.2	Audio Formats	31
3.2	Music	32
3.2.1	MIDI Basic Concepts	32
3.2.2	MIDI Devices	34
3.2.3	MIDI Messages	36
3.2.4	MIDI and SMPTE Timing Standards	38
3.2.5	MIDI Software	39
3.3	Speech	41
3.3.1	Speech Generation	42

CONTENTS

vii

3.3.2	Speech Analysis	47
3.3.3	Speech Transmission	51
4	Images and Graphics	55
4.1	Basic Concepts	56
4.1.1	Digital Image Representation	56
4.1.2	Image Format	57
4.1.3	Graphics Format	59
4.2	Computer Image Processing	61
4.2.1	Image Synthesis	61
4.2.2	Image Analysis	68
4.2.3	Image Transmission	78
4.3	Comments	79
5	Video and Animation	81
5.1	Basic Concepts	81
5.1.1	Video Signal Representation	81
5.1.2	Computer Video Format	91
5.2	Television	93
5.2.1	Conventional Systems	93
5.2.2	Enhanced Definition Systems	95
5.2.3	High-Definition Systems	98
5.2.4	Transmission	101
5.3	Computer-based Animation	103
5.3.1	Basic Concepts	104
5.3.2	Animation Languages	106
5.3.3	Methods of Controlling Animation	108
5.3.4	Display of Animation	110
5.3.5	Transmission of Animation	111

5.3.6	Comments	112
6	Data Compression	113
6.1	Storage Space	113
6.2	Coding Requirements	114
6.3	Source, Entropy and Hybrid Coding	118
6.4	Some Basic Compression Techniques	121
6.5	JPEG	130
6.5.1	Image Preparation	132
6.5.2	Lossy Sequential DCT-based Mode	137
6.5.3	Expanded Lossy DCT-based Mode	142
6.5.4	Lossless Mode	144
6.5.5	Hierarchical Mode	145
6.6	H.261 (px64)	146
6.6.1	Image Preparation	147
6.6.2	Coding Algorithms	148
6.6.3	Data Stream	149
6.7	MPEG	150
6.7.1	Video Encoding	151
6.7.2	Audio Encoding	156
6.7.3	Data Stream	157
6.7.4	MPEG-2	160
6.7.5	MPEG-4	164
6.8	DVI	165
6.8.1	Audio and Still Image Encoding	166
6.8.2	Video Encoding	168
6.8.3	Data Stream	171
6.9	Comments	172

7 Optical Storage Media	175
7.1 History	176
7.2 Basic Technology	177
7.3 Video Disks and Other WORMs	180
7.4 Compact Disk Digital Audio	181
7.4.1 Preliminary Technical Background	181
7.4.2 Eight-to-Fourteen Modulation	183
7.4.3 Error Handling	184
7.4.4 Frames, Tracks, Areas and Blocks of a CD-DA	185
7.4.5 Advantages of Digital CD-DA Technology	188
7.5 Compact Disk Read Only Memory	188
7.5.1 Blocks	188
7.5.2 Modes	189
7.5.3 Logical Data Format	192
7.5.4 Limitations of the CD-ROM Technology	193
7.6 CD-ROM Extended Architecture	194
7.6.1 Form 1 and Form 2	194
7.6.2 Compressed Data of Different Media	196
7.7 Further CD-ROM-based Developments	197
7.7.1 Compact Disk Interactive	197
7.7.2 Compact Disk Interactive Ready Format	201
7.7.3 Compact Disk Bridge Disk	201
7.7.4 Photo Compact Disk	202
7.7.5 Digital Video Interactive	203
7.8 Compact Disk Write Once	204
7.8.1 Principle of the CD-WO	204
7.8.2 Sessions	205
7.9 Compact Disk Magneto Optical	207

7.9.1	Principle of the Magnetic-Optical Method	207
7.9.2	Areas of the CD-MO	207
7.10	The Prospects of CD Technologies	208
8	Computer Technology	211
8.1	Communication Architecture	212
8.1.1	Hybrid Systems	213
8.1.2	Digital Systems	217
8.2	Multimedia Workstation	219
8.3	Comments	223
9	Multimedia Operating Systems	225
9.1	Introduction	225
9.2	Real Time	227
9.2.1	The Notion of "Real-Time"	227
9.2.2	Real Time and Multimedia	230
9.3	Resource Management	232
9.3.1	Resources	233
9.3.2	Requirements	234
9.3.3	Components and Phases	235
9.3.4	Allocation Scheme	237
9.3.5	Continuous Media Resource Model	238
9.4	Process Management	244
9.4.1	Real Time Process Management in Conventional Operating Systems: An Example	245
9.4.2	Real-time Processing Requirements	248
9.4.3	Traditional Real-time Scheduling	249
9.4.4	Real-time Scheduling: System Model	250
9.4.5	Earliest Deadline First Algorithm	252

CONTENTS

xi

9.4.6	Rate Monotonic Algorithm	254
9.4.7	EDF and Rate Monotonic: Context switches	256
9.4.8	EDF and Rate Monotonic: Processor Utilizations	256
9.4.9	Extensions to Rate Monotonic Scheduling	259
9.4.10	Other Approaches for In-Time Scheduling	260
9.4.11	Preemptive versus Non-preemptive Task Scheduling	262
9.4.12	Scheduling of Continuous Media Tasks: Prototype Operating Systems	265
9.5	File Systems	268
9.5.1	Traditional File Systems	269
9.5.2	Multimedia File Systems	276
9.6	Additional Operating System Issues	293
9.6.1	Interprocess Communication and Synchronization	293
9.6.2	Memory Management	294
9.6.3	Device Management	295
9.7	System Architecture	298
9.7.1	UNIX-based Systems	302
9.7.2	QuickTime	302
9.7.3	Windows Multimedia Extensions	306
9.7.4	OS/2 Multimedia Presentation Manager/2	308
9.8	Concluding Remarks	310
10	Networking Systems	313
10.1	Layers, Protocols and Services	313
10.2	Networks	319
10.3	Local Area Networks (LANs)	319
10.3.1	High-speed Ethernet	319
10.3.2	Token Ring	322
10.3.3	FDDI	330

10.3.4 Local ATM Networks	344
10.4 Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs)	355
10.4.1 Distributed Queue Dual Bus (DQDB)	356
10.4.2 Orwell	362
10.4.3 MAN Connectivity to ATM Networks	363
10.5 Wide Area Networks (WANs)	365
10.5.1 Traditional WAN's	366
10.5.2 B-ISDN: ATM	371
10.6 Conclusion	380
11 Multimedia Communication Systems	383
11.1 Application Subsystem	384
11.1.1 Collaborative Computing	384
11.1.2 Session Management	397
11.2 Transport Subsystem	401
11.2.1 Requirements	401
11.2.2 Transport Layer	404
11.2.3 Network Layer	410
11.3 Quality of Service and Resource Management	418
11.3.1 Basic Concepts	418
11.3.2 Establishment and Closing of the Multimedia Call	424
11.3.3 Managing Resources during Multimedia Transmission	440
11.3.4 Architectural Issues	457
11.4 Comments	459
11.4.1 Trends in Collaborative Computing	459
11.4.2 Trends in Transport Systems	462
12 Database Systems	463

12.1 Multimedia Database Management System	464
12.2 Characteristics of an MDBMS	465
12.3 Data Analysis	469
12.4 Data Structure	470
12.4.1 Raw Data	470
12.4.2 Registering Data	471
12.4.3 Descriptive Data	471
12.4.4 Examples of Multimedia Structures	471
12.4.5 Comments on Data Analysis	474
12.5 Operations on Data	474
12.6 Integration in a Database Model	476
12.6.1 Relational Database Model	477
12.6.2 Object-oriented Database Model	478
12.7 Comments	479
13 Documents, Hypertext and MHEG	481
13.1 Documents	481
13.1.1 Document Architecture	482
13.1.2 Manipulation of Multimedia Data	483
13.2 Hypertext and Hypermedia	485
13.2.1 Hypertext, Hypermedia and Multimedia	486
13.2.2 Hypermedia Systems: An Example	491
13.2.3 History	499
13.2.4 Systems: Architecture, Nodes and Pointers	502
13.2.5 Some Final Comments about Hypertext Systems	507
13.3 Document Architecture SGML	510
13.3.1 Some Details	511
13.3.2 SGML and Multimedia	514

13.3.3 Closing Comments about SGML	515
13.4 Document Architecture ODA	516
13.4.1 Some Details on ODA	516
13.4.2 ODA and Multimedia	523
13.5 MHEG	527
13.5.1 Example of an Interactive Multimedia Presentation	528
13.5.2 Derivation of a Class Hierarchy	530
13.5.3 Contents	532
13.5.4 Behavior	534
13.5.5 User Interaction	537
13.5.6 Container	539
13.5.7 Closing Comments	541
14 User Interfaces	543
14.1 General Design Issues	544
14.1.1 Architectural Issues	545
14.1.2 Information Characteristics for Presentation	545
14.1.3 Presentation Function	547
14.1.4 Presentation Design Knowledge	547
14.1.5 Effective Human-Computer Interaction	549
14.2 Current Work	549
14.3 Extension through Video and Audio	551
14.4 Video at the User Interface	552
14.4.1 Hardware for Visualization of Motion Pictures	553
14.4.2 Example: Remote Camera Control Application	553
14.5 Audio at the User Interface	556
14.6 User-friendliness as the Primary Goal	557
14.6.1 Easy to Learn Instructions	559

14.6.2 Context-sensitive Help Functions	559
14.6.3 Easy to Remember Instructions	559
14.6.4 Effective Instructions	560
14.6.5 Aesthetics	560
14.6.6 Effective Implementation Support	561
14.6.7 Entry Elements	561
14.6.8 Meaningful Location of Functions	562
14.6.9 Presentation	562
14.6.10 Dialogue Boxes	563
14.6.11 Additional Design Criteria	563
14.6.12 Design-specific Criteria	564
14.7 Comments	566
15 Synchronization	567
15.1 Introduction	567
15.2 Notion of Synchronization	570
15.2.1 Multimedia Systems	570
15.2.2 Basic Synchronization Issues	572
15.2.3 Intra- and Inter-object Synchronization	574
15.2.4 Live and Synthetic Synchronization	581
15.2.5 Comment	585
15.3 Presentation Requirements	585
15.3.1 Lip Synchronization Requirements	588
15.3.2 Pointer Synchronization Requirements	593
15.3.3 Elementary Media Synchronization	595
15.4 A Reference Model for Multimedia Synchronization	599
15.4.1 Existing Classification Approaches	600
15.4.2 The Synchronization Reference Model	601