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Reimagining Memory Expansion for Single Socket Servers with CXL
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Chris Petersen, HW System Technologist, Meta
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Increasing Memory Cost and Power

Memory an increasing % of system power and cost
- Memory price (cost/bit) flat due to scaling challenges
Increasing Core Counts Drives Growth

- Increased Bandwidth
- Increased Capacity

Diagram showing normalized growth rate over time from 2012 to 2020, comparing CPU core count and Memory Channel BW per core.
Server Design Implications

• Adding CPU-attached memory channels is expensive

• Increasing DDR* speed is challenging

• Emerging memory needs a better method of attachment

• Memory configurations today are homogeneous, but more flexibility is needed
Introducing CXL

Processor Interconnect:
• Open industry standard
• High-bandwidth, low-latency
• Coherent interface
• Leverages PCI Express®
• Targets high-performance computational workloads
CXL - Looking Ahead

- CXL Specification development progressing at predictable cadence
- CXL 2.0 introduces new features & usage models including switching, pooling, persistent memory support, and security
- CXL 3.0 in development
CXL Memory Expansion

- Scale BW
- Scale Capacity
- Enable heterogeneity
CXL Memory Expansion POC

- Intel Sapphire Rapids CPU (pre-prod)
- Intel CXL FPGA card w/ 2x DDR4 DIMMs

Please visit the Meta booth for a demo video!
Server Design Concept w/ CXL Memory

Motherboard

Expansion board

CXL Controller

DDR4/DDR5 DIMM Slots

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Building an Open and Interoperable Ecosystem across Technology and System Providers is key to successful adoption!

Technology Providers
• CPU
• CXL Controller ASIC
• Memory

System Providers

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“CXL is a game-changer in the compute landscape. Intel was a key author of the specification and like so many previous successful standards, drove to make it an industry-owned technology. Our Next Gen Intel Xeon Scalable processor (codenamed Sapphire Rapids) will be Intel’s first data center processor with CXL, and here at OCP you can see the first customer implementations built on Next Gen Intel Xeon processors and Intel FPGA technology.” Dr Debendra Das Sharma, Intel Fellow, Director Intel IO Technology & Standards, Co-chair CXL Consortium Technical Task Force, and PCI-SIG Board Member.

“We are excited about the data center innovation that CXL can enable. AMD is committed to delivering breakthrough memory expansion with CXL in our next generation server processors. We are actively working with CXL consortium members and partners such as Meta to bring these capabilities to market.” Jay Kirkland, CVP, Server Platform Solutions Eng, AMD
Building Open & Interoperable Ecosystem

“Improving memory utilization and reducing total cost of ownership continue to be a key focus for the industry and CXL is an important innovation vector to address these challenges. Microchip has contributed significantly to the CXL specification and we are excited to work with Meta to deliver solutions and contribute our joint efforts to OCP in the future.”  

Andrew Dieckmann, VP Marketing, Microchip Technology

More technology providers and startups innovating in this space! Support from all major memory partners!
Building Open & Interoperable Ecosystem

“We are excited to be partnering and innovating with Meta on the 1st generation CXL Memory modules! We look forward and are committed to enabling this transformative technology on Meta’s next generation perf/w optimized Yosemite Servers.” Mike Yang, SVP of Quanta Computer and President of QCT

“We are thrilled to see CXL progress from technology specifications into 1st generation products. Wiwynn is excited to partner with Meta to enable CXL Memory Modules for Meta’s perf/w optimized Yosemite 1S Servers,” Steven Lu, Senior Vice President of Product Development, Wiwynn
Call to Action

• Join us in developing CXL Memory solutions!

• We expect to provide a server design contribution in 2022.

• Where to find additional information:

Mailing list: http://lists.opencompute.org/mailman/listinfo/opencompute-server

CXL: https://www.computeexpresslink.org/
Thank you!