Introduction

CPS 116
Introduction to Database Systems

Course goals

❖ Random things you might do (for fun or profit) after taking this course

Course roadmap

❖ Relational databases
  ▪ Relational algebra, database design, SQL, application programming
❖ XML
  ▪ Data model and query languages, application programming, interplay between XML and relational databases
❖ Database internals
  ▪ Storage, indexing, query processing and optimization, concurrency control and recovery
❖ Topics beyond traditional databases
  ▪ Web searches and others
What is a database system?

From Oxford Dictionary:
- Database: an organized body of related information
- Database system, DataBase Management System (DBMS): a software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database

What do you want from a DBMS?
- Keep data around (persistent)
- Answer queries (questions) about data
- Update data

Example: a traditional banking application
- Each account belongs to a branch, has a number, an owner, a balance, ...
- Each branch has a location, a manager, ...
- Persistency: Homer will be pretty upset if his balance disappears after a power outage
- Query: What’s the balance in Homer Simpson’s account?
- Modification: Homer withdraws $100

Sounds simple!

- ASCII file
- Accounts/branches separated by newlines
- Fields separated by #’s
Query

What’s the balance in Homer Simpson’s account?

A simple script
- Scan through the accounts file
- Look for the line containing “Homer Simpson”
- Print out the balance

Query processing tricks

- Tens of thousands of accounts are not Homer’s

Observations

- Tons of tricks (not only in storage and query processing, but also in concurrency control, recovery, etc.)
- Different tricks may work better in different usage scenarios (example?)
- Same tricks get used over and over again in different applications
Early efforts

- "Factoring out" data management functionalities from applications and standardizing these functionalities is an important first step
  - CODASYL standard (circa 1960's)
    - Bachman got a Turing award for this in 1973
- But getting the abstraction right (the API between applications and the DBMS) is still tricky

CODASYL

- Query: Who have accounts with 0 balance managed by a branch in Springfield?
- Pseudo-code of a CODASYL application:
  
  Use index on account(balance) to get accounts with 0 balance;
  For each account record:
  - Get the branch id of this account;
  - Use index on branch(id) to get the branch record;
  - If the branch record’s location field reads "Springfield":
    - Output the owner field of the account record.
- Programmer controls “navigation”: accounts → branches
  - How about branches → accounts?

What’s wrong?

- The best navigation strategy & the best way of organizing the data depend on data/workload characteristics
- With the CODASYL approach
  - To write correct code, application programmers need to know how data is organized physically (e.g., which indexes exist)
  - To write efficient code, application programmers also need to worry about data/workload characteristics
  - Can’t cope with changes in data/workload characteristics
The relational revolution (1970’s)

- A simple data model: data is stored in relations (tables)
- A declarative query language: SQL

```
SELECT Account.owner
FROM Account, Branch
WHERE Account.balance = 0
AND Branch.location = 'Springfield'
AND Account.branch_id = Branch.branch_id;
```

- Programmer specifies what answers a query should return, but not how the query is executed
- DBMS picks the best execution strategy based on availability of indexes, data/workload characteristics, etc.
- Provides physical data independence

Physical data independence

- Applications should not need to worry about how data is physically structured and stored
- Applications should work with a logical data model and declarative query language
- Leave the implementation details and optimization to DBMS
- The single most important reason behind the success of DBMS today
  - And a Turing Award for E. F. Codd

Modern DBMS features

- Persistent storage of data
- Logical data model; declarative queries and updates → physical data independence
  - Relational model is the dominating technology today
  - XML is a hot wanna-be

What else?
DBMS is multi-user

- Example
  
  get account balance from database;
  if balance > amount of withdrawal then
    balance = balance - amount of withdrawal;
    dispense cash;
    store new balance into database;
  
- Homer at ATM1 withdraws $100
- Marge at ATM2 withdraws $50
- Initial balance = $400, final balance = ?

Final balance = $300

Homer withdraws $100; Marge withdraws $50:
read balance; $400
read balance; $400
if balance > amount then
  balance = balance - amount; $350
write balance; $350
if balance > amount then
  balance = balance - amount; $300
write balance; $300

Final balance = $350

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Concurrency control in DBMS

- Appears similar to concurrent programming problems?
  - But data not main-memory variables
- Appears similar to file system concurrent access?
  - Approach taken by MySQL in the old days
    (Fun reading: http://openacs.org/philosophy/why-not-mysql.html)

Recovery in DBMS

- Example: balance transfer
  - decrement the balance of account X by $100;
  - increment the balance of account Y by $100;
- Scenario 1: Power goes out after the first instruction
- Scenario 2: DBMS buffers and updates data in memory (for efficiency); before they are written back to disk, power goes out
- How can DBMS deal with these failures?

Summary of modern DBMS features

- Persistent storage of data
- Logical data model; declarative queries and updates → physical data independence
- Multi-user concurrent access
- Safety from system failures
- Performance, performance, performance
  - Massive amounts of data (terabytes ~ petabytes)
  - High throughput (thousands ~ millions transactions per minute)
  - High availability (≥ 99.999% uptime)
Major DBMS today
- Oracle
- IBM DB2 (from System R, System R*, Starburst)
- Microsoft SQL Server
- NCR Teradata
- Sybase
- Informix (acquired by IBM)
- PostgreSQL (from UC Berkeley’s Ingres, Postgres)
- Tandem NonStop (acquired by Compaq, now HP)
- MySQL and Microsoft Access

Modern DBMS architecture
- OS layer is bypassed for performance and safety
- Many details will be filled in the DBMS box

People working with databases
- End users: query/update databases through application user interfaces (e.g., Amazon.com, 1-800-DISCOVER, etc.)
- Database designers: design database “schema” to model aspects of the real world
- Database application developers: build applications that interface with databases
- Database administrators (a.k.a. DBA’s): load, back up, and restore data, fine-tune databases for performance
- DBMS implementors: develop the DBMS or specialized data management software, implement new techniques for query processing and optimization
Course information

- **Book**
- **Web site**
  - [http://www.cs.duke.edu/courses/fall05/cps116/](http://www.cs.duke.edu/courses/fall05/cps116/)
  - Course information; tentative syllabus and reference sections in GMUW; lecture slides, assignments, programming notes
- **Blackboard**: for grades only
- **Mailing list**: cps116@cs.duke.edu
  - Messages of general interest only
- **No official recitation sessions; help sessions for assignments, project, and exams to be scheduled**

Course load

- **Four homework assignments (35%)**
  - Include written and programming problems
- **Course project (25%)**
  - Details to be given in the third week of class
- **Midterm and final (20% each)**
  - Open book, open notes
  - Final is comprehensive, but emphasizes the second half of the course