Verifying computations with state

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A MapReduce job could compute incorrectly if there is an error in the server.
check the proof quickly

Theory (PCPs, arguments, etc.) offers a solution ...
but only in theory

[ALMSS92, Micali00, BCC88, Kilian92, IKO07]
Recent projects refine and implement the theory

CMT, TRMP, and Thaler [Cormode et al. ITCS12, Thaler et al. HotCloud12, Thaler CRYPTO13]

Pepper, Ginger, Zaatar, and Allspice [HotOS11, NDSS12, USENIX SECURITY12, EuroSys13, IEEE S&P13]


BCGTV [Ben-Sasson et al. CRYPTO13]

Highlights

Compile C programs into verifiable computations

Reduce costs by over a factor of $10^{20}$
Remaining roadblocks in bringing the theory to practice

- The computations have to be stateless
- The client incurs a large setup cost
- The server’s overheads are large
Remaining roadblocks in bringing the theory to practice

- The computations have to be stateless  [Eliminate]
- The client incurs a large setup cost  [Mitigate]
- The server’s overheads are large  [Retain]
Aren’t there more pragmatic alternatives?

Yes and no.
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Yes and no. Consider replication, trusted hardware, etc.:
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Yes and no. Consider replication, trusted hardware, etc.:

(1) Far less expensive than Pantry ... but impose assumptions
   • Long-term, we want unconditional, cost-effective guarantees
   • Pantry is a step toward this goal

(2) Pantry enables new applications for which there are not pragmatic alternatives
   • Computations over private server state, etc.
Rest of this talk:

- The computations have to be stateless
- The client incurs a large setup cost
- The server’s overheads are large

1. Eliminate
2. Mitigate
3. Retain

program in a subset of C → client executable

client executable

server executable

client executable

server executable

input

output

accept/reject

= short proof
program in a subset of C → constraints on execution → theoretical tools (PCPs, etc.) → client executable server executable

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output

= short proof
Programs compile into a set of constraints

```c
int increment(int i) {
    r = i + 1;
    return r;
}
```

- \( 0 = X - i \)
- \( 0 = Y - (X + 1) \)
- \( 0 = Y - r \)
Programs compile into a set of constraints

```java
int increment(int i) {
    r = i + 1;
    return r;
}
```

Correct input/output pair means that the equations have a solution (i.e., constraints are satisfiable)

Suppose the input is 6

If the output is 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equation 1</th>
<th>Equation 2</th>
<th>Equation 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 = X - 6</td>
<td>0 = Y - (X + 1)</td>
<td>0 = Y - 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a solution

If the output is 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equation 1</th>
<th>Equation 2</th>
<th>Equation 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 = X - 6</td>
<td>0 = Y - (X + 1)</td>
<td>0 = Y - 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no solution
Constraints can represent various program structures

Example: “Y = (X1 != X2)”

\[
0 = (X1 - X2) \cdot M - Y \\
0 = (1 - Y) \cdot (X1 - X2)
\]

Observe:

if \(X1 == X2\), then \(Y\) must be 0, to satisfy the first.

if \(X1 != X2\), then \(Y\) must be 1, to satisfy the second.

program in a subset of C → constraints on execution → theoretical tools (PCPs, etc.) → client executable

server executable

satisfiability of constraints ⇔ correct execution

client executable

server executable

= short proof

- Program in a subset of C
- Constraints on execution
- Theoretical tools (PCPs, etc.)
- Client executable
- Server executable

Satisfiability of constraints \iff correct execution

\[ E_{uroSys13} \text{ and } Pinocchio \]

Tuesday, November 5, 13
Verification protocol:

client

server

accept/reject

\[\text{short proof}\]

input

output

queries

constraints on execution

\[\text{solve}\]

a solution to constraints

\[\text{encode}\]

\[\text{a large error correcting code}\]
Verification protocol:

- **Constraints on execution**
  - **Queries**
- **Client**
  - Input
  - Output
  - Queries
  - Accept/reject
- **Server**
  - Constraints on execution
    - Solve
    - A solution to constraints
      - Encode
      - A large error correcting code
The client has to amortize its query generation costs to save resources relative to local execution.

The short proof is the queried values from the large encoding.

Program in a subset of C → Constraints on execution → Theoretical tools (PCPs, etc.) → Client executable

Client executable

Server executable

Satisfiability of constraints ⇔ Correct execution

A valid proof ⇔ Satisfiability of constraints

Input

Output

Accept/reject

= Short proof

Tuesday, November 5, 13
How can we design constraints such that their satisfiability is tantamount to correct storage interaction?
A naive approach

\[ B = \text{read}(A) \]

\[
\begin{align*}
B &= S_0 - (A-0) \cdot C_0 \\
B &= S_1 - (A-1) \cdot C_1 \\
\vdots \\
B &= S_{\text{size}} - (A-\text{size}) \cdot C_{\text{size}}
\end{align*}
\]

\[ S_0, S_1, \ldots, S_{\text{size}} \text{ correspond to cells of storage} \]
A naive approach

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\end{align*}
\]

\text{switch (A) \{ \\
\quad \text{case 0: } B = S_0; \text{ break;} \\
\quad \text{case 1: } B = S_1; \text{ break;} \\
\quad \vdots \\
\quad \text{case size: } B = S_{\text{size}}; \text{ break;} \\
\}}

S_0, S_1, ..., S_{\text{size}} \text{ correspond to cells of storage}
A naive approach

\[ B = \text{read}(A) \]

```
switch (A) {
    case 0: B = S_0; break;
    case 1: B = S_1; break;
    ...
    case size: B = S_{size}; break;
}
```

- Expensive: requires one constraint for each address
- Incomplete: provides only volatile state

\[ B = S_0 - (A-0) \cdot C_0 \]
\[ B = S_1 - (A-1) \cdot C_1 \]
\[ \ldots \]
\[ B = S_{size} - (A-size) \cdot C_{size} \]

\[ S_0, S_1, \ldots, S_{size} \text{ correspond to cells of storage} \]
Consider an untrusted block store:

\[ H(\text{block}) \neq \text{digest}, \text{H is a cryptographic hash function} \]
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To run a computation with remote inputs, the above client will need to:

1. Fetch blocks from the storage server
2. Check the integrity of the blocks using digests
3. Run the computation
Consider an untrusted block store:

- Fetch blocks from the storage server
- Check the integrity of the blocks using digests
- Run the computation

Pantry’s approach to state: verifiably run the steps below on the server, by compiling these steps into constraints, without having to handle data blocks.

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Existing work designs higher level abstractions using an untrusted block store [Merkle CRYPTO87, Blum et al. FOCS91, Fu et al. OSDI00, Li et al. OSDI04]
Pantry’s approach to state, with an example

Consider a substring search with a remote data block

client \[\text{digest,d, and short string, X}\] server

accept/reject \[\text{YES/NO}\] a data block

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Pantry’s approach to state, with an example

Consider a substring search with a remote data block

client → digest, d, and short string, X → server

accept/reject

YES/NO

check if $H(B) = d$

if (x is a substring in B)
output = YES
else
output = NO

$d_0 = B_0 + B_7 + ..$
$d_1 = B_1 + B_8 + ..$
....
$d_{25} = B_{73} \cdot B_{84} + ..$

$Z_0 = X_0 - B_0$
....
$Y = 1 \cdot Z_0 + ..$
• Satisfiability of the above constraints ⇔ passing hash checks
• Passing hash checks is computationally infeasible without the right data blocks
We add two primitives to Pantry’s C to expose state

- **PutBlock(block):** stores “block” at location $H(block)$
- **GetBlock(digest):** returns a block such that $H(block) = digest$
We add two primitives to Pantry’s C to expose state

- **PutBlock(block)**: stores “block” at location $H(block)$
- **GetBlock(digest)**: returns a block such that $H(block) = digest$

```c
function (digest d)    
    int b = GetBlock(d)     
    y = b+1                  
    return y                 
```

Representation of $H$ in constraints:

$$
\begin{align*}
  d_0 &= B_0 + B_7 + .. \\
  d_1 &= B_1 + B_8 + .. \\
  \vdots \\
  d_{25} &= B_{73} \cdot B_{84} + .. \\
Y &= B+1
\end{align*}
$$
We add two primitives to Pantry’s C to expose state

- PutBlock(block): stores “block” at location H(block)
- GetBlock(digest): returns a block such that H(block) = digest

We use a hash function that has an efficient representation as a set of constraints [Ajtai STOC96]
Pantry: an extension to Zaatar and Pinocchio

- a valid proof $\iff$ “I know a satisfying assignment to constraints”
- satisfiability of constraints $\iff$ hash checks pass
- hash checks pass $\iff$ correct storage interaction
Verifiable stateful applications from C code with Pantry:

(next)

- MapReduce
- hidden state apps

Database queries

RAM

(program in a subset of C + GetBlock/PutBlock)

client executable

server executable

Merkle CRYPTO87, Blum et al. FOCS91

(in the paper)
The computations have to be stateless

The client incurs a large setup cost

The server’s overheads are large
Pantry enables applications where the client’s setup costs are tolerable:

• Data parallel computations (MapReduce, etc.) that compute over remote state
  ‣ Have multiple identical computations

• Hidden state applications
  ‣ The client cannot, in principle, execute on its own
The client is assured that a MapReduce job was executed correctly—without ever touching the data.
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map() and reduce() are expressed in Pantry’s subset of C:

mapper(Dig in_digest, Dig *d) {
    in = GetBlock(in_digest)
    map(in, out)
    for i=1 to R
        d[i] = PutBlock(out[i])
}

reducer(Dig *d, Dig*out_digest) {
    for i=1 to M:
        in[i] = GetBlock(d[i])
        reduce(in, out)
    out_digest = PutBlock(out)
}
The client is assured that a MapReduce job was executed correctly—without ever touching the data

The two phases are handled separately:

```plaintext
mapper( ... ) {
    in = GetBlock(in_digest)
    map(in, out)
    for i=1 to R
        d[i] = PutBlock(out[i])
}

reducer( ... ) {
    for i=1 to M:
        in[i] = GetBlock(d[i])
        reduce(in, out)
        out_digest = PutBlock(out)
}
```
Pantry enables applications where the client’s setup costs are tolerable:

• Data parallel computations (MapReduce, etc.) that compute over remote state
  ‣ Have multiple identical computations

• Hidden state applications
  ‣ The client cannot, in principle, execute on its own
Hidden state applications

Client \[\text{lookup(\text{\textcolor{red}{yes}}, \text{proof})} \Rightarrow \text{Server}
\]

accept/reject

list of faces

- Key idea: Pantry’s storage + Pinocchio’s zero-knowledge
Hidden state applications

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- **Wrinkles:**
  - Pantry’s digests aren’t information hiding (wrap digests with a cryptographic commitment scheme)
  - Standard commitment schemes are expensive (use an HMAC-based scheme that is 10X cheaper)
Hidden state applications

• Key idea: Pantry’s storage + Pinocchio’s zero-knowledge

• Wrinkles:
  ‣ Pantry’s digests aren’t information hiding (wrap digests with a cryptographic commitment scheme)
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• Other applications: tolling, regression analysis, etc.
Hidden state applications

Key idea: Pantry’s storage + Pinocchio’s zero-knowledge

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Other applications: tolling, regression analysis, etc.

Upshot: with only C programs, one can get powerful guarantees
Benchmark applications and implementation

Benchmark applications:

- MapReduce: nucleotide substring search, dot product, nearest neighbor search, and covariance computation
- Hidden state: face matching, tolling, and regression analysis

Distributed implementation of the server

C++, Java, Go, and Python code; HTTP/Open MPI to distribute server's work
Evaluation questions

1. When does Pantry’s client save resources relative to locally executing the computation?

2. What are the costs of supporting hidden state?

3. What are the costs of Pantry’s server, relative to simply executing the computation?
Pantry’s client saves resources at sufficiently large input sizes

MapReduce job: **nucleotide substring search** in which a mapper gets 600K nucleotides and outputs matching locations
Pantry's client saves resources at sufficiently large input sizes

MapReduce job: nucleotide substring search in which a mapper gets 600K nucleotides and outputs matching locations.

![Graph showing CPU time (minutes) vs. number of nucleotides in the input dataset (billions)]
Pantry’s client saves resources at sufficiently large input sizes

MapReduce job: **nucleotide substring search** in which a mapper gets 600K nucleotides and outputs matching locations

Graph is an extrapolation (slopes and y intercepts determined with experiments that use up to 250 machines and up to 1.2 billion nucleotides)
Cost of supporting hidden state applications

Server holds 128 face fingerprints (hidden state: 15 KB)

good news:
proof size: 288 bytes
client’s CPU time: 7 ms

bad news:
network (setup), server’s storage (ongoing): 170 MB
server’s CPU time: 7.8 min
Pantry's server's cost is many orders of magnitude slower than simply executing the computation.

Sources of overhead: constraints + crypto ops. proportional to #constraints
Recap

- The computations have to be stateless  [Eliminate]
- The client incurs a large setup cost  [Mitigate]
- The server's overheads are large  [Retain]
Prior work on verifiable computation

Make assumptions about the server’s failure modes or give up generality:

Replication [Castro & Liskov TOCS02], trusted hardware [Chiesa & Tromer ICS10, Sadeghi et al. TRUST10], and auditing [Monrose et al. NDSS99, Haeberlen et al. SOSP07]

Special-purpose [Freivalds MFCS79, Golle & Mironov RSA01, Sion VLDB05, Benabbas et al. CRYPTO11, Boneh & Freeman EUROCRYPT11]

Unconditional guarantees and general but not geared to practice:

Use fully homomorphic encryption [GGP, Chung et al. CRYPTO10]

Theory of PCPs, IPs, arguments [GMR85, Ben-Or et al. STOC88, Babai et al. STOC91, Kilian STOC92, ALMSS92, AS92, Goldwasser et al. STOC 2008, Bitansky et al. ITCS12]
Four projects have produced implementations

Pepper, Ginger, Zaatar, Allspice

CMT, Thaler

Pinocchio, GGPR

BCGTV

HotOS 11
NDSS 12
USENIX SECURITY 12
EuroSys 13
IEEE S&P 13

Cormode et al. ITCS 12
Thaler et al. HotCloud 12
Thaler CRYPTO 13

Gennaro et al. EUROCRYPT 13
Parno et al. IEEE S&P 13

Ben-Sasson et al. CRYPTO 13
Ben-Sasson et al. ITCS 13
Bitansky et al. TCC 13
Next steps for the area of verifiable computing

- Reducing the server’s overhead (currently 3-6 orders of magnitude more than native execution)

- Avoiding the client’s setup costs efficiently

- Enhancing the computational model (currently loops are unrolled, storage operations need a lot of constraints, etc.)
Takeaways

• Pantry takes another step in bringing powerful theory behind verifiable computation into practice
  ‣ Pantry enables realistic, stateful computations: MapReduce, database queries, hidden state applications, etc.

• We think: the machinery underlying Pantry or its variant will be a key tool in building future secure systems