Carnegie Mellon University

Database Systems

15-445/645 SPRING 2026

ANDY PAVLO
JIGNESH PATEL

Lecture #06

Database Storage: Column Stores + Data Compression

ADMINISTRIVIA

Project #1 is due Sunday Feb 15th @ 11:59pm

→ Recitation Video + Slides (**@64**)

→ Perf Recitation on Wednesday Feb 4th @ 6:30pm (**@79**)

Homework #2 is due Sunday Feb 8th @ 11:59pm

UPCOMING DATABASE TALKS

Redpanda Oxla (DB Seminar)
→ Monday Feb 2nd @ 4:30pm ET
→ Zoom

Amazon Aurora DSQL (DB Seminar)
→ Monday Feb 9th @ 4:30pm ET
→ Zoom

TopK (DB Seminar)
→ Monday Feb 16th @ 4:30pm ET
→ Zoom

LAST CLASS

We discussed storage architecture alternatives to the slotted page storage scheme.

→ Log-structured storage
→ Index-organized storage

These approaches are ideal for write-heavy (**INSERT**/**UPDATE**/**DELETE**) workloads.

But the most important query for some workloads may be read (**SELECT**) performance…

TODAY'S AGENDA

Database Workloads

Storage Models

Data Compression

DATABASE WORKLOADS

On-Line Transaction Processing (OLTP)

→ Fast operations that only read/update a small amount of data each time.

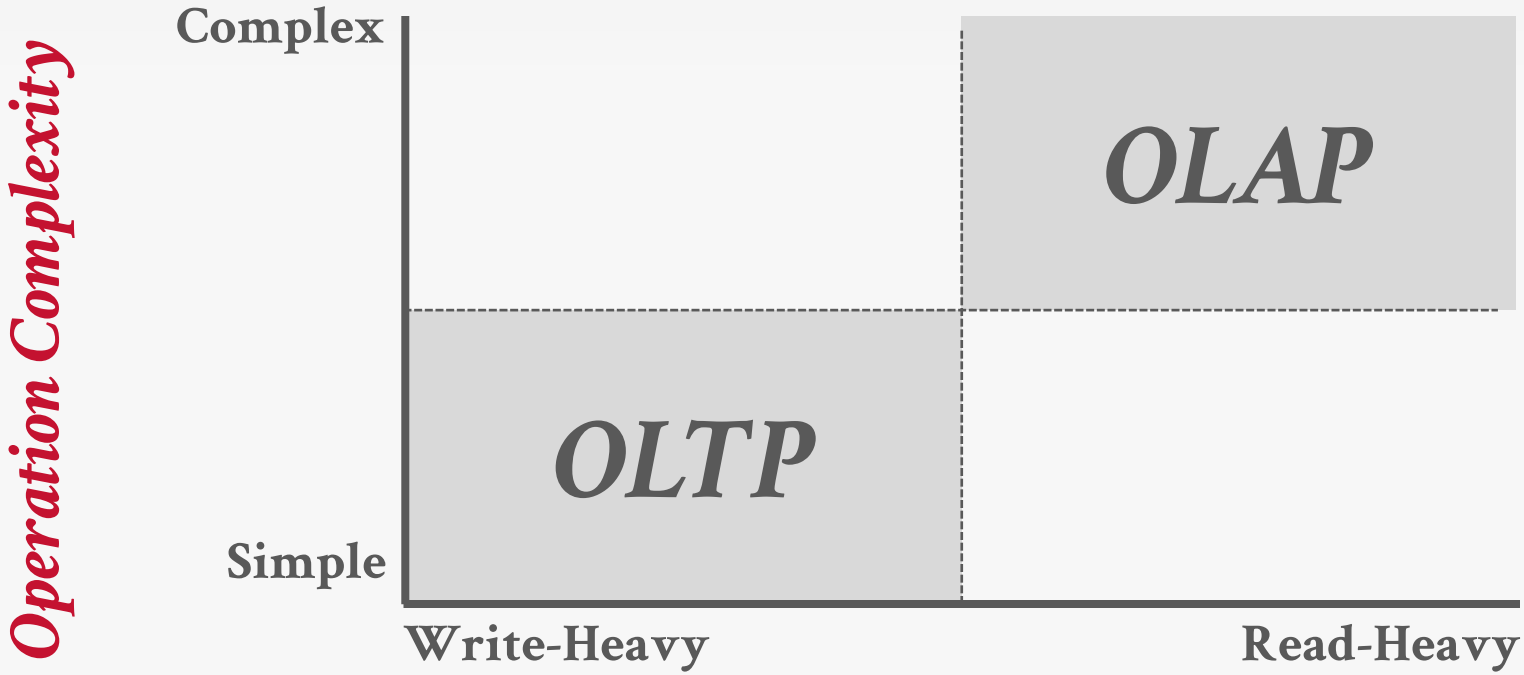
On-Line Analytical Processing (OLAP)

→ Complex queries that read a lot of data to compute aggregates.

Hybrid Transaction + Analytical Processing

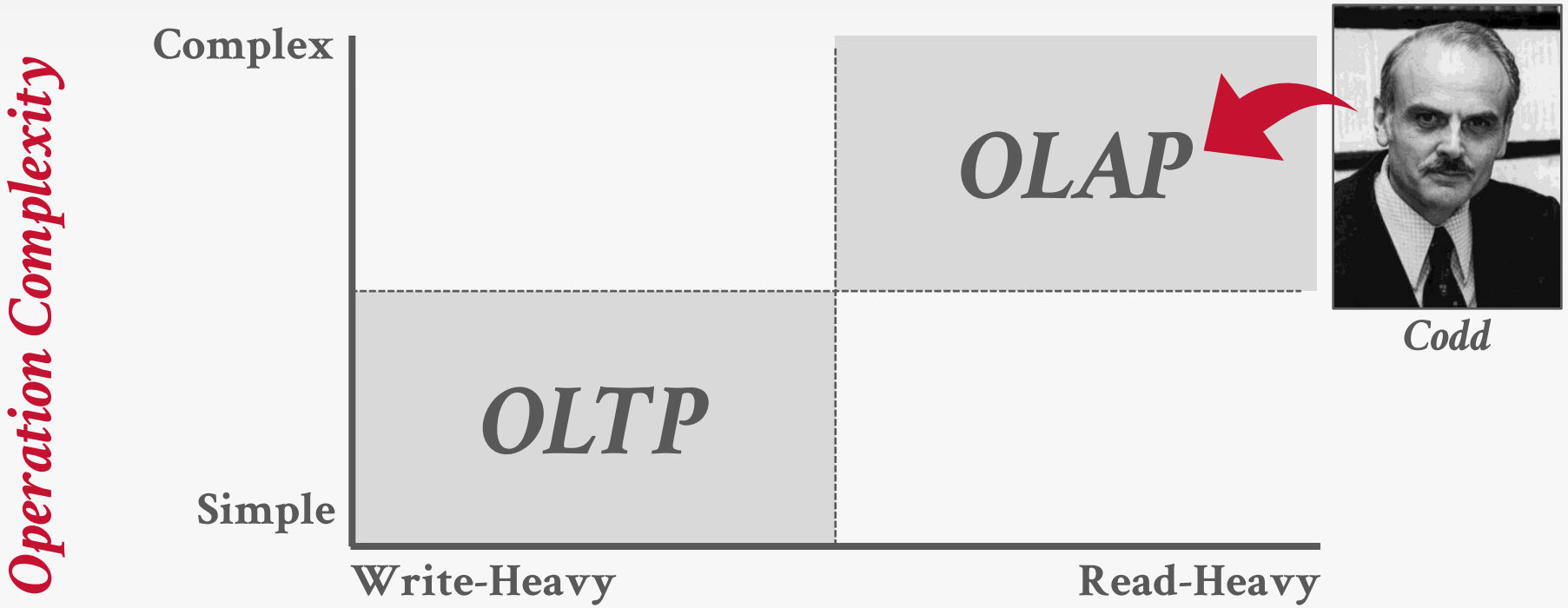
→ OLTP + OLAP together on the same database instance

DATABASE WORKLOADS



Source: Mike Stonebraker

DATABASE WORKLOADS



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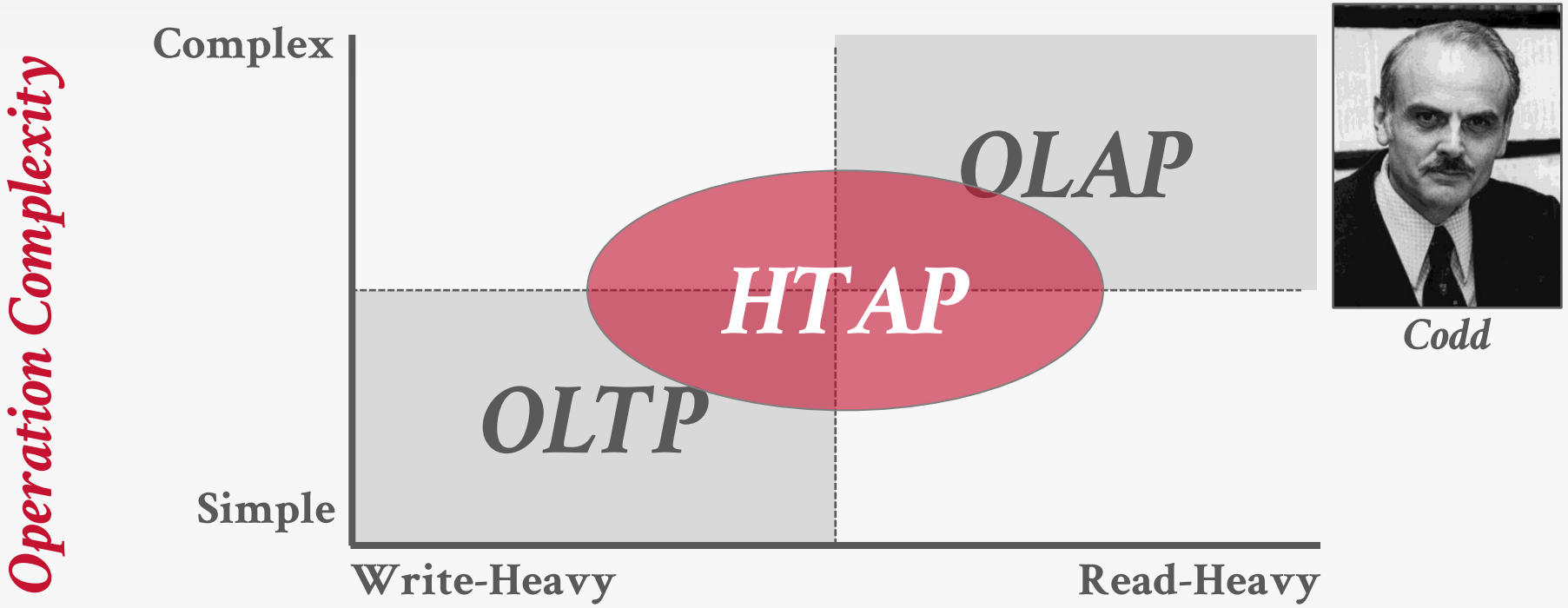

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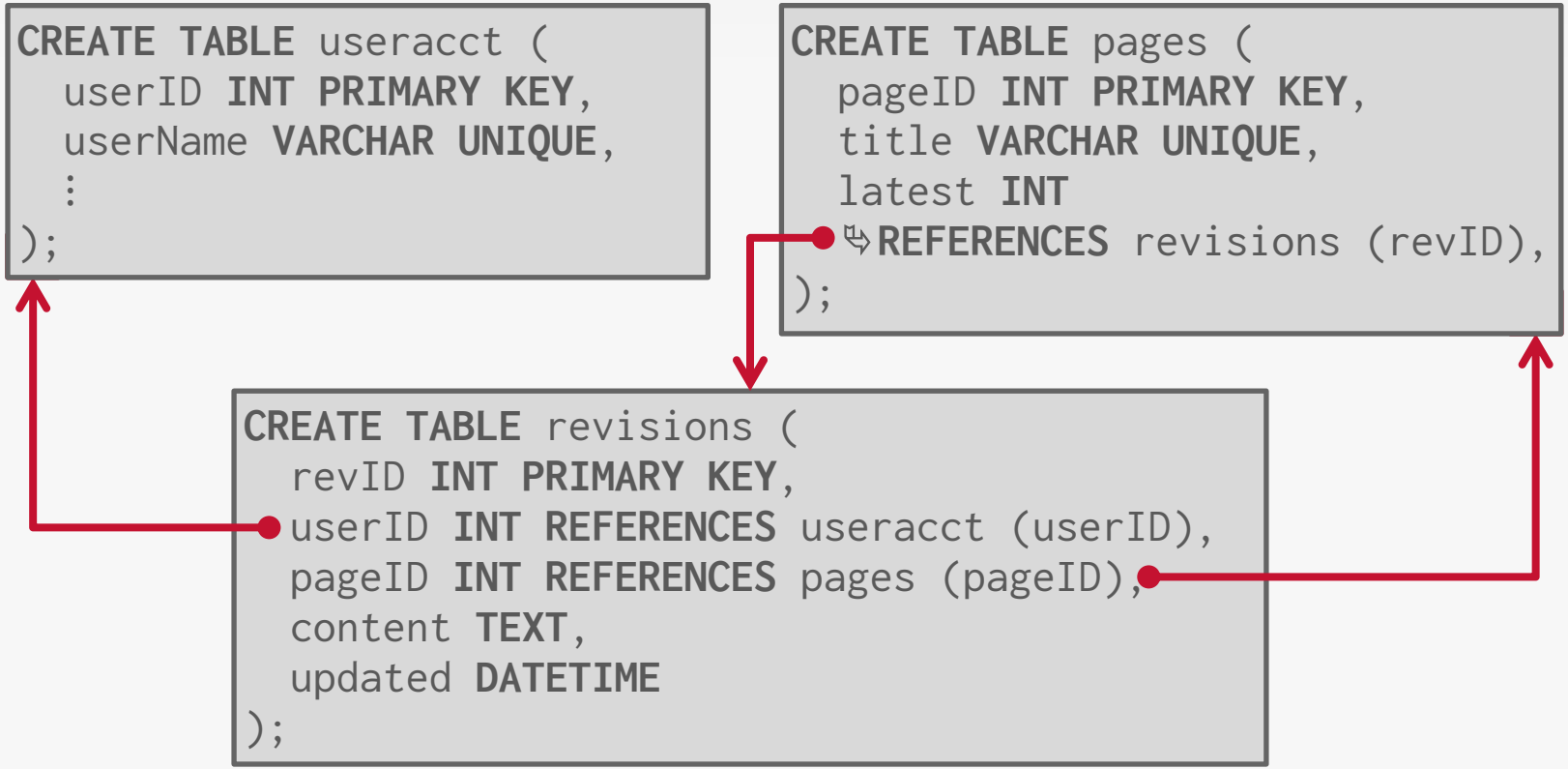
Source: Mike Stonebraker

WIKIPEDIA EXAMPLE



OBSERVATION

The relational model does not specify that the DBMS must store all a tuple's attributes together in a single page.

This may not actually be the best layout for some workloads…

OLTP

On-line Transaction Processing:

→ Simple queries that read/update a small amount of data that is related to a single entity in the database.

This is usually the kind of application that people build first.

```
SELECT P.*, R.*
  FROM pages AS P
 INNER JOIN revisions AS R
    ON P.latest = R.revID
 WHERE P.pageID = ?
```

```
UPDATE useracct
   SET lastLogin = NOW(),
       hostname = ?
 WHERE userID = ?
```

```
INSERT INTO revisions
 VALUES (?,?…,?)
```

OLAP

On-line Analytical Processing:

→ Complex queries that read large portions of the database spanning multiple entities.

You execute these workloads on the data you have collected from your OLTP application(s).

```
SELECT COUNT(U.lastLogin),
       EXTRACT(month FROM
            U.lastLogin) AS month
  FROM useracct AS U
 WHERE U.hostname LIKE '%.gov'
 GROUP BY
  EXTRACT(month FROM U.lastLogin)
```

STORAGE MODELS

A DBMS's **storage model** specifies how it physically organizes tuples on disk and in memory.

→ Can have different performance characteristics based on the target workload (OLTP vs. OLAP).

→ Influences the design choices of the rest of the DBMS.

Choice #1: N-ary Storage Model (NSM)

Choice #2: Decomposition Storage Model (DSM)

Choice #3: Hybrid Storage Model (PAX)

N-ARY STORAGE MODEL (NSM)

The DBMS stores (almost) all attributes for a single tuple contiguously in a single page.
→ Also commonly known as a **row store**

Ideal for OLTP workloads where queries are more likely to access individual entities and execute write-heavy workloads.

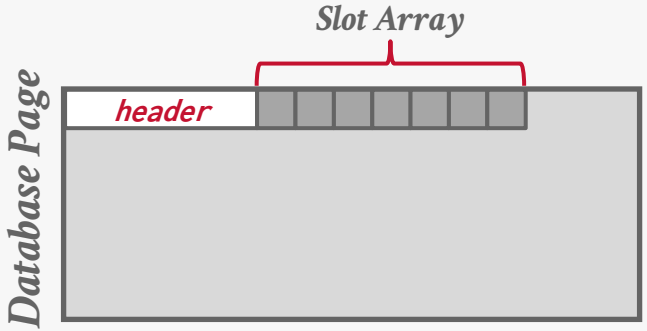
NSM database page sizes are typically some constant multiple of 4 KB hardware pages.

NSM: PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION

A disk-oriented NSM system stores a tuple's fixed-length and variable-length attributes contiguously in a single slotted page.

The tuple's **record id** (page#, slot#) is how the DBMS uniquely identifies a physical tuple.

	Col A	Col B	Col C
Row #0	a0	b0	c0
Row #1	a1	b1	c1
Row #2	a2	b2	c2
Row #3	a3	b3	c3
Row #4	a4	b4	c4
Row #5	a5	b5	c5



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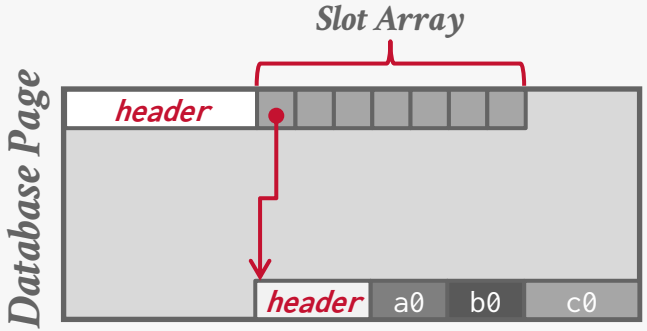

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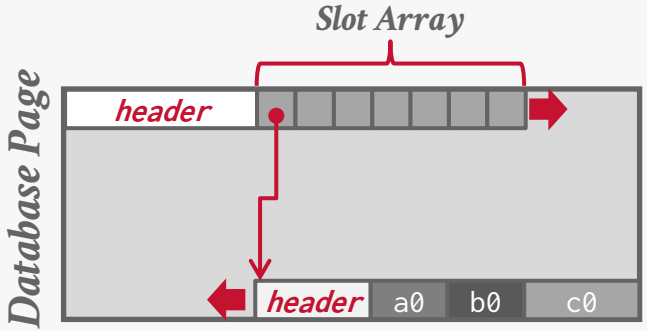

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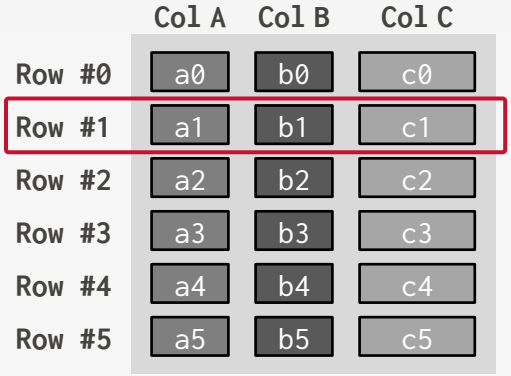

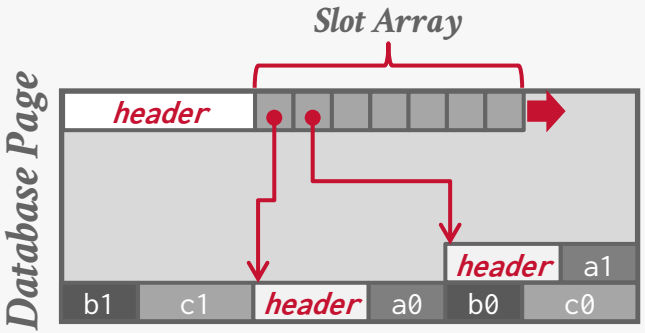

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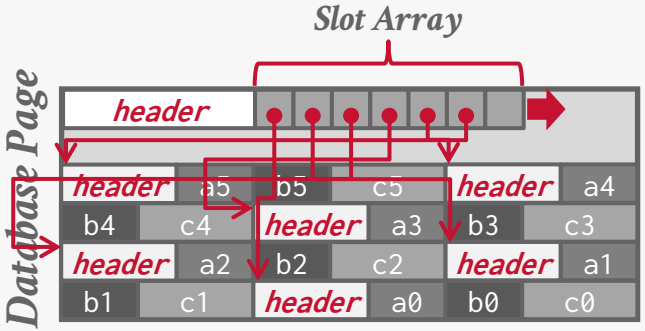
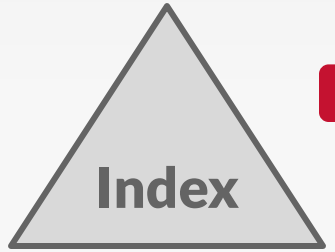


NSM: OLTP EXAMPLE

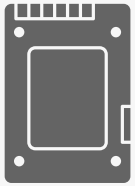
```
SELECT * FROM useracct
 WHERE userName = ?
   AND userPass = ?
```



Lectures #8-9

NSM Disk Page

header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
header	-	-	-	-	-

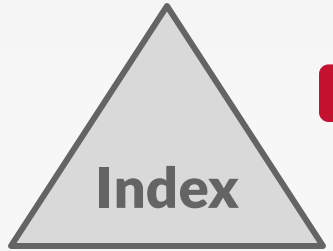


Database File

NSM: OLTP EXAMPLE

```
SELECT * FROM useracct
 WHERE userName = ?
   AND userPass = ?
```

```
INSERT INTO useracct
 VALUES (?,?,…?)
```



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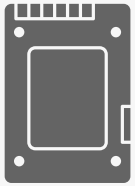

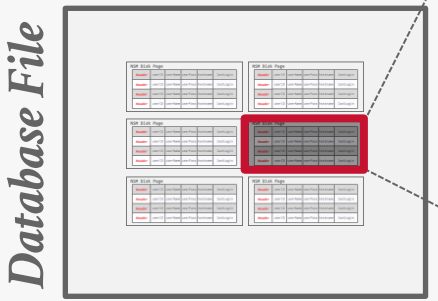

NSM Disk Page

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NSM: OLAP EXAMPLE

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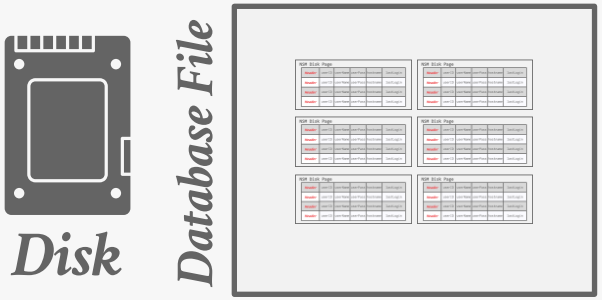

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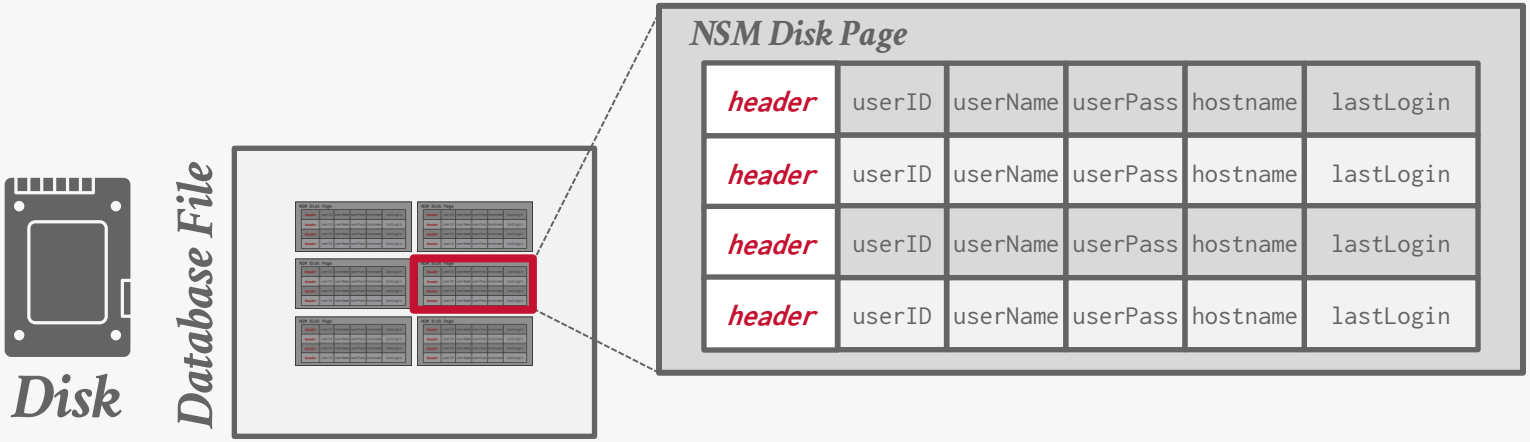

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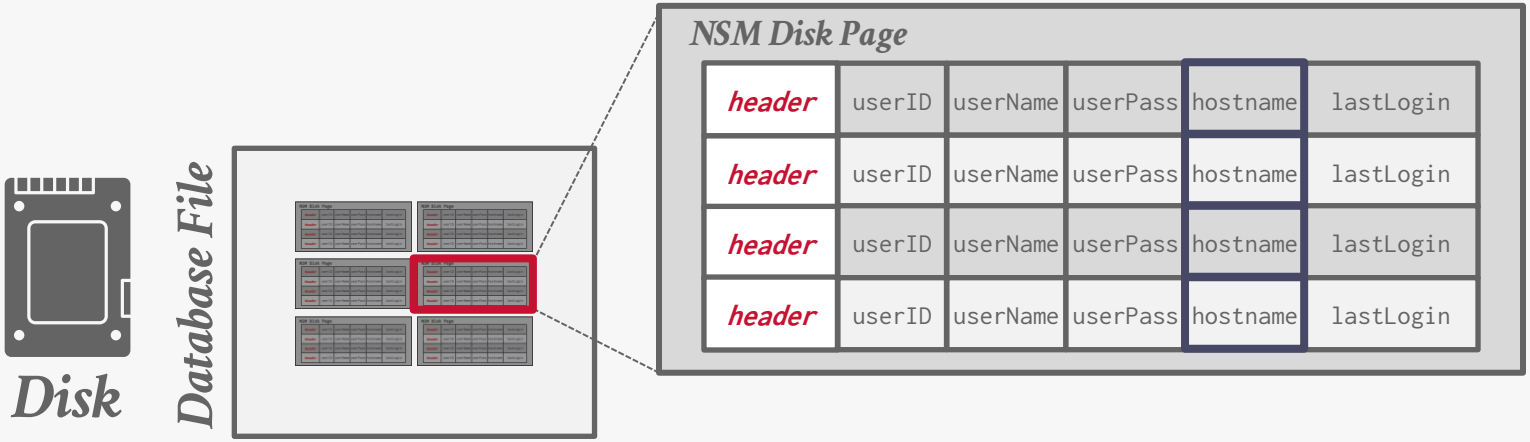

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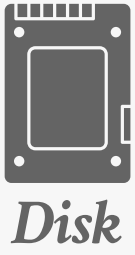

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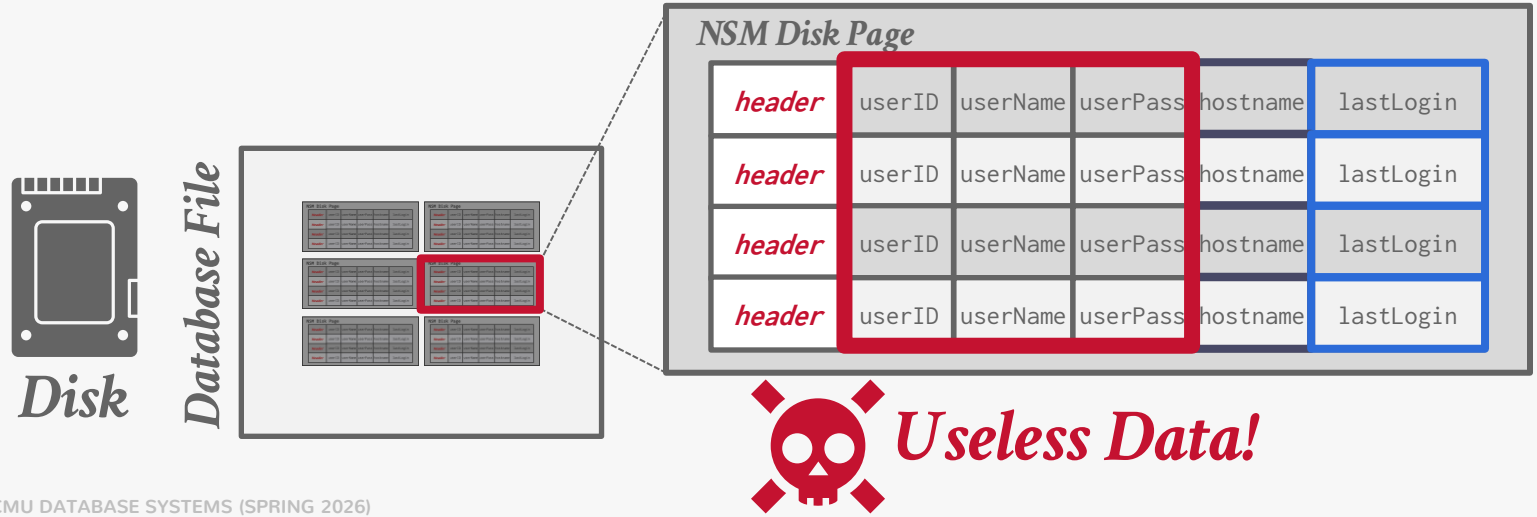


NSM: SUMMARY

Advantages

→ Fast inserts, updates, and deletes.
→ Good for queries that need the entire tuple (OLTP).
→ Can use index-oriented physical storage for clustering.

Disadvantages

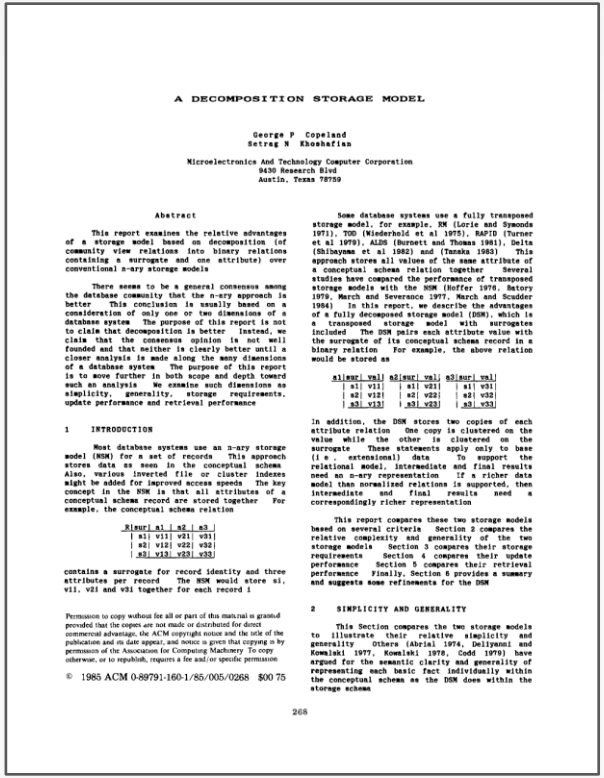
→ Not good for scanning large portions of the table and/or a subset of the attributes.
→ Terrible memory locality in access patterns.
→ Not ideal for compression because of multiple value domains within a single page.

DECOMPOSITION STORAGE MODEL (DSM)

Store a single attribute for all tuples contiguously in a block of data.
→ Also known as a "column store"

Ideal for OLAP workloads where read-only queries perform large scans over a subset of the table's attributes.

DBMS is responsible for combining/splitting a tuple's attributes when reading/writing.



A DECOMPOSITION STORAGE MODEL

George P Copeland
Setrag N Khoshafian

Microelectronics And Technology Computer Corporation
9430 Research Blvd
Austin, Texas 78759

Abstract

This report examines the relative advantages of a storage model based on decomposition (of community view relations into binary relations containing a surrogate and one attribute) over conventional n-ary storage models

There seems to be a general consensus among the database community that the n-ary approach is better This conclusion is usually based on a consideration of only one or two dimensions of a database system The purpose of this report is not to claim that decomposition is better Instead, we claim that the consensus opinion is not well founded and that neither is clearly better until a closer analysis is made along the many dimensions of a database system The purpose of this report is to move further in both scope and depth toward such an analysis We examine such dimensions as simplicity, generality, storage requirements, update performance and retrieval performance

1 INTRODUCTION

Most database systems use an n-ary storage model (NSM) for a set of records This approach stores data as seen in the conceptual schema Also, various inverted file or cluster indexes might be added for improved access speeds The key concept in the NSM is that all attributes of a conceptual schema record are stored together For example, the conceptual schema relation

R	sur	a1	a2	a3
	s1	v11	v21	v31
	s2	v12	v22	v32
	s3	v13	v23	v33

contains a surrogate for record identity and three attributes per record The NSM would store s1, v11, v21 and v31 together for each record 1

Some database systems use a fully transposed storage model, for example, RM (Lorie and Symonds 1971), TOD (Wiederhold et al 1975), RAPID (Turner et al 1979), ALDS (Burnett and Thomas 1981), Delta (Shibayama et al 1982) and (Tanaka 1983) This approach stores all values of the same attribute of a conceptual schema relation together Several studies have compared the performance of transposed storage models with the NSM (Hoffer 1976, Batory 1979, March and Severance 1977, March and Scudder 1984) In this report, we describe the advantages of a fully decomposed storage model (DSM), which is a transposed storage model with surrogates included The DSM pairs each attribute value with the surrogate of its conceptual schema record in a binary relation For example, the above relation would be stored as

a1	sur	val	a2	sur	val	a3	sur	val
	s1	v11		s1	v21		s1	v31
	s2	v12		s2	v22		s2	v32
	s3	v13		s3	v23		s3	v33

In addition, the DSM stores two copies of each attribute relation One copy is clustered on the value while the other is clustered on the surrogate These statements apply only to base (i e , extensional) data To support the relational model, intermediate and final results need an n-ary representation If a richer data model than normalized relations is supported, then intermediate and final results need a correspondingly richer representation

This report compares these two storage models based on several criteria Section 2 compares the relative complexity and generality of the two storage models Section 3 compares their storage requirements Section 4 compares their update performance Section 5 compares their retrieval performance Finally, Section 6 provides a summary and suggests some refinements for the DSM

2 SIMPLICITY AND GENERALITY

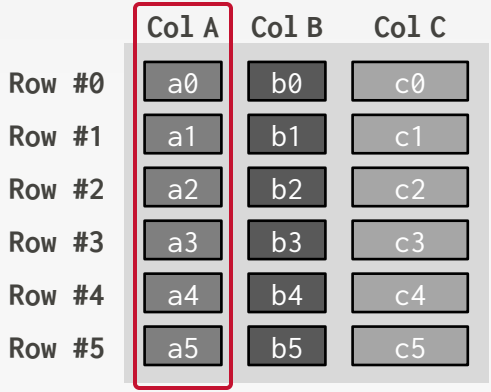
This Section compares the two storage models to illustrate their relative simplicity and generality Others (Abrial 1974, Deliyanni and Kowalski 1977, Kowalski 1978, Codd 1979) have argued for the semantic clarity and generality of representing each basic fact individually within the conceptual schema as the DSM does within the storage schema

DSM: PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION

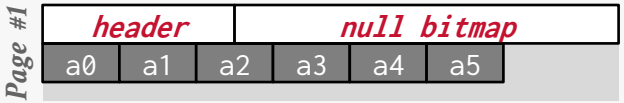
Store attributes and meta-data (e.g., nulls) in separate arrays of **fixed-length** values.

→ Most systems identify unique physical tuples using offsets into these arrays.

→ Need to handle variable-length values…



Maintain separate pages per attribute with a dedicated header area for meta-data about entire column.



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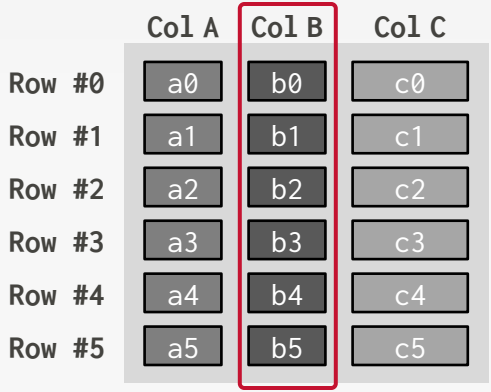

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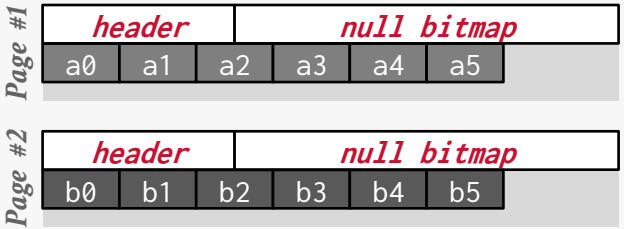

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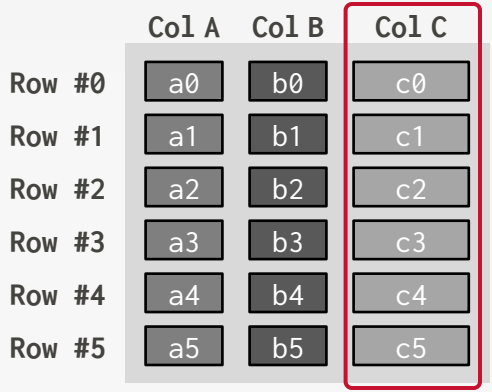

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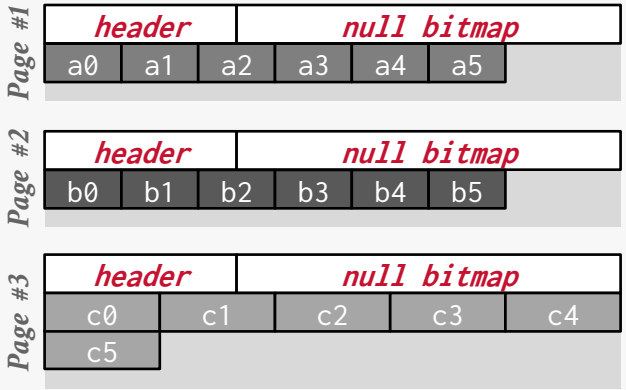

DSM: OLAP EXAMPLE

header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
header	userID	userName	userPass	hostname	lastLogin
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DSM: OLAP EXAMPLE

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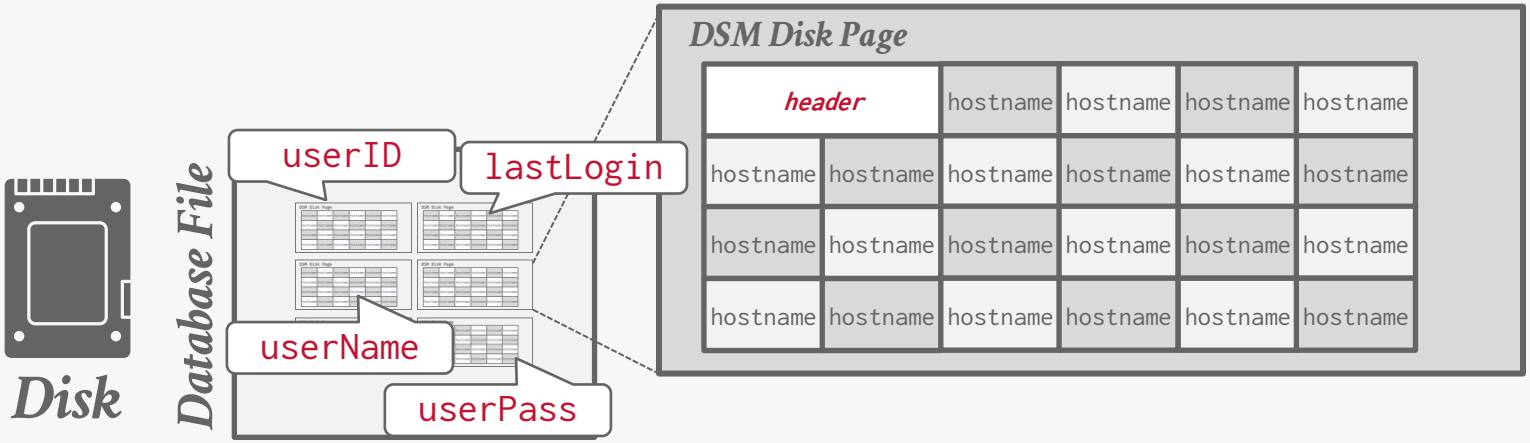

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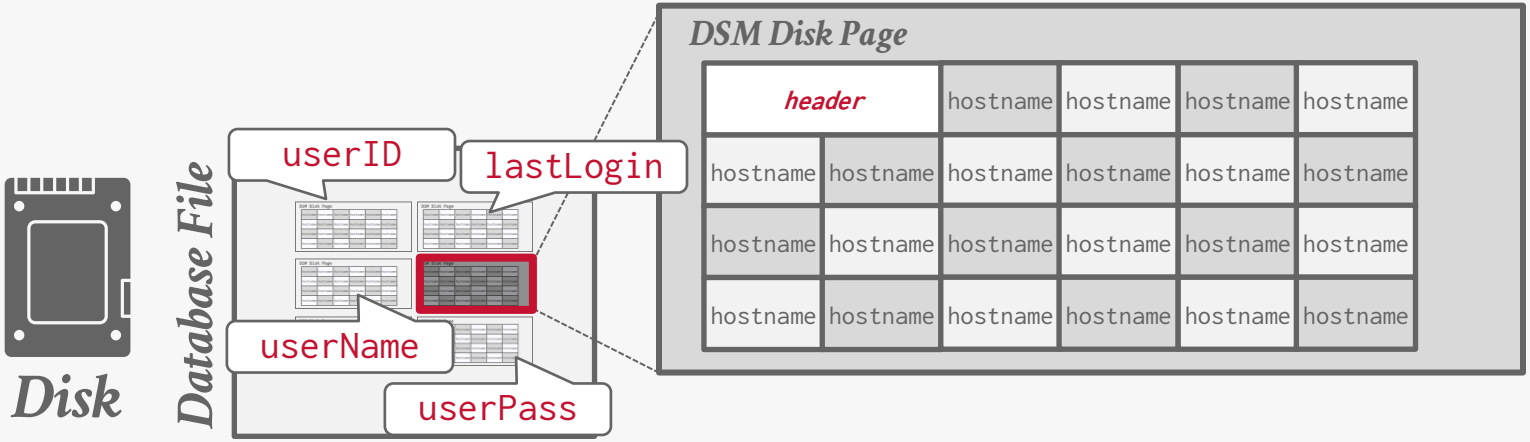

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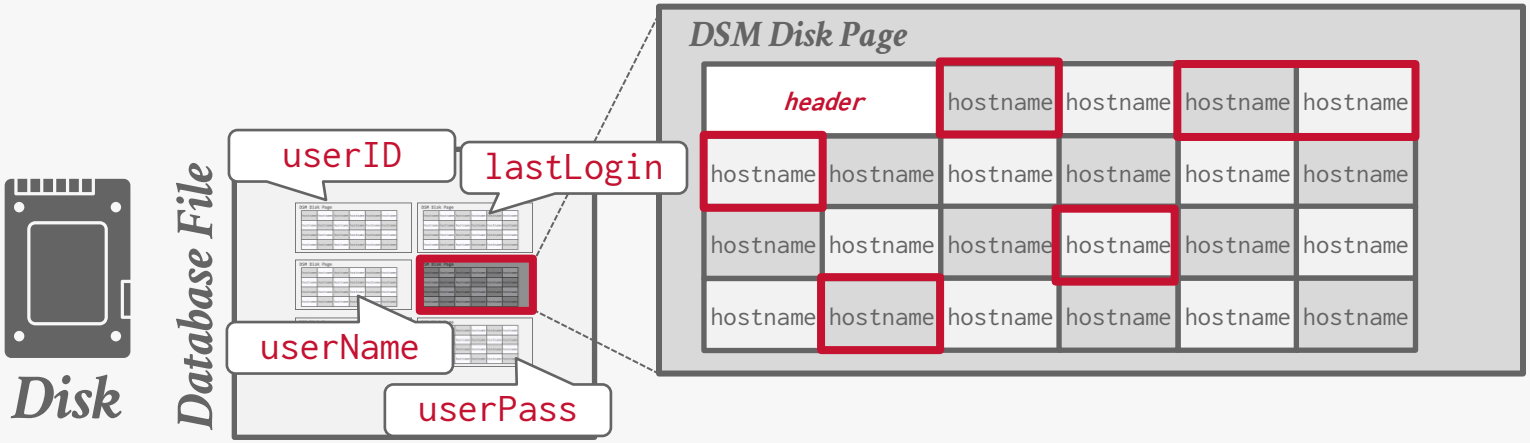

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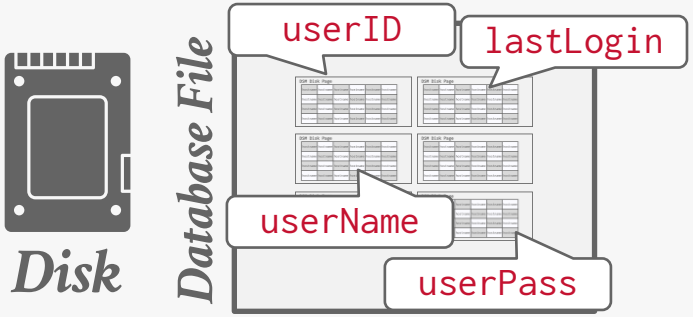

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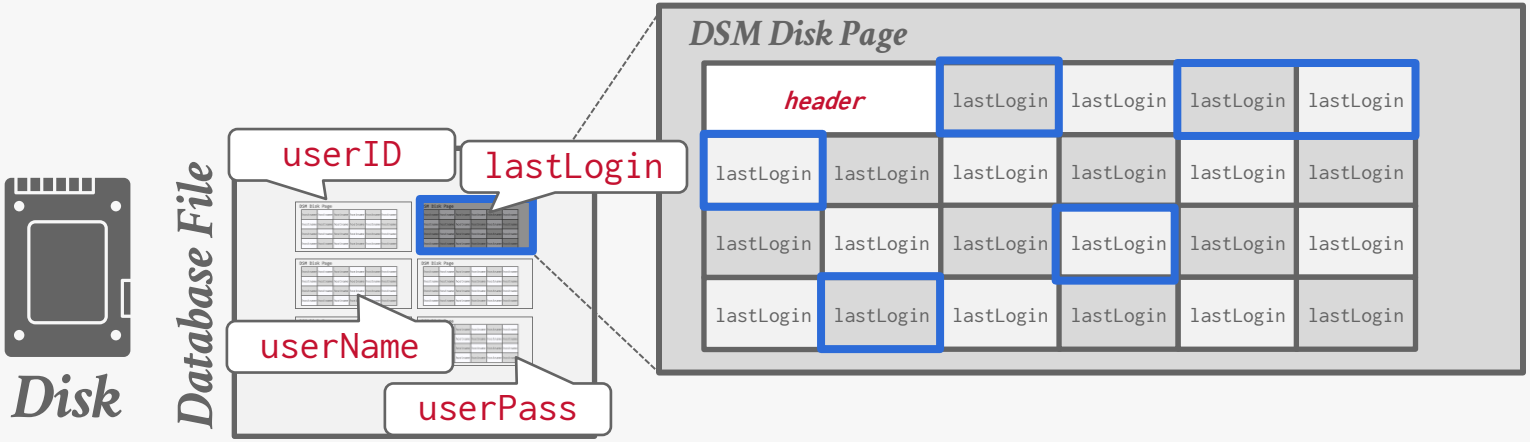
 GROUP BY EXTRACT(month FROM U.lastLogin)
```



DSM: TUPLE IDENTIFICATION

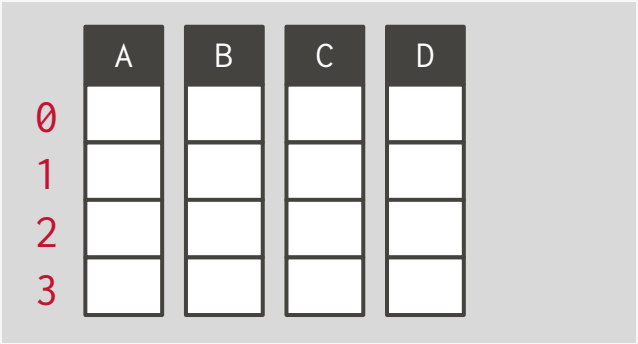
Choice #1: Fixed-length Offsets

→ Each value is the same length for an attribute.

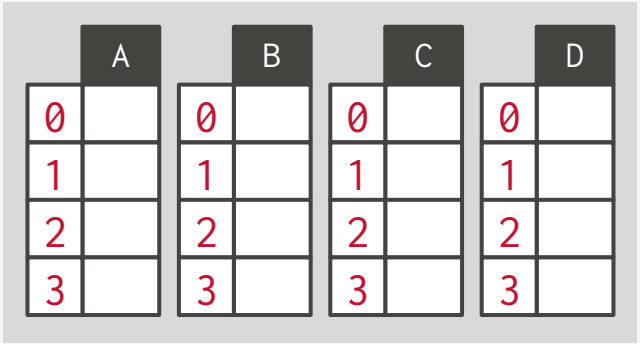
Choice #2: Embedded Tuple Ids

→ Each value is stored with its tuple id in a column.

Offsets



Embedded Ids



DSM: VARIABLE-LENGTH DATA

Padding variable-length fields to ensure they are fixed-length is wasteful, especially for large attributes.

A better approach is to use ***dictionary compression*** to convert repetitive variable-length data into fixed-length values (typically 32-bit integers).

→ More on this later in this lecture…

DECOMPOSITION STORAGE MODEL (DSM)

Advantages

→ Reduces the amount wasted I/O per query because the DBMS only reads the data that it needs.
→ Faster query processing because of increased locality and cached data reuse (**Lecture #14**).
→ Better data compression because data from the same domain are physically collocated.

Disadvantages

→ Slow for point queries, inserts, updates, and deletes because of tuple splitting/stitching/reorganization.

OBSERVATION

OLAP queries almost never access a single column in a table by itself.

→ At some point during query execution, the DBMS must get other columns and stitch the original tuple back together.

But we still need to store data in a columnar format to get the storage + execution benefits.

We need a columnar scheme that stores attributes separately but keeps each tuple's attributes physically close to each other…

PAX STORAGE MODEL

Partition Attributes Across (PAX) is a hybrid storage model that vertically partitions attributes within a database page.

→ Examples: Parquet (2013), ORC (2013), Arrow (2016), Nimble (2023), Vortex (2025).

The goal is to get the benefit of faster processing on columnar storage while retaining the spatial locality benefits of row storage.

Weaving Relations for Cache Performance

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David J. DeWitt Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison *dewitt@cs.wisc.edu*
Mark D. Hill Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison *markhill@cs.wisc.edu*
Marios Skounakis Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison *marios@cs.wisc.edu*

Abstract

Relational database systems have traditionally optimized for I/O performance and organized records sequentially on disk pages using the N-ary Storage Model (NSM) (a.k.a., slotted pages). Recent research, however, indicates that cache utilization and performance is becoming increasingly important on modern platforms. In this paper, we first demonstrate that in-page data placement is the key to high cache performance and that NSM exhibits low cache utilization on modern platforms. Next, we propose a new data organization model called PAX (Partition Attributes Across), that significantly improves cache performance by grouping together all values of each attribute within each page. Because PAX only affects layout inside the pages, it incurs no storage penalty and does not affect I/O behavior. According to our experimental results, when compared to NSM (a) PAX exhibits superior cache and memory bandwidth utilization, saving at least 75% of NSM's stall time due to data cache accesses, (b) range selection queries and updates on memory-resident relations execute 17-25% faster, and (c) TPC-H queries involving I/O execute 11-48% faster.

1 Introduction

The communication between the CPU and the secondary storage (I/O) has been traditionally recognized as the major database performance bottleneck. To optimize data transfer to and from mass storage, relational DBMSs have long organized records in slotted disk pages using the N-ary Storage Model (NSM). NSM stores records contiguously starting from the beginning of each disk page, and uses an offset (slot) table at the end of the page to locate the beginning of each record [27].

Unfortunately, most queries use only a fraction of each record. To minimize unnecessary I/O, the Decomposition Storage Model (DSM) was proposed in 1985 [10]. DSM partitions an n-attribute relation vertically into n sub-relations, each of which is accessed only when the corresponding attribute is needed. Queries that involve multiple attributes from a relation, however, must spend tremendous additional time to join the participating sub-relations together. Except for Sybase-IQ [33], today's relational DBMSs use NSM for general-purpose data placement [20][29][32].

Recent research has demonstrated that modern database workloads, such as decision support systems and spatial applications, are often bound by delays related to the processor and the memory subsystem rather than I/O [20][5][26]. When running commercial database systems on a modern processor, data requests that miss in the cache hierarchy (i.e., requests for data that are not found in any of the caches and are transferred from main memory) are a key memory bottleneck [1]. In addition, only a fraction of the data transferred to the cache is useful to the query: the item that the query processing algorithm requests and the transfer unit between the memory and the processor are typically not the same size. Loading the cache with useless data (a) wastes bandwidth, (b) pollutes the cache, and (c) possibly forces replacement of information that may be needed in the future, incurring even more delays. The challenge is to repair NSM's cache behavior without compromising its advantages over DSM.

This paper introduces and evaluates **Partition Attributes Across (PAX)**, a new layout for data records that combines the best of the two worlds and exhibits performance superior to both placement schemes by eliminating unnecessary accesses to main memory. For a given relation, PAX stores the same data on each page as NSM. *Within* each page, however, PAX groups all the values of a particular attribute together on a minipage. During a sequential scan (e.g., to apply a predicate on a fraction of the records), PAX fully utilizes the cache resources, because on each miss a number of a single attribute's values are loaded into the cache together. At the same time, all parts of the record are on the same page. To reconstruct a record one needs to perform a *mini-join* among minipages, which incurs minimal cost because it does not have to look beyond the page.

We evaluated PAX against NSM and DSM using (a) predicate selection queries on numeric data and (b) a variety of queries on TPC-H datasets on top of the Shore storage manager [7]. We vary query parameters including selectivity, projectivity, number of predicates, distance between the projected attribute and the attribute in the predicate, and degree of the relation. The experimental results show that, when compared to NSM, PAX (a) incurs 50-75% fewer second-level cache misses due to data

‡ Work done while author was at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Proceedings of the 27th VLDB Conference, Roma, Italy, 2001

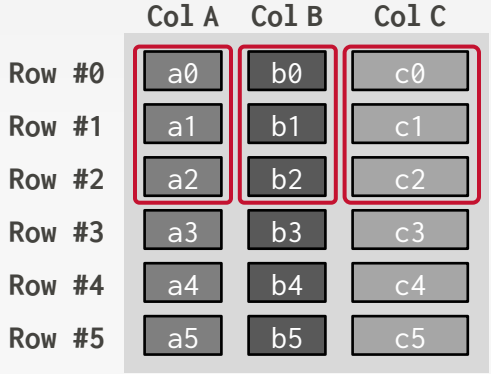
PAX: PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION

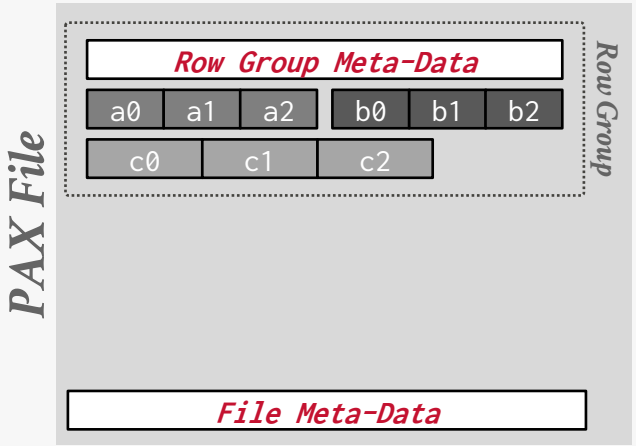
Horizontally partition data into ***row groups***. Then vertically partition their attributes into ***column chunks***.

Global meta-data directory contains offsets to the file's row groups.

→ This is stored in the footer if the file is immutable (Parquet, Orc).

Each row group contains its own meta-data header about its contents.





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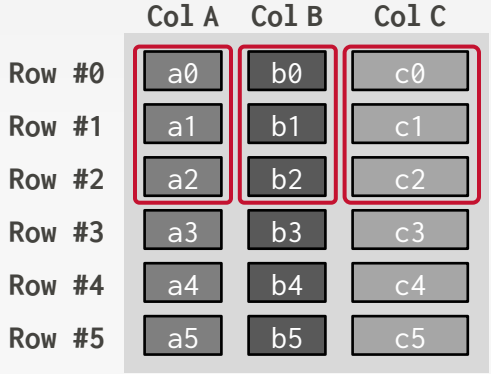

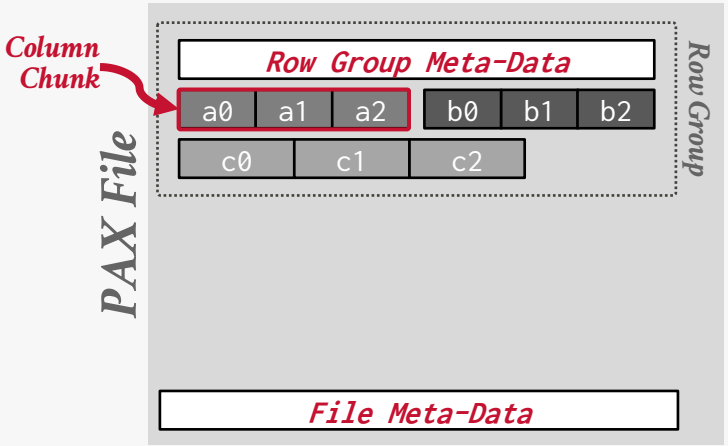

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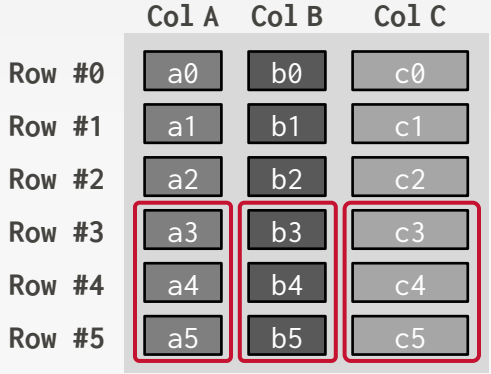
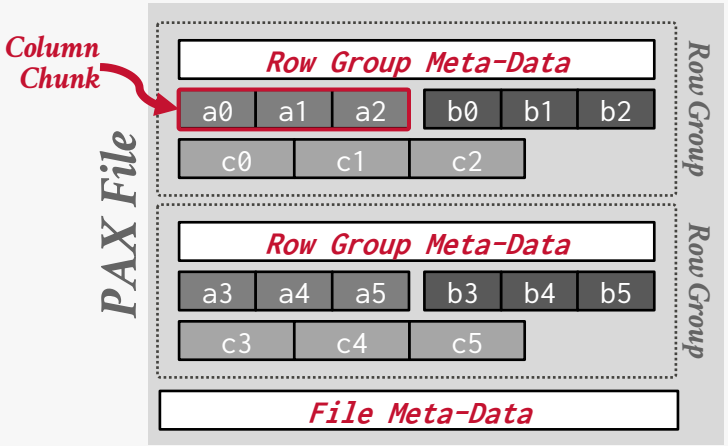




PAX: PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION

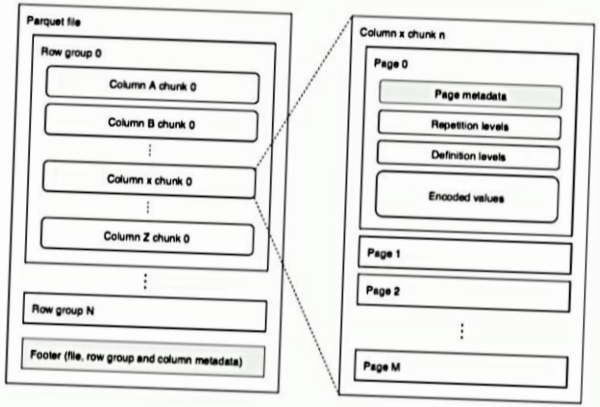
Horizontally partitio
groups. Then vertica
attributes into ***colum***

Global meta-data di
offsets to the file's r
→ This is stored in the
immutable (Parquet,

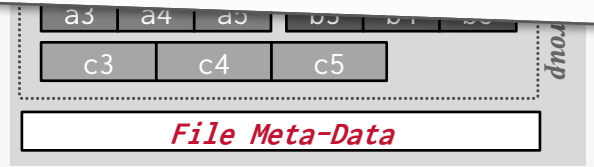
Each row group con
meta-data header about its contents.

Parquet: data organization

- Data organization
  - Row-groups (*default 128MB*)
  - Column chunks
  - Pages (*default 1MB*)
    - Metadata
      - Min
      - Max
      - Count
    - Rep/def levels
    - Encoded values



databricks



OBSERVATION

I/O is the main bottleneck if the DBMS fetches data from disk during query execution.

The DBMS can **compress** pages to increase the utility of the data moved per I/O operation.

Key trade-off is speed vs. compression ratio
→ Compressing the database reduces DRAM requirements.
→ It may decrease CPU costs during query execution.

DATABASE COMPRESSION

Goal #1: Must produce fixed-length values.
→ Only exception is var-length data stored in separate pool.

Goal #2: Postpone decompression for as long as possible during query execution.
→ Also known as late materialization.

Goal #3: Must be a lossless scheme.
→ People (typically) don't like losing data.
→ Any **lossy** compression must be performed by application.

COMPRESSION GRANULARITY

Choice #1: Block-level
→ Compress a block of tuples for the same table.

Choice #2: Tuple-level
→ Compress the contents of the entire tuple (NSM-only).

Choice #3: Attribute-level
→ Compress a single attribute within one tuple (overflow).
→ Can target multiple attributes for the same tuple.

Choice #4: Column-level
→ Compress multiple values for one or more attributes stored for multiple tuples (DSM-only).

NAÏVE COMPRESSION

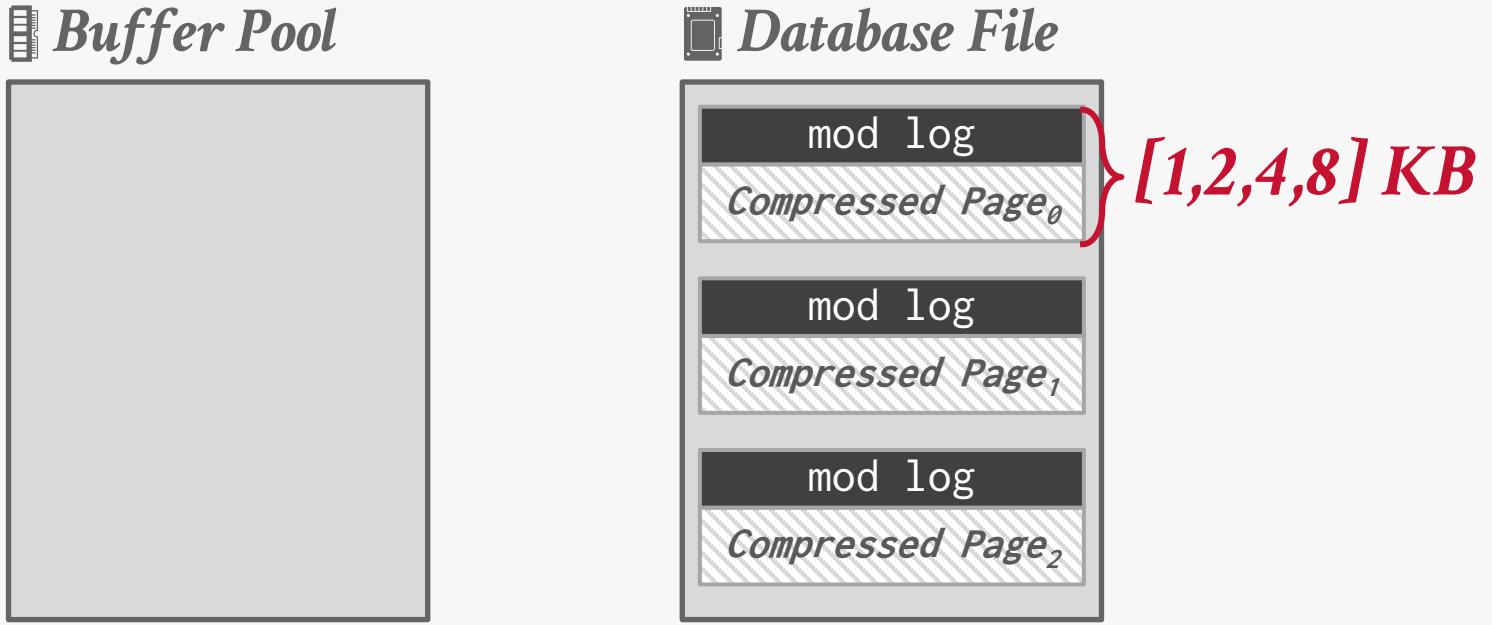
Compress data using a general-purpose algorithm.
Scope of compression is based on input provided.

→ Examples: Deflate (1990), LZO (1996), LZ4 (2011), Snappy (2011), Oracle OZIP (2014), Zstd (2015), Lizard (2017)

Considerations

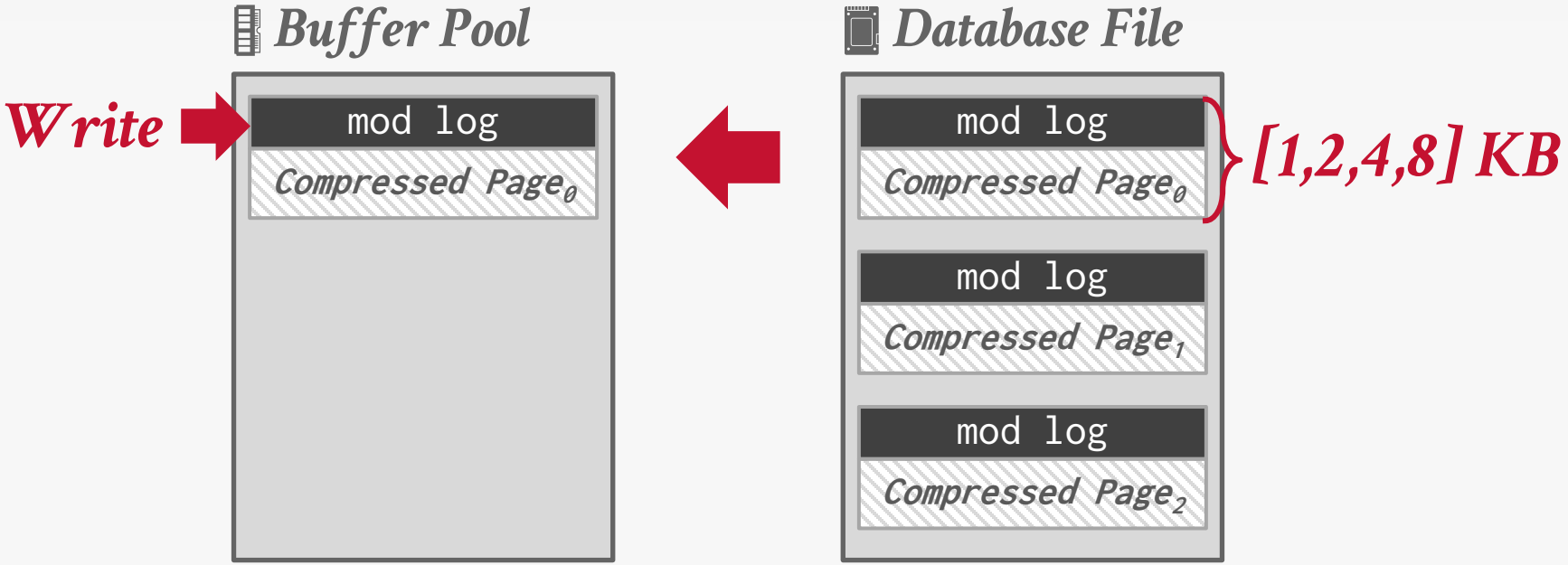
→ Computational overhead
→ Compress vs. decompress speed.

MYSQL INNODB COMPRESSION



Source: MySQL 5.7 Documentation

MYSQL INNODB COMPRESSION



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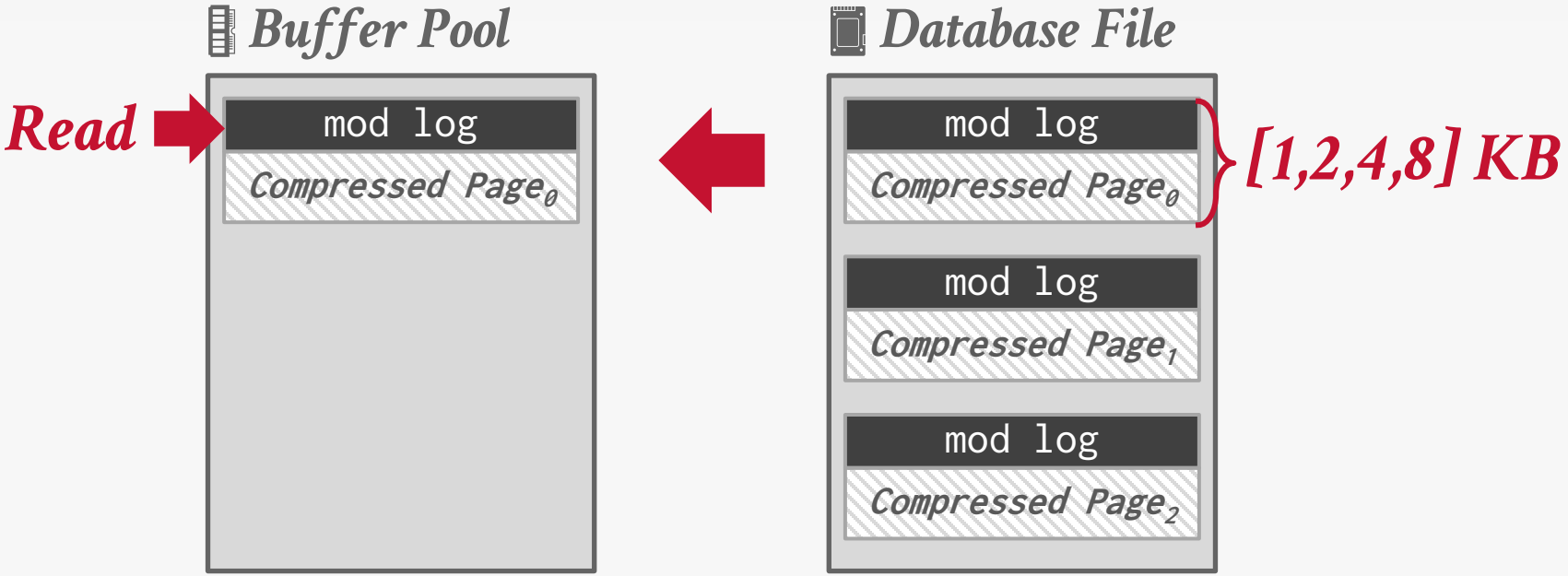

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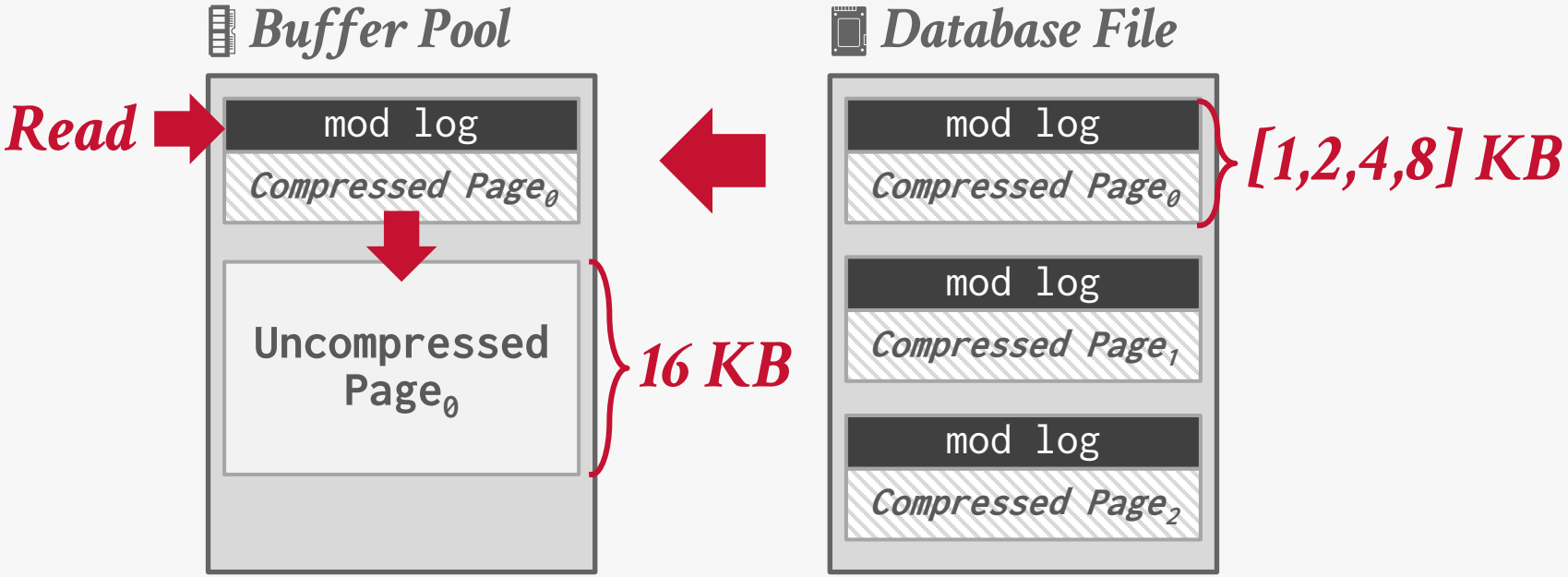

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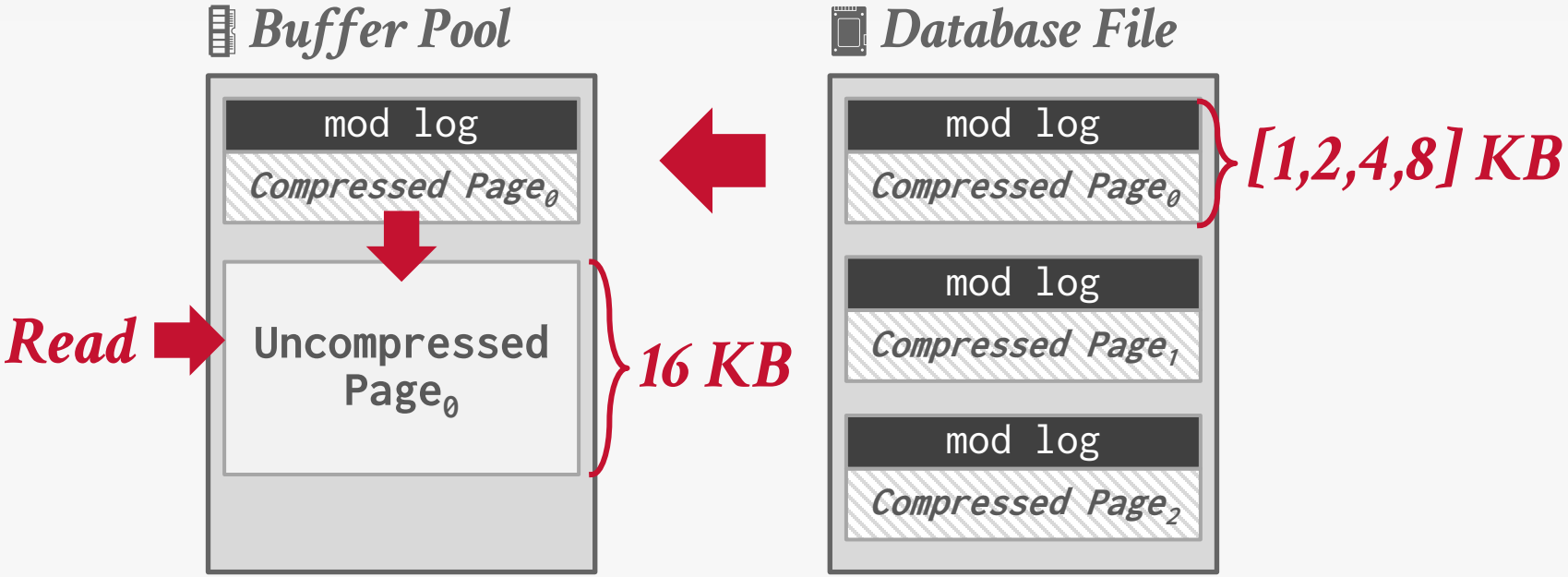
MYSQL INNODB COMPRESSION



Source: MySQL 5.7 Documentation

NAÏVE COMPRESSION

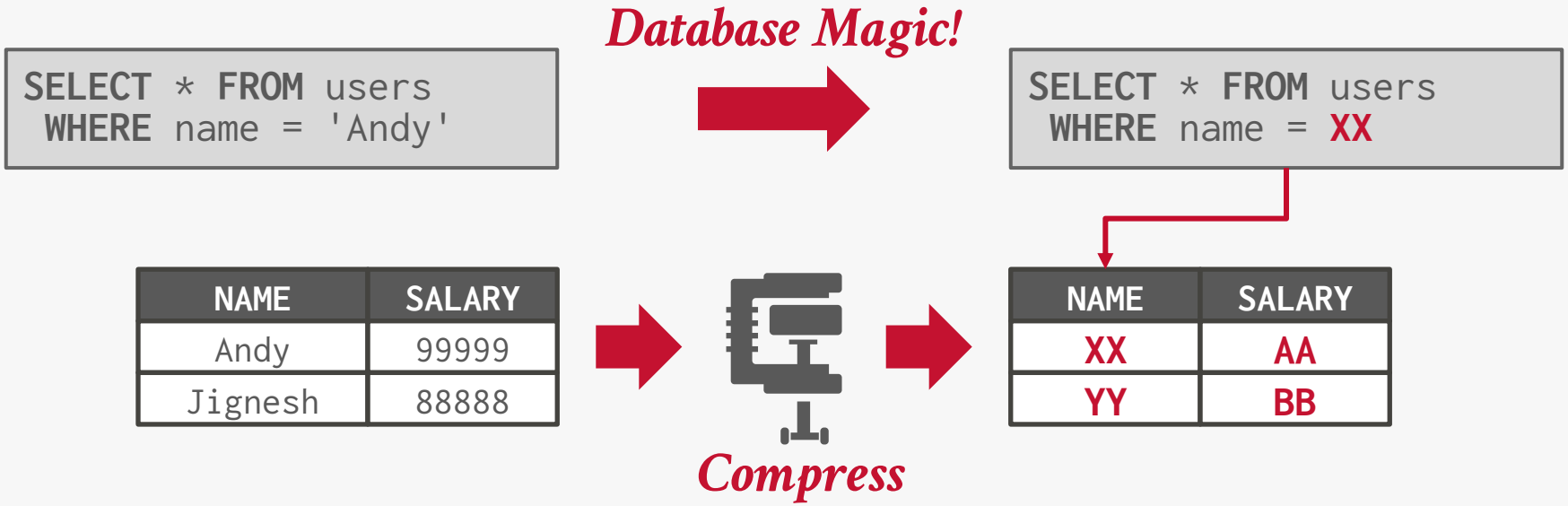
Compressed data is an opaque box to the DBMS and thus the system must decompress data first before it can be read and (potentially) modified.

→ This limits the "scope" of the compression scheme.

These schemes also do not consider the high-level meaning or semantics of the data.

OBSERVATION

Ideally, the DBMS can operate on compressed data without decompressing it first.



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COLUMNAR COMPRESSION

Run-length Encoding

Bit-Packing Encoding

Bitmap Encoding

Delta / Frame-of-Reference Encoding

Incremental Encoding

Dictionary Encoding

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING

Compress runs of the same value in a single column into triplets:

→ The value of the attribute.
→ The start position in the column segment.
→ The # of elements in the run.

Requires the columns to be sorted intelligently to maximize compression opportunities.

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

Compressed Data

id	isDead
1	(Y,0,3)
2	(N,3,1)
3	(Y,4,1)
4	(N,5,1)
6	(Y,6,2)
7	
8	
9	

RLE Triplet
- Value
- Offset
- Length

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING


```
SELECT isDead, COUNT(*)
  FROM users
 GROUP BY isDead
```

Compressed Data

id	isDead
1	(Y,0,3)
2	(N,3,1)
3	(Y,4,1)
4	(N,5,1)
6	(Y,6,2)
7	
8	
9	

RLE Triplet
- *Value*
- *Offset*
- *Length*

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

Compressed Data

id	isDead
1	(Y,0,3)
2	(N,3,1)
3	(Y,4,1)
4	(N,5,1)
6	(Y,6,2)
7	
8	
9	

RLE Triplet
- Value
- Offset
- Length

RUN-LENGTH ENCODING

Sorted Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
6	Y
8	Y
9	Y
4	N
7	N

Compressed Data

id	isDead
1	(Y,0,6)
2	(N,7,2)
3	
6	
8	
9	
4	
7	

BIT PACKING

If the values for an integer attribute is smaller than the range of its given data type size, then reduce the number of bits to represent each value.

Use bit-shifting tricks to operate on multiple values in a single word.

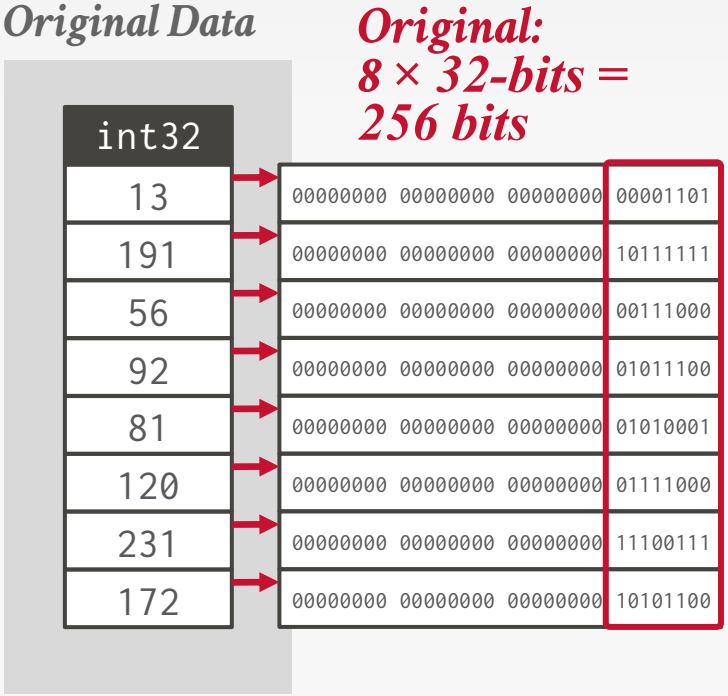
Original Data

int32
13
191
56
92
81
120
231
172

BIT PACKING

If the values for an integer attribute is smaller than the range of its given data type size, then reduce the number of bits to represent each value.

Use bit-shifting tricks to operate on multiple values in a single word.



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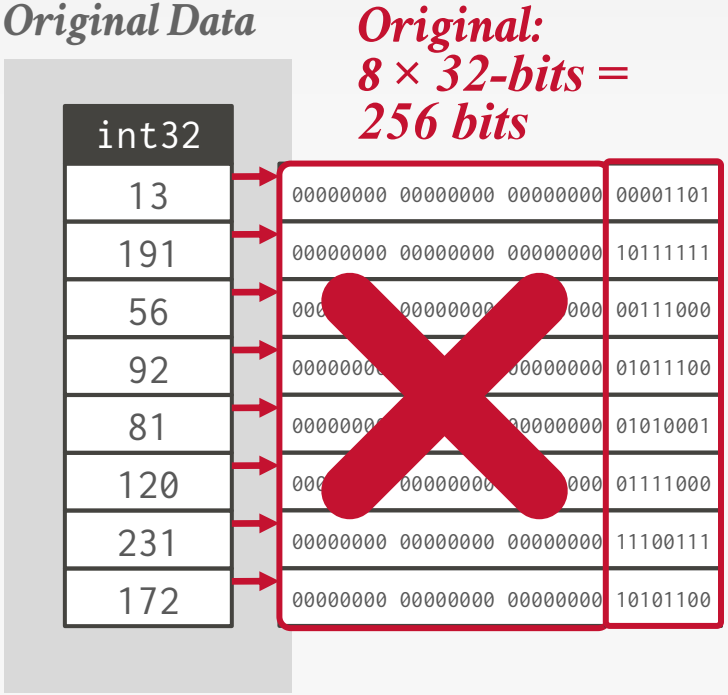

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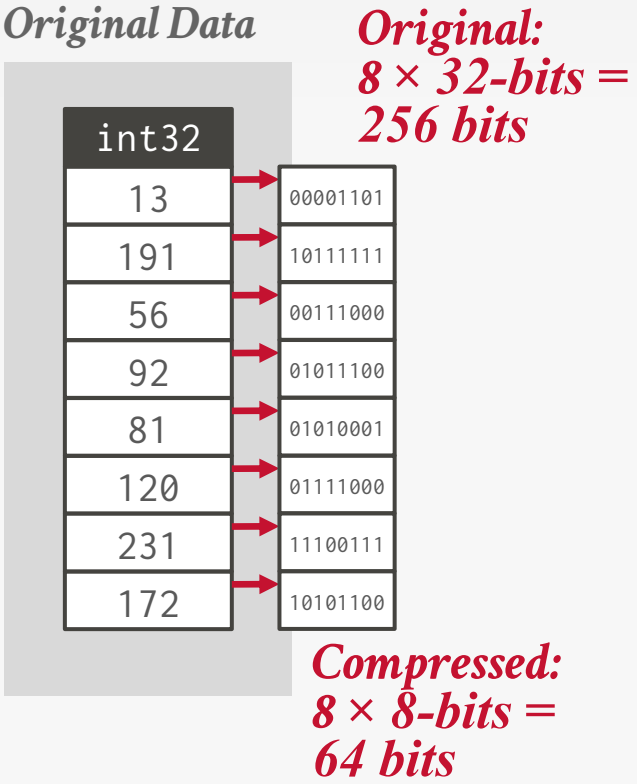


PATCHING / MOSTLY ENCODING

A variation of bit packing for when an attribute's values are "mostly" less than the largest size, store them with smaller data type.

→ The remaining values that cannot be compressed are stored in their raw form.

Original:
8 × 32-bits = 256 bits

Original Data

int32
13
191
99999999
92
81
120
231
172

Compressed Data

mostly8
13
181
XXX
92
81
120
231
172

offset	*value*
3	99999999

Compressed:
(8 × 8-bits) + 16-bits + 32-bits = 112 bits

Source: Redshift Documentation

BITMAP ENCODING

Store a separate bitmap for each unique value for an attribute where an offset in the vector corresponds to a tuple.

→ The i^{th} position in the Bitmap corresponds to the i^{th} tuple in the table.

→ Typically segmented into chunks to avoid allocating large blocks of contiguous memory.

Only practical if the value cardinality is low.

Some DBMSs provide bitmap indexes.

BITMAP ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

Compressed Data

	isDead	
id	Y	N
1	1	0
2	1	0
3	1	0
4	0	1
6	1	0
7	0	1
8	1	0
9	1	0

BITMAP ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

Compressed Data

	isDead	
id	Y	N
1	1	0
2	1	0
3	1	0
4	0	1
6	1	0
7	0	1
8	1	0
9	1	0

BITMAP ENCODING

Original Data

id	isDead
1	Y
2	Y
3	Y
4	N
6	Y
7	N
8	Y
9	Y

Original:
8 × 8-bits =
64 bits

Compressed Data

Compressed:
16 bits + 16 bits =
32 bits

id	isDead: Y	isDead: N
1	1	0
2	1	0
3	1	0
4	0	1
6	1	0
7	0	1
8	1	0
9	1	0

2 × 8-bits =
16 bits

8 × 2-bits =
16 bits

BITMAP ENCODING: EXAMPLE


```
CREATE TABLE customer (
  id INT PRIMARY KEY,
  name VARCHAR(32),
  email VARCHAR(64),
  address VARCHAR(64),
  zip_code INT
);
```

BITMAP ENCODING: EXAMPLE

Assume we have 10 million tuples.
43,000 zip codes in the US.
→ **10000000 × 32-bits = 40 MB**
→ **10000000 × 43000 = 53.75 GB**

Every time the application inserts a new tuple, the DBMS must extend 43,000 different bitmaps.

Compressed data structures for sparse data sets avoid this problem:
→ Roaring Bitmaps

```
CREATE TABLE customer (
  id INT PRIMARY KEY,
  name VARCHAR(32),
  email VARCHAR(64),
  address VARCHAR(64),
  zip_code INT
);
```

ROARING BITMAPS

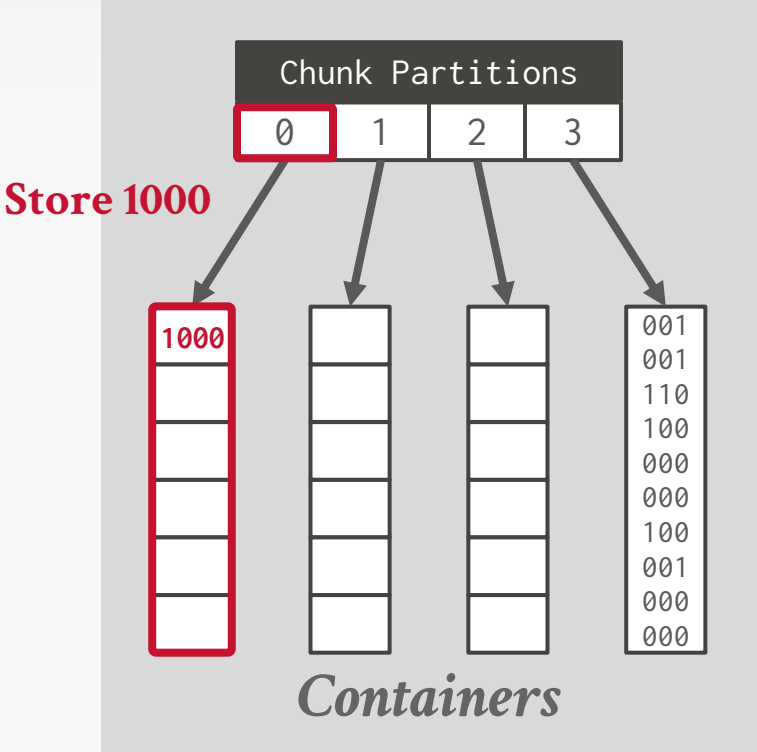
Bitmap index that switches which data structure to use for a range of values based local density of bits.

→ Dense chunks are stored using uncompressed bitmaps.
→ Sparse chunks use bitpacked arrays of 16-bit integers.

Dense chunks can be further compressed with RLE.

There are many open-source implementations that are widely used in different DBMSs.

ROARING BITMAPS



For each value **k**, assign it to a chunk based on $k/2^{16}$.

→ Store **k** in the chunk's container.

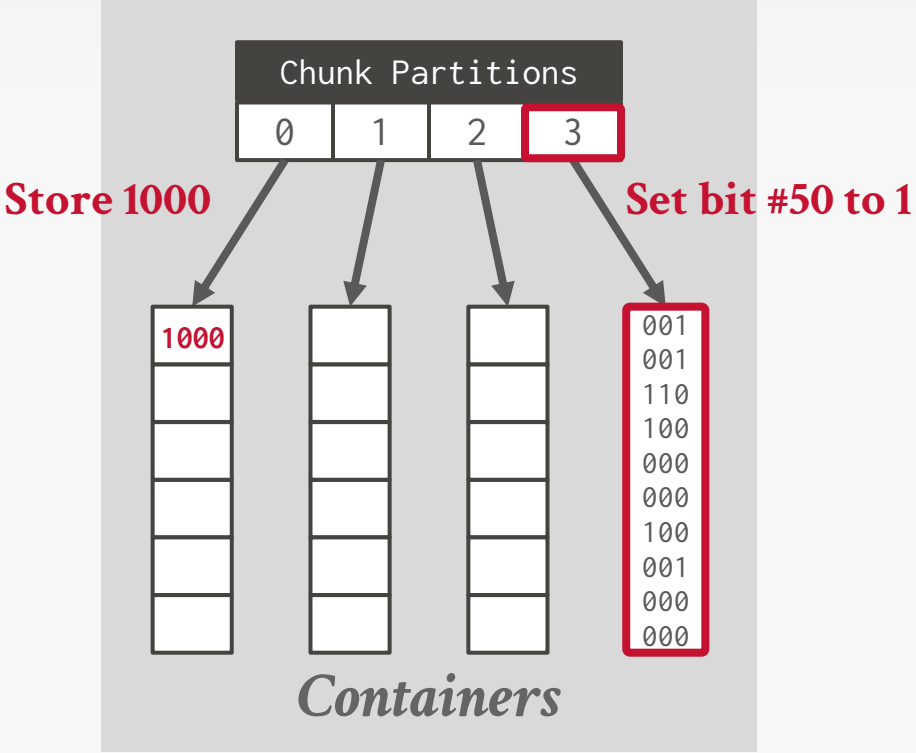
If # of values in container is less than 4096, store as array. Otherwise, store as Bitmap.

k=1000

$1000/2^{16}=0$

$1000\%2^{16}=1000$

ROARING BITMAPS



For each value **k**, assign it to a chunk based on $k/2^{16}$.

→ Store **k** in the chunk's container.

If # of values in container is less than 4096, store as array. Otherwise, store as Bitmap.

k=1000

$1000/2^{16}=0$

$1000\%2^{16}=1000$

k=199658

$199658/2^{16}=3$

$199658\%2^{16}=50$

DELTA ENCODING

Recording the difference between values that follow each other in the same column.

→ Store base value in-line or in a separate look-up table.

Original Data

time64	temp
12:00	99.5
12:01	99.4
12:02	99.5
12:03	99.6
12:04	99.4

Compressed Data

time64	temp
12:00	99.5
+1	-0.1
+1	+0.1
+1	+0.1
+1	-0.2

DELTA ENCODING

Recording the difference between values that follow each other in the same column.

→ Store base value in-line or in a separate look-up table.

→ Combine with RLE to get even better compression ratios.

Original Data

time64	temp
12:00	99.5
12:01	99.4
12:02	99.5
12:03	99.6
12:04	99.4

Compressed Data

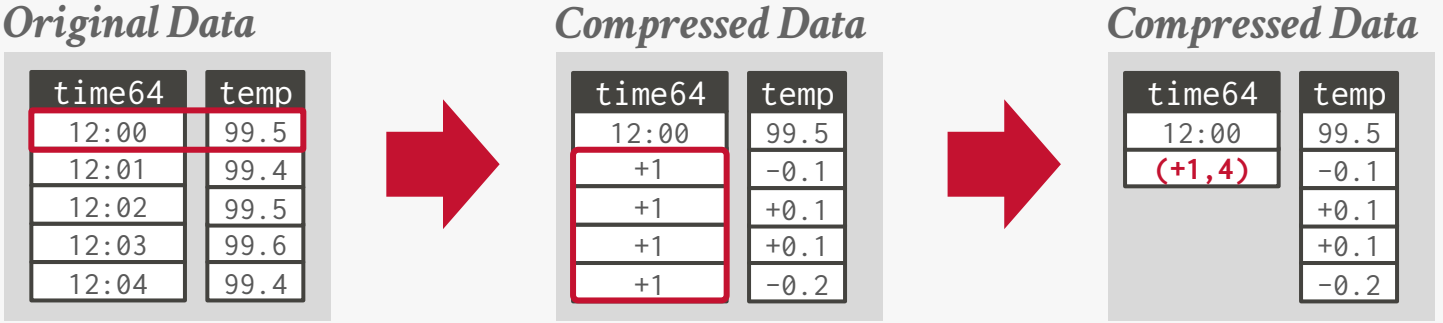
time64	temp
12:00	99.5
+1	-0.1
+1	+0.1
+1	+0.1
+1	-0.2

DELTA ENCODING

Recording the difference between values that follow each other in the same column.

→ Store base value in-line or in a separate look-up table.

→ Combine with RLE to get even better compression ratios.



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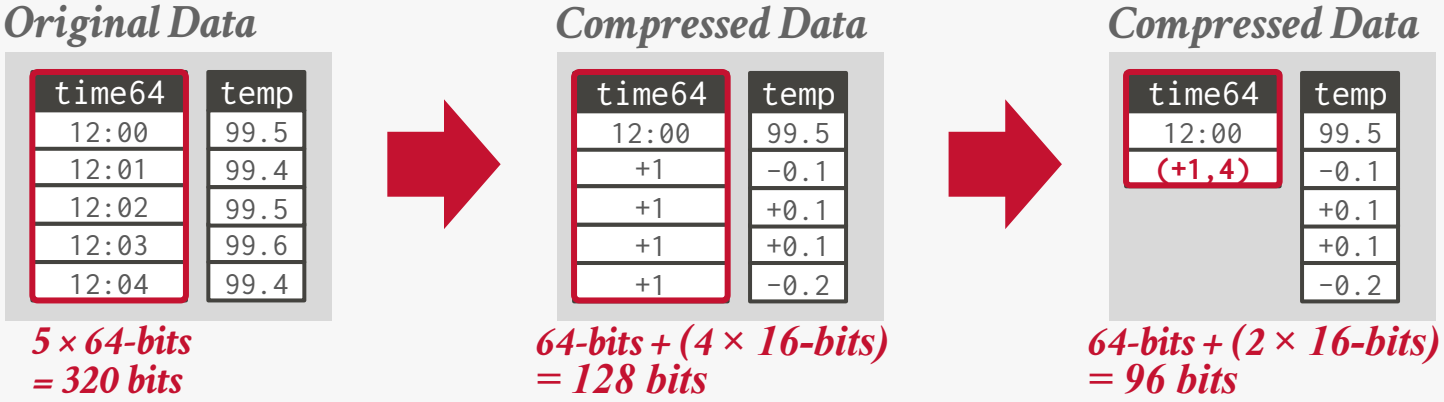
Frame-of-Reference Variant: Use global min value.



DICTIONARY COMPRESSION

Replace frequent values with smaller fixed-length codes and then maintain a mapping (dictionary) from the codes to the original values

→ Typically, one code per attribute value.
→ Most widely used native compression scheme in DBMSs.

The ideal dictionary scheme supports fast encoding and decoding for both point and range queries.

→ **Encode/Locate:** For a given uncompressed value, convert it into its compressed form.
→ **Decode/Extract:** For a given compressed value, convert it back into its original form.

DICTIONARY: ORDER-PRESERVING

The encoded values need to support the same collation as the original values.

```
SELECT * FROM users
 WHERE name LIKE 'And%'
```

```
SELECT * FROM users
 WHERE name BETWEEN 10 AND 20
```

Original Data

name
Andrea
Mr.Pickles
Andy
Jignesh
Mr.Pickles

Compressed Data

name
10
40
20
30
40

value	*code*
Andrea	10
Andy	20
Jignesh	30
Mr.Pickles	40

Sorted Dictionary

ORDER-PRESERVING ENCODING

```
SELECT name FROM users
 WHERE name LIKE 'And%'
```

Still must perform scan on column

```
SELECT DISTINCT name
  FROM users
 WHERE name LIKE 'And%'
```

Only need to access dictionary

Original Data

name
Andrea
Mr.Pickles
Andy
Jignesh
Mr.Pickles

Compressed Data

name
10
40
20
30
40

value	*code*
Andrea	10
Andy	20
Jignesh	30
Mr.Pickles	40

Sorted Dictionary

OBSERVATION

Since an OLAP DBMS is superior for analytical queries than an OLTP DBMSs, one should always use an OLAP DBMS for them.

But if new data arrives at the OLTP DBMS, then we need a way to transfer data between them…

BIFURCATED ENVIRONMENT

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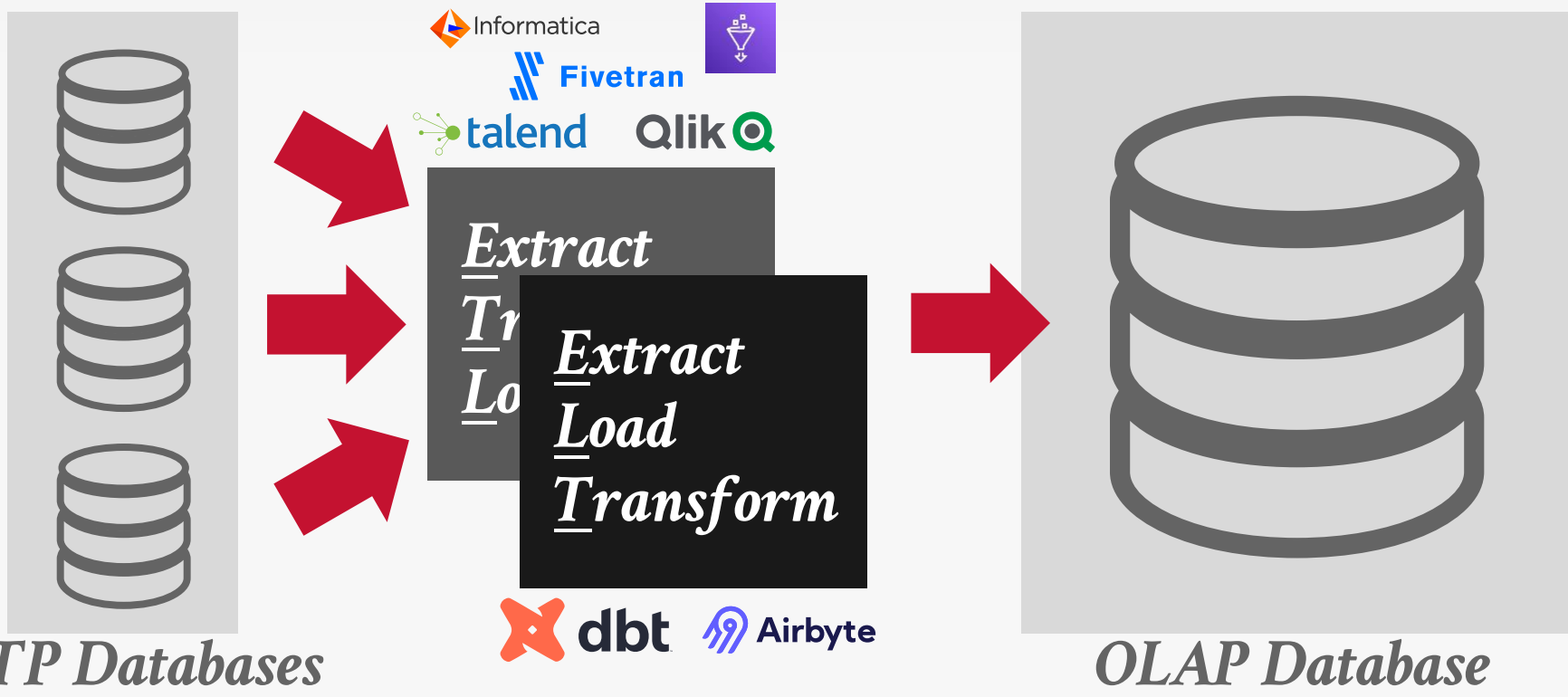

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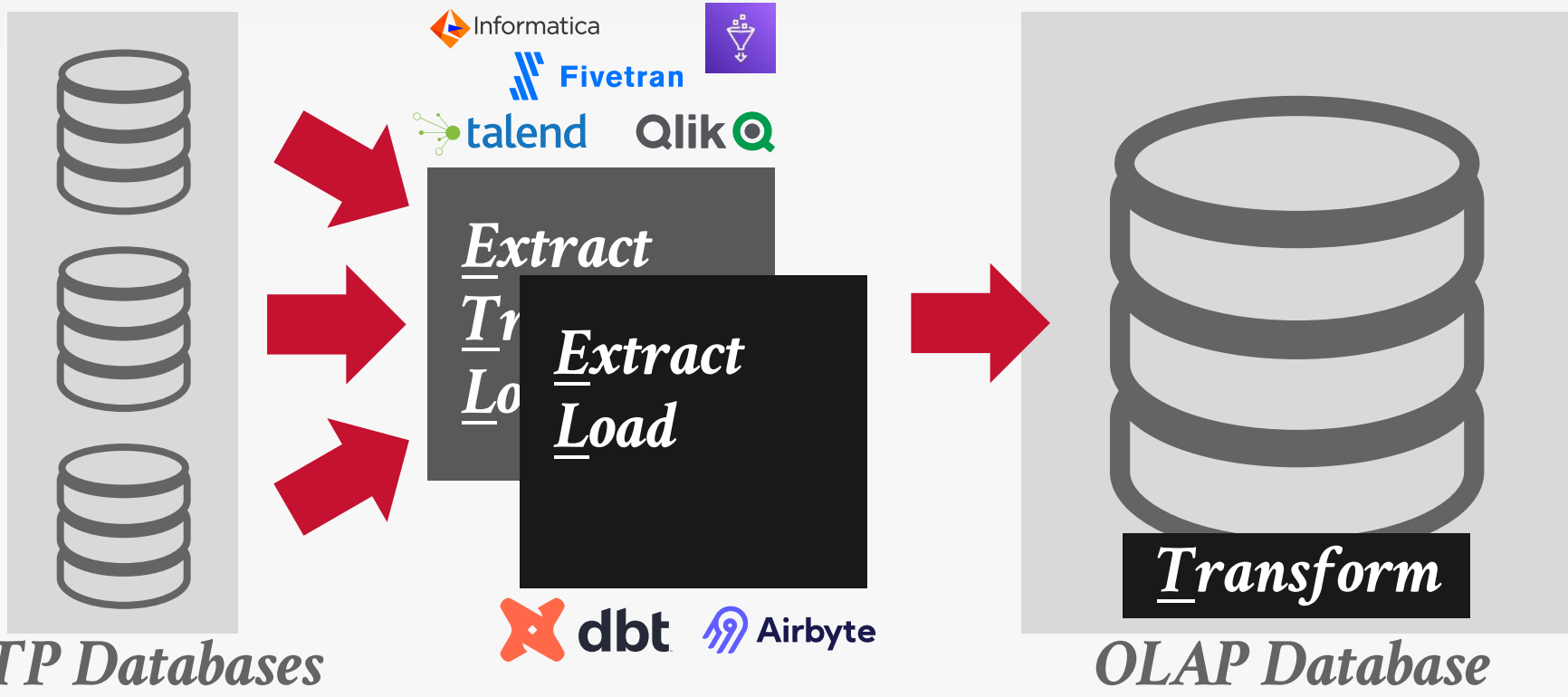


OBSERVATION

Instead of maintaining two separate DBMSs, a single DBMS could support both OLTP and OLAP workloads if it exploits the temporal nature of data.

→ Data is "hot" when it enters the database

→ As a tuple ages, it is updated less frequently.

HYBRID STORAGE MODEL

Use separate execution engines that are optimized for either NSM or DSM databases.

→ Store new data in NSM for fast OLTP.
→ Migrate data to DSM for more efficient OLAP.
→ Combine query results from both engines to appear as a single logical database to the application.

Choice #1: Fractured Mirrors

→ Examples: Oracle, IBM DB2 Blu, Microsoft SQL Server

Choice #2: Delta Store

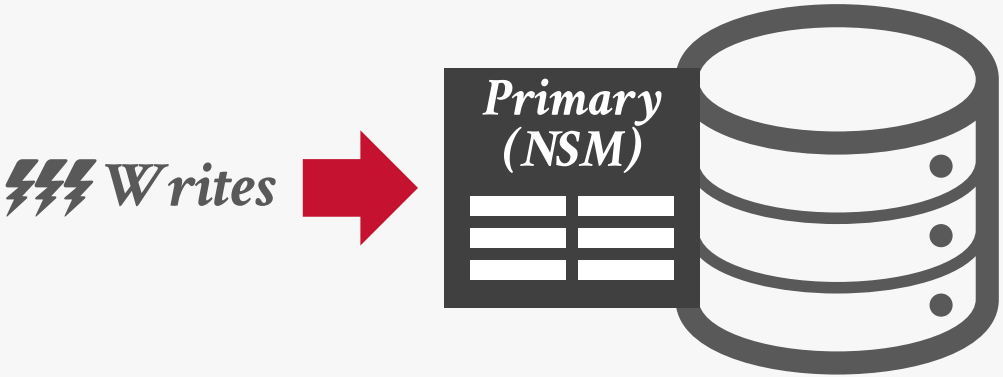
→ Examples: SAP HANA, Vertica, SingleStore, Databricks, Google Napa

FRACTURED MIRRORS

DBMS automatically maintains a second copy of the database in a DSM layout.

→ All updates are first entered in NSM then eventually copied into DSM mirror.

→ If the DBMS supports updates, it must invalidate tuples in the DSM mirror.



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DELTA STORE

Stage updates to the database in an NSM table.

A background thread migrates updates from delta store and applies them to DSM data.

→ Batch large chunks and then write them out as a PAX file.

→ Delete records in the delta store once they are in column store.

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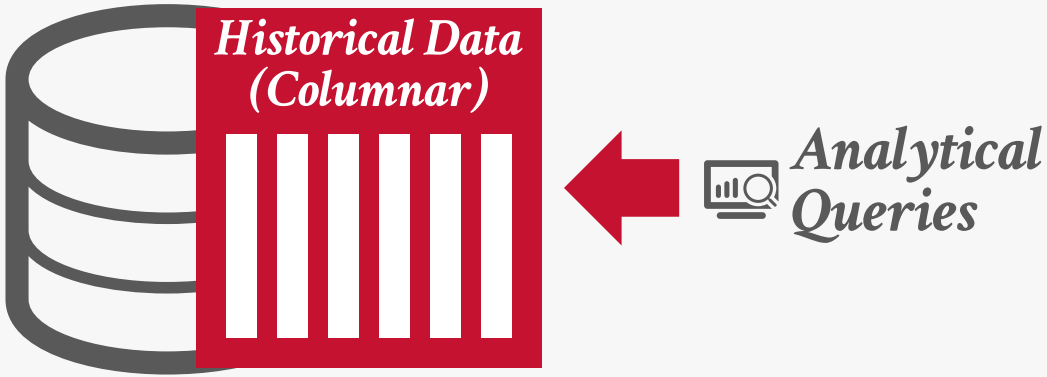
VERTICA
SingleStore
SAP HANA
DELTA LAKE



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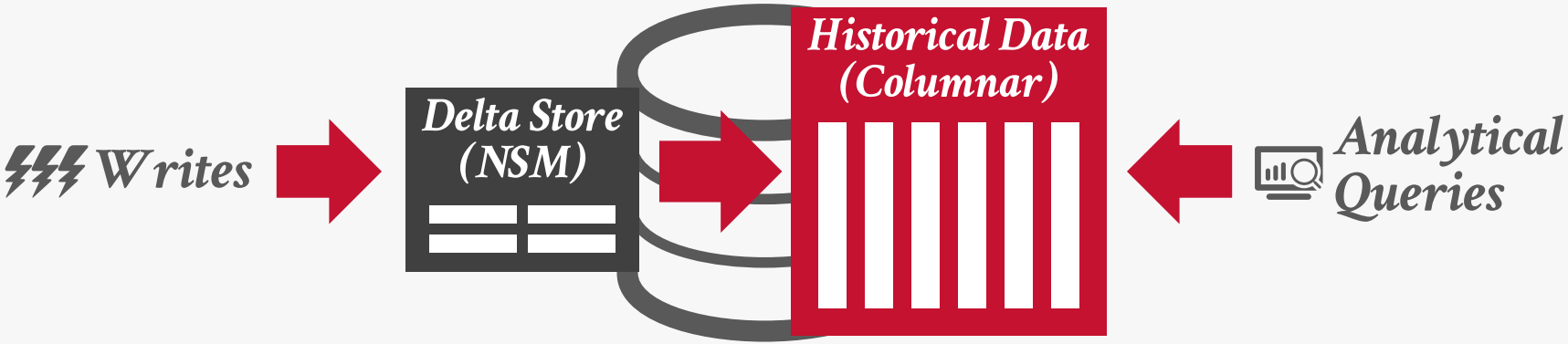

CONCLUSION

It is important to choose the right storage model for the target workload:
→ OLTP = Row Store
→ OLAP = Column Store

DBMSs can combine different approaches for even better compression.

Dictionary encoding is probably the most useful scheme because it does not require pre-sorting.

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Column Storage for the AI Era

Dec 11, 2025 • Julien Le Dem

In the past few years, we've seen a Cambrian explosion of new columnar formats, challenging the hegemony of Parquet: Lance, Fastlanes, Nimble, Vortex, AnyBlox, F3 (File Format for the Future). The thinking is that the context has changed so much that the design of yore (the previous decade) is not going to cut it moving forward. This seemed a bit intriguing to me, especially since the main contribution of Parquet has been to provide a standard for columnar storage. Parquet is not simply a file format. As an open source project hosted by the ASF, it acts as a consensus building machine for the industry. Creating six new formats is not going to help with interoperability. I spent some time to understand a bit better how things actually changed and how Parquet needs to adapt to meet the demands of this new era. In this post I'll discuss my findings.

Whether we like it or not, we're living in an AI-dominated era. Some argue that the main consumer of data will become AI and not humans, yet much of our data infrastructure was designed for a very different time.

I'm the chair for the Parquet PMC at the ASF. As any participant in this ecosystem, my perspective here is biased. However, that gives me a useful vantage point to talk about both what we got right and where the format can be improved.

NEXT CLASS

Data Structures: Hash Tables!

→ We must build our own…