

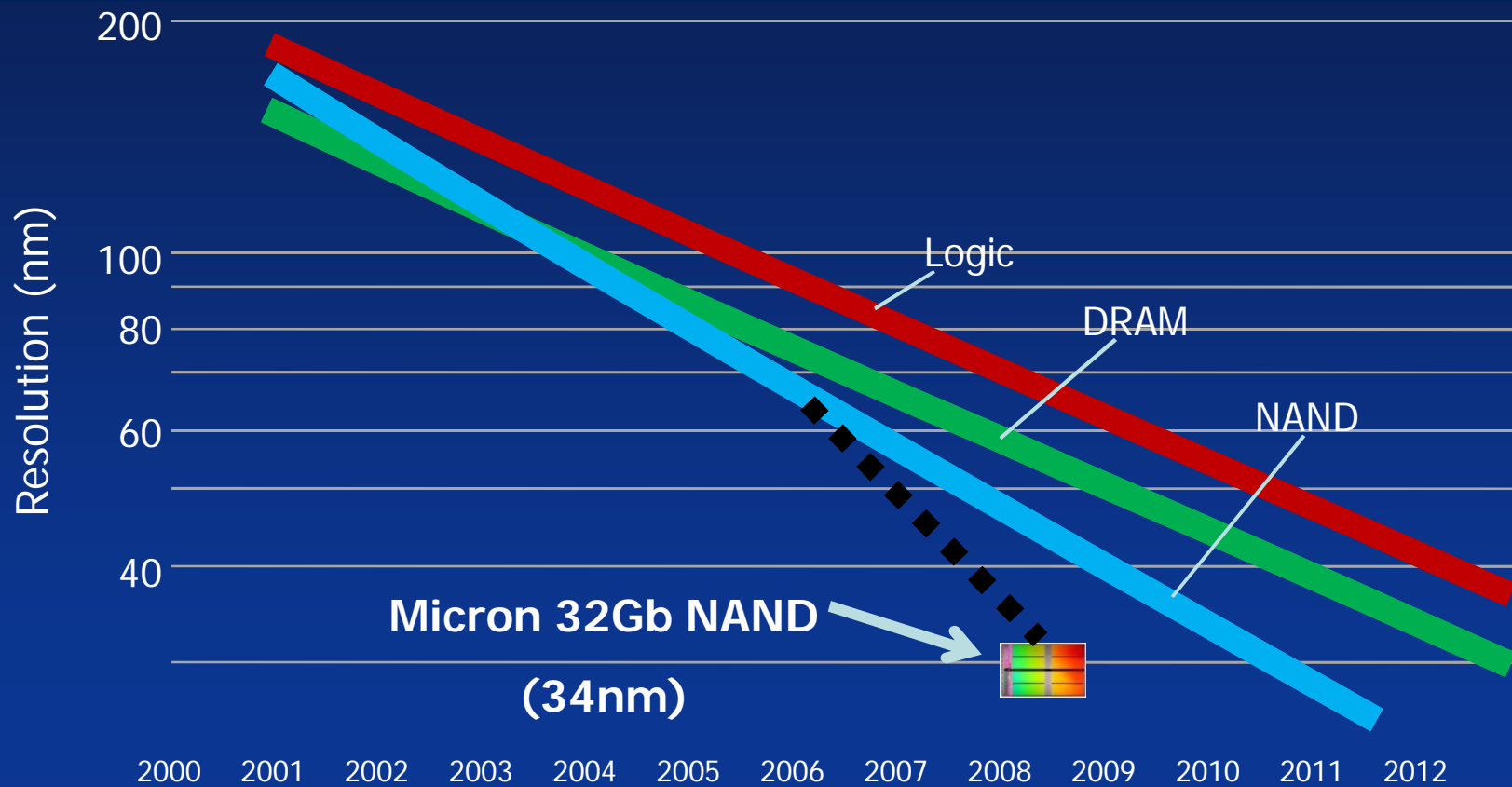
NAND Flash Architecture and Specification Trends

Michael Abraham
Applications Engineering Manager
Micron Technology, Inc.
(mabraham@micron.com)

Abstract

- As NAND Flash continues to shrink, page sizes, block sizes, and ECC requirements are increasing while data retention, endurance, and performance are decreasing
- These changes impact systems like random write performance and more
- Learn how to prepare for these changes and counteract some of them through improved block management techniques and system design
- This presentation also discusses some of the tradeoff myths – for example, the myth that you can directly trade ECC for endurance

NAND Flash: Shrinking Faster Than Moore's Law



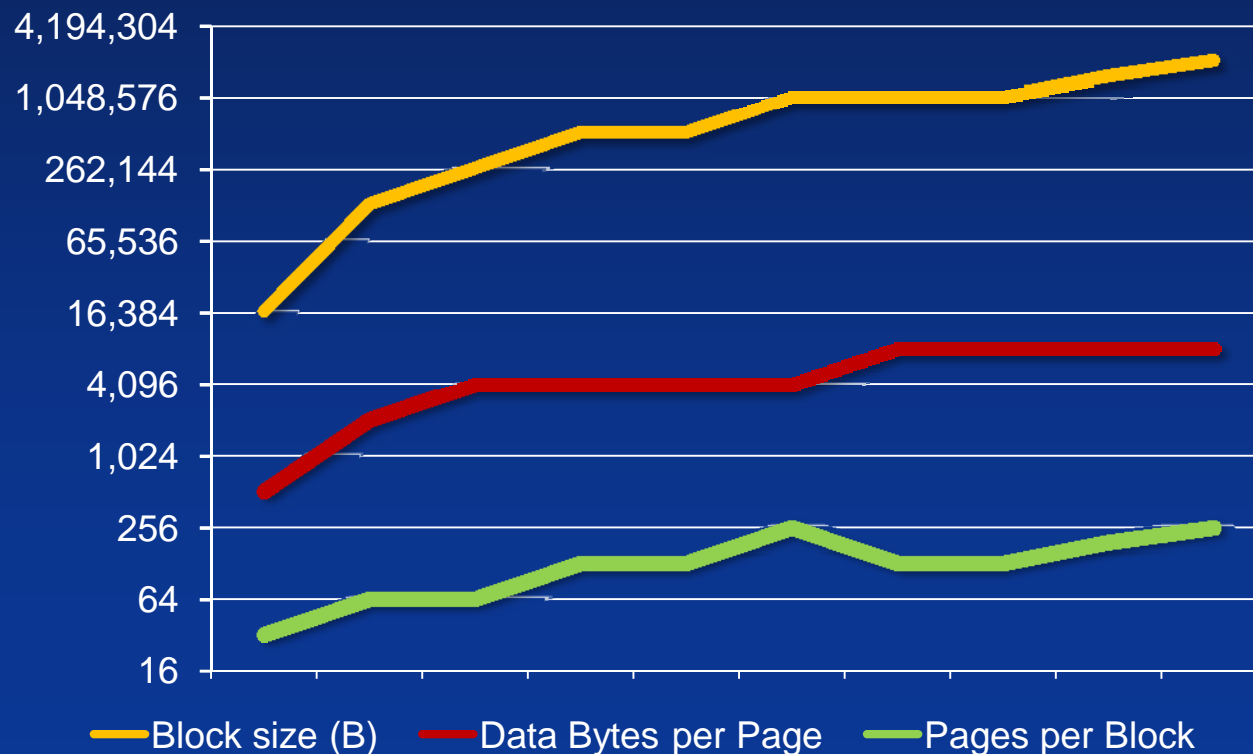
Semiconductor International, 1/1/2007

Santa Clara, CA USA
August 2009

Memory Organization Trends

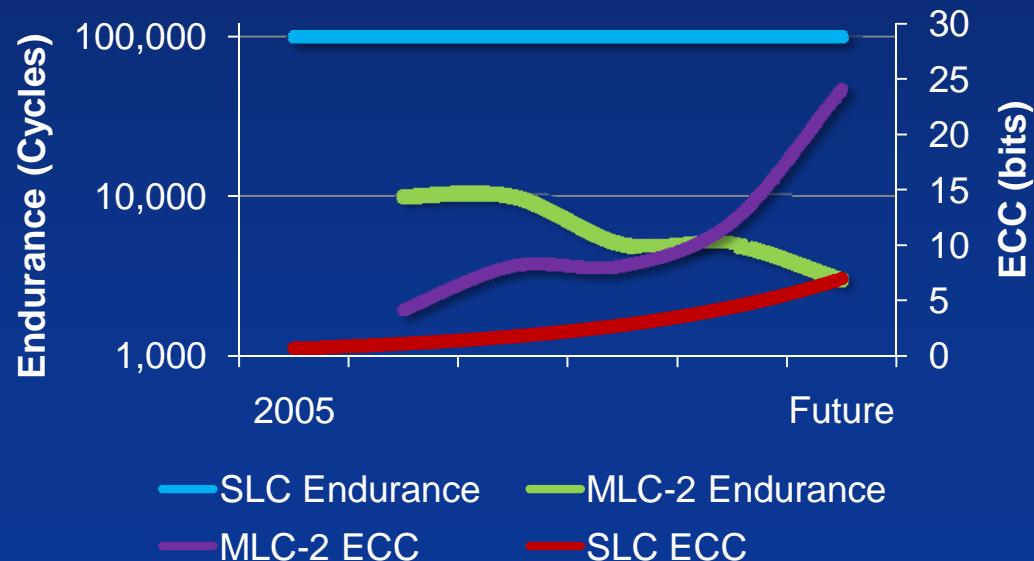
Over time, NAND block size is increasing

- Larger page sizes increase sequential throughput
- More pages per block reduce die size



Consumer-Grade NAND Flash: Endurance and ECC Trends

- Process shrinks lead to less electrons per floating gate
- ECC used to improve data retention and endurance
- To adjust for increasing RBERs, ECC is increasing exponentially to achieve equivalent UBERs
- For consumer applications, endurance becomes less important as density increases

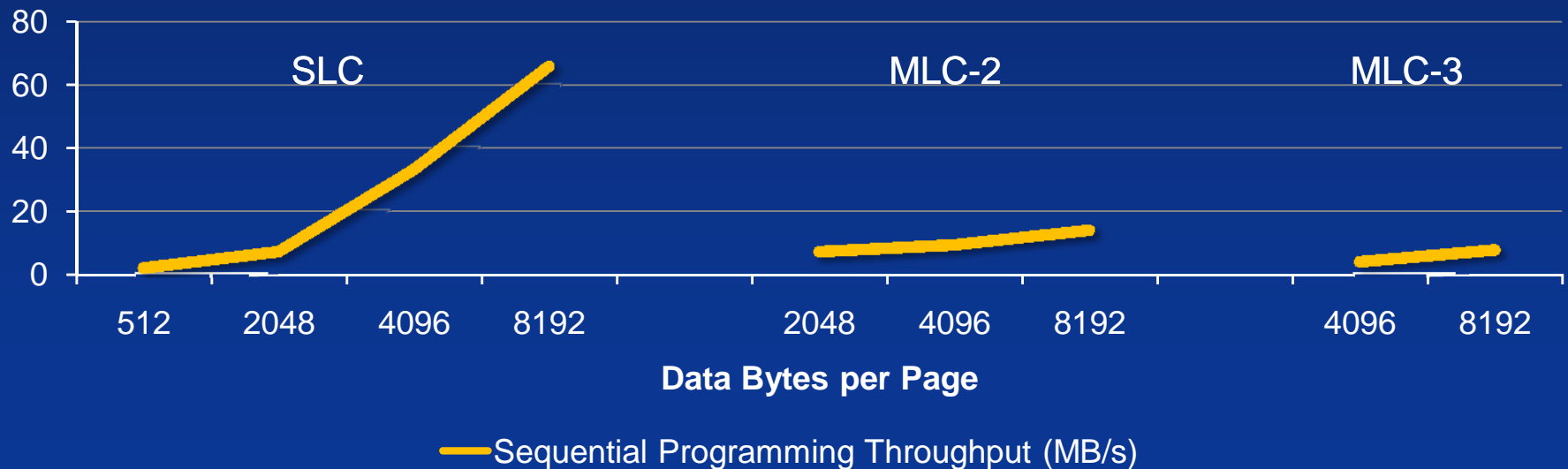


Myth: More ECC Extends Block Endurance

- Block endurance is how long a block is usable before program or erase status failures occur
- Applying more ECC than required does not automatically extend the block endurance
- NAND devices are configured to trigger program and erase status failures for a specific, fixed ECC value predetermined at the factory to meet qualification requirements
- Applying extra ECC does not change these predetermined thresholds, which means that program and erase status failures begin to occur at the same cycling intervals regardless of the amount of ECC applied

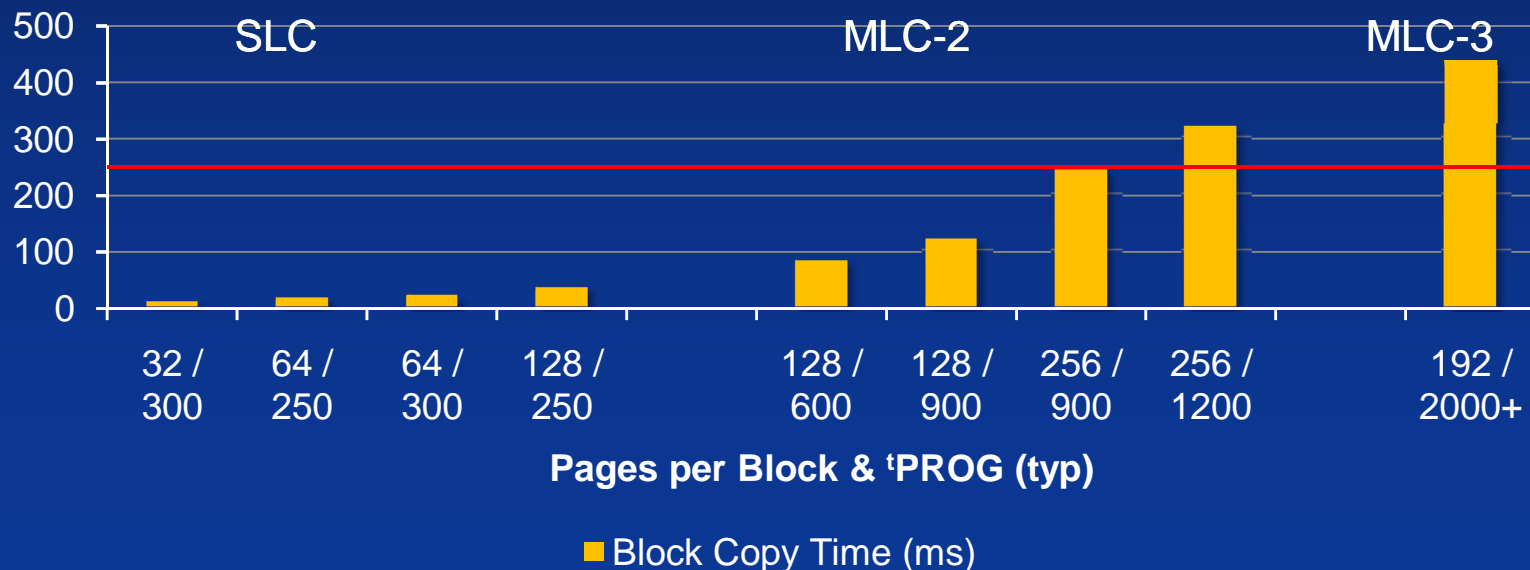
Larger Page Sizes Improve Sequential Write Performance

- For a fixed page size, write throughput decreases as NAND process shrinks
- NAND vendors increase the page size to compensate for slowing array performance
- Write throughput decreases with more bits per cell



More Pages Per Block Affect Random Write Performance

- The block copy time is the largest limiting factor for random write performance
- As block copy time increases, random performance decreases
 - Number of pages per block is the dominant factor
 - Increase of t_{PROG} is the next largest factor
 - Increase in I/O transfer time due to increasing page size (effect not shown below) is also a factor
- Some card interfaces have write timeout specs at 250ms, which means that block management algorithms manage partial blocks



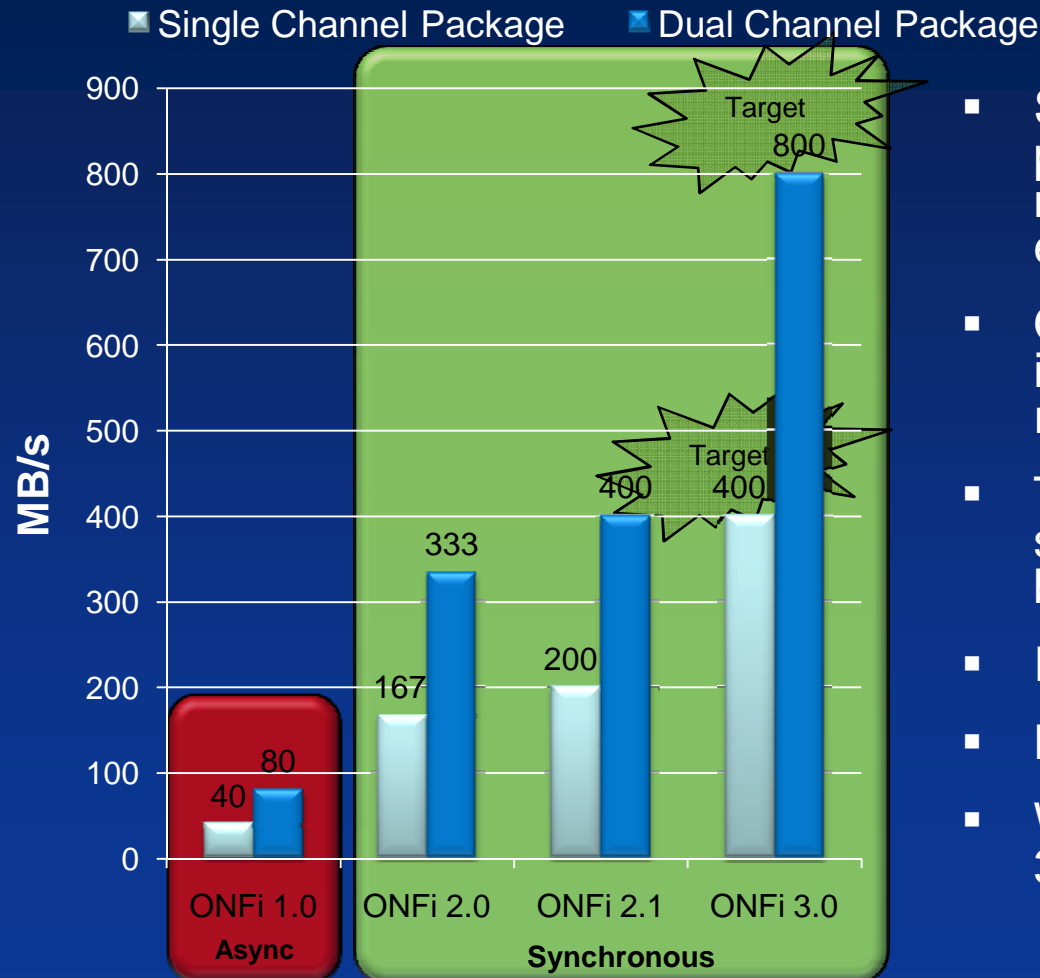
NAND Interface

- The NAND interface is increasing in throughput
 - Enables better utilization of I/O channels – higher bandwidth
 - Immediately useful for single die read performance
 - Modest improvement for write performance with multiple die
- Important for SSDs, enterprise applications
 - Reduces I/O channels

NAND Interface Trends

Interface Standard (x8)	Max Throughput (MB/s)
No standard	40
ONFI 1.0 Async (12/06)	50
ONFI 2.0 Sync (2/08)	133
ONFI 2.1-2.2 Sync (1/09, 9/09)	200
Toggle Mode (not published)	133
ONFI 3.0 Sync	400

The ONFI Advantage



- Supports simultaneous read, program, and erase operations on multiple die on the same chip enable since ONFI 1.0
- Only industry-standard NAND interface capable of 200 MB/s data rate from a single die
- Two independent channels in a single package (doubles the bandwidth)
- In volume production today
- Headroom for 400 MB/s and beyond
- Work has already begun on ONFI 3.0



Members

A-Data
 Aleph One
 Arasan Chip Systems
 Avid Electronics
 Chipsbank
 Data I/O
 ENE Technology
 FormFactor
 Fusion Media Tech
 HiperSem
 InCOMM
 Intelliprop
 Kingston Technology
 LSI
 Mentor Graphics
 Molex
 P.A. Semi
 Prolific Technology
 Seagate
 Silicon Integrated Systems
 Silicon Systems
 Smart Modular Tech.
 Synopsys
 Telechips
 Transcend Information
 University of York

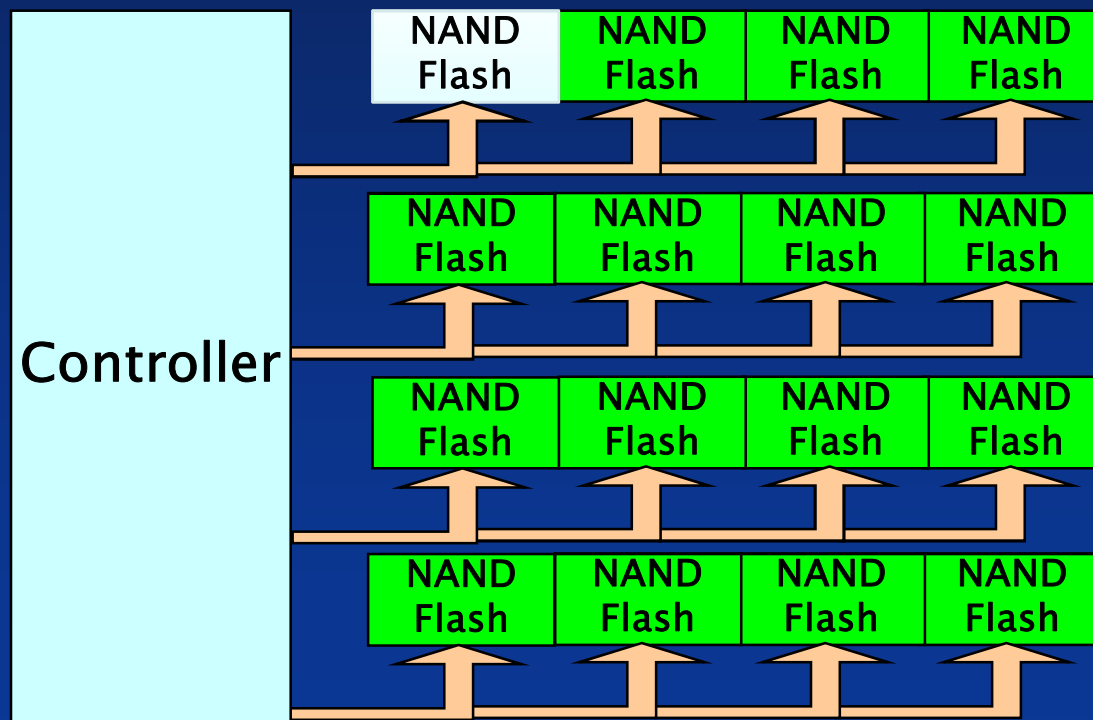
Afa Technologies
 Anobit Tech.
 ASMedia Technology
 BitMicro
 Cypress
 Datalight
 Entorian
 Foxconn
 Genesys Logic
 Hitachi GST
 Indilinx
 ITE Tech
 Lauron Technologies
 Macronix
 Metaram
 NVidia
 Powerchip Semi.
 Qimonda
 Shenzhen Netcom
 Silicon Motion
 STEC
 Solid State System
 Tandon
 Teradyne, Inc.
 Tyco
 Virident Systems

Alcor Micro
 Apacer
 ATI
 Biwin Technology
 DataFab Systems
 Denali Software
 FCI
 Fresco Logic
 Hagiwara Sys-Com
 Hyperstone
 Inphi
 Jinvani Systech
 Lotes
 Marvell
 Moai Electronics
 Orient Semiconductor
 Power Quotient International
 Sandforce
 Sigmatel
 Silicon Storage Tech
 Skymedi
 Super Talent Electronics
 Tanisys
 Testmetrix
 UCA Technology
 WinBond



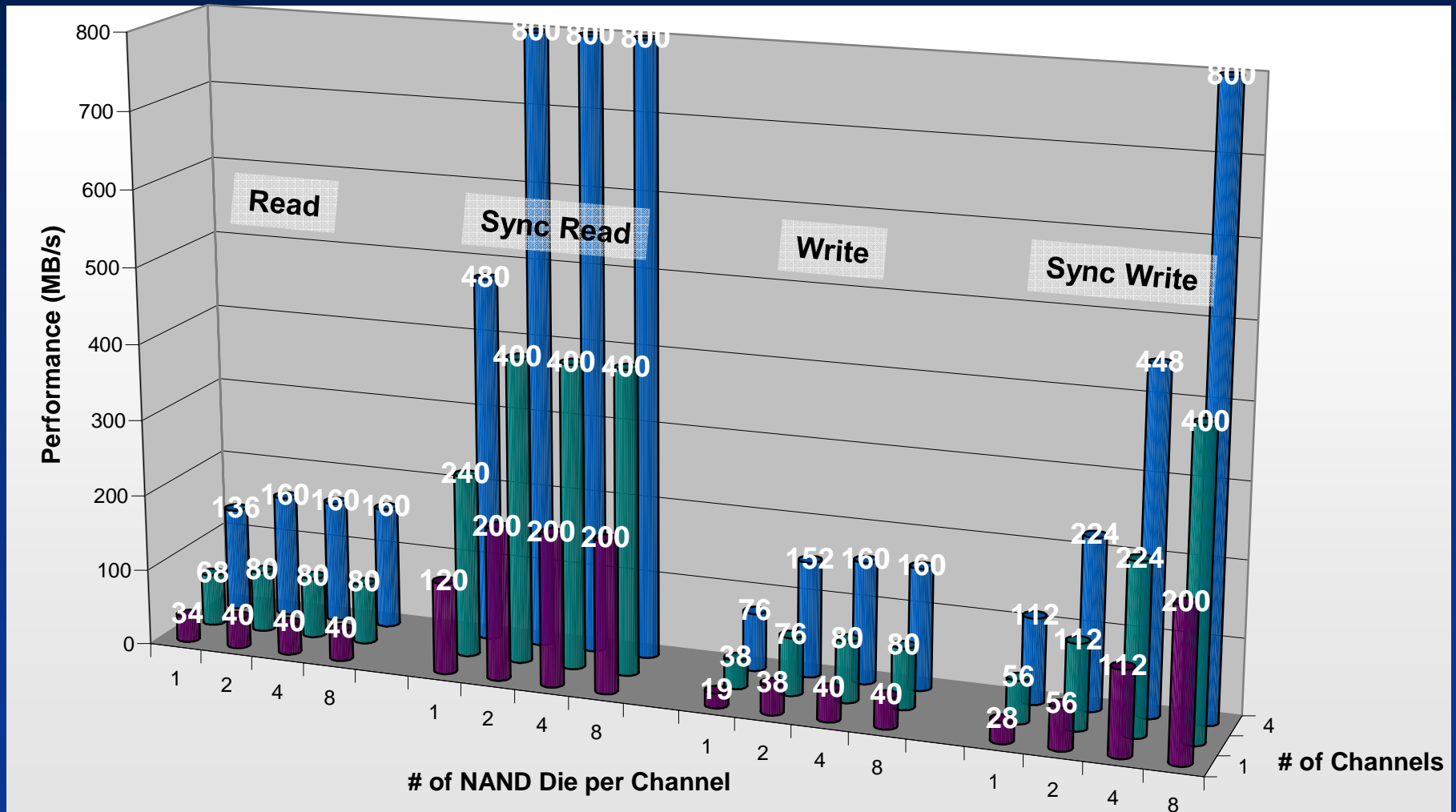
Improving System Performance

- System performance is increased by adding more channels or more die per channel
- Ignoring effects of ECC and block management algorithms, total throughput is either array or I/O throughput limited



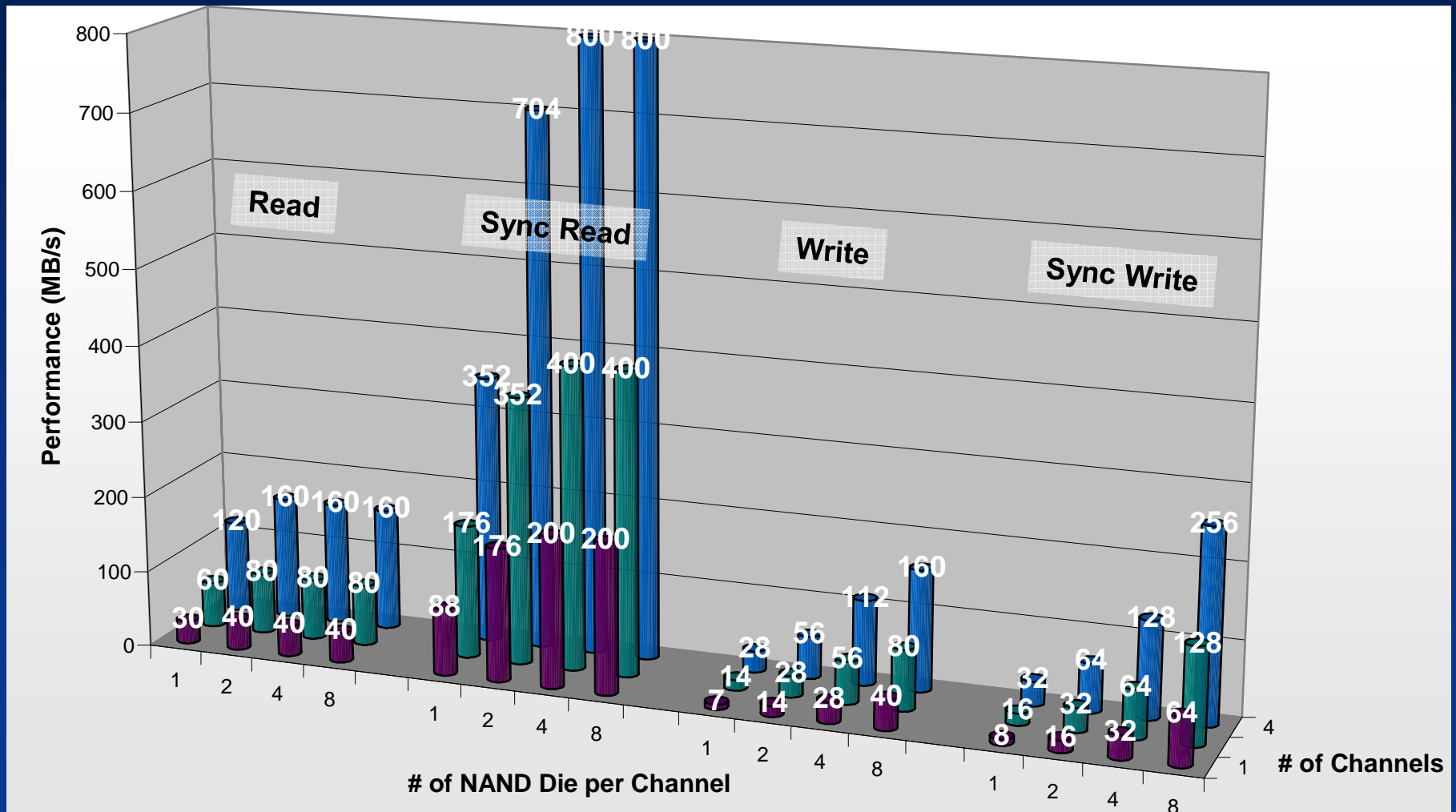
SLC 4KB Two-Plane Throughput

Example: Async vs. Sync Interface



MLC 4KB Two-plane Throughput

Example: Async vs. Sync Interface



Conclusions

- Larger block sizes to become more difficult to manage
- Page size doubles, increasing sequential performance while reducing random performance to compensate for overall slower array throughput
- ECC increases to compensate for data retention and endurance; still, endurance is decreasing for consumer NAND memory
- 2 bpc MLC has a lower manufacturing cost per bit as long as it is on a smaller process node than 3 bpc MLC memory – and it fits more customer applications!
- Pages per block increasing to reduce die size
- Interface performance increasing to open up a whole new market – enterprise solutions – while helping improve SSD performance
- ONFI provides a proactive, scalable interface for the future with broad industry support



Questions?

About Michael Abraham

- Manager of Micron's NAND Flash Applications Engineering group
- B.S. in Computer Engineering from Brigham Young University
- Technical representative for Micron in ONFI and JEDEC for NAND Flash
- Key role in defining and standardizing the high-speed, synchronous DDR NAND interface within Micron and at ONFI



©2007-2009 Micron Technology, Inc. All rights reserved. Products are warranted only to meet Micron's production data sheet specifications. Information, products and/or specifications are subject to change without notice. All information is provided on an "AS IS" basis without warranties of any kind. Dates are estimates only. Drawings not to scale. Micron and the Micron logo are trademarks of Micron Technology, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Santa Clara, CA USA
August 2009