



Intel® Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa*]

Intel Select Solutions deliver the compute-intensive resources needed to run artificial-intelligence (AI) workloads on existing high-performance computing (HPC) clusters.



Enterprises are looking to simulation and modeling, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics to help them achieve breakthrough discoveries and innovation. They understand these workloads benefit from a high-performance computing (HPC) infrastructure, yet they might still believe that separate HPC, AI, and big data clusters are the best choice for running these workloads.

Contributing to this belief are two challenges. The first challenge is a fundamental difference in how workloads request resources and how HPC systems allocate them. AI and analytics workloads request compute resources dynamically, an approach that isn't compatible with the batch scheduling software used to allocate system resources in HPC clusters.

The second challenge is the pattern of using computing systems based on graphics processing units (GPUs) as dedicated solutions for AI workloads. Enterprises might not realize that adding these workloads to an existing HPC cluster is feasible without the use of GPUs.

Enterprises can deliver the compute infrastructure needed by AI workloads, with high levels of performance and cost-effectiveness, without adding the complexity of managing separate, dedicated systems. What they need is the ability to run HPC, big data analytics, and AI workloads within the same HPC infrastructure and with optimized resource scheduling that helps save time and reduce computing costs.

Creating a converged platform to run HPC, AI, and analytics workloads in a single cluster infrastructure supports breakthrough innovation, made possible by the convergence of these workloads, while increasing the value and utilization of resources. Enter Intel® Selection Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa*]. Intel Select Solutions are verified hardware and software stacks optimized across compute, storage, and networking resources for specific workloads. Built on Intel® Xeon® Scalable processors, Intel Select Solutions help ensure enterprises get the performance, agility, and security they require.

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa]

Core capabilities in Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] are delivered by a solution that runs AI workloads within an HPC environment. The architecture enables HPC batch schedulers to run all workloads—including simulation and modeling, big data analytics, and AI—on a common HPC infrastructure. It also enables partners to help customers build upon existing HPC investments to start running AI and big data workloads.

These solutions combine Intel Xeon Scalable processors, Intel® Solid State Drives (SSDs), a high-performance parallel file system for storage, and Intel® Omni-Path Architecture (Intel® OPA) to deliver support for multiple types of workloads in the same infrastructure. This multi-workload support means:

- Customers can start their AI journeys on existing HPC infrastructures and potentially reduce the total cost of ownership (TCO) for HPC because Intel Xeon Scalable processor-based HPC environments do not require specialized hardware to run AI workloads
- Faster time to insights with improvements in AI inferencing
- No more burden of data transfer between multiple environments, reducing the time to results for data analytics and AI training runs
- Hybrid workflows supported in the same infrastructure, a capability that allows the solutions to make use of resources and improve efficiency across HPC, AI, and data-analytics workloads in a single environment

The Intel Select Solutions support advanced capabilities to run machine learning, deep-learning training models, and data analytics on the same HPC cluster. For example, the solutions help users to run Intel-optimized TensorFlow* models on an HPC system. TensorFlow is a deep learning framework based on Python* and designed for ease of use and extensibility on modern deep neural networks (DNNs), and it has been optimized for use on Intel Xeon processors. In addition, Apache Spark* support in the solutions helps with machine learning and data analytics.

The solutions also provide a cohesive HPC and AI software stack with integrated Univa Grid Engine* and Univa Universal Resource Broker* scheduling software, which can reduce system complexity and licensing costs and can support hybrid workloads in the same HPC infrastructure.

Intel Select Solutions are verified solutions that combine Intel Xeon Scalable processors and other Intel® technologies into a proven architecture based on the Intel® HPC Platform Specification. This specification defines common industry practices and requirements for building Intel®-based clusters. As an architectural foundation, the specification provides a consistent and stable platform, enabling development and deployment of a wide variety of compute-intensive and data-intensive workloads. Included in the foundation are the Intel software performance libraries and runtime environments that allow applications to experience optimized value from the underlying Intel processors and technologies. The Intel HPC Platform Specification enables organizations to achieve high performance with flexibility, scalability, balance, and portability.

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] simplify the challenge of building an HPC cluster and are designed to provide optimized performance for highly demanding hybrid workloads. In addition, the solutions are validated to ensure they:

What Are Intel® Select Solutions?

Intel Select Solutions are pre-defined, workload-optimized solutions designed to minimize the challenges of infrastructure evaluation and deployment. Solutions are validated by OEMs/ODMs, certified by ISVs, and verified by Intel. Intel develops these solutions in extensive collaboration with hardware, software, and operating system vendor partners and with the world's leading data center and service providers. Every Intel Select Solution is a tailored combination of Intel® data center compute, memory, storage, and network technologies that delivers predictable, trusted, and compelling performance.

To refer to a solution as an Intel Select Solution, a vendor must:

1. Meet the software and hardware stack requirements outlined by the solution's reference-design specifications
2. Replicate or exceed established reference-benchmark test results
3. Publish a solution brief and a detailed implementation guide to facilitate customer deployment

Solution providers can also develop their own optimizations in order to give end customers a simpler, more consistent deployment experience.

- Include key components and technologies to deliver performance and scalability
- Comply with industry standards and best practices for Intel-based clusters, as defined in the Intel HPC Platform Specification
- Meet or exceed defined performance levels in targeted characteristics important to HPC applications

Hardware and Software Selections

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] include several key hardware and software components. The solutions are built on top of Intel Select Solutions for Simulation & Modeling, with hardware that provides the right performance for converged HPC, AI, and big data analytics workloads.

Compute

The solutions use Intel Xeon Gold 6126 processors or Intel Xeon Gold 6226 processors in the "Base" configuration, and Intel Xeon Gold 6252 processors in the "Plus" configuration. Both configurations offer all the benefits of Intel Select Solutions; however, the Plus configuration delivers higher performance levels.

Intel Xeon Scalable processors feature significant enhancements that can benefit HPC applications, including improvements in input/output (I/O), memory, fabric integration, and Intel® Advanced Vector Extensions 512 (Intel® AVX-512):¹

- For HPC users adopting AI, the Intel® Deep Learning Boost (Intel® DL Boost) capability makes the configurations even more compelling because it accelerates AI workloads, increasing Int16* and Int8* peak operations/second. Intel DL Boost was designed to accelerate performance of AI deep learning (inference) workloads (for example, speech recognition, image recognition, object classification, machine translation, and others).
- Existing Intel AVX-512 fused-multiple add (FMA) instructions deliver significant performance for floating-point operations. However, with Intel DL Boost, the performance acceleration extends to integer operations and handles dense computations characteristic of convolutional neural network (CNN) and DNN workloads.

The Base and Plus configurations use the following additional hardware:

- SSDs: Intel® SSD DC 3520
- Storage: High-performance parallel file system
- Message fabric: Intel® Omni-Path Host Fabric Interface Adapter 100 Series
- Management network switch: 10 gigabit Ethernet (GbE) switch

Fabric

Intel OPA provides 100 gigabits per second (Gbps) bandwidth and a low-latency, next-generation fabric for HPC clusters. The 48-port switch chip delivers a 33 percent increase in density over the traditional 36-port switch application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) historically used for InfiniBand* networking, which reduces the number of required switches. Intel OPA can also reduce cabling-related costs, power consumption, space requirements, and ongoing system-maintenance requirements.

Software

Software in the solutions includes two Univa solutions. Univa Grid Engine is a distributed resource-management system that manages workloads automatically, improves utilization of shared resources, and accelerates runtimes. Univa Universal Resource Broker extends a Univa Grid Engine or Kubernetes cluster to support additional big data frameworks and data center services.

Additional software in the solution includes the Linux* operating system, Intel® Cluster Checker, OpenHPC*, Intel OPA software, Intel® Parallel Studio XE 2019 Cluster Edition, Apache Spark, TensorFlow, and Horovod*.

Verified Performance through Benchmark Testing

All Intel Select Solutions are verified to meet a specified minimum level of workload-optimized performance capabilities. Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] use the same performance watermarks as the Intel Select Solutions for Simulation & Modeling, which demonstrate optimized capabilities for HPC applications. These verified solutions meet or exceed design and testing standards across eight well-known industry benchmarks that cover important system aspects and indicate potential scale-up and scale-out performance for big data and AI workloads.

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] also use the following benchmarks to verify performance: the TensorFlow ResNet 50* benchmark and the Spark-Bench* suite of tests.

Base and Plus Configurations

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] are available in two configurations: Base and Plus, as shown in Table 1. The Base configuration specifies the minimum required performance capability. The Plus configuration delivers higher performance for running AI workloads.

Table 1. The Base and Plus configurations for Intel® Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa*]

INGREDIENT	INTEL® SELECT SOLUTIONS FOR HPC & AI CONVERGED CLUSTERS [UNIVA*] BASE CONFIGURATION DETAILS	INTEL SELECT SOLUTIONS FOR HPC & AI CONVERGED CLUSTERS [UNIVA] PLUS CONFIGURATION DETAILS
WORKLOAD DOMAIN (MINIMUM 4-COMPUTE-NODE CONFIGURATION)		
PLATFORM	Dual-socket server platform	Dual-socket server platform
PROCESSOR	2 x Intel® Xeon® Gold 6126 processor (2.60 GHz, 12 cores, 24 threads), Intel Xeon Gold 6226 processor (2.70 GHz, 12 cores, 24 threads), or a higher model number Intel Xeon Scalable processor	2 x Intel Xeon Gold 6252 processor (2.10 GHz, 24 cores), or a higher number Intel Xeon Scalable processor
MEMORY	192 GB	192 GB
BOOT DRIVE	240 GB Intel® SSD Data Center (DC) S3520 SAA 3.0, 6 Gbps or equivalent	240 GB Intel SSD DC S3520 SAA 3.0, 6 Gbps or equivalent
STORAGE	HPC parallel file system (470 megabits per second [Mbps] per client)	HPC parallel file system (470 Mbps per client)
MESSAGING FABRIC	Intel® Omni-Path Host Fabric Interface Adapter 100 Series	Intel Omni-Path Host Fabric Interface Adapter 100 Series

MANAGEMENT NETWORK SWITCH	10 GbE switch	10 GbE switch
SCHEDULING SOFTWARE	Univa Grid Engine* and Univa Universal Resource Broker*	Univa Grid Engine and Univa Universal Resource Broker
SOFTWARE	Linux* operating system Intel® Cluster Checker 2019 OpenHPC** Intel® Omni-Path Fabric Software Intel® Parallel Studio XE 2019 Cluster Edition** Apache Spark* TensorFlow* Horovod*	Linux operating system Intel Cluster Checker 2019 OpenHPC** Intel Omni-Path Fabric Software Intel Parallel Studio XE 2019 Cluster Edition** Apache Spark TensorFlow Horovod

MANAGEMENT DOMAIN

MANAGEMENT NETWORK	Integrated 10 GbE**	Integrated 10 GbE**
FIRMWARE AND SOFTWARE OPTIMIZATIONS	Intel® Hyper-Threading Technology (Intel® HT Technology) enabled Intel® Turbo Boost Technology enabled XPT* prefetch enabled	Intel HT Technology enabled Intel Turbo Boost Technology enabled XPT prefetch enabled

MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In addition to the benchmarks below, performance of simulation and modeling applications on HPC and AI converged clusters will be comparable to the levels specified in the Intel Select Solutions for Simulation & Modeling solution brief.

ALGORITHM/TEST	Training/inference	Using Univa 4-node cluster (images/sec)
RESNET50* INT8*	Inference	6,300
RESNET50	Training	400
BUSINESS VALUE OF CHOOSING A PLUS CONFIGURATION OVER A BASE CONFIGURATION	The Plus configuration allows faster time to train an AI model with its increased compute capabilities, and AI inferencing sees decreased time to insights due to Intel® Deep Learning Boost (Intel® DL Boost).	

**Recommended, not required

Technology Selections for Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa]

In addition to the Intel hardware foundation used for these solutions, the following Intel technologies integrated in Intel Xeon Scalable processors deliver further performance and reliability gains:

- **Intel AVX-512:** Boosts performance for the most demanding computational workloads, with up to double the number of floating point operations per second (FLOPS) per clock cycle, compared to previous-generation Intel processors.¹
- **Intel DL Boost:** The performance acceleration extends to integer operations and handles dense computations characteristic of CNN and DNN workloads. It accelerates AI workloads, increasing Int16 and Int8 peak operations/second. Intel DL Boost was designed to accelerate performance of AI deep learning (inference) workloads (for example, speech recognition, image recognition, object classification, machine translation, and others).

- **Intel Cluster Checker:** Inspects more than 100 characteristics related to cluster health. Intel Cluster Checker examines the system at both the node and cluster level, making sure all components work together to deliver optimal performance. It assesses firmware, kernel, storage, and network settings, and it conducts high-level tests of node and network performance using the Intel® MPI Library benchmarks, STREAM*, the High Performance LINPACK* (HPL*) benchmark, the High Performance Conjugate Gradients* (HPCG*) benchmark, and other benchmarks. Intel Cluster Checker can be extended with custom tests, and its functionality can be embedded into other software.
- **Intel® Cluster Runtimes:** Supplies key software runtime elements that are required on each cluster to ensure optimal performance paths for applications. Intel runtime performance libraries, including Intel® Math Kernel Library (Intel® MKL) and Intel MPI Library, deliver excellent performance optimized for clusters based on Intel architecture.

- **Converged parallel programming for Intel Xeon Scalable processors:** Enables the creation of a highly integrated portfolio of powerful technologies, software tools, and libraries. Intel Xeon Scalable processors offer an unparalleled flexible framework, based on a common programming model, that supports code-modernization initiatives across AI frameworks.

Part of the Suite of Intel Select Solutions for HPC

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] join the robust suite of Intel Select Solutions for HPC to address the most critical HPC workloads. As the foundation of Intel's HPC portfolio, Intel Select Solutions for Simulation & Modeling are Intel's most flexible solution for general HPC applications. To better visualize data, Intel Select Solutions for Professional Visualization build upon the functionality in Intel Select Solutions for Simulation & Modeling with optimizations to support simulation and visualization applications. Rounding out the HPC portfolio are the Intel Select Solutions for AI Inferencing and the Intel Select Solutions for Genomic Analytics.

Simplify Deployments of AI Workloads on HPC Clusters with Univa

Intel Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa] combine Intel Xeon Scalable processors, Intel OPA, and other Intel technologies with Univa scheduling software to deliver optimized performance for running big data and AI workloads on HPC clusters with a single comprehensive, verified solution. Customers can begin their AI journeys today using existing, familiar infrastructure.

Visit intel.com/selectsolutions for more information on Intel Select Solutions.

Intel® Xeon® Scalable Processors

Intel Xeon Scalable processors:

- Offer high scalability from the multi-cloud to the intelligent edge
- Deliver platform innovations and hardware-enhanced virtualization across compute, network, and storage
- Provide cost-efficient, flexible, and scalable infrastructure to consistently deliver amazing business-to-business and business-to-consumer customer experiences
- Supply hardware-enhanced monitoring, management, and control of resources for increased efficiency and resource utilization
- Enable improved data and workload integrity and regulatory compliance

2nd Generation Intel Xeon Scalable processors:

- Offer high scalability that is cost-efficient and flexible, from the multi-cloud to the intelligent edge
- Establish a seamless performance foundation to help accelerate data's transformative impact
- Support breakthrough Intel® Optane™ DC persistent memory technology
- Accelerate artificial-intelligence (AI) performance and help deliver AI readiness across the data center
- Provide hardware-enhanced platform protection and threat monitoring

Intel® Select Solutions for HPC & AI Converged Clusters [Univa*] feature Intel Xeon Gold processors.



Learn More

Intel Select Solutions: intel.com/selectsolutions

Intel Xeon Scalable processors: intel.com/xeonscalable

Intel SSD Data Center Family: intel.com/content/www/us/en/products/memory-storage/solid-state-drives/data-center-ssds.html

Intel OPA: intel.com/omnipath

Intel HPC Platform Specification: intel.com/content/www/us/en/high-performance-computing/hpc-platform-specification.html

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¹ Intel® Advanced Vector Extensions 512 (Intel® AVX-512) provides higher throughput to certain processor operations. Due to varying processor power characteristics, utilizing Intel AVX instructions may cause a) some parts to operate at less than the rated frequency and b) some parts with Intel® Turbo Boost Technology 2.0 to not achieve any or maximum turbo frequencies. Performance varies depending on hardware, software, and system configuration and you can learn more at intel.com/go/turbo.

Cost reduction scenarios described are intended as examples of how a given Intel- based product, in the specified circumstances and configurations, may affect future costs and provide cost savings. Circumstances will vary. Intel does not guarantee any costs or cost reduction.

Intel technologies' features and benefits depend on system configuration and may require enabled hardware, software or service activation. Performance varies depending on system configuration. **No product or component can be absolutely secure.** Check with your system manufacturer or retailer or learn more at intel.com.

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