ConnectX®-5 VPI Mellanox Socket Direct®
100Gb/s InfiniBand & Ethernet Adapter Card

Intelligent RDMA-enabled network adapter card with advanced application offload capabilities supporting 100Gb/s for servers without x16 PCIe slots

ConnectX®-5 Mellanox Socket Direct with Virtual Protocol Interconnect® (VPI) supports two ports of 100Gb/s InfiniBand and Ethernet connectivity, very low latency, and very high message rate, OVS and NVMe over Fabric offloads, providing the highest performance and most flexible solution for the most demanding applications and markets: Machine Learning, Data Analytics, and more.

Mellanox Socket Direct®

ConnectX-5 Mellanox Socket Direct provides 100Gb/s port speed even to servers without x16 PCIe slots by splitting the 16-lane PCIe bus into two 8-lane buses, one of which is accessible through a PCIe x8 edge connector and the other through a parallel x8 Auxiliary PCIe Connection Card, connected by a dedicated harness.

Moreover, the card brings improved performance to dual-socket servers by enabling direct access from each CPU in a dual-socket server to the network through its dedicated PCIe x8 interface. In such a configuration, Mellanox Socket Direct also brings lower latency and lower CPU utilization. The direct connection from each CPU to the network means the Interconnect can bypass a QPI (UPI) and the other CPU, optimizing performance and improving latency. CPU utilization is improved as each CPU handles only its own traffic and not traffic from the other CPU.

Mellanox Socket Direct also enables GPUDirect® RDMA for all CPU/GPU pairs by ensuring that all GPUs are linked to CPUs close to the adapter card, and enables Intel® DDIO on both sockets by creating a direct connection between the sockets and the adapter card.

HPC Environments

ConnectX-5 delivers high bandwidth, low latency, and high computation efficiency for high performance, data intensive and scalable compute and storage platforms. ConnectX-5 offers enhancements to HPC infrastructures by providing MPI and SHMEM/PGAS and Rendezvous Tag Matching offload, hardware support for out-of-order RDMA Write and Read operations, as well as additional Network Atomic and PCIe Atomic operations support.

ConnectX-5 VPI utilizes both IBTA RDMA (Remote Data Memory Access) and RoCE (RDMA over Converged Ethernet) technologies, delivering low-latency and high performance. ConnectX-5 enhances RDMA network capabilities by completing the Switch Adaptive-Routing capabilities and supporting data delivered out-of-order, while maintaining ordered completion semantics, providing multipath reliability and efficient support for all network topologies including DragonFly and DragonFly+.

ConnectX-5 also supports Burst Buffer offload for background checkpointing without interfering in the main CPU operations, and the innovative transport service Dynamic Connected Transport (DCT) to ensure extreme scalability for compute and storage systems.

HIGHLIGHTS

FEATURES
- Mellanox Socket Direct, enabling 100Gb/s for servers without x16 PCIe slots
- Tag matching and rendezvous offloads
- Adaptive routing on reliable transport
- Burst buffer offloads for background checkpointing
- NVMe over Fabric (NVMe-oF) offloads
- Back-end switch elimination by host chaining
- Enhanced vSwitch/vRouter offloads
- Flexible pipeline
- RoCE for overlay networks
- RoHS compliant
- ODCC compatible

BENEFITS
- Up to 100Gb/s connectivity per port
- Industry-leading throughput, low latency, low CPU utilization and high message rate
- Low latency for dual-socket servers in environments with multiple network flows
- Innovative rack design for storage and Machine Learning based on Host Chaining technology
- Smart interconnect for x86, Power, Arm, and GPU-based compute and storage platforms
- Advanced storage capabilities including NVMe over Fabric offloads
- Intelligent network adapter supporting flexible pipeline programmability
- Cutting-edge performance in virtualized networks including Network Function Virtualization (NFV)
- Enabler for efficient service chaining capabilities
- Efficient I/O consolidation, lowering data center costs and complexity
Storage Environments

NVMe storage devices are gaining popularity, offering very fast storage access. The evolving NVMe over Fabric (NVMe-oF) protocol leverages the RDMA connectivity for remote access. ConnectX-5 offers further enhancements by providing NVMe-oF target offloads, enabling very efficient NVMe storage access with no CPU intervention, and thus improved performance and lower latency.

As with the earlier generations of ConnectX adapters, standard block and file access protocols can leverage RoCE for high-performance storage access. A consolidated compute and storage network achieves significant cost-performance advantages over multi-fabric networks.

ConnectX-5 enables an innovative storage rack design, Host Chaining, by which different servers can interconnect directly without involving the Top of the Rack (ToR) switch.

Cloud and Web 2.0 Environments

Cloud and Web 2.0 customers that are developing their platforms on Software Defined Network (SDN) environments, are leveraging their servers’ Operating System Virtual-Switching capabilities to enable maximum flexibility.

Open vSwitch (OVS) is an example of a virtual switch that allows Virtual Machines to communicate with each other and with the outside world. Virtual switch traditionally resides in the hypervisor and switching is based on multiple-tuple matching on flows. The virtual switch or virtual router software-based solution is CPU intensive, affecting system performance and preventing full utilization of available bandwidth.

Mellanox’s ASAP2® - Accelerated Switching and Packet Processing® technology allows to offload vSwitch/vRouter by handling the data plane in the NIC hardware while maintaining the control plane unmodified. As a result, there is significantly higher vSwitch/vRouter performance without the associated CPU load.

Moreover, the intelligent ConnectX-5 flexible pipeline capabilities, which include flexible parser and flexible match-action tables, can be programmed, which enable hardware offloads for future protocols.

ConnectX-5 SR-IOV technology provides dedicated adapter resources and guaranteed isolation and protection for virtual machines (VMs) within the server. Moreover, with ConnectX-5 Network Function Virtualization (NFV), a VM can be used as a virtual appliance. With full data-path operations offloads as well as hairpin hardware capability and service chaining, data can be handled by the Virtual Appliance with minimum CPU utilization.

With these capabilities data center administrators benefit from better server utilization while reducing cost, power, and cable complexity, allowing more Virtual Appliances, Virtual Machines and more tenants on the same hardware.

Manageability for Mellanox Socket Direct

Manageability is supported through a BMC. The Mellanox Socket Direct PCIe stand-up adapter can be connected to a BMC using MCTP over SMBus or MCTP over PCIe protocols as if it is a standard Mellanox PCIe stand-up adapter. The adapter can be configured per the server’s specific manageability solution.
**Compatibility**

**IPC Express Interface**
- PCI Gen 3.0, 1.1 and 2.0 compatible
- 2.5, 5.0, 8, 16 GT/s link rate
- 32 lanes as 2x 16-lanes of PCIe
- Auto-negotiates to x16, x8, x4, x2, or x1 lanes
- PCIe Atomic
- TLP (Transaction Layer Packet)
- Processing Hints (TPH)
- Advance Error Reporting (AER)

**Operating Systems/Distributions**
- RHEL/CentOS
- Windows
- FreeBSD
- VMware
- OpenFabrics Enterprise Distribution (OFED)
- OpenFabrics Windows Distribution (WinOF-2)

**InfiniBand**
- EDR / FDR / DFR / DDR / SDR
- IBTA Specification 1.3 compliant
- RDMA, Send/Receive semantics
- Hardware-based congestion control
- Atomic operations
- 16 million I/O channels
- 256 to 4Kbyte MTU, 2Gbyte messages
- 8 virtual lanes + VL15

**Features**
- Enhanced Atomic operations
- Advanced memory mapping support, allowing user mode registration and remapping of memory (UMR)
- On demand paging (ODP)
- MPI Tag Matching
- Rendezvous protocol offload
- Out-of-order RDMA supporting Adaptive Routing
- Burst buffer offload
- In-Network Memory registration-free RDMA memory access

**CPU Offloads**
- RDMA over Converged Ethernet (RoCE)
- TCP/UDP/IP stateless offload
- LSO, LRO, checksum offload
- RSS (also on encapsulated packet), TSS, HDS, VLAN and MPLS tag insertion/stripping, Receive flow steering
- Data Plane Development Kit (DPDK) for kernel bypass applications
- Open VSwitch (OVS) offload using ASAP2
- Tunneling encapsulation/de-capsulation
- Intelligent interrupt coalescence
- Header rewrite supporting hardware offload of NAT router

**Storage Offloads**
- NVMe over fabric offloads for target machine
- T10 DIF – Signature handover operation at wire speed, for ingress and egress traffic
- Storage protocols: SRP, iSER, NFS RDMA, SMB Direct, NVMe-oF

**Overlay Networks**
- RoCE over Overlay Networks
- Stateless offloads for overlay network tunneling protocols
- Hardware offload of encapsulation and decapsulation of VXLAN, NVGRE, and GENEVE overlay networks

**Connectivity**
- Interoperability with InfiniBand switches (up to EDR)
- Interoperability with Ethernet switches (up to 100GBE)
- Passive copper cable with ESD protection
- Powered connectors for optical and active cable support

**HPC Software Libraries**
- Open MPI, IBM PE, OSU MPI (MVAPICH2), Intel MPI
- Platform MPI, UPC, Open SHMEM

**Management and Control**
- NC-SI over MCTP over SMBus and NC-SI over MCTP over PCIe - Baseboard Management Controller interface
- PLDM for Monitor and Control DSP0248
- PLDM for Firmware Upgrade DSP0267
- SDN management interface for managing the eSwitch
- I2C interface for device control and configuration
- General Purpose I/O pins
- SPI interface to flash
- JTAG IEEE 1149.1 and IEEE 1149.6

**Remote Boot**
- Remote boot over InfiniBand
- Remote boot over Ethernet
- Remote boot over iSCSI
- Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI)
- Pre-execution Environment (PXE)

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* This section describes hardware features and capabilities. Please refer to the driver and firmware release notes for feature availability.
### Table 1 - Part Numbers and Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPN</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dimensions w/o Bracket</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCX556M-ECAT-S25</td>
<td>ConnectX®-5 VPI adapter card with Mellanox Socket Direct supporting dual-socket server, EDR IB (100Gb/s) and 100GbE, dual-port QSFP28, 2x PCIe3.0 x8, 25cm harness, tall bracket</td>
<td>16.7cm x 6.9cm (low profile)&lt;br&gt;11.3cm x 4.0cm and 25cm harness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCX556M-ECAT-S35A</td>
<td>ConnectX®-5 VPI adapter card with Mellanox Socket Direct supporting dual-socket server, EDR IB (100Gb/s) and 100GbE, dual-port QSFP28, 2x PCIe3.0 x8, 35cm harness, active auxiliary PCIe connection card, tall bracket</td>
<td>16.7cm x 6.9cm (low profile)&lt;br&gt;11.3cm x 4.0cm and 35cm harness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
1. All tall-bracket adapters are shipped with the tall bracket mounted and a short bracket as accessory.
2. For information about our support packages, please contact your Mellanox Technologies sales representative or visit our Support Index page.
3. When using Mellanox Socket Direct in virtualization or dual-port use cases, some restrictions may apply. For further details, Contact Mellanox Customer Support.