



Strong Protection Domains and Resource Control With Java™ Technology

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Overall Presentation Goal

Learn about the requirements of component execution platforms and see how such systems can be implemented entirely with Java™ technology



Learning Objectives

- As a result of this presentation, you will be able to understand:
 - Why Java™ technology-based components need protection
 - How protection domains can be efficiently implemented entirely with Java technology
 - The design of an efficient communication model
 - How to ensure safe domain termination
 - Techniques for resource control in the Java programming language



Speaker's Qualifications

- Developer using Java technology since 1996
- Research on Java technology-based operating systems since 1997
- Designer and developer of J-SEAL2
- Working on resource control for the Java platform



Agenda: Java™ Component Execution Platforms

- Java™ component execution platforms
- Strong protection domains
- Safe domain termination
- Efficient and mediated communication
- Resource control



Java Components

- Applets
- Servlets
- Enterprise JavaBeans™
- Mobile objects (mobile agents)



Requirements for Component Execution Platforms

- Security
 - Protect platform and components
 - Ensure secrecy
 - Ensure integrity
 - Prevent denial-of-service attacks
 - Prevent resource leaks
- Portability
- High performance



Why Java™ Technology for Components?

- Portable code
- Language safety
 - Type safety
 - Automatic memory management
 - Memory protection
 - Byte-code verification
- Multi-threading
- Class-loader namespaces



Caveats and Pitfalls

- The JVM™ virtual machine is not an operating system
- No protection domains
- Uncontrolled aliasing
- No ownership information in objects
- Covert channels (e.g., public static variables)
- No resource control
- Single heap

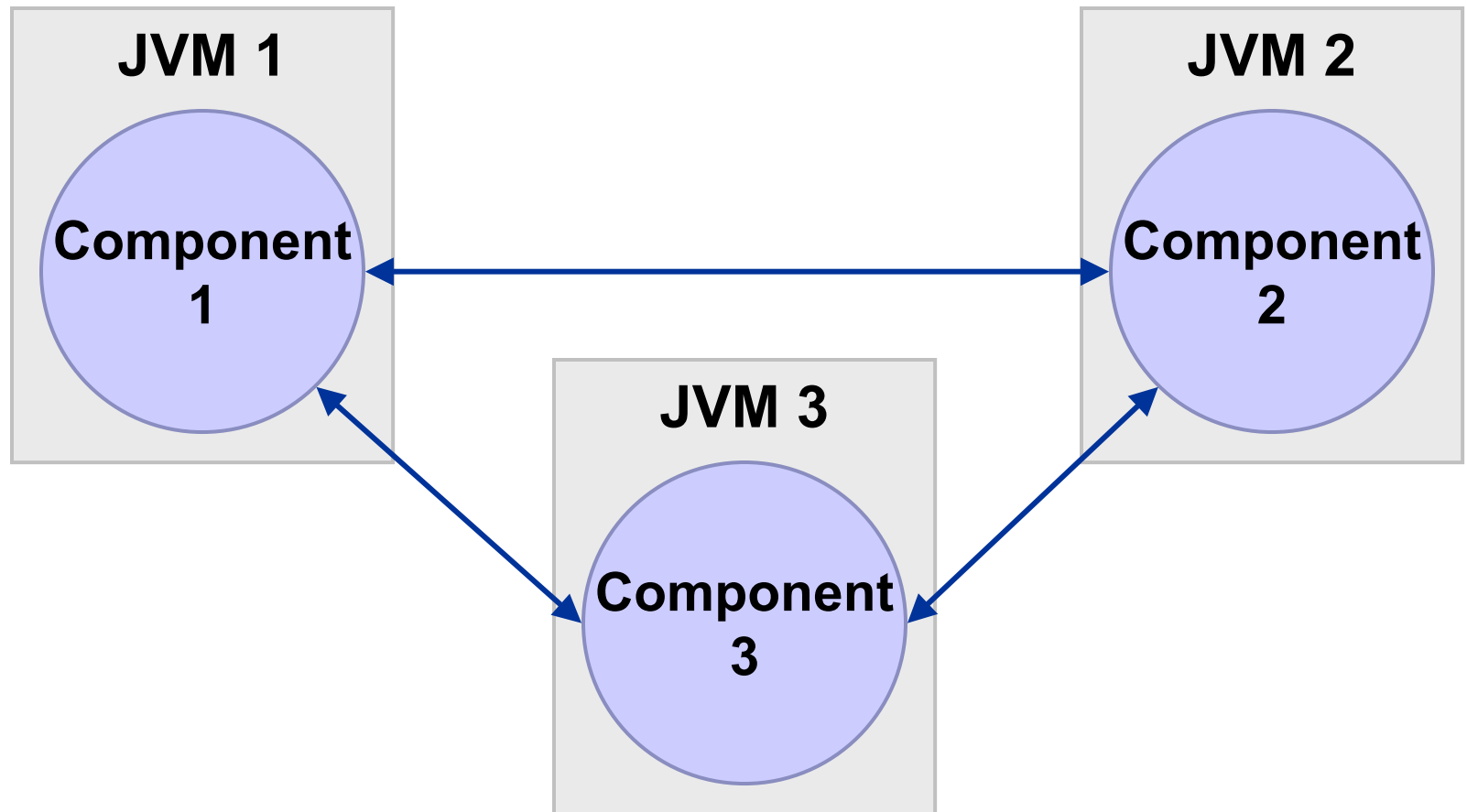


Possible Solutions

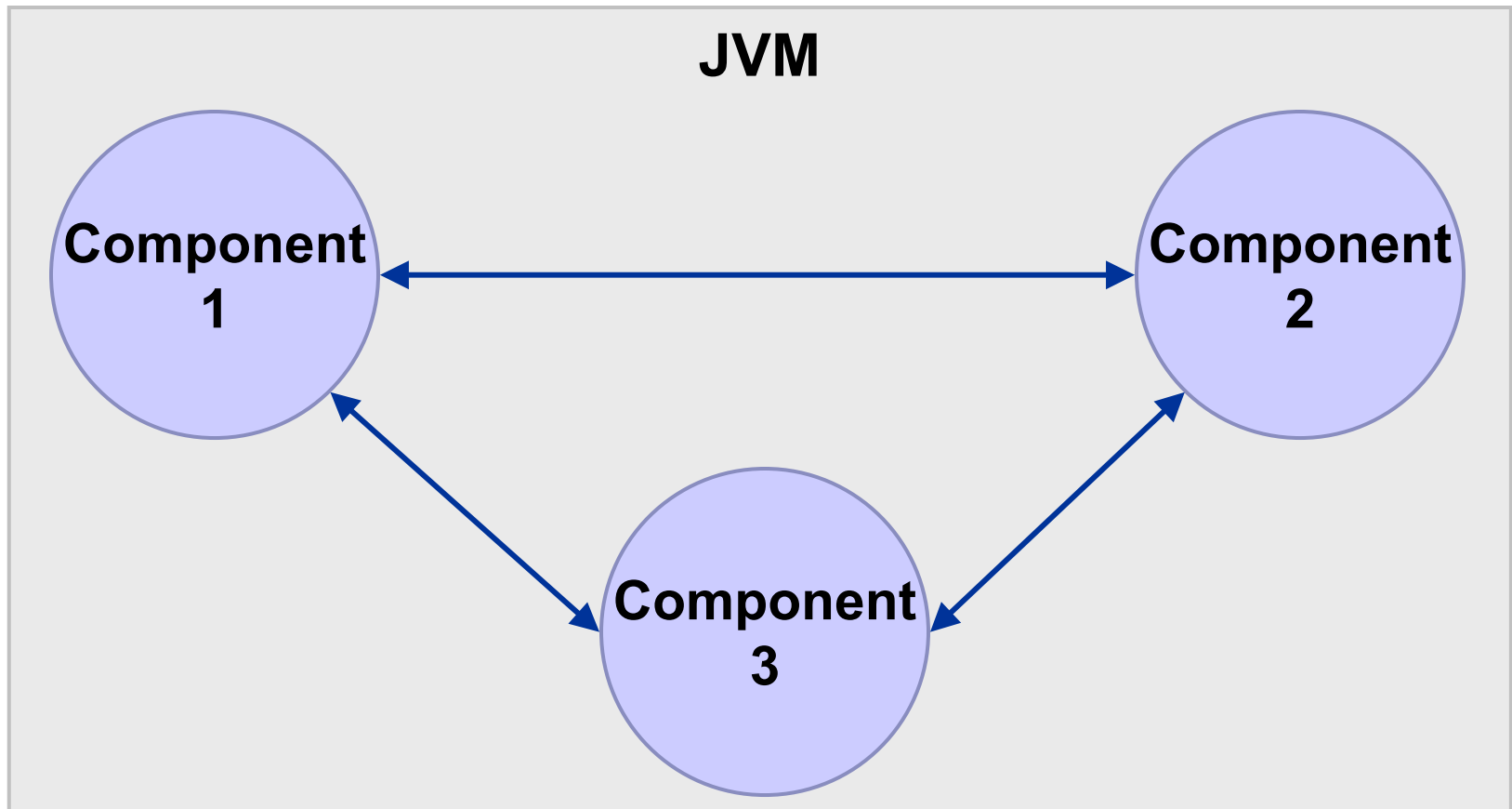
- Separate JVM for each component
 - Requires process support in operating system
 - High startup overhead, reloading of JDK™ software-based classes (“JDK classes”)
 - Expensive communication
 - Limited scalability
- Multiple protection domains in single JVM
 - Difficult to implement



Separate JVM™ for Each Component



Multiple Protection Domains in Single JVM™



Design Goals

- Operating system structure
 - Isolated protection domains
 - Safe domain termination
 - Mediated communication
 - Resource control
- Micro-kernel architecture
- Based entirely on Java™ technology
- Efficient implementation techniques



Case Study: The J-SEAL2 Mobile Agent Kernel

- Strong security guarantees
- Formal model: Seal Calculus (Jan Vitek)
- Redesign of the “JavaSeal” project (University of Geneva)
- Small micro-kernel (< 150KB)
- Portable (based entirely on Java technology)
- Flexible and extensible
- Efficient and scalable



Related Work

- Portable (based entirely on Java technology)
 - Project “JavaSeal”
 - J-Kernel
 - (JRes)
- Non-portable (native code, modified JVM™)
 - Alta
 - KaffeOS
 - Luna
 - Nomads



Agenda:

Strong Protection Domains

- Java™ component execution platforms
- Strong protection domains
- Safe domain termination
- Efficient and mediated communication
- Resource control



Requirements

- Isolation of components
- Kernel enforces domain boundaries
- Encapsulation
 - Class-loader
 - Classes
 - Threads
 - Objects
 - Kernel state (e.g., communication queues)



Class-loading

- Shared classes
 - Loaded by system class-loader
 - JDK™ and kernel classes
- Replicated classes
 - Loaded by class-loader of protection domain
 - Libraries and component classes
- Caching of replicated library classes



Extended Byte-code Verification

- Limit access to JDK™ classes and kernel
- Configurable verifier directives
 - Restricted access to packages and classes
 - Restricted access to class members
 - Extension restrictions
- Efficient constant-pool verification

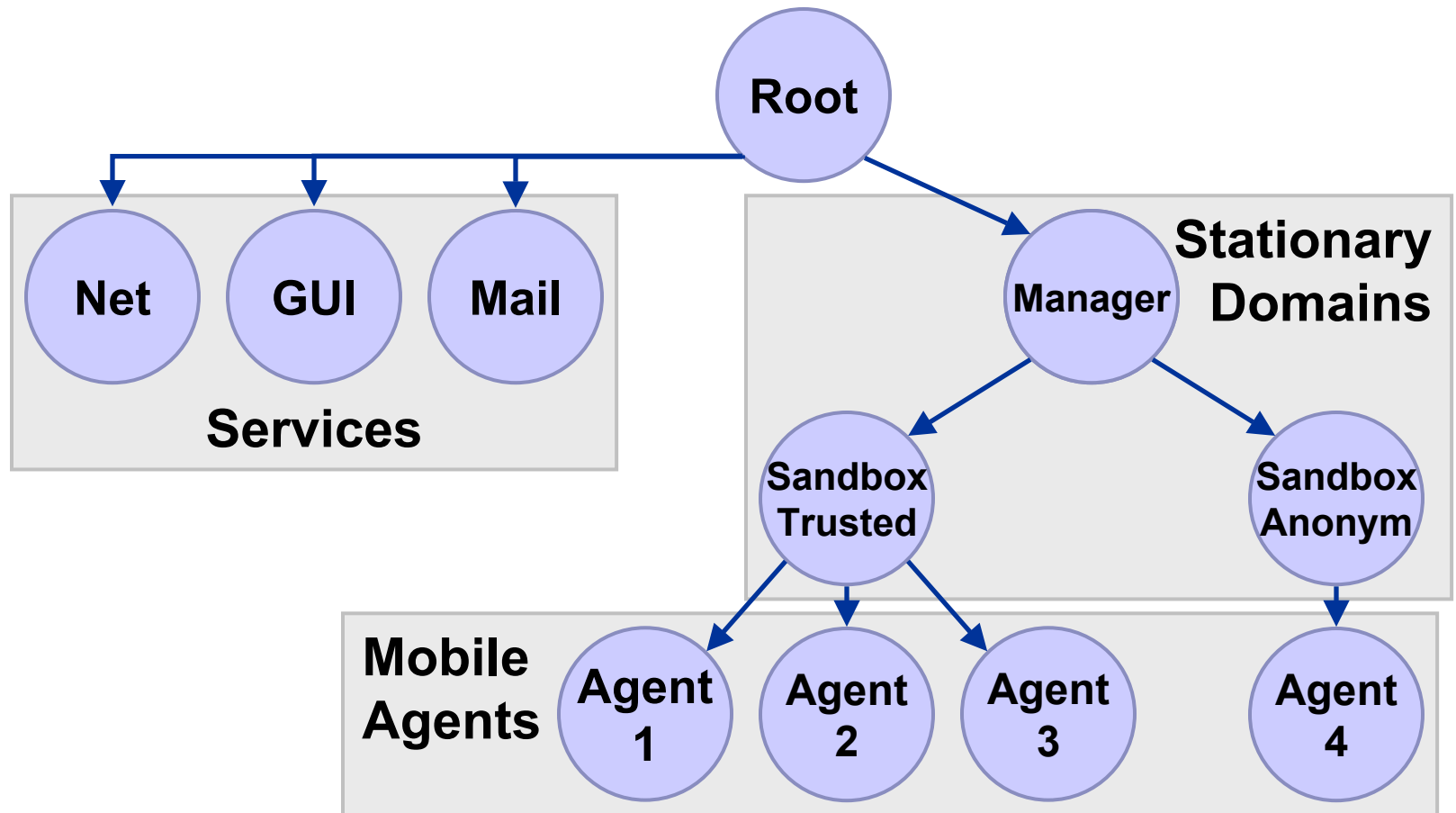


Case Study: Nested Protection Domains in J-SEAL2

- Hierarchy of protection domains
- Parent domain controls children
 - Communication control
 - Resource control
 - Termination of sub-hierarchies
- Sandboxes with different privileges



J-SEAL2 System Structure



Agenda: Safe Domain Termination

- Java™ component execution platforms
- Strong protection domains
- **Safe domain termination**
- Efficient and mediated communication
- Resource control



Requirements

- Immediate resource reclamation
 - Termination of all threads in domain
 - Invalidation of open communication ports
- Ensure consistency of JVM™ and kernel
 - Atomic kernel operations
 - VM operations in kernel (e.g., class-loading)



Code Restrictions

- No finalizers
 - void finalize()
 - void classFinalize()
- No catching of ThreadDeath
- Kernel enforces restrictions
 - Byte-code rewriting
 - Extended byte-code verification



Kernel Mode

- Atomic operations
- Multiple-reader/single-writer lock
 - Domain termination: Write lock (exclusive)
 - Other kernel operations: Read lock (shared)
- Asynchronous class-loading
 - Requires read lock
 - Prevent deadlocks
 - Keep track of threads in kernel-mode



Structure of Kernel Operations

```
boolean excl = ...; // exclusive or shared
Kernel.lock(excl);
// now executing in kernel-mode
try {
    // allocate all objects (worst case)
    ...
    // update kernel state
    ...
}
finally {
    Kernel.unlock(excl);
}
// now back in user-mode
```



Agenda: Efficient and Mediated Communication

- Java™ component execution platforms
- Strong protection domains
- Safe domain termination
- **Efficient and mediated communication**
- Resource control

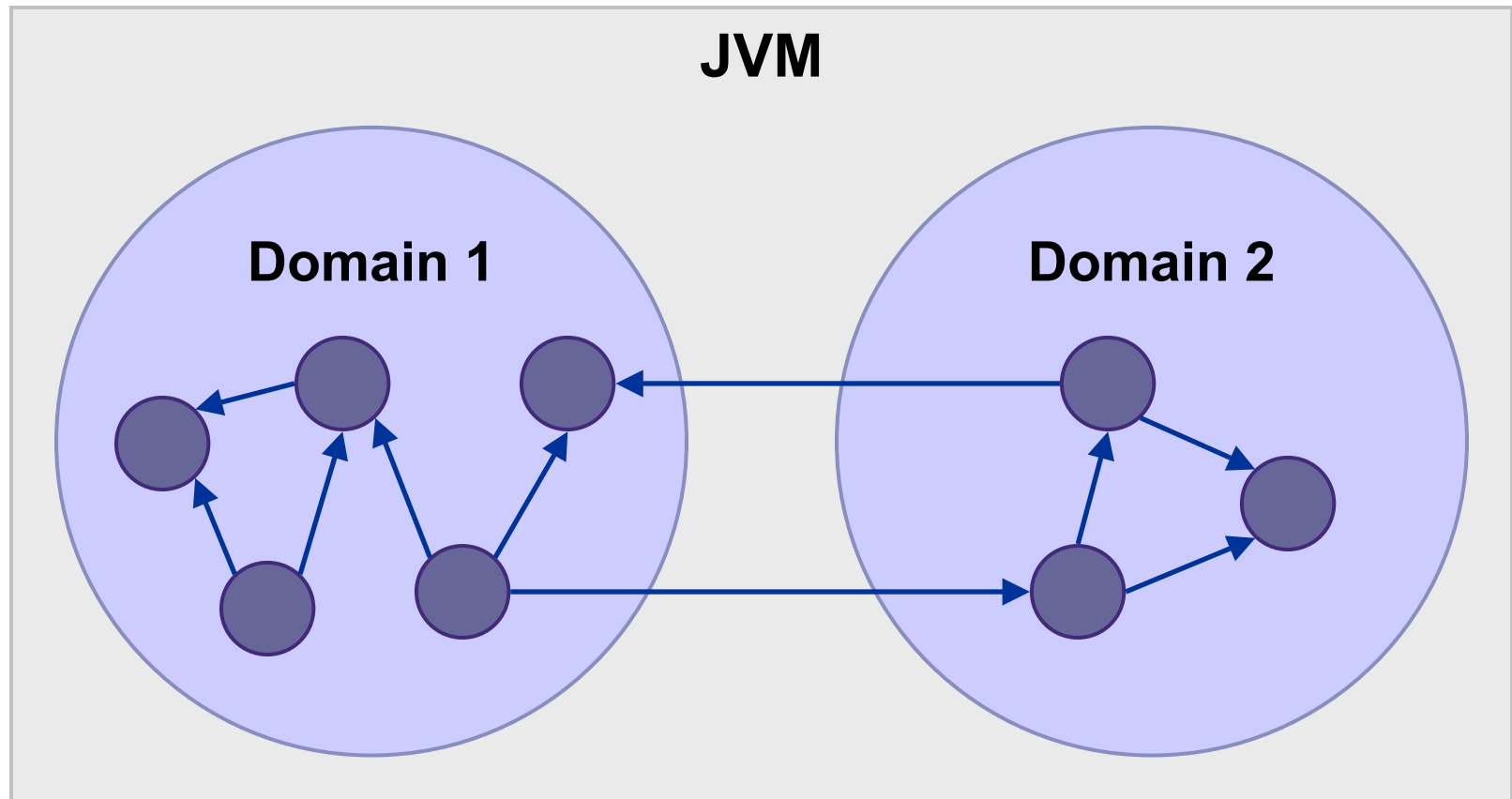


Communication Models

- Direct sharing
 - Java™ technology based references (“Java references”)
 - Special remote pointers (e.g., Luna)
- Indirect sharing (e.g., J-SEAL2, J-Kernel)
- Copying (e.g., project “JavaSeal”, J-SEAL2, J-Kernel)



Direct Sharing With Java™ Technology

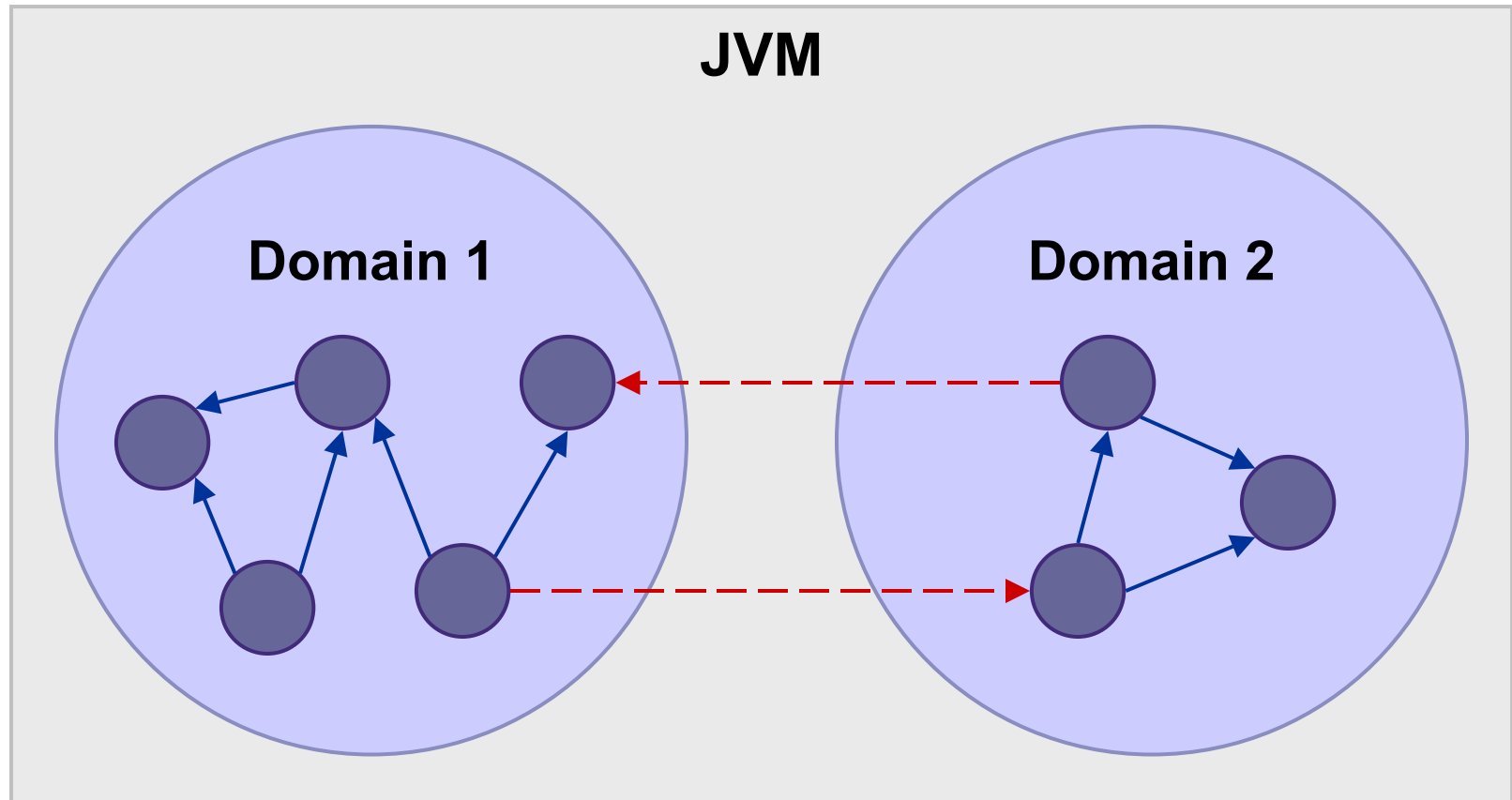


Direct Sharing With Java™ Technology: Pros and Cons

- Pros
 - Simple
 - Fast (method invocation)
 - Based entirely on Java technology
- Cons
 - Blurs domain boundaries
 - No revocation
 - Domain termination
 - Resource accounting



Direct Sharing in Luna

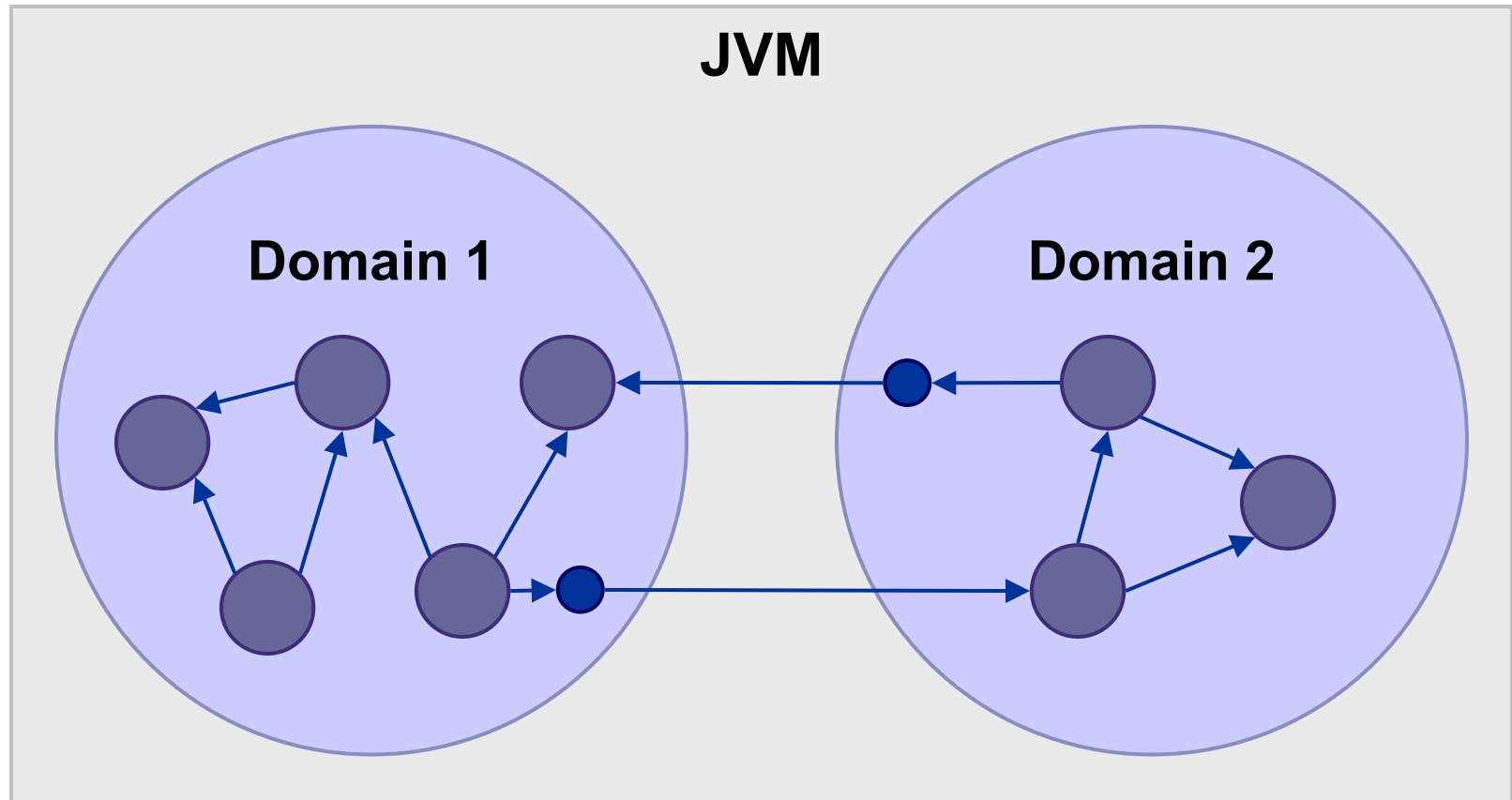


Direct Sharing in Luna: Pros and Cons

- Pros
 - Fast (method invocation)
 - Revocation
 - Domain termination
 - Resource accounting
- Cons
 - Requires modified JVM™



Indirect Sharing

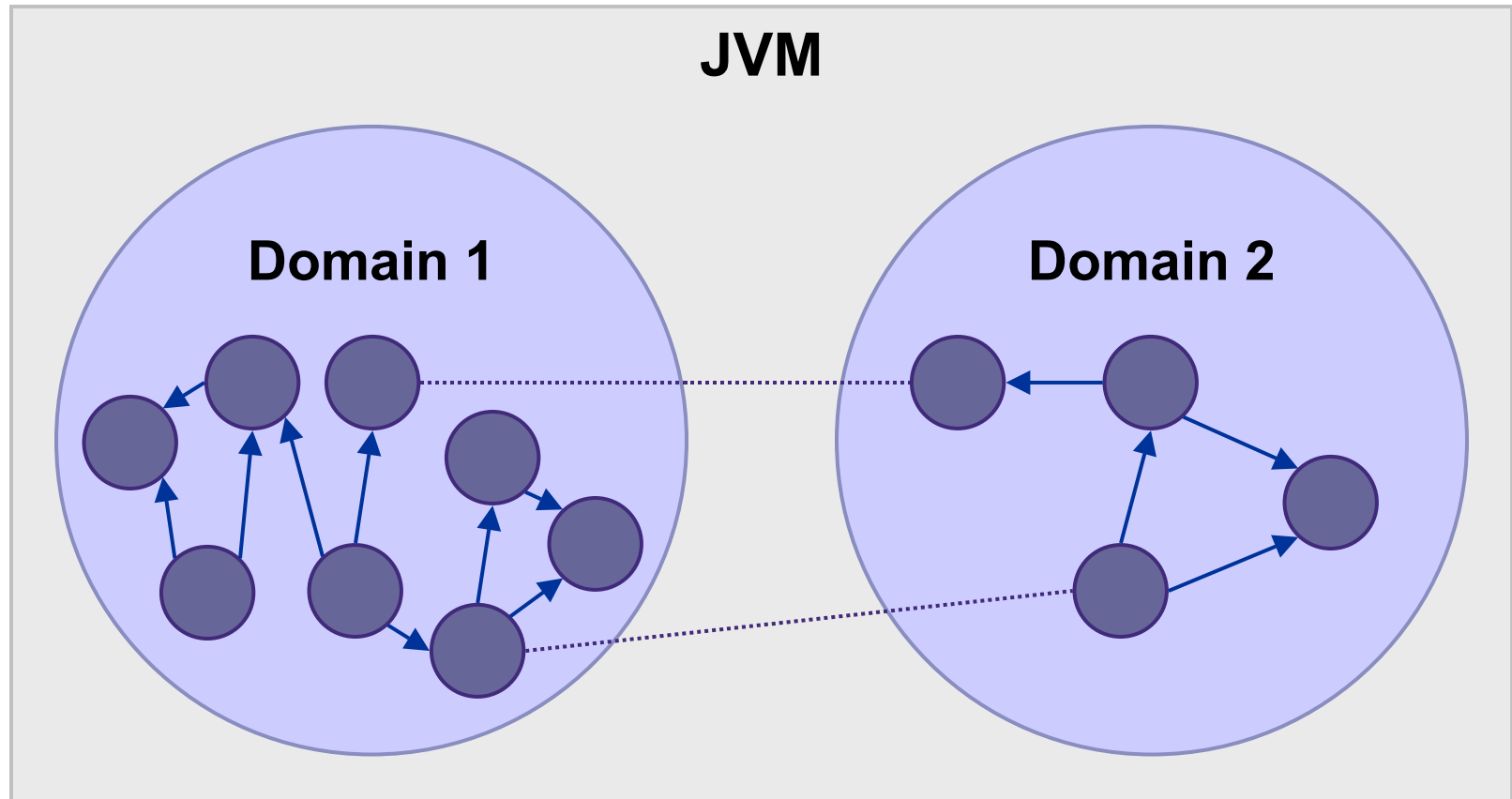


Indirect Sharing: Pros and Cons

- Pros
 - Revocation
 - Domain termination
 - Resource accounting
 - Based entirely on Java technology
- Cons
 - Overhead (indirection)



Copying



Copying: Pros and Cons

- Pros
 - Revocation not necessary
 - Domain termination
 - Resource accounting
 - Based entirely on Java technology
- Cons
 - High overhead for large object graphs (memory and CPU)
 - Serialization restrictions



Case Study: Communication in J-SEAL2

- Channels (copying)
 - Name, location (self, parent, child name)
 - Only between neighbor domains
 - Synchronous send/receive (Seal Calculus)
 - Optional timeouts
 - Asynchronous send
- External references (indirect sharing)
 - Cross-domain method invocation
- Inter Agent Method Calling (IAMC)

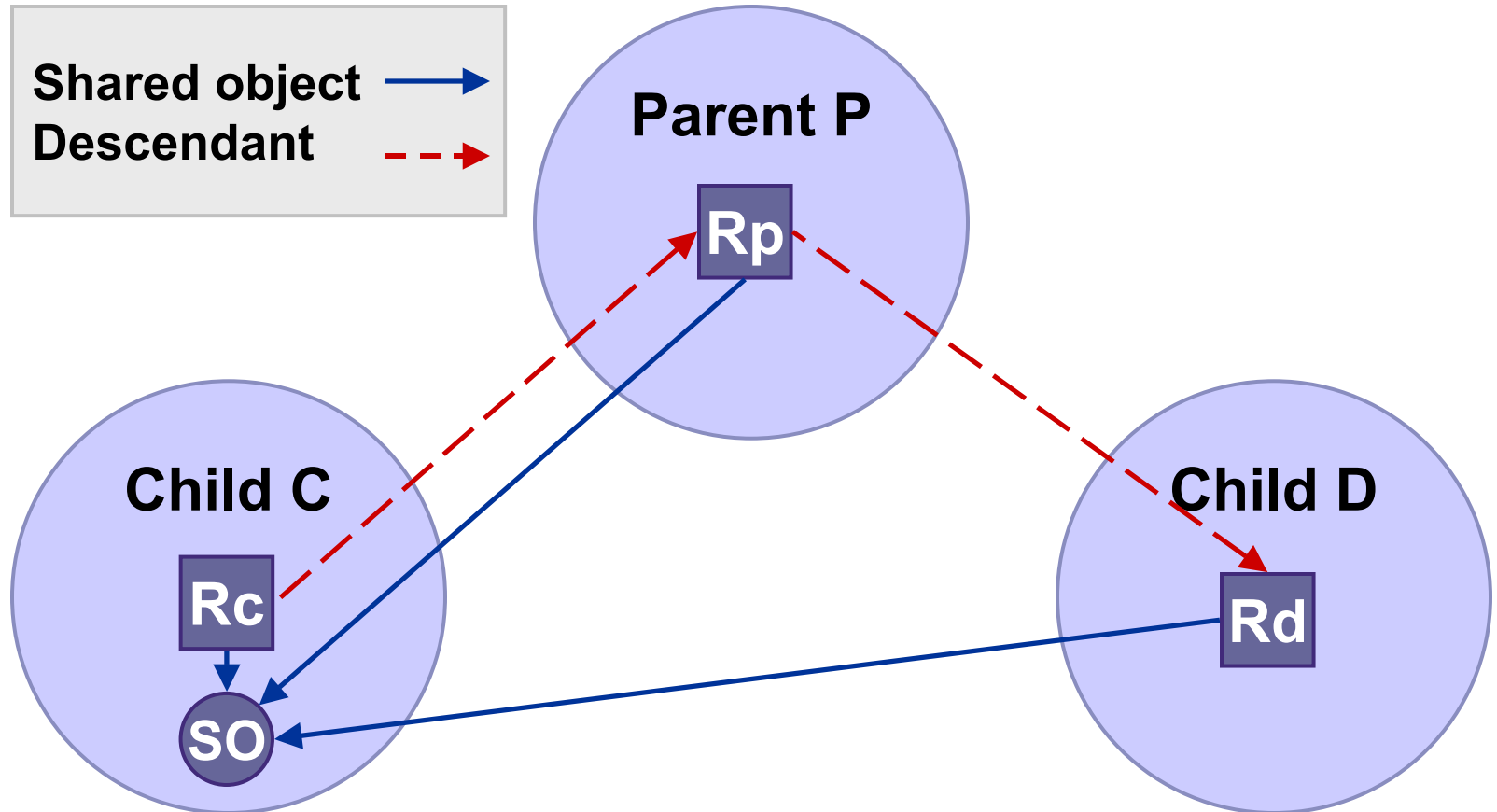


Communication Values

- Copying and indirect sharing
- Capsule: Serialized object graph
- Special treatment of external references
- Copying optimizations
 - Primitive types
 - Arrays of primitive types
 - Strings



External References



Agenda: Resource Control

- Java component execution platforms
- Strong protection domains
- Safe domain termination
- Efficient and mediated communication
- **Resource control**



Requirements

- Prevention against denial-of-service attacks
- Resource control
 - Resource accounting
 - Enforcing restrictions
- Physical resources (e.g., CPU, memory, net)
- Logical resources (e.g., threads, domains)



Implementation

- Accountability (objects belong to 1 domain)
- Byte-code rewriting
 - CPU: Count byte-code instructions
 - Memory: Check before allocation (JRes)
- Compensation for native code
 - Class-loading
 - Deserialization
 - Reflection
 - Object cloning



Memory Account (Simplified)

- Memory limit for multiple threads
- Synchronization
- Weak references to allocated objects

```
public final class MemAccount {  
    public void setLimit(int limit);  
    public void checkAllocation(int size)  
        throws ResourceOveruseException;  
    public void register(Object o);  
}
```



CPU Account

- Separate account for each thread
- No synchronization
- Periodic scheduler thread (high priority)

```
public final class CPUAccount {  
    public volatile int usage;  
}
```



Passing Accounting Objects

- Unmodified method

```
Object f(int x) {  
    if (x < 0) return null;  
    else return new Foo(g(x));  
}
```

- Added accounting objects

```
Object f(int x, MemAccount mem, CPUAccount cpu) {  
    if (x < 0) return null;  
    else return new Foo(g(x, mem, cpu), mem, cpu);  
}
```



Rewriting for Memory Accounting (Simplified)

```
Object f(int x, MemAccount mem, CPUAccount cpu) {
    if (x < 0) return null;
    else {
        int y = g(x, mem, cpu);
        mem.checkAllocation(SIZEOF_FOO);
        Object o = new Foo(y, mem, cpu);
        mem.register(o);
        return o;
    }
}
```

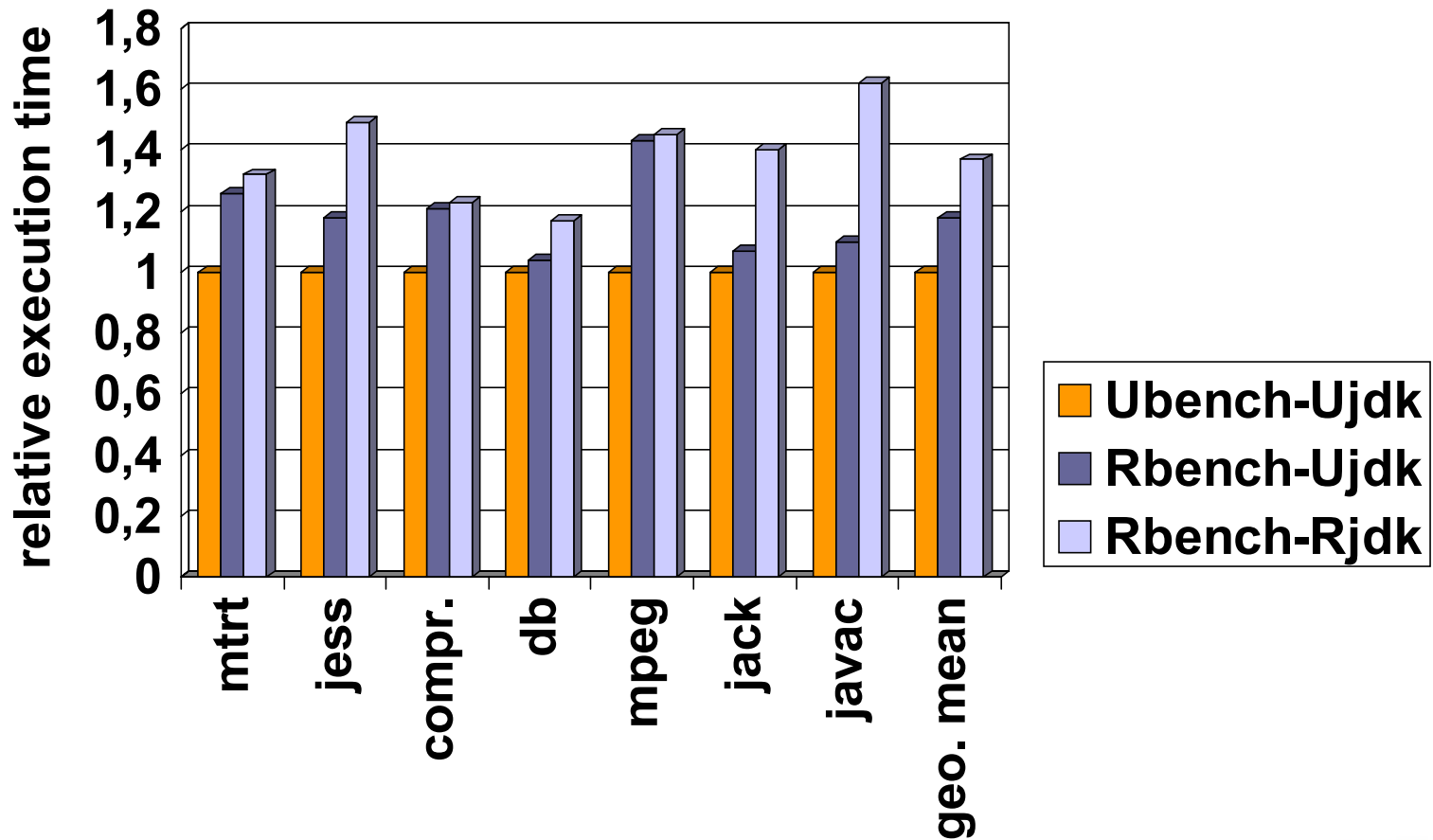


Rewriting for CPU Accounting

```
Object f(int x, MemAccount mem, CPUAccount cpu) {  
    cpu.usage += 8;  
    if (x < 0) {  
        cpu.usage += 8;  
        return null;  
    }  
    else {  
        cpu.usage += 26;  
        int y = g(x, mem, cpu);  
        mem.checkAllocation(SIZEOF_FOO);  
        Object o = new Foo(y, mem, cpu);  
        mem.register(o);  
        return o;  
    }  
}
```



Overhead of CPU Accounting

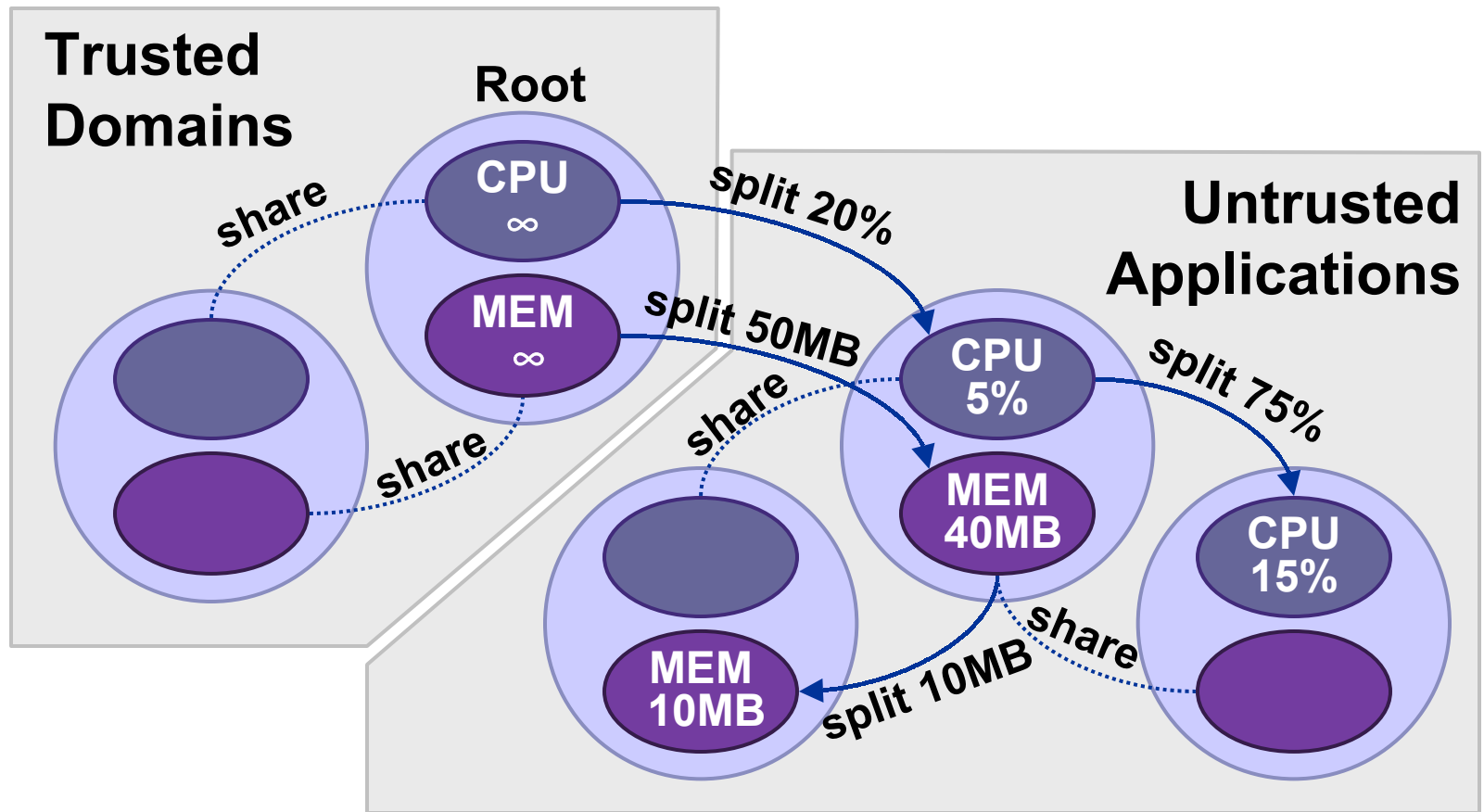


Case Study: Hierarchical Resource Control in J-SEAL2

- Startup
 - Root domain owns all resources
- Subdomain creation
 - Parent may donate resources to child
 - Parent may share resources with child



Resource Donation and Sharing in J-SEAL2



Summary

- Component execution platform requirements
 - Security
 - Portability
 - High performance and scalability
- Operating system functionality for the Java™ platform
 - Protection domains
 - Safe domain termination
 - Mediated communication
 - Resource control



Get More Information!

- Email to w.binder@coco.co.at
 - Articles
 - Thesis
 - Background information
 - Specific questions
 - Collaboration
 - Research and evaluation versions of J-SEAL2





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Q&A

Question

- Which restrictions does the protection model impose on components?



Answer

- ‘Dangerous’ JDK™ software functionality
- Restructure applications for security
- Use of service components
- Automatic transformation of components





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