Scaling Formal and Informal (Less Formal?) Reasoning

Stephen Magill

Galois, Inc / Muse Dev, Inc.

Formal Analysis

- Sound functional correctness verification
- Relevant dimension of scale
 - Proof creation
 - Proof checking
 - Proof update
 - Program update
 - Code usage

Effort Graph



Less Formal





- Functional Correctness Proofs for Amazon s2n
- Proofs for actively-developed cryptographic algorithms

Less Formal Scaling

- Non-exhaustive formal methods based testing (PKCS11)
- Symbolic bugfinding methods (Muse Dev)
- Dimensions of scale
 - Lines of code (3.5B)
 - Commits per day (10s of thousands)

Some Numbers

- Code size
 - 2B lines of code (Google)
 - 3.5B lines of code (unnamed financial sector company)
- Repository structure
 - 11k repositories
 - 1 repository with hundreds of projects
- Build time
 - 26 hours build time (different unnamed financial sector company)
 - 40 minutes when fully parallel!
 - "Trying to get builds under 10 minutes"

Solutions

- Caching
 - Build artifacts
 - Analysis artifacts
 - Relevant Build-oriented Tools: Artifactory, Bazel, Nexus
- Incremental analysis
- "Minimal viable analysis"

Inherent Sweet Spot for Each?

Are all practical industry-scale automated code analysis techniques necessarily unsound, while human-guided semi-automated analysis is the practical answer to cases where soundness is needed?