Discriminative Learning and Big Data
Approximate Nearest Neighbours

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Big Data means at least ...

- Image search, e.g Facebook
  - 1 billion images = 1 billion descriptors (e.g. 128D based on CNNs)

- Video search: thousands of hours of video
  - Billions of audio and video descriptors

- Music search: e.g. Shazam

- The order of magnitude considered in this lecture is millions to billions
Example: Large scale image/video retrieval

Objective: retrieve images from an image or video dataset that contain an object category

• Represent every image (or keyframe) by a feature vector

• Train an SVM classifier using positive images that contain the category and negative images that don’t

• Score each image in the dataset by the classifier and rank

• Basic operation: nearest neighbour matching/retrieval
Image retrieval

Training Images
- Positive (Airplane)
- Negative (Background)

Features

Learning
- Classifier Model
  - Linear SVM

Test Images

Features

Scoring
- Scores
  - 0.91
  - 0.89
  - 0.65
  - 0.12

Ranked List
- 0.91
- 0.89
- 0.65
- 0.12
Video dataset: BBC TV

- 17K broadcasts from BBC 1, 2, 3, 4 & BBC News 24
- Programmes from 2007 to 2012 in prime time slot (7-12pm)
- 10K hours of video represented by 1 frame per second
- 36M seconds of data, 5M keyframes
- Frames are 480 x 270 pixels
Nearest Neighbours

Given a query vector $q$ find the closest vector $x$ in the dataset

$$\text{NN}(q) = \arg \min_x \|x - q\|^2$$

- $d$ dimensional vectors
- $n$ size of dataset

NN and linear classifiers:

Given a classifier $w$ score each vector $x$ in the dataset as $w.x$ and sort

$$\|w - x\|^2 = \|w\|^2 + \|x\|^2 - 2w.x = 2 - 2w.x$$

with $x$ and $w$ having a unit norm.
Nearest Neighbours

Given a query vector $q$ find the closest vector $x$ in the dataset

$$\text{NN}(q) = \arg \min_x ||x - q||^2$$

- $d$ dimensional vectors
- $n$ size of dataset

Problems:
- Costly operation of exact exhaustive (linear) search: $O(n*d)$
- High-dimensional vectors: for exact search the best approach is the naïve exhaustive comparison

Related task: k-NN
- find $K$ nearest neighbours
- used in retrieval for ranked lists and for classification
The cost of (efficient) exact matching

But what about the actual timings? With an efficient implementation.

Finding the 10-NN of 1000 distinct queries in 1 million vectors
- Assuming 128-D Euclidean descriptors
- i.e., 1 billion distances, computed on a 8-core machine

How much time?

Slide: Hervé Jégou
The cost of (efficient) exact matching

But what about the actual timings? With an efficient implementation!

Finding the 10-NN of 1000 distinct queries in 1 million vectors
  • Assuming 128-D Euclidean descriptors
  • i.e., 1 billion distances, computed on a 8-core machine

5.5 seconds
Need for approximate nearest neighbours

To improve the scalability:

- **Approximate nearest neighbor (ANN) search**

Three (contradictory) performance criteria for ANN schemes

- search quality (retrieved vectors are actual nearest neighbors)
- speed
- memory footprint

Representation must fit into memory (disk is too slow)
Finding *approximate* nearest neighbour vectors

- Approximate method is not guaranteed to find the nearest neighbour.

- Can be much faster, but at the cost of missing some nearest matches

![Diagram of 128D descriptor space showing found (near) match, query, and true NN match.](image)
Three ANN methods

• Locality sensitive hashing (LSH)

• Random k-d-trees

• Product quantization
Key idea: vector quantization/space partitioning
Locality Sensitive Hashing (LSH)

- Choose a random projection
- Project points
- Points close in the original space remain close under the projection
- Unfortunately, converse not true
- Solution: use multiple quantized projections which define a high-dimensional “grid”
Locality Sensitive Hashing (LSH)

- Cell contents can be efficiently indexed using a hash table
- Repeat to avoid quantization errors near the cell boundaries
- Point that shares at least one cell = potential candidate
- Compute distance to all candidates
LSH: discussion

- In theory, query time is independent of the number of points, $n$.

- In practice, LSH has high memory requirements as a large number of projections/hash tables are needed.

- Coding method is data independent (random projections).

- Code and more materials available online:

- See also:
Randomized k-d trees

- Use multiple, randomized k-d trees for search

- A k-d tree hierarchically decomposes the descriptor space

- Points nearby in the space can be found (hopefully) by backtracking around the tree some small number of steps

- Single tree works OK in low dimensions – not so well in high dimensions
K-d tree

- K-d tree is a **binary tree** data structure for organizing a set of points in a K-dimensional space.
- Each internal node is associated with an axis aligned hyper-plane splitting its associated points into two sub-trees.
- Dimensions with high variance are chosen first.
- Position of the splitting hyper-plane is chosen as the mean/median of the projected points.
K-d tree construction

Simple 2D example

Slide credit: Anna Atramentov
K-d tree query
K-d tree: Backtracking

Backtracking is necessary as the true nearest neighbor may not lie in the query cell.

But in some cases, almost all cells need to be inspected.
Randomized K-d trees

- How to choose the dimension to split and the splitting point?
  - Pick dimension with the highest variance
  - Split at the mean/median

- Multiple randomized trees increase the chances of finding nearby points (shared priority queue)
Randomized K-d trees: discussion

• Find approximate nearest neighbor in $O(\log n)$ time, where $n$ is the number of data points.

• Increased memory requirements: needs to store multiple (~8) trees

• Good performance in practice for recognition problems (NN-search for 128-D descriptors).

• Code available online:
  http://people.cs.ubc.ca/~mariusm/index.php/FLANN/FLANN
Comparison of approximate NN-search methods


FAST APPROXIMATE NEAREST NEIGHBORS
WITH AUTOMATIC ALGORITHM CONFIGURATION

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Keywords: nearest-neighbors search, randomized kd-trees, hierarchical k-means tree, clustering.

Abstract: For many computer vision problems, the most time consuming component consists of nearest neighbor matching in high-dimensional spaces. There are no known exact algorithms for solving these high-dimensional problems that are faster than linear search. Approximate algorithms are known to provide large speedups with only minor loss in accuracy, but many such algorithms have been published with only minimal guidance on selecting an algorithm and its parameters for any given problem. In this paper, we describe a system that answers the question, “What is the fastest approximate nearest-neighbor algorithm for my data?” Our system will take any given dataset and desired degree of precision and use these to automatically determine the best algorithm and parameter values. We also describe a new algorithm that applies priority search on hierarchical k-means trees, which we have found to provide the best known performance on many datasets. After testing a range of alternatives, we have found that multiple randomized k-d trees provide the best performance for other
Comparison of approximate NN-search methods

Dataset: 100K 128-D descriptors

Code for all methods available online, see Muja&Lowe’09

Figure: Muja&Lowe’09
Searching using Product Quantization

- Vector split into m subvectors: \( y \rightarrow [y_1 \ldots y_m] \)
- Subvectors are quantized separately
- Toy example: \( y = 8 \)-dim vector split into 4 subvectors of dimension 2

\( y_1 \): 2 components

- In practice: 8 bits/subquantizer (256 centroids)
  - SIFT: \( m=4-16 \)

\( 8^4=4,096 \) centroids induced

for a quantization cost equal to that of 8 centroids

Jegou et al, PAMI 2011
Searching using Product Quantization

- Estimate distances in the compressed domain: $d(x, y)^2 \approx \sum_{i=1}^{m} d(x_i, q_i(y_i))^2$

- To compute distances between query $x$ and many codes:

  1. Precompute all distances between query subvectors and centroids:
     \[ d(x_i, c_{i,j})^2 \]
     Stored in look-up tables computed per query descriptor

  2. For each database vector: sum the elementary square distances
     - $m-1$ additions per distance

Jegou et al, PAMI 2011
Example stats

3 Million key frames

Use PQ with 4 dim sub-vectors, and 1 byte per sub-vector (256 centres)

Original descriptors 8K dimension

• Memory footprint: $8k \times 4 \times 3M = 96 \text{ GB}$

Product Quantization: $8k \times 4 -> 2k$

• Memory footprint: $2k \times 3M = 6 \text{ GB}$

Product Quantization for vector compression, Jegou et al., PAMI 2011
Product quantization: discussion

- Large reduction in memory footprint
- Large speed up in matching (cf exhaustive NN)
- Does not require access to original descriptors at run time
- Good performance in practice for recognition problems (NN-search for 128-D descriptors).
There is more …

- Inverted file indexing (Computer Vision lectures)
- Binary codes
  - Represent descriptors by binary codes such that close descriptors have a small Hamming distance
  - For search use hardware instructions to compute Hamming distance between query and corpus (very fast)
  - Small memory footprint (with short binary codes)
  - In practice performance is below PQ for the same number of bits

*Iterative Quantization: A Procrustean Approach to Learning Binary Codes*
Y. Gong and S. Lazebnik, CVPR 2011

*A. Torralba, R. Fergus, and Y. Weiss. Small codes and large image databases for recognition. CVPR, 2008*