Intel Buys More AI With Nervana

Written by Marco Attard
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Intel looks to bolster its artificial intelligence chops as it acquires deep learning startup Nervana Systems for an undisclosed sum, one Recode claims reaches around $408 million.

According to Chipzilla AI is the next frontier in computing, and machine learning is a must in a world where billions of devices are busy connecting and sharing data with each other. Thus the need for companies like Nervana, whose technology promises to bring machine learning down to Intel's bread and butter, the silicon.

Google already takes such an approach to AI-- last May it revealed the Tensor Processing Unit (TPU)   , a chip specifically designed to handle the TensorFlow open source deep learning framework behind the company's deep learning services, including the AlphaGo human-beating Go playing computer.

"[Nervana's] IP and expertise in accelerating deep learning algorithms will expand Intel's capabilities in the field of AI," an Intel blog post reads. "We will apply Nervana's software expertise to further optimize the Intel Math Kernel Library and its integration into industry standard frameworks."

Founded in 2014 and led by former Qualcomm researcher Naveen Rao, Nervana is best known for the Neon, a deep learning software the company open sourced last year. Post-acquisition it will find work to "advance Intel's AI portfolio and enhance the deep learning performance and TCO of our Intel Xeon and Intel Xeon Phi processors."

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