

Linux Plumbers Conference 2024



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Vendor Passthrough: The ultimate discussion

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Vendor Passthrough mechanisms enable direct communication between userspace and hardware devices, fully or partly bypassing traditional kernel software stacks. This approach has found applications in various subsystems, such as testing new protocols (e.g. NVMe Passthrough), debugging hardware, and implementing user-space drivers (e.g. DPDK). Some subsystems have set stricter rules governing the userspace portion of the stack (e.g. DRM).

The camera domain has traditionally been cautious about accepting undocumented pass-through APIs. This session aims to explore the needs for different types of pass-through options for complex camera systems, and their potential benefits and risks. We will seek to gather insights from the experiences of other subsystems that have considered or utilized this technology.

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