FIGURE 1.17 Growth in processor performance since the mid-1980s. This chart plots performance relative to the VAX 11/780 as measured by the SPECint benchmarks (see Section 1.11). Prior to the mid-1980s, processor performance growth was largely technology-driven and averaged about 25% per year. The increase in growth to about 52% since then is attributable to more advanced architectural and organizational ideas. The higher annual performance improvement of 52% since the mid-1980s meant performance was about a factor of seven higher in 2002 than it would have been had it stayed at 25%. Since 2002, the limits of power, available instruction-level parallelism, and long memory latency have slowed uniprocessor performance recently, to about 3.5% per year.