Communication Networks

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Communication Networks

Spring 2021

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Materials inspired from Scott Shenker & Jennifer Rexford

Last week on

Communication Networks

We (almost) finished looking at the two fundamental challenges underlying networking

routing	reliable delivery
How do you guide IP packets from a source to destination?	How do you ensure reliable transport on top of best-effort delivery?

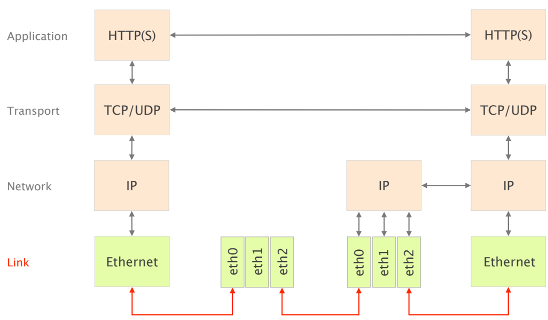
This week on

Communication Networks

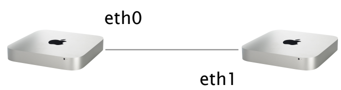
This week we'll start speaking about

How the Internet actually works

We'll do that layer-by-layer, bottom-up, starting with the Link layer



How do local computers communicate?



Communication Networks
Part 2: The Link Layer

#1	What is a link?
#2	How do we identify link adapters?
#3	How do we share a network medium?
#4	What is Ethernet?
#5	How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

Communication Networks
Part 2: The Link Layer

#1 What is a link?

How do we identify link adapters?

How do we share a network medium?

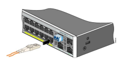
What is Ethernet?

How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

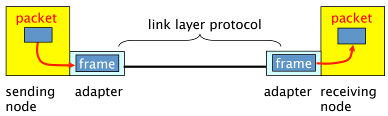
Link — Communication medium and Network adapter

 Wifi 

 Ethernet 

 Fiber 

Network adapters communicate together through the medium



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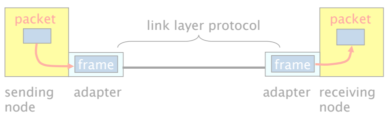


sender

encapsulate packets in a frame

add error checking bits, flow control, …

receiver

look for errors, flow control, …

extract packet and passes it to the network layer

The Link Layer provides a best-effort delivery service to the Network layer

L3	Network	global best-effort delivery
L2	Link	local best-effort delivery
L1	Physical	physical transfer of bits

The Link Layer provides a best-effort delivery service to the Network layer, composed of 5 sub-services

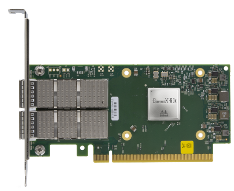
encoding	represents the 0s and the 1s
framing	encapsulate packet into a frame adding header and trailer
error detection	detects errors with checksum
error correction	optionally correct errors
flow control	pace sending and receiving node

As of March 2021, State-of-the-art Ethernet adapters clock at 200 Gbps

215 million pkt/sec

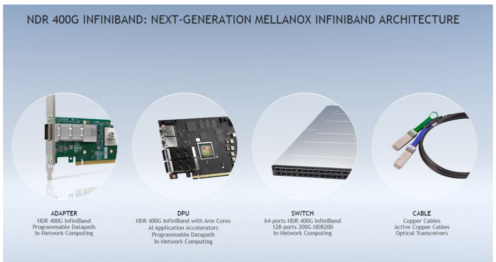
sub 0.8 usec latency

PCIe Gen 4.0



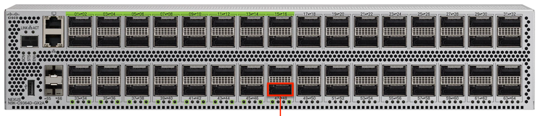
source: [Mellanox ConnectX-6]

400 Gbps adapters are around the corner



source: [NVIDIA NDR 400G Infiniband]

400 Gbps Ethernet switches are already on the market



Cisco Nexus 9364D-GX2A

source: [cisco]

64x400 GbE ports (QSFP-DD)

25.6 Tbps backplane capacity

Communication Networks

Part 2: The Link Layer

ETH

What is a link?

#2 How do we identify link adapters?

How do we share a network medium?

What is Ethernet?

How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

Medium Access Control addresses

MAC addresses…

MAC addresses…

identify the sender & receiver adapters
used within a link

are uniquely assigned
hard-coded into the adapter when built

use a flat space of 48 bits
allocated hierarchically

MAC addresses are hierarchically allocated

34:36:3b:d2:8a:86

The first 24 bits blocks are assigned to network adapter vendor by the IEEE

34:36:3b:d2:8a:86

Apple, Inc.
1 Infinite Loop
Cupertino CA 95014
US

see http://standards-oui.ieee.org/oui/oui.txt

The second 24 bits block is assigned
by the vendor to each network adapter

`34:36:3b:d2:8a:86`

assigned by Apple
to my adapter

The address with all bits set to 1
identifies the broadcast address

`ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff`

enables to send a frame to
all adapters on the link

By default, adapters only decapsulates frames
addressed to the local MAC or the broadcast address

The promiscuous mode enables to decapsulate
everything, independently of the destination MAC

Why don't we simply use IP addresses?

Links can support any protocol (not just IP)
different addresses on different kind of links

Adapters may move to different locations
cannot assign static IP address, it has to change

Adapters must be identified during bootstrap
need to talk to an adapter to give it an IP address

Adapters must be identified during bootstrap
need to talk to an adapter to give it an IP address

You need to solve two problems
when you bootstrap an adapter

Who am I?
MAC-to-IP binding

How do I acquire an IP address?

Who are you?
IP-to-MAC binding

Given an IP address reachable on a link,
How do I find out what MAC to use?

Who am I?
MAC-to-IP binding

How do I acquire an IP address?

Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol

Who are you?
IP-to-MAC binding

Given an IP address reachable on a link,
How do I find out what MAC to use?

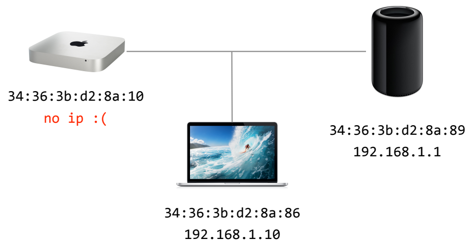
Address Resolution Protocol

Network adapters traditionally acquire an IP address using the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP)

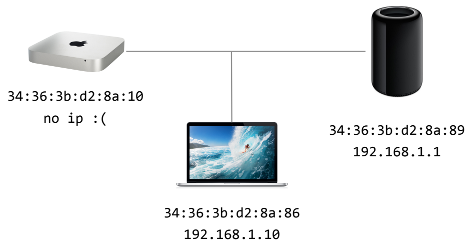
Every connected device needs an IP address…

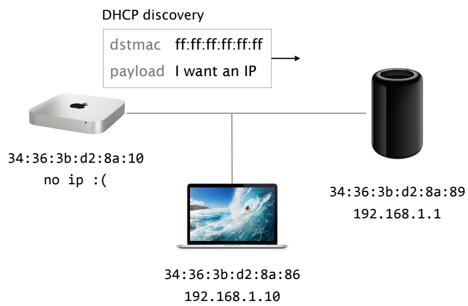
Newark Airport…

source: http://i.imgur.com/m1SQa6W.jpg

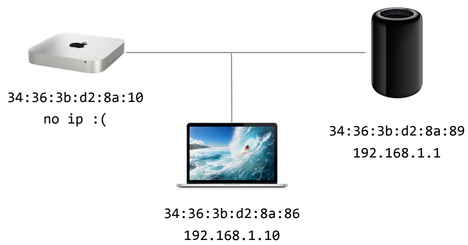


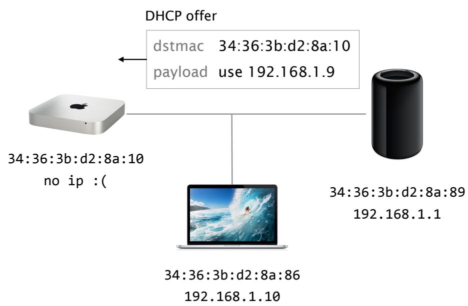
Host sends an “IP request” to everyone on the link using the broadcast address

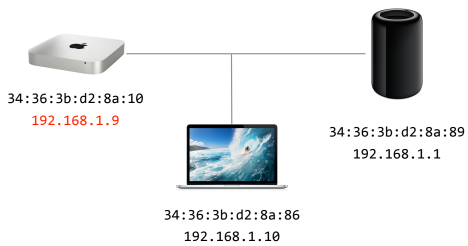




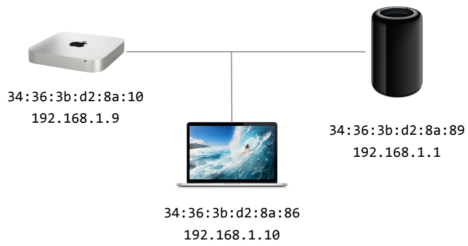
DHCP server (if any) answers with an IP address

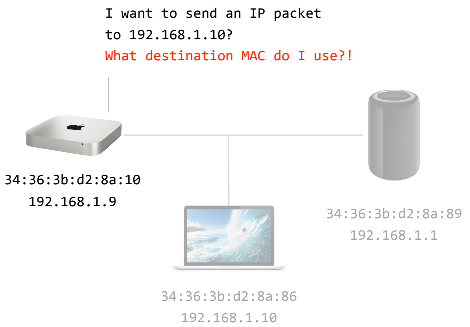


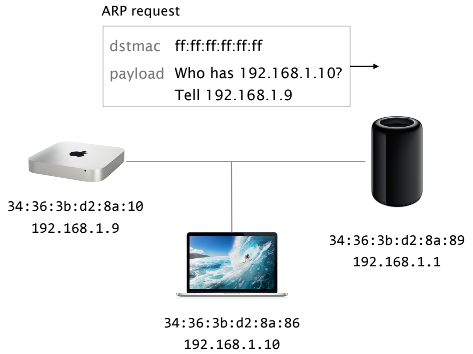


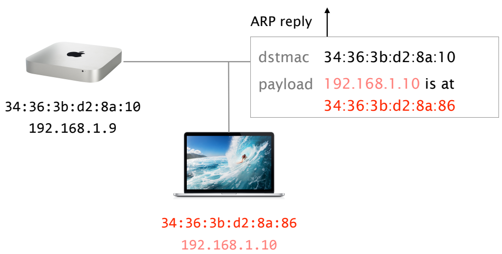


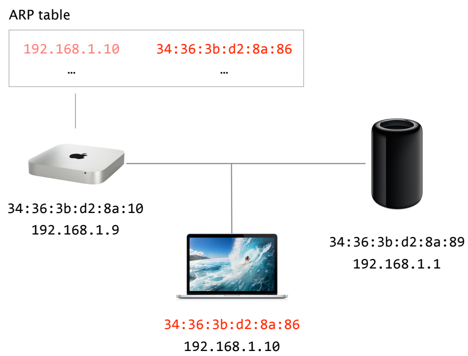
The Address Resolution Protocol (ARP) enables a host to discover the MAC associated to an IP











Communication Networks

Part 2: The Link Layer

What is a link?

How do we identify link adapters?

#3 How do we share a network medium?

What is Ethernet?

How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

Some medium are multi-access:
>1 host can communicate at the same time

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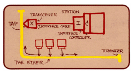
>1 host can communicate at the same time

Wireless
networks

Satellite
networks



Ethernet
networks

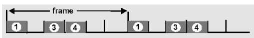
Cellular
networks

Some medium are multi-access:
>1 host can communicate at the same time

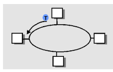
Problem	Solution
collisions lead to garbled data	distributed algorithm for sharing the channel
	When can each node transmit?

Essentially, there are three techniques to deal with Multiple Access Control (MAC)

Divide the channel into pieces
either in time or in frequency



Take turns
pass a token for the right to transmit



Random access
allow collisions, detect them and then recover

Communication Networks
Part 2: The Link Layer

ETH

What is a link?

How do we identify link adapters?

How do we share a network medium?

#4 What is Ethernet?

How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

Ethernet…

was invented as a broadcast technology
each packet was received by all attached hosts

is now *the* dominant wired LAN technology
by far the most widely used

has managed to keep up with the speed race
from 10 Mbps to 400 Gbps (next: 800 Gbps and 1.6 Tbps!)

Ethernet offers an unreliable, connectionless service

unreliable	Receiving adapter does not acknowledge anything
	Packets passed to the network layer can have gaps which can be filled by the transport protocol (TCP)
connectionless	No handshaking between the send and receive adapter

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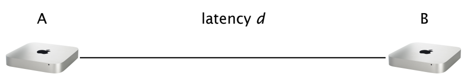
"Traditional" Ethernet relies on CSMA/CD

CSMA/CD imposes limits on the network length



Suppose A sends a packet at time *t*

B sees an idle line just before t+d and sends a packet

Effect
B would detect a collision and sends a jamming signal
A can detect the collision only after t+2d

For this reason, Ethernet imposes a minimum packet size (512 bits)

This imposes restriction on the length of the network

Network length [m] $= \dfrac{\text{min\_frame\_size} * \text{speed of light}}{2 * \text{bandwidth}}$

$=$ 768 meters for 100 Mbps

What about for 1 Gbps, 10 Gbps, 100 Gbps?

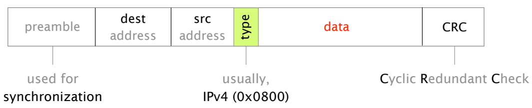
Modern Ethernet links interconnects *exactly* two hosts, in full-duplex, rendering collisions impossible!

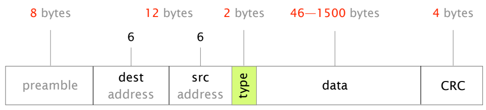
CSMA/CD is *only* needed for half-duplex communications
10 Gbps Ethernet does not even allow half-duplex anymore

This means the 64 bytes restriction is not strictly needed
but IEEE chose to keep it

Multiple Access Protocols are still important for Wireless
important concepts to know in practice

The Ethernet header is simple, composed of 6 fields only





Ethernet efficiency (payload/tot. frame size): ~97.5%
Maximum throughput for 100 Mbps: ~97.50 Mbps

Communication Networks
Part 2: The Link Layer

What is a link?

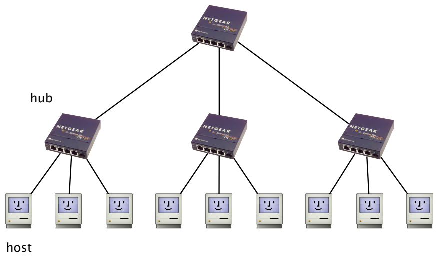
How do we identify link adapters?

How do we share a network medium?

What is Ethernet?

#5 How do we interconnect segments at the link layer?

Historically, people connected Ethernet segments together at the physical level using Ethernet hubs



Hubs work by repeating bits from one port to all the other ones

Hubs are now OBSOLETE

advantages	disadvantages
simple, cheap	inefficient, each bit is sent everywhere limits the aggregates throughput
	limited to one LAN technology can't interconnect different rates/formats
	limited number of nodes and distances cannot go beyond 2500m on Ethernet

Local Area Networks are now almost exclusively composed of Ethernet switches

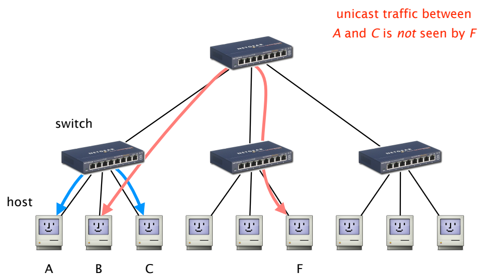
Switches connect two or more LANs together at the Link layer, acting as L2 gateways

Switches are “store-and-forward” devices, they

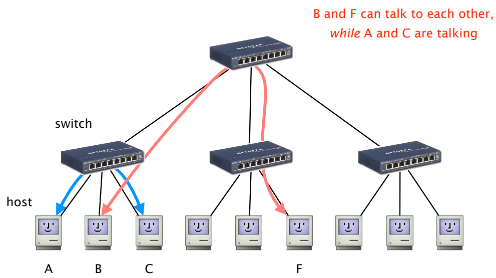
- extract the destination MAC from the frame
- look up the MAC in a table (using exact match)
- forward the frame on the appropriate interface

Switches are similar to IP routers,
except that they operate one layer below

Unlike with hubs, switches enable each LAN segment to carry its own traffic



Unlike with hubs, switches supports concurrent communication



The advantages of switches are numerous

advantages

only forward frames where needed
avoids unnecessary load on segments

join segment using different technologies

improved privacy
host can just snoop traffic traversing their segment

wider geographic span
separates segments allow longer distance

Switches are plug-and-play devices, they build their forwarding table on their own

Switches are “store-and-forward” devices, they

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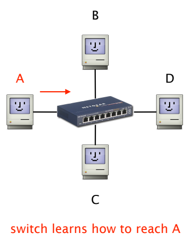
Switches are plug-and-play devices, they build their forwarding table on their own

When a frame arrives:

- inspect the source MAC address
- associate the address with the port
- store the mapping in the switch table
- launch a timer to eventually forget the mapping

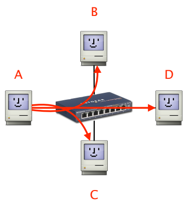


In cases of misses, switches simply floods the frames

When a frame arrives with an unknown destination

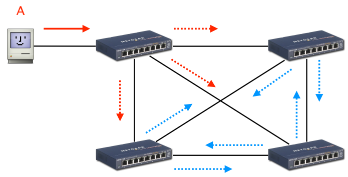
- forward the frame out of all interfaces
  except for the one where the frame arrived

Hopefully, this is an unlikely event



when in doubt, **shout!**

While flooding enables automatic discovery of hosts, it also creates problems when the networks has loops



Each frame leads to the creation of *at least two new frames!*
exponential increase, with no TTL to remove looping frames…

While loops create major problems, networks need redundancy for tolerating failures!

solution

Reduce the network
to one logical spanning tree

Upon failure,
automatically rebuild a spanning tree

In practice, switches run a *distributed* Spanning-Tree Protocol (STP)

Algorhyme

I think that I shall never see
A graph more lovely than a tree.
A tree whose crucial property
Is loop-free connectivity.

A tree that must be sure to span
So packets can reach every LAN.
First, the root must be selected.
By ID, it is elected.

Least-cost paths from root are traced.
In the tree, these paths are placed.
A mesh is made by folks like me,
Then bridges find a spanning tree.

— Radia Perlman

A tree that must be sure to span
So packets can reach every LAN.
First, the root must be selected.
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A mesh is made by folks like me,
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Constructing a Spanning Tree in a nutshell

Switches…

elect a root switch
the one with the smallest identifier

determine if each interface is
on the shortest-path from the root
and disable it if not

For this switches exchange Bridge Protocol Data Unit (BDPU) messages

Each switch *X* iteratively sends

BPDU (**Y**, **d**, X) to each neighboring switch

Y: the switch ID it considers as root

d: the # hops to reach it

initially

Each switch proposes itself as root
sends (X,0,X) on all its interfaces

Upon receiving (Y, d, X), checks if Y is a better root
if so, considers Y as the new root, flood updated message

Switches compute their distance to the root, for each port
simply add 1 to the distance received, if shorter, flood

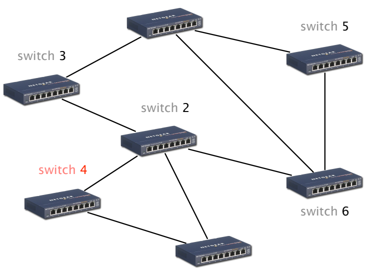
Switches disable interfaces not on shortest-path

tie-breaking

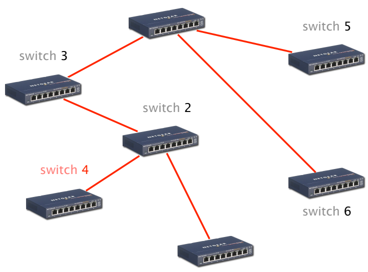
Upon receiving ≠ BPDUs from ≠ switches with = cost
Pick the BPDU with the lower switch sender ID

Upon receiving ≠ BPDUs from a neighboring switch
Pick the BPDU with the lowest port ID (e.g. port 2 < port 3)

Apply the algorithm starting with switch 4



Apply the algorithm starting with switch 4



To be robust,
STP must react to failures

Any switch, link or port can fail
including the root switch

Root switch continuously sends messages
announcing itself as the root (1,0,1), others forward it

Failures is detected through timeout (soft state)
if no word from root in *X*, times out and claims to be the root

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