Communication Networks

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Communication Networks

Spring 2018

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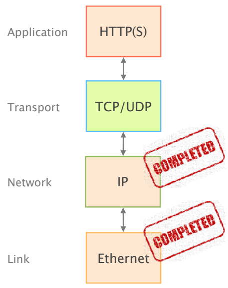
April 30 2018

Materials inspired from Scott Shenker & Jennifer Rexford

Last week on

Communication Networks

We started to look at the transport layer



What Problems Should Be Solved Here?

Data delivering, to the *correct* application
- IP just points towards next protocol
- *Transport needs to demultiplex incoming data (ports)*

Files or bytestreams abstractions for the applications
- Network deals with packets
- *Transport layer needs to translate between them*

Reliable transfer (if needed)

Not overloading the receiver

Not overloading the network

What Is Needed to Address These?

Demultiplexing: identifier for application process
- Going from host-to-host (IP) to process-to-process

Translating between bytestreams and packets:
- Do segmentation and reassembly

Reliability: ACKs and all that stuff

Corruption: Checksum

Not overloading receiver: “Flow Control”
- Limit data in receiver’s buffer

Not overloading network: “Congestion Control”

UDP: User Datagram Protocol

Lightweight communication between processes
- Avoid overhead and delays of ordered, reliable delivery
- Send messages to and receive them from a socket

UDP described in RFC 768 – (1980!)
- IP plus port numbers to support (de)multiplexing
- Optional error checking on the packet contents
  - (checksum field = 0 means “don’t verify checksum”)

SRC port	DST port
checksum	length
DATA	

Transmission Control Protocol (TCP)

Reliable, in-order delivery
- Ensures byte stream (eventually) arrives intact
  - In the presence of corruption and loss

Connection oriented
- Explicit set-up and tear-down of TCP session

Full duplex stream-of-bytes service
- Sends and receives a stream of bytes, not messages

Flow control
- Ensures that sender doesn’t overwhelm receiver

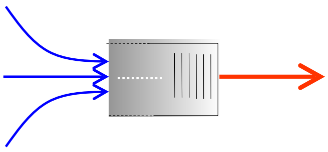
Congestion control
- Dynamic adaptation to network path’s capacity

This week on

Communication Networks

TCP Congestion Control

Because of traffic burstiness and lack of BW reservation, congestion is inevitable



If many packets arrive within
a short period of time
the node cannot keep up anymore

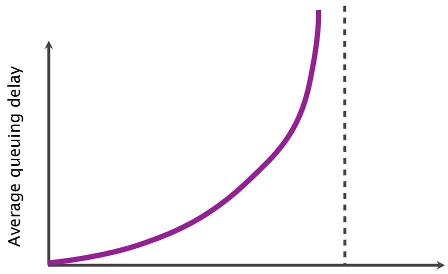
Congestion is harmful

average packet arrival rate	a	[packet/sec]
transmission rate of outgoing link	R	[bit/sec]
fixed packets length	L	[bit
average bits arrival rate	La	[bit/sec]
traffic intensity	La/R	

When the traffic intensity is >1, the queue will increase without bound, and so does the queuing delay

Golden rule — Design your queuing system, so that it operates far from that point

When the traffic intensity is <=1, queueing delay depends on the burst size



Congestion is not a new problem

The Internet almost died of congestion in 1986
throughput collapsed from 32 Kbps to… 40 bps

Van Jacobson saved us with Congestion Control
his solution went right into BSD

Recent resurgence of research interest after brief lag
new methods (ML), context (Data centers), requirements

The Internet almost died of congestion in 1986

throughput collapsed from 32 Kbps to… 40 bps

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original behavior	On connection, nodes send full window of packets
	Upon timer expiration, retransmit packet immediately
meaning	sending rate only limited by flow control
net effect	window-sized burst of packets

Increase in network load results in a decrease of useful work done

Sudden load increased the round-trip time (RTT)
faster than the hosts' measurements of it

As RTT exceeds the maximum retransmission interval,
hosts begin to retransmit packets

Hosts are sending each packet several times,
eventually some copies arrive at the destination.

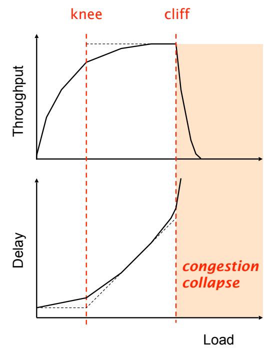
This phenomenon is known as congestion collapse

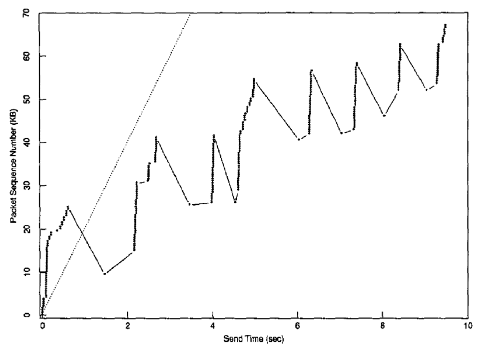
Knee point after which

throughput	increases	slowly
delay	increases	quickly

Cliff point after which

throughput	decreases	quickly
delay	tends to	infinity





Van Jacobson saved us with Congestion Control

his solution went right into BSD

Congestion control aims at solving three problems

#1	bandwidth estimation	How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to the bottleneck bandwidth? could be 1 Mbps or 1 Gbps…
#2	bandwidth adaptation	How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to variation of the bottleneck bandwidth?
#3	fairness	How to share bandwidth "fairly" among flows, without overloading the network

---

Congestion control differs from flow control

both are provided by TCP though

Flow control	prevents one fast sender from overloading a slow receiver
Congestion control	prevents a set of senders from overloading the network

TCP solves both using two distinct windows

Flow control	prevents one fast sender from overloading a slow receiver
	solved using a receiving window
Congestion control	prevents a set of senders from overloading the network
	solved using a "congestion" window

The sender adapts its sending rate based on these two windows

Receiving Window RWND	How many bytes can be sent without overflowing the receiver buffer? based on the receiver input
Congestion Window CWND	How many bytes can be sent without overflowing the routers? based on network conditions
Sender Window	minimum(CWND, RWND)

The 2 key mechanisms of Congestion Control

detecting congestion

reacting to congestion

The 2 key mechanisms of Congestion Control

detecting congestion

reacting to congestion

There are essentially three ways to detect congestion

Approach #1	Network could tell the source but signal itself could be lost
Approach #2	Measure packet delay but signal is noisy delay often varies considerably
Approach #3	Measure packet loss fail-safe signal that TCP already has to detect

Packet dropping is the best solution

delay- and signaling-based methods are hard & risky

Approach #3	Measure packet loss fail-safe signal that TCP already has to detect

Detecting losses can be done using ACKs or timeouts, the two signal differ in their degree of severity

duplicated ACKs	mild congestion signal packets are still making it
timeout	severe congestion signal multiple consequent losses

The 2 key mechanisms of Congestion Control

detecting congestion

reacting to congestion

TCP approach is to gently increase when not congested and to rapidly decrease when congested

question — What increase/decrease function should we use?

it depends on the problem we are solving…

Remember that Congestion Control aims at solving three problems

#1	bandwidth estimation	How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to the bottleneck bandwidth? could be 1 Mbps or 1 Gbps…
#2	bandwidth adaptation	How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to variation of the bottleneck bandwidth?
#3	fairness	How to share bandwidth “fairly” among flows, without overloading the network

#1 bandwidth estimation — How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to the bottleneck bandwidth?

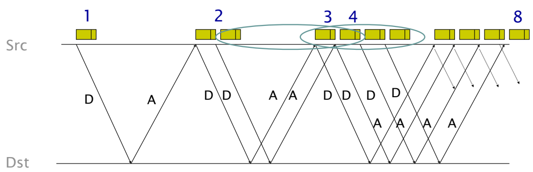
could be 1 Mbps or 1 Gbps…

The goal here is to quickly get a first-order estimate of the available bandwidth

Intuition — Start slow but rapidly increase until a packet drop occurs

Increase policy
- cwnd = 1 — initially
- cwnd += 1 — upon receipt of an ACK

This increase phase, known as slow start, corresponds to an… exponential increase of CWND!



slow start is called like this only because of starting point

The problem with slow start is that it can result in a full window of packet losses

Example — Assume that CWND is just enough to “fill the pipe”
After one RTT, CWND has doubled
All the excess packets are now dropped

Solution — We need a more gentle adjustment algorithm once we have a rough estimate of the bandwidth

#2 bandwidth adaptation — How to adjust the bandwidth of a single flow to variation of the bottleneck bandwidth?

The goal here is to track the available bandwidth, and oscillate around its current value

Two possible variations

- Multiplicative Increase or Decrease
  cwnd = a * cwnd
- Additive Increase or Decrease
  cwnd = b + cwnd

… leading to four alternative design

	increase behavior	decrease behavior
AIAD	gentle	gentle
AIMD	gentle	aggressive
MIAD	aggressive	gentle
MIMD	aggressive	aggressive

To select one scheme, we need to consider the 3rd problem: fairness

	increase behavior	decrease behavior
AIAD	gentle	gentle
AIMD	gentle	aggressive
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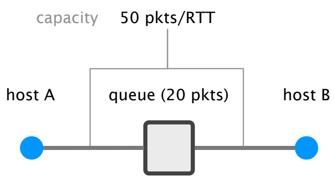
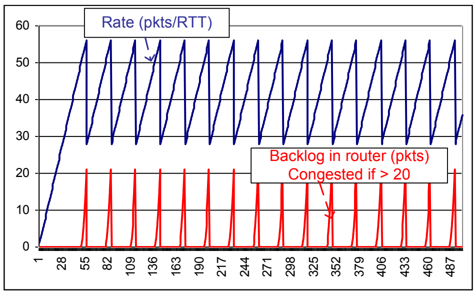
#3	fairness	How to share bandwidth “fairly” among flows, without overloading the network

TCP notion of fairness: 2 identical flows should end up with the same bandwidth

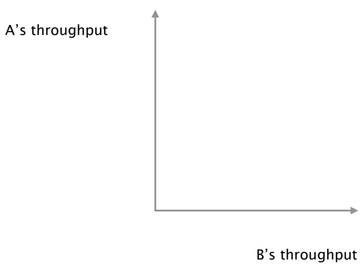
Consider first a single flow between A and B and AIMD



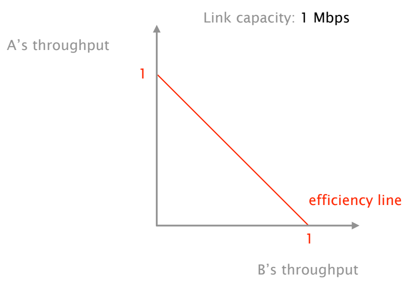
without congestion	CWND increases by one packet every ACK
upon congestion	CWND decreases by a factor 2



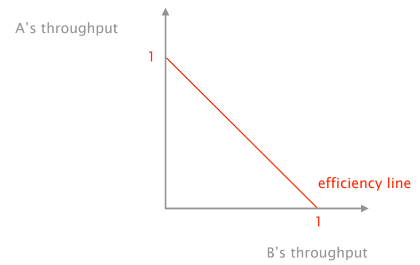
We can analyze the system behavior using a system trajectory plot

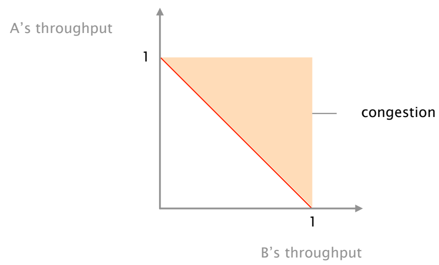


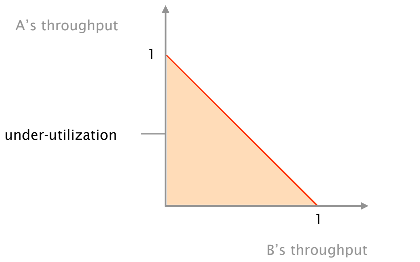
The system is efficient if the capacity is fully used, defining an efficiency line where $a + b = 1$



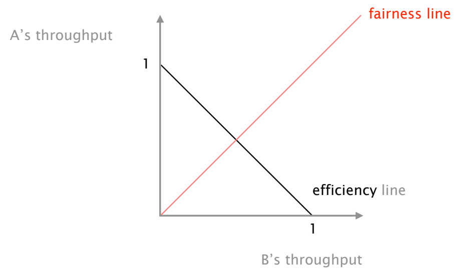
The goal of congestion control is to bring the system as close as possible to this line, and stay there

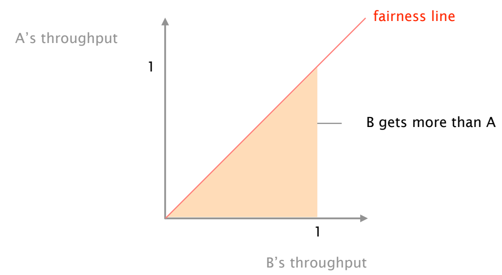


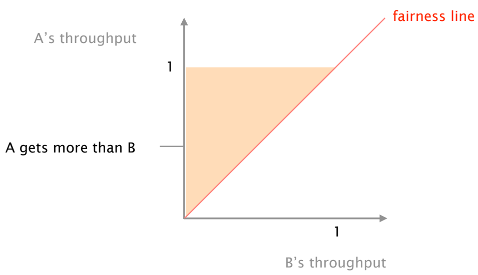


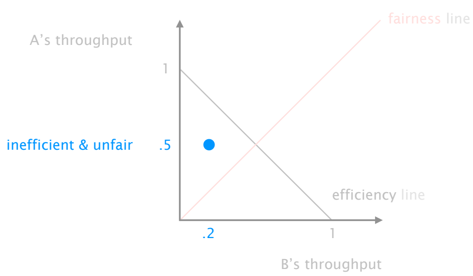


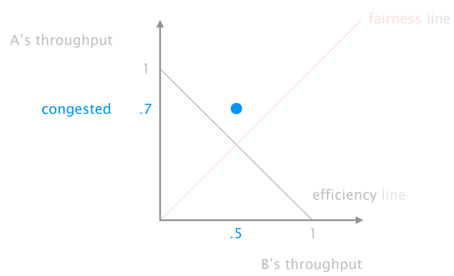
The system is fair whenever A and B have equal throughput, defining a fairness line where $a = b$

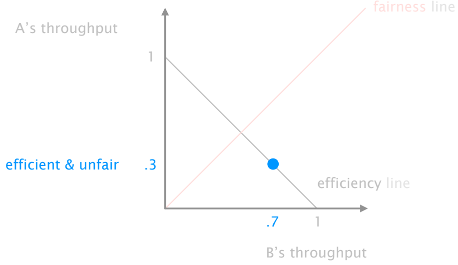


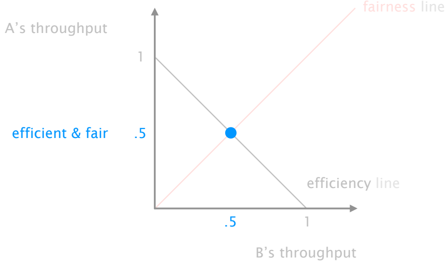












	increase behavior	decrease behavior
AIAD	gentle	gentle
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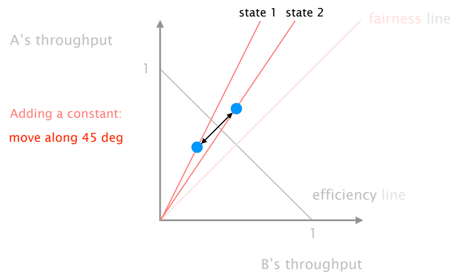
AIAD does not converge to fairness, nor efficiency:
the system fluctuates between two fairness states



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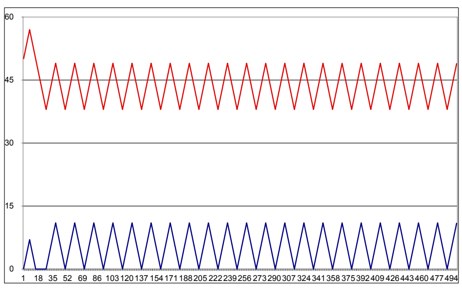

	increase behavior	decrease behavior
AIAD	gentle	gentle
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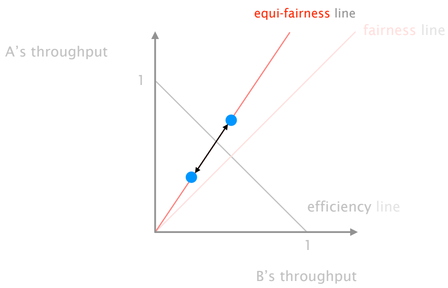
MIMD	aggressive	aggressive

MIMD does not converge to fairness, nor efficiency:
the system fluctuates along a equi-fairness line



	increase behavior	decrease behavior
AIAD	gentle	gentle
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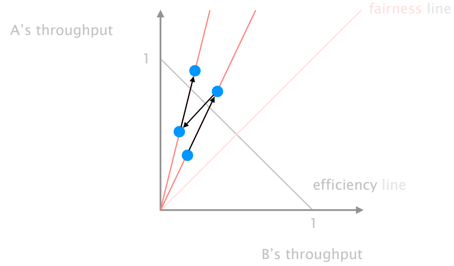
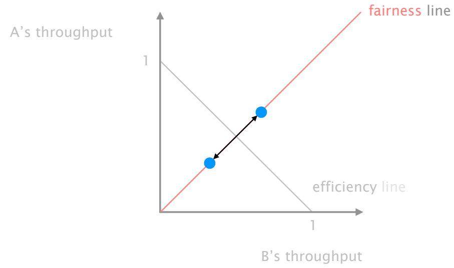
MIMD	aggressive	aggressive

MIAD converges to a totally unfair allocation,
favoring the flow with a greater rate at the beginning



If flows start along the fairness line, MIAD fluctuates along it, yet deviating from it at the slightest change



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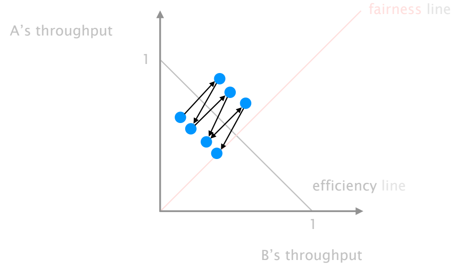
AIMD converge to fairness and efficiency,
it then fluctuates around the optimum (in a stable way)



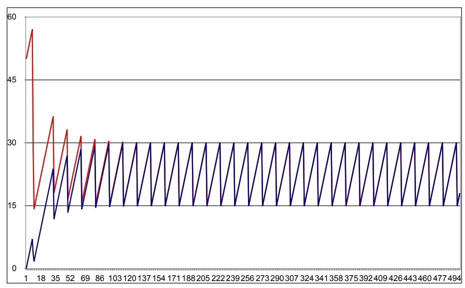
AIMD converge to fairness and efficiency,
it then fluctuates around the optimum (in a stable way)

Intuition

During increase,
both flows gain bandwidth at the same rate

During decrease,
the faster flow releases more

AIMD converge to fairness and efficiency,
it then fluctuates around the optimum (in a stable way)



In practice,
TCP implements AIMD

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In practice,
TCP implements AIMD

Implementation

After each ACK,

Increment cwnd by 1/cwnd
linear increase of max. 1 per RTT

Question

When does a sender leave slow-start and start AIMD?

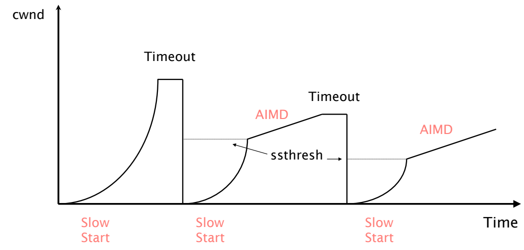
Introduce a slow start treshold,
adapt it in function of congestion:

on timeout, sstresh = CNWD/2

TCP congestion control in less than 10 lines of code

```
Initially:
    cwnd = 1
    ssthresh = infinite
New ACK received:
    if (cwnd < ssthresh):
        /* Slow Start*/
        cwnd = cwnd + 1
    else:
        /* Congestion Avoidance */
        cwnd = cwnd + 1/cwnd
Timeout:
    /* Multiplicative decrease */
    ssthresh = cwnd/2
    cwnd = 1
```

The congestion window of a TCP session typically undergoes multiple cycles of slow-start/AIMD



Going back all the way back to 0 upon timeout completely destroys throughput

solution — Avoid timeout expiration…
which are usually >500ms

Detecting losses can be done using ACKs or timeouts, the two signal differ in their degree of severity

duplicated ACKs	mild congestion signal packets are still making it
timeout	severe congestion signal multiple consequent losses

TCP automatically resends a segment after receiving 3 duplicates ACKs for it

this is known as a "**fast retransmit**"

After a fast retransmit, TCP switches back to AIMD, without going all way the back to 0

this is known as "**fast recovery**"

TCP congestion control (almost complete)

```
Initially:
    cwnd = 1
    ssthresh = infinite
New ACK received:
    if (cwnd < ssthresh):
        /* Slow Start*/
        cwnd = cwnd + 1
    else:
        /* Congestion Avoidance */
        cwnd = cwnd + 1/cwnd
    dup_ack = 0
Timeout:
    /* Multiplicative decrease */
    ssthresh = cwnd/2
    cwnd = 1

Duplicate ACKs received:
    dup_ack ++;
    if (dup_ack >= 3):
        /* Fast Recovery */
        ssthresh = cwnd/2
        cwnd = ssthresh
```


```
Initially:
    cwnd = 1
    ssthresh = infinite
New ACK received:
    if (cwnd < ssthresh):
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    /* Multiplicative decrease */
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    cwnd = 1

Duplicate ACKs received:
    dup_ack ++;
    if (dup_ack >= 3):
        /* Fast Recovery */
        ssthresh = cwnd/2
        cwnd = ssthresh
```
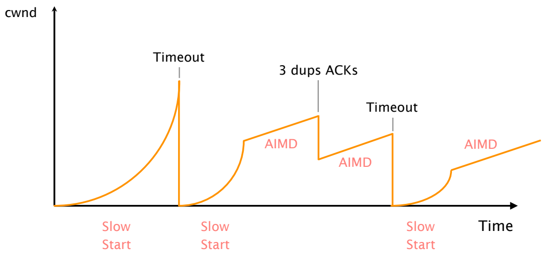

Congestion control makes TCP throughput look like a “sawtooth”



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