TDC 563
Protocols and Techniques for Data Networks

Transport Layer
Why a transport layer?

• IP gives us end-to-end connectivity doesn't it?
• Why, or why not, more than one transport layer?
• What does a transport layer typically do?
  • Process identification
  • Reliability
  • Flow control
• Are there times when those are unnecessary?
• What are the security / performance issues?
If no L4, HTTP data goes where?

HTTP data

- IPs: 192.0.2.1
- IPd: 192.0.2.2
- Proto: n/a

Thanks!!

But...

How to get this to my to HTTPd?
Try to parse and interpret!?!?
Help me out dude!!
Application multiplexing

• OS independent identifier for a network process
• Each process assigned a locally unique 16-bit id
• Server (listener) apps
  • tend to use standard, “well-known” port numbers
  • see /etc/services (UNIX / MacOS X)
• Client (opener) apps
  • tend to use ephemeral (dynamic) port numbers
  • usually >1023, range depends on OS and app
• See http://www.iana.org/assignments/port-numbers
User Datagram Protocol (UDP)
UDP is very simple

- Basically just an application multiplexer
- The length field is practically redundant
  - IP total length – 8 = UDP payload
- Source port may be zero if no reply expected
- Even the checksum is optional!
  - though it is inexpensive, recommended to use it
- No flow control, reliability, nor connection setup
- Why is this good, how could this be bad?
What uses UDP?

- SNMP, TFTP, DHCP, syslog, NetFlow
- Streaming real-time media (VoIP, radio, video)
  - some use TCP (thank you security dilettantes)
- DNS, NTP
  - if not for these, UDP death by filtering likely
Common IP transport protocols

- UDP – very common, but usually low rate of pkts
- TCP – most common, typically most of your pkts
- Some usage, but not widely deployed:
  - UDP-Lite
  - SCTP
  - DCCP
- Note, not all IP protocols considered a “transport”
  - e.g. we don't think of ICMP/IGMP as a transport
IP review

- IP provides just enough *connected-ness*
  - global addressing
  - hop-by-hop routing
- IP over everything
  - Ethernet, ATM, X.25, fiber, etc.
- Minimizes in-network functionality
- Unreliable datagram forwarding
TCP key features

• Sequencing
• Byte-stream delivery
• Connection-oriented
• Reliability
• Flow-control
• Congestion avoidance
TCP feature summary

Provides a completely reliable (no data duplication or loss), connection-oriented, full-duplex byte stream transport service that allows two application programs to form a connection, send data in either direction simultaneously and then terminate the connection.
Apparent contradiction

• IP offers best effort (unreliable) delivery
• TCP uses IP
• TCP provides completely reliable transfer
• How is this possible?
Achieving reliability

• Reliable connection start-up
• Reliable data transfer
  • sender starts a timer
  • receiver sends ACK when data arrives
  • sender retransmits if timer expires before ACK is returned
• Reliable connection shutdown
TCP connection start-up

- A “three-way handshake” is used
- Servers use a passive open
  - application sits waiting on an open port
- Clients use an active open
  - application requests a connection to server
- Initial sequence number (ISN) exchange is the primary goal
- Other parameters/options can also be exchanged
  - e.g. window scale, maximum segment size, etc.
3-way handshake illustrated
Byte stream sequencing

- Each segment carries a sequence number
- Sequencing helps ensure in order delivery
- TCP sequence numbers are fixed at 32 bits
  - byte stream is not limited to $2^{32}$ bytes
  - sequence number space can wrap
- Each side has an initial sequence number (ISN)
  - exchanged during connection establishment
- Receiver ACKs cumulative octets (bytes)
Reliability illustrated

*diagram courtesy of http://www.netbook.cs.purdue.edu
When do you retransmit?

• The time for an ACK to return depends on:
  • distance between endpoints (propagation delay)
  • network traffic conditions (congestion)
  • end system conditions (CPU, buffers)
• Packets can be lost, damaged or fragmented
• Network traffic conditions can change rapidly
Solving retransmission problem

- Keep running average of round trip time (RTT)
- Current average determines retransmission timer
- This is known as adaptive retransmission
- This is key to TCP's success
- How does each RTT sample affect the average?
  - what weight to you give each sample?
  - higher weight means timer changes quickly
  - lower weight means timer changes slowly
Adaptive retransmission illustrated

*diagram courtesy of http://www.netbook.cs.purdue.edu
Connection shutdown illustrated
Flow control

• Match the sending rate with allowable receiver rate
• TCP uses a sliding window
  • receiver advertises available buffer space
  • also known as the window
  • sender can transmit a full window without receiving an ACK for that transmitted data
• Ideally the window size allows pipe to remain full
Window size advertisement

- Each ACK carries receiver's current window size
  - called the window advertisement (aka rwnd)
  - if zero, window is closed, no data can be sent
- Interpretation of window advertisement:
  - receiver: I can accept $X$ octets or less unless I tell you otherwise
Window size illustrated

*diagram courtesy of http://www.netbook.cs.purdue.edu*
Window size: another picture

(a) 

(b) 

(c)
TCP segment illustrated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Port</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination Port</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checksum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Pointer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>options (if any)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>padding (if required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congestion principles

• Flow control
  • matching the sending and receiving rates
• Congestion control
  • active response to network overload conditions
  • end hosts cannot control congestion per se
  • network devices (routers) do this
• Congestion avoidance
  • cautionary response to presumed conditions
  • TCP does this
TCP congestion control

- Recall sliding window (advertised window)
  - receiver based control of sending rate
- Congestion window is sender based control
- Sender transmits min(cwnd, rwnd)
  - this value is the transmission window
- TCP sender infers network conditions and adjusts
- See IETF RFC 5681
TCP retransmission

• TCP starts timer after sending a segment
• If ACK returns, reset timer
• If time-out occurs, retransmit and increase timer
  • this is a back-off process
• Can't retransmit forever, need some upper bound
• Eventually TCP would give up
  • maximum time-out must be at least 60 seconds
Estimating round trip time (RTT)

- TCP measures RTT for which to calculate timers
- If ACKs return quickly, timers should be short
  - if loss occurs, recovery happens quickly
- If ACKs return slowly, timers should be long
  - if delays occur, retransmits not sent needlessly
- Keep a smoothed running average of RTT
  - smoothed RTT used to adjust retransmit timer
  - Karn's algorithm says ignore ACKs of retransmits
TCP slow start

- Recall that \( \text{min}(\text{cwnd}, \text{rwnd}) = \text{transmission window} \)
- Rather than sending a full window at start-up...
- Initialize \( \text{cwnd} \) to 1 maximum segment size (MSS)
- Increase \( \text{cwnd} \) by 1 MSS for every ACK returned
- Obviously don't go past advertised window!
- This can actually be quite fast, exponential!
TCP slow start illustrated
TCP congestion avoidance

- If a retransmission timer expires, slow down
- Set slow start threshold = transmission window x ½
  - this is sshthresh
- Set cwnd back to 1 MSS
- Transmit min(cwnd, rwnd) as usual
- Do slow start until transmission window = sshtresh
- Thereafter, increase cwnd by 1/cwnd per ACK
  - linear increase instead of exponential
Congestion avoidance illustrated
Duplicate ACKs

- Recall ACKs acknowledge cumulative octets
- TCP receiver sends an immediate ACK if it receives an out-of-order segment
- This is a duplicate ACK
- This dupe ACK informs the sender and tells it what sequence number the receiver expected
- It's unclear whether dupe ACKs indicate loss or simply packet re-ordering on the network
- But, multiple duplicate ACKs probably indicate loss
TCP fast retransmit

- If sender gets $\geq 3$ dupe ACKs, assume loss
- Immediately retransmit, don't wait for timer to expire
- Goto fast recovery
TCP fast recovery

- Duplicate ACKs indicate data is still flowing
- If there was a loss event, it was probably temporary
- Go directly to congestion avoidance
  - not all the way into slow start!
  - don't want to start off with just a 1 MSS window
- This is the fast recovery algorithm
  - minus a few minor details
Other TCP stuff

• Selective ACK (SACK) option (re-tx optimization)
• Window scale option (for high capacity paths)
• Timestamp option (RTT measurement, PAWS)
• Persist timer (window probes)
• Keepalive timer (disabled by default, app can set)
• Nagle algorithm (sender side)
• Silly window syndrome (receiver side)