



Introduction to Quality of Service

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Syllabus

- Applications examples (taxonomy?)
- Quality of Service
- Traffic characterization
- Network architectures characteristics in light of QoS provisioning
- Essential elements (mainly algorithms) to provide QoS

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Applications

- Data
 - Generated by single users, by servers, by data centers, by enterprise networks, by P2P architectures, by computing app (e.g. Mapreduce)
 - E-mail, web, messaging, remote login, file transfer, grid computing,
- Voice
 - Phone calls, IP calls, ...
- Audio
 - Music
- Video
- Multimedia
 - Videoconference, streaming, video distribution

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Applications taxonomy

- From the bit rate requirements point of view
 - Elastic applications (opportunistic)
 - If resources are available, elastic applications try to exploit them
 - If resources become scarce, elastic applications may reduce their rate (file transfer)
 - Non-elastic applications (multimedia mostly belong to this category)
 - Require a minimum amount of resources
 - If available, the application works properly
 - If not available, the application is unable to work properly
 - May become slightly elastic if changing the coding scheme

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Applications taxonomy

- From the data loss point of view
 - Loss tolerant
 - Uncompressed audio, video, voice
 - Loss intolerant
 - File transfer, e-mail, web, grid computing, compressed audio, video, voice
- From the time sensitivity point of view
 - Not sensitive
 - File transfer, e-mail, web, grid computing
 - Very sensitive (100ms)
 - Phone
 - Sensitive (few s)
 - Streaming

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Multimedia real-time and streaming

- Real time applications
 - Two or more users interact in real time
 - Low delay fundamental (a delayed packet is equivalent to a lost packet)
 - Required bit-rate **may** be significant depending on whether video is involved
 - May be robust to (limited) packet losses depending on the compression level
- Streaming applications
 - No real time requirements
 - May tolerate packet delays if initial delay large (buffering)
 - Required bit-rate **may** be significant depending on whether video is involved or not
 - May be robust to (limited) packet losses depending on the compression level

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Multimedia streaming

- Streaming
 - Multimedia file stored at the source
 - Sent to the receiver
 - **Buffering** at the receiver
 - File play-out starts when the file transfer is under way
 - Constraint: missing data should reach the receiver before the play-out ends
 - Alternative to file download with later playback (file transfer!)

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Real-time multimedia: Internet Phone

- Voice as input: sounds and silence period alternate
- Packets generated at a constant rate or when the source emitting power is above a given threshold :
 - E.g.: 20 ms of voice sample at 8kb/s
- Packets are delayed (should be compensated) and lost:
 - Network losses, due to congestion
 - max tolerable may be 10%
 - Losses due to excessive delays (IP datagram received too late for play-out)
 - Max tolerable is roughly 400 ms
- Compensation techniques
 - At the transmitter (adaptive coding)
 - At the receiver (buffering)

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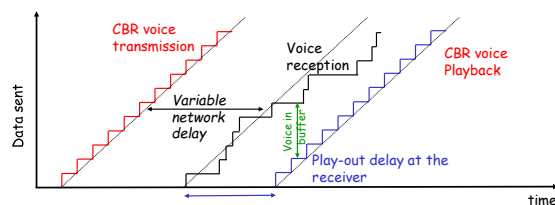
Reaction to losses, delay and jitter

- Use of a variable bit-rate coder
 - Send small size packets when congestion is detected and the experienced delay is high
 - Send large size packets if the network is lightly loaded
- Quality of reception estimate mechanisms are needed
- The transmitter bit rate should be controlled according to:
 - Instantaneous and/or average loss rate
 - Absolute or relative delay
 - Delay jitter

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Delay and jitter compensation: buffering at the receiver



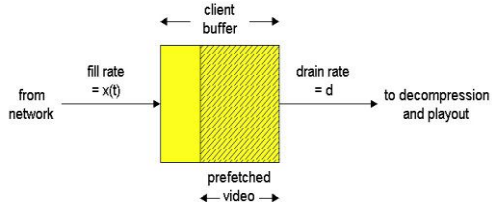
- The play-out delay compensate the network delay and jitter
 - Fixed play-out delay: easier but does not adapt
 - Adaptive play-out delay

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Buffering at the client side

- Tradeoff between initial delay (buffer size) and tolerance to network jitter



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Fixed or adaptive playout delay

- Fixed play-out delay: easier but does not adapt
 - The receiver plays out each sample exactly q seconds after the sample generation
 - If the sample has timestamp t , it is played out at $t+q$
 - If the sample is received after $t+q$, it is considered as lost
 - The value assumed by q
 - Large q : less packets lost, higher delay, more buffering
 - Small q : improved interactivity
- Adaptive play-out delay
 - Minimize play-out delay while keeping low the loss rate
 - Estimate the network delay, to determine the play-out delay
 - Compress or extend the silence periods

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In summary

- Different applications have different characteristics and different requirements
- We need to satisfy these requirements taking into account application characteristics
- Quality of service (of experience) provisioning

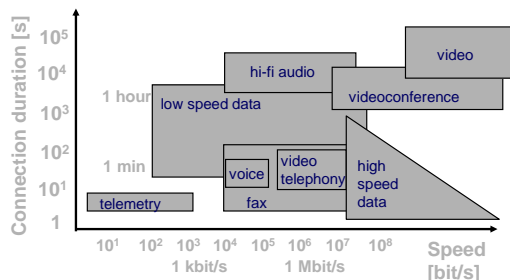
Quality of service/experience

- What is the meaning of quality of service?
- Different definitions
- We use the term mainly to describe performance seen by user traffic
 - Define indices to describe quality
 - Experience is more related to subjective measures
- Examples of indices describing quality of service:
 - Speed (in bit/s), throughput, bit rate, bandwidth
 - Delay (average, percentile, maximum, variance, jitter)
 - Loss probability
 - Error probability
 - Blocking probability
 - Fault probability or availability
 - Recovery time after a fault
 - Many others (time needed to open a connection, costs and tariffs ...)

Quality of service

- Different types of traffic require attention to different indices of quality
 - Phone calls (human voice)
 - Guaranteed fixed bit rate
 - Low delays
 - Low blocking probability
 - Data traffic
 - Low or negligible loss probability
- Provide QoS in an heterogeneous environment is more difficult (traffic heterogeneity)
- Provide QoS to unpredictable traffic is more difficult (traffic characterization)

Traffic heterogeneity



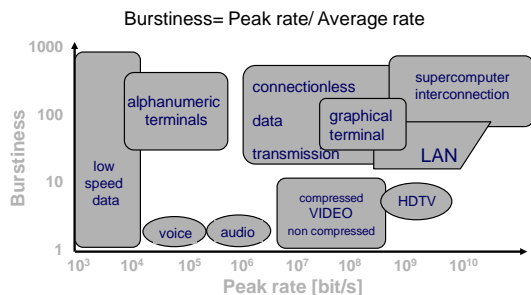
User traffic characterization *

- CBR (Constant Bit Rate) sources:
 - Rate (bit/s)
 - Data size
 - “Perfectly” known
 - Call duration (s)
 - Call generation process
 - Only statistically known

User traffic characterization *

- VBR sources:
 - Average rate (bit/s)
 - Known?
 - Over which period?
 - Peak rate (bit/s) or
 - Burstiness (Peak rate/ average rate)
 - Known (worst case)
 - Burst duration
 - Known?
 - Call duration (s)
 - Call generation process
 - Only statistically known

User traffic characterization



Quality of service

- Networks used as examples
 - Fixed telephone network: POTS
 - Internet
 - B-ISDN
- Let's start by describing in an informal way the quality of service provided by these networks

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POTS

- Characteristics
 - CBR source completely known (generated by the network)
 - Circuit switching
 - Constant, dedicated bit rate \Rightarrow no congestion
 - Minimum possible delay (only propagation): order of tens of ms (real time)
 - Zero loss probability
 - Error probability smaller than few %
 - Small or negligible blocking probability
- QoS largely independent on other users (apart from blocking probability)
- Network utilization can be really low, user satisfaction very high

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Internet

- Characteristics
 - Source behavior unknown
 - Packet switching with datagram service
 - Complete sharing of network resources
 - Bit rate and delay unknown
 - Possible congestion
 - Loss probability may be significant
 - Error probability negligible in wired networks
 - Zero blocking probability
- QoS largely dependent on other users
- Network utilization can be very high, user satisfaction can be very low

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B-ISDN

- Intermediate situation
 - Source known (either deterministically or statistically)
 - Packet switching with virtual circuit service
 - May introduce algorithms to control network resources sharing
 - Bit rate and delay negotiable
 - Loss probability negotiable
 - Blocking probability reasonably small
 - Error probability negligible
- QoS dependent on other user behavior and on algorithms used to manage network resources
- Trade network utilization and user satisfaction

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Quality of service

- Design problem
 - Given:
 - Network topology (nodes, link speed)
 - Traffic characterization
 - User behaviour
 - Jointly obtain:
 - Guaranteed QoS for each user connection
 - High network utilization
- Without the objective of high network utilization, the problem becomes trivial
 - overprovisioning (power line or water distribution network)

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Design to obtain QoS *

- Different time scale (with different level of complexity)
- Network design and planning (resource deployment)
 - Possible re-design and re-planning
 - On the basis of traffic estimates and cost constraints
 - Exploits routing criteria and traffic engineering
- Network management (running a network)
 - Measurements
 - Fault management (protection and restoration)
 - May include simple re-design and re-planning
- Connection management
- Data unit transport

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Our definition of QoS

- Assume that a network has been designed and is properly managed
 - Available resources are given
- Mainly study algorithms operating at the following time-scale:
 - Connection management
 - Data unit transport
- Also named **traffic control** problem
- **Must define what is meant by connection. Also named data classification problem.**
- Two different traffic control principles:
 - Preventive control : mainly executed at network ingress, with fairly tight traffic control to avoid congestion insurgence in the network
 - Reactive control: react when congestion situation occur, to reduce or eliminate congestion negative effects

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Traffic control: essential elements *

- Connection oriented network
- User-network service interface
 - Traffic characterization
 - QoS negotiation
- Resource allocation (bit rate and buffer)
- Algorithms for traffic control
 - CAC (Connection Admission Control) and routing
 - Scheduling and buffer management (allocation, discard) in switching nodes
 - Conformance verification (policing or UPC: Usage Parameter Control)
 - Traffic shaping to adapt it to a given model
 - Congestion control

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Traffic control: connection oriented network

- The connection oriented paradigm permits to know which are the network elements over which traffic control algorithms must be executed (path known)
 - Circuit switching
 - Packet switching with virtual circuit service
- If high utilization is a major objective:
 - Packet switching
- As such, the most suited switching technique to obtain QoS is packet switching with virtual circuit service

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Traffic control: user-network service interface

- The capability to control the network increases with the knowledge of user traffic. Limiting factor is the complexity.
- Over the service interface
 - Traffic characterization
 - QoS parameters negotiation
- Can be defined on a call basis or on a contract basis
- POTS: implicit, on a contract basis
- Internet: not existing
- Frame relay: negotiable, normally on a contract basis
- B-ISDN: negotiable with traffic contract on both contract and call basis
- Internet extended to support QoS: negotiable through a SLA (Service Level Agreement) mainly on a contract basis

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Traffic control: resource allocation

- Main resources:
 - Bit rate over transmission links
 - Buffer
- Resources can be allocated
 - On a contract basis (booking)
 - On a call basis
 - Packet by packet
- Allocation
 - Exclusive (dedicated resource)
 - Shared

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Algorithms: CAC and routing

- Routing
 - QoS based path selection to router a connection
- CAC
 - Determine whether to accept a connection or not, depending on
 - The path chosen by the routing algorithm
 - Traffic characterization
 - QoS requests
 - Network status
- Constraints
 - It is not acceptable to destroy or even reduce the quality of service guaranteed to already accepted connections ⇒
 - Can be relinquished
 - Connection must be refused to avoid network overload or congestion
- Preventive control (but can become reactive)

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Algorithms: scheduling and buffer management

- Scheduling
 - Choice of the data unit to be transmitted among data unit stored in the switch
- Buffer management
 - Allocation (partial/total, exclusive/shared) of memories in the switch
 - Dropping policies
- Mandatory in an heterogeneous environment to support different QoS requests
 - FIFO (First In First Out) or FCFS (First Come First Served) policy with drop-tail discard is optimal in a homogeneous environment
 - Counter for less than 10 pieces at supermarket
- Preventive and reactive

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Algorithms: policing e shaping

- Policing (traffic verification)
 - Network control of user behavior to guarantee conformance to traffic characterization
- Shaping (traffic conditioning)
 - User/network adaptation of data traffic to make it conformant to a given characterization
- Mandatory to control user honesty and to adapt traffic which is difficult to generate as conformant a priori
- Where algorithms must be executed?
 - Only at network edge, i.e., when user access network?
 - Multiplexing points modify traffic shape
 - Both at network access and internally to the network (UNI and NNI)
- Mainly preventive, but they can become reactive if QoS level may change over time

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Algorithms: congestion control

- Congestion
 - Traffic excess over a given channel (link)
- Can occur due to
 - Short term traffic variability
 - Allocation policies that share resources to increase network utilization
- Congestion effects:
 - Buffer occupancy increase
 - Delay increase
 - Data loss
- Needed to obtain high link utilization
- Must execute at network edge, within the network or....?
- Reactive

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