

# Remote Procedure Call Implementations

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  - ▶ NFS (Network File Service)
  - ▶ NIS (Network Information Service)
- ▶ **DCE (Distributed Computing Environment) RPC**. Implements at-most-once semantics by default. At-least-once (idempotent) can also be chosen as an option for some procedures.
  - ▶ Distributed file service.
  - ▶ Directory service.
  - ▶ Security service.
  - ▶ Distributed Time Service.

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- ▶ The file `/etc/rpc` lists some well known RPC programs. The program `rpcinfo` lists the registered RPC programs on a particular system.
- ▶ The `portmap` or `rpcbind` network service runs on each system on a well known port. To find the port for a remote program, a client sends an RPC call message to the portmap server.
- ▶ Can use either TCP/IP or UDP underneath to make remote calls. The selection depends on the application requirements.



# SUN ONC RPC Details (1)

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- ▶ **XDR** (e**X**ternal **D**ata **R**epresentation) is used to handle data layout in a machine-independent manner.
- ▶ Program numbers are assigned in blocks of 0x2000000 according to the following table.

0x0-0x1FFFFFFF	defined by Sun
0x20000000-0x3FFFFFFF	defined by user
0x40000000-0x5FFFFFFF	transient
0x60000000-0xFFFFFFFF	reserved

## SUN ONC RPC Details (2)

- ▶ The IDL compiler is [rpcgen](#). Includes options to generate thread-safe server/client stub code. Some implementations can also generate multi-threaded servers with an option. The server is single-threaded for DCE RPC and some other implementations.

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- ▶ RPC has three authentication mechanisms: [AUTH\\_NONE](#), [AUTH\\_UNIX](#), and [AUTH\\_DES](#). The last option requires a public-key cryptosystem (a separate system).
- ▶ Header files are in [/usr/include/rpc/](#) and [/usr/include/rpcsvc](#). The latter one has header files for common services implemented using RPC.

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- ▶ Then write the server functions in any language that supports system calling conventions. Compile the server along with the server skeleton generated by `rpcgen`.
- ▶ To create an executable program for a remote program, write an ordinary main program that makes local procedure calls to the client skeletons, and link the program with the `rpcgen` skeletons.

# RPC and XDR languages

The XDR language is for describing data and is similar to C declarations. The RPC language is an extension to the XDR language, with the addition of `program` and `version` types.

An RPC file is a series of definitions. The following definition types are recognized.

- ▶ `enum-definition`
- ▶ `typedef-definition`
- ▶ `const-definition`
- ▶ `declaration-definition`
- ▶ `struct-definition`
- ▶ `union-definition`
- ▶ `program-definition`

# XDR Enum, Typedef, and Const Definitions

- ▶ XDR enum before compilation.

```
enum colortype {  
    RED = 0,  
    GREEN = 1,  
    BLUE = 2  
};
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- An XDR typedef followed by the compiled C typedef.

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typedef string fname_stype<255>;  
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- ▶ An XDR typedef followed by the compiled C typedef.

```
typedef string fname_stype<255>;  
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- ▶ An XDR constant declaration followed by compiled C version.

```
const DOZEN = 12;  
#define DOZEN 12
```

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- ▶ Variable-length array declarations. None in C, so XDR uses its own notation using angle brackets.

```
int heights<12>  /* at most 12 items */  
int widths<>    /* any number of items */
```

The compiled C version.

```
struct {  
    u_int heights_len; /* number of items in the array */  
    int *heights_val;  /* pointer to array */  
} heights;
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- ▶ Pointer declarations. Same as in C. Pointers cannot be sent over the network, but we can use XDR pointers to send recursive data types, such as lists and trees. In XDR, this is known as optional-data, instead of a pointer. For example:

```
listitem * next;
```

# Special Cases

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- ▶ **Opaque data.** XDR uses `opaque` type to describe untyped data, consisting of sequences of arbitrary bytes. The opaque type gets translated into `char` type in C.
- ▶ **Voids.** In a `void` declaration, the variable is not named. Declarations of voids occur only in union and program definitions.

# XDR Struct's and Union's

- An XDR struct is almost like in C. For example.

```
/* XDR version */
struct coord {
    int x;
    int y;
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/* here is the compiled C version */
struct coord {
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- ▶ XDR Unions are discriminated unions unlike C unions. An example.

```
union read_result switch (int errno) {
    case 0:
        opaque data[1024];
    default:
        void;
};

/* the compiled C version */
struct read_result {
    int errno;
    union {
        char data[1024];
    } read_result_U;
};
typedef struct read_result read_result;
```

# Programs

- ▶ An example program definition.

```
program TIMEPROG {  
    version TIMEVERS {  
        unsigned int TIMEGET(void) = 1;  
        void TIMESET(unsigned) = 2;  
    } = 1;  
} = 44;
```

- ▶ The corresponding C declarations.

```
#define TIMEPROG 44  
#define TIMEVERS 1  
#define TIMEGET 1  
#define TIMESET 2
```

# Examples

See the folder [rpc](#) in the examples.

- ▶ square
- ▶ msg
- ▶ sort
- ▶ userlookup
- ▶ linked list
- ▶ thread-safe-square