

WORKING WITH ICMP

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The ICMP protocol, simply called ICMP, is one of the three main components of the Network layer. This is used by hosts and routers to specify the network-layer information to each other. The most notable feature about the ICMP is that these messages are carried as payloads inside IP datagrams. However, this does not mean that ICMP is an upper layer protocol. Interestingly, the traceroute programs extensively uses ICMP messages to get the IP addresses and RTT corresponding to the routers in a given path.

Using PING:

Ping is a program that allows us to verify if a host is live or not. Ping makes use of ICMP packets. A **particular type of ICMP packet** is sent to the interested destination. The host at the destination responds back with another typical ICMP packet. Using this packet, the ping program finds out RTT and status of the destination server.

```
sauron@sauron-HP-ENVY-TS-15-Notebook-PC:~$ ping vt.edu -c 10
PING vt.edu (198.82.215.14) 56(84) bytes of data.
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=1 ttl=237 time=523 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=2 ttl=237 time=427 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=3 ttl=237 time=1091 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=4 ttl=237 time=863 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=5 ttl=237 time=1089 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=6 ttl=237 time=495 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=7 ttl=237 time=416 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=8 ttl=237 time=374 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=9 ttl=237 time=340 ms
64 bytes from cmsw-prod.hosting.vt.edu (198.82.215.14): icmp_seq=10 ttl=237 time=398 ms

--- vt.edu ping statistics ---
10 packets transmitted, 10 received, 0% packet loss, time 9040ms
rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 340.089/602.053/1091.178/280.837 ms, pipe 2
sauron@sauron-HP-ENVY-TS-15-Notebook-PC:~$
```

Figure showing a ping command (count = 10) directed to Virginia Tech University

Question 1:

command ran : `ping vt.edu -c 10` (Virginia Tech University)

Source IP : 192.168.0.101

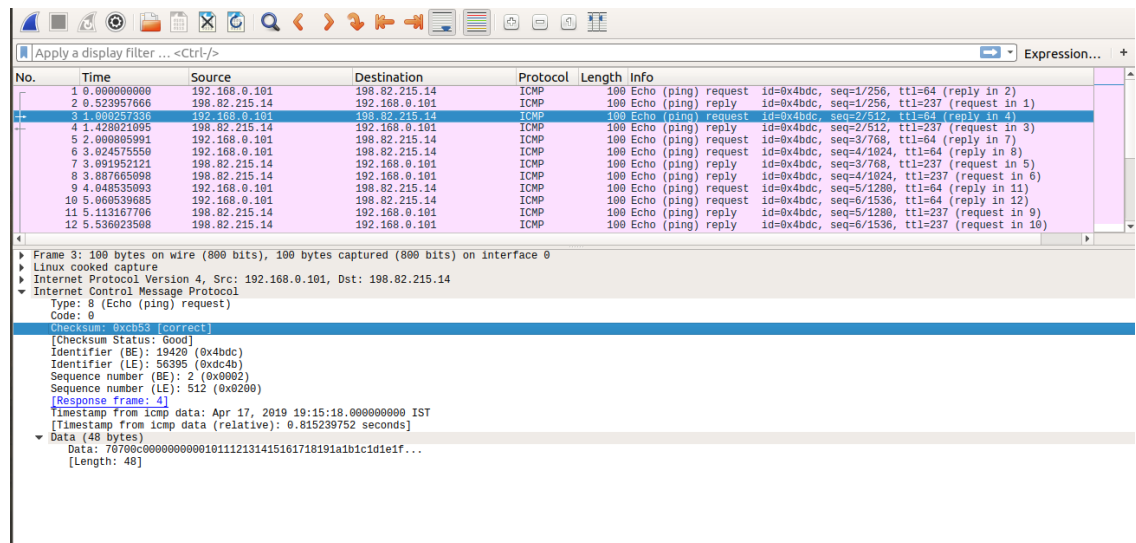
Destination IP : 192.82.215.14

Question 2:

In the ping packets, we can see that the ICMP payload has not mention to any kind of address. **ICMP is carried as a payload within an IP datagram** and does not have an header associated with it. Within this payload, there is no mention about any address. This is not similar to TCP/UDP (have port addresses) which too are data carried inside IP datagrams.

This is because, when the protocol in IP header is ICMP the host/router has **well defined** way of handling this ICMP data message. There is no ambiguity as to which single application needs to collect this information. Therefore there is no need of address inside ICMP message. The IP address of the destination in the IP header is enough for the packet to be transitted appropriately, unlike TCP/UDP where port numbers are needed.

Question 3:



In the above figure, we see a capture of expanded version of one of the ping requests.

The fields in ICMP are :

- 1) Type = 8 : corresponds to ping request
- 2) Code = 0

- 3) Checksum : 2 bytes
- 4) Identifier : 2 bytes
- 5) Sequence number : 2 bytes
- 6) Timestamp
- 7) Data

Question 4:

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
1	0.000000000	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=1/256, ttl=64 (reply in 2)
2	0.523957666	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=1/256, ttl=237 (request in 1)
3	1.000257336	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=2/512, ttl=64 (reply in 4)
4	1.42801035	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=2/512, ttl=237 (request in 3)
5	2.000000591	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=3/768, ttl=64 (reply in 7)
6	3.024575550	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=3/768, ttl=237 (request in 5)
7	3.091952121	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=4/1024, ttl=64 (reply in 8)
8	3.887665098	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=4/1024, ttl=237 (request in 6)
9	4.040535093	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=5/1280, ttl=64 (reply in 11)
10	5.060539685	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=5/1280, ttl=237 (request in 9)
11	5.113167796	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) request id=0x4bdc, seq=6/1536, ttl=64 (reply in 12)
12	5.536023508	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	100	Echo (ping) reply id=0x4bdc, seq=6/1536, ttl=237 (request in 10)

Frame 4: 100 bytes on wire (800 bits), 100 bytes captured (800 bits) on interface 0

- Linux cooked capture
- Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 198.82.215.14, Dst: 192.168.0.101
- Internet Control Message Protocol
 - Type: 0 (Echo (ping) reply)
 - Code: 0
 - Checksum: 0xd353 [correct]
 - Checksum Status: Good
 - Identifier (BE): 19420 (0x4bdc)
 - Sequence number (LE): 2 (0x0002)
 - Sequence number (LE): 512 (0x0200)
 - Request frame: 3
 - Response time: 427.764 ms
 - Timestamp from icmp data: Apr 17, 2019 19:15:18.000000000 IST
 - Timestamp from icmp data (relative): 1.243003511 seconds
 - Data (48 bytes)
 - Data: 79708c0000000000101112131415161718191a1b1c1d1e1f...
 - [Length: 48]

In the above figure, we see a capture of expanded version of one of the ping replies.

The fields in ICMP are :

- 1) Type = 0 : corresponds to ping response
- 2) Code = 0
- 3) Checksum : 2 bytes
- 4) Identifier : 2 bytes
- 5) Sequence number : 2 bytes
- 6) Timestamp
- 7) Data

Using TRACEROUTE:

Traceroute is a program that makes use of UDP packets to get the IPs of all the routers along a given path and the time delays between them. This is achieved by sending a **sequence of UDP packets** with TTL ranging from 1 to 64 (MAX). Everytime a router identifies that a packet has expired, it sends a corresponding **ICMP error message** to the source host. The traceroute then identifies the details about the router from this ICMP message.

command used : traceroute vt.edu (Vriginia Tech University)

```
sauron@sauron-HP-ENVY-TS-15-Notebook-PC:~$ traceroute vt.edu
traceroute to vt.edu (198.82.215.14), 64 hops max
 1  192.168.0.1  0.769ms  0.707ms  0.633ms
 2  10.22.15.254  3.420ms  8.615ms  3.331ms
 3  10.25.100.9  4.490ms  19.222ms  6.228ms
 4  10.25.0.14  5.196ms  6.231ms  2.535ms
 5  10.119.232.138  6.149ms  2.129ms  2.723ms
 6  10.119.232.137  3.745ms  0.991ms  2.049ms
 7  10.163.255.201  28.178ms  25.301ms  25.597ms
 8  10.255.232.217  27.431ms  29.644ms  25.494ms
 9  180.149.48.18  25.745ms  28.645ms  25.446ms
10  180.149.48.6  267.796ms  176.018ms  204.206ms
11  180.149.48.20  204.573ms  204.998ms  204.663ms
12  162.252.70.138  306.856ms  409.509ms  409.450ms
13  162.252.70.138  307.875ms  307.684ms  305.955ms
14  162.252.70.74  306.925ms  265.376ms  372.445ms
15  162.252.70.74  299.690ms  291.426ms  308.399ms
16  192.70.187.18  408.558ms  511.817ms  511.285ms
17  192.70.187.18  819.909ms  717.874ms  408.654ms
18  198.82.215.14  407.989ms  410.654ms  519.473ms
19  198.82.215.14  534.928ms  !N 584.400ms  !N 510.789ms  !N
sauron@sauron-HP-ENVY-TS-15-Notebook-PC:~$
```

Question 5:

IP address of our host : 192.168.0.101

IP address of Virginia Tech host : 198.82.215.14

The destination IP address can be seen from the last echo. Alternatively this can also be seen from any echo because, every response (TTL expire warning) also contains the original packet the host tried to send.

Question 6:

Different upper layer protocols are assigned different values for the protocol field in the IP header. For ICMP it is 01, where as for UDP it **will be 17**. This is a must because, if the IP datagrams encapsulate UDP packets, then having 17 as the protocol number is important in processing the packet when it arrives at the host. If it were falsely written as 1 instead, the host will try to break the payload as an ICMP packet which **has different fields** and demarcations. The same can be seen from the UDP probes sent from our Linux system.

The image shows a Wireshark packet capture window. The top pane displays a list of captured packets with columns for Time, Source, Destination, and Protocol. The bottom pane shows the detailed view of the selected packet (Frame 24), including the Ethernet II header, Internet Protocol Version 4 header, and User Datagram Protocol (UDP) header.

Time	Source	Destination	Protocol
22 0.142483874	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
23 0.145637584	10.25.0.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP
24 0.145731301	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
25 0.149679038	10.119.232.138	192.168.0.101	ICMP
26 0.149752142	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
27 0.150966799	10.119.232.138	192.168.0.101	ICMP
28 0.151067507	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
29 0.152665208	10.119.232.138	192.168.0.101	ICMP
30 0.152646280	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
31 0.153766486	10.119.232.137	192.168.0.101	ICMP
32 0.153875300	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	UDP
33 0.154728913	10.119.232.137	192.168.0.101	ICMP

Frame 24: 53 bytes on wire (424 bits), 53 bytes captured (424 bits) on interface 0
Linux cooked capture
Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 192.168.0.101, Dst: 198.82.215.14
0100 = Version: 4
.... 0101 = Header Length: 20 bytes (5)
Differentiated Services Field: 0x00 (DSCP: CS0, ECN: Not-ECT)
Total Length: 37
Identification: 0x9a61 (39521)
Flags: 0x4000, Don't fragment
Time to live: 5
Protocol: UDP (17)
Header checksum: 0x7cf8 [validation disabled]
[Header checksum status: Unverified]
Source: 192.168.0.101
Destination: 198.82.215.14
User Datagram Protocol, Src Port: 47681, Dst Port: 33438
Data (9 bytes)
Data: 53555045524d414e00
[Length: 9]

Question 7:

The ICMP packet resembles ping (request and reply) packet upto the IP header. From IP header, the whole payload is a lot different. This is because, the fields in the ping response (identification, sequence number) are absent in the traceroute echo messages. A more important difference is the contents of the data within ICMP payload. This **data has the copy of the original packet as such** that was failed to be forwarded because of TTL expiration. Another difference is the Type field value which is 11 and the code is 0 unlike ping packets (Type : 0,8).

running the command : `sudo traceroute -I vt.edu`
(uses echo ICMP instead of UDPs : refer to Traceroute2.pcapng)

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
1	0.000000000	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=0/0, ttl=1 (no response found!)
2	0.001478044	192.168.0.1	192.168.0.101	ICMP	96	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
3	0.007662307	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=1/256, ttl=1 (no response found!)
4	0.008353411	192.168.0.1	192.168.0.101	ICMP	96	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
5	0.008548810	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=2/512, ttl=1 (no response found!)
6	0.009131169	192.168.0.1	192.168.0.101	ICMP	96	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
7	0.009285075	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=3/768, ttl=2 (no response found!)
8	0.012479352	10.22.15.254	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
9	0.012679695	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=4/1024, ttl=2 (no response found!)
10	0.014117217	10.22.15.254	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
11	0.014255199	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=5/1280, ttl=2 (no response found!)
12	0.016872453	10.22.15.254	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
13	0.017071473	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=6/1536, ttl=3 (no response found!)
14	0.017887222	10.25.100.9	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
15	0.018614602	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=7/1792, ttl=3 (no response found!)
16	0.018809149	10.25.100.9	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
17	0.018923582	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=8/2048, ttl=3 (no response found!)
18	0.019841909	10.25.100.9	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
19	0.019964968	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0x5e2f, seq=9/2304, ttl=4 (no response found!)

89	5.000325046	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0
90	5.309786140	162.252.70.74	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72	Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)
91	5.389952221	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68	Echo (ping) request id=0

On opening a Echo message and comparing with the ping packet used in ping command, we can find that there is no difference in the fields names i.e the structure of the packet. The only difference here is that TTL is set differently (from 1 to 17 in our case). These TTL variations can be seen from the wireshark capture.

Question 8:

87	4.693259616	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f
88	5.000248400	162.252.70.74	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72 Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)	
89	5.000248400	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f
90	5.309786149	162.252.70.74	192.168.0.101	ICMP	72 Time-to-live exceeded (Time to live exceeded in transit)	
91	5.309952221	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f


```

4
▶ Frame 90: 72 bytes on wire (576 bits), 72 bytes captured (576 bits) on interface 0
▶ Linux cooked capture
▶ Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 162.252.70.74, Dst: 192.168.0.101
▼ Internet Control Message Protocol
  Type: 11 (Time-to-live exceeded)
  Code: 0 (Time to live exceeded in transit)
  Checksum: 0xe9e1 [correct]
  [Checksum Status: Good]
  ▶ Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 192.168.0.101, Dst: 198.82.215.14
  ▼ Internet Control Message Protocol
    Type: 8 (Echo (ping) request)
    Code: 0
    Checksum: 0xa4c2 [unverified] [in ICMP error packet]
    [Checksum Status: Unverified]
    Identifier (BE): 24111 (0x5e2f)
    Identifier (LE): 12126 (0x2f5e)
    Sequence number (BE): 44 (0x002c)
    Sequence number (LE): 11264 (0x2c00)
  
```

Upto IP header, the ICMP error as well as the echo messages take the same format. However their payloads, which in turn contain the ICMP data messages, are entirely different. Both ICMP data messages have Type, Code fields as well as checksum. The **differences** between the ICMP error message and the ICMP ping messages are:

- 1) Echo packet has Identifier and a Sequence number field which is used by the ping program. These fields are not present in the ICMP error message.
- 2) Echo packet has a small data field (usually 24 bytes). However ICMP error message has the **entire packet that was initially transmitted** by the router (with an insufficient TTL) starting from the network layer header. This is the reason why it appears to have more fields because it encapsulates the original ping packet in its payload.

Question 9:

193	7.151060785	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f, seq=51/13056, ttl=18 (reply in 104)
194	7.457741503	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) reply	id=0x5e2f, seq=51/13056, ttl=237 (request in 103)
195	7.457922562	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f, seq=52/13312, ttl=18 (reply in 106)
196	7.764633717	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) reply	id=0x5e2f, seq=52/13312, ttl=237 (request in 105)
197	7.764774034	192.168.0.101	198.82.215.14	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) request	id=0x5e2f, seq=53/13568, ttl=18 (reply in 108)
198	8.138248461	198.82.215.14	192.168.0.101	ICMP	68 Echo (ping) reply	id=0x5e2f, seq=53/13568, ttl=237 (request in 107)


```

4
▶ Frame 193: 68 bytes on wire (544 bits), 68 bytes captured (544 bits) on interface 0
▶ Linux cooked capture
▶ Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 192.168.0.101, Dst: 198.82.215.14
▼ Internet Control Message Protocol
  Type: 8 (Echo (ping) request)
  Code: 0
  Checksum: 0xd0b0 [correct]
  [Checksum Status: Good]
  Identifier (BE): 24111 (0x5e2f)
  Identifier (LE): 12126 (0x2f5e)
  Sequence number (BE): 51 (0x0033)
  Sequence number (LE): 13056 (0x3300)
  [Response frame: 104]
  ▼ Data (24 bytes)
    Data: 000000000000000030000000000000c0e42c88c37f0000
    [Length: 24]
  
```

Figure showing the last 6 messages

The last 6 packets are different from the rest of the packets because the responses are **not TTL errors but are ping replies**. This is as though a ping has been sent to the destination host. This is because, the TTL is enough to

reach the destination server and that server replies with a ping response (Code : 0, Type : 0).

Question 10: