

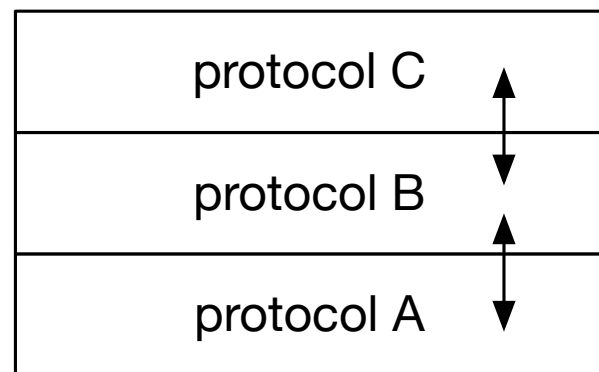
Practice questions

416 2021 W2 (Winter 2022)

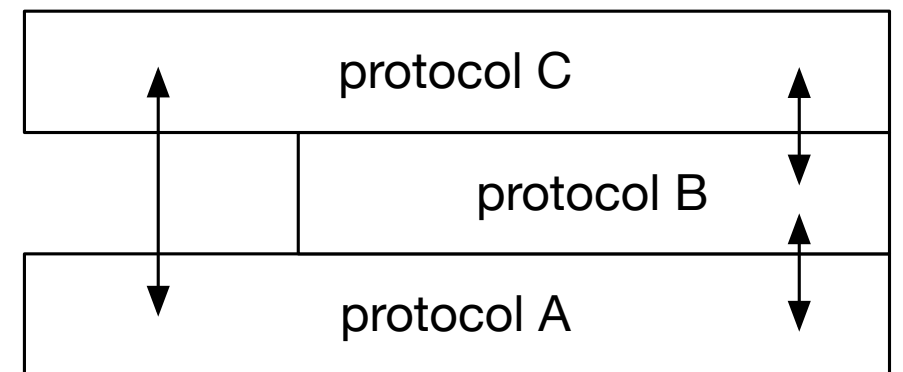
These questions are intended to simulate the final exam. They cover previous lecture/assignment material that is fair game for the final exam.

PQ 1

- You are designing a protocol stack. You have narrowed down your design to two choices. And, you know that the specification for protocol C is likely to change. Which stack design should you use?



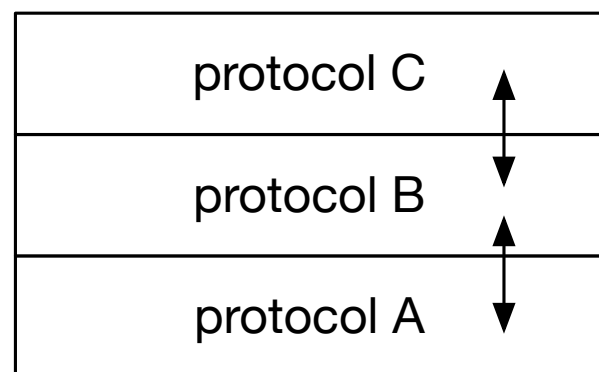
(a)



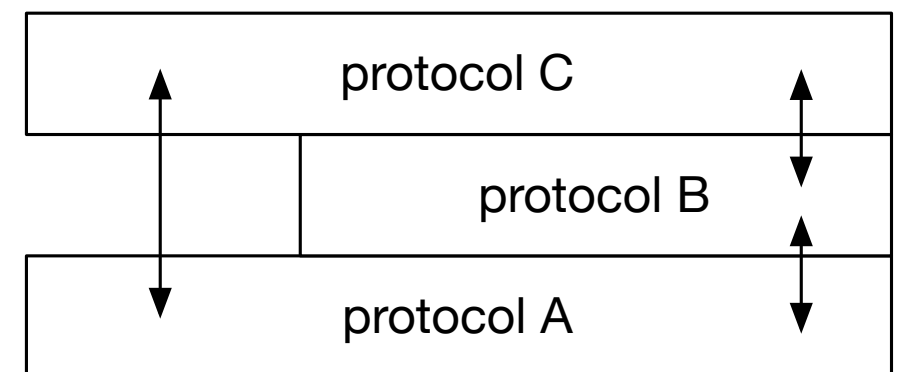
(b)

PQ 1

- You are designing a protocol stack. You have narrowed down your design to two choices. And, you know that the specification for protocol C is likely to change. Which stack design should you use?



(a)



(b)

- If protocol C changes then only protocol B would need to adapt, and not A

PQ 2

- A network element can inspect any of the protocols present in the packet. So, **why not** build e.g., a switch that is aware of HTTP and have it route packets based on HTTP information that it can extract from the packet?

PQ 2

- A network element can inspect any of the protocols present in the packet. So, **why not** build e.g., a switch that is aware of HTTP and have it route packets based on HTTP information that it can extract from the packet?
- Expensive! Line-rate HTTP processing requires more memory/cpu. Also requires interpreting the protocol below HTTP (e.g., TCP/IP)
- Higher-level protocols change, often more frequently (HTTP 2.0)
- More software can access/manipulate HTTP content (not just your OS TCP/IP stack). *Requires more robustness/more security considerations.*
- But, it's not impossible! See “software middleboxes” or “network function virtualization”

PQ 3

- You plan to disrupt the RPC concept by not only sending arguments to the remote procedure, but also sending the *procedure* itself (as a lambda fn). What challenges do you expect with this idea?
- Breakout rooms + 5 minute discussion with your peers

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- You plan to disrupt the RPC concept by not only sending arguments to the remote procedure, but also sending the *procedure* itself (as a lambda fn). What challenges do you expect with this idea?
- Breakout rooms + 5 minute discussion with your peers
- Discussion:
 - RPC server env may be rather different than the caller: lambda fn may be in a lang that can't be interpreted by the server
 - Env typical RPC: addresses/memory
 - Do you pass a pointer to fn, or an object? How do you wrap the code in a way that makes it standalone on the server. Need to capture all you need.
 - SECURITY! Fn needs some kind of sandbox (docker? VM?)
 - State — do you let the function store state somewhere?
 - Remote code execution — always bad? ... browsers!
 - Javascript... it sort of does exactly what's above!

PQ 3

- You plan to disrupt the RPC concept by not only sending arguments to the remote procedure, but also sending the *procedure* itself (as a lambda fn). What challenges do you expect with this idea?
 - Defining invocation semantics: at most once/at least once. What happens on failures?
 - Defining the capabilities of the procedure: can it read files? Can it open connections/send data?
 - Can it be STATEFUL!? Where do we store state?
 - Related: defining allowable side effects, if any
 - Guaranteeing determinism (procedure should probably run identically regardless of host server). Have to determinize calls to random, env state like files. Have to provide environment that is identical across machines (e.g., runtime language-based VM like a JVM).
 - Encoding of arguments (as in RPC)
 - Encoding of the procedure + env state that it needs besides args

PQ 4

- True/False: According to the A1 specification, if the nim server fails mid-game, the nim client will send the same *StateMoveMessage* indefinitely
- PQ4 zoom poll

PQ 4

- True/False: According to the A1 specification, if the nim server fails mid-game, the nim client will send the same *StateMoveMessage* indefinitely
- True! In a sense, the A1 aim client cannot tell if the server is slow or failed.

PQ 5

- On the client-side NFS caches only those parts of the file that the local processes have read/written.

*What are the **pros** and **cons** of NFS caching files **in their entirety**?*

- *Con : Caching entire file = more network load (less timely? Not an issue if delivering content that's being read first)*
- *Con : More conflict between clients accessing the same file (more in cache => more bits to conflict on)*
- *Con : Takes up more memory (for parts of file that may not be useful..)*
- *Pro : Easier to implement!*
- *Pro : Fewer requests! If you need the entire file, this is more efficient!*
- *Pro : More failure resistant (caching entire file => can survive server crashes!)*
- *Con : caching things that you may not need (may only want to write 1 byte in a 1 TB file)*

PQ 5

- On the client-side NFS caches only those parts of the file that the local processes have read/written. *What are the pros and cons of NFS caching files in their entirety?*
- Pros: **performance** (more reads handled locally, don't hit the server), **scales better** (can support more clients), **file access is faster** (assumes: client cache faster than server cache; client memory faster than server disk), **robust to server crashes** (client can read cache instead of going to server)
- Cons: **more resources at client** (client needs space for the cache), **scales worse** (with larger files), **worse\complex consistency** (there is less sync. between clients), **security** (trust clients with *all* file data),

PQ 6

- You decide to create a nim server that allows nim clients to play against each other (instead of against the server).

*What is the **minimal** way in which you would change A1 (protocol/client/sever) to enable this client-v-client game play?*

- Need to determine who moves first! Server decides!
- Maybe prevent cheating? (would be a nice v2 feature)
- Matching clients is the key difficulty — how? Server's problem
-

PQ 6

- You decide to create a nim server that allows nim clients to play against each other (instead of against the server). What is the **minimal** way in which you would change A1 (protocol/client/sever) to enable this client-v-client game play?
- No changes to protocol or client-side logic. Only change the server:
 - Server receives opening move and blocks waiting for another client's opening move.
 - Once it has received two opening moves, the server sends client 1 a new game board.
 - When client 1 responds with a move, the server forwards the game board to client 2 as its opening move reply and waits for a move from client 2.
 - After this point the server acts a proxy between the two clients.



PQ 7

- Which file system can support more clients, given a server that runs on identical hardware and a typical University file access workload? [Choose one answer]
 - A. NFS
 - B. AFS

PQ 7

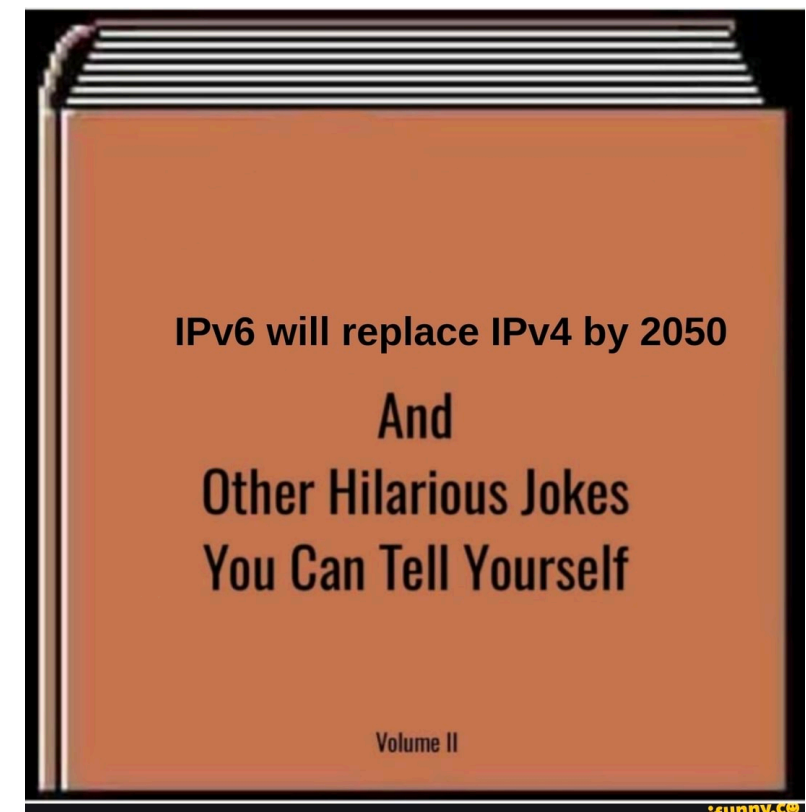
- Which file system can support more clients, given a server that runs on identical hardware? [Choose one answer]

A. NFS

B. AFS [AFS pushes client load from the server by caching entire files on the client side. It is strictly more scalable (in terms of number of clients) than NFS.]

PQ 8

- A CDN can improve which of the following for the client:
 - Latency
 - Security
 - Throughput
 - Consistency
 - Availability



PQ 8

- A CDN can improve which of the following for the client:
 - Latency (CDNs nodes closer to client)
 - Security (2 administrative domains)
 - Throughput (CDN nodes more lightly loaded)
 - Consistency (nope)
 - Availability (CDN nodes in same region as client)

PQ 9 (discussion)

- How would you map the network of servers run by a large CDN provider (e.g., Akamai)?
 - Map ~ which servers are available, where they are located, their characteristics (topology, connectivity, latency, bandwidth, server specs), etc. Maybe include DNS servers and underlying policies.
 - Try clients from different locations
 - traceroute to nytimes.com? Useful?
 - 1. Buy cloud resources — around the world (depends on granularity of the map that you want).
 - 2. VPN using those resources to appear as if you are at a different location (geographically) = spoofing your location
 - 3. Traceroute nytimes.com from the different locations — find out route. Reveals hops to a destination at the IP level.
 - 4. Make DNS requests (with a cold DNS cache) — learn about the DNS servers used by the CDN, and ultimately the server that the CDN wants you to use for nytimes.com
 - 5. Send many requests + store results. Build up a dataset (BIGDATA). Take 340. Use MACHINE LEARNING to identify patterns in data.
 - => DERIVE patterns and reconstruct map of CDN

PQ 9

- And how would you use this information to optimize (performance/availability/etc) your browsing performance?
 - -1. Buy a house close to a fast CDN server :-)
 - 0. Bypass the DNS and use the CDN server directly (cut down on RTT to DNS)
 - 1. Objective (availability), Input (set of servers) => Strategy that tells you which server to use when for a specific objective.

PQ 10

What is a blockchain?

- A. An eventually consistent data structure
- B. A set of distributed protocols
- C. A fault tolerant data storage system
- D. An implementation of an immutable ledger
- E. All of the above

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