

# Application layer: overview

- Principles of network applications
- **Web and HTTP**
- E-mail, SMTP, IMAP
- The Domain Name System DNS
- P2P applications
- video streaming and content distribution networks
- socket programming with UDP and TCP



# Web

## *Web changed the world!*

- Until early 1990's: **internet for experts**
- Soon after Berners-Lee introduced Web in 1989: **internet for public**
  - On-demand
  - Everyone can become a publisher at extremely low cost
  - Videos, images, ... simulate our scenes

## AN INTERVIEW WITH...

# Tim Berners-Lee

Sir Tim Berners-Lee is known as the inventor of the World Wide Web. In 1989, while working as a fellow at CERN, he proposed an Internet-based distributed information management system including the original version of the HTTP protocol. In the same year he successfully implemented his design on a client and server. He received the 2016 Turing award for "inventing the World Wide Web, the first Web browser, and the fundamental protocols and algorithms allowing the Web to scale." He is the Co-Founder of the World Wide Web Foundation, and currently is a Professorial Fellow of Computer Science at the University of Oxford and a professor at CSAIL at MIT.



Courtesy of Tim Berners-Lee

# Web and HTTP

*First, a quick review (terminology)...*

- web page consists of *objects*, each of which can be stored on different Web servers
- object can be HTML file, JPEG image, Java applet, audio file,...
- web page consists of *base HTML-file* which includes *several referenced objects, each* addressable by a *URL*, e.g.,

`www.someschool.edu/someDept/pic.gif`

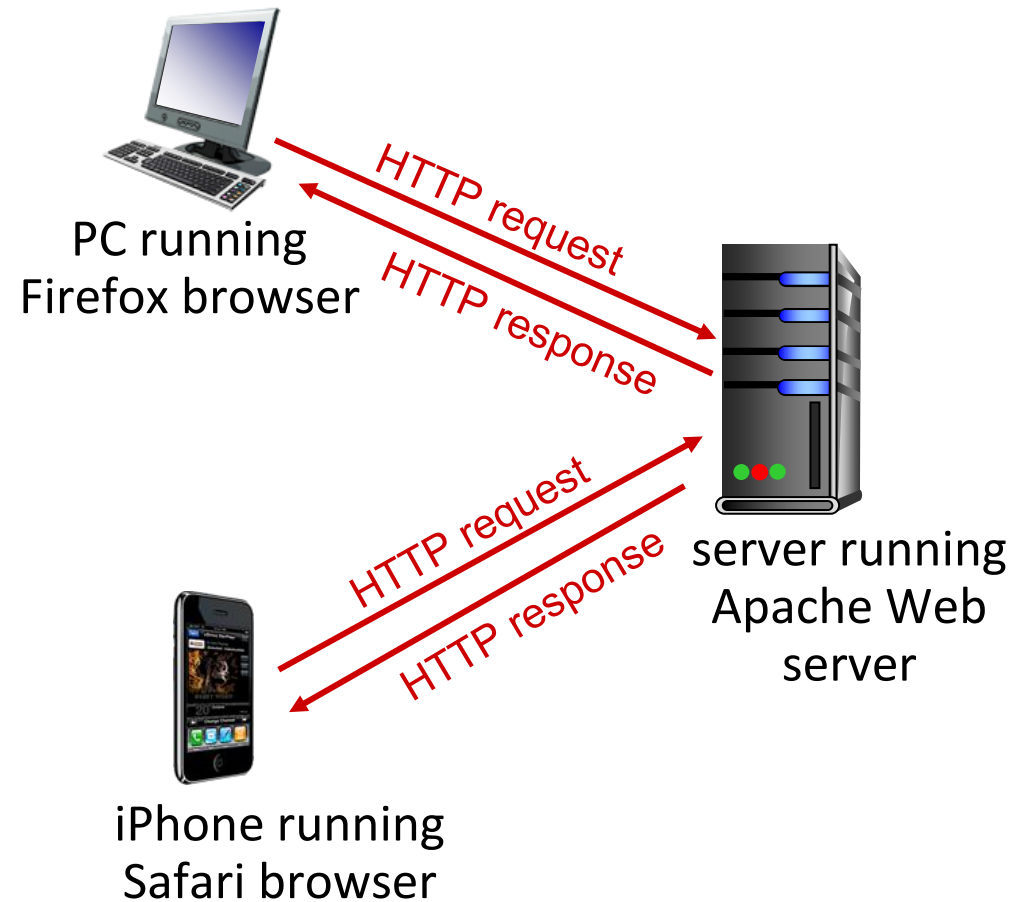
host name

path name

# HTTP overview

## HTTP: hypertext transfer protocol

- Web's application-layer protocol
- client/server model:
  - *client*: browser that requests, receives, (using HTTP protocol) and “displays” Web objects
  - *server*: Web server sends (using HTTP protocol) objects in response to requests



# HTTP overview (continued)

## *HTTP uses TCP:*

- client initiates TCP connection (creates socket) to server, port 80
- server accepts TCP connection from client
- HTTP messages (application-layer protocol messages) exchanged between browser (HTTP client) and Web server (HTTP server)
- TCP connection closed

## *HTTP is “stateless”*

- server maintains *no* information about past client requests

*aside*  
protocols that maintain “state” are complex!

- past history (state) must be maintained
- if server/client crashes, their views of “state” may be inconsistent, must be reconciled

# HTTP connections: two types

## *Non-persistent HTTP*

1. TCP connection opened
2. at most one object sent over TCP connection
3. TCP connection closed

downloading multiple objects required multiple connections

## *Persistent HTTP*

- TCP connection opened to a server
- multiple objects can be sent over *single* TCP connection between client, and that server
- TCP connection closed

# Non-persistent HTTP: example

User enters URL: `www.someSchool.edu/someDepartment/home.index`  
(containing text, references to 10 jpeg images)



**1a.** HTTP client initiates TCP connection to HTTP server (process) at `www.someSchool.edu` on port 80



**1b.** HTTP server at host `www.someSchool.edu` waiting for TCP connection at port 80 “accepts” connection, notifying client

**2.** HTTP client sends HTTP *request message* (containing URL) into TCP connection socket. Message indicates that client wants object `someDepartment/home.index`

**3.** HTTP server receives request message, forms *response message* containing requested object, and sends message into its socket

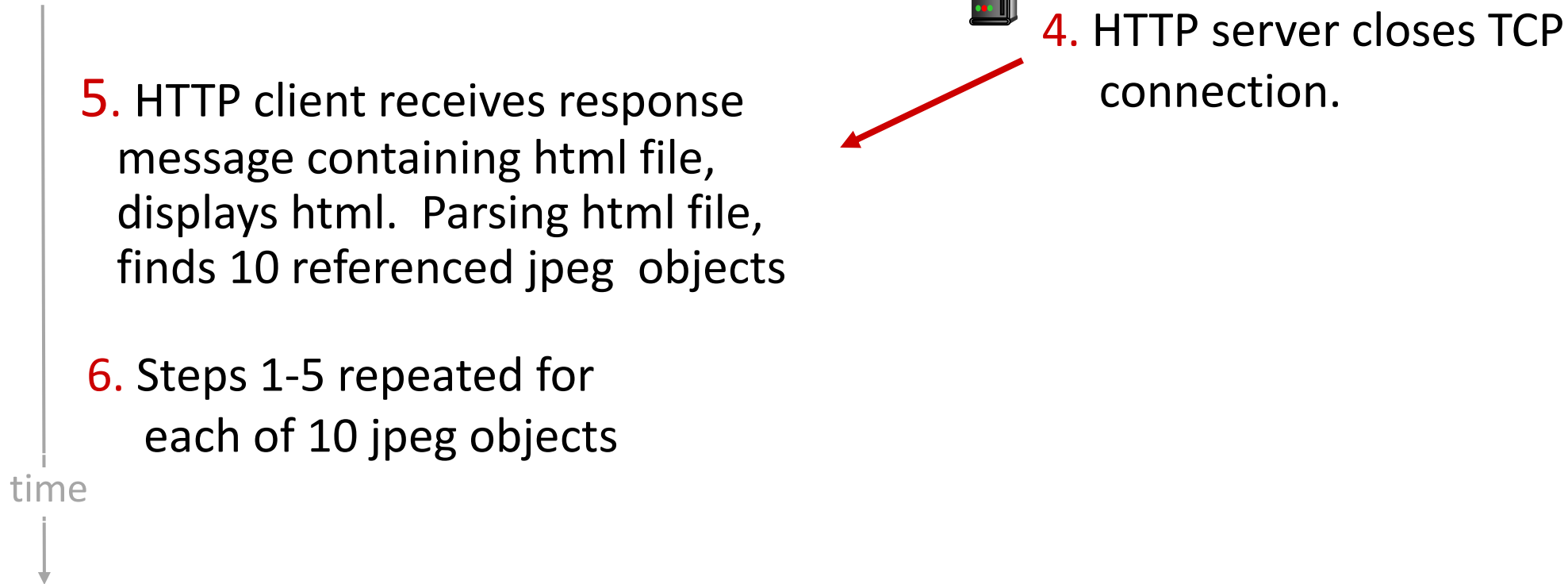
time





# Non-persistent HTTP: example (cont.)

User enters URL: `www.someSchool.edu/someDepartment/home.index`  
(containing text, references to 10 jpeg images)

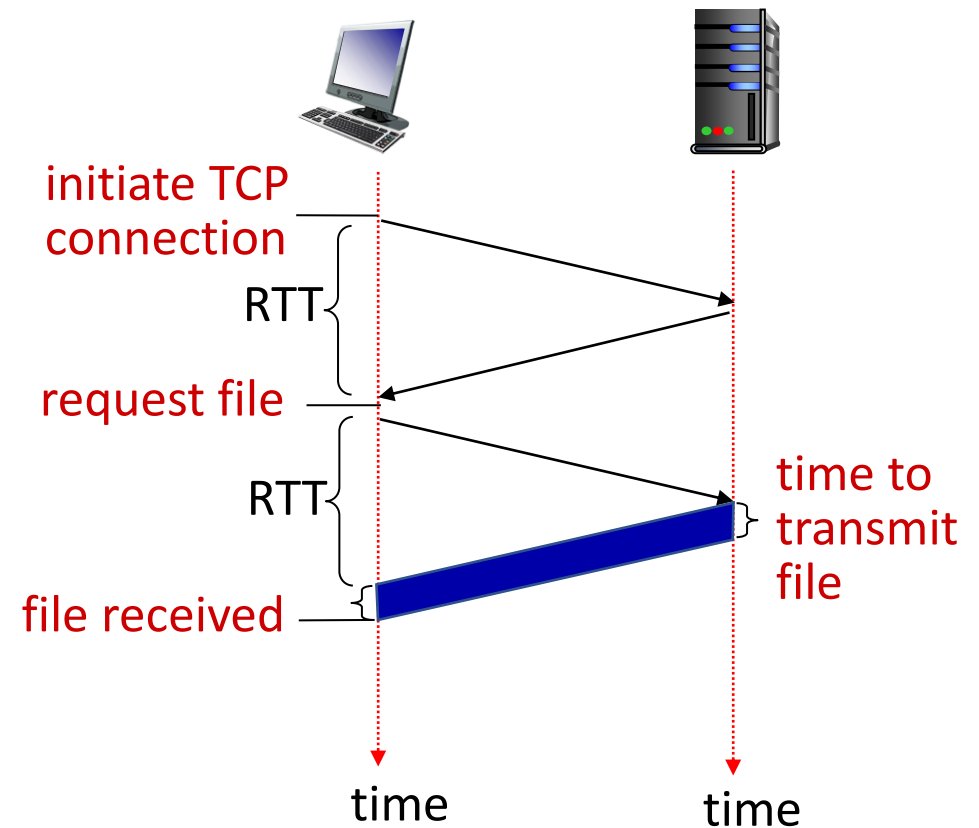


# Non-persistent HTTP: response time

**RTT (definition):** time for a small packet to travel from client to server and back

**HTTP response time (per object):**

- one RTT to initiate TCP connection
- one RTT for HTTP request and first few bytes of HTTP response to return
- object/file transmission time



*Non-persistent HTTP response time =  $2RTT + \text{file transmission time}$*

# Persistent HTTP (HTTP 1.1)

## *Non-persistent HTTP issues:*

- requires 2 RTTs per object
- OS overhead for *each* TCP connection
- browsers often open multiple parallel TCP connections to fetch referenced objects in parallel

## *Persistent HTTP (HTTP1.1):*

- server leaves connection open after sending response
- subsequent HTTP messages between same client/server sent over open connection
- client sends requests as soon as it encounters a referenced object
- as little as one RTT for all the referenced objects

# HTTP request message

- two types of HTTP messages: *request, response*
- **HTTP request message:**
  - ASCII (human-readable format)

request line (GET, POST,  
HEAD commands)

header  
lines

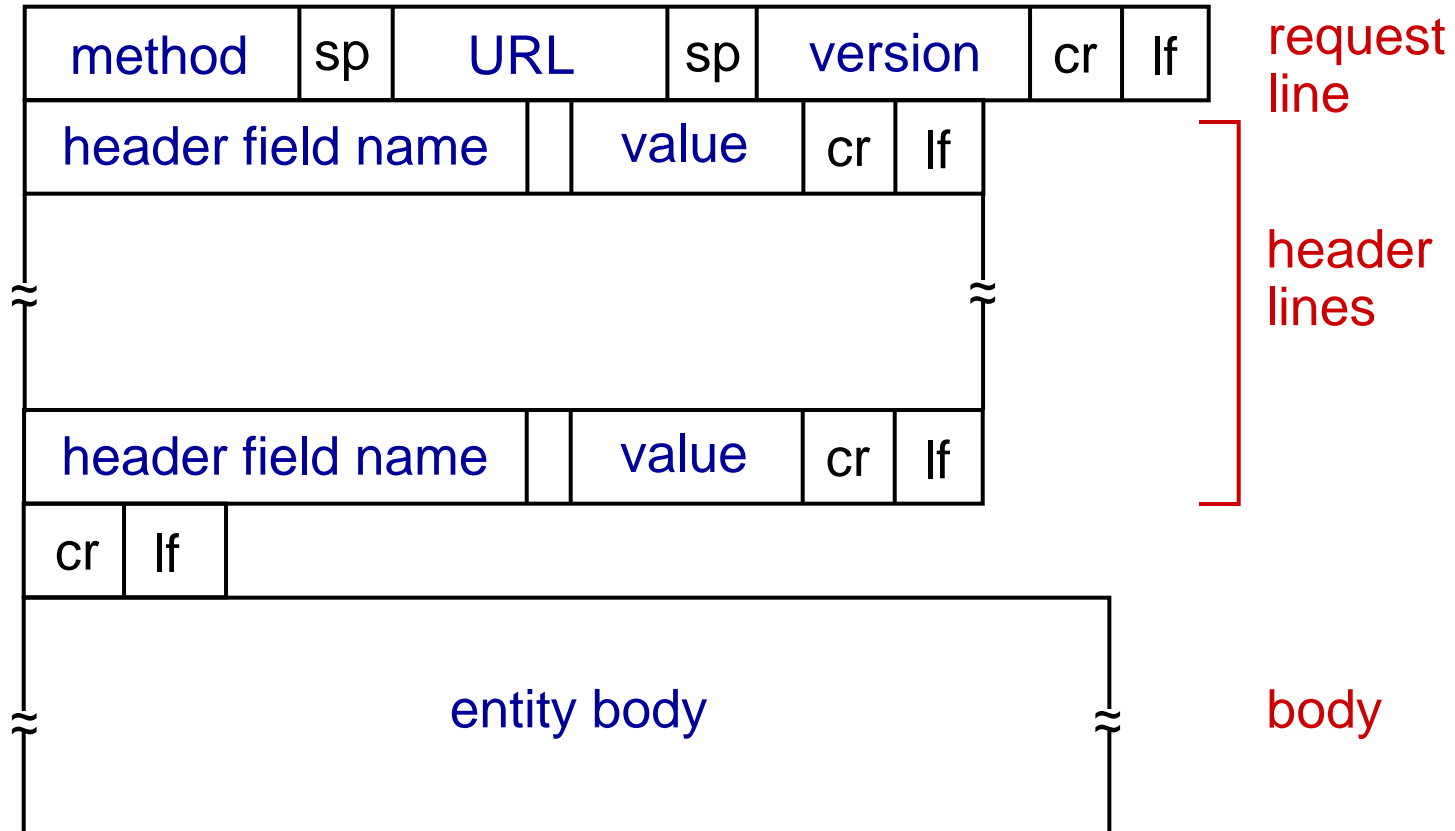
carriage return character  
line-feed character

```
GET /index.html HTTP/1.1\r\n
Host: www-net.cs.umass.edu\r\n
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X
10.15; rv:80.0) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/80.0 \r\n
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml\r\n
Accept-Language: en-us,en;q=0.5\r\n
Accept-Encoding: gzip,deflate\r\n
Connection: keep-alive\r\n
\r\n
```

carriage return, line feed  
at start of line indicates  
end of header lines

\* Check out the online interactive exercises for more  
examples: [http://gaia.cs.umass.edu/kurose\\_ross/interactive/](http://gaia.cs.umass.edu/kurose_ross/interactive/)

# HTTP request message: general format



# Other HTTP request messages

## POST method:

- web page often includes form input
- user input sent from client to server in entity body of HTTP POST request message

## GET method (for sending data to server):

- include user data in URL field of HTTP GET request message (following a '?'):

`www.somesite.com/animalsearch?monkeys&banana`

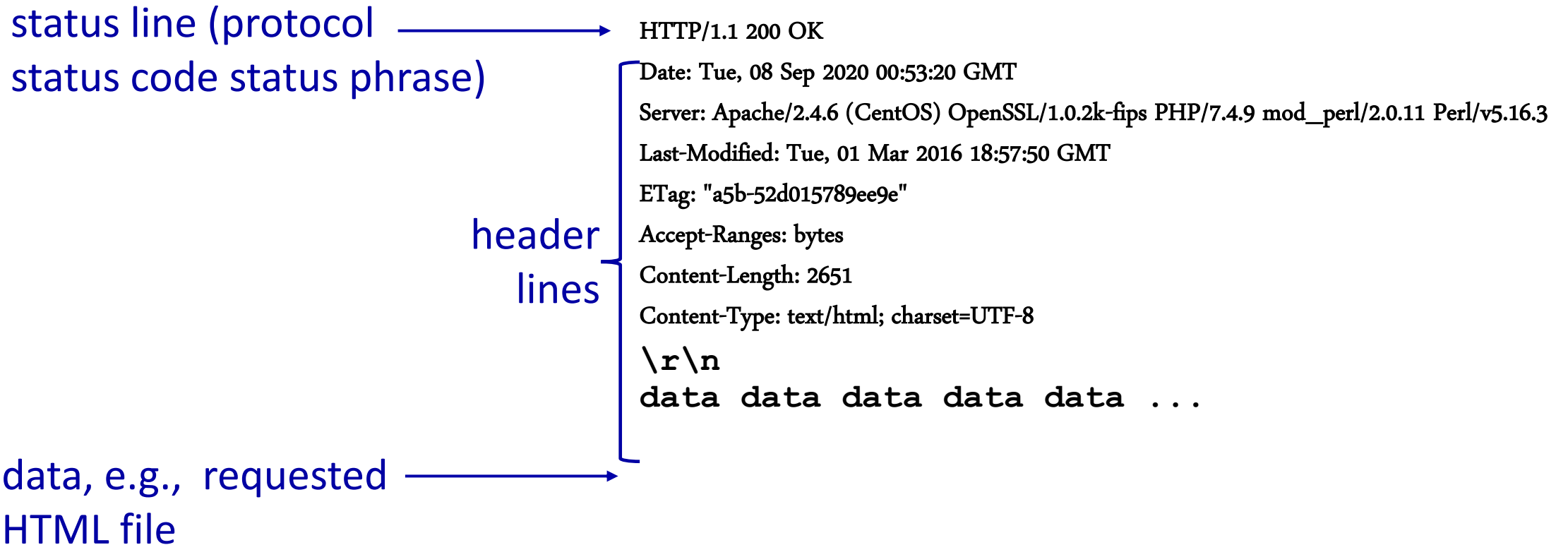
## HEAD method:

- requests headers (only) that would be returned *if* specified URL were requested with an HTTP GET method.

## PUT method:

- uploads new file (object) to server
- completely replaces file that exists at specified URL with content in entity body of PUT HTTP request message

# HTTP response message



\* Check out the online interactive exercises for more examples: [http://gaia.cs.umass.edu/kurose\\_ross/interactive/](http://gaia.cs.umass.edu/kurose_ross/interactive/)

# HTTP response status codes

- status code appears in 1st line in server-to-client response message.
- some sample codes:

## 200 OK

- request succeeded, requested object later in this message

## 301 Moved Permanently

- requested object moved, new location specified later in this message (in Location: field)

## 400 Bad Request

- request msg not understood by server

## 404 Not Found

- requested document not found on this server

## 505 HTTP Version Not Supported



# Trying out HTTP (client side) for yourself

## 1. netcat to your favorite Web server:

```
% nc -c -v gaia.cs.umass.edu 80
```

- opens TCP connection to port 80 (default HTTP server port) at gaia.cs.umass.edu.
- anything typed in will be sent to port 80 at gaia.cs.umass.edu

## 2. type in a GET HTTP request:

```
GET /kurose_ross/interactive/index.php HTTP/1.1  
Host: gaia.cs.umass.edu
```

- by typing this in (hit carriage return twice), you send this minimal (but complete) GET request to HTTP server

## 3. look at response message sent by HTTP server!

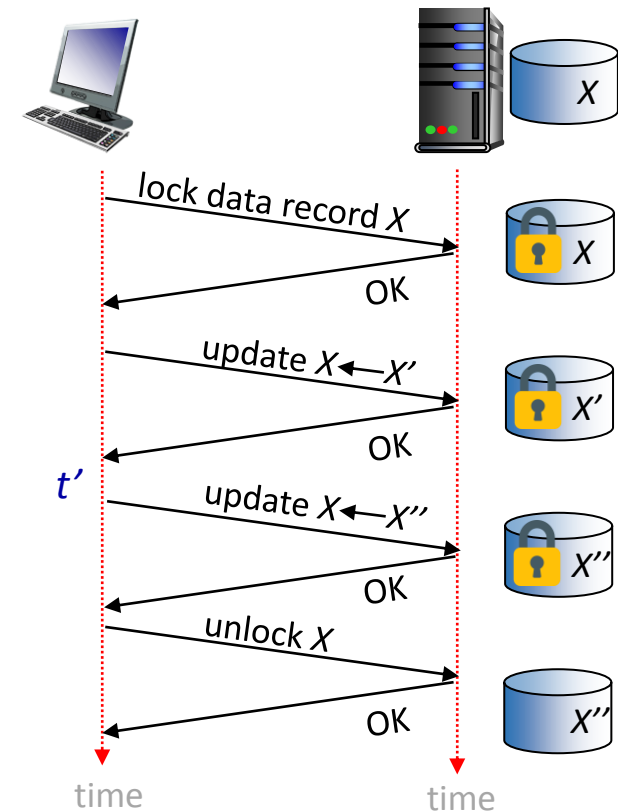
(or use Wireshark to look at captured HTTP request/response)

# Maintaining user/server state: cookies

Recall: HTTP GET/response interaction is *stateless*

- no notion of multi-step exchanges of HTTP messages to complete a Web “transaction”
  - no need for client/server to track “state” of multi-step exchange
  - all HTTP requests are independent of each other
  - no need for client/server to “recover” from a partially-completed-but-never-completely-completed transaction

a *stateful protocol*: client makes two changes to  $X$ , or none at all



*Q:* what happens if network connection or client crashes at  $t'$ ?

# Maintaining user/server state: cookies

Web sites and client browser use *cookies* to maintain some state between transactions

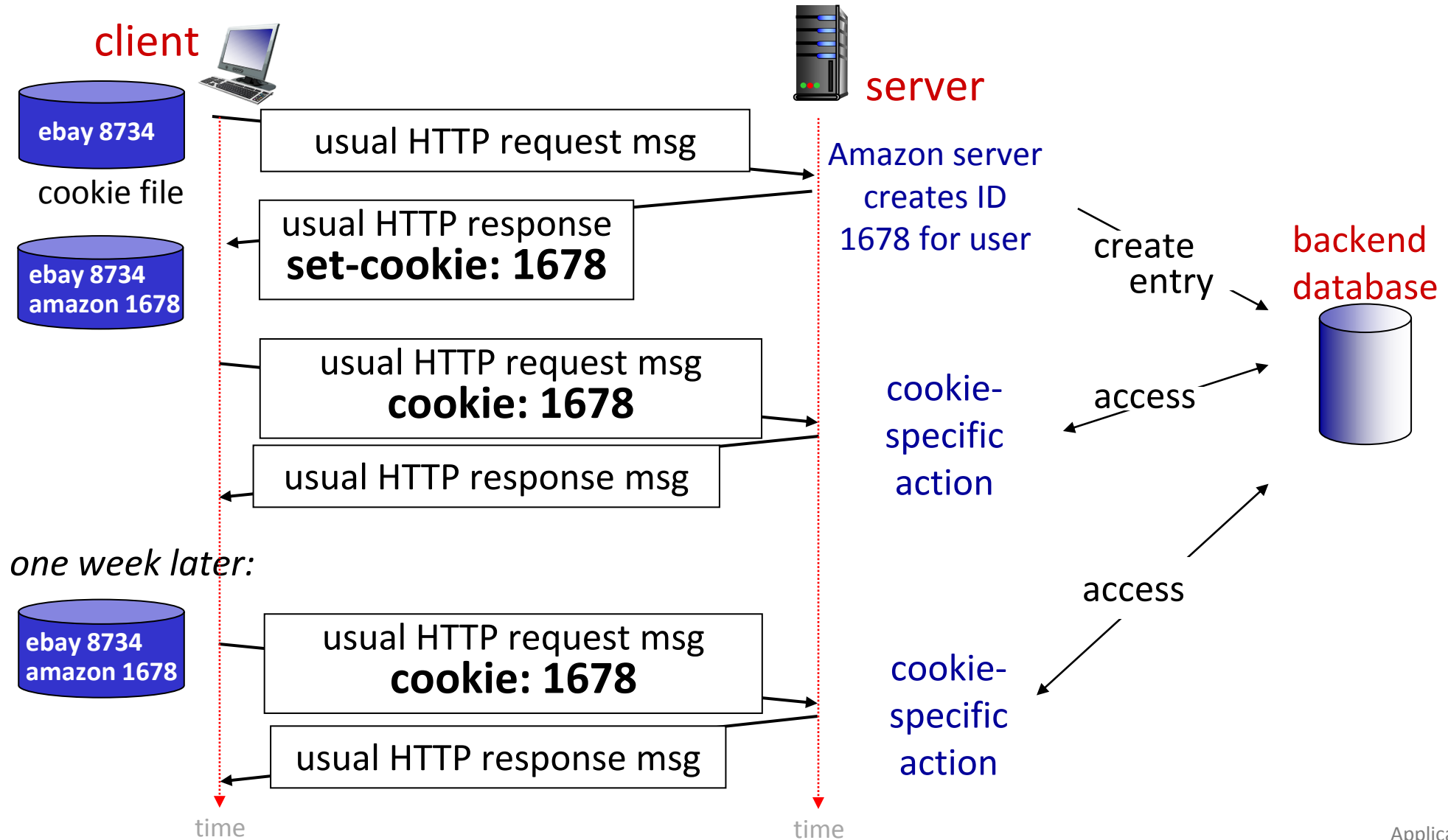
## *four components:*

- 1) cookie header line of HTTP *response* message
- 2) cookie header line in next HTTP *request* message
- 3) cookie file kept on user's host, managed by user's browser
- 4) back-end database at Web site

## Example:

- Susan uses browser on laptop, visits specific e-commerce site for first time
- when initial HTTP requests arrives at site, site creates:
  - unique ID (aka “cookie”)
  - entry in backend database for ID
- subsequent HTTP requests from Susan to this site will contain cookie ID value, allowing site to “identify” Susan

# Maintaining user/server state: cookies



# HTTP cookies: comments

## *What cookies can be used for:*

- authorization
- shopping carts
- recommendations
- user session state (Web e-mail)

## *Challenge: How to keep state?*

- *at protocol endpoints:* maintain state at sender/receiver over multiple transactions
- *in messages:* cookies in HTTP messages carry state

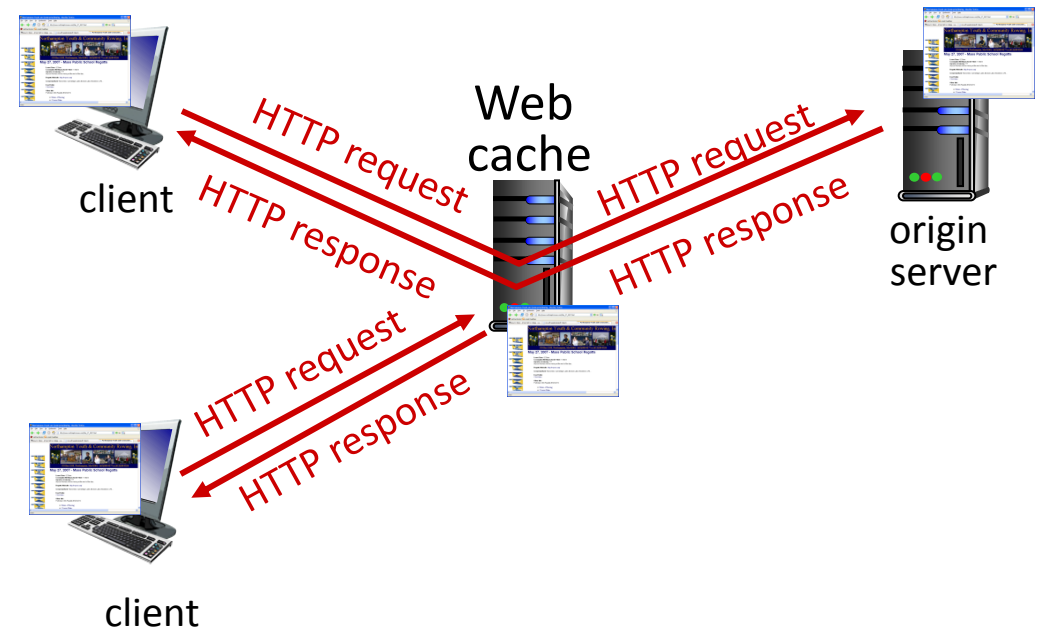
— aside —  
*cookies and privacy:*

- cookies permit sites to *learn* a lot about you on their site.
- third party persistent cookies (tracking cookies) allow common identity (cookie value) to be tracked across multiple web sites

# Web caches

*Goal:* satisfy client requests without involving origin server

- user configures browser to point to a (local) *Web cache*
- browser sends all HTTP requests to cache
  - *if* object in cache: cache returns object to client
  - *else* cache requests object from origin server, caches received object, then returns object to client



# Web caches (aka proxy servers)

- Web cache acts as both client and server
  - server for original requesting client
  - client to origin server
- server tells cache about object's allowable caching in response header:

```
Cache-Control: max-age=<seconds>
```

```
Cache-Control: no-cache
```

## *Why* Web caching?

- reduce response time for client request
  - cache is closer to client
- reduce traffic on an institution's access link
- Internet is dense with caches
  - enables “poor” content providers to more effectively deliver content

# Caching example

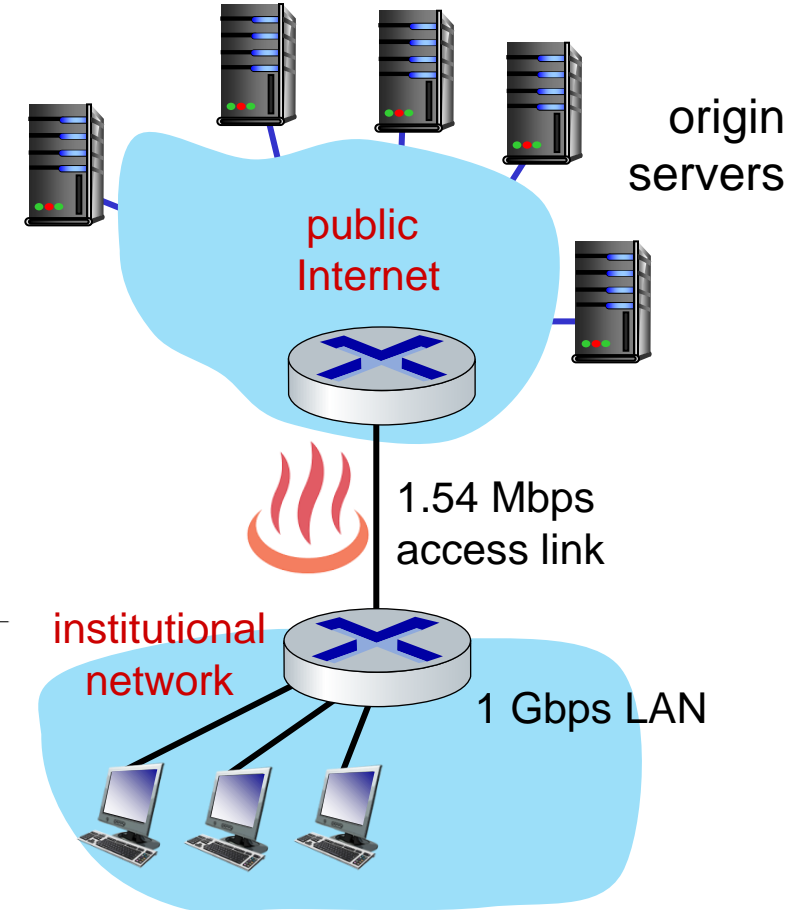
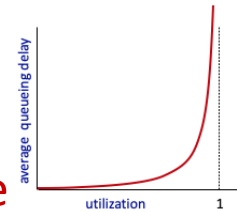
## Scenario:

- access link rate: 1.54 Mbps
- RTT from institutional router to server: 2 sec
- web object size: 100K bits
- average request rate from browsers to origin servers: 15/sec
  - avg data rate to browsers: 1.50 Mbps

## Performance:

- access link utilization = .97
- LAN utilization: .0015
- end-end delay = Internet delay +  
access link delay + LAN delay  
= 2 sec + minutes + usecs

problem: large  
queueing delays  
at high utilization!





# Option 1: buy a faster access link

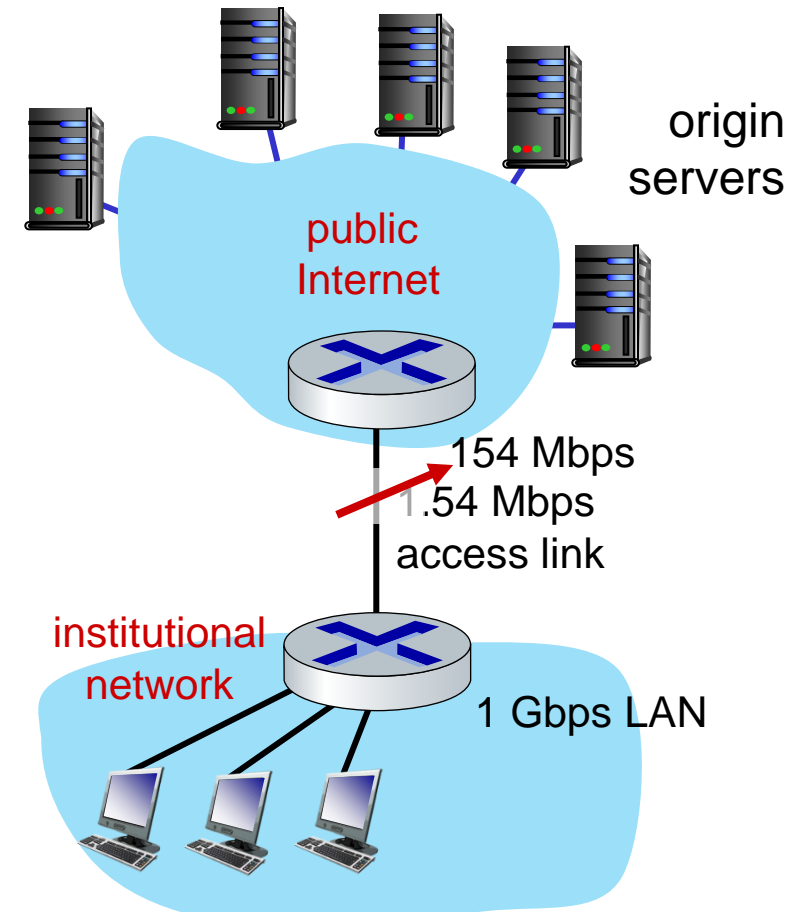
## Scenario:

- access link rate: ~~1.54~~ 154 Mbps
- RTT from institutional router to server: 2 sec
- web object size: 100K bits
- average request rate from browsers to origin servers: 15/sec
  - avg data rate to browsers: 1.50 Mbps

## Performance:

- access link utilization = ~~.97~~ .0097
- LAN utilization: .0015
- end-end delay = Internet delay +  
access link delay + LAN delay  
= 2 sec + ~~minutes~~ + usecs

Cost: faster access link (expensive!) → msecs



# Option 2: install a web cache

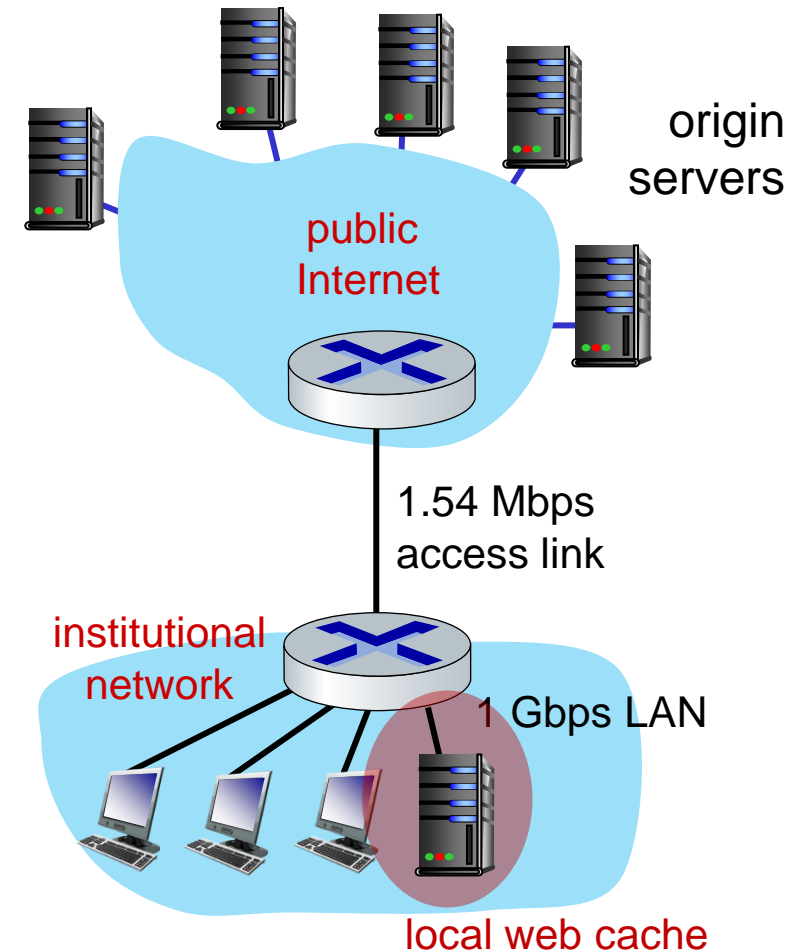
## *Scenario:*

- access link rate: 1.54 Mbps
- RTT from institutional router to server: 2 sec
- web object size: 100K bits
- average request rate from browsers to origin servers: 15/sec
  - avg data rate to browsers: 1.50 Mbps

*Cost:* web cache (cheap!)

## *Performance:*

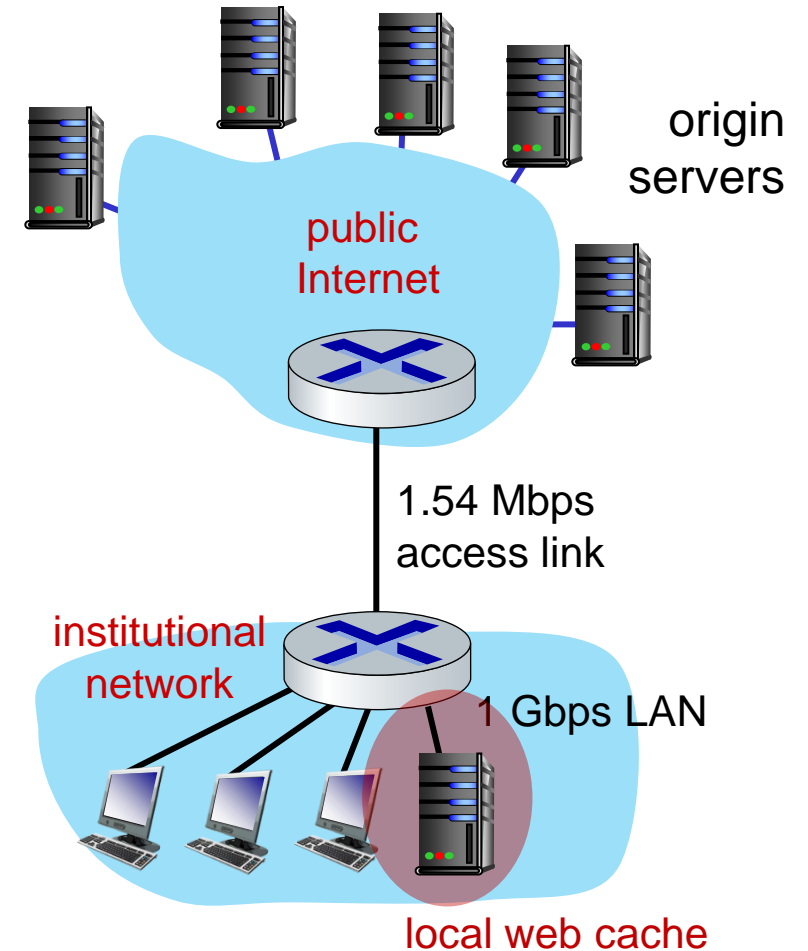
- LAN utilization: .?
  - access link utilization = ?
  - average end-end delay = ?
- How to compute link utilization, delay?*



# Calculating access link utilization, end-end delay with cache:

suppose cache hit rate is 0.4:

- 40% requests served by cache, with low (msec) delay
- 60% requests satisfied at origin
  - rate to browsers over access link  
 $= 0.6 * 1.50 \text{ Mbps} = .9 \text{ Mbps}$
  - access link utilization  $= 0.9 / 1.54 = .58$  means low (msec) queueing delay at access link
- average end-end delay:  
 $= 0.6 * (\text{delay from origin servers})$   
 $+ 0.4 * (\text{delay when satisfied at cache})$   
 $= 0.6 (2.01) + 0.4 (\sim \text{msecs}) = \sim 1.2 \text{ secs}$

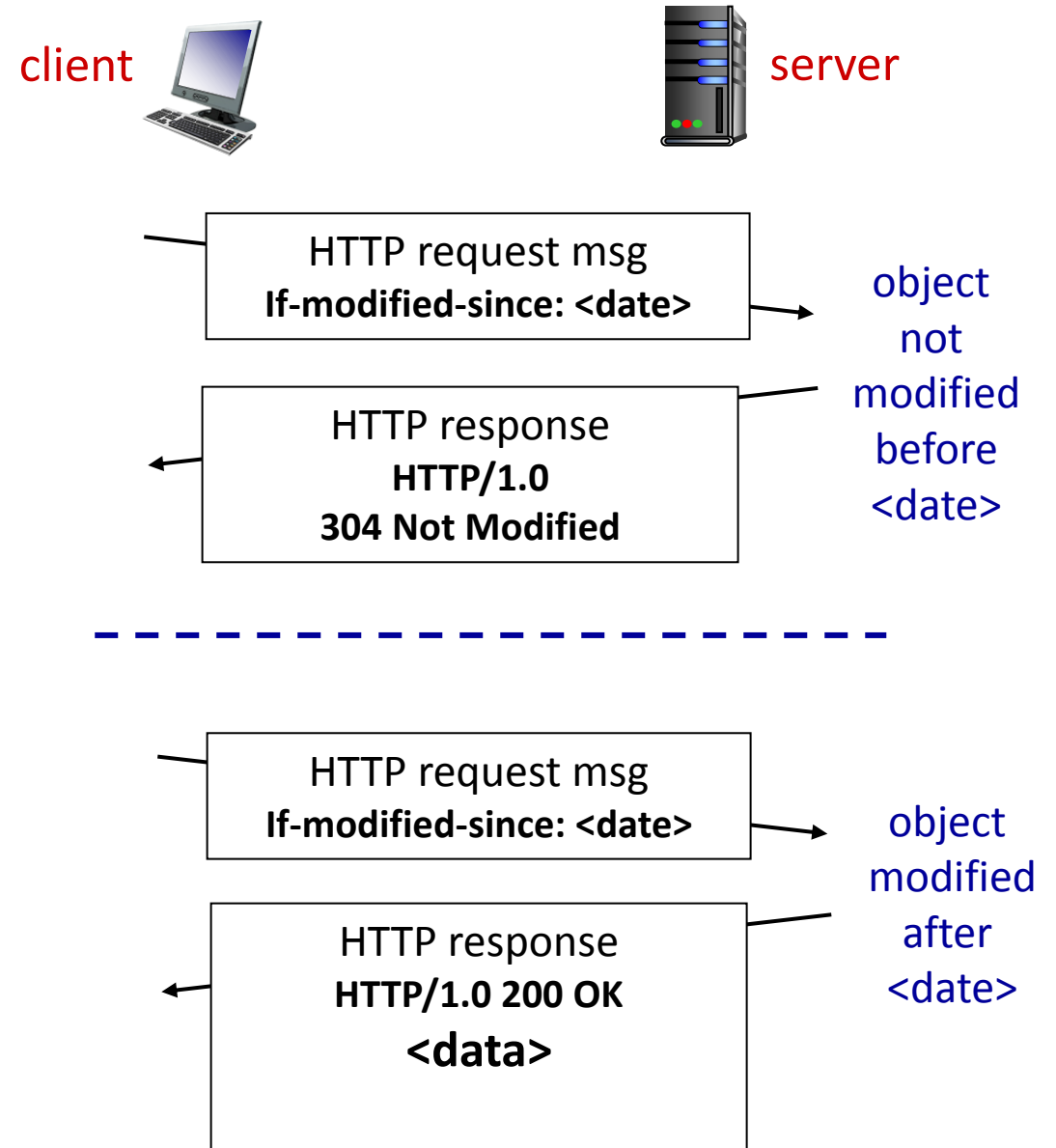


*lower average end-end delay than with 154 Mbps link (and cheaper too!)*

# Conditional GET

**Goal:** don't send object if cache has up-to-date cached version

- no object transmission delay (or use of network resources)
- **client:** specify date of cached copy in HTTP request  
**If-modified-since: <date>**
- **server:** response contains no object if cached copy is up-to-date:  
**HTTP/1.0 304 Not Modified**



# HTTP/2

*Key goal:* decreased delay in multi-object HTTP requests

HTTP1.1: introduced multiple, pipelined GETs over single TCP connection

- server responds *in-order* (FCFS: first-come-first-served scheduling) to GET requests
- with FCFS, small object may have to wait for transmission (**head-of-line (HOL) blocking**) behind large object(s)
- loss recovery (retransmitting lost TCP segments) stalls object transmission

# HTTP/2

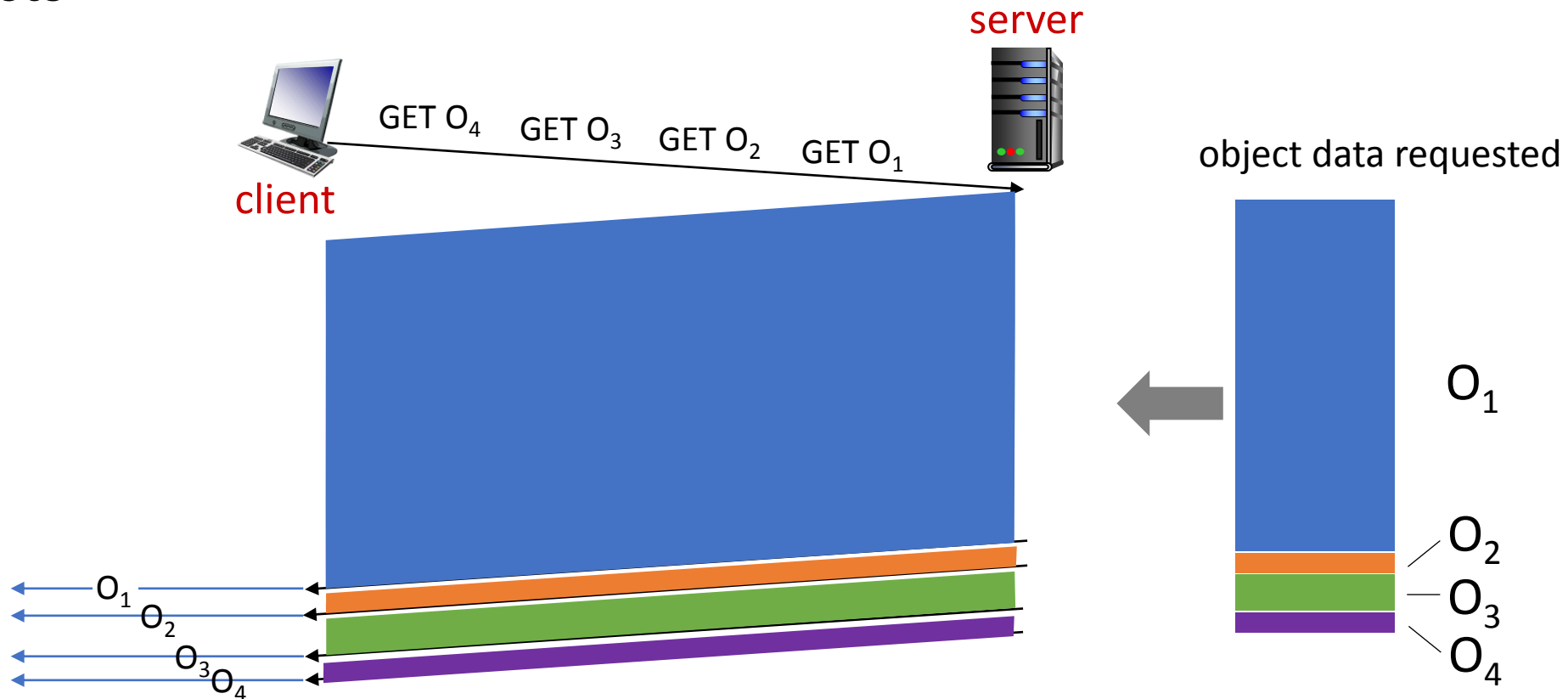
*Key goal:* decreased delay in multi-object HTTP requests

HTTP/2: [RFC 7540, 2015] increased flexibility at *server* in sending objects to client:

- methods, status codes, most header fields unchanged from HTTP 1.1
- transmission order of requested objects based on client-specified object priority (not necessarily FCFS)
- *push* unrequested objects to client
- divide objects into frames, schedule frames to mitigate HOL blocking

# HTTP/2: mitigating HOL blocking

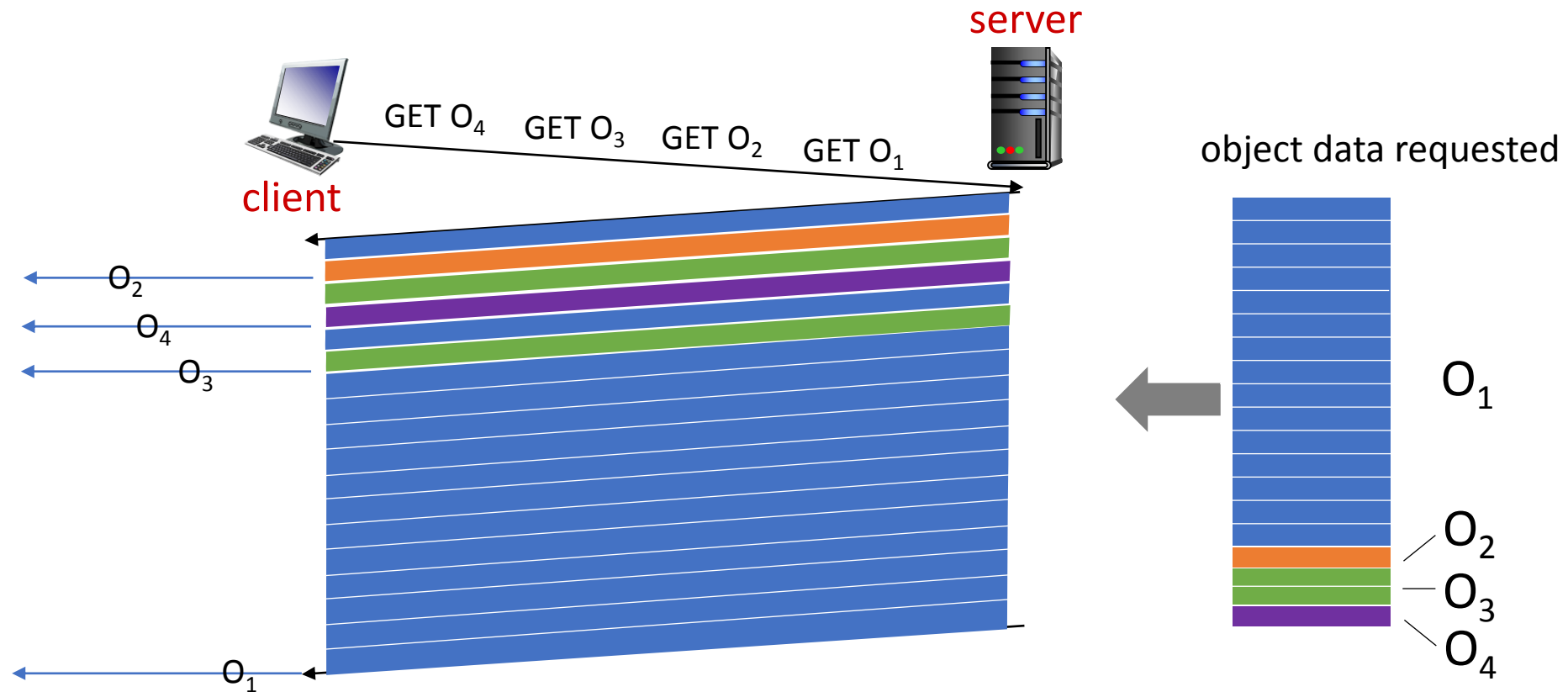
HTTP 1.1: client requests 1 large object (e.g., video file) and 3 smaller objects



*objects delivered in order requested:  $O_2$ ,  $O_3$ ,  $O_4$  wait behind  $O_1$*

# HTTP/2: mitigating HOL blocking

HTTP/2: objects divided into frames, frame transmission interleaved



*O<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, O<sub>4</sub> delivered quickly, O<sub>1</sub> slightly delayed*