

**UPLB NETWORK QUEUE SIMULATOR (UNQS):
ANALYZING NETWORK PERFORMANCE
FOR INTERNET BANDWIDTH MANAGEMENT**

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Leensey M. Lawas was born on September 25, 1996 and currently resides in Los Banos. She is the eldest daughter to Vernel and Cresencia, and has two siblings: Cresel (16) and Sevyer (7). Leensey finished her primary education in Maquiling School Incorporated and her secondary education in University of the Philippines Rural High School. During her transition from elementary to high school, she was able to discover her interest in coding through a social networking site that allows HTML and CSS manipulation. She developed further interest upon taking up a class on coding in her high school years. Thus, she pursued a bachelor of science degree in Computer Science. Aside from coding, she also dabbles in creative writing as inspired by her other hobbies: watching films and shows, and reading books.

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ABSTRACT

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Given the increasing demand for bandwidth, UNQS was developed to simulate real traffic data and to help identify the optimal bandwidth setting as measured by duration (seconds), throughput (bits per second), and flow loss (percentage). For the traffic data that was collected using *ntopng* from November 13 to 20, four bandwidth settings (32.5 Mbps, 35.0 Mbps, 37.5 Mbps, and 40.0 Mbps) were simulated to show the trend that increased bandwidth eventually resulted to successfully scheduling all the flows, specifically using bandwidths 37.5 Mbps and 40 Mbps. Same duration and throughput was observed for both, but in consideration of cost, 37.5 Mbps would be preferred. In conclusion, UNQS can be used to find optimal bandwidth setting for a network given data collected using *ntopng* as input.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BOOTP	Bootstrap Protocol Server
DHCP	Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol
DNS	Domain Name System
FIFO	First In-First Out Queueing
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
HTTPS	Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure
IANA	Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IP	Internet Protocol
ITC	Information Technology Center
LLMNR	Link Local Multicast Name Resolution
MS-DS	Microsoft-Directory Services
PQ	Priority Queueing
SIP	Session Initiation Protocol
SMB	Server Message Block
SNMP	Simple Network Management Protocol
SQL	Structured Query Language
SSDP	Simple Service Discovery Protocol
TE	Traffic Engineering
UNQS	UPLB Network Queue Simulator
UPLB	University of the Philippines Los Banos
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol
WFQ	Weighted Fair Queueing

UPLB Network Queue Simulator (UNQS):

Analyzing Network Performance for Internet Bandwidth Management

Leensey M. Lawas

INTRODUCTION

With the prevalence of internet usage in this digital age, the rise of demand for fast and reliable execution of online services is inevitable. Whether it is for personal use, like video chatting with friends and family from abroad, or for commercial and business transactions, customers want to make sure their services are done efficiently without slowing down or timing out. Client requests are sent simultaneously that when the server responses (or traffic) are returned, the routers are unable to inspect long fields in Internet Protocol (IP) packet headers quickly and are unable to reassemble and segment packets fast enough, causing performance bottleneck (Pazos, Gerla, and Rigolio, 1999). A quick solution to the problem would be increasing bandwidth size, because as the demand for services increases, the bandwidth must also be increased (*Communication news*, 2001). However, this method is costly and inefficient, which is why traffic engineering (TE) takes place.

Awduche, Chiu, Elwalid, Widjaja, and Xiao of The Internet Society (2002) defined that internet traffic engineering deals with evaluating network performance and optimizing it. Bandwidth is the unit of measurement, usually in Kbps or Mbps, used to monitor network performance for quantifying how much information a communication channel can handle (Teach-ICT, n.d.).

Background of the study

Tong and Yang (2007) cited that there have been many studies on TE, but most of them dealt

with route selection algorithms, and few tackled bandwidth management techniques. For this study, bandwidth management is the TE method chosen. Kanu, Kuyoro, Ogunlere, & Adegbenjo define bandwidth management as an optimization technique that helps differentiate the types of network traffic from each other and determine which client or service should be prioritized. In short, bandwidth management allocates the available bandwidth depending on network traffic and client/service priority.

In an article named *Bandwidth management pays off* (2002), two key devices were identified to help in bandwidth management: traffic shaping or congestion avoidance mechanisms and queueing techniques. *Congestion avoidance mechanisms* or *congestion control* locates where in the router the packets do not enter the system, and finds an alternative route so the packets do not block the way and cause timeout (Jacobson, 1988). *Queueing techniques*, on the other hand, help predict and direct the traffic flow by implementing a constraint or constraints to provide the services as demanded (Gross and Harris, 1974). In addition, queueing network models are known for accuracy and efficiency (Lazowska et al, 1984).

Significance of the study

Inefficient internet bandwidth management can lead to dissatisfied customers and reduced productivity. As long there is a need for “high quality of corporate customer satisfaction”, bandwidth management will continue to grow as a body of knowledge (Duzbeck, 2006). This study simulated actual traffic data within the University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB) Network in order to determine whether the existing bandwidth is optimal or not. Additionally, the results can also be used for future planning that can entail significant cost reductions, thus optimizing both bandwidth and budget to provide quality service.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to efficiently simulate the UPLB network traffic by identifying the most optimal bandwidth setting. Specifically, the study was able to:

1. Collect traffic data from the UPLB network;
2. Simulate the traffic data using various bandwidth sizes;
3. Take note of the duration, throughput, and flow loss for each simulation; and
4. Determine the most optimal network setting using graphs and simple statistics.

Time and Place of the study

The study was conducted from January 2017 until June 2018, at the Institute of Computer Science, UPLB.

Scope and Limitations of the study

The study was limited to monitoring and simulating a portion of the UPLB network. Also, it focused on the traditional queueing technique known as First In-First Out Queueing (FIFO).

In determining the most optimal bandwidth, the throughput, latency, and flow loss values was measured, noted, and compared. *Throughput* is the number of tasks accomplished over a period of time, *latency* is the time it takes for a fixed task to be finished, and *flow loss* is the percentage of dropped flows over the total number of flows.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Several studies have been conducted which attempted to manage internet bandwidth as efficiently as possible. With a goal to provide speedy transaction of certain services such as e-mailing, video streaming, downloading, and many more, internet bandwidth management plays an important role not just for business and commerce applications, but as well as personal usage, for customer satisfaction and improved network performance. Because of the many details enumerated, the demand for internet bandwidth management has never been greater.

Internet Live Stats (2016) records that internet users from 2015 to 2016 had increased with an estimated 43.4% of the world population to 46.1%. It has been a dramatic increase since 1995, with users all over the world amounting less than 1%. The implications of this statistics to the UPLB academe can also be applicable, as more students and workers enter the university to make use of the campus network. The increase entails a growth in demand for larger internet bandwidth. With a number of users sending multiple requests for different services with varying sizes, data traffic becomes congested. No end-user wants delays, slow downs, or timeouts, in accomplishing the services they requested. Instead, end-users want fast execution of their requests so they can proceed to doing other tasks.

To fix the problem, bandwidth management takes place. Instead of paying for an increase in bandwidth for a temporary fix, as mentioned in the article *Communication News (2001)*, bandwidth management aims to properly allocate the already existing bandwidth size as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

Before packets are received by the destination address, they first arrive in packet switches.

These packet switches are in charge of queueing the packets and forwarding them eventually to the destination (Comer, 1999). Thus enters the scheduling algorithms used to identify which packets must be distributed first to the computers in the network.

An important aspect in network scheduling is the data that will be subjected to it. Jerkins and Wang (1999) emphasized the importance of characterizing these data in order to extend its applications to traffic management, and more specifically, for the purpose of this paper, bandwidth management.

The simplest scheduling algorithm is the First-In First-Out (FIFO) queueing algorithm, wherein each introduced data is serviced based on their arrival time. A study by Mustafa and Talab (2016) showed that FIFO has a smaller queueing delay compared to Priority Queueing (PQ) and Weighted Fair Queueing (WFQ).

METHODOLOGY

Traffic Collection

With assistance from ITC, a mirror port was setup and connected to a 64-bit Ubuntu server named as *babage*. The traffic monitoring application, *ntopng*, was installed to the server. MySQL database management system was also installed, which shall contain the database where traffic flow data from *ntopng* will be dumped. To run *ntopng*, a configuration file needs to be set to identify the network interface(s) and network(s) to be monitored, the database and table to be dumped at, and the HTTP port where the web portal can be accessed. Data was collected from November 13 to 20. Using the *mysqldump* tool, the .sql file was generated for the researcher to have a copy of the database outside of the UPLB network. *ntopng* uses the Unix timestamp to label the arrival time of packets into the switch (known as FIRST_SWITCHED) and their exit time from switch to their destination hosts (LAST_SWITCHED). This timestamp counts the seconds that have passed since January 1, 1970 (Coordinated Universal Time/UTC).

The configuration file *ntopng.conf* looked like this:

```
--pid-path=/var/tmp/ntopng.pid
--daemon
--interface=eno1,eno2
--http-port=3000
--local-networks="10.0.0.0/8,172.16.0.0/16,202.92.144.0/22"
--dns-mode=1
--data-dir=/var/tmp/ntopng
--disable-autologout
--community
--hw-timestamp-mode=ixia
--user="admin"
--dump-flows="mysql;localhost;ntopng;flowsv4;root;[password]"
--dump-hosts=remote
```

Figure 1. ntopng configuration file.

To run *ntopng* using the configuration file *ntopng.conf*,

```
ntopng "/etc/ntopng/ntopng.conf"
```

Figure 2. Run *ntopng* with configuration file.

To save the data into a .sql file,

```
mysqldump -u [username] -p[password] [db_name] flowsv4 > flowsv4.sql
```

Figure 3. Dump data to sql file.

Using *desc flowsv4* in the *mysql* command line interface, the structure of the table *flowsv4* is retrieved. Said information has been placed in Table 1.

Table 1. Structure of database table flowsv4

FIELD	TYPE	NULL	KEY	DEFAULT	EXTRA
idx	Int(11)	NO	MUL	NULL	auto_increment
VLAN_ID	smallint(5) unsigned	YES		NULL	
L7_PROTO	smallint(5) unsigned	YES		NULL	
IP_SRC_ADDR	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
L4_SRC_PORT	smallint(5) unsigned	YES		NULL	
IP_DST_ADDR	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
L4_DST_PORT	smallint(5) unsigned	YES		NULL	
PROTOCOL	tinyint(3) unsigned	YES		NULL	
IN_BYTES	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
OUT_BYTES	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
PACKETS	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
FIRST_SWITCHED	int(10) unsigned	YES	MUL	NULL	
LAST_SWITCHED	int(10) unsigned	YES		NULL	
INFO	varchar(255)	YES		NULL	
JSON	blob	YES		NULL	
PROFILE	varchar(255)	YES	MUL	NULL	
NTOPNG_INSTANCE_NAME	varchar(256)	YES	MUL	NULL	
INTERFACE_ID	smallint(5)	YES		NULL	

The columns used in either the traffic description or simulation are as follows: IP_SRC_ADDR and IP_DST_ADDR to determine the two hosts that are interacting, L4_DST_PORT to have a rough idea of the network applications and services being accessed by the source host, IN_BYTES and PACKETS to count the size of the data being retrieved including the overhead, and FIRST_SWITCHED to identify the timestamp when a flow arrives for scheduling.

Simulation

A class diagram (Fig. 7) was constructed to get an overview of how UNQS was implemented in the Java programming language. The following items give a brief description of each class/interface.

1. **Configuration.java** is the class responsible for setting, updating, validating, and displaying the configuration for the database connection and simulation settings.
2. **Flow.java** represents a *flow*, which is a network link between a source host and a destination host. For the purpose of this program, the IP addresses of both hosts are not defined as this class' attribute.
3. **NetworkBuffer.java** is the queue or cache that will contain all arriving flows that need to be switched.
4. **Schedule.java** is an interface that has final-static-defined variables FIFO (0), PQ (1), and WFQ (2). All of its methods are abstract and therefore must be overridden by the classes that will implement it.
5. **FirstInFirstOut.java** implements the Schedule interface and overrides its methods in order to perform FIFO's logic.
6. **UNQS.java** contains the main function where the connection to the database is established. Time is counted from the configuration's defined range of *start_time* to *end_time* and shall continue to iterate until all flows within the defined network buffer(s) are scheduled from the

switch to their destination.

To compile the program,

```
javac -cp ".;mysql-connector-java.jar;" *.java
```

Figure 4. Compile UNQS.

To run the program,

```
java -cp .:mysql-connector-java.jar UNQS conf/simulation.conf
```

Figure 5. Run UNQS.

where *conf* is a subfolder containing configuration file *simulation.conf*. The output will then be stored to subfolder results in the format *YYYY-MM-DD_bandwidth.txt*.

The format of UNQS' configuration file was inspired by the configuration file used in *ntopng*. It contains:

```
# information for the database connection
--username=root
--password
--ip-address=127.0.0.1
--port=3306
--database=FINAL
--table=flowsv4

# for the queue

# in bits per second
--bandwidth=6000000000

# 0=FIFO, 1=PQ, 2=WFQ
--schedule=0

# in seconds
--timeout=60
--starttime=1510502646
--endtime=1511168758

# add if debugging
#--debug
```

Figure 6. UNQS configuration file.

where the first block of information (username, password, IP address, port, database, table) is used to connect to the database, and the latter parts are used for setting the bandwidth, schedule type, timeout, the start and end times that bound the data set, and a debug flag.

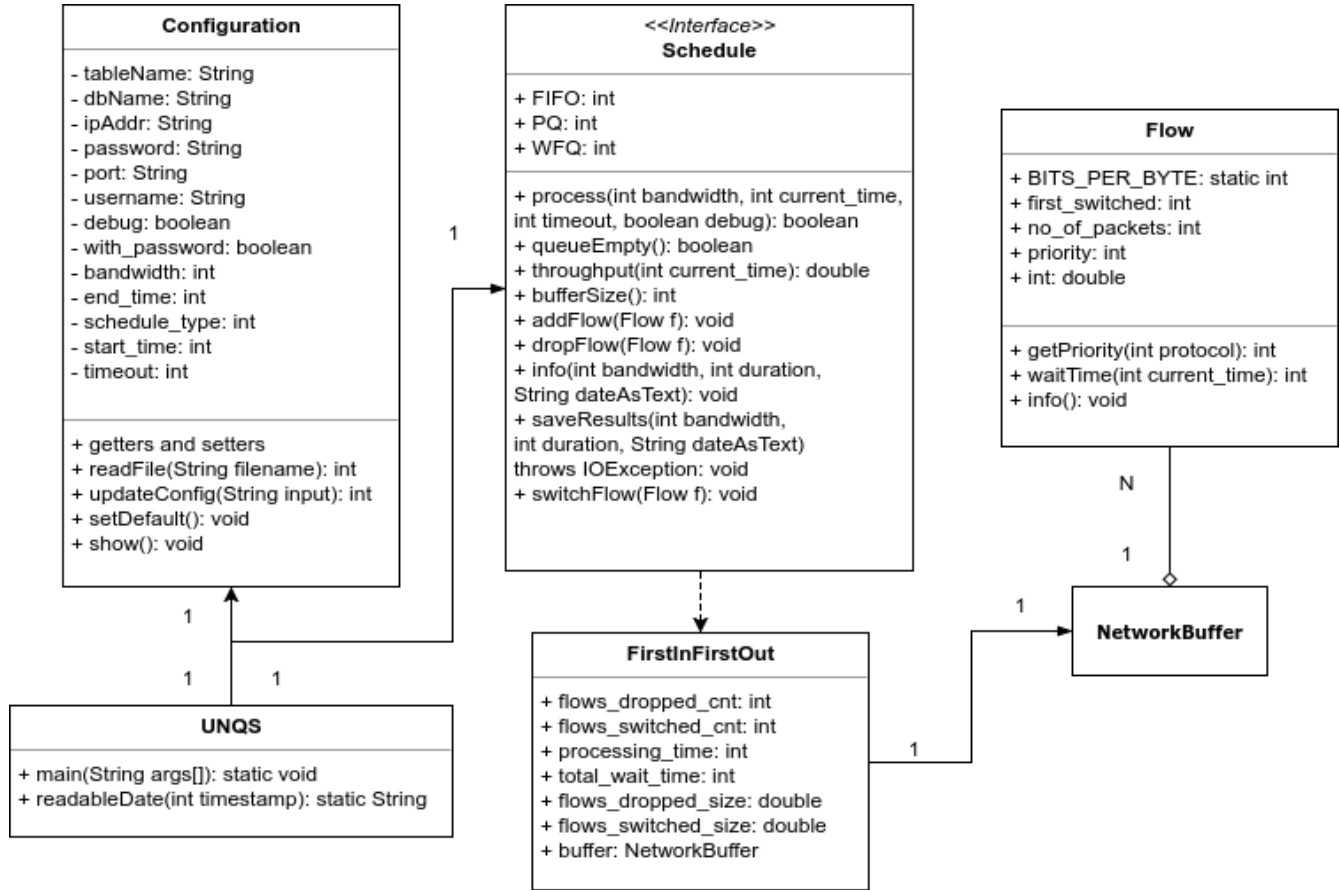


Figure 7. UNQS Class Diagram.

For each instance, UNQS has one Configuration object and one Schedule object. FirstInFirstOut inherits the methods of the Schedule interface and uses one NetworkBuffer. That particular NetworkBuffer object can contain many Flow objects.

An overview of the simulation's main program logic is visualized in the flow chart in Figure 8.

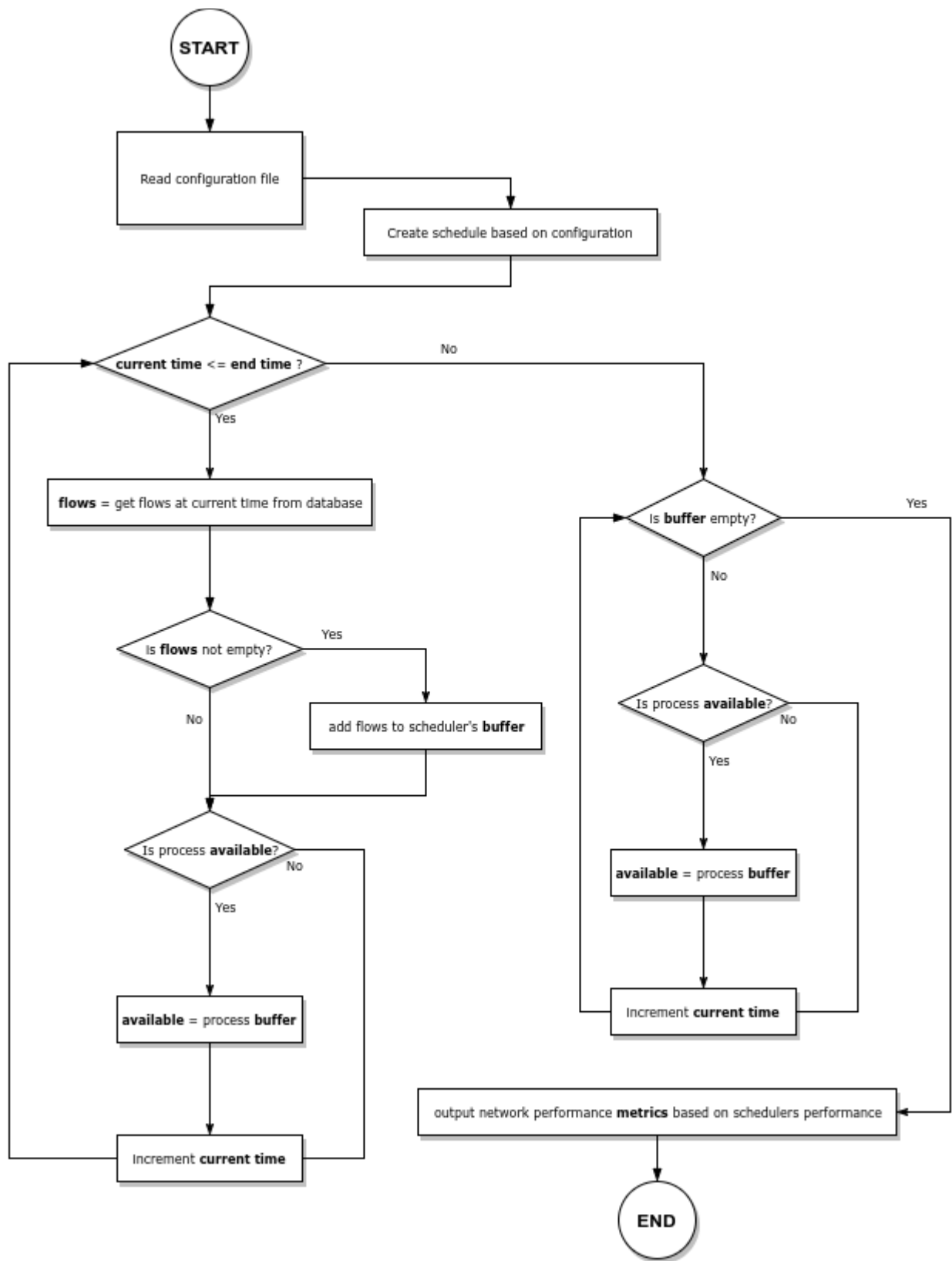


Figure 8. UNQS Main Program Logic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Traffic Description

Network traffic was collected from November 13-20. Specifically, the earliest interaction was sent at 1510502646 and the last flow arrived at 1511168758.

The total number of flows was 554,392, the largest flow having 1,362,515,708 bytes of data, the average size being 517,998.49 bytes and the smallest containing 60 bytes.

The most active source IP address, 172.16.8.8 (Private), sent the most data, accounting for 5.4324% of the total flows while the IP address 239.255.255.250 (Multicast) received the most interactions, thus describing 9.9321% of the total flows.

Table 2. Top 9 Out-Flows

DESTINATION (# of flows)	TOTAL BYTES	% TOTAL
KDDI CORPORATION (1)	62,409,079,786	60.6
MULTICAST (3)	12,310,903,701	11.9
Google LLC (3)	5,202,456,530	5.0
Facebook, Inc. (1)	2,771,346,197	2.7
Apple Inc. (1)	1,054,547,100	1.0

Table 3. Top 9 In-Flows

SOURCE (# of flows)	TOTAL BYTES	% TOTAL
KDDI CORPORATION(1)	79,135,454,093	43.0
Google LLC(3)	27,958,817,762	15.2
WorldStream B.V.(1)	3,426,880,570	1.9
M247 Ltd(2)	4,286,472,241	2.3
Converge ICT Solutions Inc.(2)	3,967,550,023	2.2

The top destination IP addresses for out-flow traffic shown in Table 2 and the top source IP addresses for in-flow traffic seen in Table 3 belong to the companies that are listed as follows:

1. **KDDI Corporation** is a telecommunications business based in Japan. It provides content hosting over optimized networks, and ICT and business services and solutions.
2. **Google LLC** is an American multinational technology company that specializes in Internet-related services and products such as online advertising technologies, search engine, cloud computing, software, and hardware.
3. **WorldStream B.V.** is a popular Internet Service Provider based in the Netherlands and is used by customers from all over the world. It provides cost-effective services to secure hosting environment, and offers hardware and Operating System technologies.
4. **M247 Ltd** is a UK-based technology company that offers services and tools to secure network and data while providing connectivity and internet infrastructure that expands to a global scale.
5. **Converge ICT** is a Philippine technology company with the fastest growing fiber internet and services offered to ensure pure end-to-end fiber internet connection, thus reducing data loss, increasing speed and bandwidth.
6. **Facebook** is an American online social media and social networking service company.
7. **Apple Inc.** is an American multinational technology company that designs, develops, and sells consumer electronics, computer software, and online services. Multicast IPs allow group communication to be sent simultaneously to multiple computers.
8. **Multicast** is not a company, but rather a form of data transmission that allows multiple hosts to receive data simultaneously.

Table 4. Top 10 Destination Ports

PORT NUMBER	PROTOCOL	TOTAL FLOWS	% TOTAL
443	HTTPS	65,088	11.7
53	DNS	60,765	11.0
1900	SSDP	52,579	9.5
5060	SIP	43,101	7.8
445	Microsoft-DS	28,746	5.2
80	HTTP	18,485	3.3
5355	LLMNR	17,090	3.1
0	Reserved	15,732	2.8
7437	Faximum	13,734	2.5
161	SNMP	9,142	1.6
67	Bootstrap Protocol Server	8,602	1.6

The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) is responsible for associating port numbers with certain internet protocols used by network applications. These identifications can be found in IANA's *Service Name and Transport Protocol Port Number Registry*. Table 4 listed the top destination port numbers as recorded in the data.

1. **Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS)** is responsible for securing communication over a network.
2. **Domain Name System (DNS)** helps match names to IP addresses and vice versa to facilitate network communications.
3. **Simple Service Discovery Protocol (SSDP)** is used to advertise presence information to locate available network services.
4. **Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)** allows signaling and controlling of multimedia communication sessions in VoIP applications like online voice and video calls.

5. **Microsoft-Directory Services (MS-DS)** follows the SMB protocol for shared access to files, printers, and serial ports and other communications between nodes on a network.
6. **Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP)** is used to facilitate data communication for the World Wide Web.
7. **Link Local Multicast Name Resolution (LLMNR)** is a protocol based on DNS and allows both IPv4 and IPv6 hosts to perform name resolution for hosts on the same local links.
8. **0 (Reserved) and 7437 (Faximum)** have no specific protocols linked to them, and are likely abused ports to send computer attacks and harmful computer and network content like viruses.
9. **Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP)** functions in collecting and organizing information about managed devices on IP networks, and can modify information to change device behavior.
10. **Bootstrap Protocol Server (BOOTP)** is exclusive for IPv4; Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) server receives requests upon booting the client's computer.

Network Performance Metrics

Three network performance metrics were accounted for as a result of the simulation, namely, duration, throughput, and flow loss. They are described in the items listed below.

1. **Duration** d is a function of the arrival time t_0 seconds minus the last switched time t_n seconds.

$$d(t_0, t_n) = t_n - t_0$$

Figure 9. Formula for duration.

2. **Throughput** $tput$ was computed as

$$tput = \frac{count(t_s)}{d}$$

Figure 10. Formula for throughput.

where t_s is the total size (in bits) that was successfully switched, and d as the computed duration.

3. **Flow loss** is measured by the total number of dropped flows all over the total number of both dropped (f_l) and switched (f_s) flows, then multiplied by 100 to get the percentage.

$$l = \frac{\text{count}(f_l)}{\text{count}(f_l + f_s)} \times 100$$

Figure 11. Formula for flow loss.

Simulation Results

Table 5 contains a summary of the simulation using the network performance metrics as defined in the previous section. It is observed that as the bandwidth is increased, the flows being dropped reduced while the flows being switched increased and became flat. To visualize this, the total size per bandwidth was graphed in Figure 12. Aside from the information concerning the flows, the simulation results showed that the throughput and duration values across the 4 bandwidth constraints have significantly small difference and thus have similar performance.

Table 5. Simulation results per bandwidth

bandwidth (Mbps)	32.5	35.0	37.5	40.0
flows_dropped_size (Gb)	72.59	18.87	0	0
flows_dropped_cnt	36	9	0	0
flows_switched_size (Gb)	866.46	920.18	939.05	939.05
flows_switched_cnt	554,356	554,383	554,392	554,392
duration (days)	8.22	8.22	8.22	8.22
throughput (Mbps)	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3

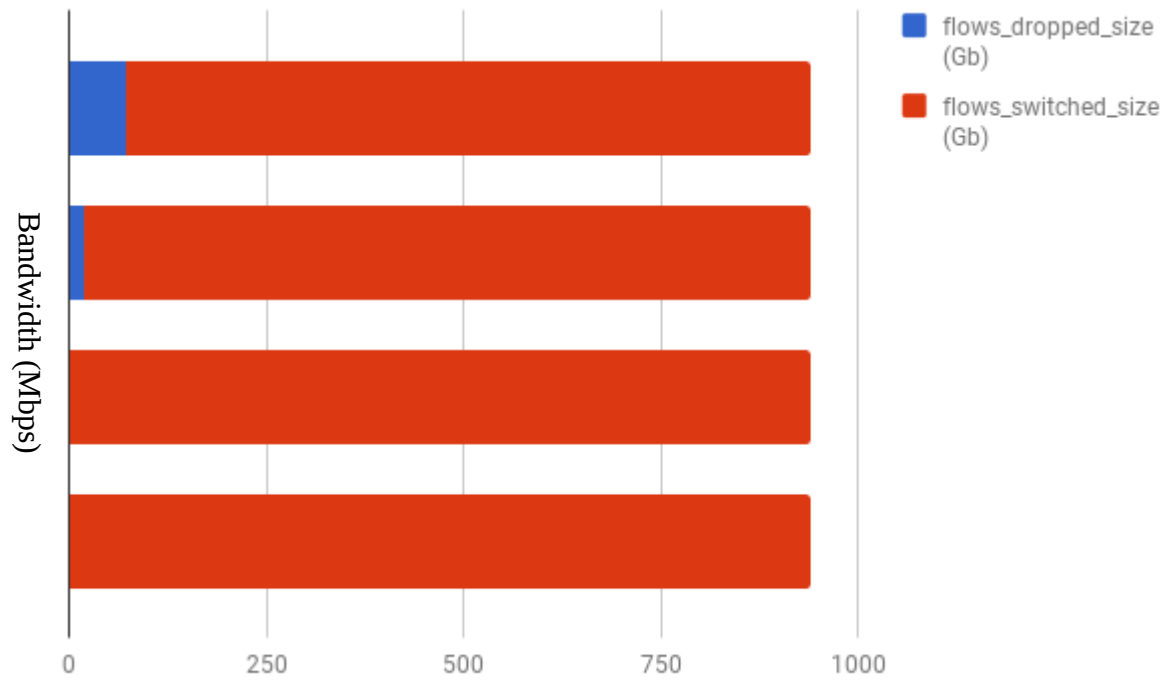


Figure 12. Total flow size per bandwidth.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Traffic data that was collected using *ntopng* was successfully processed using the FIFO scheduling algorithm that was simulated by UNQS. The output performance metrics showed the effect of increasing the bandwidth in order to switch all the flows. It is consistent with the expected result, since the assumption is an increased bandwidth should allow more data to be switched through the network.

The resulting top ports that were part of the collected data can be used to improve bandwidth allocation within the UPLB network, such as reserving a certain percentage for entertaining services and applications that make use of HTTPS, or by keeping watch of (and possibly blocking) ports like 0 and 7437 which could be used to transmit harmful content. Meanwhile, the resulting top flows show where the data is being sent and received, which can also help in bandwidth allocation by maximizing local servers that are barely used (e.g. Converge ICT, which provides UPLB's server), and could have significant effect in the budget being allocated to provide these services.

Considering that maintaining a local server to provide certain services can be expensive and that increasing the bandwidth size also has expensive additional cost, UNQS can be used as a tool to aid in identifying a recommendable bandwidth size that allows for optimal flow switching while minimizing cost. Furthermore, data could be collected from a longer time period in order to discover a pattern of behavior depending on certain periods of time, such as peak season during enrollment period, etc., which may then give a better picture of the bandwidth usage and thus determining the minimum and maximum bandwidths that would allow for cost-efficient and service-effective bandwidth setting.

Future works may also try to implement more complex scheduling algorithms aside from the native FIFO queuing algorithm in order to determine more optimal scheduling techniques that will require a smaller bandwidth setting and save expenses.

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