i341

Networks and Distributed Applications

DataLink Protocols

Data Link Protocols:

Data Link protocols are the rules which govern the way in which computing/network devices communicate at the data link level.

Several data link protocols commonly used include asynch (asynchronous) protocol, bisynch (binary synchronous) protocol, SDLC (Synchronous Data Link Control) and HDLC (High Level Data Link Control) protocols.

Functions of Data Link Protocols

Every specific data link protocol performs a set of functions in different ways. There are basic functions that any data link protocol must perform to be considered a true data link protocol. These functions include:

Synchronization: The data link protocol must be capable of establishing and maintaining synchronization between the sender and receiver. This means the receiver must be capable of determining where each bit/character begins and ends.

Framing: The protocol must be capable of marking the beginning and end of each transmission frame.

Control: The protocol must perform a minimum set of control functions. For example, on a multipoint link, the sending station must be capable of identifying the receiving station to which it is transmitting data.

Error Detection: The data link protocol must be able to perform some degree of error detection and implement error recovery.

HDLC (High Level Data Link Control)

HDLC is a bit oriented protocol specification published by ISO (international Standards Organization). HDLC is widely utilized throughout the world, it provides many functions and supports a broad range of applications. HDLC is also the basis for many other widely used protocols (such as SDLC, LAPB and LLC) used in the data communications industry. HDLC Figure-1 illustrates the HDLC family.

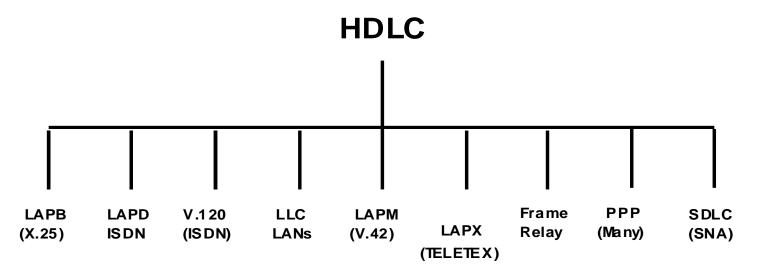
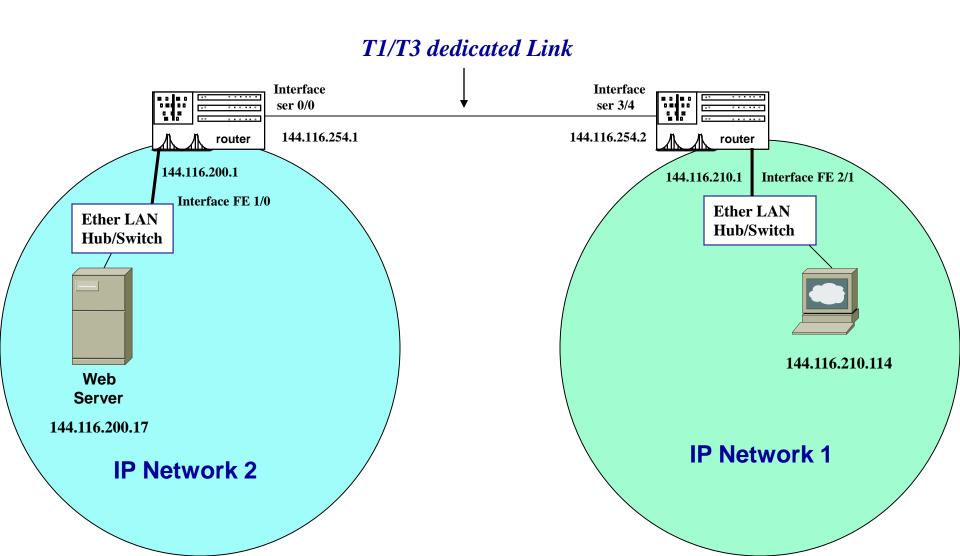


Figure-1 (HDLC Family)

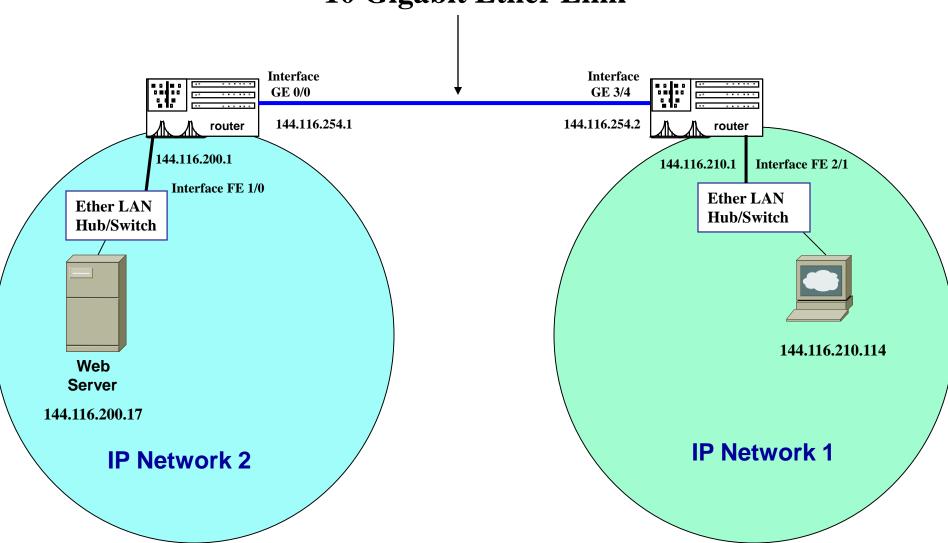
Why would I ever need to know HDLC?

Protocol Illustration Scenario #1



Protocol Illustration Scenario #2

10 Gigabit Ether Link



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Data Link Protocols

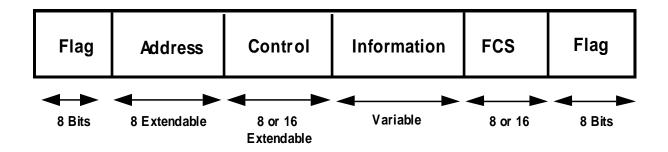


Figure-2 HDLC Frame Format

I: Information

S: Supervisory

U: Unnumbered

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
0	N(S)			P/F	N(R)		
1	0	S		P/F	N(R)		
1	1	M		P/F	M		

N (S) = Send Sequence Number

N(R) = Receive Sequence Number

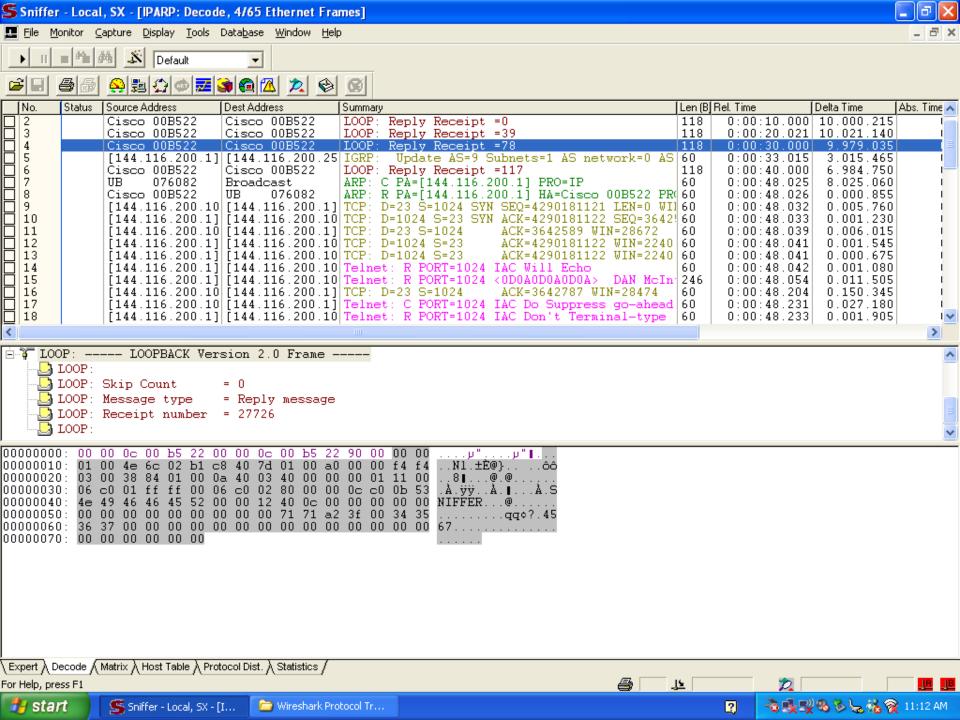
S = Supervisory Function bits

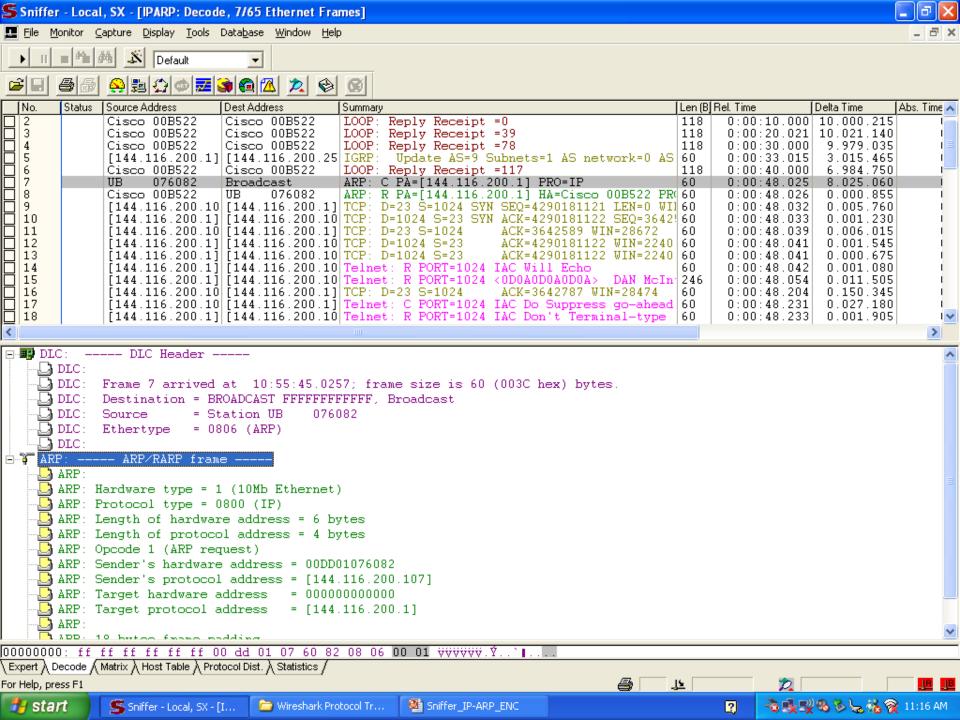
M = Unnumbered function bits

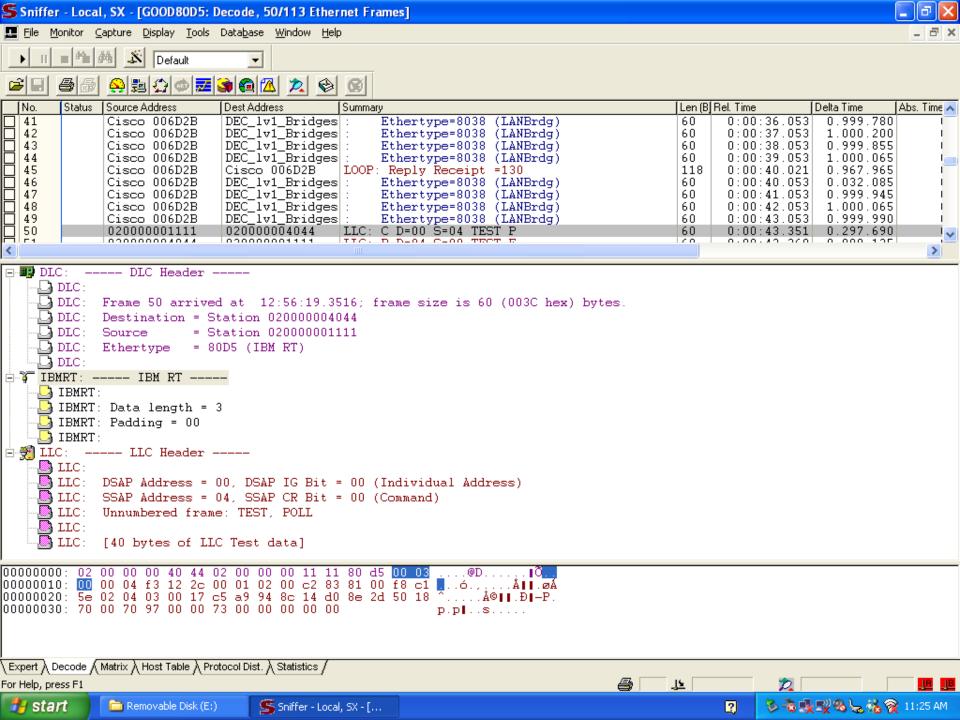
P/F = Poll/Final Bit

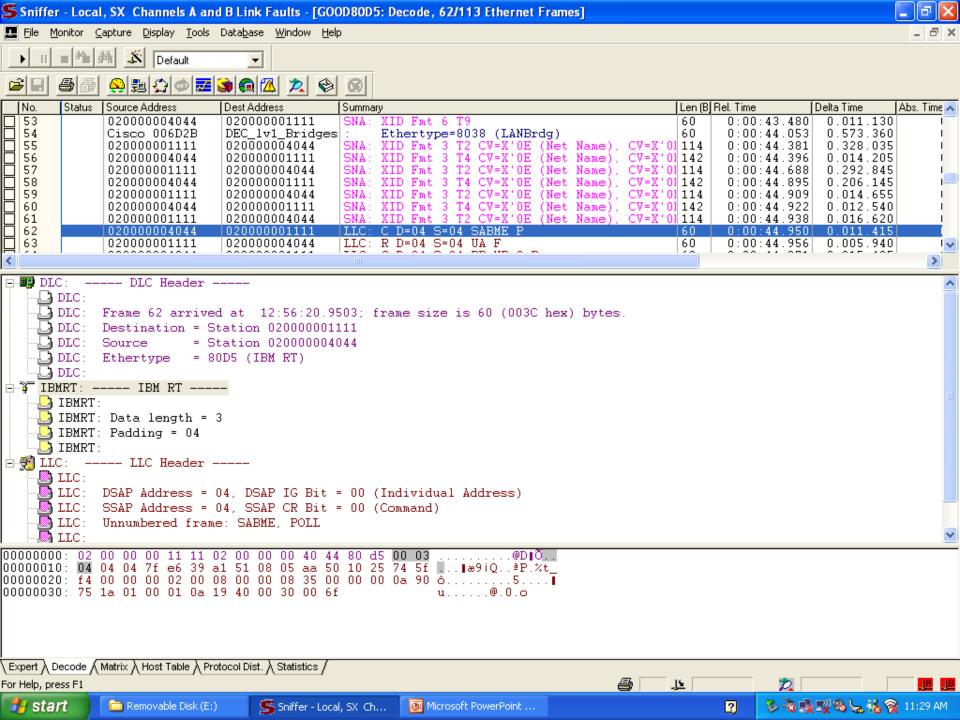
Figure-3 HDLC Control Field Format

Remember the OSI Layers?





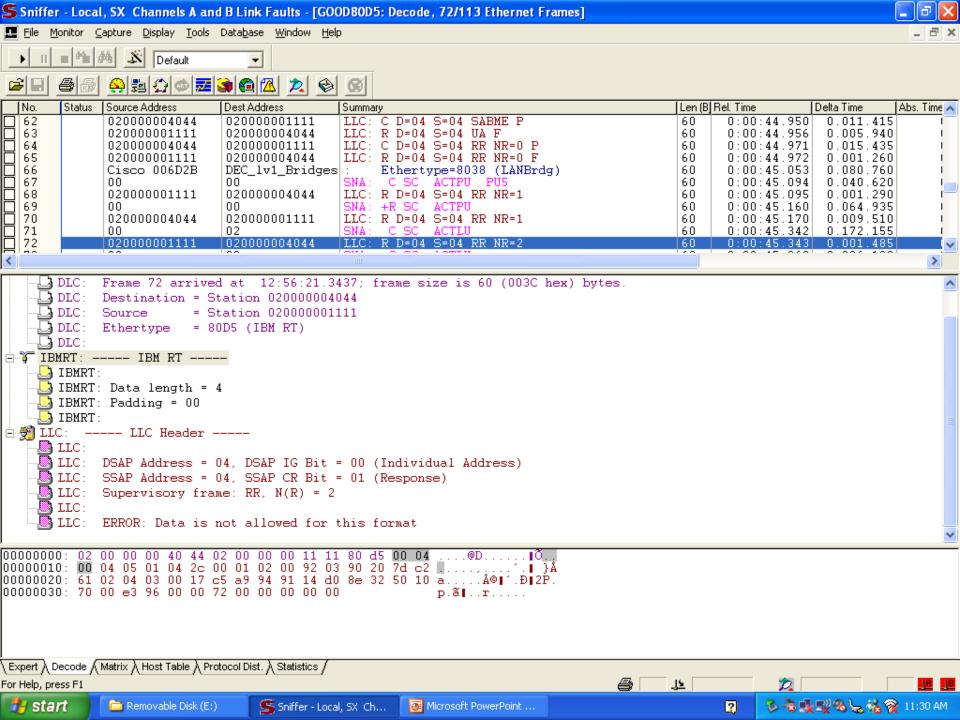




Data Link Protocols

Sequence Counter Definitions:

- **V(R) Receive-state variable**. A counter maintained by a network station. This counter indicates the sequence number of the next-in-sequence I PDU to be received on a connection. It is maintained in the network station and not the frame.
- **N(S)** Sequence number of the frame (called the send sequence number). Located in the transmitted frame, this field will only be set in information (I) packets. Prior to sending an I frame, the value of N(S) is set to the value of V(S), the send-state variable. This is located in the frame and not in the network station.
- **V(S)** Send-state variable. This number indicates the next sequence number expected on the connection. It is incremented by one for each successive I-frame transmission. It is maintained in the network station and not the frame.
- N(R) Receive Sequence number. This is an acknowledgment of a previous frame. It is located in the transmitted frame. All information and supervisory frames will contain this. Prior to sending that type of frame, it is set equal to the value of the receive-state V(R) for that connection. N(R) indicates to the receiving station that the station that originated this frame accepts all frames up to the N(R) minus 1.



Data Link Protocols

This ability to detect and correct sequence errors is basically characterized by three types of retransmissions: **Go Back to N, Selective Repeat, and Stop and Wait**.

All three types have their merits.

The **Selective Reject** offers better bandwidth utilization in that only the out-of-sequence frame needs to be retransmitted. But the receiving network station must wait for that frame and, when it does arrive, it must reorder the data in the correct sequence before presenting it to the next layer. This consumes memory and CPU utilization.

Go-Back-to-N method specifies not only a specific sequence number is to be retransmitted, but also any frames before that and up to the last acknowledged sequence number. It is a simpler method; however, it uses more network bandwidth and is generally slower that the Selective Reject. HDLC uses the Selective Reject methods. Other network protocols use a variance of the both Go Back to N and Selective Reject.

Stop-and-Wait method has a window size of 1, for only one frame may be outstanding at a time. Stop and Wait means send a packet and do not transmit another until that packet has been acknowledged exchange.