Software Defined Networking

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COS 461: Computer Networks

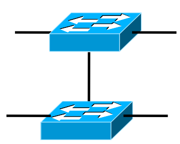
Lectures: MW 10-10:50am in Architecture N101

http://www.cs.princeton.edu/courses/archive/spr12/cos461/

The Internet: A Remarkable Story

- Tremendous success
  - From research experiment to global infrastructure
- Brilliance of under-specifying
  - Network: best-effort packet delivery
  - Hosts: arbitrary applications
- Enables innovation in applications
  - Web, P2P, VoIP, social networks, virtual worlds
- But, change is easy only at the edge… ☹

Inside the 'Net: A Different Story…

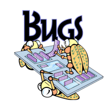


- Closed equipment
  - Software bundled with hardware
  - Vendor-specific interfaces
- Over specified
  - Slow protocol standardization
- Few people can innovate
  - Equipment vendors write the code
  - Long delays to introduce new features

Impacts performance, security, reliability, cost…

Networks are Hard to Manage

- Operating a network is expensive
  - More than half the cost of a network
  - Yet, operator error causes most outages



- Buggy software in the equipment
  - Routers with 20+ million lines of code
  - Cascading failures, vulnerabilities, etc.

- The network is "in the way"
  - Especially a problem in data centers
  - … and home networks

Creating Foundation for Networking

- A domain, not (yet?) a discipline
  - Alphabet soup of protocols
  - Header formats, bit twiddling
  - Preoccupation with artifacts
- From practice, to principles
  - Intellectual foundation for networking
  - Identify the key abstractions
  - … and support them efficiently
- To build networks worthy of society's trust

Rethinking the "Division of Labor"

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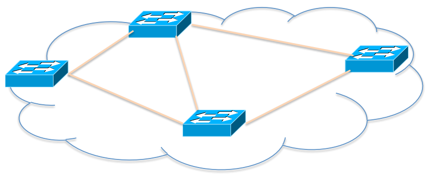
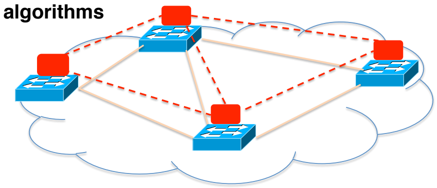
Traditional Computer Networks



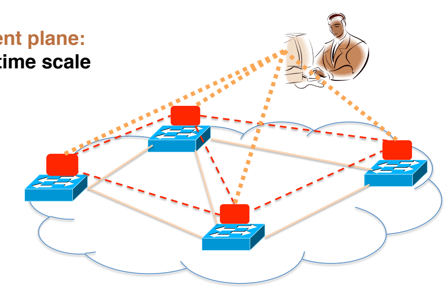
Forward, filter, buffer, mark, rate-limit, and measure packets

Traditional Computer Networks



Track topology changes, compute routes, install forwarding rules

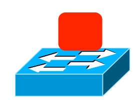
Traditional Computer Networks



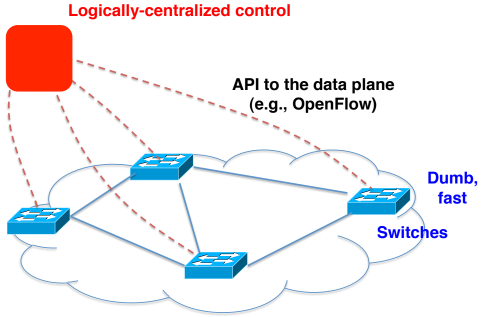
Collect measurements and configure the equipment

Death to the Control Plane!

- Simpler management
  - No need to “invert” control-plane operations
- Faster pace of innovation
  - Less dependence on vendors and standards
- Easier interoperability
  - Compatibility only in “wire” protocols
- Simpler, cheaper equipment
  - Minimal software



Software Defined Networking (SDN)



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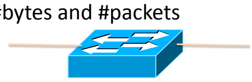
OpenFlow Networks

Data-Plane: Simple Packet Handling

- Simple packet-handling rules
  - Pattern: match packet header bits
  - Actions: drop, forward, modify, send to controller
  - Priority: disambiguate overlapping patterns
  - Counters: #bytes and #packets



1. src=1.2.*.*, dest=3.4.5.* → drop
2. src = *.*.*.*, dest=3.4.*.* → forward(2)
3. src=10.1.2.3, dest=*.*.*.* → send to controller

Unifies Different Kinds of Boxes

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- Router
  - Match: longest destination IP prefix
  - Action: forward out a link
- Switch
  - Match: destination MAC address
  - Action: forward or flood
- Firewall
  - Match: IP addresses and TCP/UDP port numbers
  - Action: permit or deny
- NAT
  - Match: IP address and port
  - Action: rewrite address and port

Controller: Programmability

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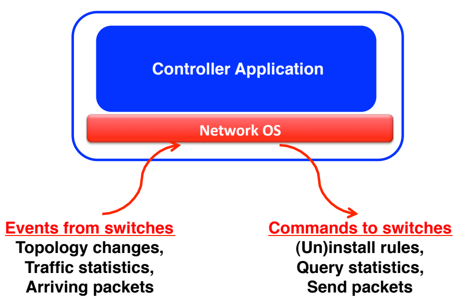


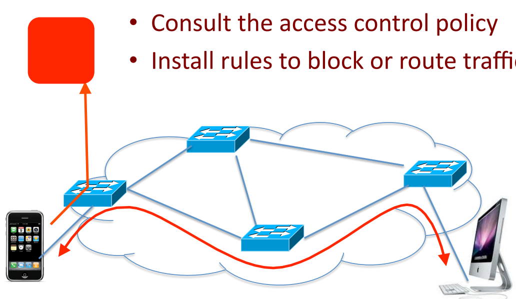
Example OpenFlow Applications

- **Dynamic access control**
- **Seamless mobility/migration**
- **Server load balancing**
- **Network virtualization**
- Using multiple wireless access points
- Energy-efficient networking
- Adaptive traffic monitoring
- Denial-of-Service attack detection

See http://www.openflow.org/videos/

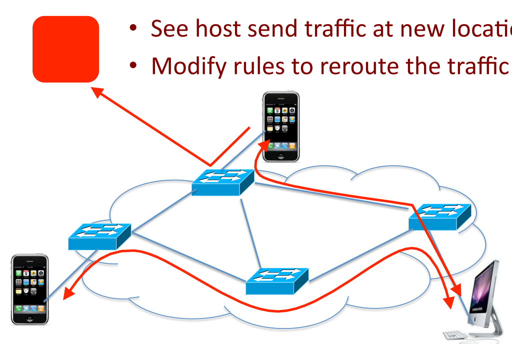
E.g.: Dynamic Access Control

- Inspect first packet of a connection
- Consult the access control policy
- Install rules to block or route traffic



E.g.: Seamless Mobility/Migration

- See host send traffic at new location
- Modify rules to reroute the traffic



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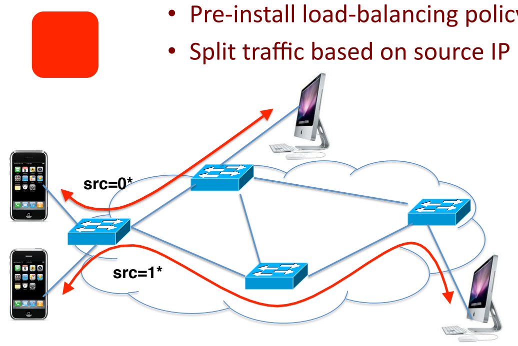
E.g.: Server Load Balancing

- Pre-install load-balancing policy
- Split traffic based on source IP



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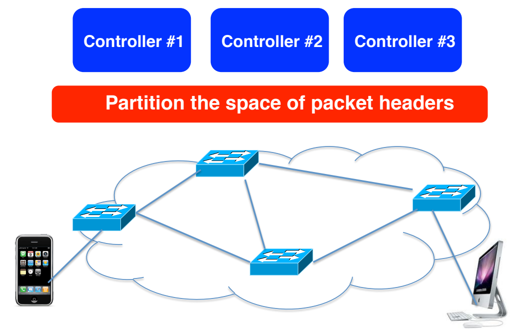
E.g.: Network Virtualization



OpenFlow in the Wild

- Open Networking Foundation
  - Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Yahoo, Verizon, Deutsche Telekom, and many other companies
- Commercial OpenFlow switches
  - HP, NEC, Quanta, Dell, IBM, Juniper, …
- Network operating systems
  - NOX, Beacon, Floodlight, Nettle, ONIX, POX, Frenetic
- Network deployments
  - Eight campuses, and two research backbone networks
  - Commercial deployments (e.g., Google backbone)

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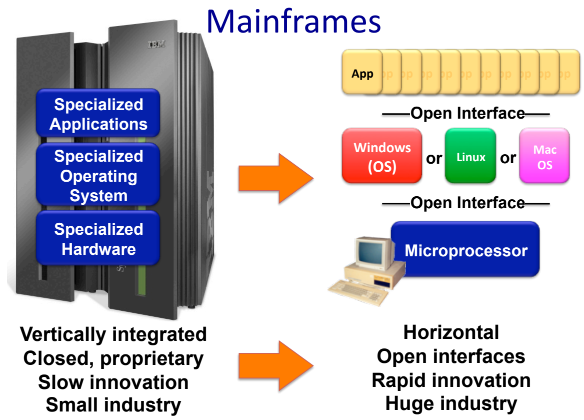
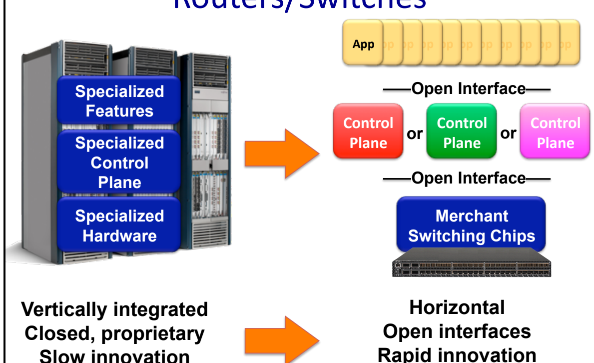
A Helpful Analogy

From Nick McKeown's talk "Making SDN Work" at the Open Networking Summit, April 2012

Mainframes



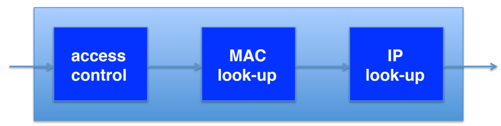
Routers/Switches



Challenges

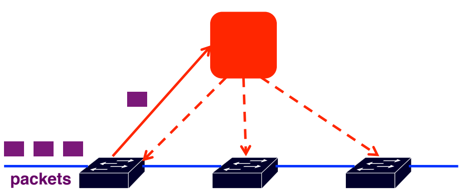
Heterogeneous Switches

- Number of packet-handling rules
- Range of matches and actions
- Multi-stage pipeline of packet processing
- Offload some control-plane functionality (?)

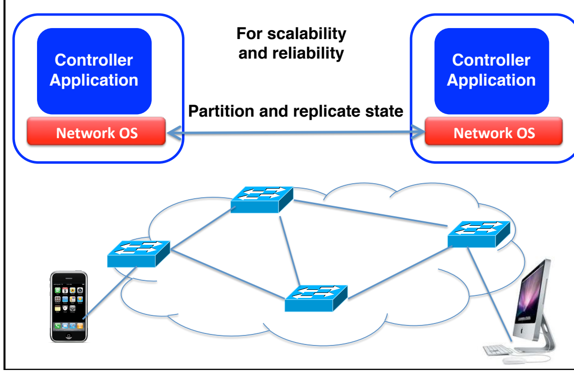


Controller Delay and Overhead

- Controller is much slower the the switch
- Processing packets leads to delay and overhead
- Need to keep most packets in the "fast path"



Distributed Controller

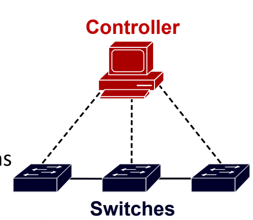


Testing and Debugging

- OpenFlow makes programming possible
  - Network-wide view at controller
  - Direct control over data plane
- Plenty of room for bugs
  - Still a complex, distributed system
- Need for testing techniques
  - Controller applications
  - Controller and switches
  - Rules installed in the switches

Programming Abstractions

- Controller APIs are low-level
  - Thin veneer on the underlying hardware
- Need better languages
  - Composition of modules
  - Managing concurrency
  - Querying network state
  - Network-wide abstractions
- Ongoing at Princeton
  - http://www.frenetic-lang.org/



Conclusion

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- Rethinking networking
  - Open interfaces to the data plane
  - Separation of control and data
  - Leveraging techniques from distributed systems
- Significant momentum
  - In both research and industry
- Next time
  - Closing lecture
  - No precept this week