

CSCI-1680

WWW

Rodrigo Fonseca



Administrivia

- **HW3 out today**
 - Will cover HTTP, DNS, TCP
- **TCP Milestone II**



Precursors

- **1945, Vannevar Bush, Memex:**
 - *“a device in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanized so that it may be consulted with exceeding speed and flexibility”*
- **Precursors to hypertext**
 - “The human mind [...] operates by association. With one item in its grasp, it snaps instantly to the next that is suggested by the association of thoughts, in accordance with some intricate *web of trails* carried by the cells of the brain”
- **His essay, “As we may think”, is worth reading!**



Tim Berners-Lee

- **Physicist at CERN, trying to solve real problem**
 - Distributed access to data
- **WWW: distributed database of pages linked through the Hypertext Transfer Protocol**
 - First HTTP implementation: 1990
 - HTTP/0.9 – 1991
 - Simple GET command
 - HTTP/1.0 – 1992
 - Client/server information, simple caching
 - HTTP/1.1 – 1996
 - Extensive caching support
 - Host identification
 - Pipelined, persistent connections, ...



Why so successful?

- **Ability to self publish**
 - Like youtube for video
- **But...**
 - Mechanism is *easy*
 - Independent, open
 - Free
- **Current debate**
 - Is it easy enough? Why is facebook so popular, even though it is not open?



Components

- **Content**
 - Objects (may be static or dynamically generated)
- **Clients**
 - Send requests / Receive responses
- **Servers**
 - Receive requests / Send responses
 - Store or generate content
- **Proxies**
 - Placed between clients and servers
 - Provide extra functions
 - Caching, anonymization, logging, transcoding, filtering access
 - Explicit or transparent



Ingredients

- **HTTP**
 - Hypertext Transfer Protocol
- **HTML**
 - Language for description of content
- **Names (mostly URLs)**
 - Won't talk about URIs, URNs



URLs

*protocol://[name@]hostname[:port]/directory/
resource?k1=v1&k2=v2#tag*

- URLs are a type of URIs
- *Name* is for possible client identification
- *Hostname* is FQDN or IP address
- *Port* defaults to protocol default (e.g., 80)
- *Directory* is a path to the resource
- *Resource* is the name of the object
- *?parameters* are passed to the server for execution
- *#tag* allows jumps to named tags within document



HTTP

- **Important properties**
 - Client-server protocol
 - Protocol (but not data) in ASCII
 - Stateless
 - Extensible (header fields)
- **Server typically listens on port 80**
- **Server sends response, may close connection (client may ask it to say open)**
- **Currently version 1.1**



Steps in HTTP^(1.0) Request

- **Open TCP connection to server**
- **Send request**
- **Receive response**
- **TCP connection terminates**
 - How many RTTs for a single request?
- **You may also need to do a DNS lookup first!**



```
> telnet www.cs.brown.edu 80
Trying 128.148.32.110...
Connected to www.cs.brown.edu.
Escape character is '^]'.
GET / HTTP/1.0
```

HTTP/1.1 200 OK

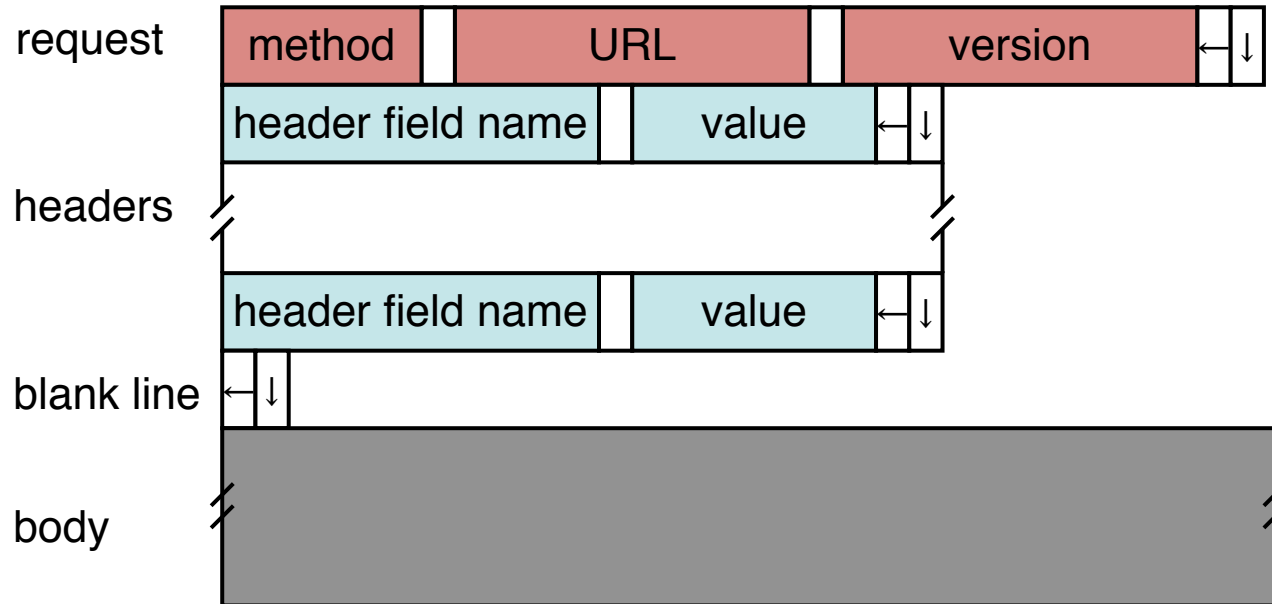
Date: Thu, 24 Mar 2011 12:58:46 GMT
Server: Apache/2.2.9 (Debian) mod_ssl/2.2.9 OpenSSL/0.9.8g
Last-Modified: Thu, 24 Mar 2011 12:25:27 GMT
ETag: "840a88b-236c-49f3992853bc0"
Accept-Ranges: bytes
Content-Length: 9068
Vary: Accept-Encoding
Connection: close
Content-Type: text/html

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Strict//EN"
    "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-strict.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" xml:lang="en"
    lang="en">
```

...



HTTP Request



- **Method:**
 - GET: current value of resource, run program
 - HEAD: return metadata associated with a resource
 - POST: update a resource, provide input for a program
- **Headers: useful info for proxies or the server**
 - E.g., desired language



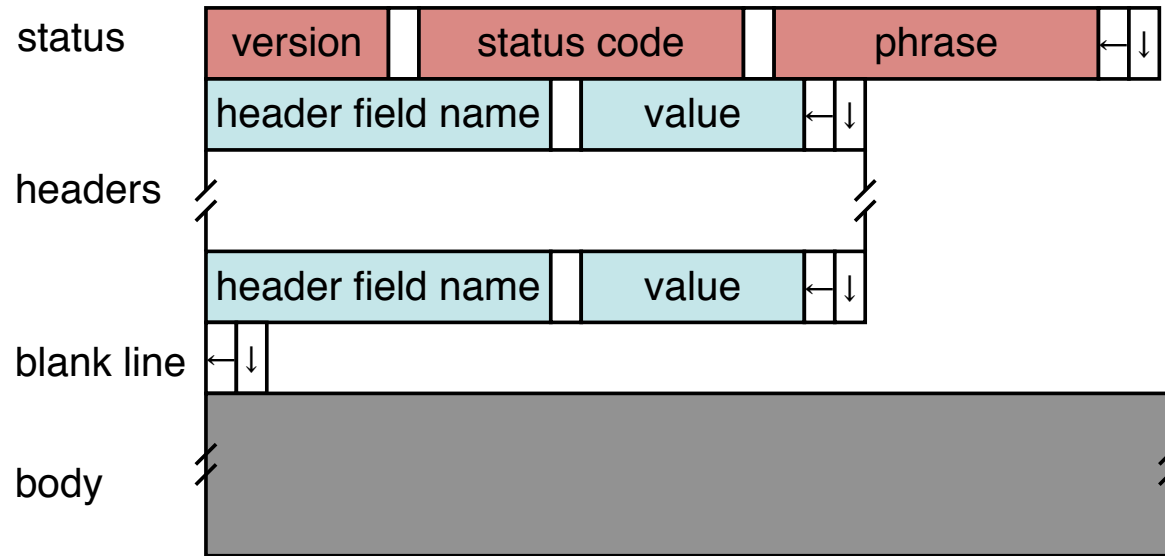
Sample Browser Request

```
GET / HTTP/1.1
Host: localhost:8000
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macinto ...
Accept: text/xml,application/xm ...
Accept-Language: en-us,en;q=0.5
Accept-Encoding: gzip,deflate
Accept-Charset: ISO-8859-1,utf-8;q=0.7,*;q=0.7
(empty line)
```

Firefox extension LiveHTTPHeaders is a cool way to see this



HTTP Response



- **Status Codes:**

- 1xx: Information e.g, 100 Continue
- 2xx: Success e.g., 200 OK
- 3xx: Redirection e.g., 302 Found (elsewhere)
- 4xx: Client Error e.g., 404 Not Found
- 5xx: Server Error e.g, 503 Service Unavailable



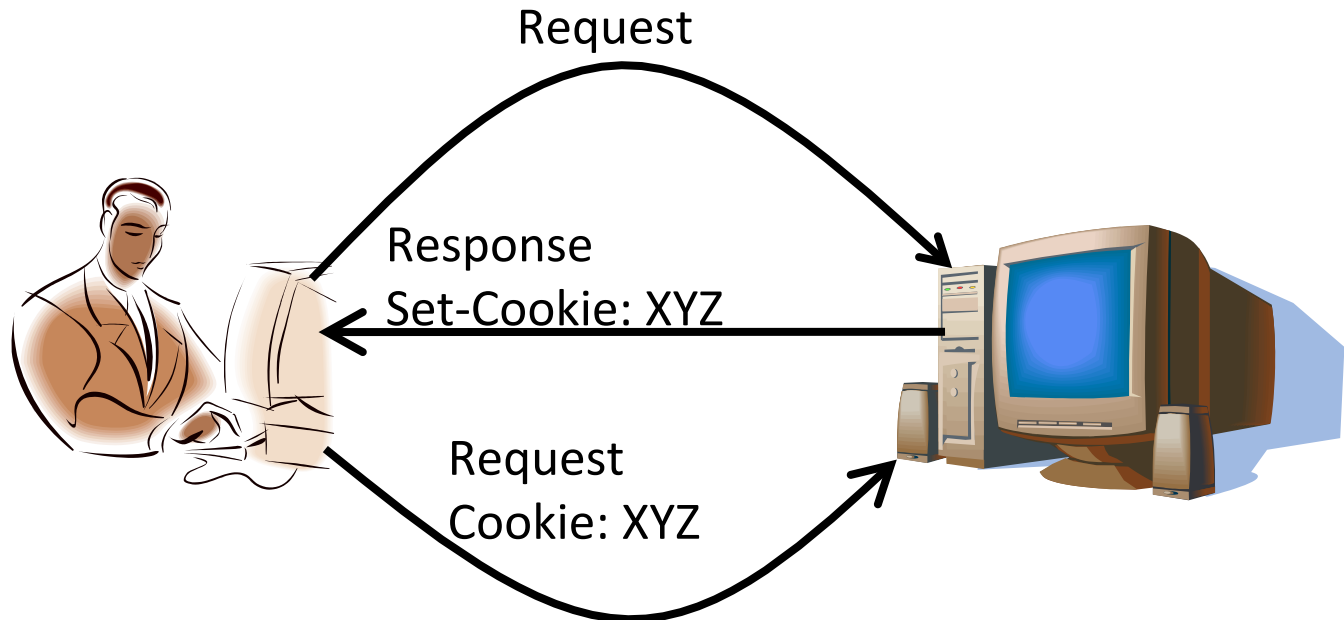
HTTP is Stateless

- **Each request/response treated independently**
- **Servers not required to maintain state**
- **This is good!**
 - Improves server scalability
- **This is also bad...**
 - Some applications need persistent state
 - Need to uniquely identify user to customize content
 - E.g., shopping cart, web-mail, usage tracking, (most sites today!)



HTTP Cookies

- **Client-side state maintenance**
 - Client stores small state on behalf of server
 - Sends request in future requests to the server
 - Cookie value is meaningful to the server (e.g., session id)
- **Can provide authentication**



Anatomy of a Web Page

- **HTML content**
- **A number of additional resources**
 - Images
 - Scripts
 - Frames
- **Browser makes one HTTP request for each object**
 - Course web page: 14 objects
 - My facebook page this morning: 100 objects

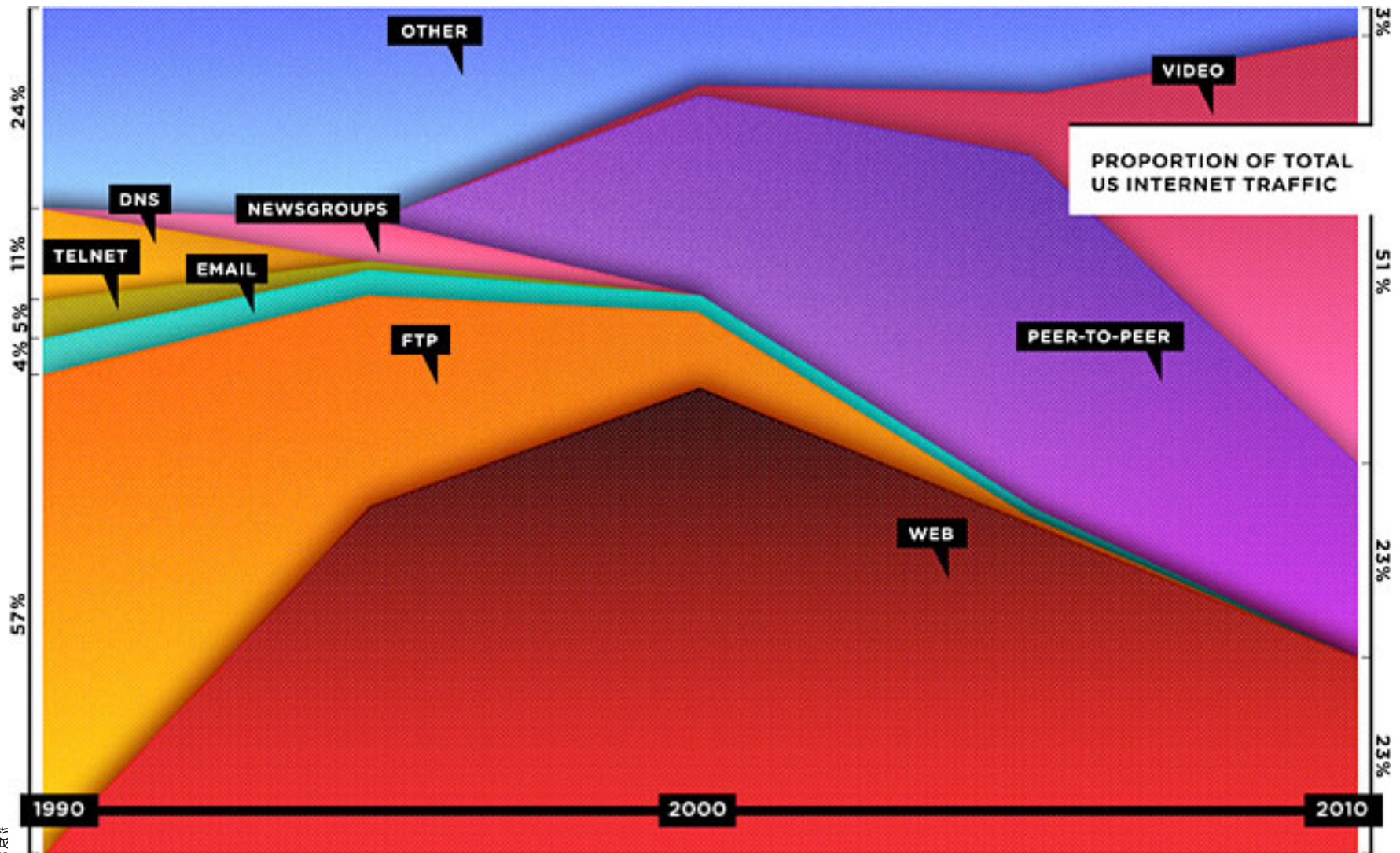


What about AJAX?

- *Asynchronous Javascript and XML*
- **Based on XMLHttpRequest object in browsers, which allow code in the page to:**
 - Issue a new, non-blocking request to the server, without leaving the current page
 - Receive the content
 - Process the content
- **Used to add interactivity to web pages**
 - XML not always used, HTML fragments, JSON, and plain text also popular



The Web is Dead? (Wired, Aug 2010)



http://www.wired.com/magazine/2010/08/ff_webrip/all/1



The Web is Dead? (Wired, Aug 2010)

- You wake up and *check your email* on your bedside iPad — that's one app. During breakfast you browse Facebook, Twitter, and The New York Times — three more *apps*. On the way to the office, you listen to a *podcast* on your smartphone. Another app. At work, you scroll through *RSS feeds in a reader* and have *Skype* and *IM* conversations. More apps. At the end of the day, you come home, make dinner while listening to *Pandora*, play some games on *Xbox Live*, and watch a movie on *Netflix's* streaming service. You've spent the day on the Internet — but not on the Web. And you are not alone.



HTTP Performance

- **What matters for performance?**
- **Depends on type of request**
 - Lots of small requests (objects in a page)
 - Some big requests (large download or video)



Small Requests

- **Latency matters**
- **RTT dominates**
- **Two major causes:**
 - Opening a TCP connection
 - Actually sending the request and receiving response
 - And a third one: DNS lookup!



How can we reduce the number of connection setups?

- **Keep the connection open and request all objects serially**
 - Works for all objects coming from the same server
 - Which also means you don't have to “open” the window each time
- **Persistent connections (HTTP/1.1)**



Browser Request

GET / HTTP/1.1

Host: localhost:8000

User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macinto ...

Accept: text/xml,application/xm ...

Accept-Language: en-us,en;q=0.5

Accept-Encoding: gzip,deflate

Accept-Charset: ISO-8859-1,utf-8;q=0.7,*;q=0.7

Keep-Alive: 300

Connection: keep-alive



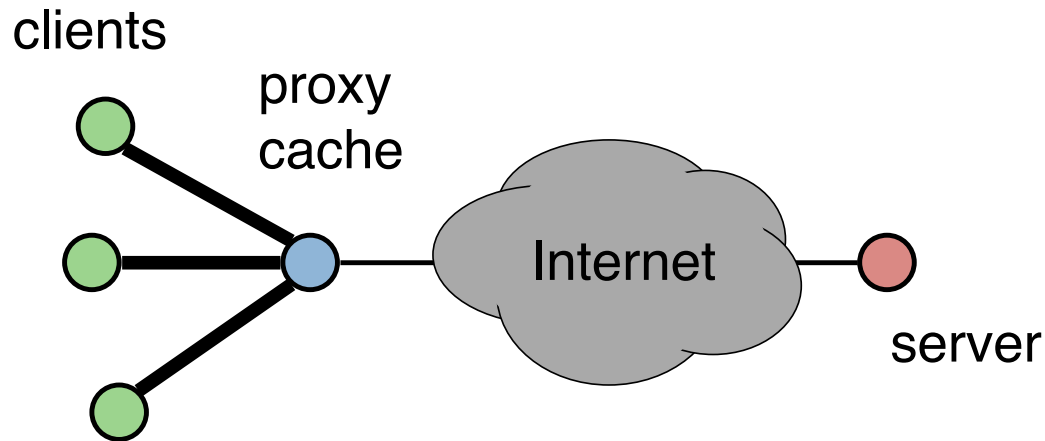
Small Requests (cont)

- **Second problem is that requests are serialized**
 - Similar to stop-and-wait protocols!
- **Two solutions**
 - Pipelined requests (similar to sliding windows)
 - Parallel Connections
 - HTTP standard says no more than 2 concurrent connections per host name
 - Most browsers use more (up to 8 per host, ~35 total)
 - See <http://www.browserscope.org/>
 - How are these two approaches different?



Larger Objects

- **Problem is throughput in bottleneck link**
- **Solution: HTTP Proxy Caching**
 - Also improves latency, and reduces server load



How to Control Caching?

- **Server sets options**
 - Expires header
 - No-Cache header
- **Client can do a conditional request:**
 - Header option: if-modified-since
 - Server can reply with 304 NOT MODIFIED
- **More when we talk about Content Distribution**



Next Week

- **Global data distribution**
 - CDN and P2P
- **How to create your own application layer protocol!**
 - Data / RPC

