Distributed Systems

07. Group Communication

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Fall 2016

Modes of communication

- One-to-One
  - unicast
    - 1↔1
    - Point-to-point
  - Anycast
    - 1→nearest 1 of several identical nodes
    - Introduced with IPv6; used with BGP
- One-to-many
  - multicast
    - 1→many
    - group communication
  - broadcast
    - 1→all

Groups

Groups allow us to deal with a collection of processes as one abstraction

Send message to one entity
- Deliver to entire group

Groups are *dynamic*
- Created and destroyed
- Processes can join or leave
  - May belong to 0 or more groups

Primitives

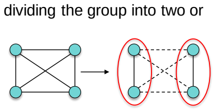
join_group, leave_group, send_to_group, query_membership

Design Issues

- Closed vs. Open
  - Closed: only group members can sent messages
- Peer vs. Hierarchical
  - Peer: each member communicates with group
  - Hierarchical: go through dedicated coordinator(s)
  - Diffusion: send to other servers & clients
- Managing membership & group creation/deletion
  - Distributed vs. centralized
- Leaving & joining must be synchronous
- Fault tolerance
  - Reliable message delivery? What about missing members?

Failure considerations

- Crash failure
  - Process stops communicating
- Omission failure (typically due to network)
  - Send omission: A process fails to send messages
  - Receive omission: A process fails to receive messages
- Byzantine failure
  - A message is faulty
- Partition failure
  - The network may get segmented, dividing the group into two or more unreachable sub-groups

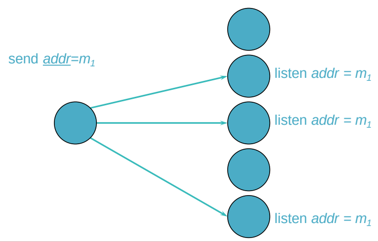


Implementing Group Communication Mechanisms

Hardware multicast

If we have hardware support for multicast

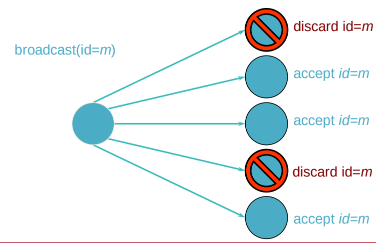
- Group members listen on network address



Hardware broadcast

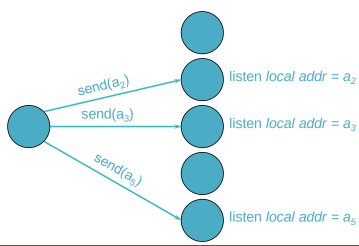
If we only have hardware support for broadcast

- Software filters incoming multicast address
  - May use auxiliary address (not in the network address header)



Software: multiple unicasts

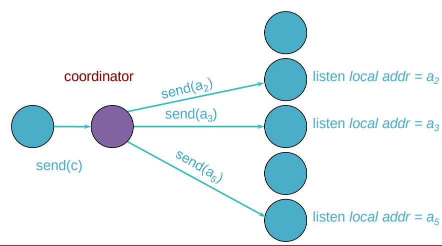
Sender knows group members



Software: hierarchical

Multiple unicasts via group coordinator

- coordinator knows group members



Reliability of multicasts

Atomic multicast

Atomicity

Message sent to a group arrives at *all* group members

- If it fails to arrive at *any* member, no member will process it

Problems

Unreliable network

- Each message should be acknowledged
- Acknowledgements can be lost

Message sender might die

Achieving atomicity

- General idea
  - Ensure that *every* recipient acknowledges receipt of the message
  - Only then allow the application to process the message
- Easier said than done!
  - What if a recipient dies after acknowledging the message?
    - Is it obligated to restart?
    - If it restarts, will it know to process the message?
  - What if the sender (or coordinator) dies partway through the protocol?

Achieving atomicity

- Retry through network failures & system downtime
- Sender & receivers maintain a persistent log
- Each message has a unique ID so we can discard duplicates
- Sender
  - Send message to all group members
  - Write message to log
  - Wait for acknowledgement from each group member
  - Write acknowledgement to log
  - If timeout on waiting for an acknowledgement, retransmit to group member
- Receiver
  - Log received non-duplicate message to persistent log
  - Send acknowledgement
- *NEVER GIVE UP!*
  - Assume that dead senders or recivers will be rebooted and will restart where they left off

Reliable multicast

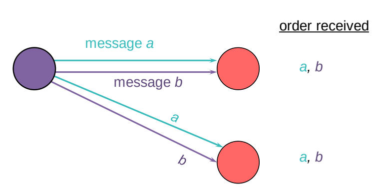
- All non-faulty group members will receive the message
  - Assume sender & recipients will remain alive
  - Network may have glitches
    - Retransmit undelivered messages
- Acknowledgements
  - Send message to each group member
  - Wait for acknowledgement from each group member
  - Retransmit to non-responding members
  - Subject to **feedback implosion**
- Negative acknowledgements
  - Use a sequence # on each message
  - Receiver requests retransmission of a missed message
  - More efficient but requires sender to buffer messages indefinitely

Unreliable multicast (best effort)

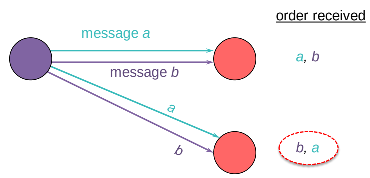
- Basic multicast
- Hope it gets there

Message ordering

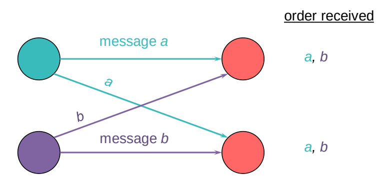
Good Ordering



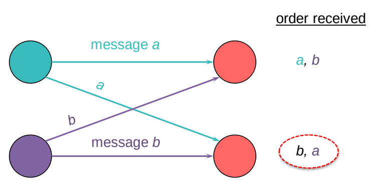
Bad Ordering



Good Ordering



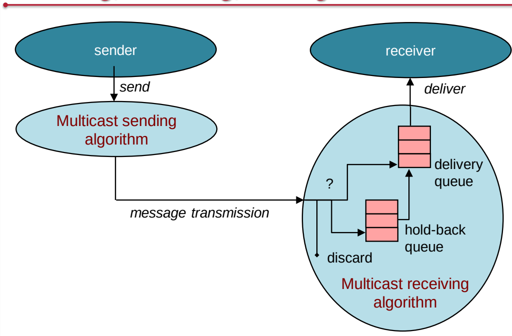
Bad Ordering



Sending versus Delivering

- Multicast receiver algorithm decides when to *deliver* a message to the process.
- A received message may be:
  - **Delivered immediately**
    (put on a delivery queue that the process reads)
  - **Placed on a hold-back queue**
    (because we need to wait for an earlier message)
  - **Rejected/discarded**
    (duplicate or earlier message that we no longer want)

Sending, delivering, holding back



Global time ordering

- All messages arrive in exact order sent
- Assumes two events never happen at the exact same time!
- Difficult (impossible) to achieve

Total ordering

- Consistent ordering everywhere
- All messages arrive at all group members in the same order
  - They are sorted in the same order in the delivery queue

1. If a process sends *m* before *m'* then *any* other process that delivers *m'* will have delivered *m*.
2. If a process delivers *m'* before *m"* then *every* other process will have delivered *m'* before *m"*.

- Implementation:
  - Attach unique totally sequenced message ID
  - Receiver delivers a message to the application only if it has received all messages with a smaller ID

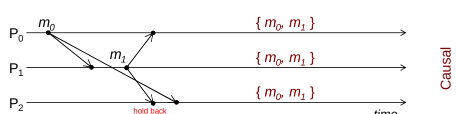
Causal ordering

- Partial ordering
  - Messages sequenced by Lamport or Vector timestamps

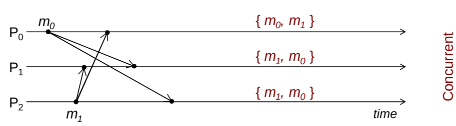
If multicast(*G*, *m*) → multicast(*G*, *m'*)
then *every* process that delivers *m'* will have delivered *m*

- If message *m'* could be causally dependent on message *m*, all processes must deliver m before *m'*.

Causal Ordering



m_1 is causally dependent on the receipt of m_0.
Hence, m_1 must be delivered after m_0 has been delivered.



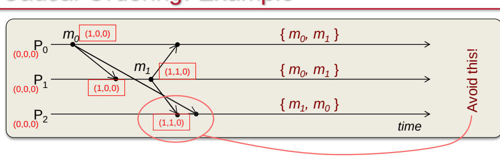
m_0 and m_1 have no causal relationship (they are concurrent).
Any process can deliver them in any order.

Causal ordering

Implementation: P_a receives a message from P_b

- Each process keeps a **precedence vector** (similar to vector timestamp)
- Vector is updated on multicast *send* and *receive* events
  - Each entry = # of latest message from the corresponding group member that causally precedes the event
- Algorithm
  - When P_b **sends** a message, it increments its own entry and sends the vector
    $V_b[b] = V_b[b] + 1$
    Send V_b with the message
  - When P_a **receives** a message from P_b
    - Check that the message arrived in FIFO order from P_b
      $V_b[b] == V_a[b] + 1$?
    - Check that the message does not causally depend on something P_a has not seen
      $\forall i, i \neq b$: $V_b[i] \leq V_a[i]$?
    - If both conditions are satisfied, P_a will deliver the message
    - Otherwise, hold it until the conditions are satisfied

Causal Ordering: Example



P_2 receives message m_1 from P_1 with V_1=(1,1,0)

(1) Is this in FIFO order from P_1?

Compare current V on P_2: V_2=(0,0,0) with received V from P_1, V_1=(1,1,0)

Yes: $V_2[1] = 0$, received $V_1[1] = 1 \Rightarrow$ sequential order

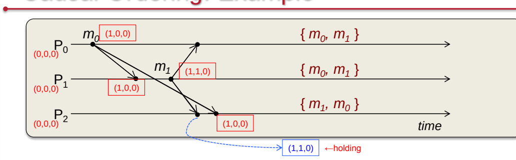
(2) Is $V_1[i] \leq V_2[i]$ for all other i?

Compare the same vectors: V_2=(0,0,0) vs. V_1=(1,1,0)

No. $V_1[0] > V_2[0]$ (1 > 0)

Therefore: hold back m_1 at P_2

Causal Ordering: Example



P_2 receives message m_0 from P_0 with V=(1,0,0)

(1) Is this in FIFO order from P_0?

Compare current V on P_2: V_2=(0,0,0) with received V from P_2, V_1=(1,0,0)

Yes: $V_2[0] = 0$, received $V_1[0] = 1 \Rightarrow$ sequential

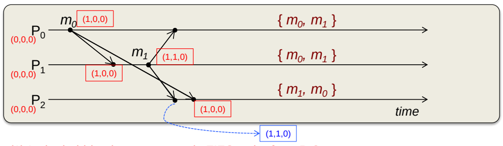
(2) Is $V_0[i] \leq V_2[i]$ for all other i?

Yes. $(0 \leq 0)$, $(0 \leq 0)$.

Deliver m_0.

Now check hold-back queue. Can we deliver m_1?

Causal Ordering: Example



(1) Is the held-back message m_1 in FIFO order from P_0?

Compare current V on P_2: V_2=(1,0,0) with held-back V from P_0, V_1=(1,1,0)

Yes: $V_2[1] = 0$, received $V_1[1] = 1 \Rightarrow$ sequential

(2) Is $V_0[i] \leq V_2[i]$ for all other i?

Now yes. Element 0: ($1 \leq 1$), element 2: ($0 \leq 0$).

Deliver m_1.

More efficient than total ordering:

No need for a global sequencer.

No need to send acknowledgements.

Sync ordering

- Messages can arrive in any order
- Special message type
  - Synchronization primitive
  - Ensure all pending messages are delivered before any additional (post-sync) messages are accepted

FIFO ordering

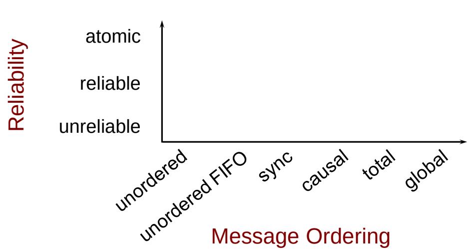
- Messages from the same source are delivered in the order they were sent.
- Message *m* must be delivered before message *m'* iff *m* was sent before *m'* from the same host

If a process issues a multicast of *m* followed by *m'*, then *every process* that delivers *m'* will have already delivered *m*.

Unordered multicast

- Messages can be delivered in different order to different members
- Order per-source does not matter.

Multicasting considerations



IP multicast routing

IP multicast routing

- Deliver messages to a subset of nodes
- How do we identify the recipients?
  - Enumerate them in the header?
    - What if we don't know?
    - What if we have thousands of recipients?
- Use a **special address** to identify a group of receivers
  - A copy of the packet is delivered to all receivers associated with that group
  - Class D multicast IP address
    - 32-bit address that starts with 1110
      (224.0.0.0/4 = 224.0.0.0 – 239.255.255.255)
  - Host group = set of machines listening to a particular multicast address

IP multicasting

- Can span multiple physical networks
- Dynamic membership
  - Machine can join or leave at any time
- No restriction on number of hosts in a group
- Machine does not need to be a member to send messages
- Efficient: Packets are replicated only when necessary

IP multicast addresses

- Addresses chosen arbitrarily for an application
- Well-known addresses assigned by IANA
  - Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
  - See
    http://www.iana.org/assignments/multicast-addresses/multicast-addresses.xml
  - Similar to ports – service-based allocation
    - For ports, we have:
      - FTP: port 21, SMTP: port 25, HTTP: port 80
    - For multicast, we have:

      224.0.0.1: all systems on this subnet
      224.0.0.2: all multicast routers on subnet
      224.0.23.173: Philips Health
      224.0.23.52: Amex Market Data
      224.0.12.0-63: Microsoft & MSNBC

IGMP

- Internet Group Management Protocol (IGMP)
  - Operates between a host and its attached router
  - Goal: *allow a router to determine to which of its networks to forward IP multicast traffic*
  - IP protocol (IP protocol number 2)
- Three message types
  - Membership_query
    - Sent by a router to all hosts on an interface to determine the set of all multicast groups that have been joined by the hosts on that interface
  - Membership_report
    - Host response to a query or an initial join or a group
  - Leave_group
    - Host indicates that it is no longer interested
    - Optional: router infers this if the host does not respond to a query

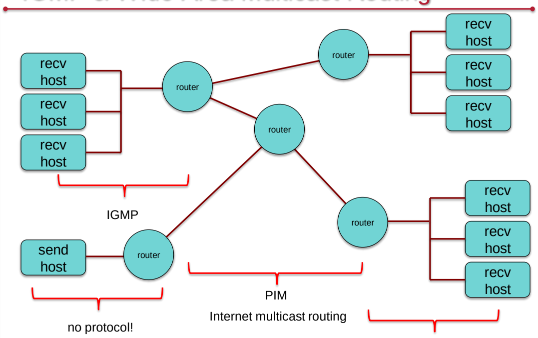
Multicast Forwarding

IGMP allows a host to *subscribe* to receive a multicast stream

What about the source?

- There is no protocol for the source!
- It just sends to a class D address
- Routers have to do the work

IGMP & Wide-Area Multicast Routing



Multicast Forwarding

- IGMP: Internet Group Management Protocol
  - Designed for routers to talk with hosts on directly connected networks
- PIM: Protocol Independent Multicast
  - Multicast Routing Protocol for delivering packets across routers
  - Topology discovery is handled by other protocols

Flooding: Dense Mode Multicast

- Relay multicast packet to all connected routers
  - Use a spanning tree and use reverse path forwarding (RPF) to avoid loops
  - Feedback & cut off if there are no interested receivers on a link
    - A router sends a *prune* message.
    - Periodically, routers send messages to refresh the prune state
  - Flooding is initiated by the sender's router
- Reverse path forwarding (RPF): avoid routing loops
  - Packet is duplicated & forwarded ONLY IF it was received via the link that is the shortest path to the sender
  - Shortest path is found by checking the router's forwarding table to the source address

Flooding: Dense Mode Multicast

- Advantage:
  - Simple
  - Good if the packet is desired in most locations
- Disadvantage:
  - wasteful on the network, wasteful extra state & packet duplication on routers

Sparse Mode Multicast

- Initiated by the routers at each receiver
- Each router needs to ask for a multicast feed with a PIM *Join* message
  - Initiated by a router at the destination that gets an IGMP *join*
  - Rendezvous Point: meeting place between receivers & source
    - *Join* messages propagate to a defined ***rendezvous point*** (RP)
    - Sender transmits only to the rendezvous point
    - RP announcement messages inform edge routes of rendezvous points
  - A *Prune* message stops a feed
- Advantage
  - Packets go only where needed
  - Creates extra state in routers only where needed

IP Multicast in use

- Initially exciting:
  - Internet radio, NASA shuttle missions, collaborative gaming
- But:
  - Few ISPs enabled it
  - For the user, required tapping into existing streams (not good for on-demand content)
  - Industry embraced unicast instead

IP Multicast in use: IPTV

- IPTV has emerged as the biggest user of IP multicast
  - Cable TV networks have migrated (or are migrating) to IP delivery
- Cable TV systems: aggregate bandwidth ~ 4.5 Gbps
  - Video streams: MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 (H.264)
  - MPEG-2 HD: ~30 Mbps ⇒ 150 channels = ~4.5 Gbps
  - MPEG-4 HD: ~6-9 Mbps; DVD quality: ~2 Mbps
- Multicast
  - Reduces the number of servers needed
  - Reduces the number of replicated network streams

IP Multicast in use: IPTV

- Multicast allows one stream of data to be sent to multiple subscribers using a single address
- IGMP from the client
  - Subscribe to a TV channel
  - Change channels
- Use unicast for video on demand

The End

