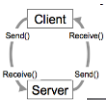
Internet application protocols
Introduction

CSCI E 45b: The Cyber World – part B

Introduction: learning goals

- Understand the basic structural elements of Internet application protocols
- Understand the basic mechanics of the most popular Internet application protocols

Topics, all required



- Base concepts - R
  Key terms and ideas common across most protocols
- Finger - R
  One of the simplest Internet application protocol
- SMTP - R
  The primary protocol used for sending and distributing email
- HTTP – R
  The protocol used for the Web

Topics, all required, contd.

- SIP - R

  The protocol used to support Voice over IP (VoIP)/phone, media broadcast over Internet
- SSH - R

  A secure connection (and forward) protocol

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Internet application protocols
Base concepts

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Application protocols


DIALOGO
DI
GALILEO GALILEI LINCEO
MATEMATICO SOPRAORDINARIO
DELLO STVDIO DI PISA.
E Filosofo, e Matematico primario del
SERENISSIMO
GR. DVCA DI TOSCANA.
MASSIMI SISTEMI DEL MONDO
TOLEMAICO, E COPERNICANO,
IN FIORENZA, Per Gio: Batista Landini MDCXXXII.

- The structures, and sequence of network messages required to implement an application
- And the actions that create these messages or result from the receipt of these messages

  e.g. email, viewing documents, connecting to a host, etc.

Basic mechanics of an application

Finger 79

HTTP 80

SSH 22

SMTP 25

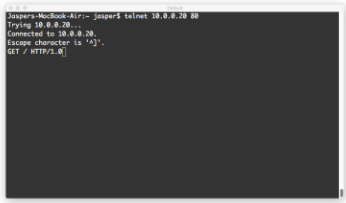
SIP 5060

- Listens on a predetermined port – default application port
- Expects a predetermined protocol to be used – the application protocol
- Most IETF (and thus most Internet) protocols are plain text protocols

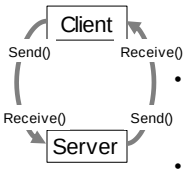
Basic mechanics of an application, contd.

- You can use the Telnet command to test many network services/applications:

```
telnet [host [port]]
```



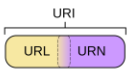
Client, Server, or both?



- Client – the machine/software from which requests originate
- Server – the machine/software fulfilling the request
- A machine often is both client and server – the role is context dependent
- Peer to Peer
  - No central server required

Names and identifiers

www.xyz.com
www.xyz.org
www.xyz.net
www.xyz.gov
www.xyz.mil
…



- IP address is the identifier and locator of a node on the network
- Resolving names - DNS
  - A records – map a user friendly name to an IP address
  - CNAME records – link a name to another name
  - MX records – identify mail servers for a domain
- URI: URN/URL
  - Uniform Resource Locator (URL) - includes a domain name
    - e.g., http://www.harvard.edu
  - Uniform Resource Name (URN)
    - e.g. urn:isbn:0-300-15124-1

The early days…

- Remote Login
  - Character based protocol
    - One character at a time sent to the destination
    - Waited for ECHO to print character on the terminal
- File Transfer
  - Used to send files to remote printers
  - Enhanced version allowed to specify which user the file was being sent to – early form of email

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Internet application protocols
Finger

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History

Robert Morris Jr.

- Early days protocol to get information about users from a machine on the Internet
- Very simple protocol specified in 1977 in RFC-742
- Used by the Morris Worm
- Security risk, not in use a whole lot – Duh!

For fun you can try

`finger @bathroom.mit.edu*`

* Not always responsive

Before the worm, Morris setup the Finger service on HARV-10 as a "mirror Finger"

How it works

- The command is issued on the client machine

```
finger [user] [user@host]
[@host]
```

- The finger utility sends a packet to the target (server) machine's port 79

How it works, contd.

- The payload of the packet contains either:
  - An empty line – get information on all users on the target machine
  - A user name – get information about a specific user

- The target machine responds with text detail on the user(s)

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Internet application protocols
Small Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP)

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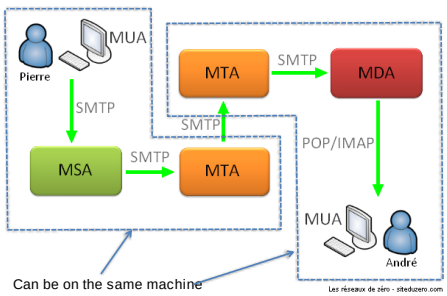
History

- SMTP formally defined in 1982 by RFC-821, although email was in use since the early 70's
- In the early days of email
  - Mail messages were sent as individual files to a specific user
- The first email was sent from BBN-TENEXB (back) and received by BBN-TENEXA (front) – both machines being side-by-side

Mail processing model

- SMTP is for sending files in mail format, not retrieving email
  - Mail User Agent (MUA) – mail client software
  - Mail Submission Agent (MSA) – sends messages received by MUAs
  - Mail Transfer Agent (MTA) – relays (send/receive) email using SMTP
  - Mail Delivery Agent (MDA) – collects messages destined for local users and makes them available to their MUA

Mail processing model, contd.



A simple SMTP exchange

```
<connection made on port 25>
220 frontend01.harvard.edu ESMTP Server
ready
HELO test.com
250 OK
MAIL FROM: testuser@test.com
250 OK - mail from <testuser@test.com>
RCPT TO: administrator@frontend01.harvard.edu
250 OK - Recipient
<administrator@frontend01.harvard.edu>
DATA
354 Send data. End with CRLF.CRLF
Hi there!  How are you?


250 OK
QUIT
221 closing connection
```


Status codes

- **220** Service ready
- **221** Service closing transmission channel
- **250** Requested mail action okay, completed
- **251** User not local; will forward to
- **354** Start mail input; end with "."
- **4xx** and **5xx** series Error situations of various kinds
  E.g. **550** – No such user

MIME and SMTP/MIME

- Original SMTP supported sending 7 bit ASCII coded characters
- MIME - Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions
  - Defines a mechanism for sending other types of data over email
- Now MIME is used by other protocols for the same purpose

MIME and SMTP/MIME, contd.

- Primary headers (with sample values):

```
MIME-version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain
Content-Transfer-Encoding:
<7bit|8bit|base64|binary|qu
oted-printable>
```


MIME and SMTP/MIME, contd.

- Multipart messages

```
Content-Type:
multipart/mixed;
boundary=<boundary>
```

  - To send different content-types in the same message
  - To send large messages (e.g. files)
  - This allows the sending of messages of any size
    - But MUA and MSAs, MDAs sometime set limits

A sample message header

```
Received: from ENTWEDGE0000001.university.harvard.edu (10.35.2.152) by
 ENTWHUBT0000004.university.harvard.edu (10.32.208.50) with Microsoft SMTP
 Server (TLS) id 14.3.146.0; Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:47 -0500
Received: from ackroyd.harvard.edu (128.103.208.29) by
 ENTWEDGE0000001.university.harvard.edu (10.35.2.152) with Microsoft SMTP
 Server id 14.3.146.0; Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:30 -0500
Received: by ackroyd.harvard.edu (Postfix)     id ACBC5E9A67; Sun, 19 Jan
2015
 10:28:46 -0500 (EST)
Received: from sobco.sobco.com (unknown [136.248.127.164]) by
 ackroyd.harvard.edu (Postfix) with ESMTP id 953ABE9A65 for
 <ben_gaucherin@harvard.edu>; Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:46 -0500 (EST)
Received: from localhost (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by sobco.sobco.com
(Postfix)
 with ESMTP id 069915A627F for <ben_gaucherin@harvard.edu>; Sun, 19 Jan
2015
 10:28:46 -0500 (EST)
X-Virus-Scanned: amavisd-new at sobco.com
Received: from sobco.sobco.com ([127.0.0.1]) by localhost (sobco.sobco.com
 [127.0.0.1]) (amavisd-new, port 10024) with ESMTP id rQqF3W0xtX4V for
 <ben_gaucherin@harvard.edu>; Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:44 -0500 (EST)
Received: from golem.sobco.com (golem.sobco.com [136.248.127.162]) by
 sobco.sobco.com (Postfix) with ESMTPSA id DDD4A5A6271 for
 <ben_gaucherin@harvard.edu>; Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:44 -0500 (EST)
```


A sample message header, contd.

```
From: "Scott O. Bradner" <sob@sobco.com>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Subject: to look at
Message-ID: <33114E8C-89A1-4F3B-BE0A-A6F9FC0409E0@sobco.com>
Date: Sun, 19 Jan 2015 10:28:44 -0500
To: Benoit Gaucherin <ben_gaucherin@harvard.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0 (Mac OS X Mail 7.1 \(1827\))
X-Mailer: Apple Mail (2.1827)
Return-Path: sob@sobco.com
X-MS-Exchange-Organization-Antispam-Report: v=2.1 cv=TKZ8FTVa c=1 sm=1
tr=0
 a=jeTkmrT/jwcKSjCs2WwgaA==:117 a=SZwlRxzbqrU7NHadf9mkIA==:17
 a=bThMrJPUCi0A:10 a=wPDyFdB5xvgA:10 a=kj9zAlcOel0A:10 a=zA0KW45MAAAA:8
 a=sVy1UYKO7ONOnZoQoFgA:9 a=CjuIK1q_8ugA:10 a=diyHqU4cqYEA:10
 a=jVLyn9cCbSIA:10 a=3B-TjL6AeNYA:10 a=HXrLMtXIuHoA:10
 a=l1lbC1KgUbIA:10;OrigIP:128.103.208.29;SCL:0
X-MS-Exchange-Organization-AVStamp-Mailbox: MSFTFF;1;0;0 0 0
X-OrganizationHeadersPreserved: ENTWEDGE0000001.university.harvard.edu
X-MS-Exchange-Organization-SCL: 0
X-MS-Exchange-Organization-AuthSource:
ENTWEDGE0000001.university.harvard.edu
X-MS-Exchange-Organization-AuthAs: Anonymous
```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6	http://www.smtp-error-codes.info/images/logo.jpg
7-9	http://le-mime.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/mime_2.jpg

Internet application protocols
HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP)

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History


Ted Nelson

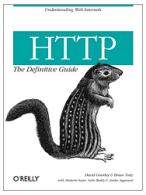

Tim Berners Lee

- Ted Nelson coined the terms HyperText and HyperMedia in 1963
- Tim Berners Lee and his team invented both HTTP and HTML to share documents with other researchers over the Internet
  - HTTP the application protocol
  - HTML the format for encoding HyperText

History, contd.

- In 1993 National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) released the first widely available browser
- In 1994 Tim founded the World Wide Web Consortium W3C at MIT
  - Main standards body for the World Wide Web
  - Joint funding from European Commission and DARPA

Protocol overview



- Similar to SMTP in many ways: plain text, header based, status codes
- Methods:
  GET, HEAD, POST, PUT, DELETE, TRACE, OPTIONS, CONNECT, PATCH
- Header fields – e.g. content-type

Protocol overview, contd.

- Status codes – e.g. 404 resource not found
  Note the general consistency with SMTP status codes
  2xx – Success, 3xx – Redirection, 4xx – Request error, 5xx – Application internal error

Simple HTTP exchange

<establish connection to a web server's port 80>

- Request:
  `GET /index.html HTTP/1.0`
- Response:

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK                          Status line
Server: nginx/1.4.3
Date: Sun, 05 Jan 2015 04:11:37 GMT      Header fields
Content-Type: text/html
Content-Length: 612
Connection: close

<!DOCTYPE html>                          Content
<html>
<head>
. . .
```

Getting a whole web page

- A web page is made of multiple parts:
  - Main HTML, pictures, videos, glyphs, advertisements, trackers, etc.
  - From the same server, or any number of third party servers
- Each element is obtained by a separate HTTP request
- So, a web page will typically require many (sometimes dozens) of HTTP requests to be rendered in your browser

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HTTP URLs

<protocol>://<host><:port>/<path>?<variables>

- <protocol> - http (or https for secure HTTP)
- <host> - name or IP address of the host the request is being sent to
- <:port> - defaults to 80 for HTTP, 443 for HTTPS
- <path> - path to the resource (page, service, etc.)
- <variables> - key, value pairs to provide some state to the HTTP server

```
https://bentest.law.harvard.edu:8080/my_web_app/index.php?key1=blue&key2=vanilla
```

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Mucking around with URLs

- URLs variables capture information to tailor the content you receive
  - E.g., page number in a multi-page list of results, number of lines per page
- Playing with these parameters may allow you to customize what you see
  - Sometimes in ways not intended by the website operator

GOOGLEDORKS

Google dorking is the way to query google in a way that would retrieve what you really want from Google.

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State in HTTP applications

- State on the server side:
  - In database – more permanent
  - In memory – session state
- State can be transferred between the client and server:
  - Cookies – saved by the browser on the local disk
  - Using the URL
  - User Agent string

State in HTTP applications, contd.

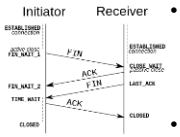
- Important question(s):
  - What happens to these bits of data?
  - Do they need to and are they kept secure?
  - What do they reveal about you if collected across multiple web sites/services?

User-Agent string

```
User-Agent:
Mozilla/5.0
(Macintosh; Intel
Mac OS X 10.10;
rv:34.0)
Gecko/20100101
Firefox/34.0
```

- Browsers identify themselves to servers using a User-Agent string
- Used by the server to adapt its response to the capabilities of the browser (e.g., encryption strength, mobile, etc.)
- You can spoof the User-Agent...
  - ...although it is only one of many parameters used to identify users

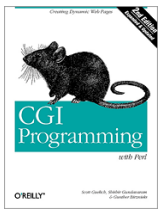
Persistent connections



- In early versions of HTTP the TCP connection was closed after each request/response exchange
- In HTTP 1.1 persistent connections (aka Keep Alive) were introduced to keep the connection open

  Remember – every web page can have hundreds of individual components requiring a separate HTTP request for each

Common Gateway Interface (CGI)



- CGI and derivative technologies are what people use to generate dynamic content on the Web
- CGI is a standard for calling command line executables to generate the response to an HTTP request
- A team from the NCSA wrote the first specs
- Which evolved to become RFC 3875

HTTP Secure - HTTPS

- Initially developed by Netscape for commerce
- Not a protocol itself, but layering HTTP on top of SSL/TLS to encrypt the end-to-end HTTP exchange
- Other approaches that failed: S-HTTP was looking to encrypt just the content, not the end-to-end connection

HTTP/2

- HTTP/1.1 came out in 1999
- Backwards compatible
- Based on SPDY
  - Primarily Google effort to improve HTTP
- Key characteristics:
  - Binary protocol
  - Multiplexed over a single connection
  - Server push
  - Header compression HPACK

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7	http://logicpool.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/webpage-terms-11.jpg
9	http://radicaldevelopment.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/googledorks.jpg
10	http://img.ideageek.it/uploads/2013/01/firefox-user-agent.jpg
13	"TCP CLOSE" by Clemente - https://secure.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/wiki/File:Fin_de_conexi%C3%B3n_TCP.svg. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:TCP_CLOSE.svg#/media/File:TCP_CLOSE.svg
14	http://akamaicovers.oreilly.com/images/9781565924192/cat.gif
15	http://www.chicagonow.com/listing-toward-forty/files/2015/06/https-does-not-mean-your-data-is-safe.png
16	http://edgecast.tech.buscafs.com/uploads/images/31982_735x390.jpg

Internet application protocols
Cookies

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Cookies – what it is

- Originally used to provide continuity of identity
  - Moving to device fingerprints rather than using cookies
- Use expanded to a wide array of scenarios:
  - Personalization, access counts
- Cookie access is limited to the domain that set the cookie
- Some cookies are encrypted

Cookies – process

- When you visit, the server sends a set-cookie command as part of its response header

```
Set-Cookie:
user_id=23fa93b;
Expires=Sat, 25 Jun 2015
11:00:00 GMT
```

- The cookie is saved on your machine, if your browser is set to accept cookies

Cookies – process

- On your next request to that domain/path, your browser will add the contents of the cookie as a header variable

```
Cookie: fav_color=blue;
user_id=23fa93b
```

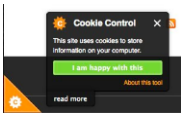

Cookies – anatomy

- The seven parts of a cookie:
  - Name of the cookie*
  - Value*
  - Expiry date/time
  - The domain the cookie is good for
  - The path, within the domain, the cookie is good for
  - Whether you need a secure connection to use the cookie
  - Whether the cookie can be accessed through other means than HTTP (e.g. JavaScript)
  - * Required

Cookies – other cookies

- Third-party cookies – when viewing a web page, elements of the page can be served by third-parties (e.g. banner ad).
  - You can configure browsers to not accept third-party cookies
- Supercookies – Top level domain cookies?! Blocked by browsers
- Zombie cookies – get recreated if they get deleted (by local code: Flash, JavaScript)

Cookies and European law



- European Union Directives
  - Directives direct EU member countries to enact country level laws
  - In 2002 launched the Directive and Privacy in Electronic Communications (DPEC)
    - Article 5 paragraph 3 – a user needs to be informed of how information about them stored on their device will be used, and given the option to opt-out
  - In 2009 changed the directive to require opt-in rather than opt-out

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7	https://www.drupal.org/files/project-images/cookie%20control%20v4.jpg

Internet application protocols
Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)

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Overview

- IETF Proposed Standard - RFC 3261
- Protocol to setup multimedia sessions
  - Audio, video
  - Used in Voice over IP (VoIP)
  - Application-layer signaling protocol
- SIP invitations include session descriptions

SIP - basics

- Call establishment and handling facets
  - User location - find out user's current location
  - User capabilities - find out media parameters to use
  - User availability - find out if user wants to participate
  - Call setup - establish call parameters at called & calling
  - Call handling - includes call transfer & call termination

SIP - basics, contd.

- Can gateway with PSTN (telephone network)
- Works with Session Description Protocol (SDP)

4

Session Description Protocol (SDP)

- Language to describe media sessions
- Includes:
  - session name and purpose
  - timing of session
  - media descriptions
  - format information
  - contact information
  - resource requirements

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SDP example

```
v=0
o=mhandley 2890844526 2890842807 IN IP4 126.16.64.4
s=SDP Seminar
i=A Seminar on the session description protocol
u=http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/M.Handley/sdp.03.ps
e=mjh@isi.edu (Mark Handley)
c=IN IP4 224.2.17.12/127
t=2873397496 2873404696
a=recvonly
m=audio 49170 RTP/AVP 0
m=video 51372 RTP/AVP 31
m=application 32416 udp wb
a=orient:portrait
```

6

SIP - URLs

- SIP objects are users at hosts
- Supported parameters
  - Password (not recommended)
  - Maddr - address of server for this user
  - Port number to use on host (if it is not the default)
  - Transport protocol (UDP assumed if not specified)
  - TTL of multicast packet

```
sip:sob@harvard.edu
sip:+1-617-495-3864@sipgate.com;user=phone
```

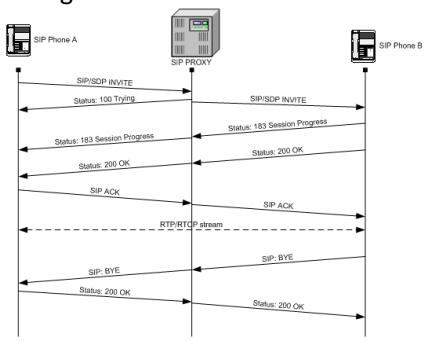

SIP - elements

- Servers: (not required)
  - Proxy server: acts for UA, services or forwards SIP requests
  - Redirect server: returns "next-hop" address
  - Registrar: registers SIP user agents
  - Location server: returns info about callee's location(s)
    - used by proxy and redirect servers

SIP – elements, contd.

- User Agent (UA):
  - Application that sends or receives SIP requests (e.g., soft phone)
- Gateways: (not required)
  - Behaves like a user agent, but translates to another call technology e.g., to and from PSTN

SIP – high-level flow



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SIP - messages

- Text-based using UTF-8 encoding
- Messages exchanged in RFC 822 (email) format
  - 1 or more headers
  - blank line
  - optional message body
- Headers
  - general-header, entity-header, request-header, response-header

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SIP – request messages

- <Method> Request-URI SIP-Version
- Methods:
  - INVITE - invite participation in session
  - ACK - acknowledge INVITE
  - OPTIONS - negotiate capabilities
  - BYE - end session
  - CANCEL - cancel INVITE
  - REGISTER - bind URI address to a location
- example
  - INVITE sip:sob@harvard.edu SIP/2.0

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SIP – other methods

- INFO - mid-call information
- COMET - precondition met
- PRACK - provisional acknowledgement
- SUBSCRIBE - subscribe to event
- NOTIFY - notify subscribers
- REFER - call transfer

SIP – Status codes

- Informational
  - 100 - trying
  - 180 - ringing
  - 181 - call is being forwarded
  - 182 - queued
  - 183 - session progress
- Success
  - 200 - OK

SIP – Status codes, contd.

- Redirection
  - 300 - multiple choices
  - 301 - moved permanently
  - 302 - moved temporally
  - 305 - use proxy
  - 380 - alternative service possible
- Request failure
  - 400 - bad request
  - 401 - authorization required
  - 404 - not found
  - 407 - proxy authorization required
  - 486 - busy here

SIP – Status codes, contd.

- Server failure
  - 500 - server internal error
  - 501 - not implemented
  - 502 - bad gateway
  - 503 - service unavailable
  - 504 - server timeout
- global failure
  - 600 - busy everywhere
  - 603 - decline
  - 604 - does not exist anywhere
  - 606 - not acceptable

Image credits

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3-4	"Take a Sip" logo
5	https://skypeblogs.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/conf-call.jpg
10	https://www.packetizer.com/ipmc/sip/papers/understanding_sip_voip/sip_call_flow.png
7-9, 11-16	http://ww1.prweb.com/prfiles/2013/05/22/10759453/gl_94460_Icon512.png

Internet application protocols
Secure SHell (SSH)

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History

- SSH-1 developed by Tatu Ylönen in 1995 to address security issues of rlogin, Telnet, and rsh
- OpenSSH became the leading Open Source implementation of SSH

History, contd.

- IETF Secsh workgroup developed SSH-2 in 2006 to address a number of design flaws in SSH-1
- SSH has associated utilities using the SSH protocol for specific functions: e.g. `scp` to securely copy files over SSH

SSH - basic use, and process

- SSH allows access to a shell (command line interface) on a remote machine over a secure connection
- It goes through three steps to establish a connection:
  - Host identification - Proving the remote host you are talking to is the one you think it is
  - Encryption – Secure the end-to-end connection
  - User authentication – Using username/password or key pairs
- This is a simple VPN for the user

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SSH – simple tunnel

- Another use of SSH is to create a simple tunnel through which a local port is connected to the same port on the remote machine
- This is a simple VPN for an application
- This is useful to secure a connection to legacy applications that do not have secure protocols

```
ssh ben@192.168.0.1 -L80:192.168.0.1:80
```

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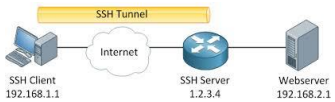
SSH – more complex use

- Bastion host
  - Term coined by Marcus Ranum
  - A host designed to withstand attacks, and generally run only one service
- Using SSH you establish a tunnel between your local machine and the bastion host, and can forward traffic to another machine on the local network of the bastion host



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Internet application protocols
Conclusion

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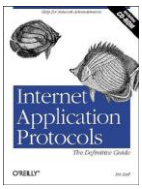
In summary…



- A surprisingly small number of relatively simple protocols power the vast majority of what we do on the Internet today
- Remember, the Internet is a "stupid network". All you need are end points (client and server) that communicate with each other.
  - Internet application protocols take the IP layer (and others below) for granted

In summary…

- Some of these protocols have gained a lot of popularity and are evolving to be generic information request/response protocols way beyond their original intent
  - e.g., HTTP and web services

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