Distributed Systems

Multicast and agreement

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Multicast

- Send message to multiple nodes
- A node can join a multicast *group*, and receives all messages sent to that group
- The sender sends only once: to the group address
- The network takes care of delivering to all nodes in the group
- Note: groups are restricted to specific networks such as LANs & WANs
  - Multicast in the university network will not reach nodes outside the network

Multicast

- A special version of broadcast (restricted to a subset of nodes)
- In a LAN
  - Sender sends a broadcast
  - Interested nodes accept the message others reject
- In larger networks we can use a tree
  - Remember trees can be used for broadcast
  - Interested nodes join the tree, and thus get messages
  - All nodes can use the same tree to multicast to the same group

IP Multicast

- IP has a specific multicast protocol
- Addresses from 224.0.0.0 to 239.255.255.255 are reserved for multicast
  - They act as *groups*
  - Some of these are reserved for specific multicast based protocols
- Any message sent to one of the addresses goes to all processes subscribed to the group
  - Must be in the same "network"
  - Basically depends on how routers are configured
- In a LAN, communication is broadcast
- In more complex networks, tree-based protocols can be used

IP Multicast

- Any process interested in joining a group informs its OS
- The OS informs the "network"
  - The network interface (LAN card) receives and delivers group messages to the OS & process
  - The router may need to be informed
  - IGMP – Internet group management protocol

IP Multicast

- Sender sends only once
- Any router also forwards only once
- No acknowledgement mechanism
  - Uses UDP
- No guarantee that intended recipient gets the message
- Often used for streaming media type content
- Not good for critical information

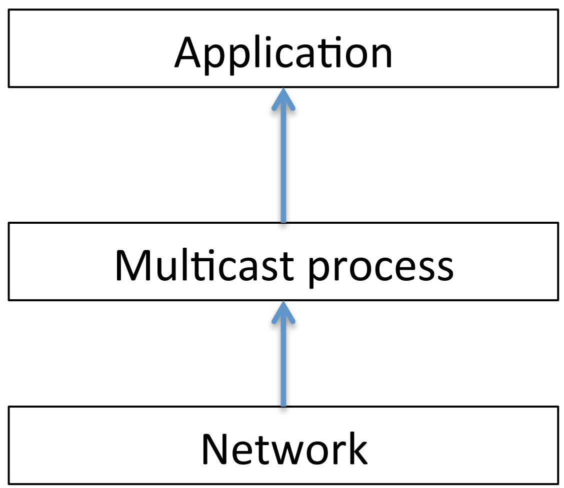
Multicast

- Can we design a reliable protocol?

- If there are multiple messages, can we ensure they are delivered in correct order?

Multicast

- Imagine: We are designing an OS service
- Other applications will use this service to perform multicasts.
- We have to ensure that everything goes *correctly*

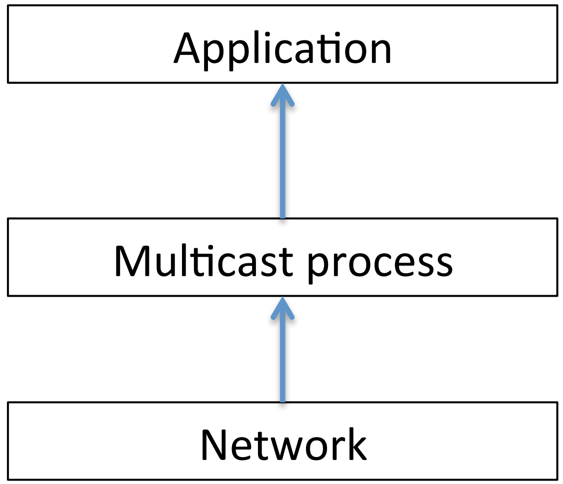


Reliable Multicast

- The sending process is in the multicast group
- Nodes may fail (by crashing)
- We will use one to one communication between processes
  - The communication is reliable (may be using suitable ack-based protocol)
  - If both processes are alive, the message gets delivered. i.e. the network does not fail
- Note that these assumptions are necessary.
  - If network and message delivery can fail, then there may be 2 sets of processes who never communicate with each other
  - Thus message from one set will never reach the other

Reliable Multicast

- *multicast(g,m)* : multicast message m to group g
- *receive(m)*: The OS or network card receives the message and gives to the multicasting process
- *deliver(m)*: The multicast process delivers m to the application



Reliable Multicast - definition

- Must have the following properties:
  - Integrity: A working process p in group g delivers m at most once, and m was multicast by some working process
  - Agreement: If a working process delivers m then all other working processes in group g will deliver m

- What is the point of having reliable multicast?

Reliable Multicast - definition

- Must have the following properties:
  - Integrity: A working process p in group g delivers m at most once, and m was multicast by some working process
  - Agreement: If a working process delivers m then all other working processes in group g will deliver m
- What is the point of having reliable multicast?
  - We ensure that one process can communicate with all others
  - Application programmer does not have to worry about it

Basic Multicast

- Suppose send(p,m) is reliable
- Define Basic multicast p.Bmulticast(g,m):
  - For each q in g:
    - P.send(q,m)
  - On p.receive(m): # by multicasting algorithm
    - P.Bdeliver(m) # to the application
- Assumes the sender does not crash in operation
- Therefore, does not implement Agreement in presence of crashes

Reliable Multicast

- Use Bmulticast as function/procedure

- Implement *Rmulticast(g,m)* and *Rdeliver(m)*

Reliable Multicast

- Initialization: *Received={}*
- *p.Rmulticast(g,m):*
  - *p.Bmulticast(g, m)*
- *Q.Bdeliver(m):*
  - If *m* is not in *Received:*
    - *Received = Received* U *{m}*
    - If *p≠q : q.Bmulticast(g,m)*
    - *q.Rdeliver(m)*

- The key point is that q sends the message to other working nodes *before* it accepts the message and delivers to the interested application

Reliable Multicast

- Integrity: A message is delivered at most once and was multicast by some correct process
  - Obviously, since send(p,m) is reliable

- Agreement: Since a process forwards the message to others *before* it delivers to the local application
  - If it was in the reverse order, then the following could have occurred:
    - Application gets the message and takes action according to it (such as send a message to update a database)
    - The machine fails, so that no other working processes receive the multicast
    - Result: inconsistent state
  - In the present case, a process failing in between the 2 actions is like it having failed before the multicast starts.

Multicast ordering

- We want messages delivered in "correct" (intended, consistent etc) order

- FIFO: If a process p performs 2 multicasts, then every working process that delivers these 2 messages deliver in the correct order
- Causal: if p.multicast(g,m) q.multicast(g,m') then every process which delivers both, deliver m before m'
- Total: All working processes deliver messages in the same order

Multicast ordering

- Causal implies FIFO

- Total ordering
  - Requires messages are delivered *same* order by each process
  - But this order may have no relation to causality or message sending order
  - Can be modified to be FIFO-total or Causal-total orders

FIFO ordered multicast

- Our reliable multicast implements FIFO
  - Assuming the Bmulticast sends to group members in same order & channels are FIFO
  - Sequence numbers can be used to implement FIFO otherwise

FIFO ordered multicast

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Causally ordered Multicast

- Each process has a Vector clock
- Suppose p sends a multicast m
- q receives m and holds it until:
  - It has delivered any earlier message by p
  - delivered any multicast message that has been delivered by p (to its application) before p multicast m
- These are easy to check using vector timestamps

Total ordered multicast

- Using sequencer process
  - p wants to multicast
  - It asks sequencer process for a sequence number
  - Sends multicast tagged with the sequence number
  - All processes deliver messages by sequence number
- Simple
- Single point of failure and bottleneck

Total ordered multicast

- Using collective agreement
- p first sends Bmulticast to the group
- Each process in group picks a sequence number
- Processes run a distributed protocol to agree on a sequence number for the message
- Messages delivered according to sequence number

Consensus

- Agreeing on things (leader, sequence numbers, time for action, action to be taken etc)

Basic Consensus

- Set of processes
- Each starts with *state = undecided*
- Each has a single value
- Have to set their decision variable to the same value and enter decided state

Basic Consensus

- Termination: each process sets its decision variable and enters decided state
- Agreement: If 2 processes have entered decided state, then their decision variables are equal
- Integrity: If all working processes proposed the same value v, then all of them in decided state has decision=v

Basic Consensus

- A simple solution:
  - Use reliable multicast to communicate all values
  - Use a simple rule (min, max etc) to decide

- Inefficient, but works!

Byzantine generals consensus

- 3 or more generals deciding whether to attack or not
- A commander issues the attack
- One or more processes may be faulty (controlled by the enemy)
- Properties:
  - Termination : everyone decides
  - Agreement : non-faulty processes agree
  - Integrity : If the commander is non-faulty, then all non-faulty processes agree with commander

Byzantine generals consensus

- Suppose 3 processes: A, B, C.
  - C is commander
  - B is faulty
- C says attack to both

- A tells B: "C told me: attack"
- B tells A: "C told me: do-not-attack"

- A knows someone is lying. But does not know who

- No solution with 3 processes

- In general, no solution with $n \leq 3f$ processes, where f is number of faulty proceses

Interactive consensus

- Processes have to agree on a vector of values
- Each process contributed only to part of the vector (but all processes must have same vector in the end)

- Termination : everyone decides
- Agreement: they decide the same vector V
- If p_i proposes x, then in V_i=x for all processes

Consensus in Asynchronous systems

- Cannot be guaranteed
- Process A is not responding:
  - Is it failed or just slow?
  - It might just send a message at the wrong time

Termination detection

- How do we know when a distributed computation has ended?

Termination detection

- We suppose that the computation is started by a process s.
  - This means, other processes start working after receiving message from s or some other process
  - They have no other way to know that a computation is in progress
- s wants to know when all other processes have concluded working
- S starts with weight = 1.0
- Other processes start with weight = 0
- When a process sends a message, it puts part (say, half) of its weight in the message.
- When a process receives a message, it adds the message weight to its own weight.
- When a process has finished computing, it sends its current weight to s
- When s has weight=1, it knows no other process is active

Termination detection

- Works on the assumption that no message is lost
  - Methods like TCP give good guarantee for delivery
  - Many other distributed algorithms have this assumption
  - Useful for their termination detection
- Other, more complicated methods are possible