Modeling and Optimizing Pipeline Latency

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Question

What's the optimal latency of transferring 4K on Myrinet??

State-of-Art

- Many applications care about medium message latency
  - network memory (e.g., GMS)
  - distributed file system (e.g., xFS)
  - database applications
- Lack of research in this area
  - focus:
    e.g., previous emphasis on small and bulk messages
  - problem domain:
    e.g., different problem(s) on the internet
  - approach:
    e.g., GMS study used brute force simulation + ad hoc hacks for a particular configuration

Problem Statement

- want to send a ***packet***
- can break it down into ***fragments***
- the network has a number of ***pipeline stages***
- each stage is defined by:
  - a ***per-fragment startup cost***, and
  - an additional ***per-byte cost***
- each stage is ***store-and-forward***
- question: how to break down the packet to minimize ***latency*** of the entire packet?

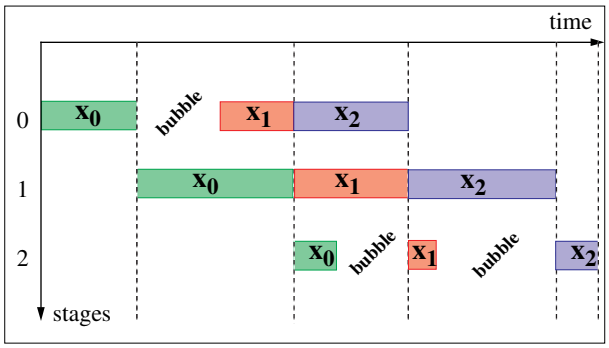
Outline

- Introduction
- *Algorithms and models*
- Experimental methodology and results
- Conclusions

Algorithms

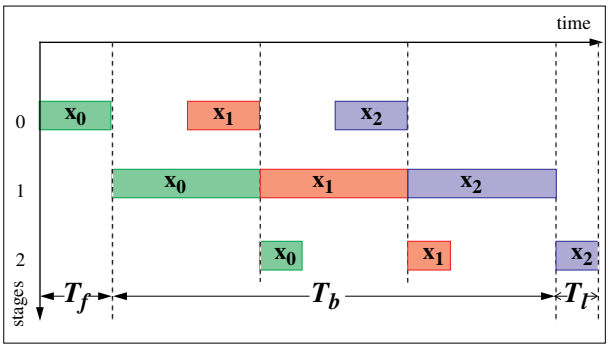
- Linear (integer) programming
- Fixed-sized fragmentation
- Variable-sized fragmentation
  - 2-stage pipelines
    no-stall, ramp-up, reversibility theorems
  - 3-stage fast-slow-fast pipeline
    ramp-up-down theorem
  - 3-stage fast-slow-slowest pipeline
    hierarchical fragmentation
  - n-stage pipelines
    put it all together!

Notations



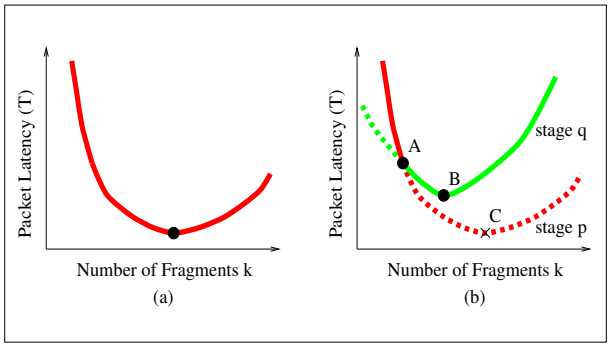
- packet = B bytes
- fragments: $x_0+x_1+...+x_k = B$
- stage i is defined by (g_i, G_i) =
  (per-fragment overhead, per byte cost)
- bottleneck stage is (g_b, G_b)

Fixed-sized Fragments



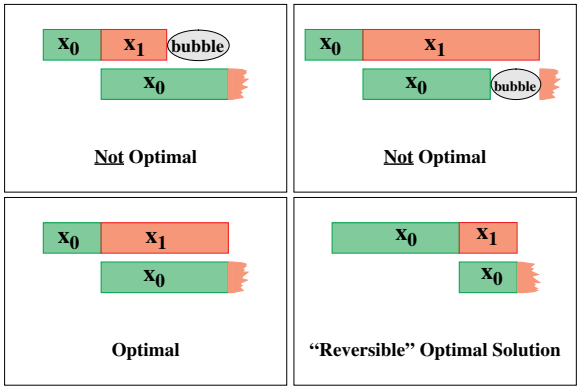
- Must keep bottleneck busy
- *Key trade-off* between (T_f+T_l) and T_b
- Total latency is a function of x_i
- Optimal fragment size: $x_i = \sqrt{\frac{B \bullet g_b}{\sum_{i \neq b} G_i}}$

Generalizing Bottleneck Definition



- ***Signature curve*** of a bottleneck
- ***Latency curve*** of a pipeline = concatenation of multiple signature curves
- Find ***global minimum*** on latency curve

2-stage Pipelines

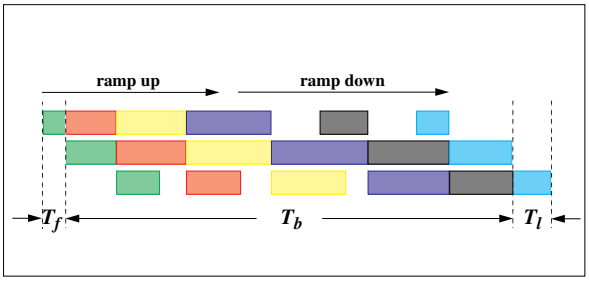


- Optimal ***only if*** no bubble (Ramp-up Theorem):

$$x_{i+1} = \frac{g_1 - g_0}{G_0} + \frac{G_1}{G_0} \bullet x_i$$

- Latency is function of x_0 (find best x_0)
- "Reversible" optimal solutions for "reversed" pipelines ("Reversibility Theory")

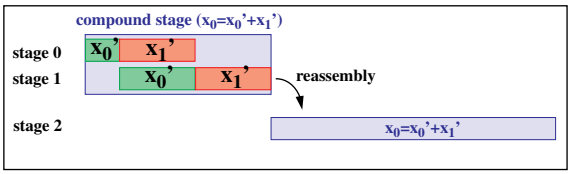
3-stage Pipeline
(fast-slow-fast)



Intuition of ramp-up-down:

- $T=T_f+T_b+T_l$
- Want small T_f -- start with small frag., and "ramp up"
- Want small T_l -- end with small frag., so "ramp down"

3-stage Pipeline
(fast-slow-slowest)



- Case for (possible) reassembly
- Hierarchical fragmentation
  - treat the first two stages as a ***compound*** stage
  - search for optimal x_0 for overall pipeline
  - apply recursion to breakdown x_0 for sub-pipeline
- Reversibility Theory solves slowest-slow-fast case (fragmentation instead of reassembly)

Algorithm Summary

- Fixed-sized fragmentation
  - good for pipeline whose stages are similar
- Ramp-up, Ramp-up-down fragmentation
  - optimal for 2-stage and fast-slow-fast pipelines
  - provides upper bound and insight
- Hierarchical fragmentation
  - useful when one stage is much slower than others

General Pipeline
(Put it all Together)

- Break pipeline into three parts:
  bottleneck stage,
  the stages before, and
  the stages after
- Treat the before and after stages as
  two compound stages
- Apply recursion to each of the compound stages
- Apply fixed-sized fragmentation,
  or ramp-up-and-down fragmentation

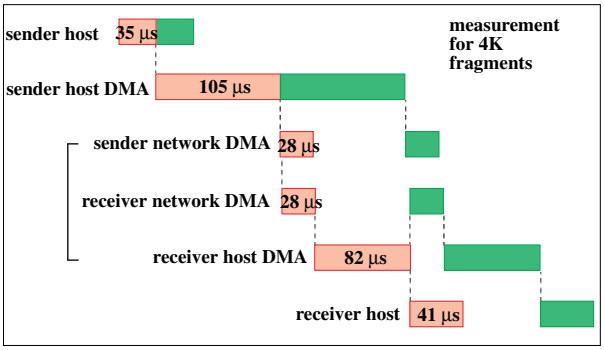
Outline

- Introduction
- Algorithms
- ***Experimental methodology and results***
  - methodology
  - clear-box and black-box measurement of pipeline parameters
  - evaluation of fixed-sized fragmentation
  - evaluation of variable-sized fragmentation
- Conclusions

Methodology

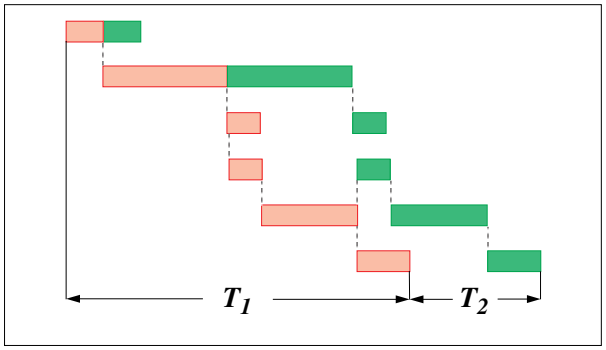
- Obtain pipeline parameters
  - clear-box instrumentation
  - black-box measurement
- Construct customized pipeline algorithms
- Adapt to user packet sizes and changing network characteristics at run time

Myrinet-GAM Pipeline
(Clear-box Instrumentation)



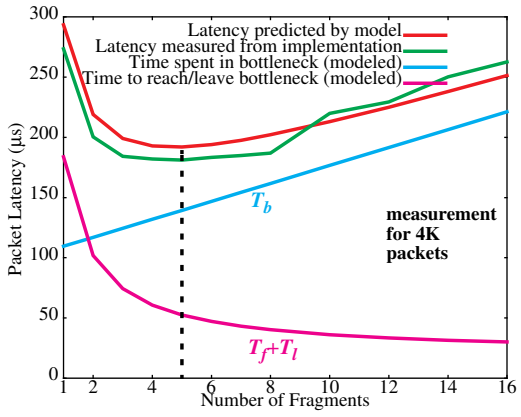
stage i	g_i (µs)	G_i (µs/kB)
0	7.2	7.2
1	5.2	24.9
2	7.5	24.9
3	7.4	7.9

Myrinet-GAM Pipeline
(Black-box Measurement)



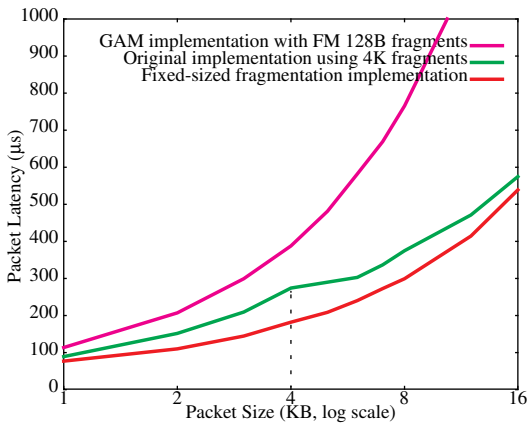
- Measure $T_1 = (\Sigma g_i + x \cdot \Sigma G_i)$ to obtain $(\Sigma g_i, \Sigma G_i)$
- Measure $T_2 = (g_b + x \cdot G_b)$ to obtain (g_b, G_b)
- $(g_b, \Sigma G_i - G_b)$ sufficient for fixed-sized fragmentation

Validation of Fixed-sized Model



- Model error averages 5.9%
- Tradeoff between (T_f+T_l) and T_b

Applying Fixed-sized Fragmentation

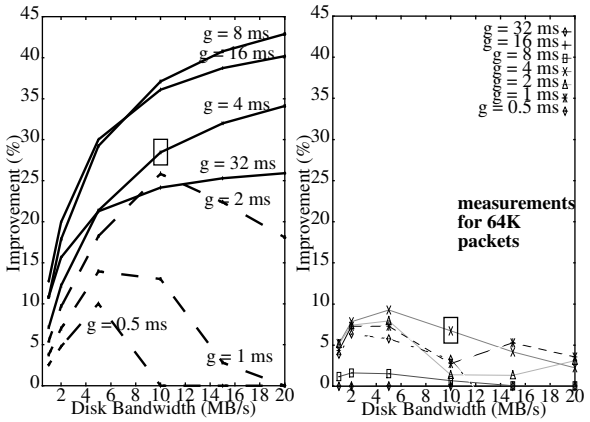


- Adaptive fragment size by fixed-sized fragmentation
- for 4KB, 51% improvement over original implementation

Evaluation of Variable-sized Fragmentation

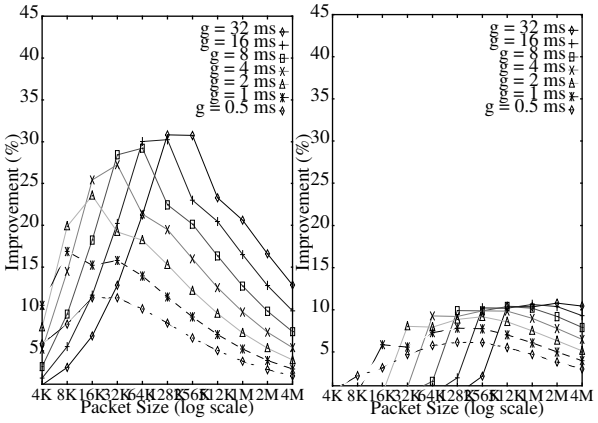
- Two pipelines
  - network - disk
  - network - disk - network
- Three algorithms
  - A: simple fixed-sized fragmentation
  - B: add hierarchical fragmentation
  - C: add ramp-up fragmentation
  - C': add ramp-up-down fragmentation

Sensitivity of Variable-sized Fragmentation



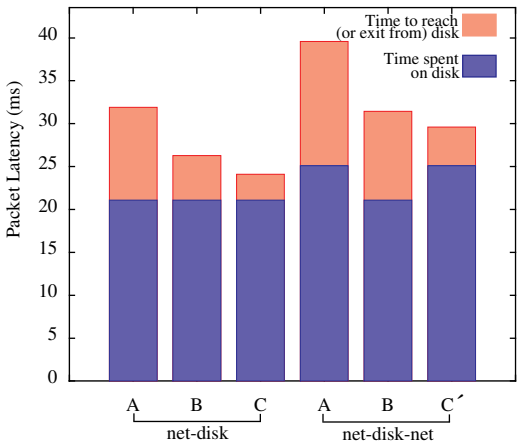
- Hierarchical fragmentation good when bottleneck
  - g ~ an order of magnitude worse
  - G ~ no worse than an order of magnitude larger
- Ramp-up fragmentation: < 10% improvement

Sensitivity of Variable-sized Fragmentation to Packet Size



- Hierarchical fragmentation good for medium messages
- Ramp-up fragmentation: < 11% improvement

Timing Breakdown of Variable-sized Fragmentation



- Main effect is reducing (T_f+T_l)
- Fixed-sized + hierarchical fragmentation is a good approximation

Conclusion

- Medium messages are important
- Series of pipelining algorithms based on a single tradeoff between (T_f+T_l) and T_b
- No more
  - "voodoo constants"
  - brute force simulation
- Instead, the algorithm dynamically adapts to
  - user packet size, and
  - network characteristics
- Fixed-sized + hierarchical fragmentation is a good approximation