

Encapsulation and Tunneling

- *encapsulation* describes the process of placing an IP datagram inside a network packet or frame

- encapsulation refers to how the network interface uses packet switching hardware
 - two machines communicating across IEEE 802.3 using IP encapsulates each datagram in a single Ethernet packet for transmission
 - the encapsulation standard for TCP/IP specifies:
 - that an IP datagram occupies the data portion of the IEEE 802.3 packet
 - the IEEE 802.3 packet type must be set to IP

Tunneling

- by contrast, the term *tunneling* refers to the use of a high level transport service to carry packets or messages from another service
- the key difference between tunneling and encapsulation lies in whether IP transmits datagrams in hardware packets or uses a high level transport service
- *IP encapsulates each datagram in a packet when it uses hardware directly*
- *it creates a tunnel when it uses a high level transport delivery service to send datagrams from one point to another*

Performance implications of data transmission on high speed network devices

- 10 Gbits/sec Ethernet has been standardised
 - and 10 Gbits/sec cards are becoming available and are supported on
 - [Linux/Windows/FreeBSD](http://www.myri.com/Myri-10G/10gbe_solutions.html) (http://www.myri.com/Myri-10G/10gbe_solutions.html)
 - the IEEE committee is now investigating 100 GBit/sec!

- the 10 Gbits/sec card above has a 2 MB buffer and uses the PCI-Express bus
 - claims to run at line speed

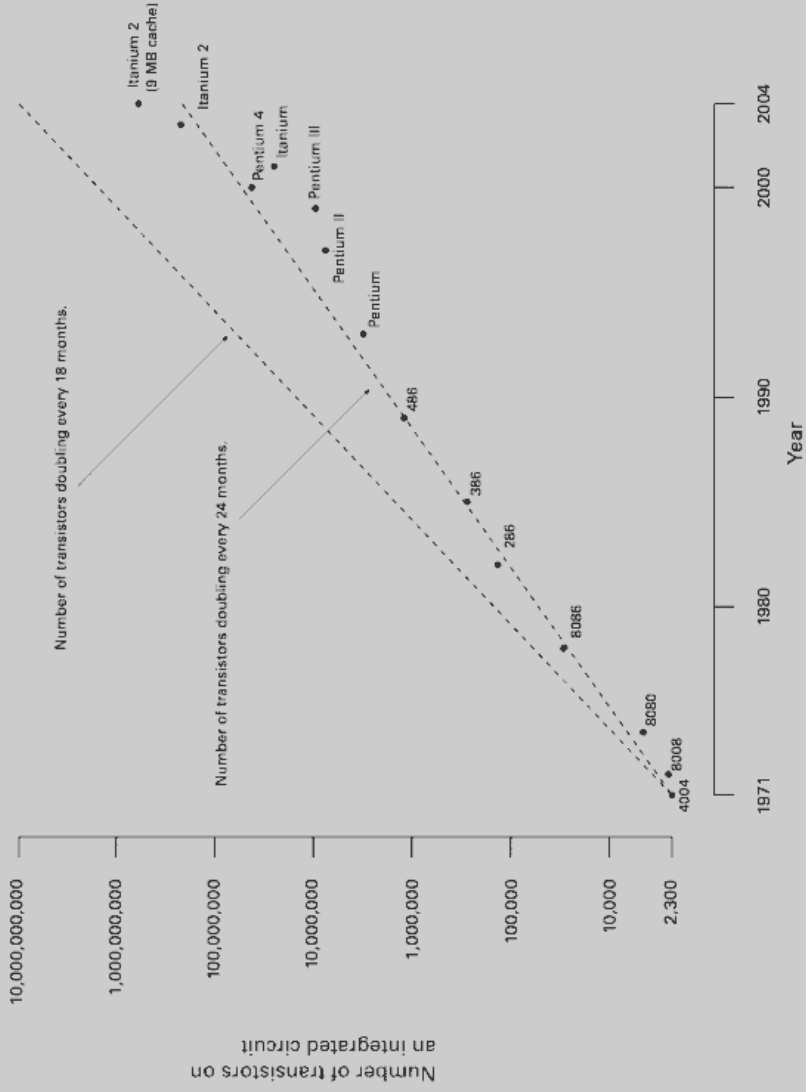
Performance implications of data transmission on high speed network devices

- effectively 10 bits transmitted every nano second
- huge strain on the microprocessor and memory system as it must move ~1 GByte ram/sec across to the card - for sustained performance
- or put another way, assuming a single core is clocking at 3.33 GHz and that a core can execute an instruction every cycle then
- every instruction used to configure the next transmitted packet will incur a 3 bit latency delay
- what we are seeing is the network speed becoming faster than CPU speed
 - not seen this for 20 years

Performance implications of data transmission on high speed network devices

- **the free lunch is over!** (<http://www.gotw.ca/publications/concurrency-ddj.htm>)
 - over the last 30 years we have seen microprocessor speeds increase

Moore's Law



Moore's Law

- interestingly it states the no of transistors will double every 18 months
 - actually fairly true if altered 24 months

- does *not* say that performance doubles every 18 months!
 - although this has been a by product of transistors doubling, so far..

- Moore's Law continues to hold, but microprocessor manufacturers are using transistors in different ways
 - they cannot keep increasing clock speed as was done over the last 30 years
 - thus multicore microprocessors are available (currently quad core)
 - large cache and maybe GPU on chip
 - expect no. of cores to double every 24 months

Moore's Law

- implications for the Computer Science community are immense
 - strange irony that one of the oldest scripting languages will make harness these multicores with no extra user level programming
 - bash!

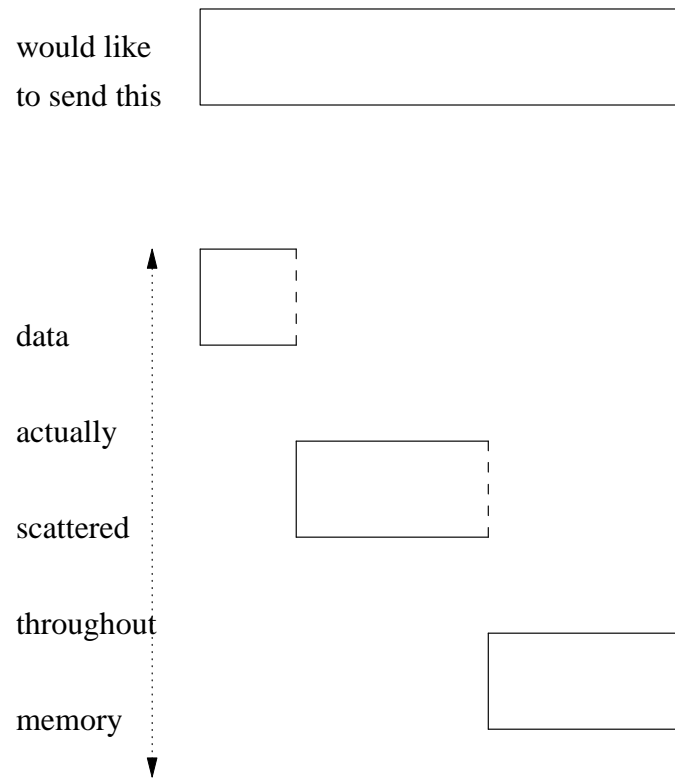
- we need to ensure that we reduce the amount of data copying within the operating system to a minimum
 - it is critical to keep to a minimum the number of instructions executed when configuring the device driver hardware to transmit/receive the next packet

- finally extra reading - check the [conclusion](http://www.hep.man.ac.uk/u/rich/net/nic/GE_FGCS_v18.doc) `<http://www.hep.man.ac.uk/u/rich/net/nic/GE_FGCS_v18.doc>`

System and user organization of frames, packets, headers and data

- network programming often requires disjoint data to be transmitted in a single unit

System and user organization of frames, packets, headers and data



User level scatter/gather technique

- could copy data - but excess copying is *slow*
- a common user level technique is to use an `iovec` and `readv`, `writev`

```
#include <sys/types.h>
#include <sys/uio.h>

int writev (int fd, struct iovec iov[],
            int iovcount);
int readv  (int fd, struct iovec iov[],
            int iovcount);
```

- similar mechanism exists at the user and system level in UNIX
 - see `iovec`, `readv`, `writev`

User level scatter/gather technique

- the iovec is defined under linux as:

```
struct iovec {  
    void *iov_base;  
    int iov_len;  
};
```

iovec example

- consider a function that needs to transmit header and data

iovec example

```
int write_with_hdr (int fd, void *buff, int nBytes)
{
    struct hdr header;

    /* set up header ... as required */

    if (write(fd, &header, sizeof(header)) !=
        sizeof(header)) {
        return( -1 );
    }
    if (write(fd, buff, nBytes) == nBytes) {
        return( nBytes );
    } else {
        return( -1 );
    }
}
```

iovec example

- requires two write system calls, again slow.
 - could copy - but again slow
- remove two calls to write and the need to copy by:

Using writev and iovec

```
int write_with_hdr (int fd, void *buff, int nBytes)
{
    struct hdr header;
    struct iovec iov[2];

    /* set up header ... as required */

    iov[0].iov_base = (void *)&header;
    iov[0].iov_len  = sizeof(header);
    iov[1].iov_base = buff;
    iov[1].iov_len  = nBytes;

    if (writev(fd, &iov, 2) ==
        sizeof(header) + nBytes) {
        return( nBytes );
    } else {
        return( -1 );
    }
}
```

User and System interface

- user level iovecs remove redundant copies and multiple writes
 - useful to improve speed
 - maybe necessary if data must be written atomically
 - ie to a network device

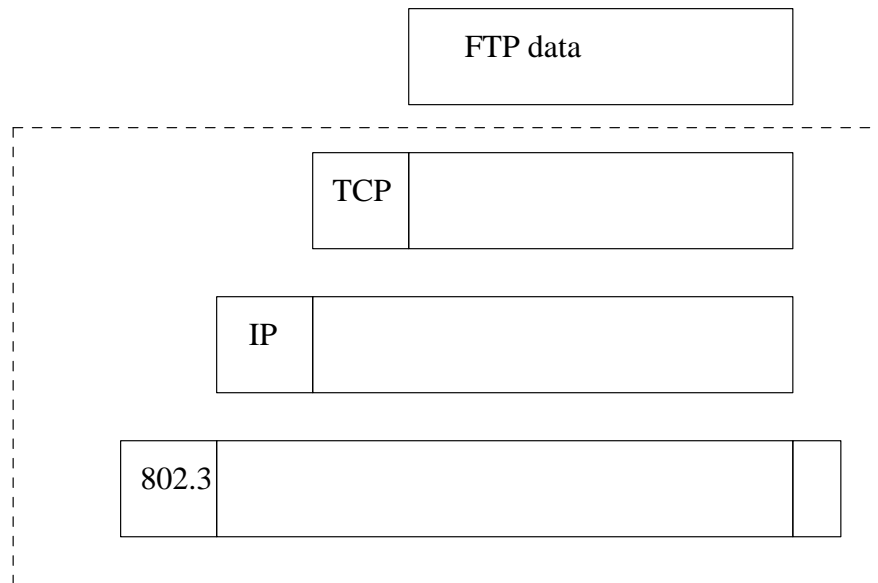
- what happens when the system call occurs and the operating system needs to add further headers?
 - could copy iovecs and create a new iovec
 - not a good idea as outgoing data (writes) may need a number of headers
 - require an efficient method of adding and removing headers and data

Internal organization of frames, packets, headers and data

- one aspect seldom covered in network books
 - protocol implementation
 - difficult and large subject

- specific topics are useful to examine as an overall aid to understanding
 - how is data passed between protocol layers?
 - in particular remember that the data component of lower layers contains headers (control information) of the higher

Protocol encapsulation



- only concerned with packets/frames within dotted box
 - going up the layers we need to strip off the headers (receiving a packet)
 - going down the layers we need to add headers! (might be harder!)

Buffer management

- incoming packets must be placed in memory and passed to the appropriate protocol software for processing
- applications generate output which must be stored in packets and passed to software and hardware devices for transmission
- ultimately the efficiency of protocol software depends on how it manages memory
- a good design allocates space quickly and avoids copying data

Outgoing traffic implementation issues - method 1

- create frame header
 - could copy frame data
 - generally considered bad as copying data is slow
 - advantage, clear and simple

- raises two questions
 - how do we allocate buffers
 - surely there is a better way!

Buffer allocation

- ideally a system could efficiently allocate buffers by using buffers of the same size
 - difficult to choose the optimum packet size
 - 1 computer might be attached to two networks
 - each has a different optimum size of packet
 - may wish to add connections to a computer without changing system buffer size
 - IP may need to store datagrams larger than underlying network packet size (reassembly)
 - applications may wish to send arbitrary sized messages

Large buffer solution - method 2

- could choose buffers capable of storing largest packets
 - advantage, it works and is simple
 - disadvantage IP datagrams can be 64k
 - large datagrams are rare
 - large amounts of memory are wasted

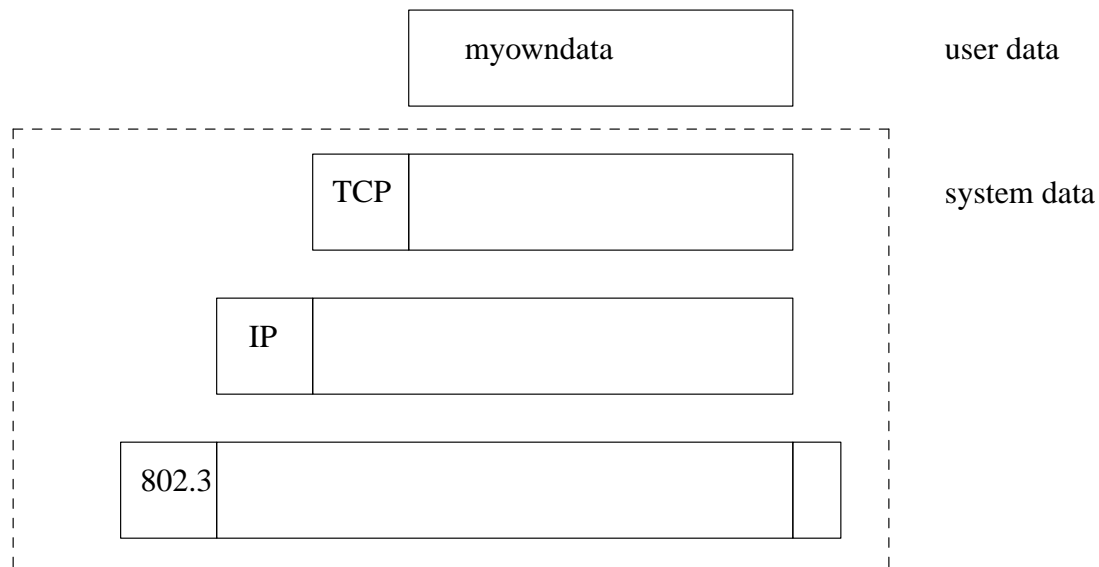
- in practice such a solution is often adopted but at a size of 4 or 8k + size of physical network layer header

- no problem in our dotted boxed system but we would have to copy data to/from the user
 - ie out of system buffers into user space

Problem with large buffer solution

- maybe a better solution can be found which avoids this

```
char myowndata[lengthOfData] ;  
  
nbytes = write(tcpSocket, &myowndata,  
              lengthOfData);  
}
```



Linked list solution - the mbuf - method 3

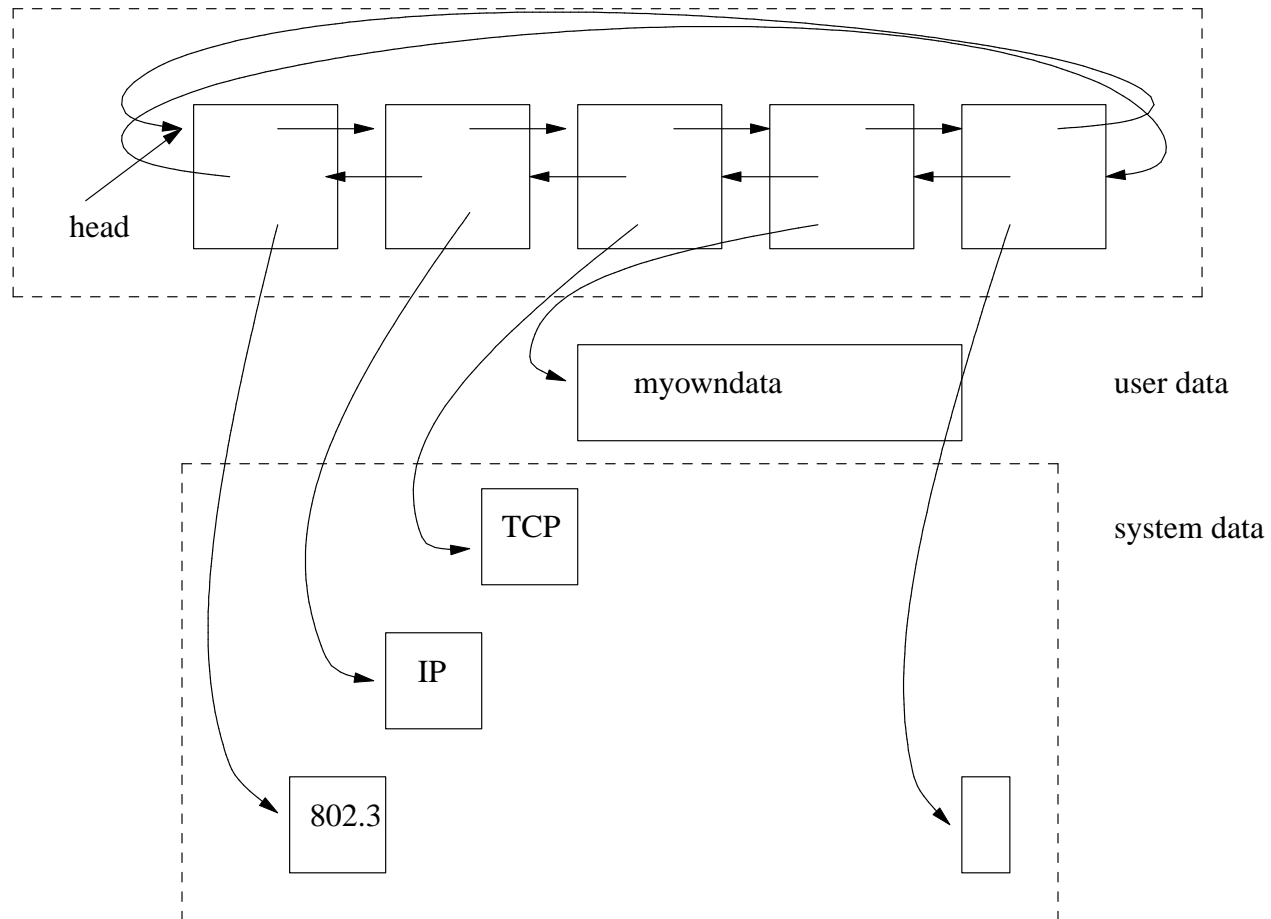
- the alternative in to use linked lists of smaller buffers
 - buffers may be of fixed or variable size usually small between 128..1024 bytes
 - BSD Unix uses 128 bytes in a structure called (mbuf)

- individual buffers do not need to be full of data
 - they contain a very short header which define the
 - length of data buffer
 - amount of real data
 - where the data exists (address of data)

Linked list diagram

- permitting data on the linked list to contain partial data
- allows quick encapsulation without copying

Linked list diagram



Linked list diagram

- it is likely that you do not need the trailer as hardware *may* automatically generate it

Requirements and advantages

- need to make all protocol layer implementation understand the linked list mechanism (mbuf)

- some devices can write or read data in non contiguous blocks
 - called *scatter read scatter write*
 - linked list fits neatly with this hardware mechanism

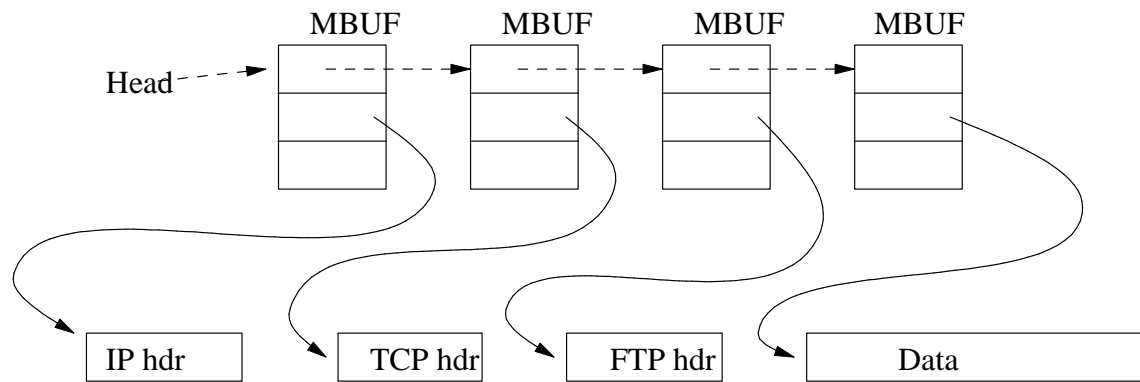
- UNIX must translate Mbufs into iovecs and visa-versa

Incoming packets using MBUFs

- 2 cases
- case (i) either receiver is waiting for the packet
 - eager reader, or
- case (ii) packet is waiting for receiver
 - lazy reader

Case (i)

- can build empty MBUF list for incoming frame



Data needs to be large enough to contain largest data

- note we need an extra field in each MBUF indicating *# of bytes used*
 - especially for the data component

Case (ii)

- here the packet comes in before we are ready to consume data

- need to house packet until the receiver is ready
 - use a single large packet buffer
 - large enough for largest packet

- when receiver is finally ready to consume packet
 - we copy packet into our MBUF structured buffer