

# Computer Networks and Distributed Systems

## Solutions to Questionnaire about ch. 2, part 4

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### Context

- Based on this lecture presentation: <http://palermo.unileon.es/cn/ch2-2017.pdf>
  - The Ethernet system
  - Ethernet timing and CSMA/CD

Assume an original Ethernet System network (Shared media Ethernet) for all the following questions

1. Explain the responsibilities of the Transceiver and the NIC in the Ethernet technology. Which one is responsible for computing Ethernet's CRC-32?

The transceiver, when transmitting, it translates binary symbols into electrical waveforms, when receiving it translates waveforms into binary symbols. The transceiver's responsibilities lay into the physical layer, among them, it contains electronics for computing the CRC.

The NIC, which implements the services of the Datalink layer, is responsible for building a new frame every time an upper layer protocol requests the transmission of a data unit: including the MAC addresses and the correct ethertype. When a new frame has been received by the transceiver, the NIC will deencapsulate its payload and convey it to the correct upper layer protocol.

2. What does Shared Link mean in the context of the Ethernet system? Then, what does Switched Ethernet mean?

In the original Ethernet System, the stations (Hosts or end nodes) were directly connected to a coaxial cable shared by all, thus, the bits transmitted by a station were inevitably received by all stations. Logically, only the station whose address is included in the frame's destination address field, deencapsulates the frame's contents and has it properly demultiplexed to the upper layer protocol number contained in the frame's ethertype.

A few years after its inception, the Ethernet System evolved into the Switched Ethernet in which stations are connected to a store-and-forward device named lan switch which has each received unicast frame copied to the destination station's port which has the benefit of keeping the communication private to sender and receiver.

3. What is the Rtt of a maximally shared-medium Ethernet (2500m)? Consult the textbook or the lecture presentation slides.

The Rtt of a maximally-configured Ethernet is  $51,2\mu\text{s}$ , which is known as *slot time*. The slot time has a great significance in the Ethernet System because it determines the minimum frame length that guarantees a proper functioning of the access control algorithm (CSMA/CD).

4. The transmission speed of the original Ethernet system is 10Mbps. Calculate how many bits fit the Rtt of a

maximally-configured Ethernet.

Assume two stations, A and B are connected on the extreme points of an Ethernet segment of maximum allowed length, 2.5Km. Rtt is the time it takes for one bit to propagate from A to B plus the time it takes the response bit to propagate from B to A. We assume it takes zero seconds for B to generate the response bit. Basically, Rtt depends on the distance between A and B and the light speed in the physical transmission medium, in our case, a typical 50Ohm coaxial 10BASE5 cable. (For a review of Rtt and related concepts, consult textbook ch.1 and the solved exercises documents in [paloalto.unileon.es/cn](http://paloalto.unileon.es/cn)).

How many bits can be transmitted in a time T using the transmission speed of Ethernet, 10Mbps? We computed this on the board:  $10\text{Mbps} = 10 \cdot 10^6 \text{ b/s}$  then we multiply this transmission rate by the time, in this case the time being Rtt:

Number of bits that fit into the Rtt =  $10 \cdot 10^6 \text{ b/s} \cdot 51,2\mu\text{s} = 10 \cdot 10^6 \text{ b/s} \cdot 51,2 \cdot 10^{-6}\text{s} = 10 \cdot 51,2 \text{ b} = 512 \text{ b}$

In conclusion, 512 bits fit the slot time (The Rtt of a maximally-configured Ethernet)

5. Assume a number of hosts (H1, H2,...) are connected to an original Ethernet; host H1 transmits a frame and wishes to prevent other hosts from receiving the frame. Is this possible? Make some suggestion.

In the original Ethernet system, the stations are all connected to the same coaxial cable, therefore, if the cable is of the maximum length allowed (2.5Km), then, every electrical signal driven by a station, will, necessarily be received by all the other peer stations. Any single station's physical layer receives each frame driven onto the cable and selects whether or not to hand the frame to the datalink protocol on the basis of the received frame's Destination MAC field being equal to the receiving adapter's MAC address.

Normally, a station's NIC is configured to reject all the frames sent to other stations, but, in principle, if a station wishes to receive and process all the frames, it can do so with the sender having no capability to avoid it whatsoever. In fact, network analyzers like Wireshark configure NICs in a mode known as *promiscuous mode*, in which the adapter will hand all the traffic to the datalink, so that it will eventually reach the Wireshark application.

6. What topology is implemented by the network based on coaxial cable used in 10BASE-2 and 10BASE-5? What is the topology used in 10BASE-T? What's is the acronym that represents the access protocol in the three cases?

By convention, the network topology resulting from the shared medium Ethernets, 10BASE2 and 10BASE5 is known as the *bus topology*. The 10BASE-T Ethernet implements the *star topology*. These three Ethernet technologies use the same access protocol: CSMA/CD, since the three are *shared-medium* Ethernets; in the first two cases, the shared medium is the coaxial cable and, in the third case, the shared medium is made up of the hub's electronics which behaves as a repeater/regenerator of electrical signals.

7. Ethernet's datalink frame structure is explained in slide no. 64, what's the minimum size of the payload field? Considering the other fields's sizes except the preamble, what's the resulting minimum size of the Ethernet frame? Is there a maximum Ethernet frame's size?

The original Ethernet system prescribes a minimum frame size of 512 bits, this allows a correct operation of the CSMA/CD access protocol. Let's calculate the contribution of each frame's field to obtain the minimum payload size:

$512 \text{ b} = 512 \text{ bit} \cdot 1 \text{ bit}/8 \text{ Byte} = 64 \text{ Byte}$  is the minimum frame size

Dest MAC + Src MAC = 6 Byte + 6 Byte = 12 Byte  
Ethertype = 2 Byte

CRC = 4 Byte

The size of all the fields except the payload yields = 12 Byte + 2 Byte + 4 Byte = 18 Byte

Since the minimum frame's size is 64 Byte, the resulting minimum payload is: 64 Byte - 18 Byte = 46 Byte or 46 Byte · 8 bit/1 Byte = **368 bit**.

Every Ethernet frame must contain at least 368 bit in its payload and, if the upper layer protocol requesting transmission is submitting a payload less than 368 bits, then, the transmitter should pad it with bits 0 until the desired size is reached. A question comes to mind immediately, how does the receiver find out the effective payload size?

The Ethernet system specifies a maximum frame size of 1500Bytes so that no station monopolize the transmission medium.

8. Does there exist an Ethernet MAC address that represents all the hosts belonging to one network? What's the bit pattern of that special MAC address? What's its name?

The broadcast MAC address is, by convention, the all-1 MAC address = 0xff ff ff ff ff. The broadcast MAC address represents all the stations connected to the LAN; when a transmitted Ethernet frame contains the broadcast MAC address in its Destination MAC field, then, all stations must hand it to the upper layer protocols.

9. What's the sentinel that marks the *end of frame* in the Ethernet system?

Ethernet's end of frame is implicitly derived by a receiver when the medium becomes idle after receiving a frame. The Ethernet frame contains no length field, by contrast, the IEEE 802.3 frame does contain a length field. Both, Ethernet and 802.3 are implemented by NICs of present day.

10. Host H1 in an Ethernet has a number of frames to transmit. Assume no other hosts on the same network want to transmit for the time being, only H1 wants to transmit a frame now, therefore no carrier will be present in the medium when H1 checks CS (Carrier Sense). After H1 finishes transmitting the first of the backlog of frames it wishes to transmit the second frame: How long after the first is finished? (Skim slide no. 113).

When host H1 finishes transmission of frame no. 1, it must sense the medium again (*CS, Carrier Sense*) and find it idle (*No carrier*) for at least IFG seconds (9,6µs), therefore, frame no. 2 will be transmitted later than 9,6µs after frame 1 finished transmission.

11. The 32-bit Jamming Sequence sent by a host when it determines that a collision took place is a fixed bit pattern? Discuss this.

The Jamming Sequence is not a specific bit pattern. When an Ethernet transmitter detects a collision (*CD or Collision Detection*), it does not abort the current frame transmission immediately, but it injects 32 further bits from the frame with the objective of further stressing the fact that a collision occurred thereby allowing the farthest stations to undoubtedly become aware of the collision.

12. Why does the Ethernet system specify that minimum frame length is 512 bits? Consider the number of bits that fit the  $R_{tt}$  that you calculated above (Skim slides 120:123).

The  $R_{tt}$  of the maximally-configured Ethernet is  $51,2\mu s$ , known as *slot time* and 512 bits fit into it. Recall, that this is the  $R_{tt}$  resulting when the communicating stations are located at the cable's farthest points, *i.e.*, we are considering the worst case  $R_{tt}$ . Being located so far away, when station S1 and S2 more or less simultaneously monitor CS for initiating a new transmission, they can become aware that no carrier is present, then, after IFG seconds they will start transmitting. Both signal wavefronts move against each other and somewhere in the midst of the cable a collision will occur, which will arrive at station S1 and at station S2. In general, in the worst case, H1 will have to transmit at least 512 bits (The number of bits that fit into the *slot time*) if it wants to know whether the frame underwent a collision and, if that is the case, then proceed accordingly by attempting transmission again.

13. In slide no. 123, observe the behavior of node D, which detects a collision earlier than node B. When the collision's wavefront arrives at D (Marked as "collision detect/abort time") it makes sure a collision is taking place: recall D (a transmitter) *continuously* monitors the average signal power as it transmits, it convinces itself that a collision is taking place since the power associated with the yellow/red wavefront is much higher than that of the red wavefront (Its own transmitted wavefront). What does D do after the "collision detect/abort time"? Indicate where in the diagram is D's Jamming Sequence sent.

D sends a Jamming Sequence after detecting the collision, and will attempt a new transmission of the involved frame at a *randomly distributed* time according to the *exponential backoff algorithm*.

14. An institution has a maximally configured original Ethernet whose length is 2500m and needs to extend it to 3000m. Calculate the minimum Ethernet frame length that allows the access algorithm (CSMA/CD) to function correctly.

Since  $51.2\text{ s}$  is the  $R_{tt}$  corresponding to the 2500m length, we can compute the  $R_{tt}'$  corresponding to 3000m, then, again calculate, as we did above, the number of bits that fit into  $R_{tt}'$