Networking Applications

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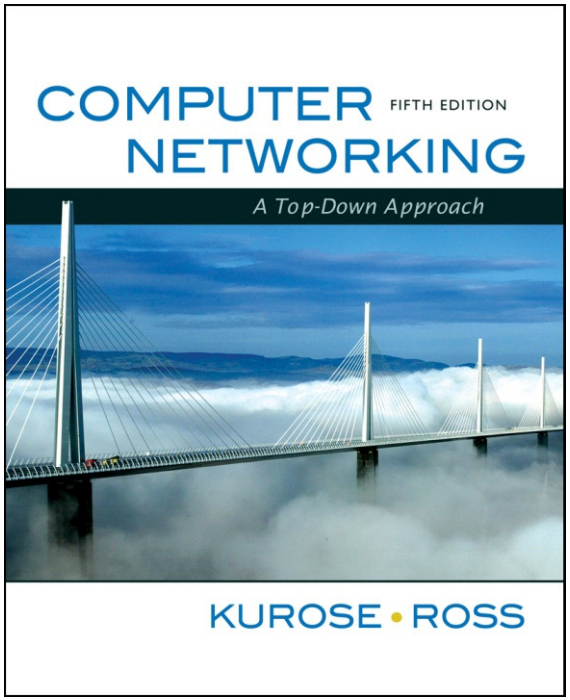
The Web and HTTP



The material is adapted from slides for Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 of this textbook

Computer Networking: A Top Down Approach, 5th edition.
Jim Kurose, Keith Ross
Addison-Wesley, April 2009.

History of The Web

- World Wide Web, "Web", "WWW"
- Tim Berners-Lee at CERN in 1991
  - Demonstrated prototype at a conf. in '91
  - Text-based
- Marc Andreessen developed the first graphical Web browser in 1993: Mosaic
- Andreessen founds Netscape Communications
- Browser war starts around 1995-96
- America Online buys Netscape in 1998

Web and HTTP

First some jargon

- Web page consists of objects
- Object can be HTML file, JPEG image, Java applet, audio file,…
- Web page consists of base HTML-file which includes several referenced objects
- Each object is addressable by a URL
- Example URL:

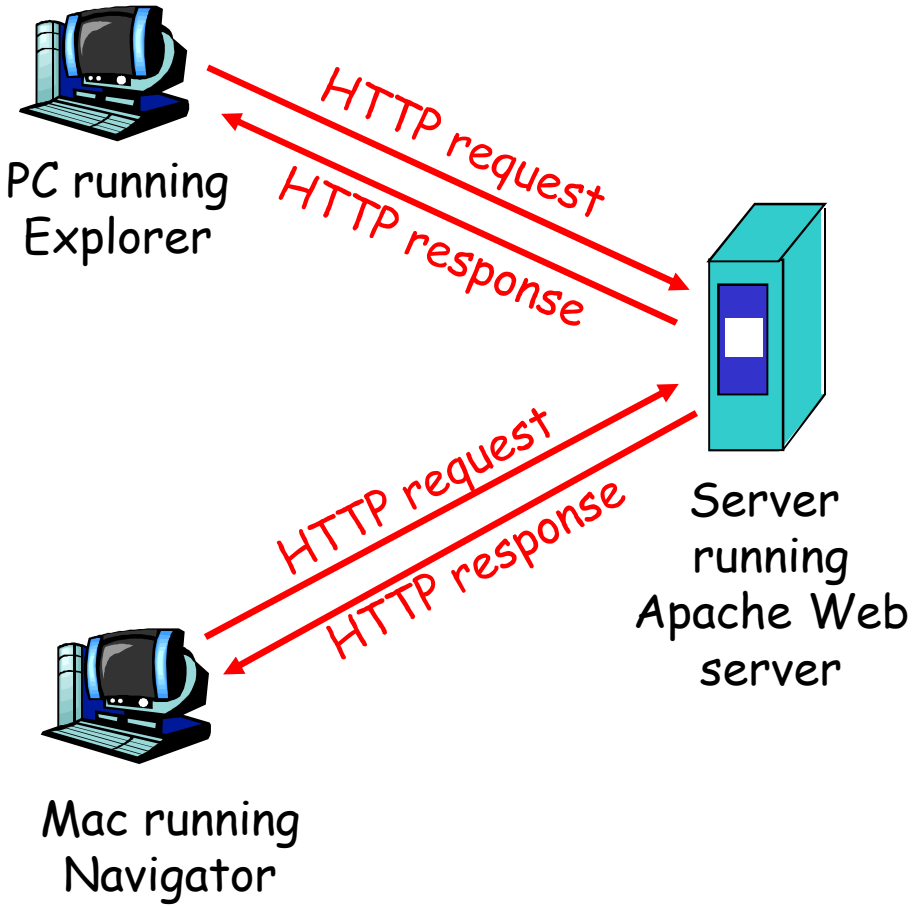
`www.someschool.edu/someDept/pic.gif`

host name | path name

HTTP overview

HTTP: hypertext transfer protocol

- Web's application layer protocol
- client/server model
  - *client:* browser that requests, receives, "displays" Web objects
  - *server:* Web server sends objects in response to requests
- HTTP defines communication protocol between client and sever
- HTTP 1.0: RFC 1945
- HTTP 1.1: RFC 2616 (starting 1998)



HTTP overview (continued)

Uses TCP:

- client initiates TCP connection (creates socket) to server, port 80
- server accepts TCP connection from client
- HTTP messages (application-layer protocol messages) exchanged between browser (HTTP client) and Web server (HTTP server)
- TCP connection closed

HTTP is "stateless"

- server maintains no information about past client requests

aside

Protocols that maintain "state" are complex!

- past history (state) must be maintained
- if server/client crashes, their views of "state" may be inconsistent, must be reconciled

HTTP connections

Nonpersistent HTTP

- At most one object is sent over a TCP connection.
- HTTP/1.0 uses nonpersistent HTTP

Persistent HTTP

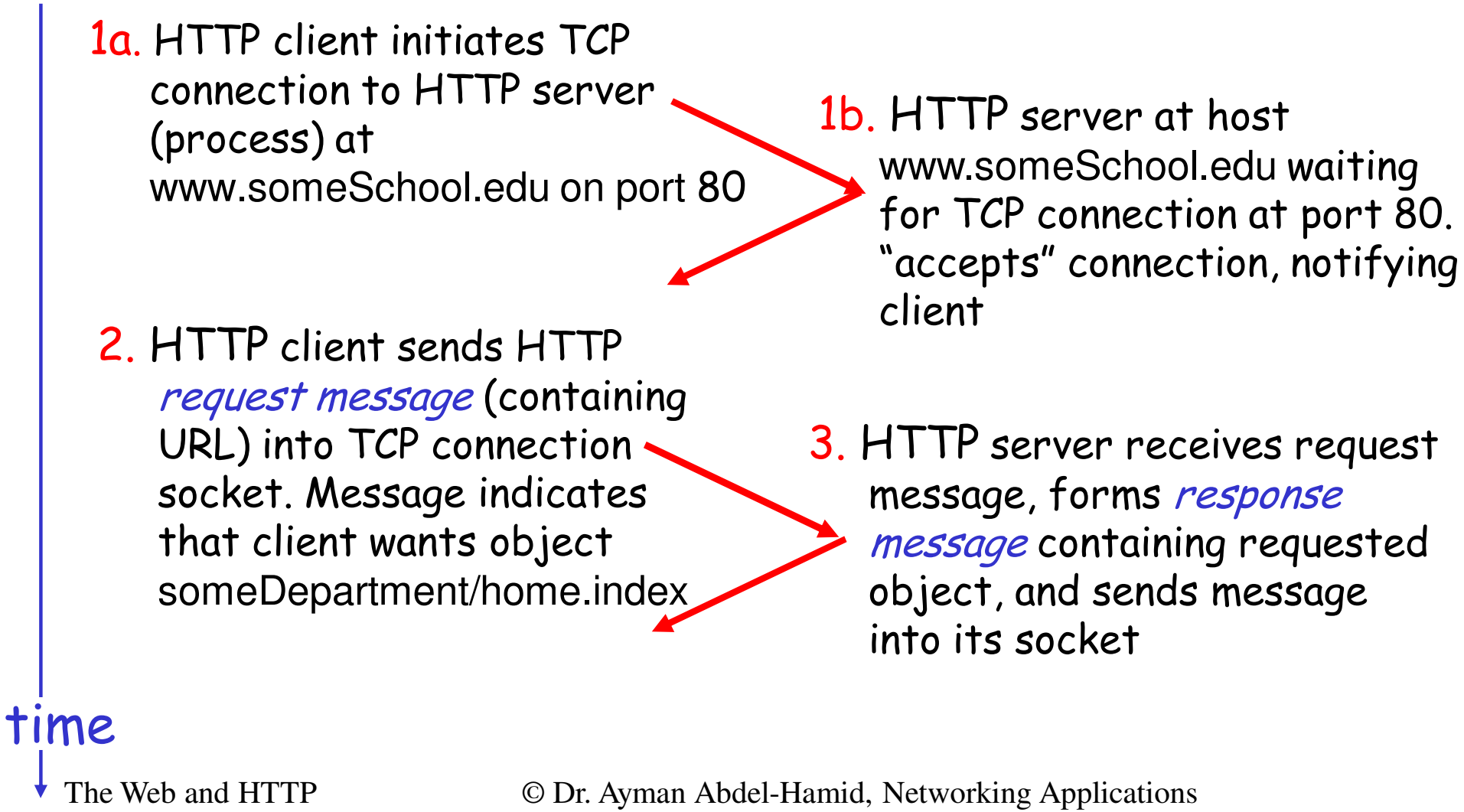
- Multiple objects can be sent over single TCP connection between client and server.
- HTTP/1.1 uses persistent connections in default mode

Nonpersistent HTTP

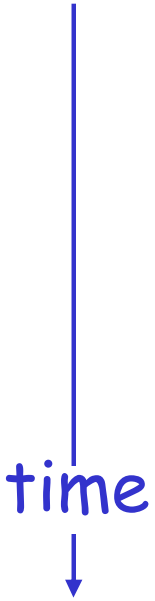
Suppose user enters URL

`www.someSchool.edu/someDepartment/home.index`

(contains text, references to 10 jpeg images)



Nonpersistent HTTP (cont.)



4. HTTP server closes TCP connection. (How about reliability issues?)

5. HTTP client receives response message containing html file, displays html. Parsing html file, finds 10 referenced jpeg objects

6. Steps 1-5 repeated for each of 10 jpeg objects (serially or in parallel?)

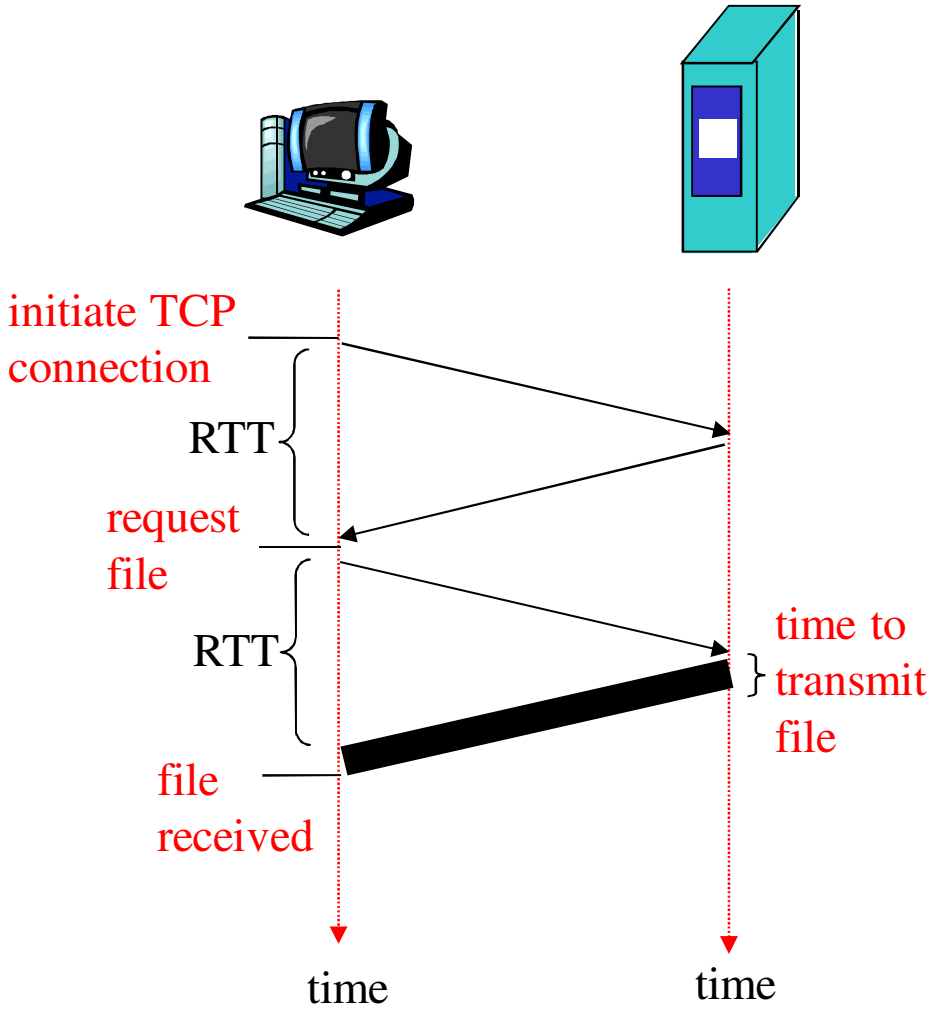
Non-Persistent HTTP: Response time

Definition of RTT: time to send a small packet to travel from client to server and back.

Response time:

- one RTT to initiate TCP connection
- one RTT for HTTP request and first few bytes of HTTP response to return
- file transmission time

total = 2RTT+transmit time



Persistent HTTP

Nonpersistent HTTP issues:

- requires 2 RTTs per object
- OS overhead for *each* TCP connection (buffers, etc...)
- browsers often open parallel TCP connections to fetch referenced objects

Persistent HTTP

- server leaves connection open after sending response
- subsequent HTTP messages between same client/server sent over open connection
- Close connection when not used for a certain time

Persistent ***without*** pipelining:

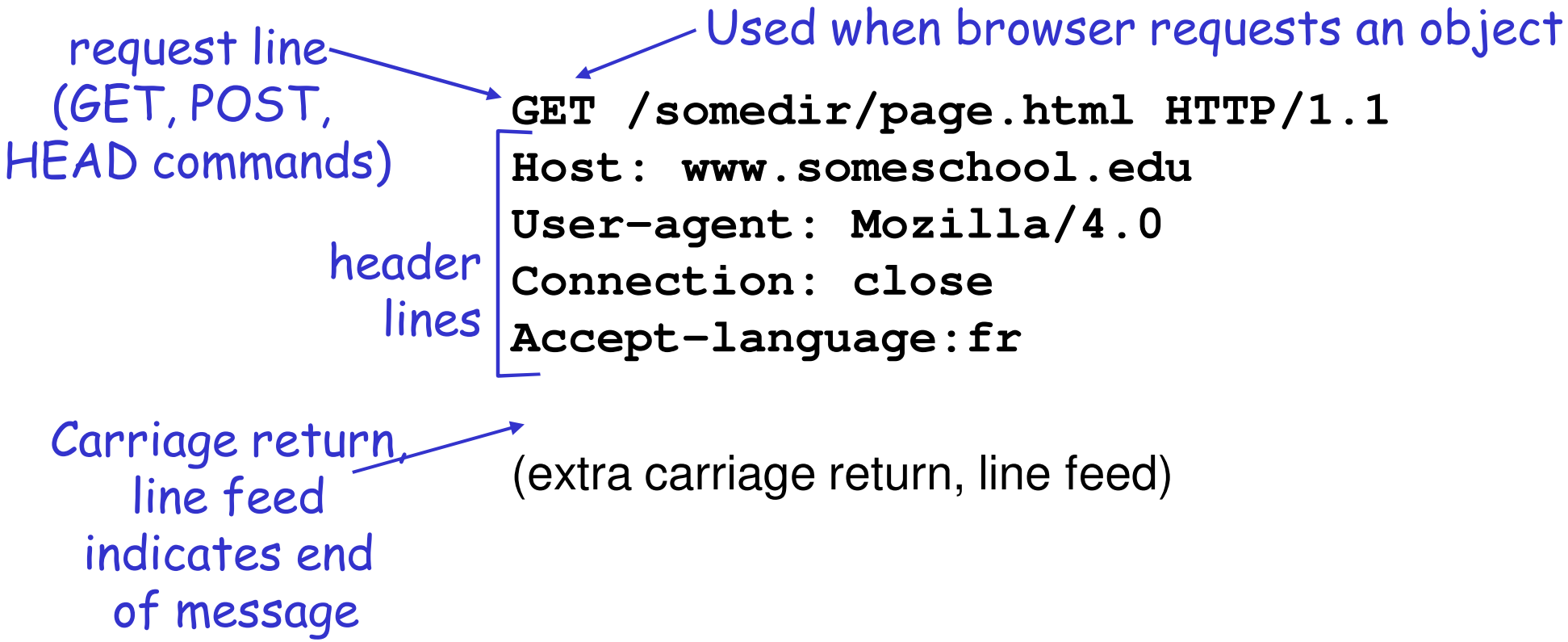
- client issues new request only when previous response has been received
- one RTT for each referenced object

Persistent ***with*** pipelining:

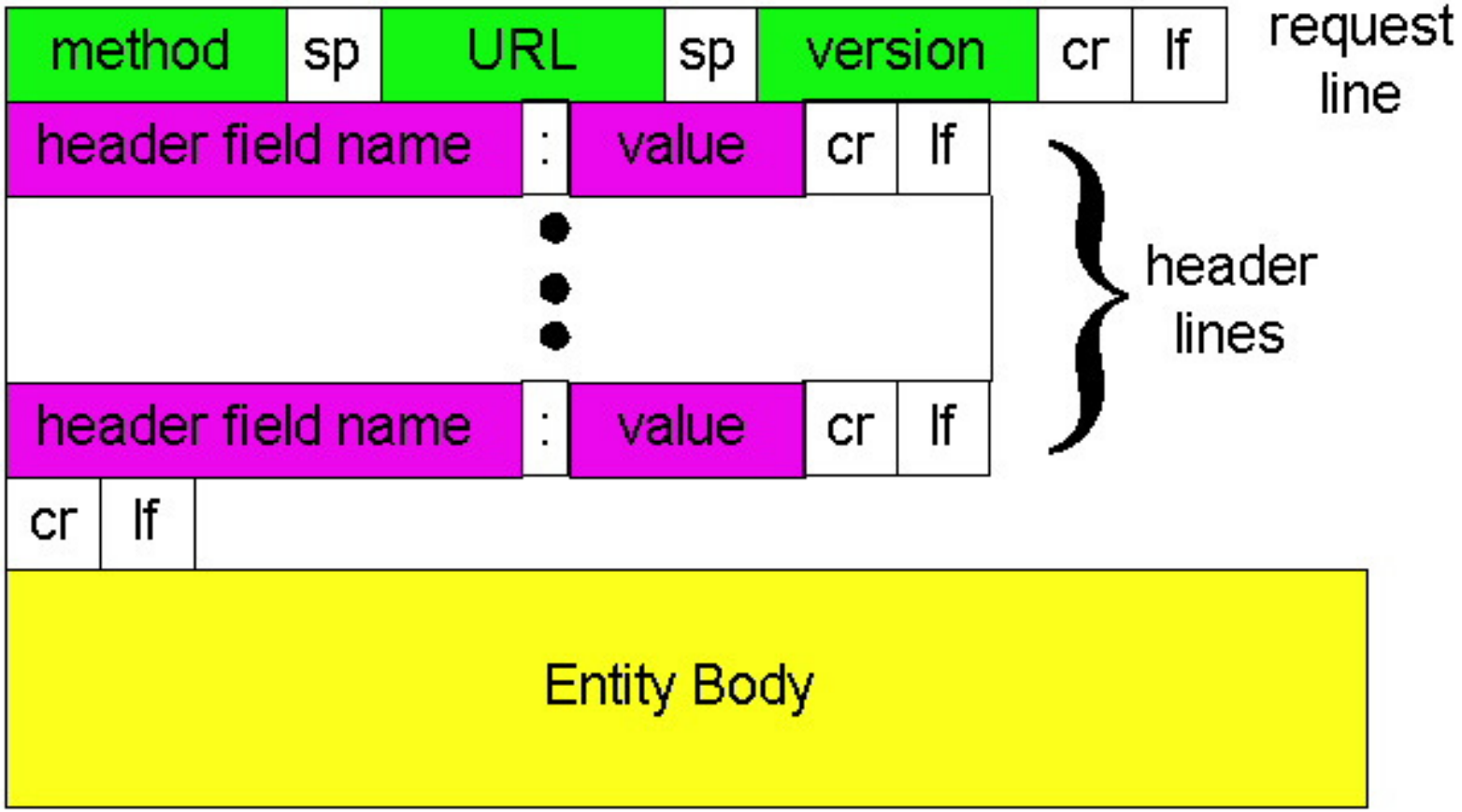
- default in HTTP/1.1
- client sends requests as soon as it encounters a referenced object
- as little as one RTT for all the referenced objects

HTTP request message

- two types of HTTP messages: *request, response*
- HTTP request message:
  - ASCII (human-readable format)



HTTP request message: general format



Uploading form input

Post method:

- Web page often includes form input
- Input is uploaded to server in entity body

URL method:

- Uses GET method
- Input is uploaded in URL field of request line:

```
www.somesite.com/animalsearch?monkeys&banana
```

Method types

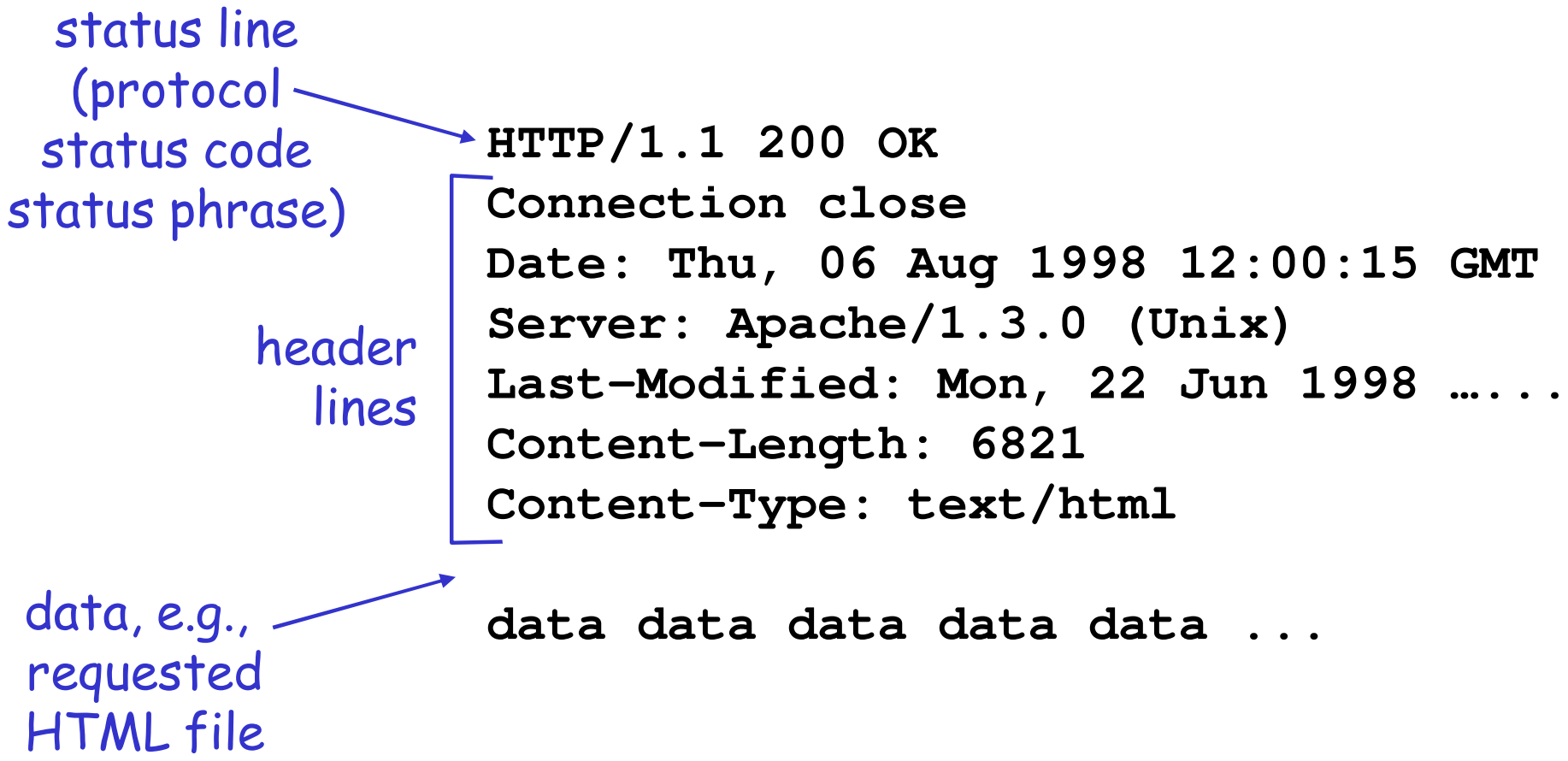
HTTP/1.0

- GET
- POST
- HEAD
  - asks server to leave requested object out of response

HTTP/1.1

- GET, POST, HEAD
- PUT
  - uploads file in entity body to path specified in URL field
- DELETE
  - deletes file specified in the URL field

HTTP response message



HTTP response status codes

In first line in server->client response message.

A few sample codes:

200 OK

- request succeeded, requested object later in this message

301 Moved Permanently

- requested object moved, new location specified later in this message (Location:)

400 Bad Request

- request message not understood by server

404 Not Found

- requested document not found on this server

505 HTTP Version Not Supported

Trying out HTTP (client side) for yourself

1. Telnet to your favorite Web server:

```
telnet cis.poly.edu 80
```

Opens TCP connection to port 80 (default HTTP server port) at cis.poly.edu. Anything typed in sent to port 80 at cis.poly.edu

2. Type in a GET HTTP request:

```
GET /~ross/ HTTP/1.1
Host: cis.poly.edu
```

By typing this in (hit carriage return twice), you send this minimal (but complete) GET request to HTTP server

3. Look at response message sent by HTTP server!

User-server state: cookies (RFC 2109)

Many major Web sites use cookies

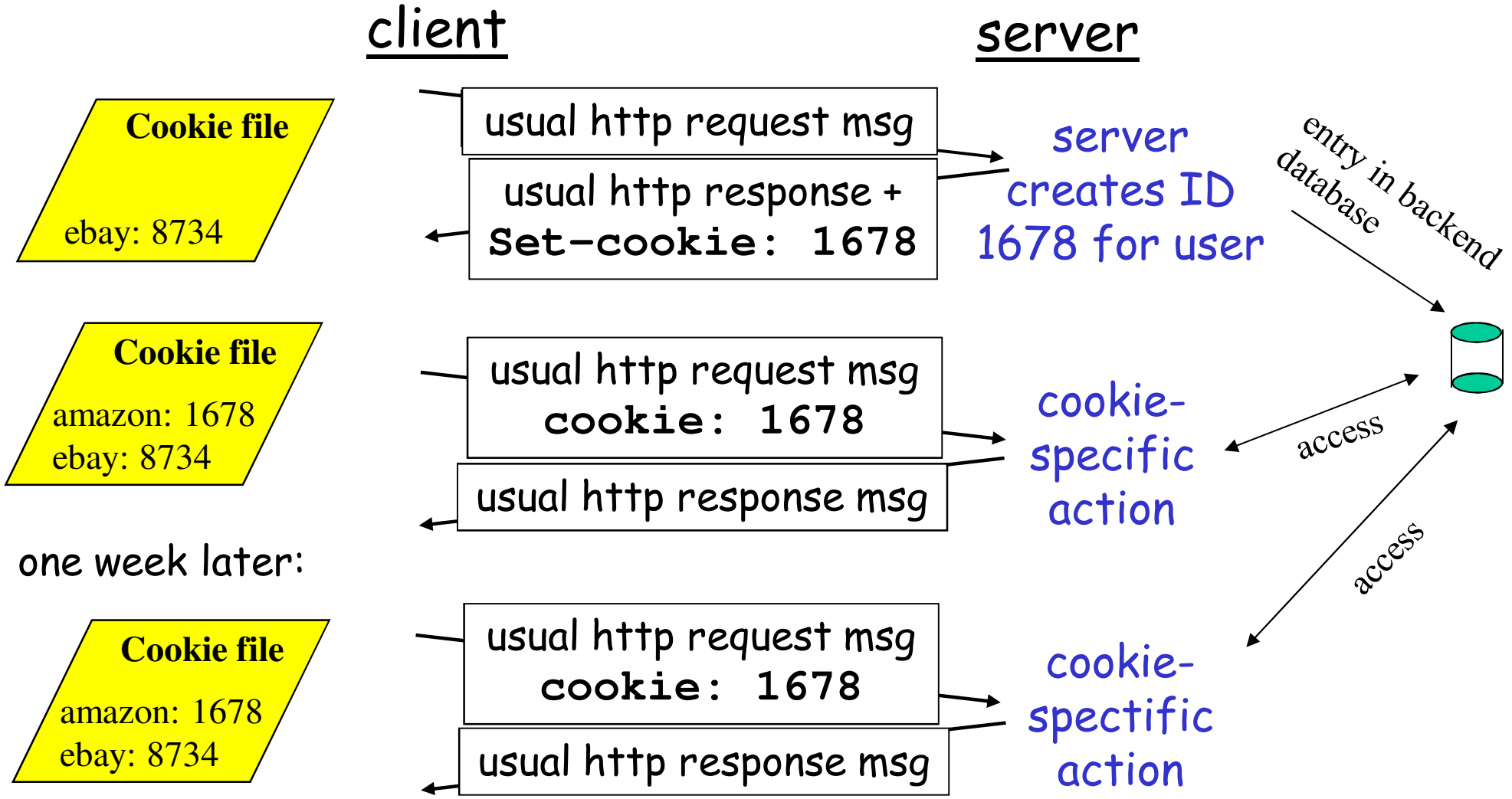
Four components:

1) cookie header line of HTTP *response* message
2) cookie header line in HTTP *request* message
3) cookie file kept on user's host, managed by user's browser
4) back-end database at Web site

Example:

- Susan access Internet always from same PC
- She visits a specific e-commerce site for first time
- When initial HTTP requests arrives at site, site creates a unique ID and creates an entry in backend database for ID

Cookies: keeping "state" (cont.)



Cookies (continued)

What cookies can bring:

- authorization
- shopping carts
- recommendations
- user session state (Web e-mail)

aside

Cookies and privacy:

- cookies permit sites to learn a lot about you
- you may supply name and e-mail to sites

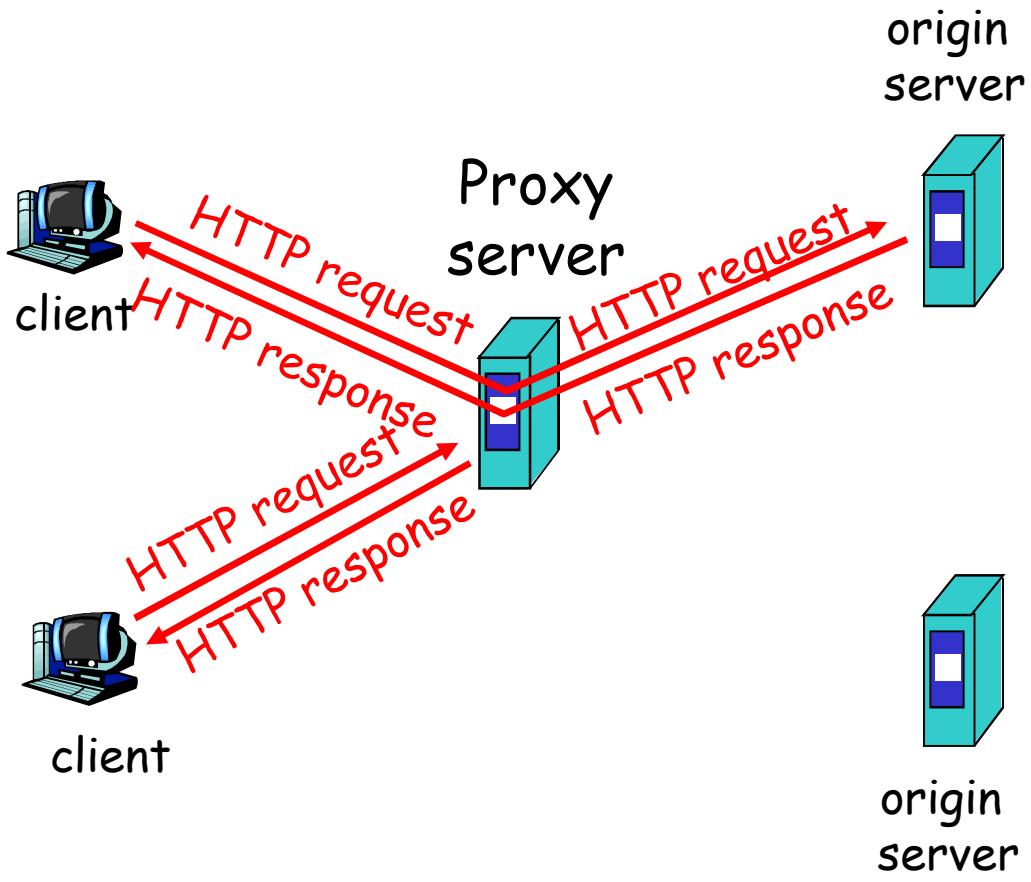
How to keep "state":

- Protocol endpoints: maintain state at sender/receiver over multiple transactions
- cookies: http messages carry state

Web caches (proxy server)

Goal: satisfy client request without involving origin server

- user sets browser: Web accesses via cache
- browser sends all HTTP requests to cache
  - object in cache: cache returns object
  - else cache requests object from origin server, then returns object to client



More about Web caching

- Cache acts as both client and server
- Typically cache is installed by ISP (university, company, residential ISP)

Why Web caching?

- Reduce response time for client request.
- Reduce traffic on an institution's access link.
- Internet dense with caches: enables "poor" content providers to effectively deliver content (but so does P2P file sharing)

Caching example

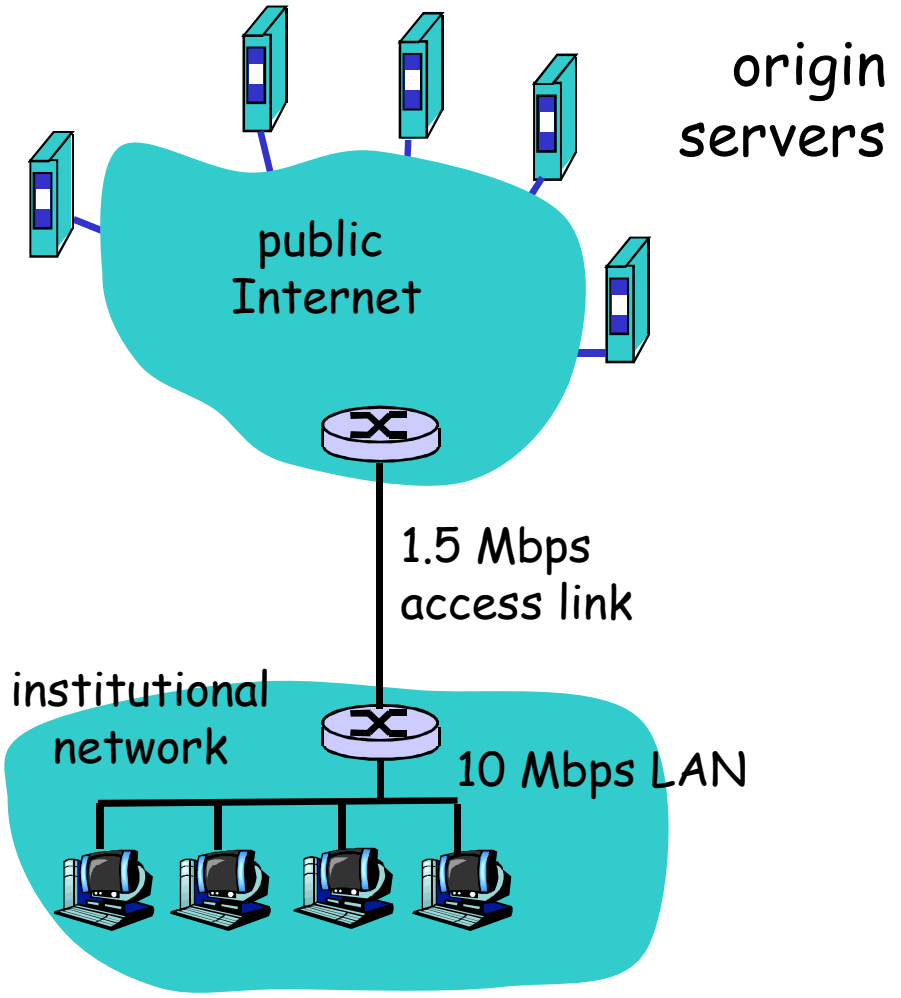
Assumptions

- average object size = 100,000 bits
- avg. request rate from institution's browsers to origin servers = 15/sec
- delay from institutional router to any origin server and back to router = 2 sec

Consequences

- utilization on LAN = 15%
- utilization on access link = 100%
- total delay = Internet delay + access delay + LAN delay

  = 2 sec + minutes + milliseconds



Caching example (cont)

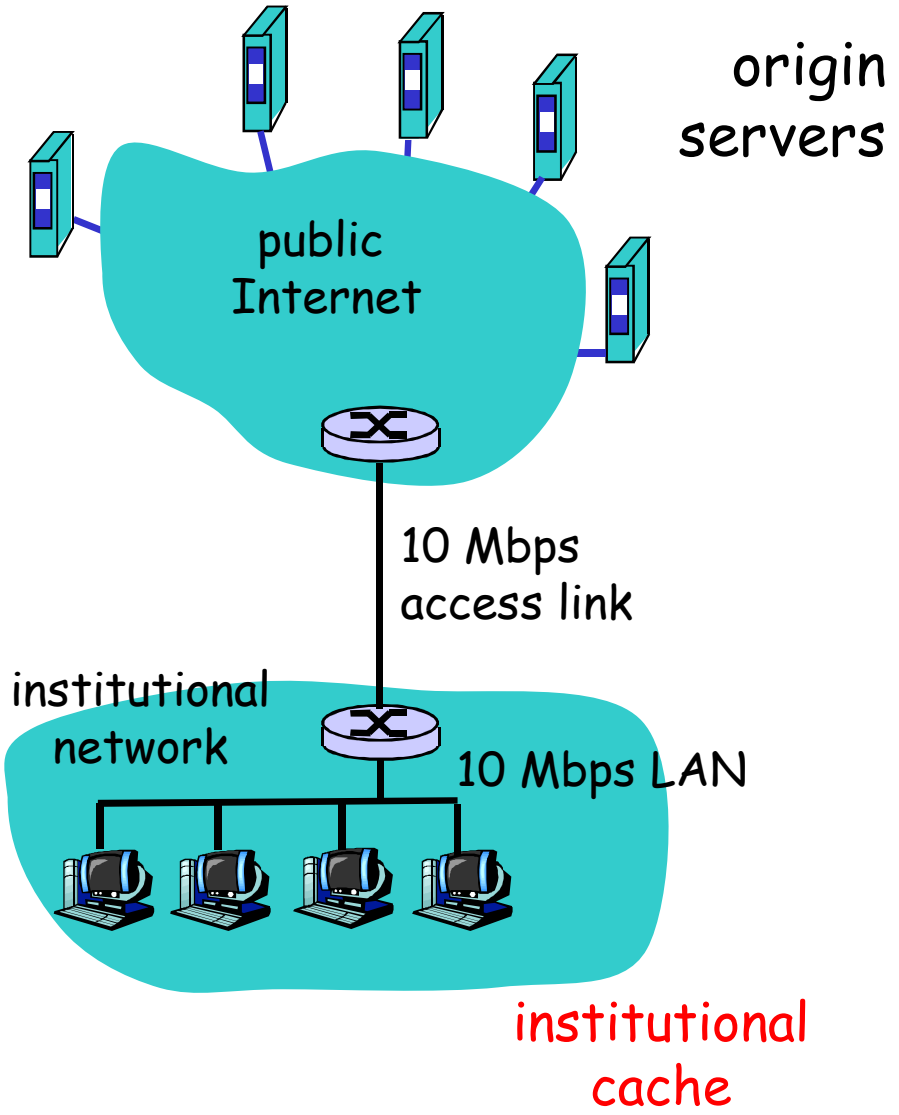
Possible solution

- increase bandwidth of access link to, say, 10 Mbps

Consequences

- utilization on LAN = 15%
- utilization on access link = 15%
- Total delay = Internet delay + access delay + LAN delay

  = 2 sec + msecs + msecs
- often a costly upgrade



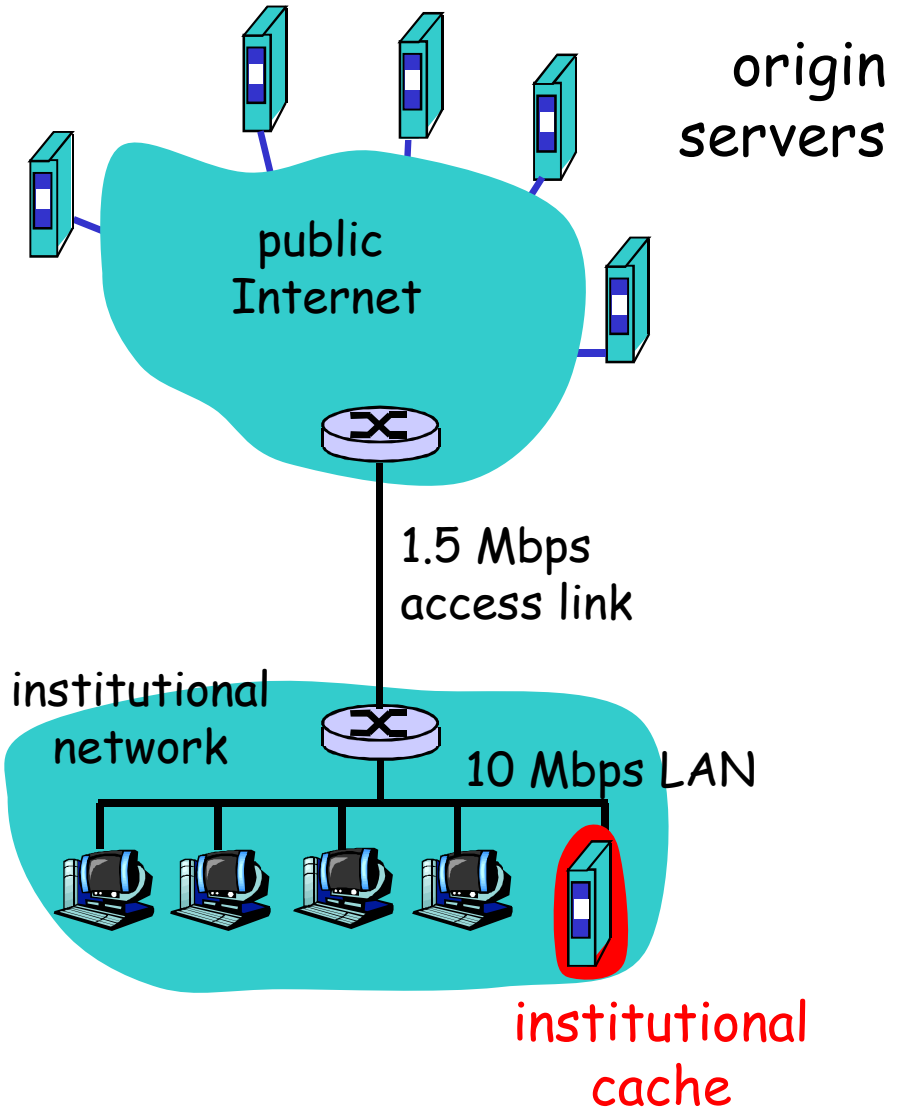
Caching example (cont)

Install cache

- suppose hit rate is .4

Consequence

- 40% requests will be satisfied almost immediately
- 60% requests satisfied by origin server
- utilization of access link reduced to 60%, resulting in negligible delays (say 10 msec)
- total avg delay = Internet delay + access delay + LAN delay = .6*(2.01) secs + .4*milliseconds < 1.4 secs



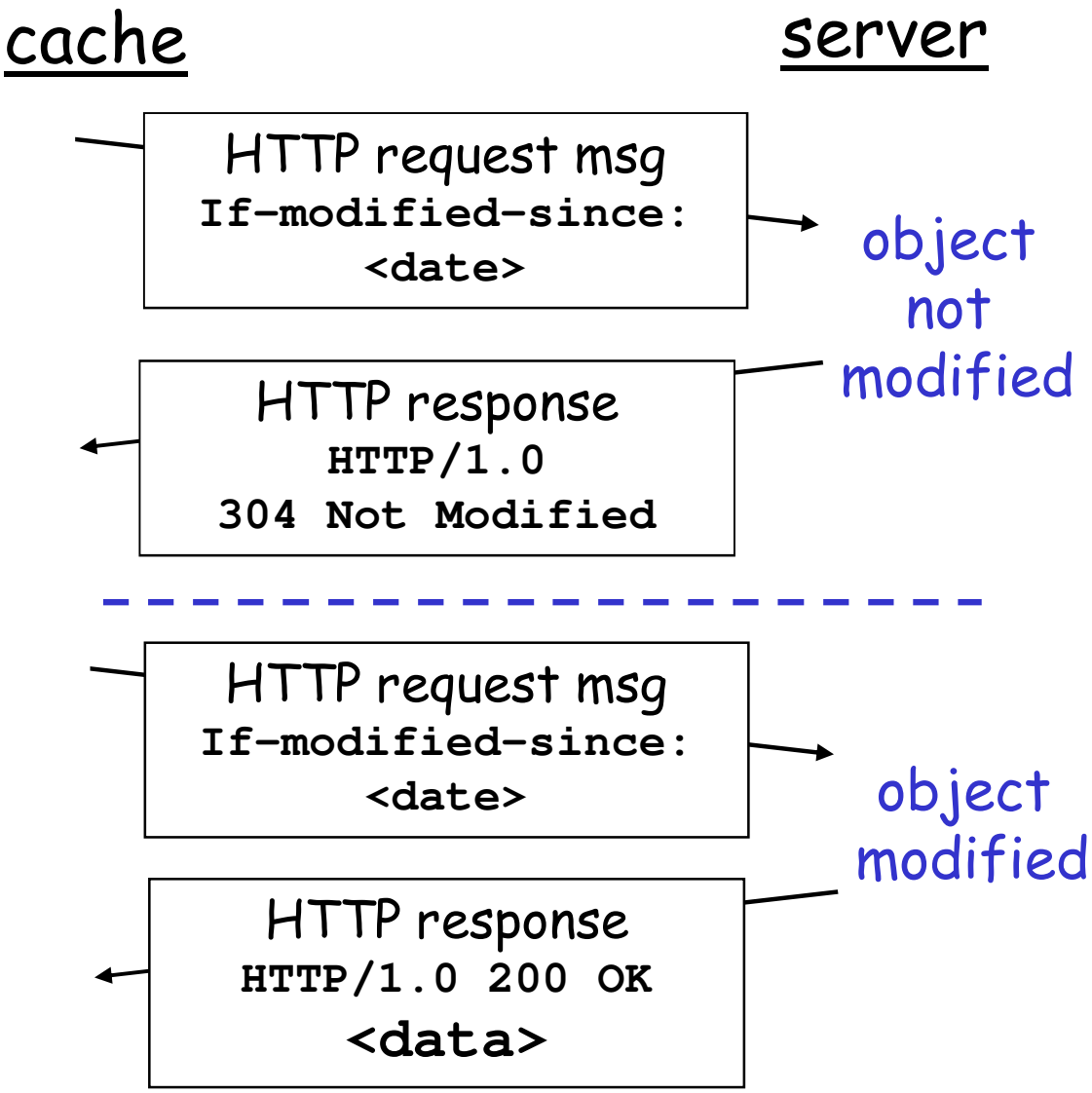
Conditional GET

- Goal: don't send object if cache has up-to-date cached version
- cache: specify date of cached copy in HTTP request

```
If-modified-since:
   <date>
```

- server: response contains no object if cached copy is up-to-date:

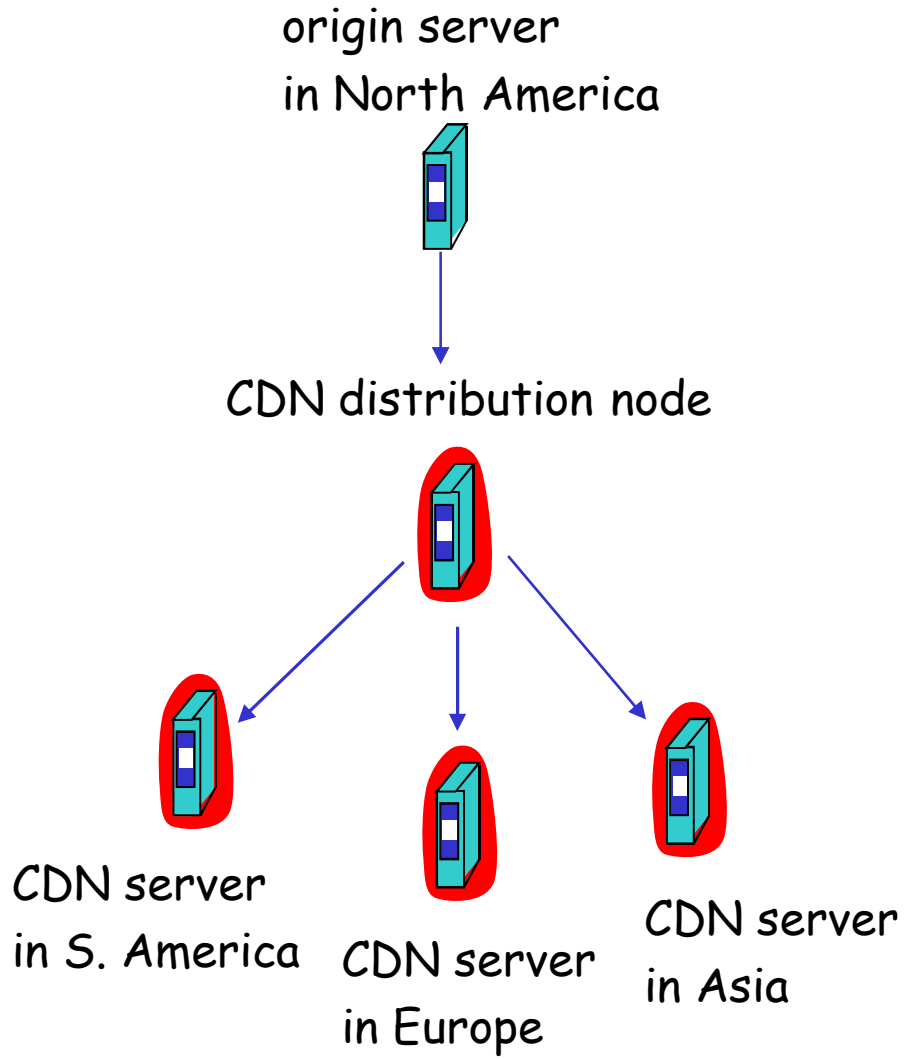
```
HTTP/1.0 304 Not
   Modified
```



Content distribution networks (CDNs)

Content replication

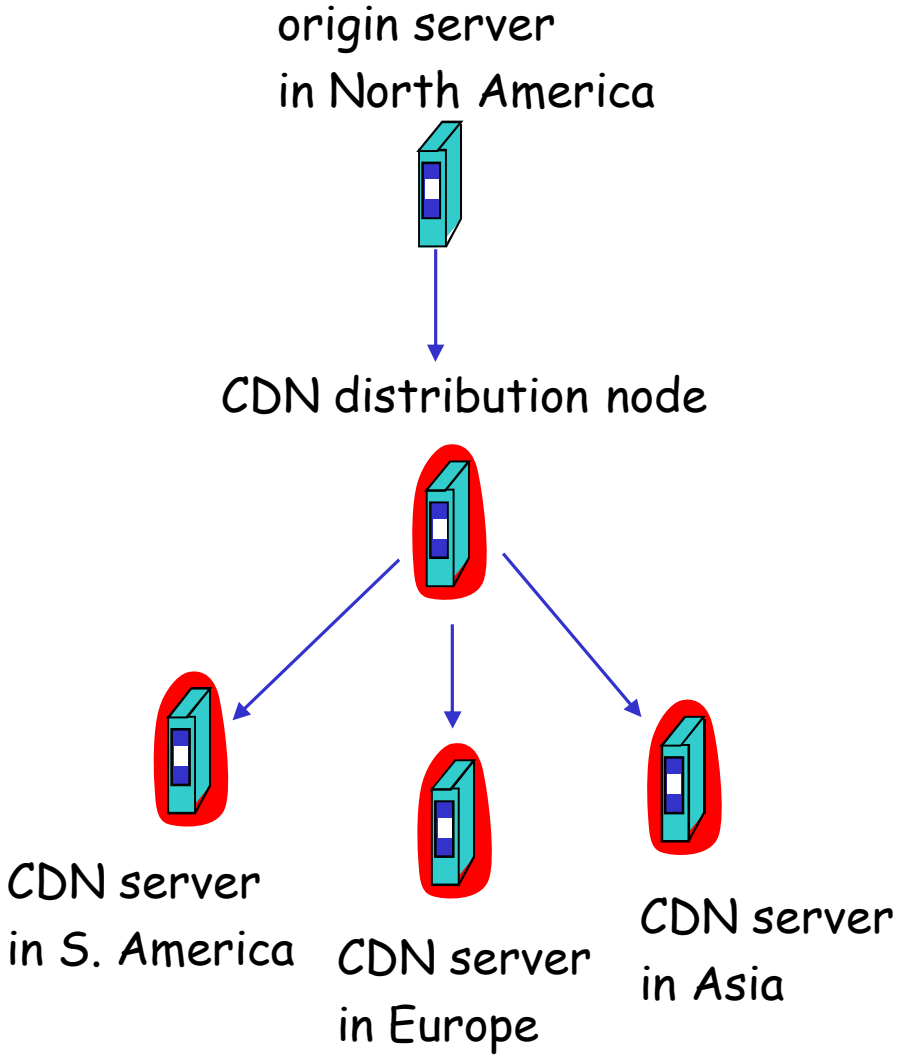
- Challenging to stream large files (e.g., video) from single origin server in real time
- Solution: replicate content at hundreds of servers throughout Internet
  - content downloaded to CDN servers ahead of time
  - placing content "close" to user avoids impairments (loss, delay) of sending content over long paths
  - CDN server typically in edge/access network



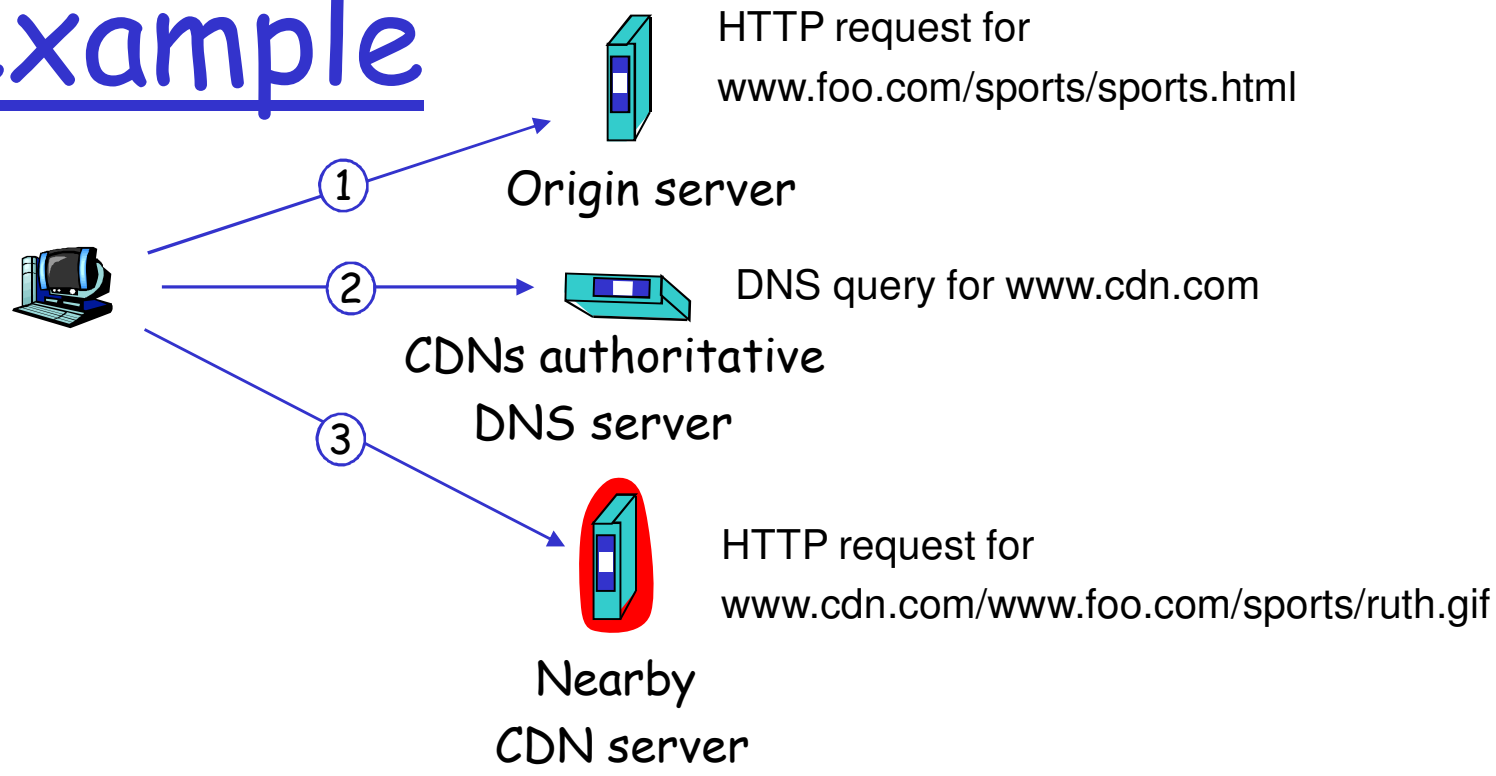
Content distribution networks (CDNs)

Content replication

- CDN (e.g., Akamai) customer is the content provider (e.g., CNN)
- CDN replicates customers' content in CDN servers. When provider updates content, CDN updates servers



CDN example



origin server (www.foo.com)

- distributes HTML
- replaces:

  http://www.foo.com/sports.ruth.gif

  with

  http://www.cdn.com/www.foo.com/sports/ruth.gif

CDN company (cdn.com)

- distributes gif files
- uses its authoritative DNS server to route redirect requests

More about CDNs

routing requests

- CDN creates a "map", indicating distances from leaf ISPs and CDN nodes
- when query arrives at authoritative DNS server:
  - server determines ISP from which query originates
  - uses "map" to determine best CDN server
- CDN nodes create application-layer overlay network

Further Information

- RFC 1945: HTTP 1.0, May 1996
- RFC 2616: HTTP 1.1, June 1999
- RFC 2109: HTTP State Management Mechanism, February 1997