CS4450

Computer Networks:
Architecture and Protocols

Lecture 2
Sharing Networks:
“Circuits” and “Packets”

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Announcements

- Please read course policies on the webpage.
- You should all be registered on Piazza by now.
- I do not expect you to read notes/slides before lecture
- We will decide on office hours in Feb first week
    - Your schedule will be clearer

Goal of Today's Lecture

- Learn about:
    - Two important performance metrics:
        - Bandwidth
        - Delay, or latency
        - Why are these important?
    - Two ways of sharing networks:
        - Circuit switching
        - Packet switching
    - **Why do current computer networks use packet switching?**

But first, Recap from last lecture

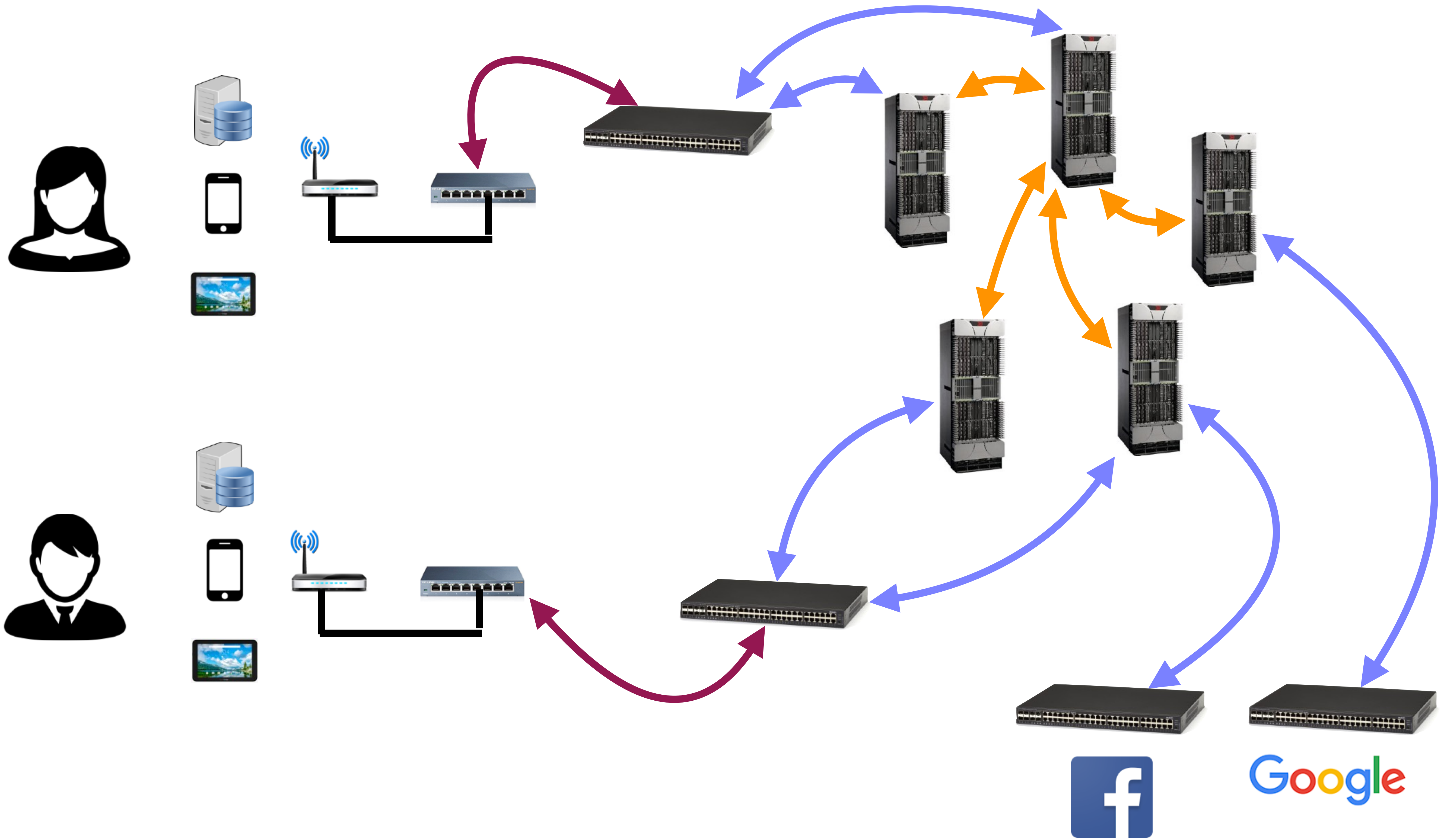
Recap: what is a computer network?

A set of network elements connected together, that implement a set of protocols for the purpose of sharing resources at the end hosts

- **Three important components**:
  - **Core infrastructure:**
    - A set of network elements connected together
  - **Protocols:**
    - Needed to use the network
  - **Purpose:**
    - Sharing resources at the end hosts (computing devices)

What is a computer network?

A set of network elements connected together, that implement a set of protocols for the purpose of sharing resources at the end hosts



Recap: what do computer networks do?

A computer network delivers data between the end points

- **One and only one task**: Delivering the data

- This delivery is done by:
    - Chopping the data into **packets**
    - Sending individual packets across the network
    - Reconstructing the data at the end points

Recap: what do computer networks look like?

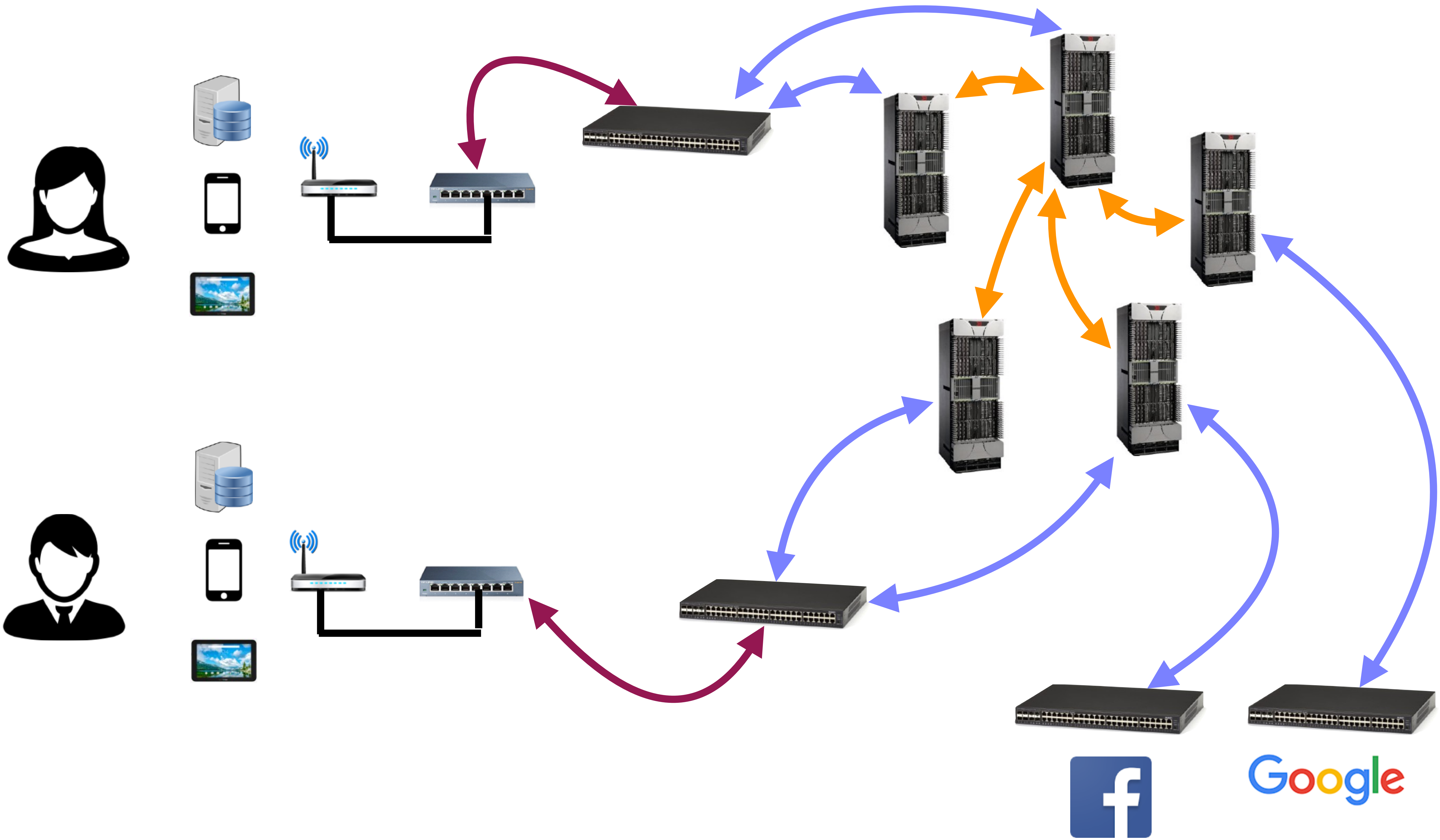
Three Basic components

- **End hosts**: they send/receive packets
- **Switches/Routers:** they forward packets
- **Links:** connect end hosts to switches, and switches to each other

Lets make the picture simpler for today's lecture

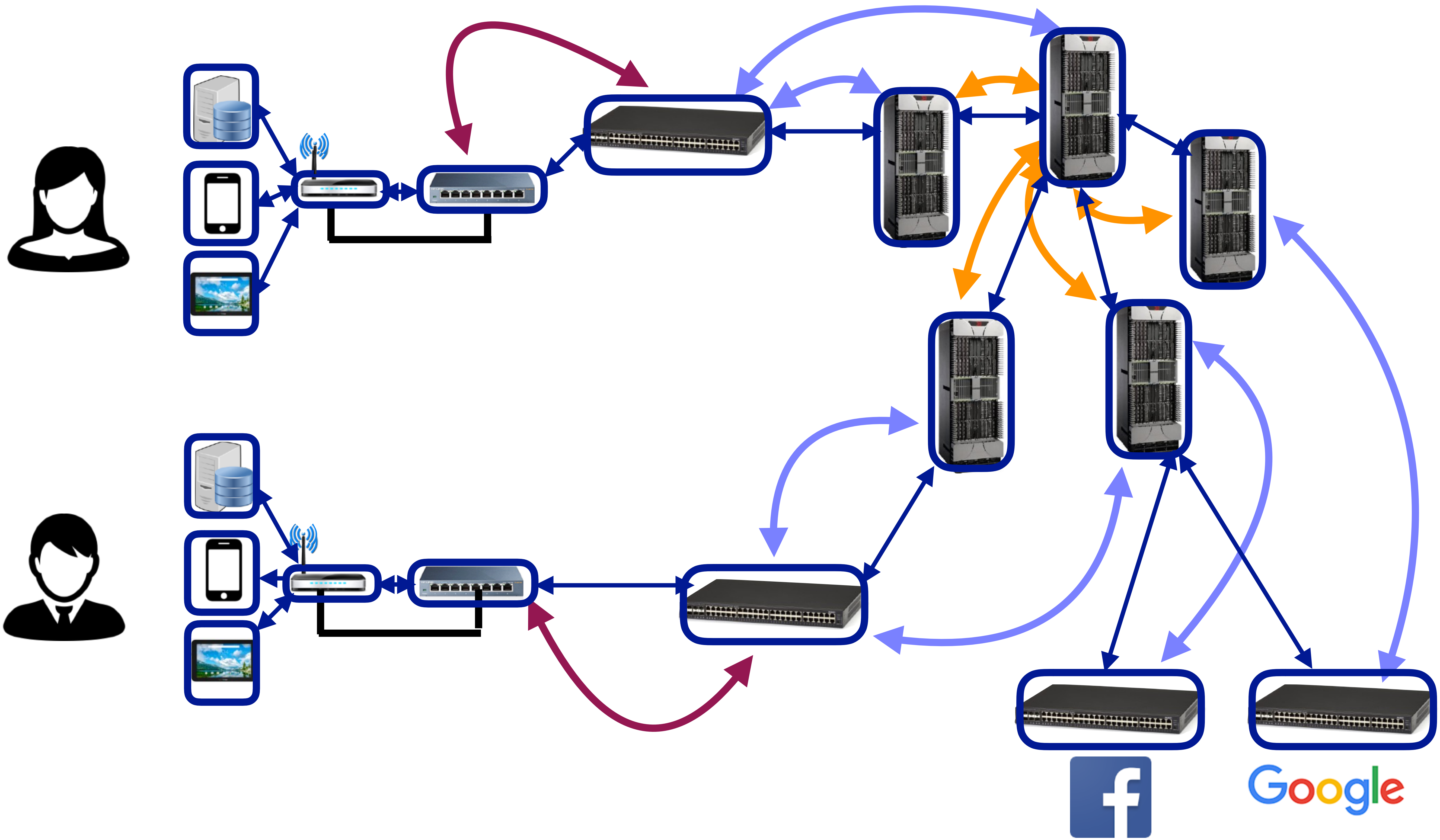
What is a computer network?

A set of network elements connected together, that implement a set of protocols for the purpose of sharing resources at the end hosts

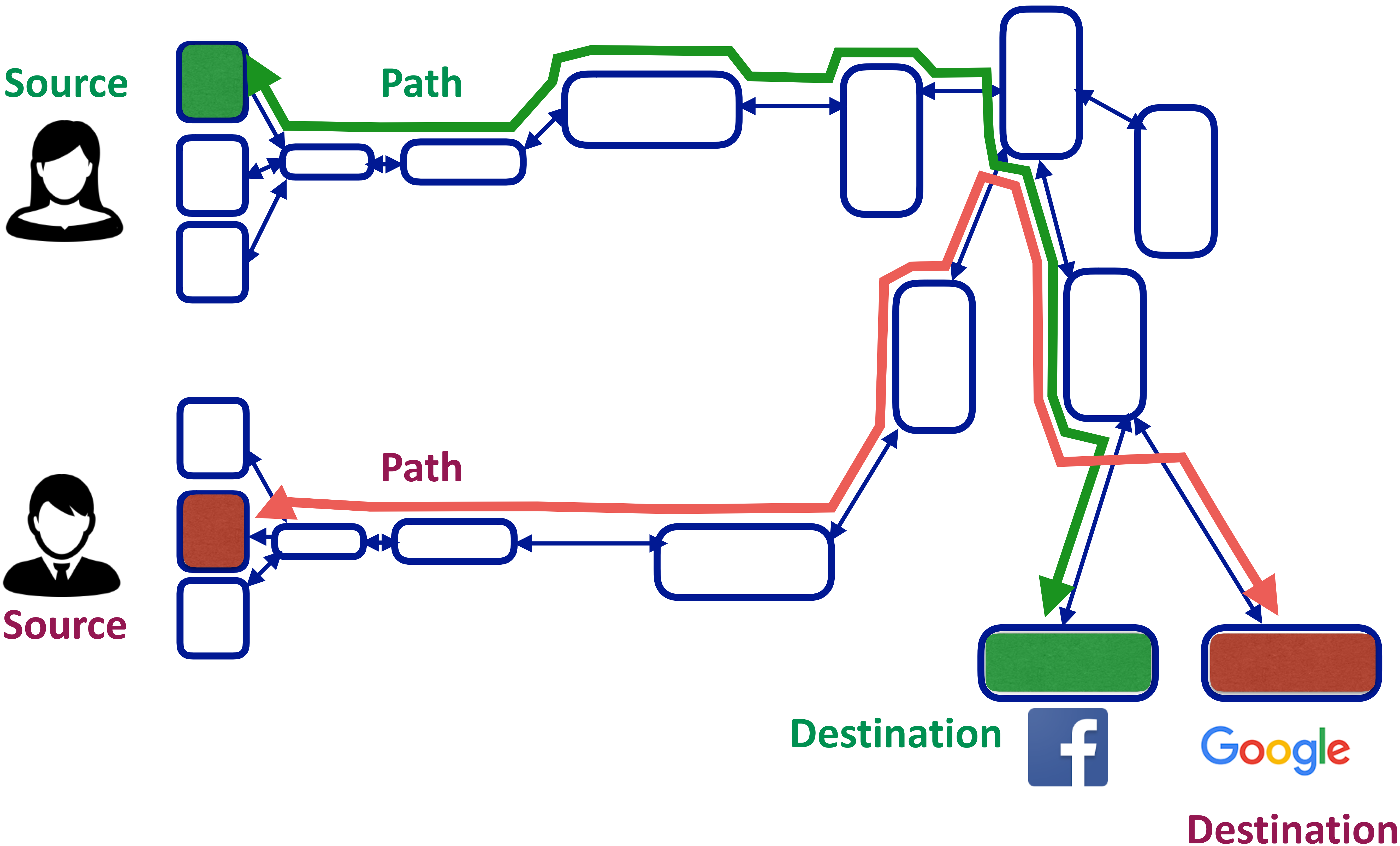


What is a computer network?

A set of network elements connected together, that implement a set of protocols for the purpose of sharing resources at the end hosts



A computer network can be abstractly represented as a graph

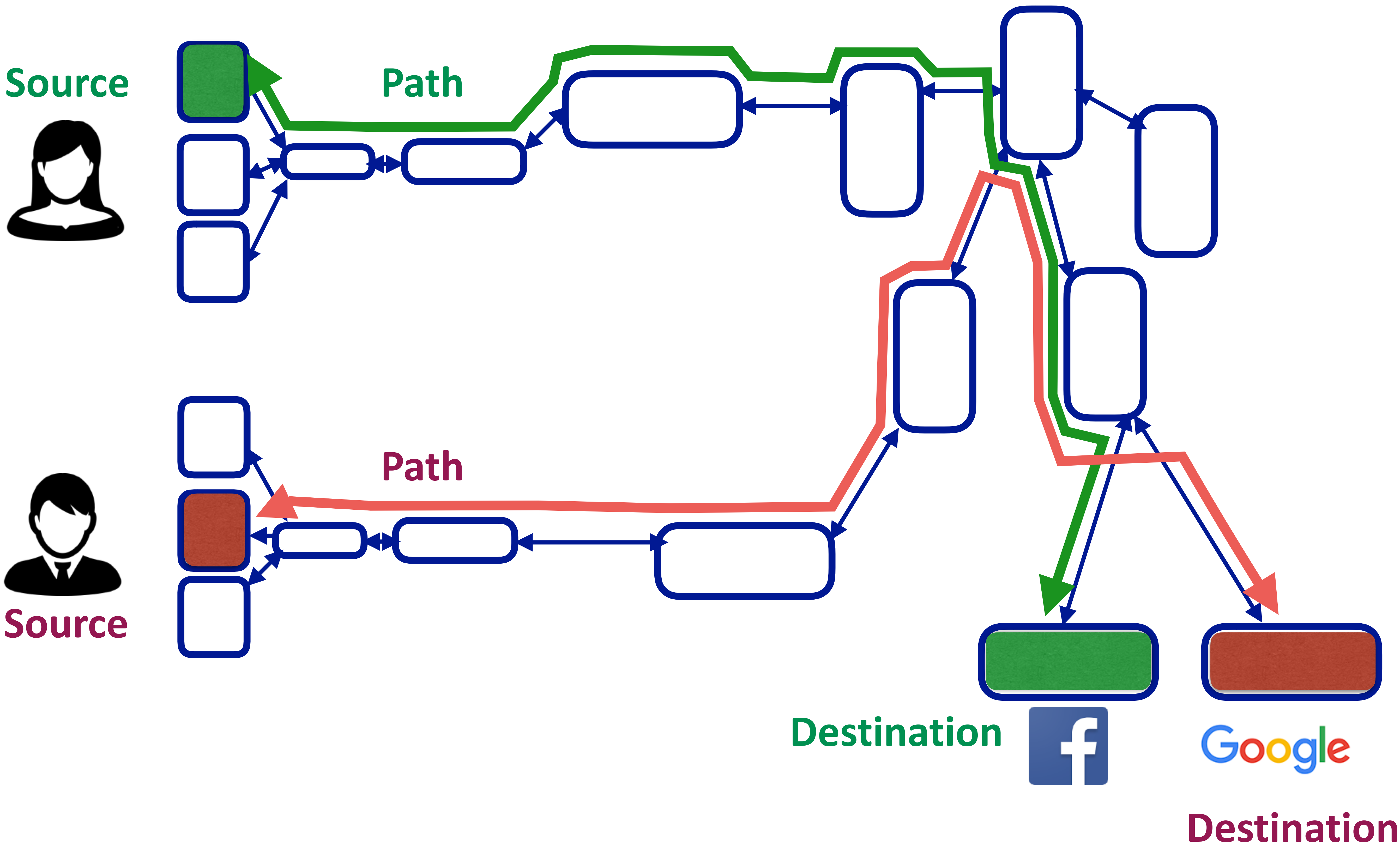


Many mechanisms underneath!

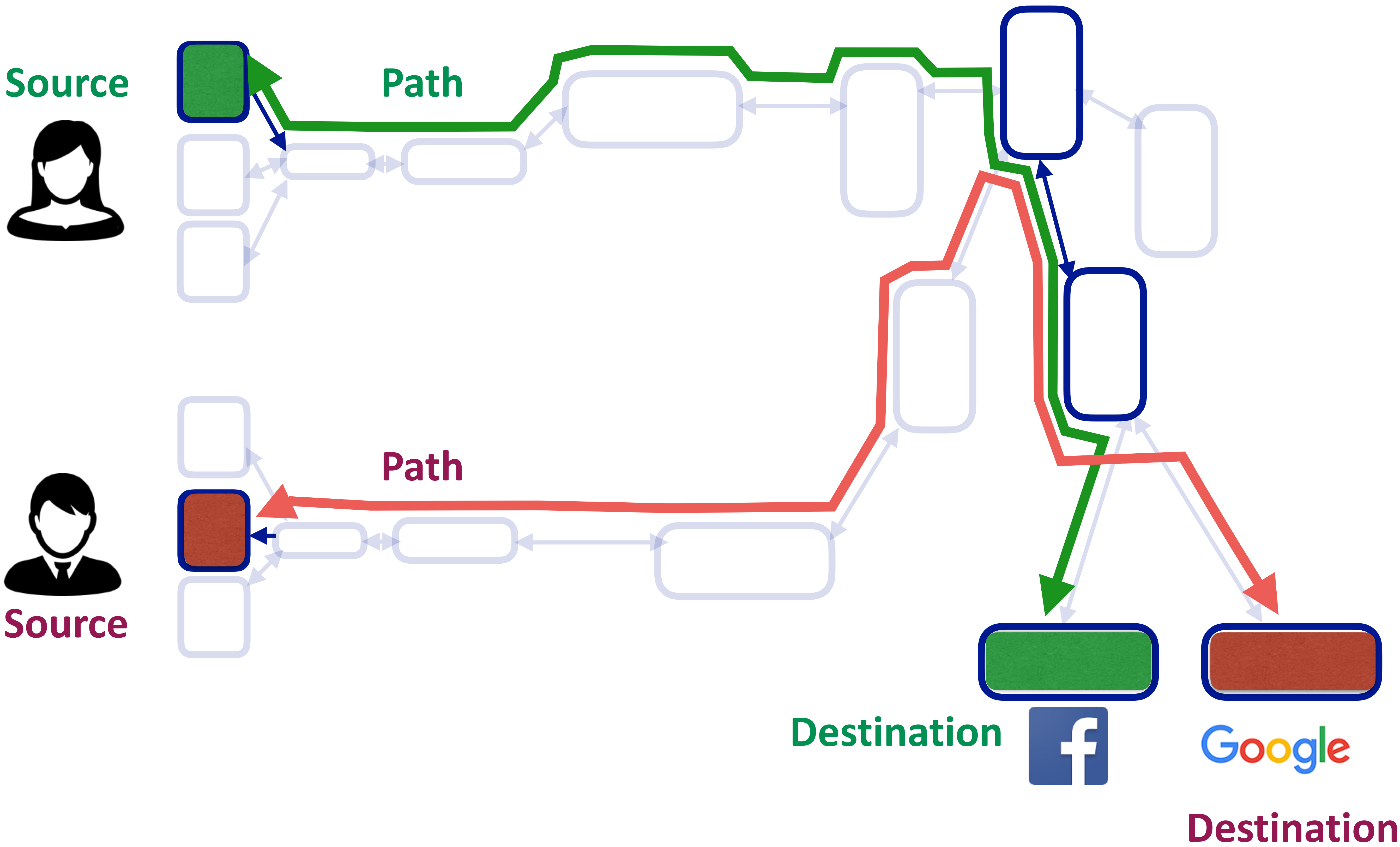
- **Locating the destination**: Naming, addressing
- **Finding a path to the destination**: Routing
- **Sending data to the destination:** Forwarding
- **Failures, reliability, etc.:** Distributed routing and congestion control

Will take the entire course to learn these

A computer network can be abstractly represented as a graph



Today's focus: sharing the network (graph)



Today’s lecture: sharing computer networks

1. What does network sharing mean?
2. What are the performance metrics?
3. What are the various mechanisms for sharing networks?
4. **Why “packets” and “flows”?**
5. **Understanding bandwidth and latency for packets**

What does network sharing mean?

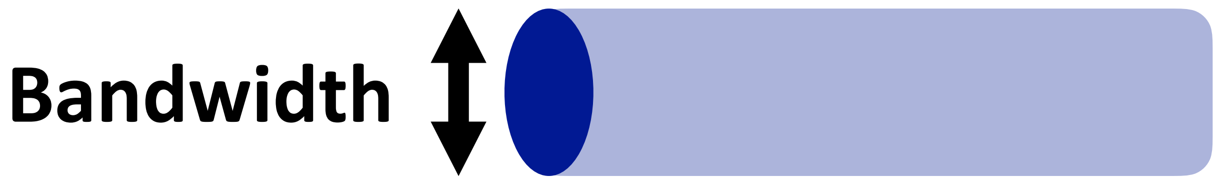
The problem of sharing networks

- Must support many “users” at the same time
- Each user wants to use the network (send and receive data)
- Limited resources
- **Fundamental question:**
  - **How does network decide which resource to allocate to which user at any given point of time?**

What are the performance metrics?

Performance metrics in computer networks!

- **Bandwidth: Number of bits sent per second (bits per second, or bps)**
  - Depends on
    - Hardware
    - Network traffic conditions
    - ….



- **Delay: Time for all bits to go from source to destination (seconds)**
  - Depends on
    - Hardware
    - Distance
    - Traffic from other sources
    - ….
- **Many other performance metrics (reliability, etc.)**
  - We will come back to other metrics later …

What are the various mechanisms for sharing networks?

Group Exercise 1:

How would you design a sharing mechanism?

Hint:

Think about sharing any resource (think of a road)

Two approaches to sharing networks

- Reservations
- On demand

Two approaches to sharing networks

- **First: Reservations**
  - Reserve bandwidth needed in advance
  - Set up circuits and send data over that circuit

- How much bandwidth to reserve?
  - Applications may generate data at rate varying over time
  - 100MB in first second
  - 10MB in second second …
  - Must reserve for peak bandwidth (100MB)

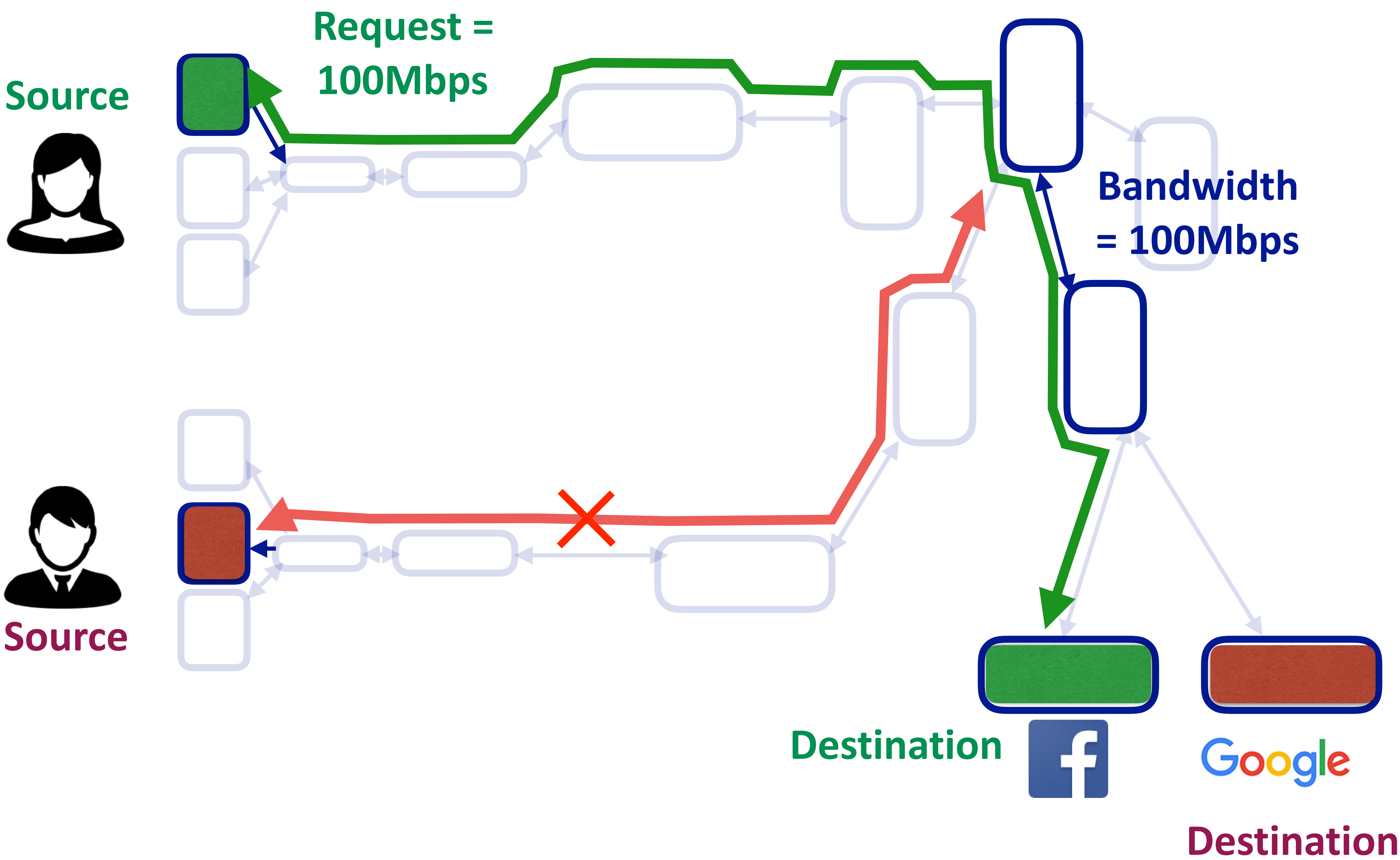
Circuit switching: Implementing reservations since …

Telephone networks

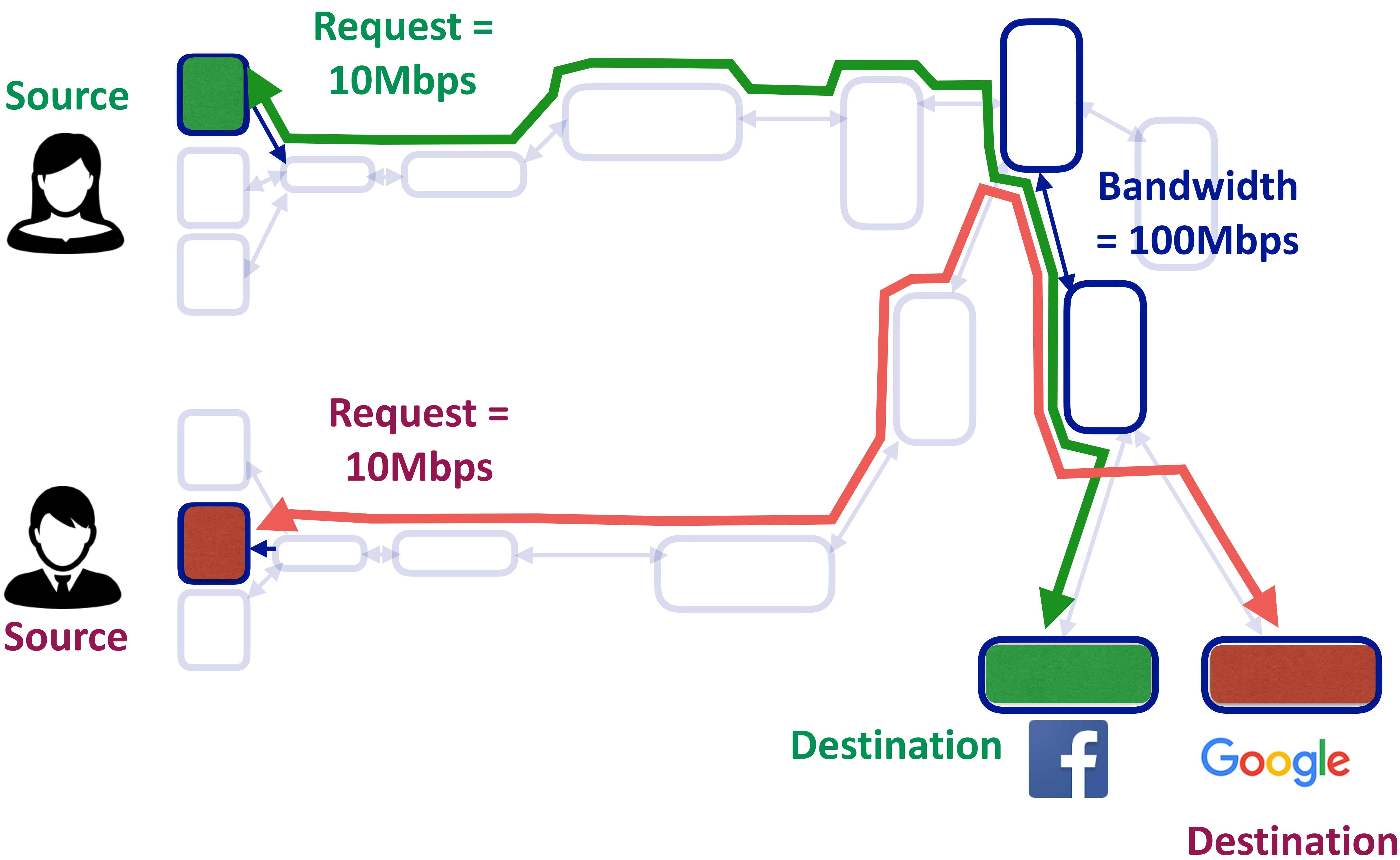
- One of the many approaches to implementing reservations

- **Mechanism:**
  - Source sends a reservation request for peak demand to destination
  - Switches/routers establish a "circuit"
  - Source sends data
  - Source sends a "teardown circuit" message

Circuit switching: an example (red request fails)



Circuit switching: another example (red request succeeds)



Circuit switching and failures

- Circuit is established
- **Link fails along path (!!!!!!!)**
  - First time we have seen failures making our life complicated.
  - Remember this moment.
  - Its gonna happen, over and over again.
- Must establish new circuit

Circuit switching doesn’t route around failures!!

Circuit switching summary

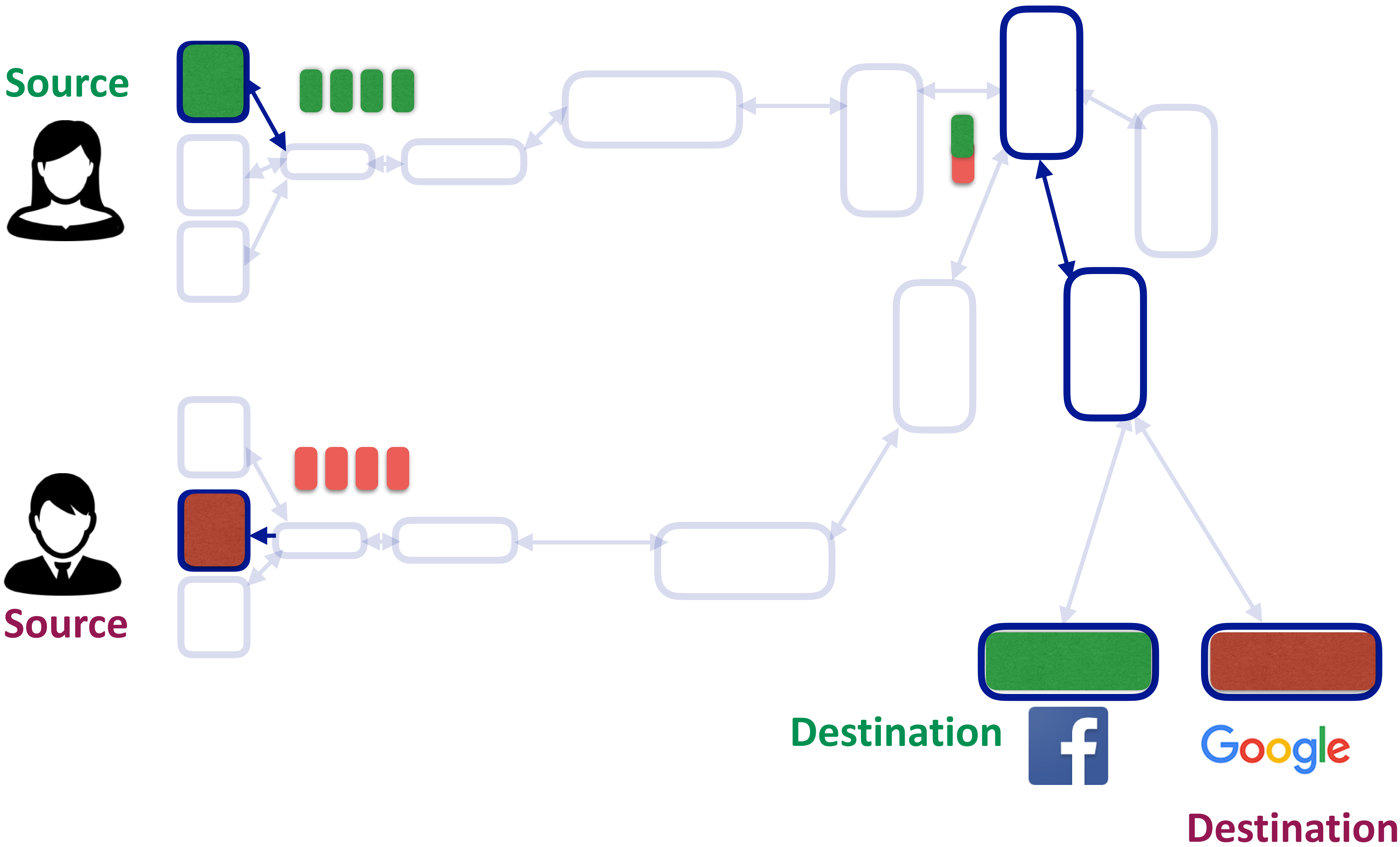
- **Goods:**
  - Predictable performance
  - Reliable delivery (assuming no failures)
  - Simple forwarding mechanism

- **Not-so-goods**
  - Handling failures
  - Resource underutilization
  - Blocked connections
  - Connection set up overheads
  - Per-connection state in switches (scalability problem)

Two approaches to sharing networks

- **Second: On demand (also known as "best effort")**
  - **Designed specifically for the Internet**
  - Break data into packets
  - Send packets when you have them
  - Hope for the best …

Packet switching: an example



Packets

- **Packets carry data (are bag of bits)**:
  - Header: meaningful to network (and network stack)
    - can be multiple headers
  - Body: meaningful only to application
  - More discussion in next lecture

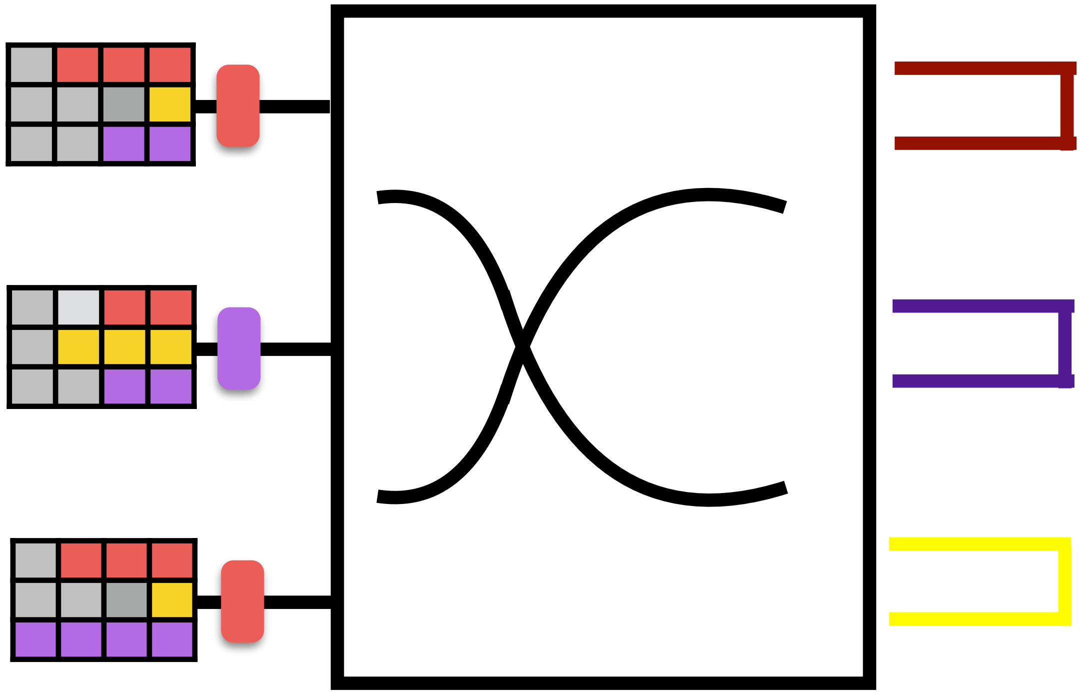
- **Body can be bits in a file, image, whatever**
  - can have its own application “header”

- **What information goes in the header?**

What must headers contain to enable network functionality?

- **Packets must describe where it should be sent**
    - Requires an address for the destination host
        - can be multiple headers
- **Packets must describe where its coming from**
    - why?
    - Acknowledgments, etc.
- **Thats the only way a router/switch can know what to do with the packet**

Packet switching: what does a switch look like



Packet switching summary

- **Goods:**
  - Possible to gracefully handle failures
  - No resource underutilization
    - A source can send more if others don’t use resources
  - No blocked connection problem
  - No per-connection state
  - No set-up cost
- **Not-so-goods:**
  - Unpredictable bandwidth availability
  - Unpredictable delay/latency
  - Packet header overhead

Circuits vs packets

- Pros for circuits:
    - Better application performance (reserved bandwidth)
    - More predictable and understandable (w/o failures)

- Pros for packets:
    - Better resource utilization
    - Easier recovery from failures
    - Faster startup to first packet delivered

Summary of network sharing

Statistical multiplexing

- **Statistical multiplexing:** combining demands to share resources efficiently

- Long history in computer science
  - Processes on an OS (vs every process has own core)
  - Cloud computing (vs every one has own datacenter)

- Based on the premise that:
  - **Peak of aggregate load is << aggregate of peak load**

- Therefore, it is better to share resources than to strictly partition them …

Two approaches to sharing networks

Both embody statistical multiplexing

- Reservation: sharing at connection level
  - Resources shared between connections currently in system
  - Reserve the peak demand for a flow

- On-demand: sharing at packet level
  - Resources shared between packets currently in system
  - Resources given out on packet-by-packet basis
  - No reservation of resources

Understanding delay/latency

Packet Delay/Latency

- Consists of four components
  - **Transmission delay** (hardware properties)
  - **Propagation delay** (hardware properties, distance)
  - **Queueing delay** (traffic, switch internals)
  - Processing delay (end hosts)
- First, consider transmission and propagation delays
- Then queueing delay
- Ignore processing delays

Transmission delay

- How long does it take to push **all the bits of a packet** into a link?

- **Packet size / Transmission rate of the link**
  - Transmission rate = Share of Bandwidth

- Example:
  - Packet size = 1000Byte
  - Bandwidth = 100Mbps
  - 1000*8/100*1024*1024 seconds ~76.3us

Propagation delay

- How long does it take to move **one bit** from one end of a link to the other?
- **Link length / Propagation speed of link**
    - Propagation speed ~ some fraction of speed of light
- Example:
    - Length = 30,000 meters
    - Delay = 30*1000/3*100,000,000 second = 100us

Group Exercise 2:

How long does it take for a *packet* on a link?

Constraints:

- Packet size = 1000Byte
- Rate = 100Mbps
- Length = 30,000m