CS4450

Computer Networks:
Architecture and Protocols

Lecture 8
Switched Ethernet
Spanning Tree Protocol

Rachit Agarwal
Goals for Today’s Lecture

• Experience (the beauty of) Spanning Tree Protocol

• Why do we need network layer?
  • Why not just use switched Ethernet across the Internet?
Recap: Link Layer

- Originally a broadcast channel
  - MAC addresses (really, names)
  - CSMA/CD
    - Remember: Exponential back-off (more in problem set 2)
- Why does Ethernet use frames?
- How Link Layer builds on top of Physical Layer (that uses bits)
  - Bounds on network length and/or minimum frame size
    - Due to propagation delays
- More recently: switched Ethernet
  - Broadcast storm!
Recap: Ethernet “Frames”

- **Preamble:**
  - 7 bytes for clock synchronization
  - 1 byte to indicate start of the frame
- **Names:** 6 + 6 bytes (MAC names/addresses)
- **Protocol type:** 2 bytes, indicating higher layer protocol (e.g., IP)
- **Data payload:** max 1500 bytes, minimum 46 bytes
- **CRC:** 4 bytes for error detection
- **+Trailer:** 1 byte to indicate end of the frame (right before CRC)
Recap: Switched Ethernet

- Enables concurrent communication
  - Host A can talk to C, while B talks to D
  - No collisions -> no need for CSMA, CD
  - No constraints on link lengths or frame size
Recap: Broadcast storm

Bridges relay broadcasts from one LAN to the other

Local-Area Network (LAN)
How to avoid the Broadcast Storm Problem?

Get rid of the loops!
Let's get back to the graph representation!
Easiest Way to Avoid Loops

- Use a network topology (graph) where loop is impossible!
- Take arbitrary topology (graph)

**Build spanning tree**
- Subgraph that includes all vertices but contains no cycles
- Links not in the spanning tree are not used in forwarding frames

- Only one path to destinations on spanning trees
  - So don't have to worry about loops!
Consider Graph
Multiple Spanning Trees
Questions?
Spanning Tree Approach

• Take arbitrary topology

• Pick subset of links that form a spanning tree

• Only forward packets on the spanning tree
  • => No loops
  • => No broadcast storm
Spanning Tree Protocol

• Protocol by which bridges construct a spanning tree
• Nice properties
  • Zero configuration (by operators or users)
  • Self healing
• Still used today
• Constraints for backwards compatibility
  • No changes to end-hosts
  • Maintain plug-n-play aspect
• Earlier Ethernet achieved plug-n-play by leveraging a broadcast medium
  • Can we do the same for a switched topology?
Algorithm has Two Aspects...

• Pick a root:
  • Destination to which the shortest paths go
  • Pick the one with the smallest identifier (MAC name/address)

• Compute the shortest paths to the root
  • No shortest path can have a cycle
  • Only keep the links on the shortest path
  • Break ties in some way
    • so we only keep one shortest path from each node

• Ethernet’s spanning tree construction does both with a single algorithm
Breaking Ties

• When there are multiple shortest paths to the root:
  • Choose the path via neighbor switch with the smallest identifier

• One could use any tie breaking system
  • This is just an easy one to remember and implement
Constructing a Spanning Tree

• **Messages (Y,d,X)**
  - Proposing Y as the root
  - From node X
  - And advertising a distance d between X and Y

• Switches elect the node with smallest identifier (MAC address) as root
  - Y in messages

• Each switch determines if a link is on its shortest path to the root
  - If not, excludes it from the tree
  - d to Y in the message is used to determine this
Steps in Spanning Tree Protocol

• Messages \((Y,d,X)\)
  • Proposing root \(Y\); from node \(X\); advertising a distance \(d\) to \(Y\)

• Initially each switch proposes itself as the root
  • that is, switch \(X\) announces \((X,0,X)\) to its neighbors

• Each switch \(X\) updates its view
  • Upon receiving message \((Y,d,Z)\) from \(Z\), check \(Y\)’s id
  • If \(Y\)’s id < current root: set \(\text{root} = Y\)
  • Set next-hop = \(Z\)

• Switches compute their distance from the root
  • Add 1 to the shortest distance received from a neighbor

• If root changed OR shortest distance to the root changed:
  • send neighbors updated message \((Y,d+1,X)\)
Group Exercise:

Let's run the Spanning Tree Protocol on this example
(assume all links have “distance” 1)
### Round 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node</th>
<th>Receive</th>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Next-hop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1, 0, 1)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2, 0, 2)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3, 0, 3)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4, 0, 4)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>(5, 0, 5)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>(6, 0, 6)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>(7, 0, 7)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Round 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node</th>
<th>Receive</th>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Next hop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1)</td>
<td>(3, 0, 3), (5, 0, 5), (6, 0, 6)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(2, 0, 2)</td>
<td>(3, 0, 3), (4, 0, 4), (6, 0, 6), (7, 0, 7)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(3, 0, 3)</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1), (2, 0, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(4, 0, 4)</td>
<td>(2, 0, 2), (7, 0, 7)</td>
<td>(2, 1, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(5, 0, 5)</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1), (6, 0, 6)</td>
<td>(1, 1, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(6, 0, 6)</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1), (2, 0, 2), (5, 0, 5)</td>
<td>(1, 1, 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(7, 0, 7)</td>
<td>(2, 0, 2), (4, 0, 4)</td>
<td>(2, 1, 7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Round 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node</th>
<th>(x, y, z)</th>
<th>Receive</th>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Next hop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1)</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3), (1, 1, 5), (1, 1, 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(2, 0, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3), (2, 1, 4), (1, 1, 6), (2, 1, 7)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>3 (or 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(2, 1, 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2, 1, 7)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1, 1, 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1, 1, 6)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(1, 1, 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1, 1, 5)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(2, 1, 7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2, 1, 4)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Round 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Receive</th>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Next hop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(2, 1, 4)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 3, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1, 1, 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(1, 1, 6)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(2, 1, 7)</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 3, 7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Round 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Receive</th>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Next hop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1, 0, 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(1, 2, 2)</td>
<td>(1, 3, 4), (1, 3, 7)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1, 1, 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1, 3, 4)</td>
<td>(1, 3, 7)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1, 1, 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(1, 1, 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(1, 3, 7)</td>
<td>(1, 3, 4)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After Round 5: We have our Spanning Tree

• 3-1
• 5-1
• 6-1
• 2-3
• 4-2
• 7-2
Questions?
Spanning Tree Protocol ++ (incorporating failures)

• Protocol must react to failures
  • Failure of the root node
  • Failure of switches and links

• Root node sends periodic announcement messages
  • Few possible implementations, but this is simple to understand
  • Other switches continue forwarding messages

• Detecting failures through timeout (soft state)
  • If no word from root, time out and send a \((Y, 0, Y)\) message to all neighbors (in the graph)!

• If multiple messages with a new root received, send message \((Y, d, X)\) to the neighbor sending the message
Suppose link 2-4 fails

• 4 will send (4, 0, 4) to all its neighbors
  • 4 will stop receiving announcement messages from the root
  • Why?

• At some point, 7 will respond with (1, 3, 7)

• 4 will now update to (1, 4, 4) and send update message

• New spanning tree!
Questions?
The end of Link Layer....

And the beginning of network layer :-D
Why do we need a network layer?

• There’s only one path from source to destination

• How do you find that path? Ideas?

• Easy to design routing algorithms for trees
  • Nodes can “flood” packet to all other nodes
Flooding on a Spanning Tree

• Sends packet to every node in the network

  • **Step 1**: Ignore the links not belonging to the Spanning Tree

  • **Step 2**: Originating node sends “flood” packet out every link (on spanning tree)

  • **Step 3**: Send incoming packet out to all links other than the one that sent the packet
Flooding Example

Eventually all nodes are covered

Source

Destination

One copy of packet delivered to destination
Routing via Flooding on Spanning Tree ...

• There’s only one path from source to destination

• How do you find that path? Ideas?

• Easy to design routing algorithms for trees
  • Nodes can “flood” packet to all other nodes

• Amazing properties:
  • No routing tables needed!
  • No packets will ever loop.
  • At least (and exactly) one packet must reach the destination
    • Assuming no failures
Three fundamental issues!

Issue 1: Each host has to do unnecessary packet processing! (to decide whether the packet is destined to the host)
Three fundamental issues!

Issue 2: Higher latency!
(The packets unnecessarily traverse much longer paths)
Three fundamental issues!

Issue 3: Lower bandwidth availability!
(2-6 and 3-1 packets unnecessarily have to share bandwidth)
Questions?
Why do we need a network layer?

• Network layer performs “routing” of packets to alleviate these issues

• Uses routing tables

• Lets understand routing tables first
  • We will see routing tables are nothing but ...