15-441
15-641
Computer Networking

Lecture 6 – Network Address Translation

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Outline

- The IP protocol
  - IPv4
  - IPv6
- IP in practice
  - Network address translation
  - Address resolution protocol
  - Tunnels

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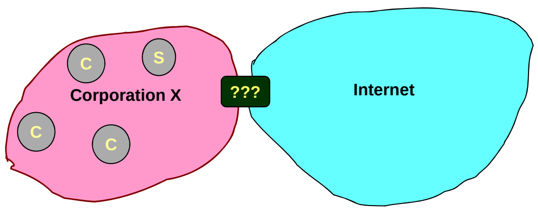
Altering the Addressing Model

- Original IP Model: Every host has unique IP address
- This has very attractive properties …
  - Any host can communicate with any other host
  - Any host can act as a server
    - Just need to know host ID and port number
- … but the system is open – complicates security
  - Any host can attack any other host
  - It is easy to forge packets
    - Use invalid source address
- … and it places pressure on the address space
  - Every host requires "public" IP address

Challenges When Connecting to Public Internet

C: Client
S: Server



- Not enough IP addresses for every host in organization
  - Increasingly hard to get large address blocks
- Security
  - Don't want every machine in organization known to outside world
  - Want to control or monitor traffic in / out of organization

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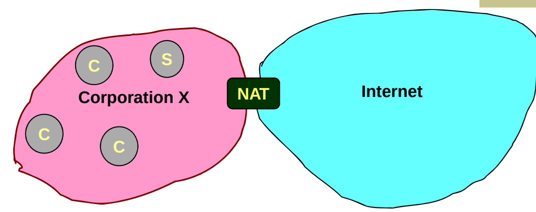
But not All Hosts are Equal!

C: Client
S: Server



- Most machines within organization are used by individuals
  - For most applications, they act as clients
- Only a small number of machines act as servers for the entire organization
  - E.g., mail server, web, ..
  - All traffic to outside passes through firewall

(Most) machines within organization do not need public IP addresses!

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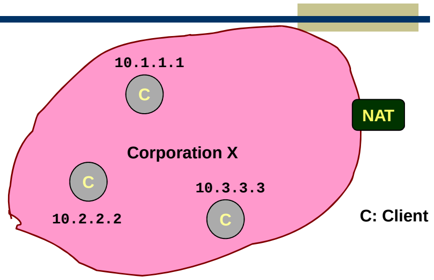
Reducing Address Use: Network Address Translation

- Within organization: assign each host a private IP address
  - IP addresses blocks 10/8 & 192.168/16 are set aside for this
  - Route within organization by IP protocol
  - Can do subnetting, ..



- The NAT translates between public and private IP addresses as packets travel to/from the public Internet
  - It does not let any packets from internal nodes "escape"
  - Outside world does not need to know about internal addresses

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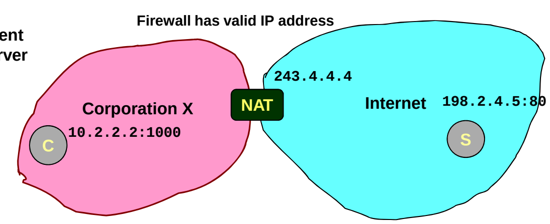
NAT: Opening Client Connection

C: Client
S: Server



- Client 10.2.2.2 wants to connect to server 198.2.4.5:80
  - OS assigns ephemeral port (1000)
- Connection request intercepted by firewall
  - Maps client to port of firewall (5000)
  - Creates NAT table entry

Int Addr	Int Port	NAT Port
10.2.2.2	1000	5000

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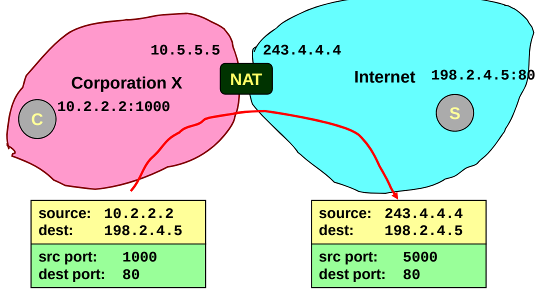
NAT: Client Request

C: Client
S: Server

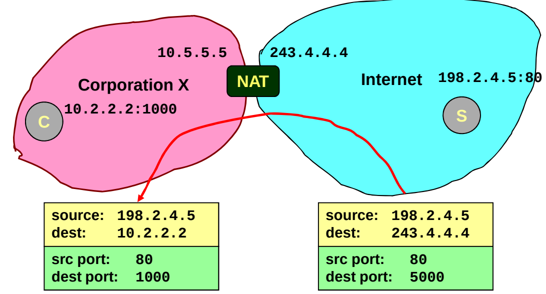


Int Addr	Int Port	NAT Port
10.2.2.2	1000	5000

- Firewall acts as proxy for client
  - Intercepts message from client and marks itself as sender

NAT: Server Response

C: Client
S: Server

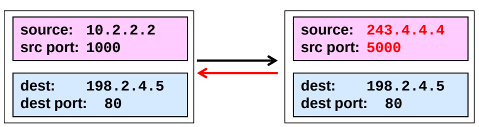


Int Addr	Int Port	NAT Port
10.2.2.2	1000	5000

- Firewall acts as proxy for client
  - Acts as destination for server messages
  - Relabels destination to local addresses

Client Request Mapping

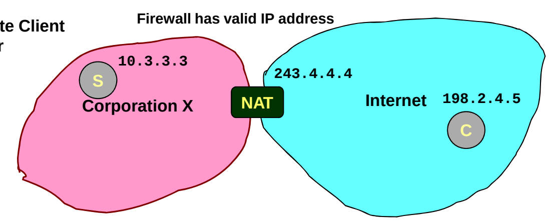
Private network: Public Internet:



- NAT manages mapping between two four-tuples
- Mapping must be unique: one to one
- Must respect practical constraints
  - Cannot modify server IP address or port number
  - Client has limited number of IP addresses, often 1
  - Mapping client port numbers is important!
- Mapping must be consistent
  - The same for all packets in a communication session

NAT: Enabling Servers

C: Remote Client
S: Server



- Use *port mapping* to make servers available

Int Addr	Int Port	NAT Port
10.3.3.3	80	80

- Manually configure NAT table to include entry for well-known port
- External users give address 243.4.4.4:80
- Requests forwarded to server

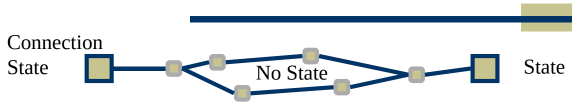
Additional NAT Benefits

- They significantly reduce the need for public IP addresses
- NATs directly help with security
  - Hides IP addresses used in internal network
    - Easy to change ISP: only NAT box needs to have IP address
    - Fewer registered IP addresses required
  - Basic protection against remote attack
    - Does not expose internal structure to outside world
    - Can control what packets come in and out of system
    - Can reliably determine whether packet from inside or outside
- And NATs have many additional benefits
  - NAT boxes make home networking simple
  - Can be used to map between addresses from different address families, e.g, IPv4 and IPv6

NAT Challenges

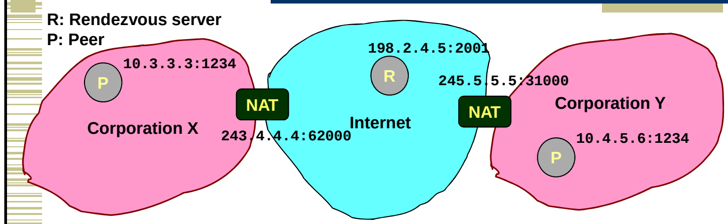
- NAT has to be consistent during a session.
  - Mapping (hard state) must be maintained during the session
    - Recall Goal 1 of Internet: Continue despite loss of networks or gateways
  - Recycle the mapping after the end of the session
    - May be hard to detect
- NAT only works for certain applications.
  - Some applications (e.g. ftp) pass IP information in payload - oops
  - Need application level gateways to do a matching translation
- NATs are a problem for peer-peer applications
  - File sharing, multi-player games, …
  - Who is server?
  - Need to "punch" hole through NAT

Principle: Fate Sharing



- "You can lose state information relevant to an entity's connections if and only if the entity itself is lost"
  - Example: OK to lose TCP state if either endpoint crashes
  - The TCP connection is no longer useful anyway!
- It is NOT okay to lose it if an unrelated entity goes down
  - Example: if an intermediate router reboots
- NATs violate this principle: if a NAT goes down, all communication session it supports are lost!
  - Unless you add redundancy and put state in persistent storage
- Bad news: many stateful "middleboxes" violate this rule
  - Firewalls, mobility services, … - more on this later
- Good news: today's hardware is very reliable

Many Options Exist for Peer-Peer



- NAT recognizes certain protocols and behaves as a application gateway
  - Used for standard protocols such as ftp
- Applications negotiate directly with NAT or firewall – need to be authorized
  - Multiple protocols dealing with different scenarios
- Punching holes in NAT: peers contact each other simultaneously using a known public (IP, port), e.g. used with rendezvous service
  - Use publicly accessible rendezvous service to exchange accessibility information
  - Assumes NATs do end-point independent mapping
- But remains painful!