Wireless Sensor Networks

Reading:

I. Akyildiz, W. Su, Y. Sankarasubramaniam and E. Cayirci, "A Survey on Sensor Networks," *IEEE Communications Magazine*, August 2002.

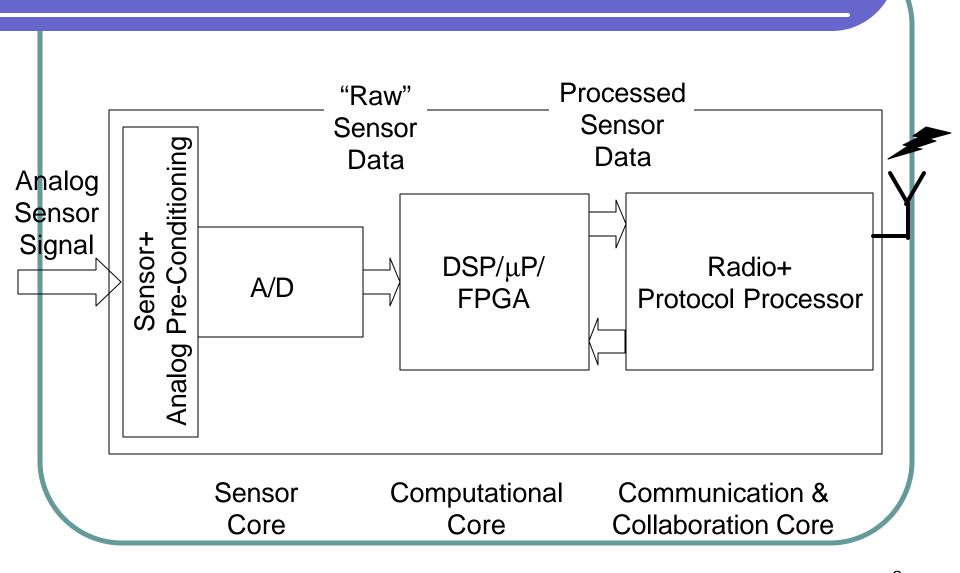
Wireless Sensor Nodes

- Sensors monitor environment
 - Cameras, microphones, physiological, pressure, biological sensors, etc.
 - Sensor data limited in range and accuracy
- Micro-sensors
 - Sensor module (e.g., acoustic, seismic, image)
 - Digital processor for signal processing and network protocol functions
 - Radio for communication
 - Battery-operated





Wireless Sensor Nodes

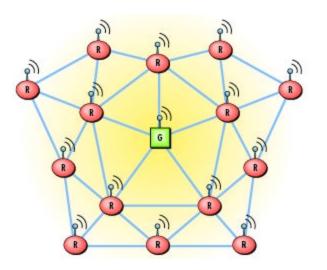


[http://mtlweb.mit.edu/researchgroups/icsystems/uamps/pubs/files/darpa_oct_01.ppt]

Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs)

Networks of distributed data sources that provide information about environmental phenomena to an end user or multiple end users

- Tens to thousands of nodes scattered throughout an environment
- Data routed via other sensors to
 - One or more sinks or base stations
 - Other sensors
- Unique characteristics
 - Ad hoc network
 - No end-to-end communication
 - Co-operative operation
 - Redundancy in information



WSN Advantages

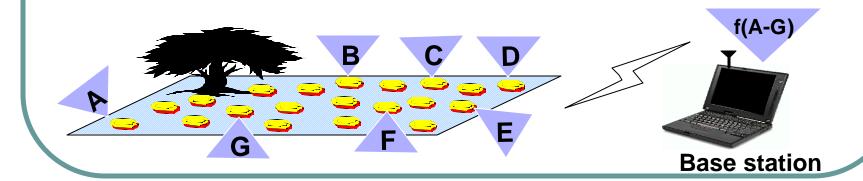
- Networking sensors enables
 - Extended range of sensing → improved quality
 - Fault tolerance due to redundancy in data from different sensors
 - Distributed processing of large amounts of data
 - Duty-cycling individual nodes
 - Scalability: quality can be traded for system lifetime
 - "Team-work": nodes can help each perform a larger sensing task

WSN Networking

- New wireless networking paradigm
 - Requires autonomous operation
 - Highly dynamic environments
 - Sensor nodes added/fail
 - Events in the environment
 - Distributed computation and communication protocols required

Sample Applications

- Remote surveillance
- Research (e.g., tracking animals)
- Chemical/biological agent detection
- Medical/machine monitoring
- US military Sense and Respond Logistics
- Agriculture monitoring
- Psychological and behavioral studies



Example Application: Environmental Monitoring

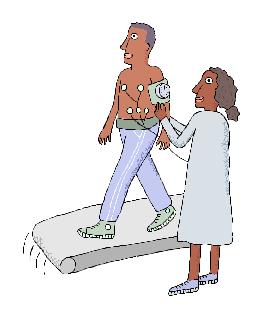
- Raw sensor data or high level descriptions about environmental phenomena
- Example projects
 - ZebraNet
 - Ecology of rare plants in Hawaii



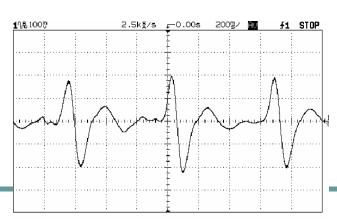


Example Application: Health Monitoring

- Sensors monitor vital signs
 - Blood pressure, heart rate, EKG, blood O2
- Sense, process, understand, control
- Requires protocols that are
 - Reliable, flexible, scalable, secure







Sensor Platforms

- Example platforms
 - MicaZ (Crossbow)
 - http://www.xbow.com/Products/Wireless_Sensor_Networks.htm
 - Tmote Sky (MotelV)
 - http://www.moteiv.com/products-tmotesky.php
 - Intel Motes (Intel)
 - http://www.intel.com/research/exploratory/motes.htm
 - iBadge (UCLA)
 - http://nesl.ee.ucla.edu/projects/ibadge/default.htm
 - BTNode (ETH Zurich)
 - http://www.btnode.ethz.ch/
 - mAMPS (MIT)
 - http://mtlweb.mit.edu/researchgroups/icsystems/uamps/

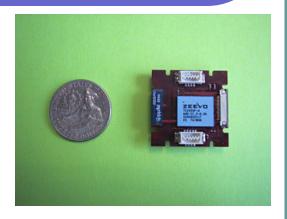
Sensor Platforms



Crossbow MicaZ mote



MotelV Tmote Sky



Intel mote



UCLA iBadge



ETH BTNode



MIT μ AMPS-I

WSN Limitations

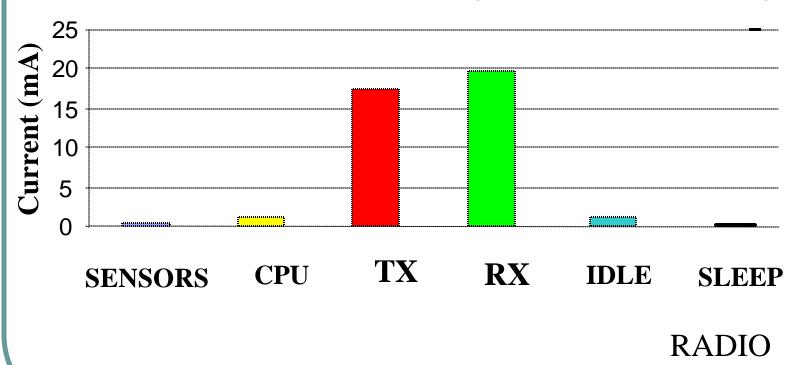
- Communication
 - Bandwidth is limited and must be shared among all the nodes in the sensor network
 - Spatial reuse essential
 - Efficient local use of bandwidth needed

WSN Limitations (cont.)

- Sensor energy
 - Each sensor node has limited energy supply
 - Nodes may not be rechargeable
 - Eventually nodes may be self-powered
 - Energy consumption in sensing, data processing, and communication
 - Communication often the most energy-intensive
 - For some sensors (e.g., imagers), sensing may also be energy-intensive
 - Must use energy-conserving protocols

Sensor Node Current Draw

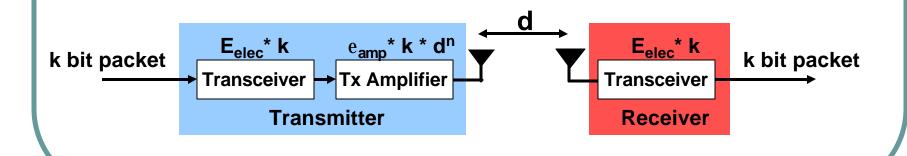
Current draw of node subsystems for Tmote Sky



Operating voltage: 2.1 – 3.6 V

Communication Module Energy Dissipation Model

- Transmitter dissipates energy for
 - Transceiver electronics (e.g., baseband processing)
 - Transmit amplifier
 - Fixed or variable transmit power
- Receiver dissipates energy for
 - Transceiver electronics



General Ad Hoc Networks	Sensor Networks
Unreliable communication	Unreliable communication
Require self-configuration	Require self-configuration
Constrained energy and bandwidth	Very constrained energy and bandwidth
Small-scale	Large-scale
Typically mobile	Typically immobile
Competitive	Cooperative
One-to-one traffic pattern	Many-to-one traffic pattern

QoS: delay, packet drop threshold, etc | Application-specific QoS

Data-centric

Address-centric

Design Factors

- What are the important features of WSNs?
- Fault tolerance/reliability
 - Network should be robust to individual node failures
 - Failures due to running out of energy, hardware failures, malicious intercept of sensor, etc.
- Cost
 - Must have cheap sensors

Design Factors (cont.)

Scalability

- Protocols must scale to thousands or millions of sensor nodes
- Requires intelligent management of high densities of nodes
- Energy consumption
 - Sensor functions: sensing, communication, data processing
 - All require energy
 - Lifetime a function of sensors' remaining energy

Design Factors (cont.)

- Topology
 - Deployment
 - Random or deliberate placement of nodes
 - Fixed locations or can place optimally
 - Changes in topology during network operation
 - New nodes added to the system
 - Nodes failing
 - Environmental changes

Evaluating WSNs

- What are the performance metrics for WSNs?
- System lifetime
 - E.g., time until network partition
 - E.g., time until probability of missed detection exceeds a threshold
- Quality of result of sensor network
 - Application-specific measure
 - Latency of data transfer
 - SNR of aggregate data signal
 - Probability of missed detection or false alarm
 - Coverage probability

Evaluating WSNs (cont.)

- Tradeoffs can be made among network parameters
 - E.g., can reduce quality of result of sensor network to increase system lifetime

Taxonomy of WSN Architectures

- In what ways do sensor networks for various applications differ?
- Data sink(s)
 - Embedded within network
 - Located on network edge or outside network
 - Mobile access point
 - One or several sinks

Taxonomy (cont.)

- Sensor mobility
 - Often assume stationary sensors
 - Some projects use mobile sensors
 - ZebraNet
 - Military operations
 - Self-propelled sensors
 - Robots
 - Medical monitoring

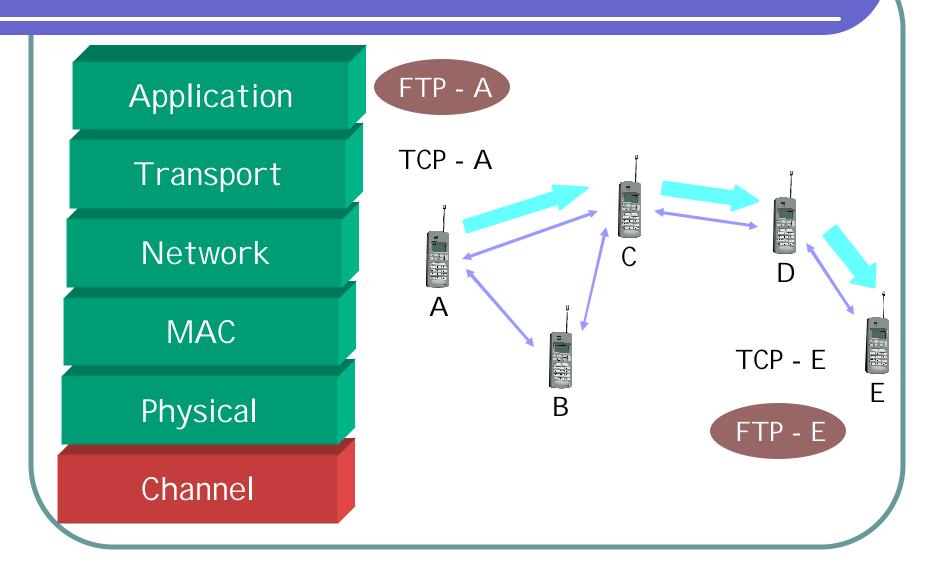
Taxonomy (cont.)

- Sensor resources
 - Memory
 - Processing
 - Transmit power (fixed vs. variable)
 - Location/density
- Traffic patterns
 - Event-driven applications
 - Continuous data generation
 - Query-driven applications

WSN Architectures

- Several different architectures proposed for WSNs
- Traditional layered architecture
 - Benefits from modularity and existing protocols
- Cross-layer architectures
 - Provides greater QoS and longer lifetime
- Sensor network architecture (SNA)
 - Provides link layer and hardware platform abstractions
- Information-sharing architecture
 - Provides layered protocols with ability to share information for cross-layer optimizations

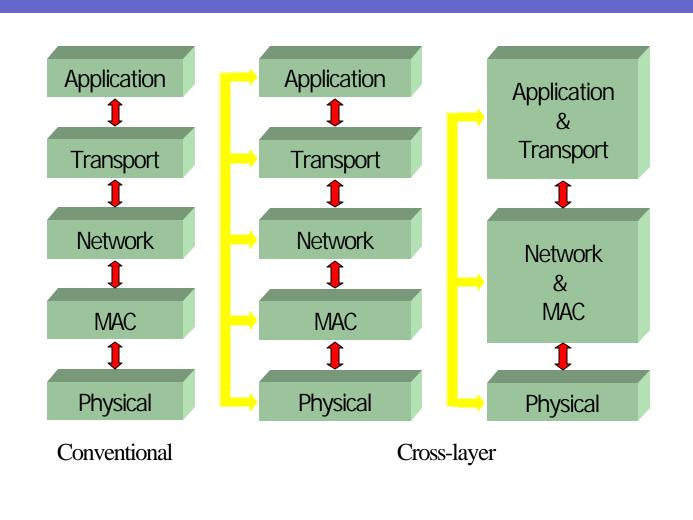
Traditional Layered Architecture



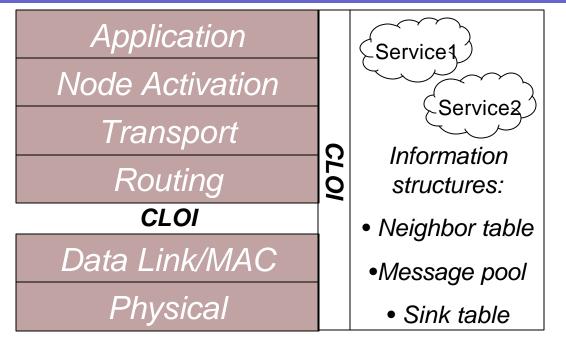
Cross-layer Definitions

- Two or more layers cooperate to improve network's response
- Layer fusion: operations from two or more layers performed jointly
- Information sharing: several layers share information
- Former shows surprisingly little improvement in face of other design optimizations

Cross-layer Architectures



X-lisa: X-layer Information Sharing Architecture



- Maintain layered stack but enable information sharing
- Cross-layer optimization interface (CLOI)
 - Repository for information that can be used for optimizations
 - Provides services

Design Issues

- New protocols needed
- MAC
 - Cooperative nature of sensor networks
 - Fairness not an issue
 - Sensors should not compete for limited bandwidth
 - Exploit traffic patterns
 - Energy efficiency extremely important
 - Reduce idle listening
 - Reduce unnecessary reception

- Routing
 - Different traffic models
 - Data dissemination rather than point-to-point routing
 - Data-centric rather than address-centric
 - Location-aware sensors
 - Resource-aware routing needed
 - Exploit local aggregation
 - Time-varying channels leads to necessity for dynamic routing approaches

- Topology control

 - Create fully-connected dominating set from active routers
- Transmission power control
 - How to avoid "hot spot" problem?
 - Provide connected network

- QoS Management
 - QoS determined by content of data rather than amount
 - Transport layer
 - Intelligent congestion management
 - Throttle back irrelevant data rather than each node's sending rate
 - Coverage
 - Ensure the correct sensors provide data
 - K-coverage: each location monitored by at least K sensors

- Time synchronization
 - Very important in sensor networks
 - Needed to determine if event sensed by two sensors is in fact the same event
 - Needed to determine object speed
 - Approaches
 - GPS expensive, not energy-efficient
 - NTP (used in computer networks) not enough precision
 - Post-facto synchronization
 using stimulus arrival time to synchronize nodes
 - Multi-hop time synchronization
 - Several other approaches being researched

- Localization
 - Important for same reasons as time synchronization
 - Often times, only relative position is necessary
 - GPS is unattractive for energy reasons
 - RSSI often used to infer distances
 - Time of Arrival (ToA)
 - Time Difference of Arrival (TDoA)
 - Angle of Arrival (AoA)

- Localization (cont.)
 - Sensor can find its own location using received beacons
 - Sensor can have other nodes measure its location
 - Sensor sends beacon message and neighbors use trilateration based on signal strength measurements
 - Problem small scale fading

Routing Protocols

Sensor Network Routing

- Energy-efficiency even more important than in MANETs
- "Resource"-aware, data-centric routing needed
 - Reduce power consumption
 - Distribute energy load (maximize network lifetime)
 - Take into account sensors' importance to application
- May be tightly coupled with protocols from different layers
 - Take advantage of data fusion opportunities
 - Cross-layer architectures

Taxonomy of Routing Protocols

- Traffic patterns
 - One-to-one: data to sink
 - Many-to-one: all sensors' data to sink
 - One-to-many: sink commands to sensors
 - Many-to-many: data dissemination, flooding, gossiping
- Resource-aware routing
 - Energy-aware routing
 - Fidelity-aware routing
- Data-centric routing
 - SPIN
 - Directed diffusion
 - Rumor routing

Taxonomy (cont.)

- Geographic routing
 - GFG
 - GPSR
 - TBF
 - RBF
- Clustering
 - LEACH
 - HEED
- Querying a distributed database
 - TAG
 - TinyDB
 - GHT

Resource-aware Routing

- Consider each sensor's resources for routing decisions
 - Energy resources
 - Sensing resources
 - Others?
- Energy-aware routing
 - Balance power consumption so nodes fail uniformly
 - Node costs and link costs considered
- Fidelity-aware routing
 - Consider importance of node to sensing application
 - Route around "important" sensors
 - Requires local communication to learn importance

Energy-aware Routing

- Consider energy resources of each sensor
- Balance energy consumption
- Energy-aware routing metric
 - For packet j sent from n1 to nk, minimize

$$c_{j} = \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} \frac{1}{1 - g(z_{i})}$$

 g(zi) = normalized remaining lifetime corresponding to node ni's battery zi

Energy-aware Routing (cont.)

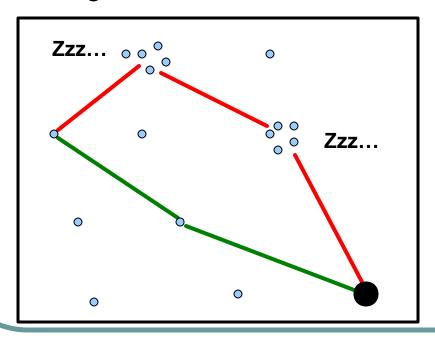
 Can also use routing cost that is sum of individual link costs

$$c_{ij} = e_{ij} \underline{E}_{i}^{-x_2} E_{i}^{x_3}$$

- e_{ij} = energy to transmit from node i to node j
- Ei = residual energy of node i
- Ei = initial energy of node i

Fidelity-aware Routing

- Rather than ensuring uniform energy usage, consider importance of sensor to application
 - Sensors must determine "application cost"
 - E.g., "Redundant" sensors less important



Possible routes:

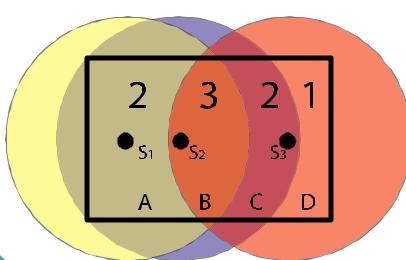
Shortest path

Path of most sensing redundancy

Application Cost: Coverage

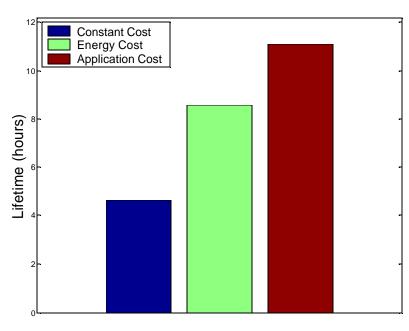
- Each subregion characterized by unique sensor set
 - Important factor: energy of sensors in set
- Intuitively, sensors equivalent if they cover equivalent regions

$$C_{\text{app_cost}}(S_i) = \int_{R(S_i)} \frac{dx}{\boldsymbol{e}(x)} = \int_{R(S_i)} \frac{dx}{\sum_{S_i: x \in R(S_i)}} \frac{dx}{\sum_{S_i: x \in R(S_i)}}$$



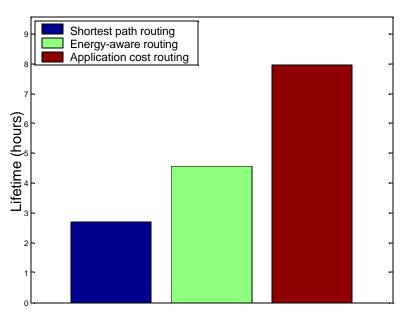
Comparison of Fidelity-aware and Energy-aware

Balanced Energy



Application cost: 56% improvement over energy cost

Unbalanced Energy



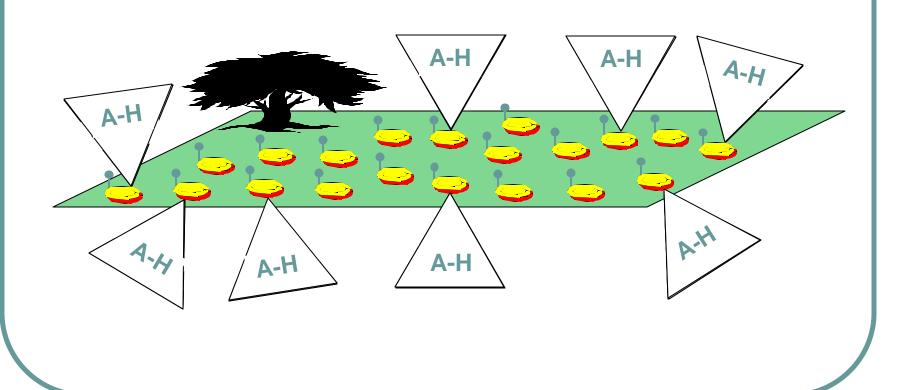
Application cost: 75% improvement over energy cost

Data-Centric Routing

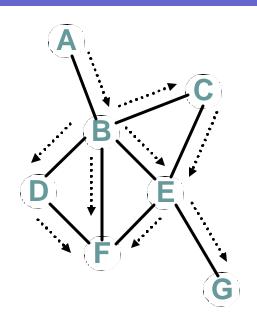
- Aggregate data or information from data important
 - Individual data items not important
- Sensor nodes themselves less important than data
- Queries posed for specific data rather than data from a particular sensor
- Routing exploits the requirement for aggregate data rather than individual data
- Example protocols
 - SPIN
 - Directed Diffusion
 - Rumor Routing

Network-wide Data Dissemination

Problem: information dissemination



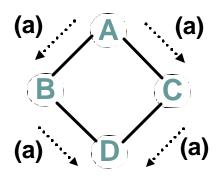
Flooding



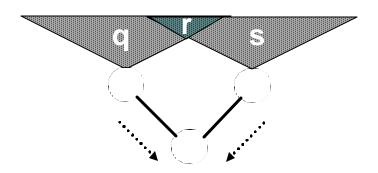
- Flooding
 - Send to all neighbors
 - E.g., routing table updates

Resource Inefficiencies

Implosion



Data overlap

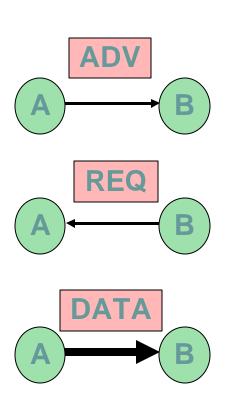


Resource blindness

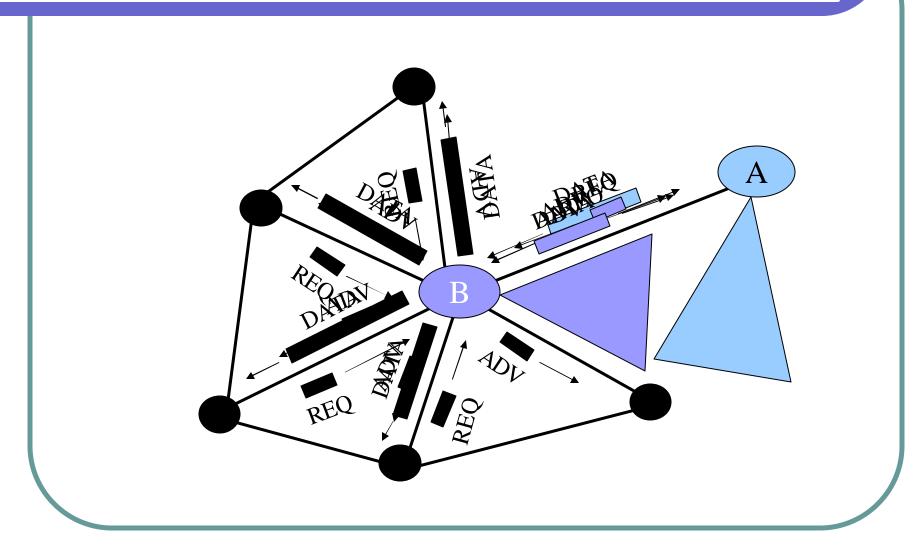
SPIN Family

Sensor Protocol for Information via Negotiation

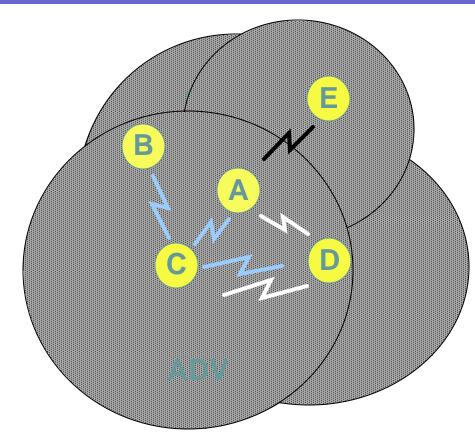
- Data negotiation
 - Meta-data (data naming)
 - Application-level control
 - Model "ideal" data paths
- SPIN messages
 - ADV- advertise data
 - REQ- request specific data
 - DATA- requested data
- Resource management



SPIN Example

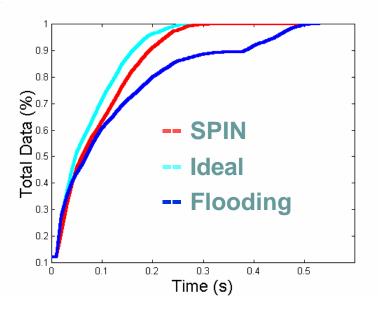


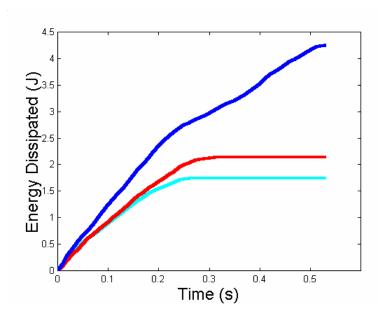
SPIN Example 2



- A Nodes with data
- A Nodes without data
- A Nodes waiting to transmit REQ

SPIN Performance





SPIN

- Converges quicker than flooding
- Reduces energy by 50% compared with flooding
- Meta-data negotiation successful in broadcast

Directed Diffusion

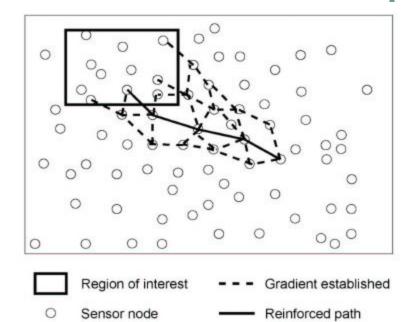
- Abstraction that tries to describe communication patterns underlying many localized algorithms
- Data named with attribute-value pairs
- Nodes that want data express interests based on the predefined attributes
- Interests disseminated throughout network
- Interests diffuse to correct area
 - Intermediate nodes propagate interests based on the contents of the interest
 - E.g., interest for data from location (x,y)
 - Interests may be propagated to multiple neighbors for robustness

Directed Diffusion (cont.)

- Gradients set up that draw events of interest back to originating node
 - Strength of gradient depends on quality of routing path
 - Application-specific meaning to a gradient
- Interests/data propagated along routes with strong gradients
 - Good routes inherently reinforced
 - Creates low-energy routing of data
- Data aggregation and caching performed in network
 - Further reduces node energy dissipation

Example: Animal Monitoring

- Interested in receiving data about all 4-legged creatures in area
- Specify desired data rate
- Query/interest
 - Type=four-legged animal
 - Interval=20ms (event data rate)
 - Duration=10 seconds (t to cache)
 - Rect=[-100, 100, 200, 400]
- Reply
 - Type=four-legged animal
 - Instance = elephant
 - Location = [125, 220]
 - Intensity = 0.6
 - Confidence = 0.85
 - Timestamp = 01:20:40
- Attribute-Value pairs → no advanced naming scheme

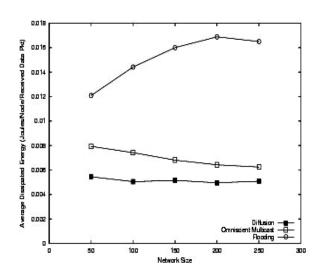


Design Considerations

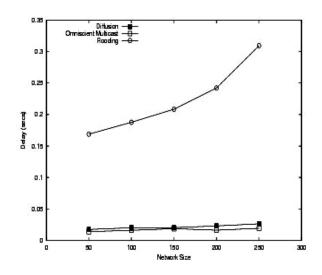
Diffusion element	Design Choices
Interest Propagation	 Flooding Constrained or directional flooding based on location Directional propagation based on previously cached data
Data Propagation	 Reinforcement to single path delivery Multipath delivery with selective quality along different paths Multipath delivery with probabilistic forwarding
Data caching and aggregation	 For robust data delivery in the face of node failure For coordinated sensing and data reduction For directing interests
Reinforcement	 Rules for deciding when to reinforce Rules for how many neighbors to reinforce Negative reinforcement mechanisms and rules

Figure 3: Design Space for Diffusion

DD Performance



(a) Average dissipated energy



(b) Average delay

Rumor Routing

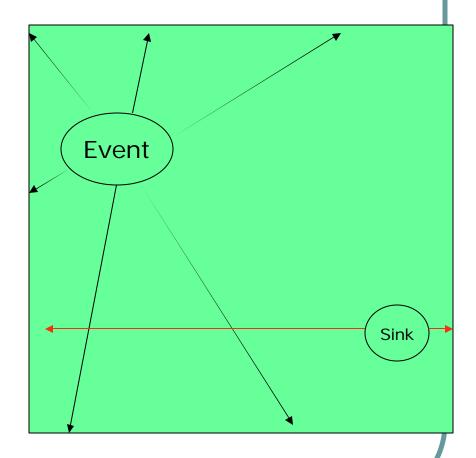
- In query-based networks, different techniques for routing data and queries
 - Query flooding
 - Expensive for large query/event ratio
 - Allows for optimal reverse path setup
 - Gossiping scheme can be use to reduce overhead
 - Event Flooding
 - Expensive for low query/event ratio
 - Note
 - Both of them provide shortest delay paths

Rumor Routing (cont.)

- Alternative: Rumor Routing
 - Designed for query/event ratios between query and event flooding
 - Motivation: sometimes non-optimal route is fine
 - Advantages
 - Tunable best effort delivery
 - Tunable for a range of query/event ratios
 - Disadvantages
 - Optimal parameters depend heavily on topology (but can be adaptively tuned)
 - Does not guarantee delivery

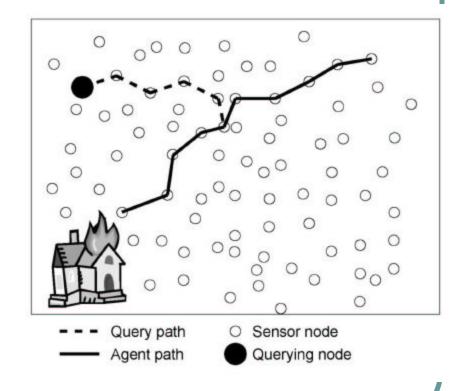
Basis for Algorithm

- Observation
 - Two lines in a bounded rectangle have a 69% chance of intersecting
- Idea
 - Create set of straight line gradients from event
 - Send query along a random straight line from sink
- What if this line is not really straight?

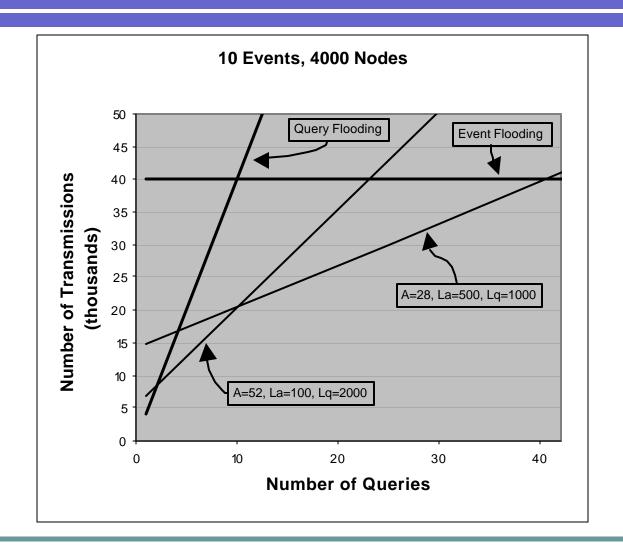


Creating Paths

- Nodes with data send agents
 - Agents leave routing info to event as state in intermediate nodes
- Agents attempt to travel in a straight line
- If an agent crosses a pat to another event, it begin to build the path to both
- Agents also optimize paths if they find shorter ones



Rumor Routing Performance



[http://www.cse.nd.edu/~surendar/conferences/wsna02/papers/p22-braginsky.pd6]4

Observations

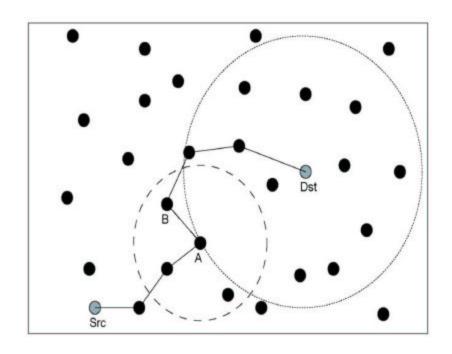
- Wide range of parameters allow for energy savings over simple alternatives
- Optimal parameters depend on
 - Network topology
 - Query/event distribution and frequency
- Algorithm very sensitive to event distribution
- Fault tolerance
 - After agents propagated paths to events, some nodes were disabled
 - Delivery probability degraded linearly up to 20% node failure, then dropped sharply

Geographic Routing

- Sensors often know location
- Use location information to get data/queries to particular part of network
- Geographic forwarding reduces
 - Routing overhead
 - Memory utilization
- Example protocols
 - GFG
 - GPSR
 - TBF
 - RBF

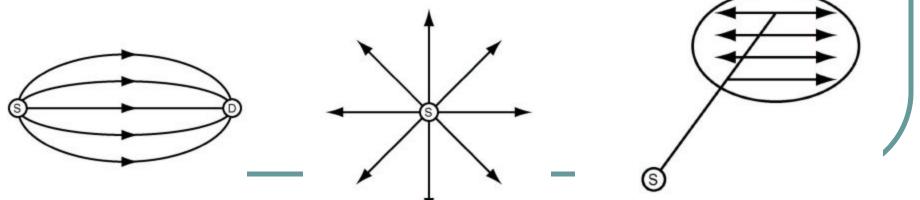
Greedy-FACE-Greedy (GFG) and Greedy Perimeter Stateless Routing (GPSR)

- Greedy geographic forwarding algorithm
 - Forward data to node's neighbor that makes most progress towards destination
 - Must keep track of neighbors' locations
- Obstacles can cause problems
 - Use "right hand rule" routing around holes



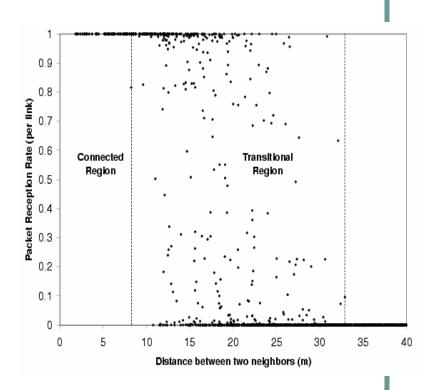
Trajectory Based Forwarding (TBF)

- Similar to GFG/GPSR but allow sourcespecified trajectories for routes
- Enables
 - Multipath routing for added resilience
 - Spoke broadcasting
 - Broadcast to remote subregion

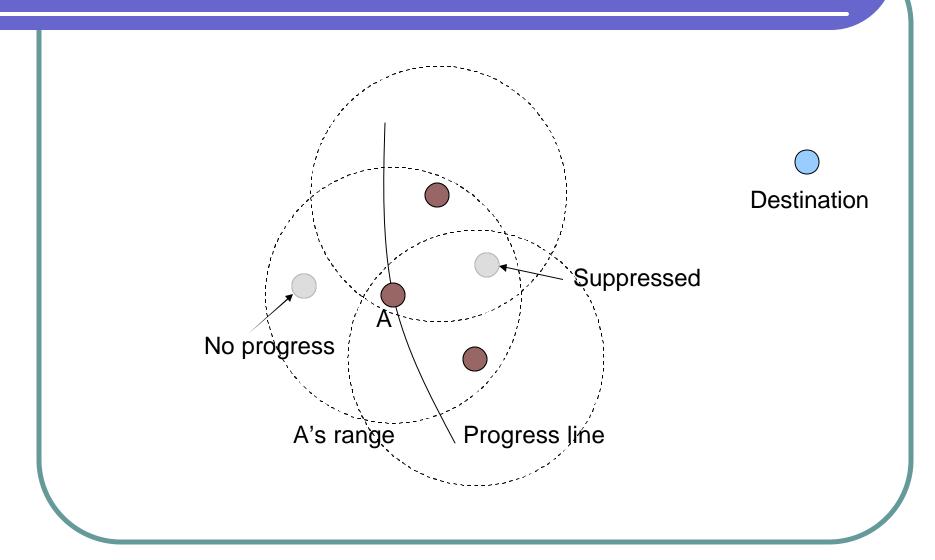


Receiver-based Forwarding (RBF)

- Receivers determine whether or not to forward
 - Ensures good links selected for forwarding data
- RBF protocol
 - Sender broadcasts
 - Receiver determines if elligible (progress)
 - Receiver sets a timer for retransmission
 - If another retransmission is heard, cancel timer
 - Keep messages heard in a cache



RBF Protocol

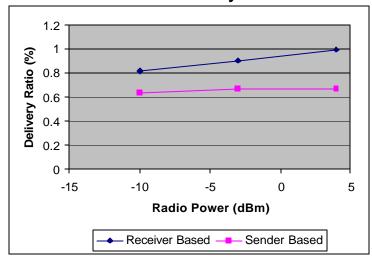


Sample Routes

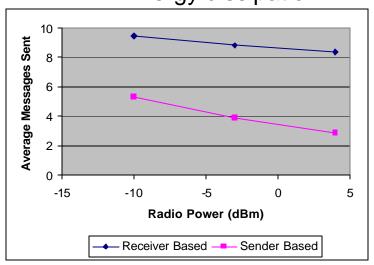
Sender Based Receiver Based Dest

RBF Performance

Packet delivery ratio



Energy dissipation



RBF 20 to 30% better

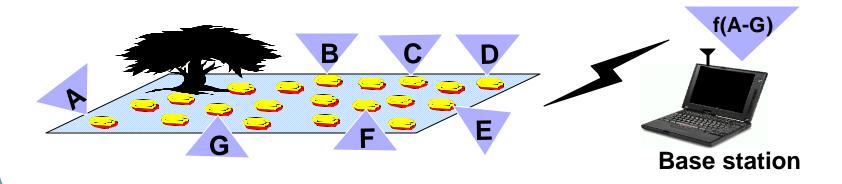
2 ~ 3 times more, better in less dense networks

Clustering

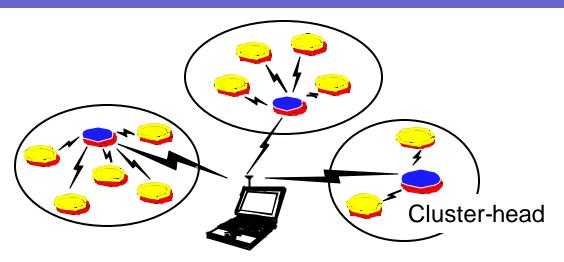
- To scale, hierarchical approach beneficial
- Form local clusters managed by cluster head
 - Fixed or adaptive cluster maintenance
- Clustering provides
 - Framework for resource management
 - Support for intra-cluster channel access and power control
 - Support for inter-cluster routing and channel separation
 - Distributes management responsibility from sink to cluster heads
 - Provides framework for data fusion, local decision making, local control and energy savings

LEACH Framework

- Assumptions:
 - Base station away from nodes
 - All nodes energy-constrained
 - Locally, data correlated



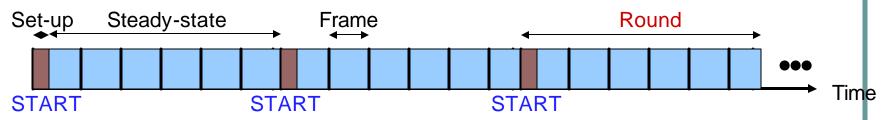
LEACH Protocol Architecture



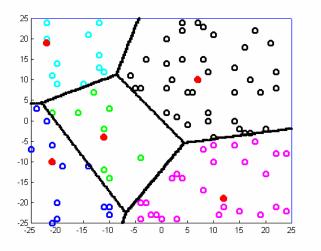
Base station

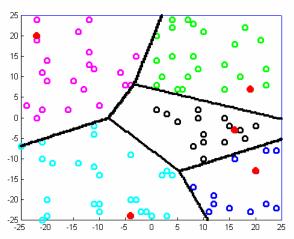
- Low-Energy Adaptive Clustering Hierarchy
 - Adaptive, self-configuring cluster formation
 - Localized control for data transfers
 - Low-energy medium access
 - Application-specific data aggregation

Dynamic Clusters



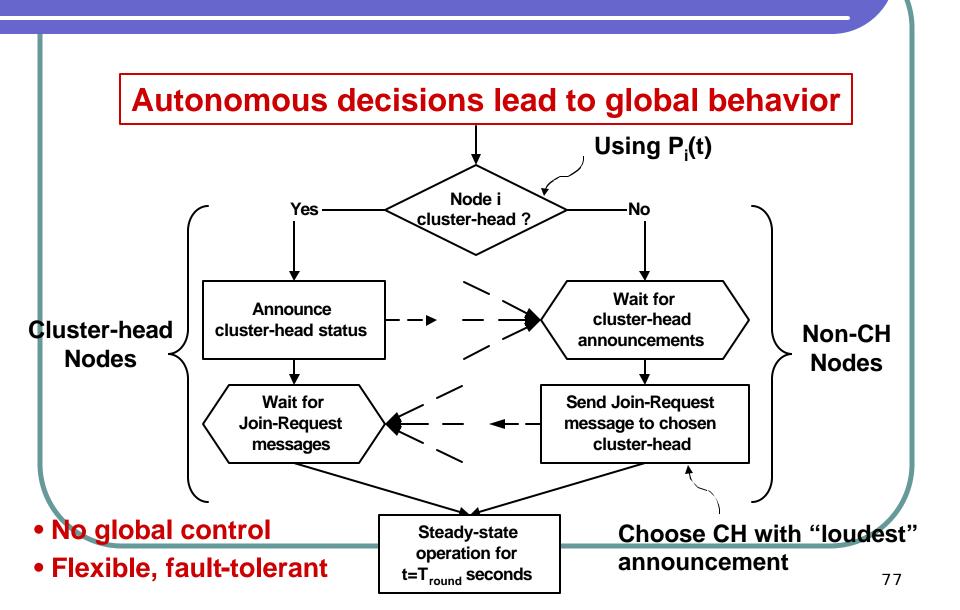
- Cluster-head rotation to evenly distribute energy load
- Adaptive clusters
 - Clusters formed during set-up
 - Scheduled data transfers during steady-state





Cluster-heads =

Distributed Cluster Formation



Distributed Cluster Formation

- Assume nodes begin with equal energy
- Design for k clusters per round
- Want to evenly distribute energy load
- ⇒ Each node CH once in N/k rounds

$$E[\# CH] = \dot{\mathbf{a}}^{N} P_{i}(t) * 1 = k$$

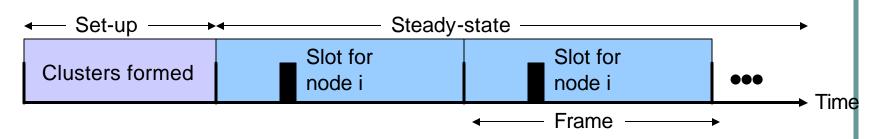
$$P_{i}(t) = \frac{1}{1} \frac{k}{N - k * r \mod(N/k)} \quad C_{i}(t) = 0$$

$$\vdots \quad 0 \quad C_{i}(t) = 1$$

 $C_i(t) = 1$ if node i a CH in last r rounds

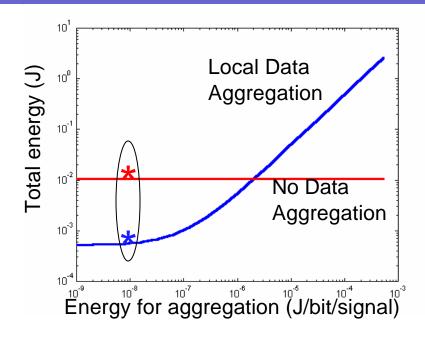
Can determine P_i(t) with unequal node energy

LEACH Steady-State



- Cluster-head coordinates transmissions
 - Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) schedule
 - Node i transmits once per frame
- Cluster-head broadcasts TDMA schedule
- Low-energy approach
 - No collisions
 - Maximum sleep time
 - Power control

Data Aggregation

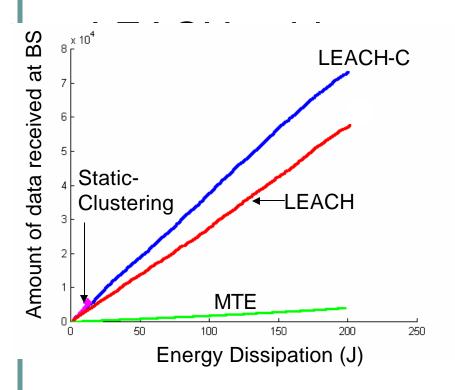


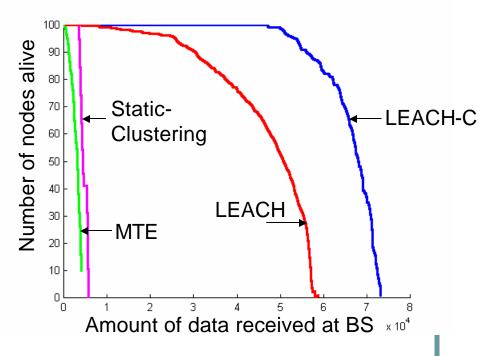
- Clusters exhibit spatial locality
 - Local data aggregation
- Computation vs. communication tradeoff
 - Depends on cost of computation and communication
 - Signal processing within the network

Base Station Cluster Formation

- Get optimal clusters for comparison
- LEACH-C
 - Requires communication with base station
 - Nodes send base station current position
 - Base station runs optimization algorithm to determine best clusters
- Need GPS or other location-tracking method

LEACH Performance

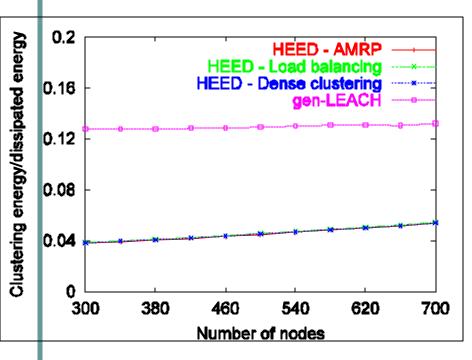


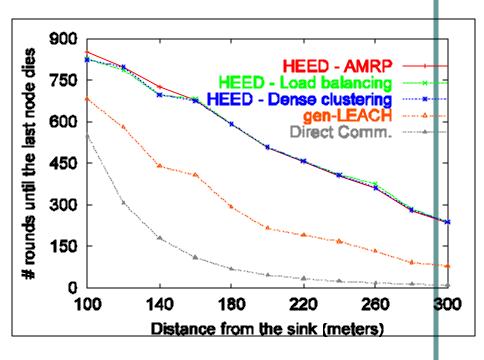


HEED

- Node costs
 - Cluster head probability
 - Function of residual energy
 - Communication cost
 - Function of neighbor proximity
- Iterative approach where nodes with lowest cost advertise themselves as cluster head
 - Nodes associate with cluster heads
 - At each iteration, cluster head probability increased
- Advantages
 - Creates well distributed clusters
 - Terminates in constant time
 - Requires only local communication

HEED Performance





- HEED produces well distributed clusters
 - Reduces energy load
 - Extends network lifetime

Querying a Distributed Database

- WSNs can be thought of as distributed databases
- Can query sensors using SQL-like language
 - TAG
 - TinyDB
 - GHT
 - Cougar
- Careful thought needed for execution of queries

Database Query Languages

TAG

 Unlike standard database queries where data gathered by central processor, allows queries to be executed in distributed manner

TinyDB

 Provides optimizations of aggregation trees, sensing task scheduling and query processing

GHT

Data-centric means for storing sensor data

Research Issues

Research Issues (1)

- Appropriate QoS model
 - Traditional networks: delay, packet delivery ratio, jitter
 - Sensor networks: probability of missed detection of an event, signal-to-noise ratio, network sensing coverage, others
 - Difficult to translate these data-specific QoS parameters into meaningful protocol parameters
 - What are good QoS parameters and how can these be described efficiently for use in protocol optimizations?

Research Issues (2)

- Appropriate architecture
 - Cross-layer
 - Entire protocol stack tailored to specific needs of WSN application
 - Trade-off: generality and ease of network design to achieve lifetime increases
 - Layered
 - Generality leads to worse system performance
 - Hybrid approaches
 - What is best architecture to meet WSN needs?

Research Issues (3)

- Reliability
 - Links and sensors may fail, temporarily or permanently
 - Must design protocols to provide reliable service with these failures
 - How can reliability be achieved at all levels of the protocol stack?
- Self-powered sensors
 - Using vibration, solar, heat
 - How should protocols be modified for time-varying energy capacities?

Research Issues (4)

- Heterogeneous applications
 - Sensor nodes may be shared by multiple applications with differing goals
 - How to ensure protocols efficiently serve multiple applications simultaneously?
- Heterogeneous sensors
 - How to make best use of resources in heterogeneous sensor networks?

Research Issues (5)

- Security
 - How much and what type of security is really needed?
 - How can data be authenticated?
 - How can misbehaving nodes be prevented from providing false data?
 - Can energy and security be traded-off such that the level of network security can be easily adapted?

Research Issues (6)

- Actuation
 - Eventually sensor networks will "close the loop"
 - Data do not need to reach base station
 - Current models for sensor networks may not be valid— what new models are needed?
- Distributed and collaborative data processing
 - How to best process heterogeneous data?
 - How much data and what type of data should be processed to meet application QoS goals while minimizing energy drain?

Research Issues (7)

- New medium
 - Underground sensor networks
 - Agriculture monitoring
 - Structural monitoring
 - Underwater sensor networks
 - Tsunami warnings
 - Ocean monitoring
 - What changes do these channels pose for existing protocols and algorithms?
 - What architectures should be used?

Research Issues (8)

- Integration with other networks
 - Sensor networks may interface with other networks, such as a WiFi network, a cellular network, or the Internet
 - What is the best way to interface these networks?
 - Should the sensor network protocols support (or at least not compete with) the protocols of the other networks?
 - Or should the sensors have dual network interface capabilities?

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