Flow Control of TCP Protocol

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Types of Flow Control

* Rate-based control
* Delay-based control
* Window-based control

==> TCP flow control is window-based control
Flow Control of TCP

Basic concept:

*A prespecified amount of data can be kept outstanding in the transmission pipe to achieve efficiency.
TCP flow control is imposed both on the sender and receiver

At the sender -- congestion window (cwnd)

Two-Phase control:

I. Slow start (exponentially increasing the sending rate)
II. Congestion avoidance (linearly increasing)

At the receiver -- advertised window

prevents a fast sender from overflowing the buffer at a slower receiver
At the sender (during initialization):

**I. Slow Start:**

(i) set cwnd = one segment,
    set ssthresh = 65535bytes (64 segments)
(ii) cwnd increased by \( cwnd \leftarrow cwnd + 1 \)
(iii) as cwnd \( \geq \) ssthresh, enters congestion avoidance

**II. Congestion Avoidance:**

(i) cwnd increased by
    \( cwnd \leftarrow cwnd + 1/cwnd \)

**Remark:** the sender takes
    \( \min(cwnd, \text{advertised window}) \)
    as the current window size
At the sender (right after timeout expires):

I. Slow Start:

(i) set cwnd = one segment,
    set ssthresh = 1/2 * (current window size)
(ii) cwnd increased by  \[ cwnd \leftarrow cwnd + 1 \]
(iii) as cwnd \geq ssthresh, enters congestion avoidance

II. Congestion Avoidance:

(i) cwnd increased by  \[ cwnd \leftarrow cwnd + 1/cwnd \]
Fast retransmit and fast recovery algorithms

=> makes TCP flow control more efficient
(proposed by Jacobson in 1990)

How the receiver acknowledges the segments

* the receiver assumes that segments are arriving in sequence.

* acknowledges segments only up to where the sequencing is maintained.

* ACK of the last segment in sequence will be repeatedly sent to the sender with arrival of the each segment followed.
Fast retransmit and fast recovery algorithms

(i) as the 3rd duplicate ACK is received:
   ssthresh = 1/2 * (current window size)
   cwnd = ssthresh + 3 segments

(ii) cwnd = cwnd + 1
     with receipt of another duplicate ACK.

(iii) as the new ACK arrives:
     cwnd = ssthresh

(iv) enter congestion avoidance
What do we gain with fast retransmit and fast recovery?

(i) schedule a retransmission much earlier when timeout expires.

(ii) keeps things moving during retransmission.

(iii) avoid slow start phase.