

CS 352

Video Streaming

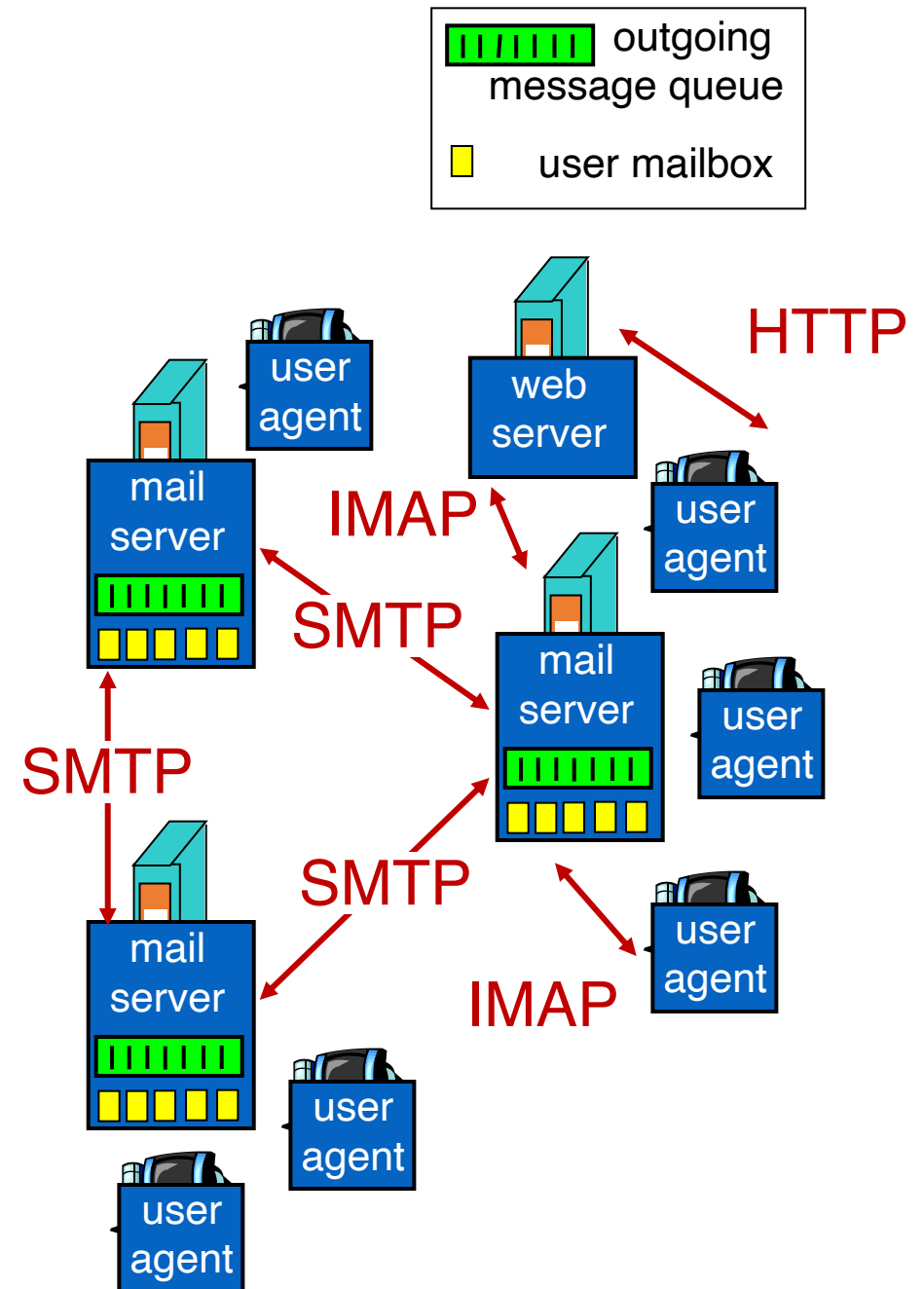
Lecture 8

<http://www.cs.rutgers.edu/~sn624/352-F22>

Srinivas Narayana

Review of concepts

- E-mail: user agents, mail servers, SMTP
- SMTP: Push-based protocol
- Mail access protocols: POP, IMAP. Pull based.
- How web-based email works
- Can stuff multiple objects into one email, multimedia, with MIME
- ASCII/plain-text based
- Use headers to evolve protocols and add functionality



Today's lecture: Internet Multimedia

- Many applications on the Internet use audio or video
- IP video traffic will be 82 percent of all IP traffic [...] by 2022, up from 75 percent in 2017
- CCTV traffic over the Internet will increase sevenfold between 2017 to 2022
- Internet video to TV will increase threefold between 2017 to 2022.
- Consumer Video-on-Demand (VoD) traffic will nearly double by 2022

Source: Cisco visual networking index 2017--22



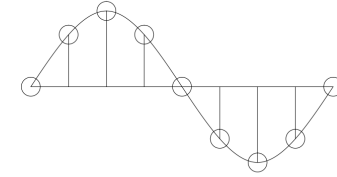
What's different about these applications?

- Traditional applications (HTTP(S), SMTP)
 - Delay tolerant but not loss tolerant
 - Data used *after* transfer complete
- Multimedia applications are often **real time**
 - Data delivery time *during transfer* matters for user experience
- Video/audio streaming
 - Delay-sensitive
- Real-time audio and video
 - Delays > 400 ms for audio is a bad user experience
 - Somewhat loss tolerant

Multimedia Data Representations

Digital representation of audio and video

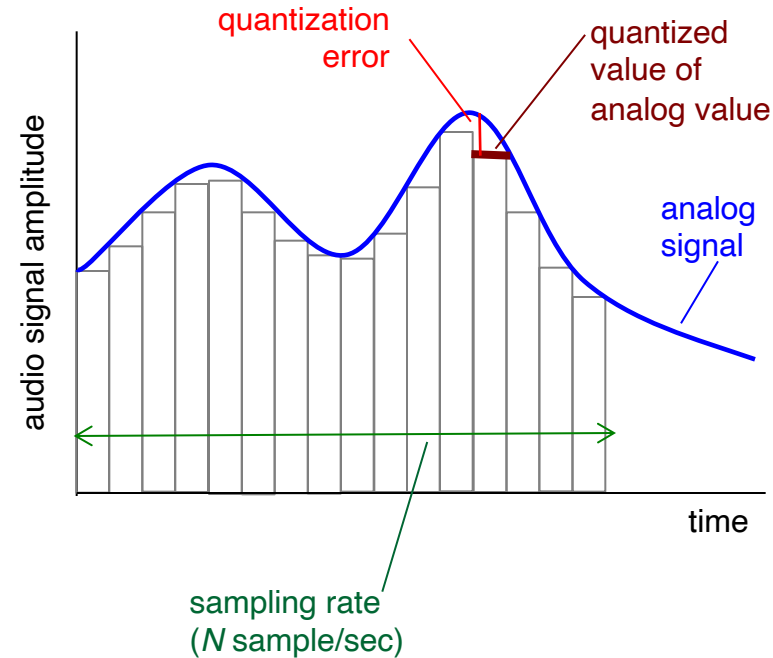
Digital representation of audio



- Must convert analog signal to digital representation
- Sample
 - How many times (twice the max frequency in the signal)
- Quantize
 - How many levels or bits to represent each sample
 - More levels → more accurate representation of signal
 - More levels → more bits to store & need more bandwidth to transmit
- Compress
 - Compact representation of quantized values

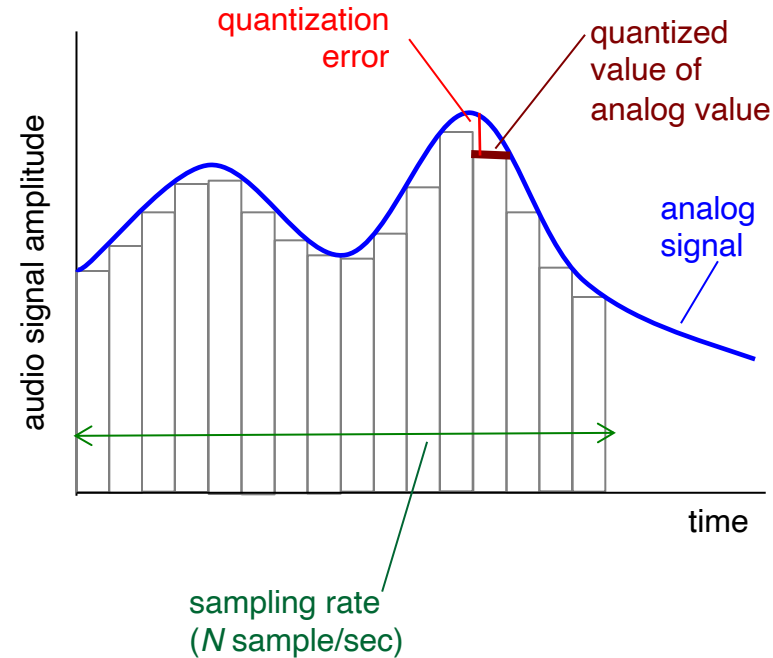
Audio representation

- analog audio signal sampled at constant rate
 - telephone: 8,000 samples/sec
 - CD music: 44,100 samples/sec
- each sample quantized, i.e., rounded
 - e.g., $2^8=256$ possible quantized values
 - each quantized value represented by bits, e.g., 8 bits for 256 values



Audio representation

- example: 8,000 samples/sec, 256 quantized values
- Bandwidth needed: 64,000 bps
- receiver converts bits back to analog signal:
 - some quality reduction



Example rates

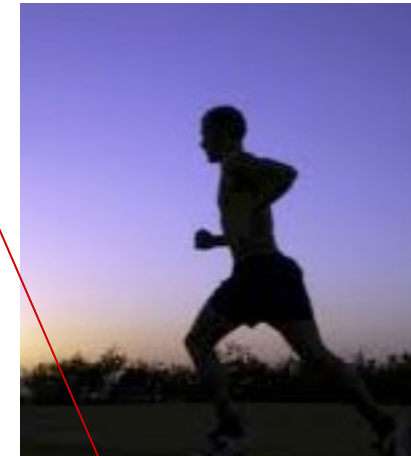
- CD: 1.411 Mbps
- MP3: 96, 128, 160 Kbps
- Internet telephony: 5.3 Kbps and up

Video representation

- Video: sequence of images displayed at constant rate
 - e.g., 30 images/sec
 - Appear continuous due to the stroboscopic effect



frame i

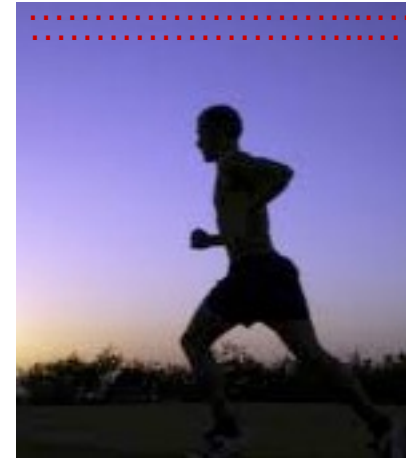


frame $i+1$

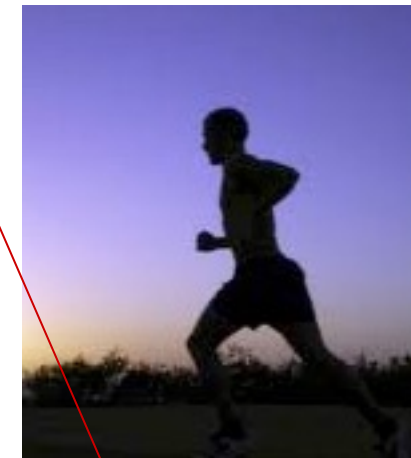
Video representation

- Digital image: array of pixels
 - each pixel represented by bits
 - Encode luminance and color
 - Number of pixels: **resolution**
- Coding: use redundancy *within* and *between* images to decrease # bits used to encode image
 - spatial (within image)
 - temporal (from one image to next)
- Coding/decoding algorithm often called a **codec**

spatial coding example: instead of sending N values of same color (all purple), send only two values: color value (*purple*) and number of repeated values (N)



frame i



frame $i+1$

temporal coding example: instead of sending complete frame at $i+1$, send only differences from frame i (motion vectors)

Video codecs: terminology

- **Video bit rate:** effective number of bits per second of the video after encoding
- It depends on many factors
 - Resolution of each image: more pixels = more bits
 - Detail per pixel: better luminance & color detail = more bits
 - Amount of movement in the video. More movement = more bits
 - Quality of overall compression in the codec
- Video bit rate is typically correlated with quality of perception.
 - Higher bit rate == better to perceive

Bit-rates: terminology

- Bit-rate of a video changes over the duration of the video
- **CBR: (constant bit rate):** fixed bit-rate video
- **VBR: (variable bit rate):** different parts of the video have different bit rates, e.g., changes in color, motion, etc.
 - For VBR, we talk about **average bit-rate** over video's duration
- **Examples of average video bit-rates**
 - MPEG 1 (CD-ROM) 1.5 Mbps. MPEG2 (DVD) 3-6 Mbps
 - MPEG4 (often used in Internet, < 1 Mbps)
 - In general, one Internet video stream takes up a few Mbit/s (unless HD)

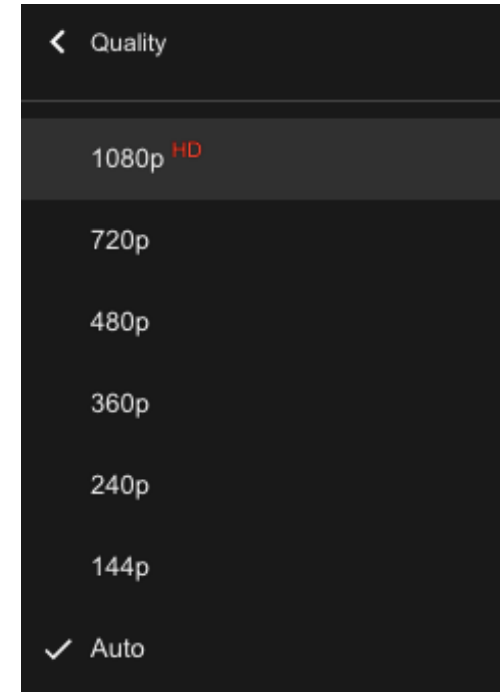
Networking multimedia: 3 types

- **On-demand streamed video/audio**
 - Can begin playout before downloading the entire file
 - Full video/audio stored at the server: able to transmit faster than audio/video will be rendered (with storing/buffering at client)
 - e.g., Spotify, YouTube, Netflix
- **Conversational voice or video over IP**
 - interactive human-to-human communication limits delay tolerance
 - e.g., Zoom, Google Stadia
- **Live streamed audio, video**
 - e.g., sporting event on sky sports
 - Can delay a little, but must be close to the “live edge” of content

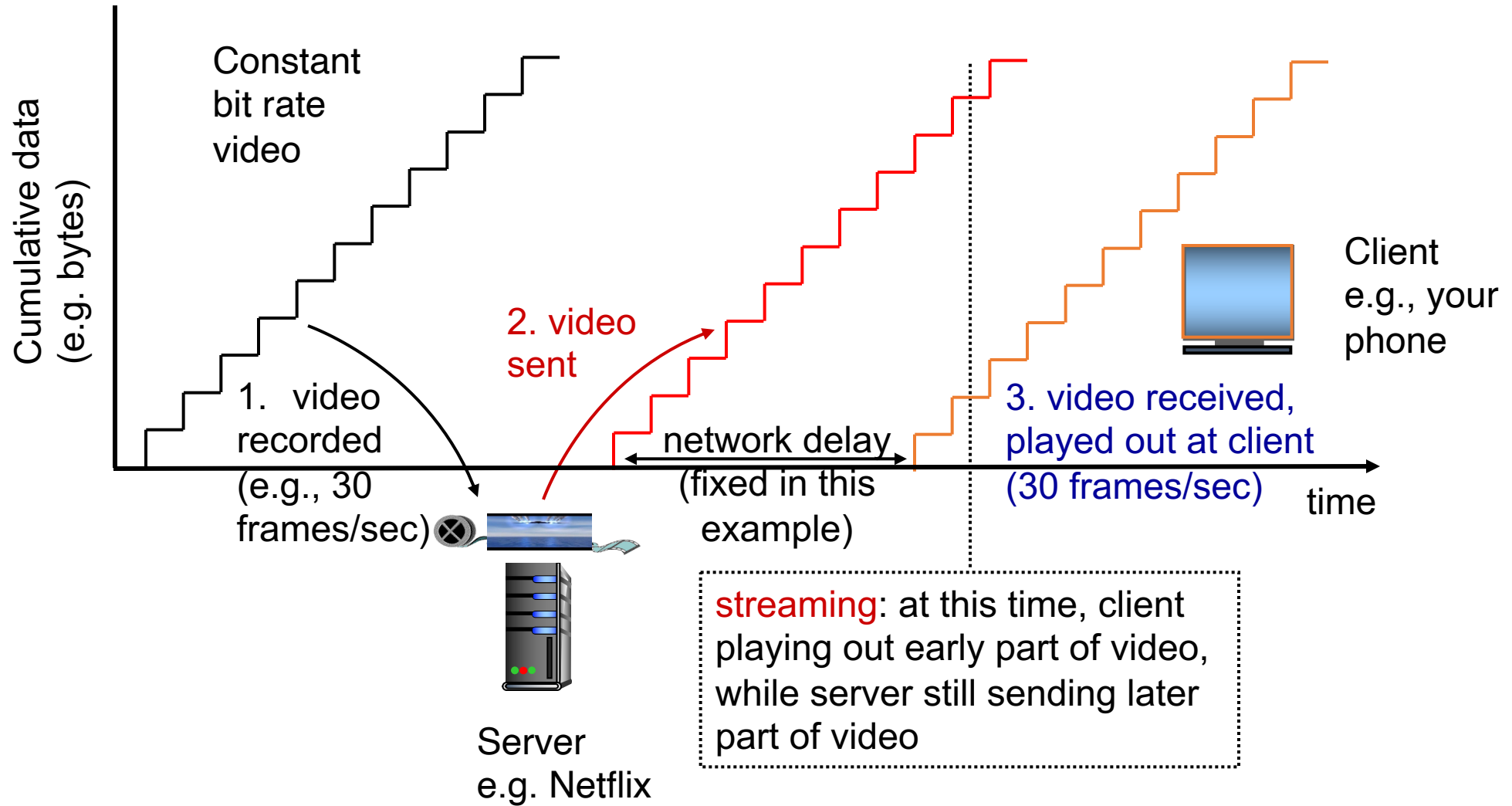
On-demand Video Streaming

Streaming (stored) video

- Media is prerecorded at different qualities
 - Available in storage at the server
- Client downloads an initial portion and starts viewing
 - The rest is downloaded as time progresses
 - No need for user to wait for entire content to be downloaded!
- Can change the quality of the content and where it's fetched mid-stream
 - More on this soon

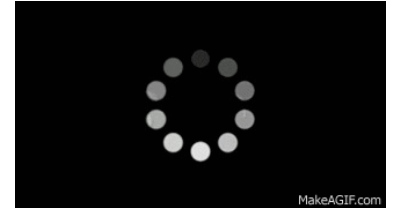


Streaming stored video

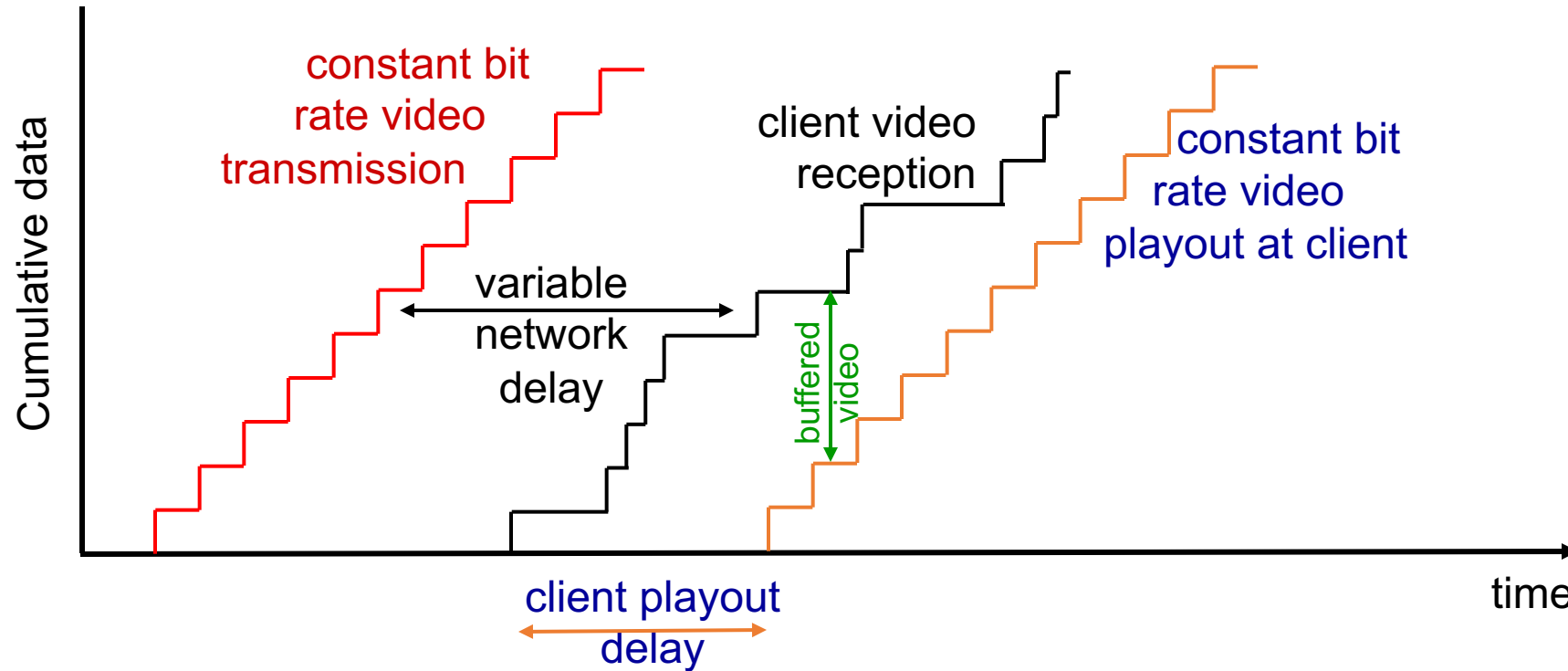


Streaming stored video: challenges

- **Continuous playout constraint**: once video playout begins at client, time gap between frames must match the original time gap in the video (why?)
- But **network delays are variable!**
- Clients have a **client-side buffer** of downloaded video to absorb variation in network conditions
- Buffer also helps with user interactions: pause, fast-forward, rewind, jump through video



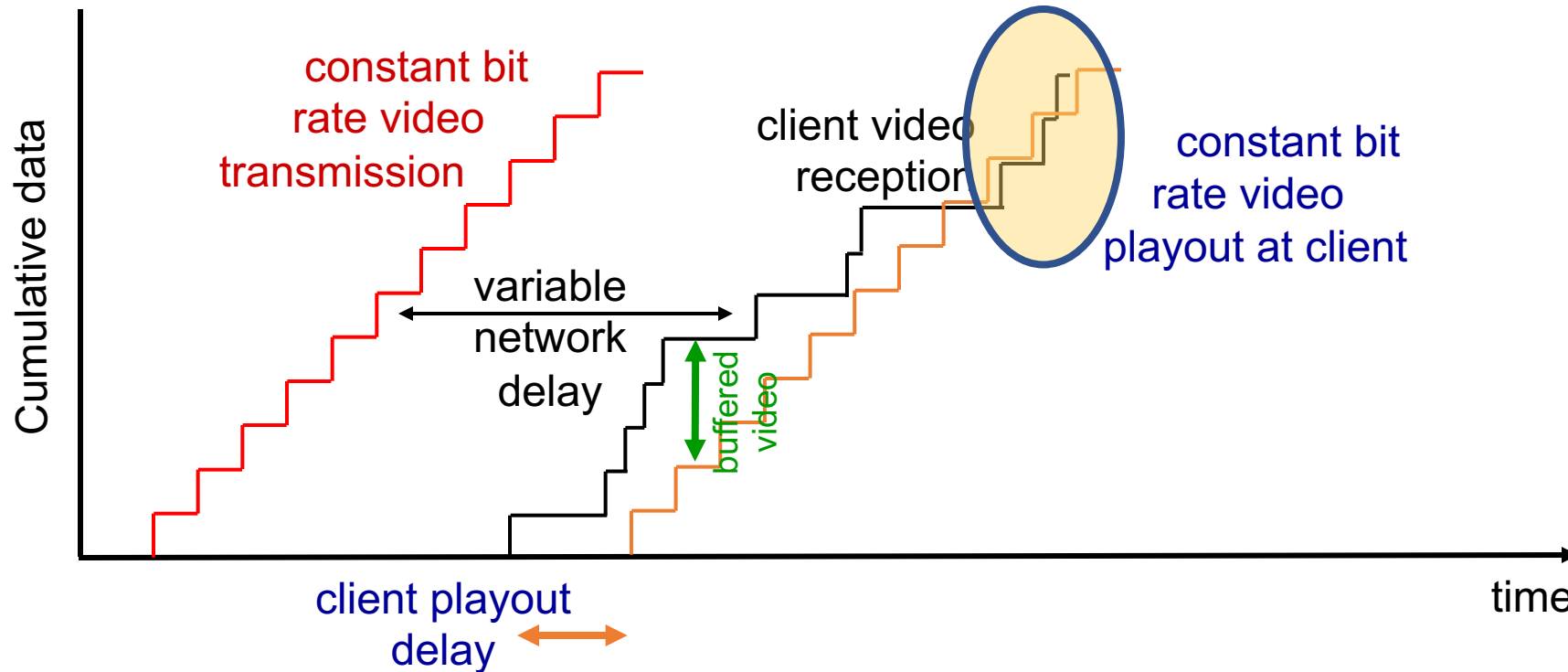
Scenario 1: Constant bit-rate video



Client-side buffering with playout delay:

compensate for network-added delays and variations in the delay

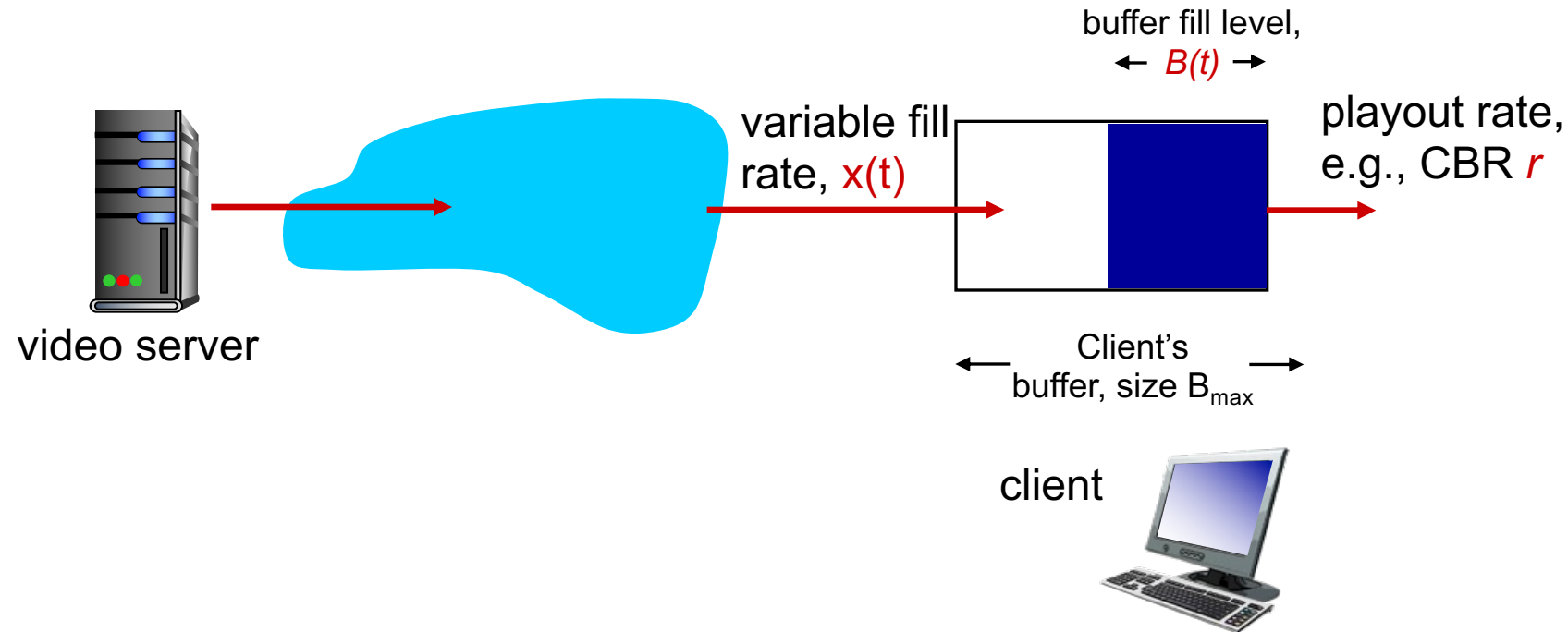
Scenario 2: Small playout delay



Playout delay that's too small can cause stalls

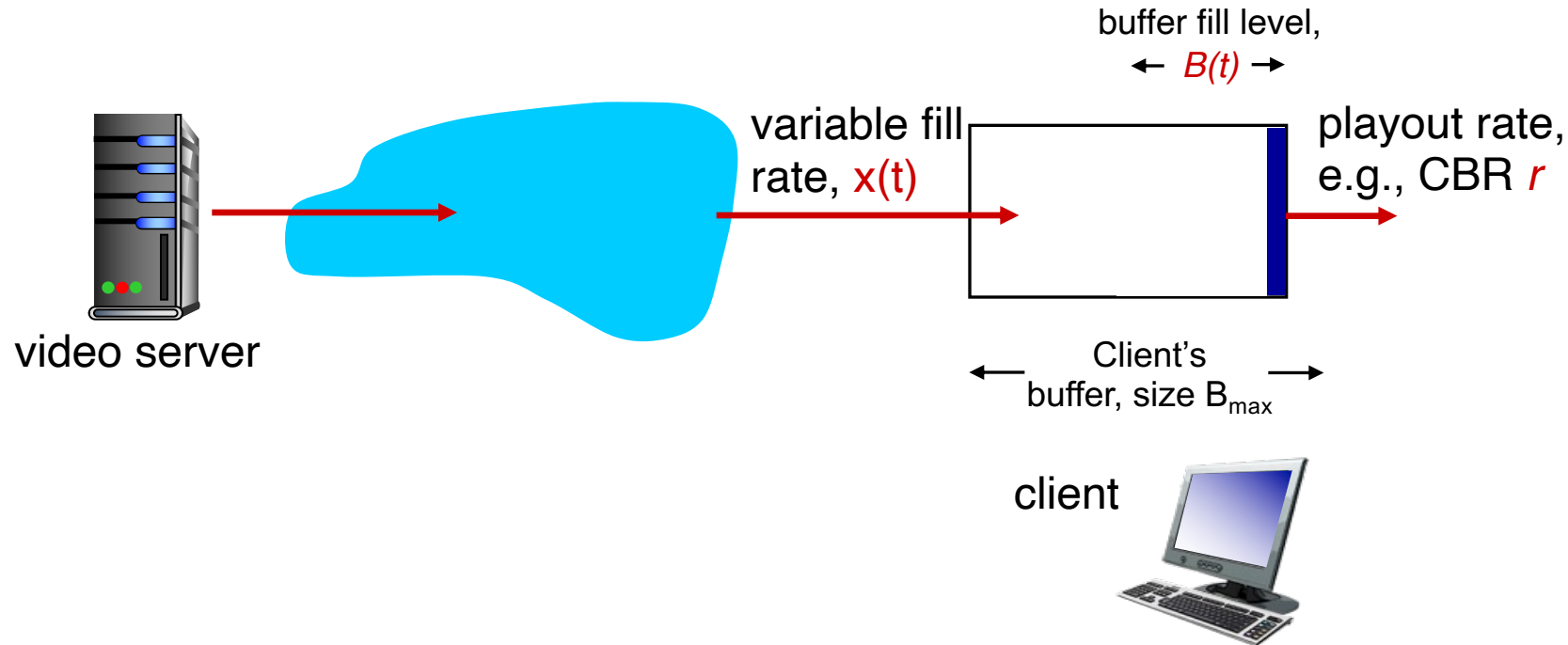
There's nothing in the buffer to show to the user

Client-side buffering, playout



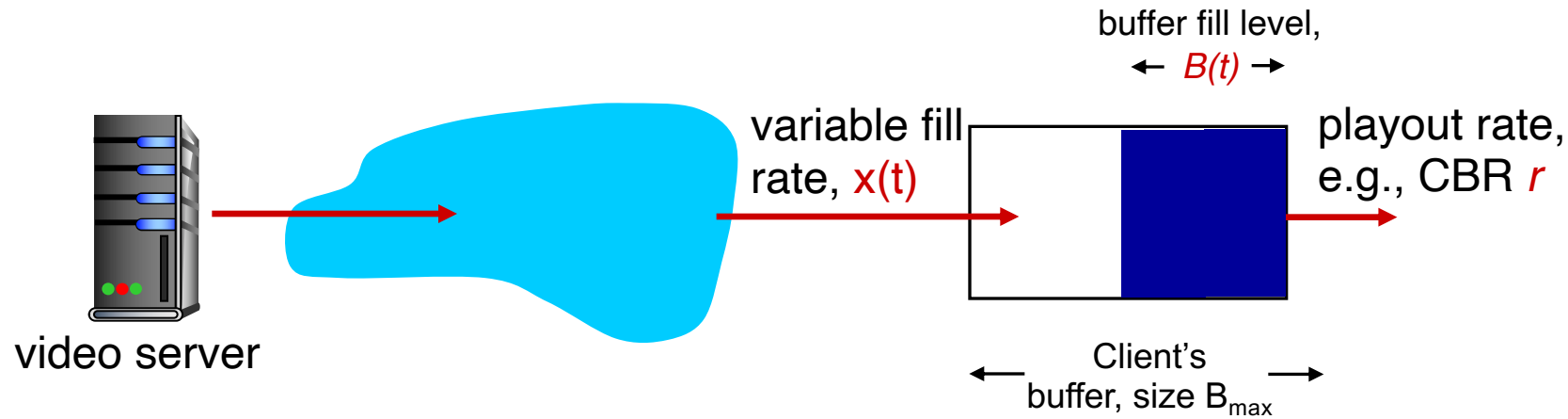
Most video is broken up in time into multiple **segments**
Client downloads video segment by segment
For example: a segment might be 4 seconds worth of video.

Client-side buffering, playout



1. Initial fill of buffer until playout begins at t_p
2. playout begins at t_p
3. buffer fill level varies over time as fill rate $x(t)$ varies (assume playout rate r is constant for now)

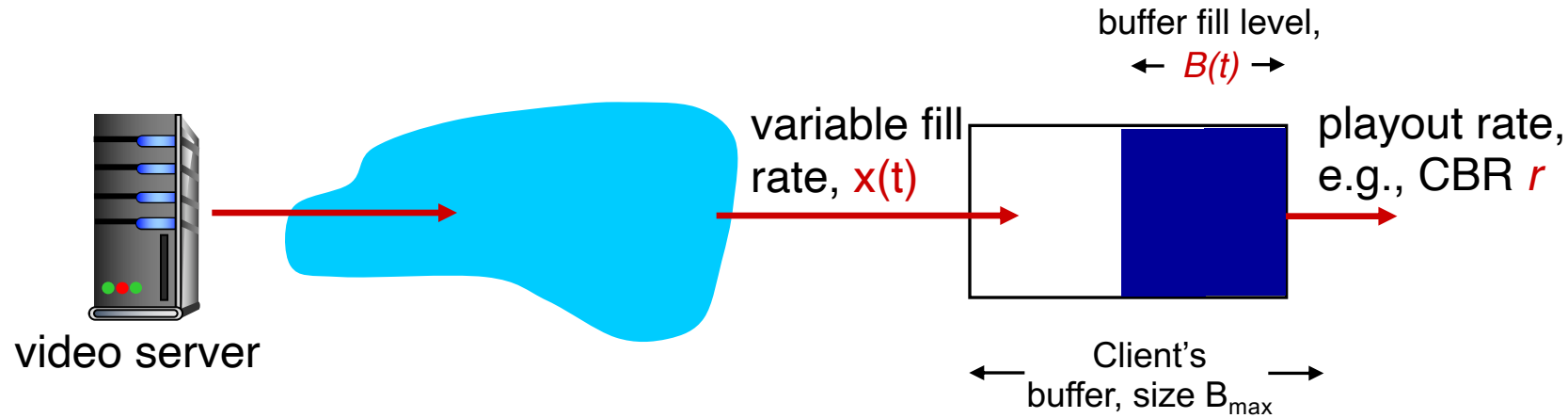
Client-side buffering, playout



playout buffering: average fill rate (\bar{x}), playout rate (r):

- $\bar{x} < r$: buffer eventually empties for a sufficiently long video. Stall and rebuffering
- $\bar{x} > r$: buffer will not empty, provided the initial playout delay is large enough to absorb variability in $x(t)$
 - *initial playout delay tradeoff*: buffer starvation less likely with larger delay, but also incur a larger delay until the user begins watching

Client-side buffering, playout

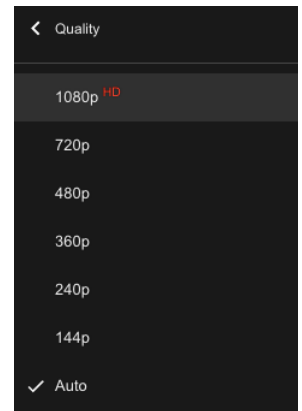


playout buffering: average fill rate (\bar{x}), playout rate (r):

- is $\bar{x} < r$ or $\bar{x} > r$ for a given network connection?
- It is hard to predict this in general!
 - Best effort network suffers long queues, paths with low bandwidth, ...
- **How to set playout rate r ?**
 - Too low a bit-rate r : video has poorer quality than needed
 - Too high a bit-rate r : buffer might empty out. Stall/rebuffering!

Adaptive bit-rate video

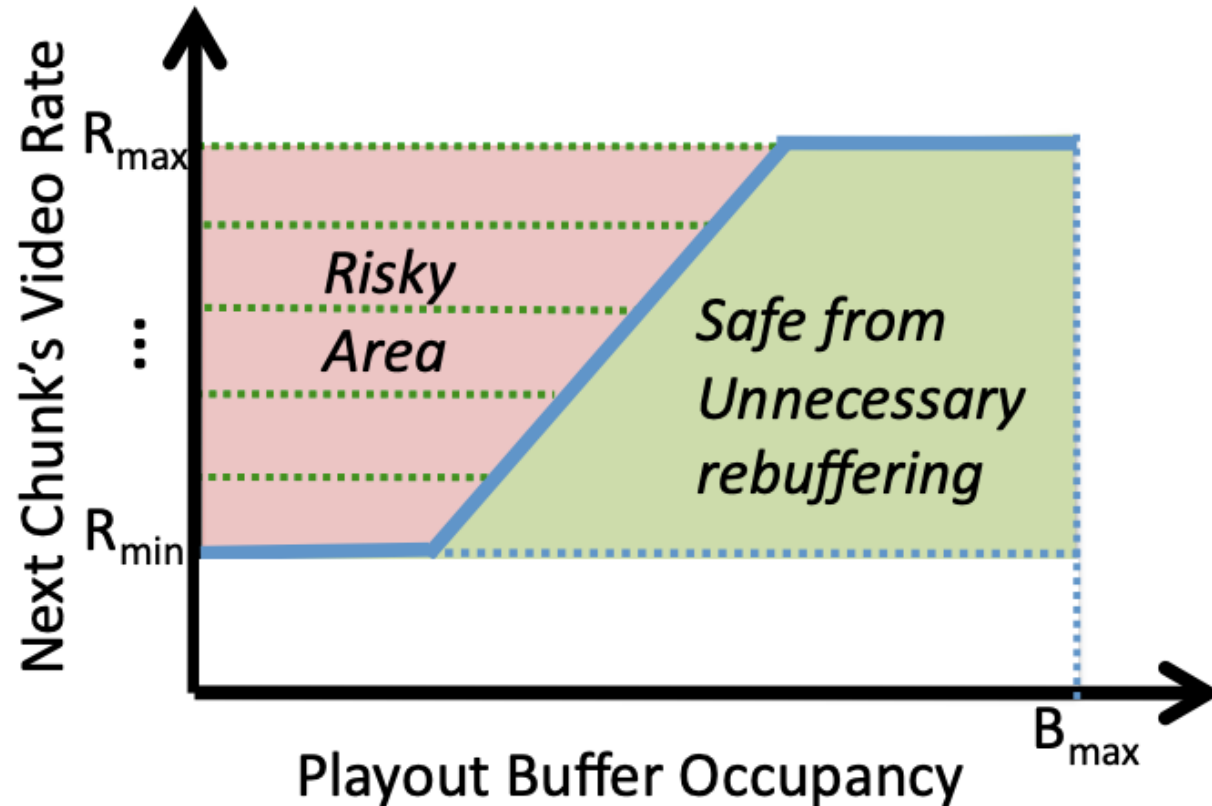
- Motivation: Want to provide high quality video experience, without stalls
- Observations:
 - Videos come in different qualities (average bit rates)
 - Versions of the video for different quality levels readily available
 - Different segments of video can be downloaded separately
- **Adapt bit rate per segment** through collaboration between the video client (e.g., your browser) and the server (e.g., @ Netflix)
- **Adaptive bit-rate (ABR) video**: change the bit-rate (quality) of next video segment based on network and client conditions
- A typical strategy: **Buffer-based rate adaptation**



Buffer-based bit-rate adaptation

- Key idea: If there is a large stored buffer of video, optimize aggressively for video quality, i.e., high bit rates
- Else (i.e., buffer has low occupancy), avoid stalls by being conservative and ask for a lower quality (bit-rate)
 - Hope: lower bandwidth requirement of a lower quality stream is satisfiable more easily

Buffer-based bit-rate adaptation



A highly effective method to provide high video quality despite variable and intermittently poor network conditions.

Used by Netflix.

<http://yuba.stanford.edu/~nickm/papers/sigcomm2014-video.pdf>

A Buffer-Based Approach to Rate Adaptation