Chair of Network Architectures and Services TUM School of Computation, Information and Technology Technical University of Munich



# Evaluating the Benefits: Quantifying the Effects of TCP Options, QUIC, and CDNs on Throughput

Simon Bauer, Patrick Sattler, Johannes Zirngibl Christoph Schwarzenberg, Georg Carle

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Chair of Network Architectures and Services TUM School of Computation, Information and Technology Technical University of Munich



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2

#### Motivation

- Assessing and understanding connection and network performance is crucial
- Provider perspective: performance impacts user satisfaction
- Research perspective: assess the effectiveness of arising or widely deployed measures

Which impact have ...

- ... TCP options ...
- ... QUIC ...
- ... CDN hosting ...

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2

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#### **Related Work**

- 1992 TCP window scaling (WS) [1]
- 1996 Selected acknowledgments (SACK) [2]
- 2001 Explicit congestion notifications (ECN) [3]
- 2004 🍦 7.44% of all SYN(/ACK)s advertise MSS, TS, SACK, and WS [4]
- 2005 🖕 Web server: 2.1% ECN capable, 68% SACK capable [5]
- 2013 🖕 Alexa Top 1M: 88.22% WS, 89.06% SACK, 29.48% ECN [6]
- 2019 🖕 ECN deployed by the majority of Alexa Top 1M domains (74.62% IPv4, 94.12% IPv6) [7]
- 2021 🍦 Ongoing growth of infrastructure by hypergiants [8]
- 2021 🖕 QUIC [9]–[11]
- 2022 🖕 W3Techs: QUIC accounted for 8% of the global Internet traffic [12]

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Crawling

- 1. Determining measurement targets
- 2. Conducting Measurements

3. Traffic analysis

Downlaoding





#### 1. Determining measurement targets

- Public web servers as crawling targets
- Recursively crawl all links of a website
- Minimum file size of 1 MB
- Consider different CDN providers
  - Domain-Org. mapping:  $IP \rightarrow AS \rightarrow Org.$  [13]



#### 2. Conducting Measurements





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# 2. Conducting Measurements







- 2. Conducting Measurements
  - Run downloads with different TCP options
    - SACK, ECN, WS
  - ... and with different QUIC implementations
    - quiche, aioquic
  - Vantage points: MUC, SFO, SGP





Page 2.1

file

Page 2.2

file





Page 2.1

file

Page 2.2



- Vantage points: MUC, SFO, SGP
- 3. Traffic analysis







#### **Target selection**

#### TCP target set

- Crawl the top 100K Alexa Top 1M entries
- Selected 2000 domains (200 per CDN, 1000 from other ASes)

#### **QUIC target set**

- Top 100K entries of Google's CrUX dataset
- Scanned for QUIC support with QScanner [14]
- Crawling & filtering domains for option support

Three measurement runs per target for both target sets

Run	Total	Akamai	Amazon	Cloudflare	Google	Microsoft	Others
			ТСР				
MUC SFO SGP	1679 1678 1640	167 165 162	150 147 147	170 168 163	147 152 143	172 173 166	873 873 859
			QUIC				
MUC_Q SFO_Q SGP_Q	511 506 495	3 3 3	15 14 13	289 285 276	2 2 2	0 0 0	202 202 201

Measurements: July 2023

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VP in MUC

- Baseline exceeds warm-up run, indicates impact by edge caching
- SACK and ECN results close to baseline
- WS significantly increases observed mean throughput
- All options slightly increase throughput compared to WS only





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# How significant are speed-ups between downloads of one measurement run?

- For each download run: Config.MeanTP ≥ x \* Baseline.MeanTP & Config.MeanTP < y \* Baseline.MeanTP
- Results merged for all VPs
- SACK and ECN results comparable to baseline, only small shares of samples show speed-ups  $\geq$  30%
- WS implies increased throughput for over 90% of samples
- WS doubles mean TP for nearly 40% of samples, over 60% show a speed up larger 50%

TCP options										
Config	VS.	+	-	0.7 - 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.1	1.1 - 1.3	1.3 - 1.5	1.5 - 2	>2
Warm-up ECN SACK WS ALL	BL BL BL BL	35.4% 53.3% 54.2% 90.3% 91.4%	64.6% 46.7% 45.8% 9.7% 8.6%	12.1% 7.4% 2.5% 2.3%	37.1% 34.0% 33.2% 3.5% 3.2%	25.9% 35.0% 34.7% 5.7% 5.6%	5.3% 8.4% 9.1% 12.9% 12.5%	1.6% 2.6% 2.6% 10.8% 10.2%	1.2% 2.2% 2.4% 22.9% 22.8%	1.5% 5.1% 5.5% 38.0% 40.2%

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Warm-up	BL	35.4%	64.6%	12.1%	37.1%	25.9%	5.3%	1.6%	1.2%	1.5%	
ECN	BL	53.3%	46.7%	7.4%	34.0%	35.0%	8.4%	2.6%	2.2%	5.1%	
SACK	BL	54.2%	45.8%	7.4%	33.2%	34.7%	9.1%	2.6%	2.4%	5.5%	
WS	BL	90.3%	9.7%	2.5%	3.5%	5.7%	12.9%	10.8%	22.9%	38.0%	
ALL	BL	91.4%	8.6%	2.3%	3.2%	5.6%	12.5%	10.2%	22.8%	40.2%	

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ALL	BL	91.4%	8.6%	2.3%	3.2%	5.6%	12.5%	10.2%	22.8%	40.2%

- 70% of quiche downloads show increased throughput compared to aioquic
- quiche vs. aioquic: over 45% of samples show a speed-up  $\geq$  50%
- > 55% of TCP All downloads faster than aioquic
- But: over 30% of *aioquic* samples show a speed-up  $\geq$  100% compared to TCP All
- Over 70% of *quiche* downloads outperform TCP All, doubled mean throughput for  $\geq$  40% of samples

QUIC and TCP											
Config.	VS.	+	-	0.7 - 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.1	1.1 - 1.3	1.3 - 1.5	1.5 - 2	>2	
quiche aioquic quiche	aioquic ALL ALL	70.0% 44.5% 71.9%	30.0% 55.5% 28.1%	6.8% 12.2% 8.6%	2.9% 4.7% 5.5%	4.0% 3.3% 9.1%	10.5% 2.7% 11.8%	7.7% 1.6% 4.3%	8.9% 4.6% 5.9%	38.9% 32.4% 40.7%	

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#### **Measurement results**

- TCP WS is crucial to achieve higher throughput rates
- Significant difference between downloads with *quiche* and *aioquic*
- quiche mostly exceeds TCP with all options (diff. between measurement series observed)
- Observed different impacts by vantage point location and edge caching

Future Work

- Extension of pipeline with further QUIC implementations
- Conducting root cause analysis of throughput limitations
- Running long-term measurements

Pipeline published on Github [15]

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## Back-up - How does observed performance differ between vantage points?

#### **Mean Throughput**

- *MUC* shows higher throughput for the majority of samples
- SFO & SGP: share of samples significantly exceeding throughput observed by MUC



#### Mean RTT

- SFO & SGP:
  - DLs with significantly increased throughput correlate to very small RTTs
  - Small RTTs associate with DLs from Akamai, Cloudflare, and Amazon domains

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# Back-up - CDN Throughput (MUC, SFO, SGP)



ТΠ

## Back-up - CDN RTT (MUC, SFO, SGP)



ТΠ



5,3% of domains do not support a single option while 81,0% support all three considered options. ECN is supported by 85,8%, SACK by 91,4% and WS by 91,1% of the domains.

# Back-up - With vs. Without Warm-up (July'23 vs. June'23)



#### With Warm-up



#### Without Warm-up



# Back-up - Speed-ups June'23 vs July'23

#### June'23

TCP options												
Config.	VS.	+	-	<0.5	0.5 - 0.6	0.6 - 0.7	0.7 - 0.8	0.8 - 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.1	1.1 - 1.2	>1.2
ECN SACK WS	ALL14 ALL14 ALL14	9.6% 10.3% 45.9%	90.4% 89.7% 54.1%	39.3% 37.7% 7.3%	15.4% 15.0% 1.7%	8.5% 8.8% 2.4%	10.7% 11.2% 3.9%	9.7% 10.2% 7.1%	6.8% 6.9% 31.7%	3.2% 3.4% 28.9%	1.4% 1.1% 5.3%	5.1% 5.8% 11.7%
					c	UIC and TC	Р					
Config.	VS.	+	-	0.7 - 0.8	0.8 - 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.1	1.1 - 1.2	1.2 - 1.3	1.3 - 1.5	1.5 - 2	>2
quiche quiche	TCP-BL TCP-ALL14	72.1% 47.6%	27.9% 52.4%	2.8% 3.9%	1.9% 5.9%	3.1% 5.4%	11.5% 12.9%	7.1% 6.5%	3.7% 3.1%	6.4% 5.6%	13.2% 3.9%	30.2% 15.7%

#### July'23

	TCP options											
Config	VS.	+	-	0.7 - 0.8	0.8 - 0.9	0.9 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.1	1.1 - 1.2	1.2 - 1.3	1.3 - 1.5	1.5 - 2	>2
ECN	BL	53.3%	46.7%	2.1%	5.3%	34.0%	35.0%	6.1%	2.3%	2.6%	2.2%	5.1%
SACK	BL	54.2%	45.8%	2.1%	5.3%	33.2%	34.7%	6.3%	2.8%	2.6%	2.4%	5.5%
All	BL	91.4%	8.6%	1.0%	1.3%	3.2%	5.6%	6.8%	5.7%	10.2%	22.8%	40.2%
quiche	TCP-BL	82.9%	17.1%	2.1%	2.8%	3.9%	5.2%	3.9%	2.9%	4.7%	14.6%	51.5%
quiche	TCP-ALL	71.9%	28.1%	4.3%	4.3%	5.5%	9.1%	7.5%	4.3%	4.3%	5.9%	40.7%

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