Peer-to-Peer Systems

What's behind the buzzword?

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What is it?

- What does Peer-to-Peer (P2P) mean to you?
- What does "peer" mean?
 - Merriam-Webster:
 one that is of equal standing with another:
 EQUAL; especially: one belonging to the same
 societal group especially based on age, grade, or status

P2P Principle

- Organizational principle, core concepts:
 - Self-organizing, no central management
 - Resource sharing, exploits resources at the edge of the network
 - Peers in P2P are all equal (more or less)
 - Large number of peers in the network

Properties of P2P

- Unreliable, uncoordinated, unmanaged
- Resilient to attacks, heterogeneous
- Large collection of resources

When to use it?

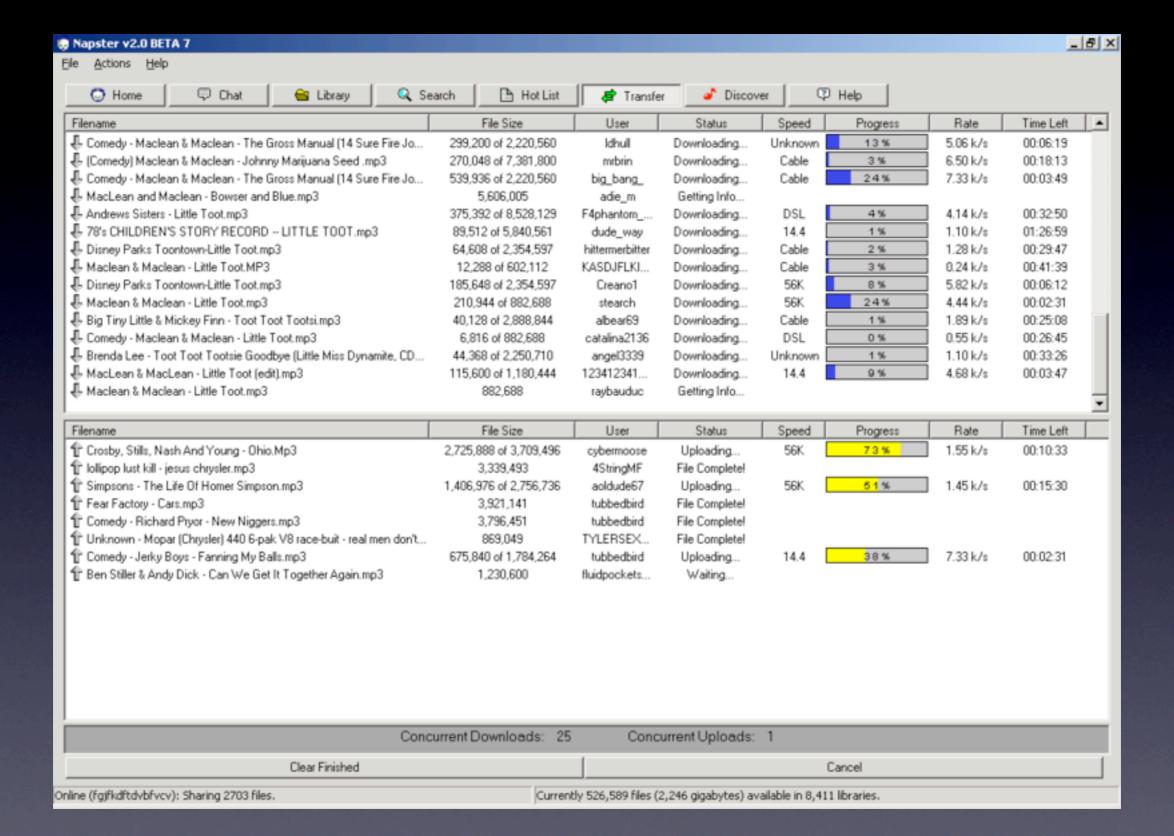
- Budget
- Resource relevance
- Trust
- Rate of system change
- Criticality

P2P Vision

No More Dedicated Servers, Everything in Internet Served by Peers

P2P File-sharing

- The most popular application of the P2P principle
- Made P2P popular
- We will look at the "evolution" of P2P filesharing in the following...



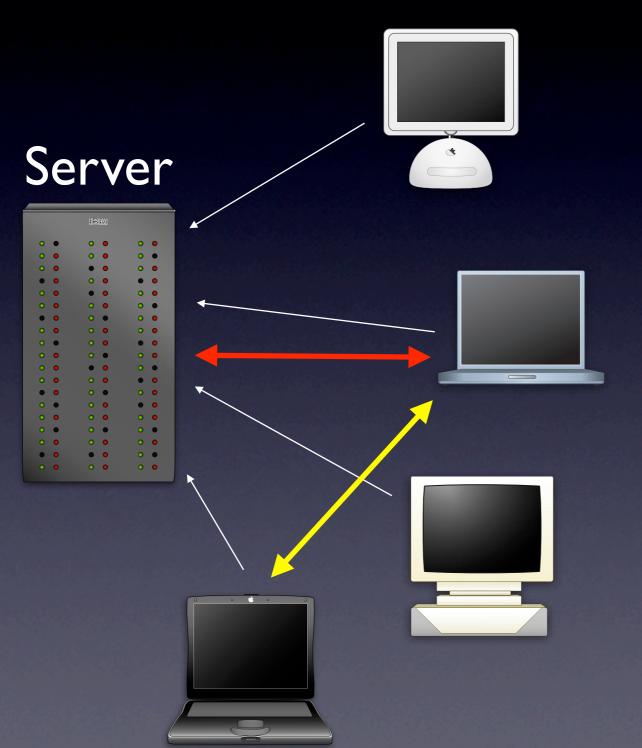
Napster

- First P2P file-sharing application (June 1999)
- Only MP3 sharing possible
- Made the term "P2P" known
- Created by Shawn Fanning (nickname "Napster")

How Napster worked

- Based on central index server (farm)
- User register and give list of files to share
- Searching based on keywords
 - Results: List of files with additional information, e.g. peer's bandwidth, encoding rate, file size

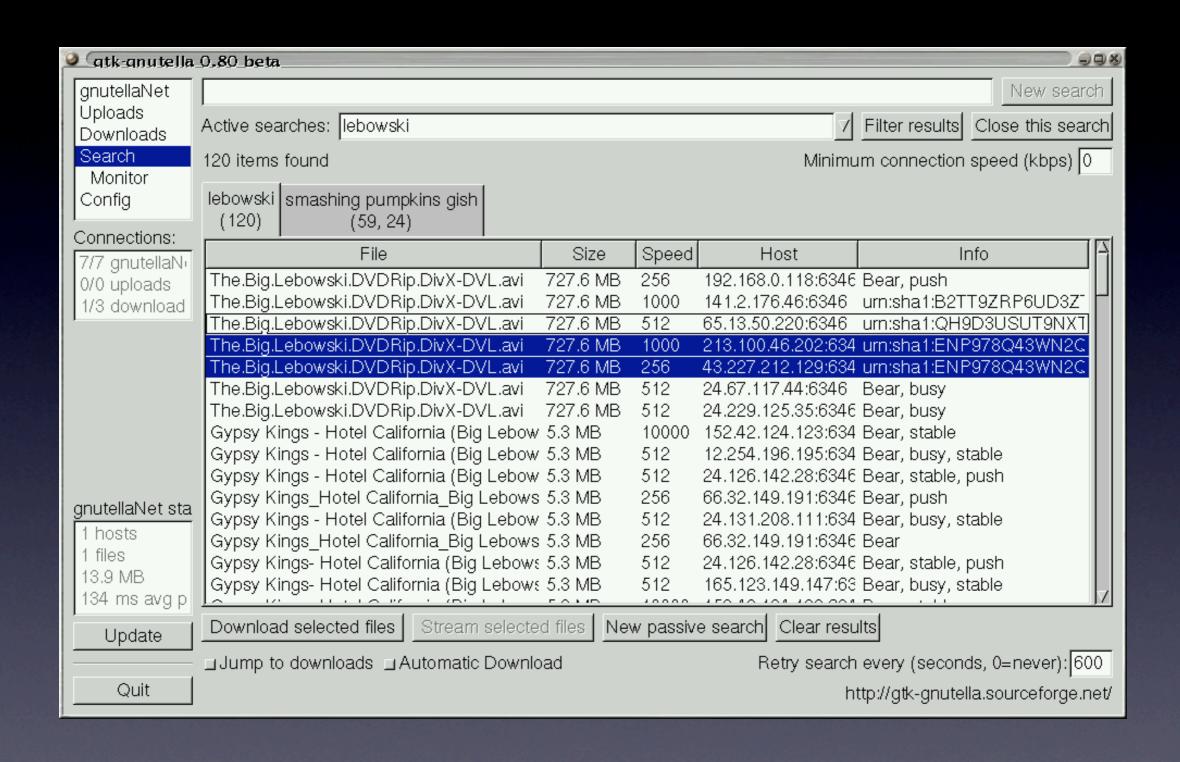
Napster Diagram



- Peers log in
- Send list of files to share
- Peer queries server
- Server responds
- File transfer directly

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strength	Weakness
Fast, efficient and overall search	Central server is a single point of failure
Consistent view of the network	Expensive to maintain central server (farm)



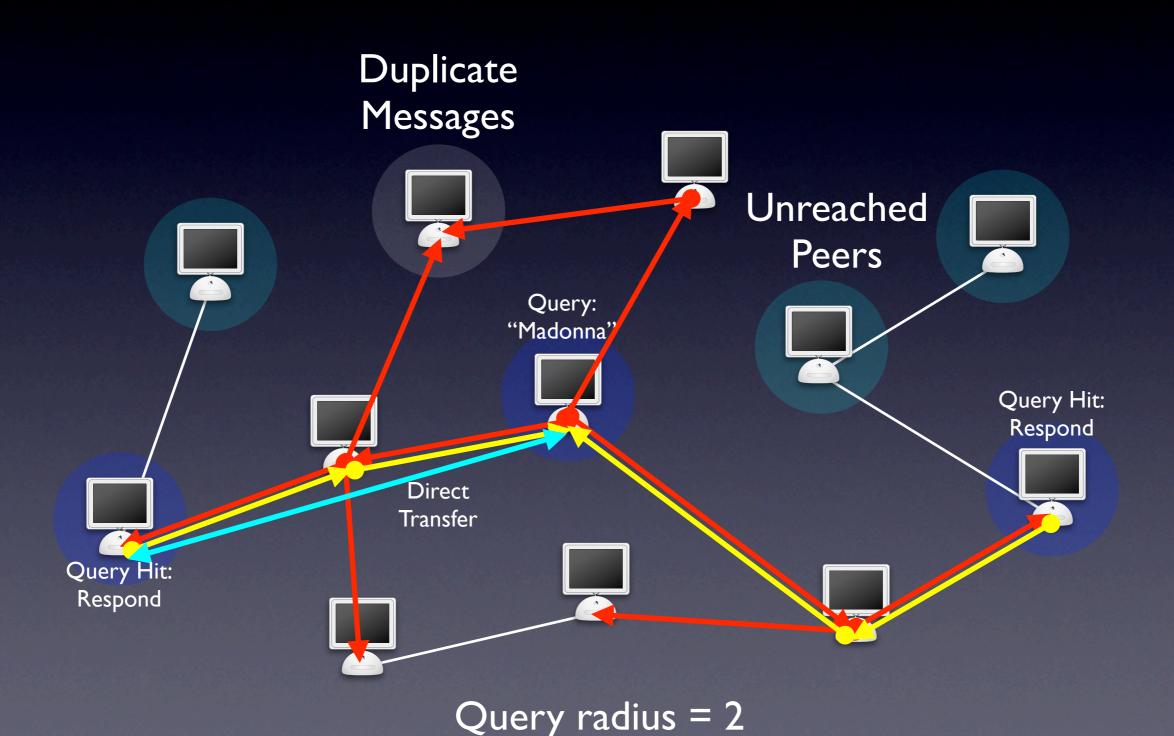
Gnutella

- Addresses some of Napster's weaknesses and introduces its own problems
- Originally developed at Nullsoft (AOL)
 - Accidentally released on their website
- Open protocol specifications
- Fully distributed

How Gnutella works

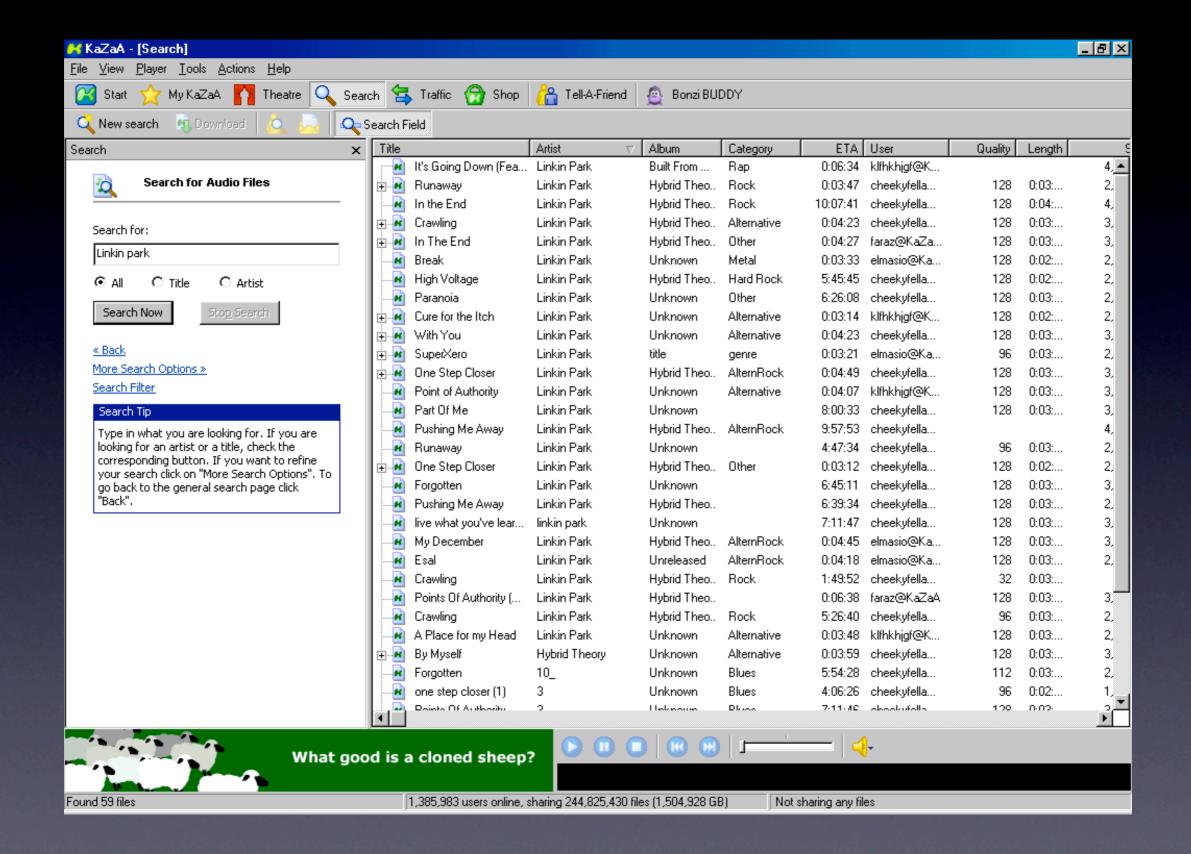
- Based on an overlay network
- All peers are fully equal
- A peer needs to know another peer, that is already in the network, to join
- Searching based on flooding
- Direct downloads

Gnutella Diagram



Strengths & Weaknesses

Strength	Weakness
Fully distributed, no attack points?	Flooding a query is extremely inefficient
Open protocol	Search only reaches a subset of peers due to limited query radius



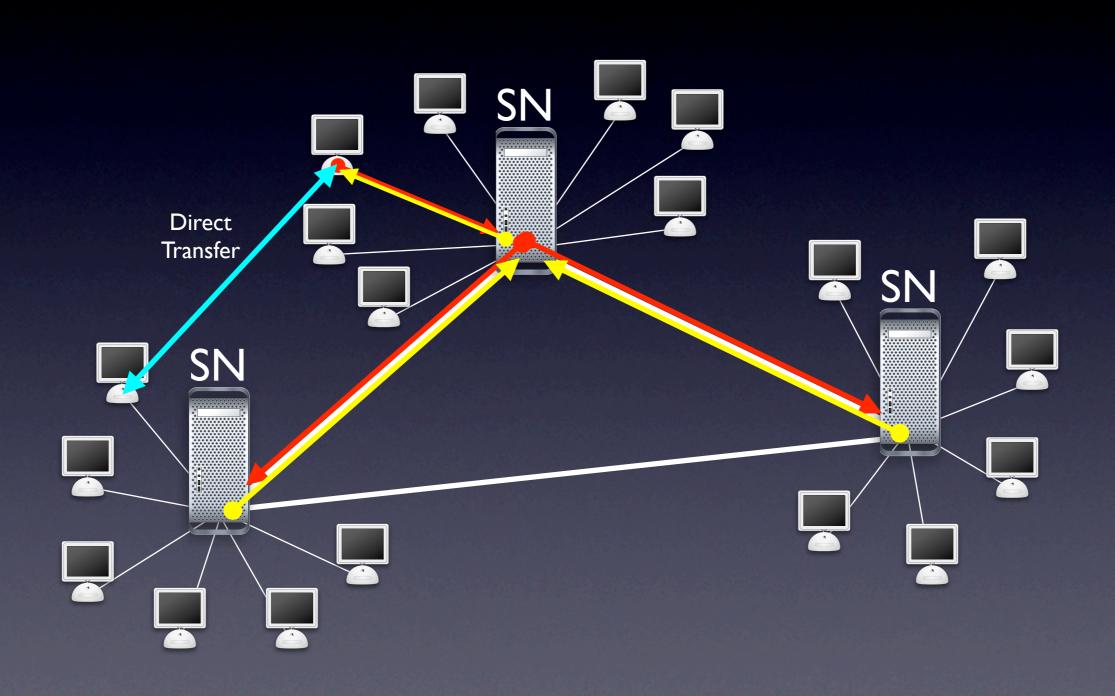
KaZaA

- Created in March 2001 (Niklas Zennström)
- Combines strengths of Napster and Gnutella
- Based on "supernode architecture"
- Exploits heterogenity of peers
- Organize peers into a hierarchy

How KaZaA works

- Two-tier hierarchy
- Two kinds of nodes
 - Ordinary nodes (ON)
 - Supernodes (SN)
- ON belongs to SN

KaZaA Diagram



Strengths & Weaknesses

Strength	Weakness
Combines good points from Napster and Gnutella	Still no overall search
	Easier to attack?

Comparison

	Napster	Gnutella	KaZaA
Type of network	Centralized	Distributed	Hybrid
Efficient searching	+++		+
Resilience to attacks		++?	+

Current State

- Most bigger file-sharing systems sued into submission (e.g. Napster and KaZaA)
 - Although many still running because of open clients
- User who share copyrighted content are sued as well...
 - e.g. by the RIAA

Non-direct file-sharing

- People try to be anonymous by disguising their identity, i.e. IP-address
- Idea: Non-direct file transfer, i.e. route traffic through intermediate peers
- Have currently too much overhead
 - slow and not very efficient

BitTorrent

- Developed by Bram Cohen in 2001
- New approach for sharing large files
- Goal: Quickly replicate one file to a large number of clients
- More appropriately called P2P content distribution instead of file-sharing

How BitTorrent works

- Build a network for each file to distribute
- Each file has unique "link"
 - "torrent" file holds metadata about a file
- Tracker is a server to manage active clients
- Files are broken into chunks

BitTorrent Download

- Client gets "torrent" file from somewhere
- Client contacts tracker, gets lists of peers
- Client contacts other peers directly for download of specific chunks

Tit-for-Tat policy

- Encourages cooperation, discourages free-riding
- A peer serves peers that serve it
- Peers download rarest chunks first
 - makes them attractive to other peers,
 they can then download in return
 - also prevents chunks from disappearing

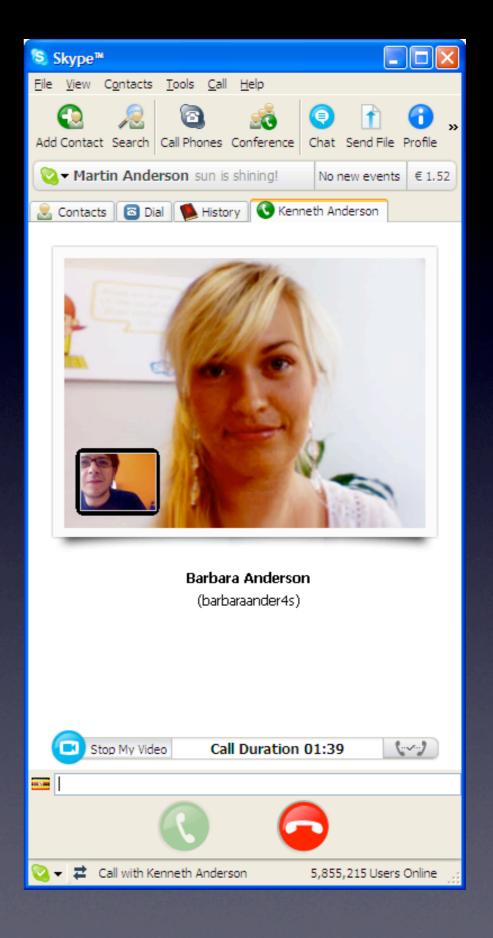
Strengths & Weaknesses

Strength	Weakness	
Works quite well, only slow in the beginning	Files have to be large	
Efficient distrubution mechanism	No searching	
Enforces contribution, discourages free-riding	Everyone must contribute	

Other P2P applications

- P2P Communications
 - Email, IM, VoIP
- P2P Computation
 - SETI@Home
- P2P Collaboration
 - Wikipedia





Skype

- Developed by the same people as KaZaA
- 9 Million concurrent users (Jan. 29 2007)
- Very similar to KaZaA's architecture
 - Supernodes and ordinary nodes
- Central server for login and billing

Skype

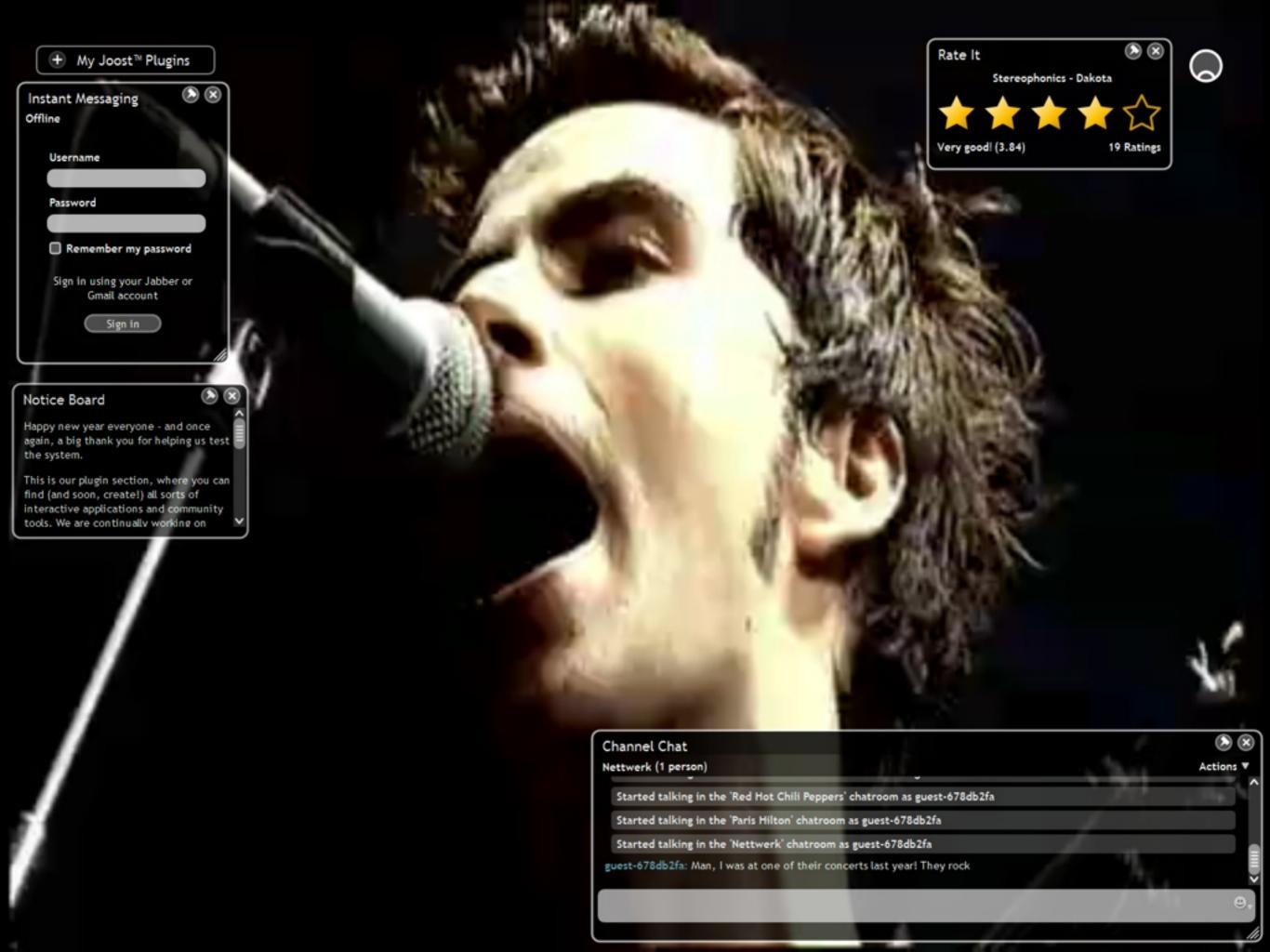
- Proprietary and encrypted protocol
- Source code is closed
- Executable uses a lot of mechanisms to protect against reverse engineering
 - Anti-debugger code
 - Partly encrypted

How Skype goes through Firewalls

- Skype server plays mediator
 - takes IP adresses and UDP ports
 - forwards them to other side
- Both clients start connections
- Firewalls think that packets from the other side are responses to started connections

Joost

- Brought to you by the guys who made KaZaA and Skype
- Uses P2P video streaming technology
- Tries to merge the best of TV with the best of the Internet
- Beta test is running right now
- Advertisement based, View on demand



That's it

Let's get some beer...

References

Most slides are based and copied in large part from Jussi Kangasharju's lecture on "Peer-to-Peer and Grid Computing", chapter I and 2. http://elara.tk.informatik.tu-darmstadt.de/LectureNotes/ws0607/P2P/

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