

Network Design

Planning a Network with Different Users, Hosts, and Services

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lab is to demonstrate the basics of designing a network while considering the users, services, and locations of the hosts.

OVERVIEW

Optimizing the design of a network is a major issue. Simulations are usually used to analyze the conceptual design of the network. The initial conceptual design is usually refined several times until a final decision is made to implement the design. The objective is to have a design that maximizes the network performance, considering the cost constraints and the required services to be offered to different types of users. After the network has been implemented, network optimization should be performed periodically throughout the lifetime of the network to ensure its maximum performance and to monitor the utilization of the network resources.

In this lab, you will design a network for a company that has four departments: research, engineering, e-commerce, and sales. You will utilize a LAN model that allows you to simulate multiple clients and servers in one simulation object. This model dramatically reduces both the amount of configuration work you need to perform and the amount of memory needed to execute the simulation. You will be able to define a profile that specifies the pattern of applications used by the users of each department in the company. By the end of this lab, you will be able to study how different design decisions can affect the performance of the network.

~~PRE-LAB ACTIVITIES~~



~~Read Chapter 3 from *Computer Networks: A Systems Approach, 5th Edition*.~~



~~Go to www.net-seal.net and play the following animation:~~

- ~~o Adding Switches~~

PROCEDURE

Create a New Project

1. Start OPNET IT Guru Academic Edition → Choose New from the File menu.
2. Select Project and click OK → Name the project <your initials>_NetDesign, and the scenario SimpleNetwork → Click OK.

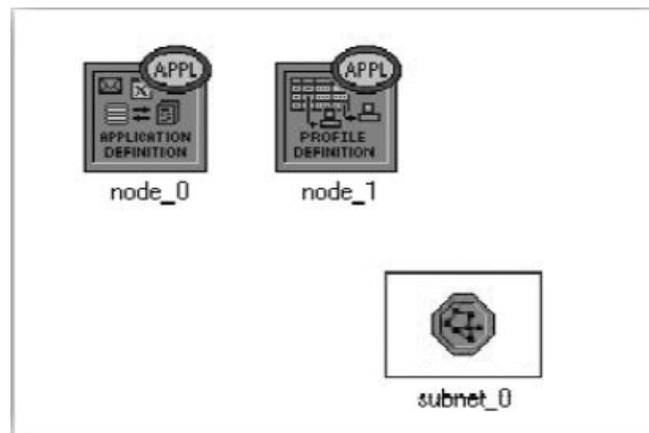
3. In the *Startup Wizard: Initial Topology* dialog box, make sure that **Create Empty Scenario** is selected → Click **Next** → Choose **Campus** from the *Network Scale* list → Click **Next** → Choose **Miles** from the **Size** drop-down menu and assign 1 for both **X Span** and **Y Span** → Click **Next** twice → Click **OK**.

Initialize the Network

1. The *Object Palette* dialog box should now be on the top of your project space. If it is not there, open it by clicking . Make sure that the **internet_toolbox** is selected from the pull-down menu on the object palette.
2. Add to the project workspace the following objects from the palette: **Application Config**, **Profile Config**, and a **subnet**.
 - a. To add an object from a palette, click its icon in the object palette → Move your mouse to the workspace → Left-click to place the object. Right-click when finished. The workspace should contain the shown three objects.

Application Config is used to specify applications that will be used to configure users' profiles.

Profile Config describes the activity patterns of a user or group of users in terms of the applications used over a period of time. You must define the applications using the Application Config object before using this object.



3. Close the *Object Palette* dialog box and save your project.

Configure the Services

1. Right-click on the **Application Config** node → **Edit Attributes** → Change the **name** attribute to **Applications** → Change the **Application Definitions** attribute to **Default** → Click **OK**.
2. Right-click on the **Profile Config** node → **Edit Attributes** → Change the **name** attribute to **Profiles** → Change the **Profile Configuration** attribute to **Sample Profiles** → Click **OK**.

Sample Profiles provides patterns of applications employed by users such as engineers, researchers, salespeople, and multimedia workers.

Configure a Subnet

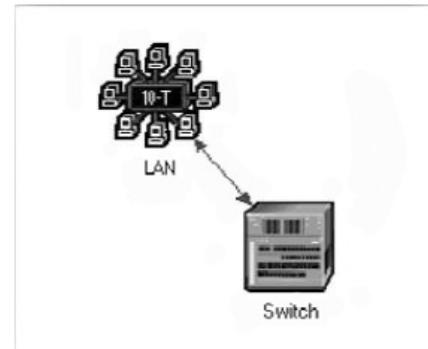
1. Right-click on the **subnet** node → **Edit Attributes** → Change the **name** attribute to **Engineering** and click **OK**.
2. Double-click on the **Engineering** node. You get an empty workspace, indicating that the subnet contains no objects.
3. Open the object palette , and make sure it is still set to **internet_toolbox**.
4. Add the following items to the subnet workspace: **10BaseT LAN**, **ethernet16 Switch**, and a **10BaseT link** to connect the LAN with the switch → Close the palette.

5. Right-click on the 10BaseT LAN node → **Edit Attributes** → Change the **name** attribute to LAN → Observe that the **Number of Workstations** attribute has a value of 10. Click in the **Value** column for the **Application: Supported Profiles** attribute, and select **Edit**. You should get a table in which you should do the following:

- a. Set the number of rows to 1.
- b. Set the **Profile Name** to **Engineer**. *Note:* Engineer is one of the “sample” profiles provided within the **Profile Config** object → Click **OK** twice.

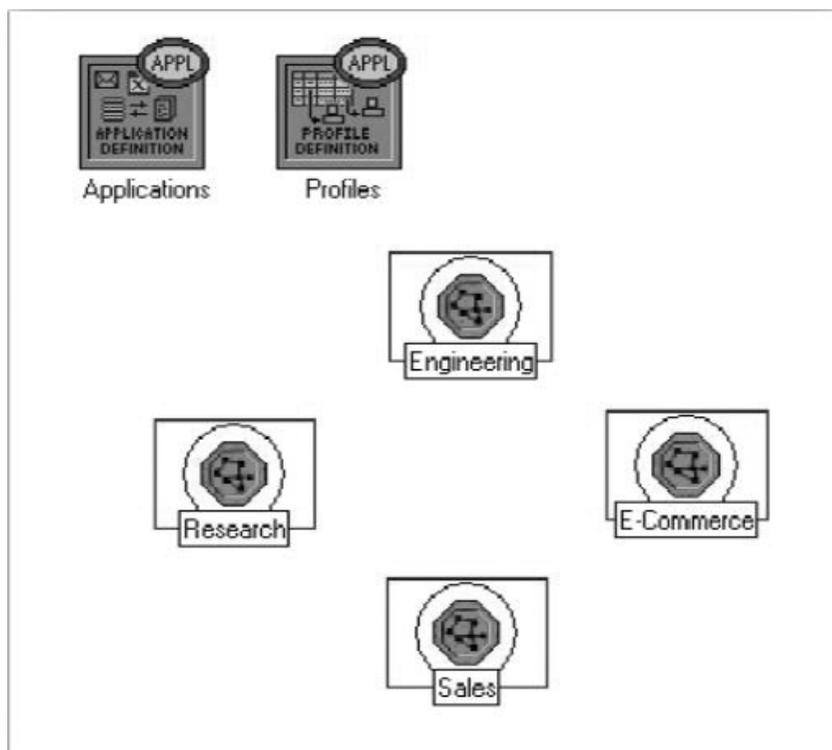
The object we just created is equivalent to a 10-workstation star topology LAN. The traffic generated from the users of this LAN resembles that generated by “engineers.”

6. Rename the **ethernet16 Switch** to **Switch**.
7. The subnet should look like the shown one.
8. Save your project.



Configure All Departments

1. Now you have completed the configuration of the Engineering department subnet. To return to the main project space, click the **Go to the higher level** button. The subnets of the other departments in the company should be similar to the engineering one except for the supported profiles.
2. Make three copies of the **Engineering** subnet we just created: Click on the **Engineering** node → From the **Edit** menu, select **Copy** → From the **Edit** menu, select **Paste** three times, placing the subnet in the workspace after each, to create the new subnets.
3. Rename (right-click on the subnet and select **Set Name**) and arrange the subnets as shown here:

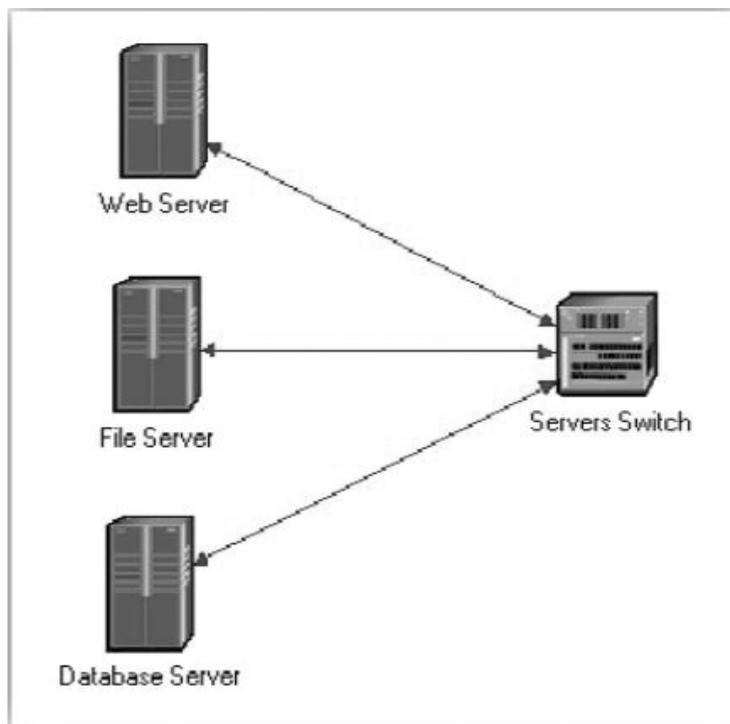


4. Double-click the **Research** node → **Edit** the attributes of its LAN → **Edit** the value of the **Application: Supported Profiles** attribute → Change the value of the **Profile Name** from **Engineer** to **Researcher** → Click **OK** twice → Go to the higher level by clicking the  button.
5. Repeat Step 4 with the **Sales** node and assign to its **Profile Name** the profile **Sales Person**.
6. Repeat Step 4 with the **E-Commerce** node and assign to its **Profile Name** the profile **E-commerce Customer**.
7. **Save** your project.

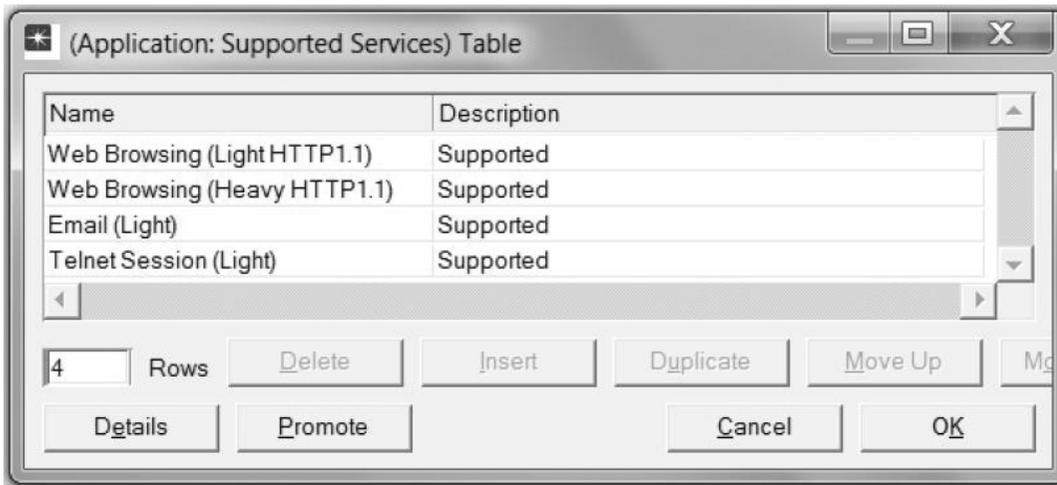
Configure the Servers

Now we need to implement a subnet that contains the servers. The servers have to support the applications defined in the profiles we deployed. You can double-check those applications by editing the attributes of our **Profile** node. Inspect each row under the **Applications** hierarchy, which in turn is under the **Profile Configuration** hierarchy. You will see that we need servers that support the following applications: Web browsing, email, Telnet, file transfer, database, and file print.

1. Open the **Object Palette**  and add a new **subnet** → Rename the new subnet to **Servers** → Double-click the **Servers** node to enter its workspace.
2. From the **Object Palette**, add three **ethernet_servers**, one **ethernet16_switch**, and three **10BaseT** links to connect the servers with the switch.
3. Close the **Object Palette**.
4. Rename the servers and the switch as shown.



5. Right-click on each one of the preceding servers and **Edit** the value of the **Application: Supported Services** attribute.
 - a. For the *Web Server*, add four rows to support the following services as shown in the figure: **Web Browsing (Light HTTP1.1)**, **Web Browsing (Heavy HTTP1.1)**, **Email (Light)**, and **Telnet Session (Light)**.



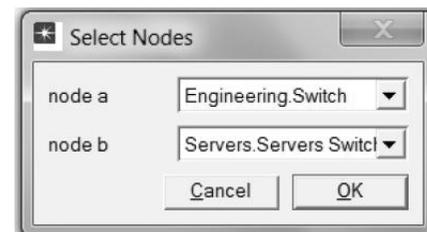
- b. For the *File Server*, add two rows to support the following services: **File Transfer (Light)** and **File Print (Light)**.
 - c. For the *Database Server*, add one row to support the following service: **Database Access (Light)**.
6. Go back to the project space by clicking the **Go to the higher level** button.
 7. Save your project.

Connect the Subnets

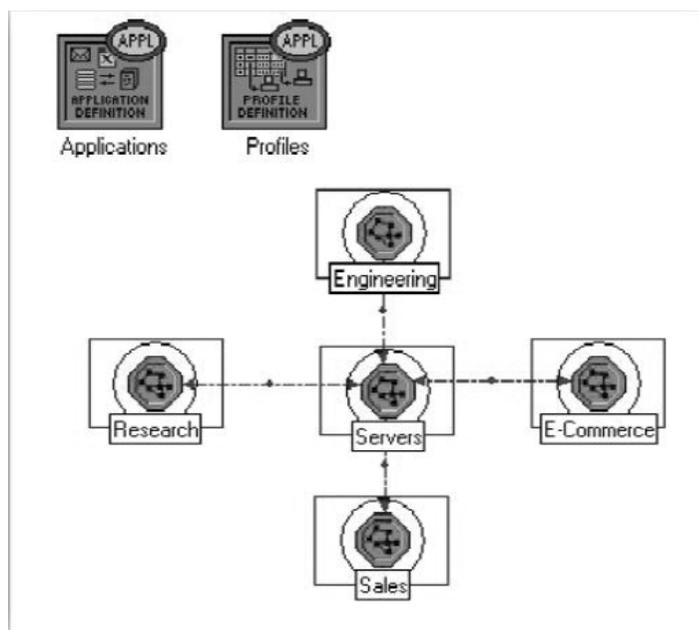
Now all subnets are ready to be connected together.

1. Open the **Object Palette** and add four 100BaseT links to connect the subnets of the departments to the **Servers** subnet.

As you create each link, make sure that it is configured to connect the "switches" in both subnets to each other. Do this by choosing them from the drop-down menus as shown.



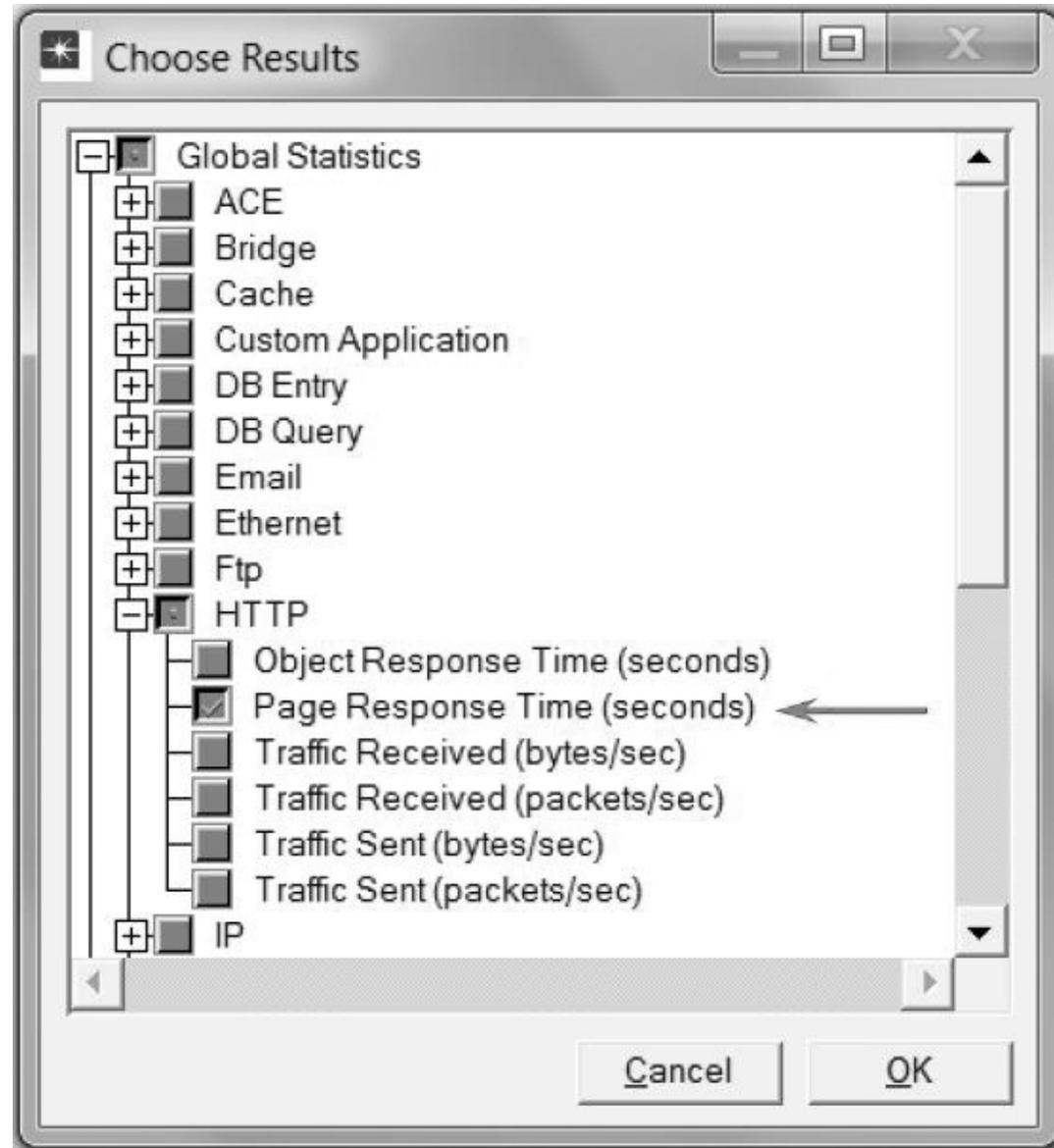
2. Close the **Object Palette** and **Save** your project.
3. Now your network should resemble the following one:



Choose the Statistics

To test the performance of our network, we will collect one of the many available statistics as follows:

1. Right-click anywhere in the project workspace and select **Choose Individual Statistics** from the pop-up menu.
2. In the *Choose Results* dialog box, choose the following statistic:



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Page Response Time is the required time to retrieve the entire page.

3. Click OK.

Configure the Simulation

Here we need to configure the duration of the simulation:

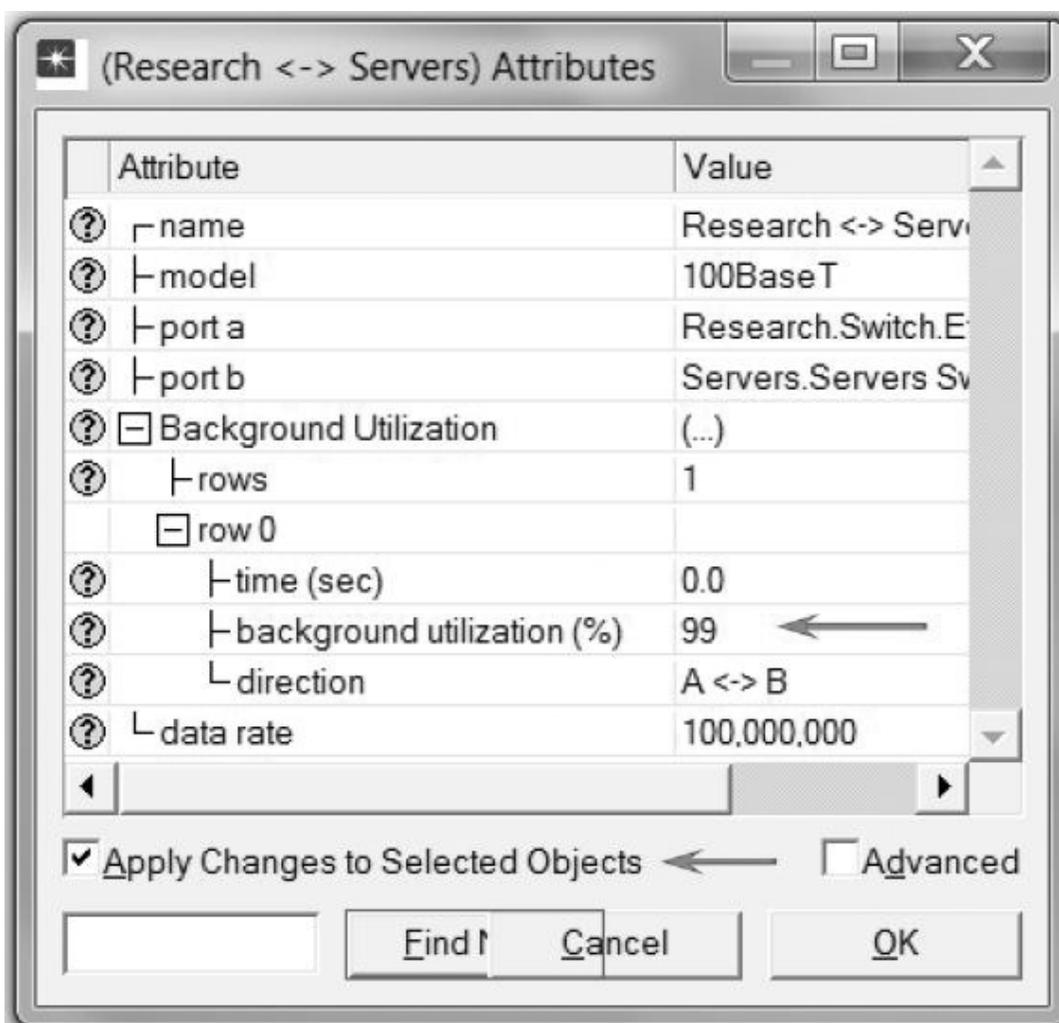
1. Click on the **Configure/Run Simulation**  button.
2. Set the duration to 30.0 minutes.
3. Press OK.

Duplicate the Scenario

In the network we just created, we assumed that there is no background traffic already in the links. In real networks, the links usually have some existing background traffic. We will create a duplicate of the **SimpleNetwork** scenario but with background utilization in the 100BaseT links.

1. Select **Duplicate Scenario** from the **Scenarios** menu and give it the name **BusyNetwork** → Click **OK**.
2. Select all the **100BaseT** links simultaneously (click on all of them while holding the **Shift** key) → Right-click on any one of them → **Edit Attributes** → Check the **Apply Changes to Selected Objects** check box.
3. Expand the hierarchy of the **Background Utilization** attribute → Expand the **row 0** hierarchy → Assign **99** to the **background utilization (%)** as shown here:

Link utilization is the percentage of the used link bandwidth.



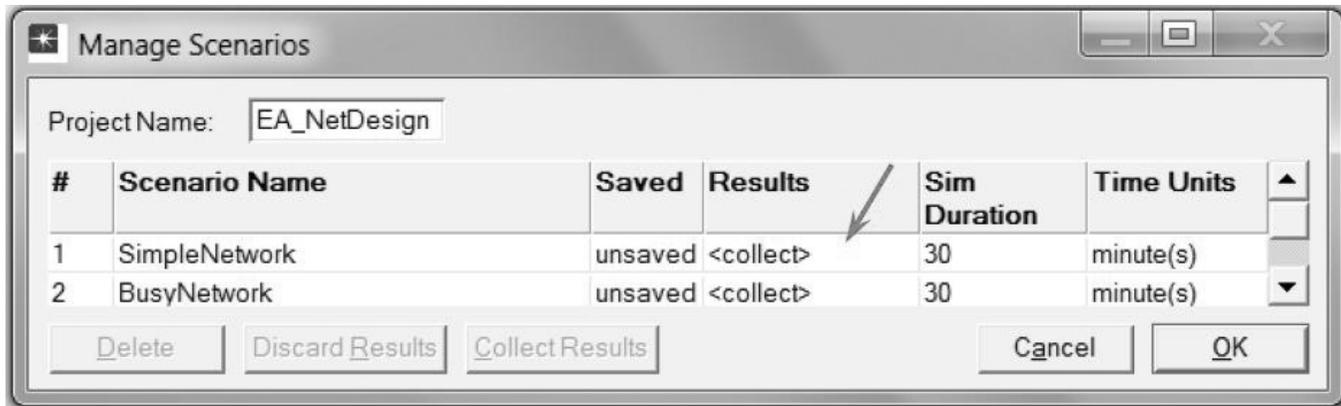
4. Click **OK**.
5. Save your project.

Run the Simulation

To run the simulation for both scenarios simultaneously:

1. Go to the **Scenarios** menu → Select **Manage Scenarios**.

2. Change the values under the **Results** column to <collect> (or <recollect>) for both scenarios. Compare to the following figure.

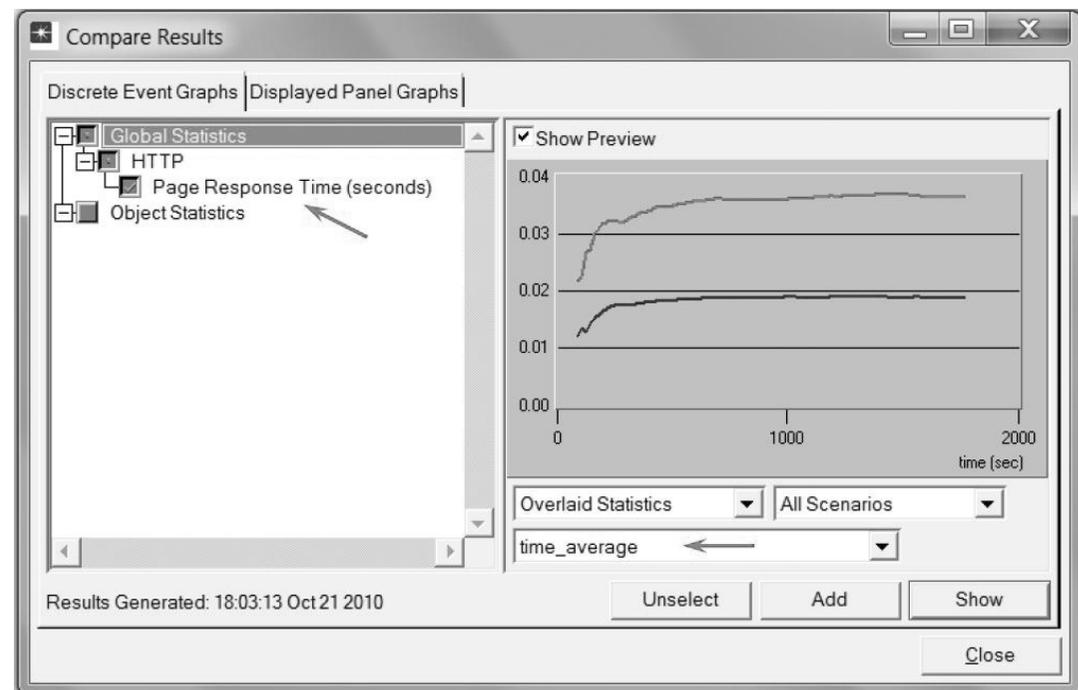


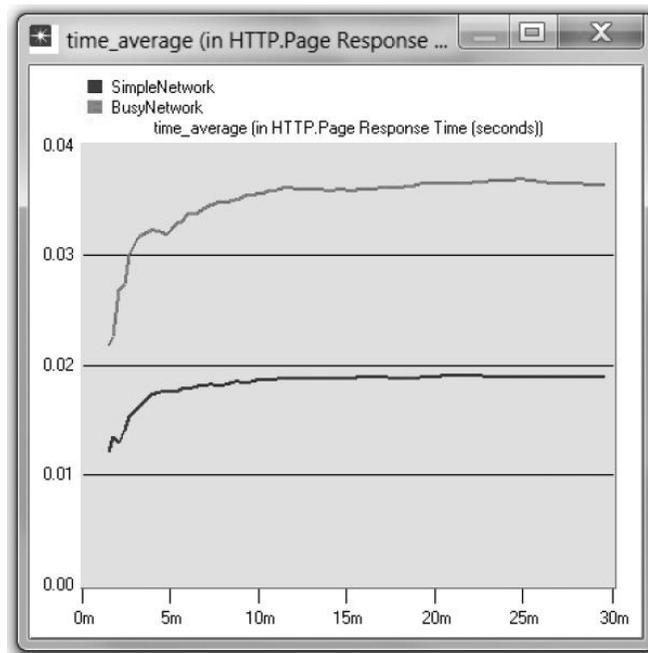
3. Click **OK** to run the two simulations. Depending on the speed of your processor, this task may take several seconds to complete.
4. After the two simulation runs complete (one for each scenario), click **Close**.
5. **Save** your project.

View the Results

To view and analyze the results:

1. Select **Compare Results** from the **Results** menu.
2. Change the drop-down menu in the lower-right part of the *Compare Results* dialog box from **As Is** to **time_average** as shown.
3. Select the **Page Response Time (seconds)** statistic and click **Show**. The resulting graph should resemble the one that follows. (*Note:* Results may vary slightly due to different node placement.)





FURTHER READING

OPNET Configuring Applications and Profiles: From the **Protocols** menu, select **Applications** → **Model Usage Guide** → **Configuring Profiles and Applications**.

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EXERCISES

1. Analyze the result we obtained regarding the HTTP page response time. ~~Collect four other statistics of your choice and rerun the simulation of the Simple and the Busy network scenarios. Get the graphs that compare the collected statistics. Comment on these results.~~
2. In the **BusyNetwork** scenario, study the **utilization%** of the CPUs in the servers (right-click on each server and select **Choose Individual Statistics** → **CPU** → **Utilization**).
3. ~~Create a new scenario as a duplicate of the BusyNetwork scenario. Name the new scenario Q3_OneServer. Replace the three servers with only one server that supports all required services. Study the utilization% of that server's CPU. Compare this utilization with the three CPU utilizations you obtained in the previous exercise.~~
4. Create a new scenario as a duplicate of the **BusyNetwork** scenario. Name the new scenario **Q4_FasterNetwork**. In the **Q4_FasterNetwork** scenario, replace all **100BaseT** links in the network with **10Gbps Ethernet** links and replace all **10BaseT** links with **100BaseT** links. Study how increasing the bandwidth of the links affects the performance of the network in the new scenario (e.g., compare the HTTP page response time in the new scenario with that of the **BusyNetwork**).

LAB REPORT

~~Prepare a report that follows the guidelines explained in the Introduction Lab.~~ The report should include the answers to the preceding exercises as well as the graphs you generated from the simulation scenarios. Discuss the results you obtained and compare these results with your expectations. Mention any anomalies or unexplained behaviors.

