A Novel Directional Ad Hoc MAC

Abstract—Recently, Ad Hoc network is adapted widely in military, agriculture, and disaster rescue owing to the character flexible and fast deployment without infrastructure itself. However, the omnidirectional Ad Hoc cannot fulfill the requirements from people of increasing the capacity and the bandwidth of network caused by drastic explosion of information. By contrast, the directional antenna is more advantage than the omnidirectional one, which has the capability to improve the performance of Ad Hoc including more transmission range, less interference, spatial reuse, more capacity and tactical silence. Based on the existing lecture, a novel directional MAC found on STDMA (Spatial Time Division Multiple Access) is raised and provide high throughput, high transmission rate and low delay to network system which contribute to share massive information and improve the performance of the network.

Index Terms—Ad Hoc, Directional antenna, MAC, STDMA.

I. FORWARD

Ad hoc can construct a temporary self-managing system without pre-constructing fixed network infrastructure and consist of a series of wireless terminal which brings flexible deployment and great practicality in some scenario. According to existing study, directional antenna is a wonderful solution deployed in Ad Hoc networks to reduce the signal interference, improve communication quality and performance of the system. A directional Ad Hoc MAC found on STDMA is proposed, and main work includes:

1. Neighbor discovery algorithm under directional antenna model;
2. Directional antenna alignment algorithm;
3. Information sorting algorithm based on priority.

Finally, the MAC is simulated and validated with OPNET which exports the results.

The following article is arranged as follows: section II, describe the detail of MAC, such as the initialization process, neighbor discovery and normal access process. Section III, analyze the main design specifications. Section IV, model the MAC with OPNET. Section V, output the results of analysis and make a conclusion.

In fact, there are so many works focus on directional MAC which is divided into two research directions, the one is to improve the 802.11 protocol family as a supplement, and the other one is to improve ALOHA. In reference [1], D-MAC was proposed by Ko Y and supplemented 802.11 protocol family, in which the RTS was sent by transmitter directionally, and the CTS was Omni-directionally sent from receiver to notice neighbors to block himself in case of collision. Afterward, Roychoudhury R et al raised MMAC protocol, which can afford the communication between nodes far over two hops with multi-RTS, and send CTS/DATA/ACK directionally in one hop. Compare to the D-MAC, MMAC has greater throughput and poorer end to end delay owing to multi-hop communication link. In reference [3], adaptive antenna array was deployed in PHY, and two kinds of control frame were supplemented, in which contains active nodes and topology information about the whole network, respectively. These measures are helpful for nodes to grasp the status of communication nodes and communication link to enhance the RTS addressing probability of multi-hop in MMAC. In reference [4], Takai M et al raised DVCS protocol base on 802.11 DCF, which use directional RTS/CTS to communicate. In reference [5], Lal D et al design a receiver ask mechanism, if some node ready to receive information, it will send the omnidirectional training sequence at first to tell neighbor the size of information can be received itself. A neighbor who received the announcement and have messages to send will send back an RTS packet to a receiver whose size is as the size demanded exactly. After the process, message will be transmitted directionally. In reference [6], the DOA-MAC was raised by Singh H et al, which is directional MAC based on ALOHA, and divide every slot into three little slot in which node send a tone signal frame, data and confirmation frame. Later, in reference [7] they suggest sending tone signal and receiving tone signal to replace original simple tone signal frame. The mechanism is similar to RTS/CTS handshake protocol, the tone signal from receiver did not indicate the destination node, what is the reason why receiver may receive some data packet not for itself. If the node identity in RTS/CTS can be ignored during handshake protocol, the tone signal frame could be used to displace the RTS/CTS and save control overhead.

II. DIRECTIONAL MAC

The MAC protocol takes advantage of STDMA (Spatial Time Division Multiple Access) which ensure the exact communication delay and enhance the reliability of communication. Directional antenna has SDMA character by which system gains the Improvement of tactical communication concealment, spatial reuse and network throughput. Beside, DS and FH are employed in PHY which is good for improving the PLI/PLD of signal further and ensure the communication security.

Design index is as listed:

1. Data rate: 2Mbps (range: 100KM), or 256Kbps (range: 200KM);
2. End to end sensitive message delay: less than 10ms;

http://dx.doi.org/10.3991/ijoe.v11i9.5063

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3. Two level network, maximum capacity: 32 nodes, eight teams in which 2-4 nodes;
4. The communication between Multi-cluster will not be interfered with each other;
5. Access time: less than 5s;
6. Throughput: over 10Mbps;
7. Radius of network: 200Km.

A. Antenna pattern

In the system design, the Multi-beam lens antenna is deployed, whose main lobe gain: 21dBi, width: 18° and pitch angle: 21°. When the antenna works, it switches the beams. To cover three-dimensional space, antenna system consists of three sets of Multi-beam lens antenna which scan together during working and contain 78 beams each, the beam switching time is 10µs. Refer to the table 1 which lists the antenna alignment pattern in detail.

| Serial number | Transmitter | Receiver | Work scenario                  |
|---------------|-------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1             | Directional transmission | Switch and simulate omnidirectional | Network initialization and sensitive message transmission |
| 2             | Directional transmission | Directional reception | Normal data transmission slot |
| 3             | Switch and simulate omnidirectional transmission | Switch and simulate omnidirectional | Network initialization and new node join the network |

The first pattern: under the status that the receiver is not sure the topology information or position of the transmitter, the unify spread code is applied by both sides. If the receiver can’t catch the signal by single antenna, the antenna system will turn into joint scan until it does and switch directional receive the pattern.

The pattern is applied during network initialization and sensitive message transmission, to receive information correctly, K bits leader sequence are added into the frame head to realize antenna alignment, as figure 4 shown. The whole scanning period of systems: 56*2us=112us, and K=112us*2Mbps=224bits.

The second pattern: the coordinator of system makes an announcement in advance according to the slot schedule and specifies the both sides of every slot before normal communication. When the system works, the transmitter and the receiver will point to each other and communicate.

The third pattern: the both sides of communication will use unify spread code, if the receiver sense the signal, it will switch the beam and aim to the transmitter. The pattern is used mainly in network initialization and new node join network.

In order to simplify the management of the network, the hierarchical structure is employed, which result in two kinds of transmission range: 100Km and 200Km, the former is applicable to the communication and management in clusters, and the latter suits for communication and management between clusters.

B. Network topology and Information classification

In the network, hierarchical management is a solution to manage the network structure, which is beneficial to extend network and organize itself. In the structure, network is segmented into clusters which comprise a cluster head and several members, the former can form a higher level network.

![Hierarchical topology structure](http://www.i-joe.org)
In the protocol, the frame synchronization sequence of data frame is provided by PHY, and the basic size of data frame is 676 bits, if the length of data frame exceeds the basic size, the message will be broken into multiple subframes, and if not, the message will be packaged as basic size.

d) Network initialization

Before starting, eight nodes are chosen as seeds to trigger the network initialization. First of all, these nodes will keep sending initialization HELLO message, which is designed to discover neighbors. Second, gather all the collected information about neighbors, pick up one as second class temporary center node base on the connectivity algorithm and neighbor information. Third, second class temporary center node collects all the topology information. Fourth, second class center node setup the slot schedule and inform the rest of the node, the second class cluster is built up.

After finishing initializing the second class network, the eight nodes mentioned start to scan the whole spatial space and try to search the remaining node information, include ID, position and so on, after that, build the first class cluster in which the mentioned nodes will be cluster head of first class cluster respectively, the construction procession is similar to the construction of the second class network. The construction of every first class network can be realized at the same time for CDMA, which avoid interfering with each other.

In fact, there is a problem need to be solved in advance that before the network initialization, a start node is appointed, if the node broadcasts the initialization HELLO, and activate the other seven nodes. The initial procession of second class network will start officially. The detail of initialization is shown as below:

| Information type                        | Length     | Slot length |
|-----------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| First class time-slot application data format | 327bits    | First class application time-slot: 0.6ms |
| First class center control slot data format | 1177bits   | first class center control slot: 0.8ms |
| C1 network control slot data format      | 1501bits   | C1 network control slot: 1ms |
| Second class time-slot application data format | 775bits    | Second class application time-slot: 1.5ms |
| Second class center control slot data format | 1669bits   | Second class center control slot: 1.9ms |
| Initialization HELLO data format         | 183bits    |             |
| Initialization RTT data format           | 93bits     |             |
| Access application data format           | 97bits     |             |
| Access application response data format  | 212bits    |             |
| Access application RTT data format       | 93bits     |             |
| RTT-REP data format                      | 213bits    |             |
| Routing control REQ data format          | 77bits     |             |
| Routing control REP data format          | 77bits     |             |
| Common data format                       | First class:4402bits; second class:5488bits | 3.6ms |
| T time sensitive information data format  | 676bits    | First class:0.7ms; second class:2ms |

The structure of SDTMA frame includes application control slot, center control slot, network control slot, time sensitive slot and data communication slot.

Application control slot: Set for applying transmission slot and topology updating slot, node apply the slot in the corresponding application control slot, and report its position at the same time.

Center control slot: Set for releasing the slot schedule, access application and network topology. In the slot, cluster head arrange the slot schedule according to business request and issue the schedule, topology information and access application response.

Network control slot: Set for preventing the malfunction or failure of the network center, backup cluster head will take the place of cluster head. In the slot, the backup cluster head backup whole network topology information.

Time sensitive slot: Set for sending time sensitive message.

Data communication slot: Set for three kinds of business data, time sensitive data only take the specialized time sensitive slot.
The above time slot contains data processing delay and data transmission delay.

To avoid communication interference, CDMA is employed in the MAC protocol. In general, there are two types of spread code, one for network control and access application, and the other for normal communication, by which receiver can tell and process the message with characteristic spread code rapidly.

f) Slot distribution algorithm

In the MAC, slot distribution algorithm bases on the links status, a node applies transmission slot for the priority information in each link concerns itself. There are four types of message in which the first priority is a time sensitive message with exclusive slot. Slot distribution algorithm is arranged for the second to four priority information. The application frame is shown in Fig. 4.

Figure 4. The structure of application frame

The application frame includes source and destination segment, which represents a communication link, and slot number required by each priority transmission, in which M, N, L represents the slot number for each priority respectively. There are four nodes in first class cluster at most which decides maximum of three adjacent links for a node, and there are eight nodes in the second class cluster at most which decides maximum of seven adjacent links for a node in higher level. In the system, the communication way contains unicast and broadcast. According to the maximum information principle, the distribution strategy is broadcast takes priority allocation, after that, the rest of slot is for the same priority information which can be transmitted in parallel. If the slot is not assigned yet, it will be for unicast. The second constraint is high priority information take priority transmission chance, then second priority and lowest priority. If a broadcast is too long to be finished in a remaining slot, it will be postponed for the next slot, the flow chart is as follows.

Figure 5. The flow chart of slot distribution
B. Network throughput

There are 8 clusters in system network, assume one transfer links at least in the first class communication period and 2 links in second class, time sensitive slot is excluded. The network throughput is

\[
Q = \frac{13206 \text{bits} \times 40 + 5408 \text{bits} \times 14 + 2 \times 4377344 \text{bits}}{0.264 \text{ls}} = \frac{4377344 \text{bits}}{0.264 \text{ls}} = 16.57 \text{Mbps} = 17 \text{Mbps}
\]

IV. PERFORMANCE VERIFICATION

The MAC is validated with OPNET in which the scene design parameters are as follows:

- The radius of scene: 250Km*250Km;
- The application radius of the network: 200Km;
- Data rate: 4Mbps (first class network): 2Mbps (second class network);
- Node number: 32 nodes, 4 nodes in first class cluster, 8 nodes in second class cluster;
- The priority of information classification: four kinds of message, time sensitive message takes the highest priority, voice and data message secondly, and picture message at last;
- End to end delay for time sensitive message: less than 8ms;
- The output of simulation is as follows:

In Figure 6, the statistical results show the delay not for time sensitive information but latter three kinds of information. The message with higher priority can access channel with lower delay which fit the design requirements. Besides, the access delay of the second and the third priority information is very close, and far below the fourth priority caused by huge amount of former two kinds of priority information. To keep the access balance, the second and third priority information have to be cut down relative to the fourth priority which can avoid of un-accessing of low priority business normally.

The Fig 7 shows that the delay of time sensitive message fluctuates drastically, and tends to be stable gradually. The steady delay is 5ms which fits the design requirements. The fluctuation in Fig 7 is caused by equal transmission of all priority information, it's called queuing phenomenon.

As shown in Fig 8, the Average delay of all business is 6.4s under the status of equal amount of priority information.

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Node number: 32 nodes, 4 nodes in first class cluster, 8 nodes in second class cluster;
The priority of information classification: four kinds of message, time sensitive message takes the highest priority, voice and data message secondly, and picture message at last;
End to end delay for time sensitive message: less than 8ms;
The output of simulation is as follows:
From Fig 9, the stable throughput of system is 10Mbps, and the actual traffic load is much higher and reaches 10.5Mbps which means the performance of system is beyond the original design index.

V. CONCLUSIONS

From the above simulation results, the directional MAC proposed can satisfy the system requirements which can ensure time sensitive transmission and improve the throughput with CDMA, SDMA and parallel transmission.

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Submitted 21 September 2015. Published as resubmitted by the authors 20 October 2015.