SIGCOMM COMMUNITY FEEDBACK MEETING

2009

Agenda

- Intro & Thanks

- Status and Future of SIGCOMM

- Communication among the SIGCOMM Community

- SIGCOMM Technical Steering Committee Proposal

- Survey on SIGCOMM 2009 author experience

- Discussion on double submissions

- Open Discussion

SIG Officers

Bruce Davie
Chair

Henning Schulzrinne
Vice-Chair

Tilman Wolf
Secretary/Treasurer

Ramesh Govindan
Awards Chair

S. Keshav
EIC, CCR

Neil Spring
Information Director

Mark Crovella
Past Chair

Jau de Oliveira
Conference Coordinator

Joe Touch
Conference Coordinator
Emeritus

Thanks to outgoing EC members

- Past Chair (now past-past chair):
  Jen Rexford

- Awards Chair:
  John Byers

- Chair:

  Mark Crovella (stays on EC as past chair)

SIG Finances

- ACM Guidelines
  - Maintain a minimum fund balance, as a fraction of expected expenses for the year
- The SIG's budget is healthy
  - Within our fund-balance requirements
  - This year's events broke even or had a small profit
  - We use those profits for SIG activities such as awards, geodiversity grants, LANC support, etc.

SIGCOMM Sponsored Conferences

- CoNEXT
  - SIGCOMM sponsored; European roots, broad scope
  - Dec 1-4, 2009, Rome, Italy
- Internet Measurement Conference
  - SIGCOMM, in cooperation with USENIX and SIGMETRICS
  - November 4-6, 2009, Chicago, IL, USA
- HotNets Workshop
  - Emphasis on emerging research directions
  - October 22-23, 2009, New York, NY, USA
- Architectures for Networking and Communication Systems
  - Joint with SIGARCH, IEEE
  - October 19-20, 2009, Princeton, NJ, USA
- Networked Sensor Systems (SenSys)
  - Joint with SIGMOBILE, SIGARCH, SIGOPS, SIGMETRICS, SIGBED and NSF
  - November 4-6, 2009, Berkeley, CA, USA

Connecting with the Global Community

- AINTEC: Asian Internet Engineering Conf.
  - SIGCOMM is in cooperation & provides some $$
  - November 18-20, 2009, Bangkok, Thailand
- LANC: Latin American Networking Conf.
  - SIGCOMM is in cooperation & provides some $$
  - September 24-25, 2009, Pelotas, Brazil
- Travel grants to SIGCOMM-sponsored events
  - Student travel grants
  - SIGCOMM'09 geodiversity travel grants

Conferences "In Co-operation"

- Networked Systems Design & Implementation (NSDI)
  - USENIX, in cooperation with SIGCOMM & SIGOPS
  - April 28-20, 2010, San Jose, CA, USA
- Multimedia Systems Conference
  - Sponsored by SIGMM
  - February 22-23, 2010, Scottsdale, AZ, USA
- NetGames Workshop
  - in cooperation with SIGCOMM and SIGMM
  - November 23-24, 2009, Paris, France
- IPTComm: Principles, Systems and Applications of IP Telecommunications
  - July 7-8, 2009, Atlanta, GA, USA
- SIMPLEX: 1st Annual Workshop on Simplifying Complex Network for Practitioners
  - In cooperation with SIGMOBILE
  - July 1, 2009, Venice, Italy
- NOSSDAV
  - SIGMM, in cooperation with SIGCOMM & SIGOPS
  - June 3-5, 2009, Williamsburg, VA, USA

SIGCOMM Conference Locations

- Now on three-year cycle:
  North America, Europe, and "Wild Card"

- Future SIGCOMM Locations
  - 2010: New Delhi, India
  - 2011: North America
    - Currently seeking 1-page site proposals: due October 31
    - See www.sigcomm.org
  - 2012: Europe

- SIGCOMM conference dates
  - One week between mid August & first Monday in Sept
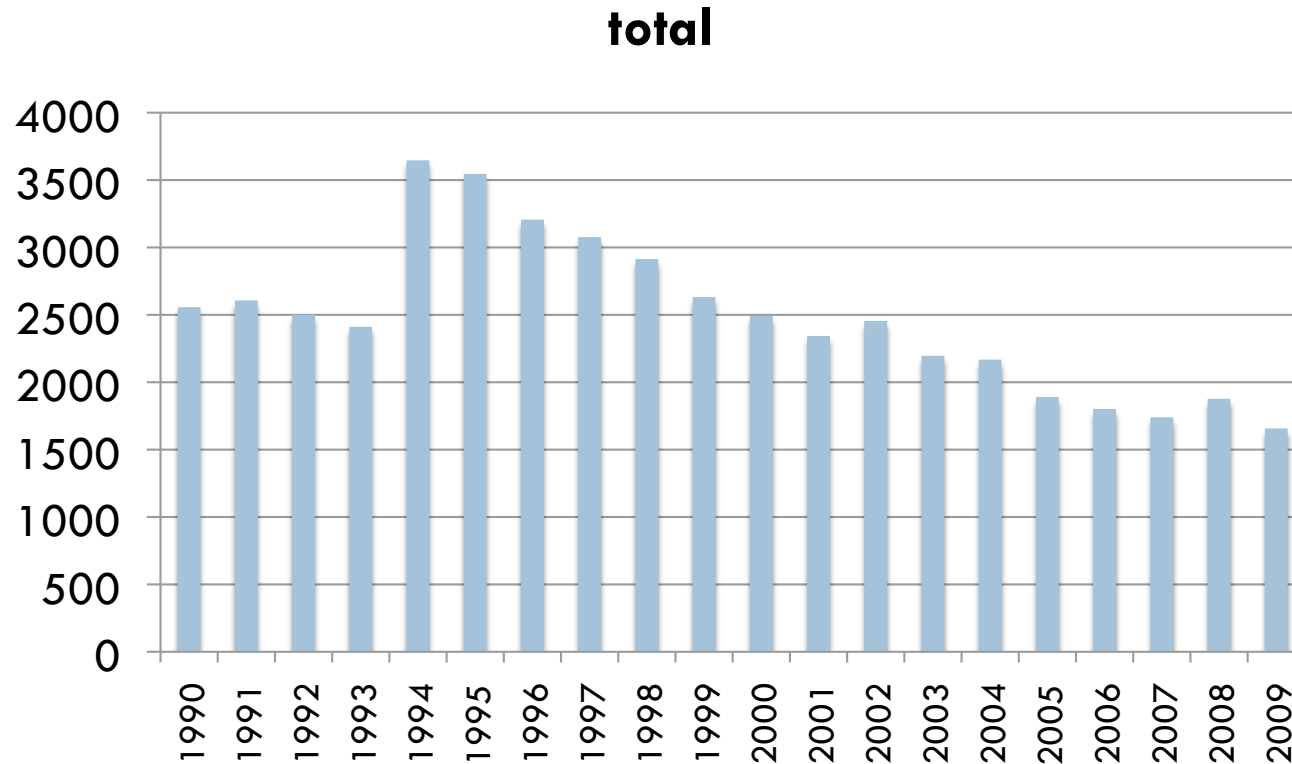 - Rotating dates to avoid scheduling collisions

Awards

- SIGCOMM
- Test of Time
- SIGCOMM Best Paper
- Best Student Paper (2009 the first time both awards given)
- SIGCOMM Rising Star
  - Continuation of CoNEXT's Rising Star Award
  - "recognizing a young researcher - generally, an individual who has completed a PhD roughly within the past seven years - who has made outstanding research contributions during this early part of their career."
  - First award to Dina Papagiannaki in 2008

Information Services

- Redesign and Reimplementation of SIGCOMM Web Site in 2008
  - Still some room for improvement (navigation, consistency)
- Thanks to Neil Spring
- Feedback Solicited!
  - infodir_sigcomm@acm.org

SIG Total Membership: 1657

total

- Trend common to majority of SIGs
- SIGCOMM membership included in conf. reg this year (as in 2007, but not 2008)

SIGCOMM FUTURE VISION

SIGCOMM as a community

- Not just a set of conferences
  - For example, members of the community view SIGCOMM as a place to find collaborators
- Community members help each other develop compelling research agendas
- Foster new workshops, publications, etc
- Place where industry comes to connect with researchers
- Educating the next generation of networking folks
- You are the community – many ways to contribute

Industry-Academic Collaboration

- A focus of mine for c. 20 years
- Aim: improve information flow in both directions
    - Industry has lots of interesting problems that would benefit from academic research
    - Academics have lots of ideas/projects likely to be of value to industry
- Proposals:
    - Host a website that enables industrial folks to disseminate research topics of interest and provide contact points for researchers
    - Create a session at SIGCOMM (other conferences?) for information exchange between industry and academia

Communication

- Desire for "transparency" of EC clearly expressed
- Attempting to address that through all communication means at our disposal
  - CCR, print and online
    - My first article in next issue
    - All members can submit articles (inc. opinion pieces), comment online
  - blog.sigcomm.org
  - www.sigcomm.org/news/RSS
  - Email discussion: sigcomm@postel.org
  - SIGCOMM members mailing list: SIGCOMM-MEMBERS@LISTSERV.ACM.ORG
  - Facebook (SIGCOMM, not to be confused with SIGCOMM 2009)
  - Not yet on twitter (can we pay off Signy Roberts?)

Contributing to the Community

- Comment on blog, CCR, sigcomm@postel.org
  - Guest bloggers, CCR editorials, welcome
- Offer your services as a reviewer (CCR, TPCs, etc.)
- Propose workshops (not only at SIGCOMM conf.)
- Make your own suggestion to the EC
  - E.g. we're interested in putting more news on our webpage – this needs volunteer effort

Conference Issues

- The SIGCOMM conference is highly selective, and prestigious (duh)
- Inevitably, many unhappy authors of rejected papers
- We must make the paper selection process as good as we can
  - Documenting that process very helpful (thanks Dina and Luigi!)
  - Lots of thinking on how to do better
  - Technical Steering Committee proposal
- Fostering additional high-quality venues
  - E.g. CoNEXT, etc.
  - Reviewer diligence is essential

Education

- SIGCOMM also has the potential to affect how Computer Networking is taught
- There's a lot of experience and enthusiasm for teaching in this community that could be shared
- Education director position has been open since Jim Kurose stepped down 12 months ago
- We could (for example)
    - Run workshops on this topic
    - Provide forum for exchange of ideas/experience among instructors
    - Participate in IEEE/ACM efforts on CS/EE curricula
- Filling the Education Director position should be a priority

TECHNICAL STEERING COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

TSC Proposal: Motivation

- Currently, SIGCOMM EC serves as steering committee for SIGCOMM Conference
  - All other SIG-sponsored conferences have steering committees
- Want to make the PC composition and review process the best we can
- The EC may not be elected for their expertise in these areas
- A Technical Steering Committee composed of individuals with strong PC expertise can provide store of institutional knowledge

TSC Proposal Outline

- NOTE: We're looking for feedback
- TSC has clear set of responsibilities around the *Technical* aspects of the SIGCOMM Conference
  - No overlap with EC responsibilities
  - PC Chairs retain autonomy
  - EC continues to deal with budget and logistical aspects
    - EC will ultimately have to deal with budget anyway
    - Starting with a small change rather than full-blown SC

TSC Composition

- 6 members, appointed by SIGCOMM EC
- Three year term
- Three former PC chairs (one from each of last 3 conferences)
- Three other members with suitable expertise
  - Aiming to increase "openness"
- In steady state, 2 members replaced each year

TSC Responsibilities

- Select PC Chairs
- Maintain records on what has/hasn't worked
- Maintain dialog with the SIGCOMM Community
- Advise PC Chairs on PC composition
- Advise PC Chairs on review process issues
- Set policies/guidelines as needed related to technical program (e.g. double submission, etc.)
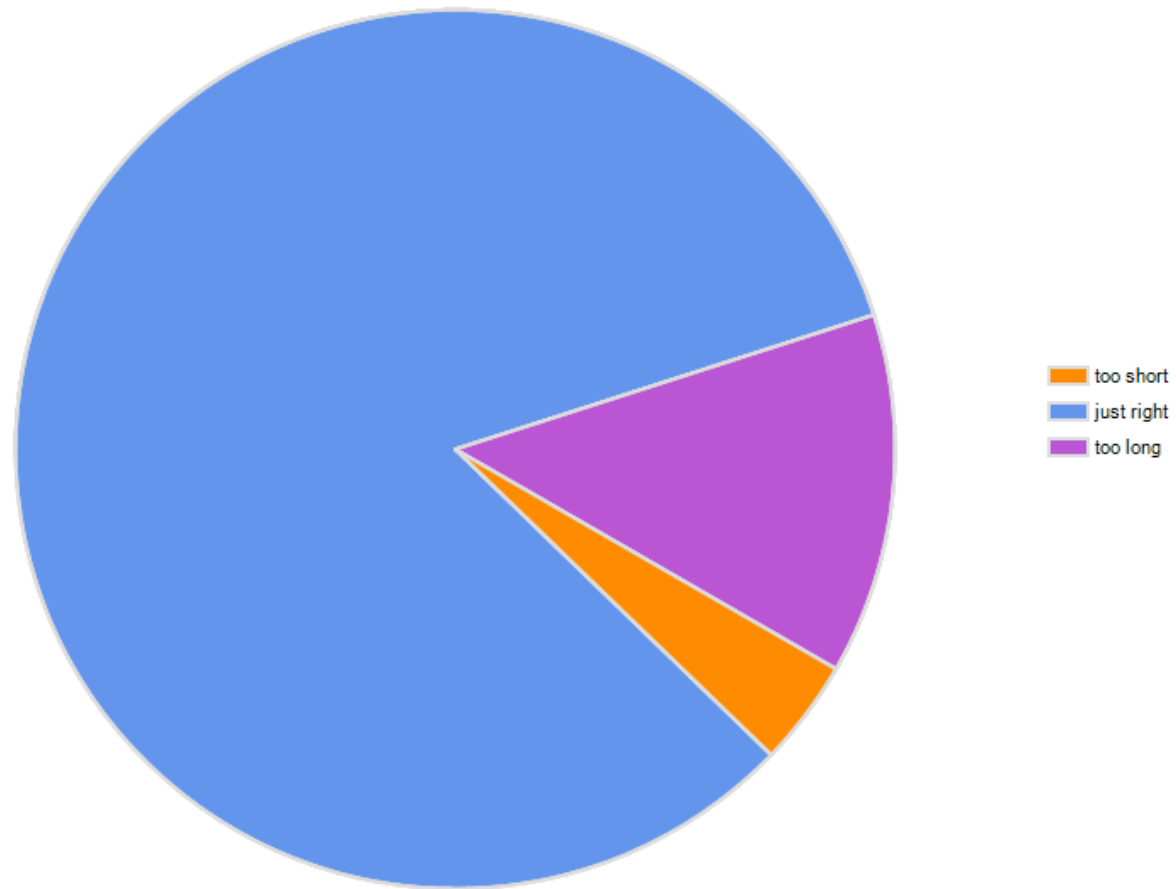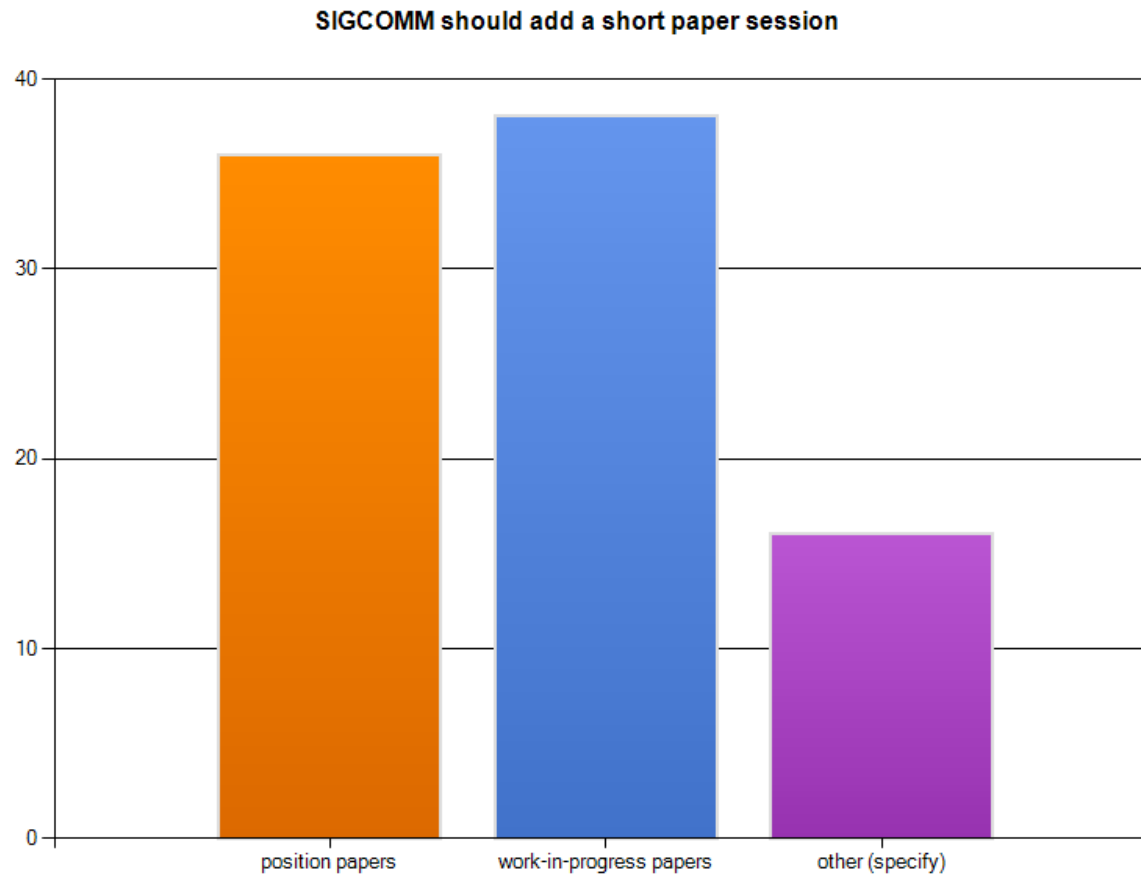
SIGCOMM 2009 AUTHOR SURVEY

2009 author survey

- Attempt to gather feedback from authors
  - review quality
  - possibilities for changes (length, review process, …)
- About 130 responded (SurveyMonkey)
- Absolute numbers less important than trends
  - selection bias, sour grapes, …
  - but tried to phrase questions positively

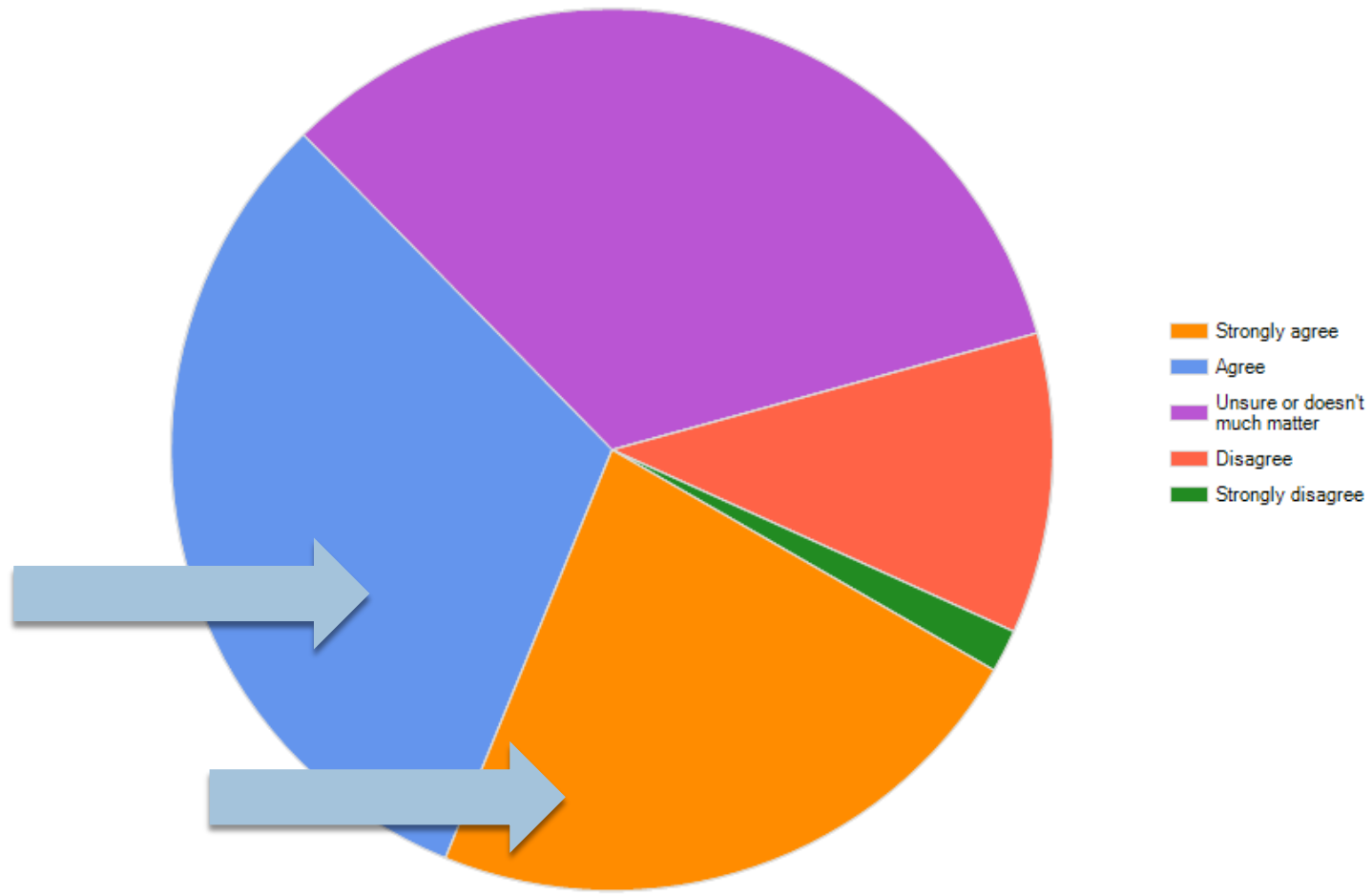# Paper length

The current SIGCOMM paper length of 14 pages is

Legend:
- too short
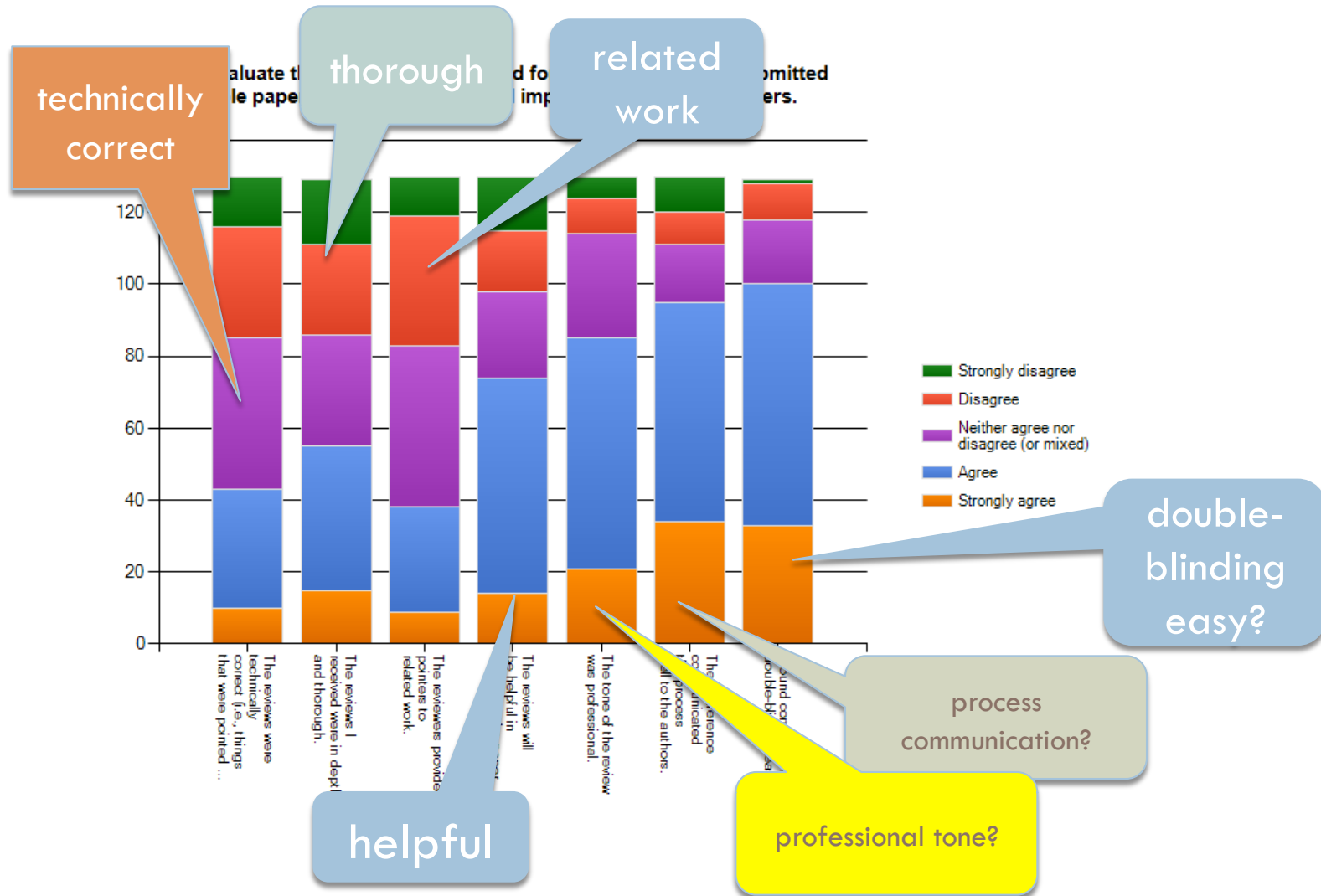- just right
- too long

Short paper session?

SIGCOMM should add a short paper session

Double-blind matters?

Double-blind reviewing makes the review process fairer.

Strongly agree
Agree
Unsure or doesn't much matter
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Review quality

Review suggestions

- Ensure >= 3 reviews for all papers
  - seen as mark of "good" conference
- Rebuttal
  - effect unclear – no clear evidence of effectiveness
  - maybe for borderline papers?
- OSDI/SOSP model: ~9 reviews/paper

Interesting comments

- "Think about why theory people don't submit their papers to Sigcomm any longer."
- "The SIGCOMM conference should narrow its scope to reflect the competence areas of the program committee members. The reviews this year and papers published in the last couple of years on wireless networking illustrate the lack of knowledge in the area."
- This is my first time to submit SIGCOM. I found that the review quality is so bad. the reviewers really do not understand the paper.
- I received much more helpful and more thorough reviews from NSDI.
- Many of the reviews, including the PC summary, seemed of the form "Nice idea. But what about X?" where X is some relatively minor case.
- We worked on this piece, succeeded, added it to the paper, resubmitted this year, and... got two "1"s, with completely random and minor criticism, completely inconsistent to the previous year reviews -- very frustrating experience.
- It's kind of difficult explaining to your grad students why a reviewer for a "top conference" is suggesting we switch to a less-scalable algorithm than what we'd used in the paper.

Conference topics

- No consensus (surprise!), but some themes
  - openness to all networking areas
  - hardware & theory underrepresented
  - less wireless (since covered by other events)
  - "likely to generate discussion" vs. "well-founded" vs. "likely to matter"

General comments

- Strive for best-possible review process, but perfection unlikely
  - unclear metrics, noise (see shadow PC experiments)
  - non-repeatability (year N changes != year N+1 changes)
  - top 10 papers clear, rest less so
- Limited effectiveness of tweaking
  - large number of good, but incomplete (or limited), papers
- Consider "next-generation" publishing
  - general CS debate (see CACM)
  - what do we want to accomplish? resources available?
  - almost all of the good rejects will appear somewhere else (and in the DL!)

DOUBLE SUBMISSION

Need for policy

- Agreement: "double submission bad-bad-bad"
- But:
  - unclear policy on details
  - who makes determination?
    - e.g., "almost" the same
  - traditional remedy: withdraw from both events
  - but what happens if paper replicas already published?
    - mark in online program? withdraw from DL?
  - cross-society issues?
  - notify academic supervisor/lab director?
- Interest in "CS publishing 101" seminar for young researchers?
  - ethics, good reviewing, common mistakes