

Characterization of ISP Traffic: Trends, User Habits, and Access Technology Impact

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In the recent years, the research community has increased its focus on network monitoring which is seen as a key tool to understand the Internet and the Internet users. Several studies have presented a deep characterization of a particular application, or a particular network, considering the point of view of either the ISP, or the Internet user. In this paper, we take a different perspective. We focus on three European countries where we have been collecting traffic for more than a year and a half through 5 vantage points with different access technologies. This humongous amount of information allows us not only to provide precise, multiple, and quantitative measurements of "What the user do with the Internet" in each country but also to identify common/uncommon patterns and habits across different countries and nations. Considering different time scales, we start presenting the trend of application popularity; then we focus our attention to a one-month long period, and further drill into a typical daily characterization of users activity. Results depict an evolving scenario due to the consolidation of new services as Video Streaming and File Hosting and to the adoption of new P2P technologies. Despite the heterogeneity of the users, some common tendencies emerge that can be leveraged by the ISPs to improve their service.

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