process one
INSTANT MESSAGES | CREATIVE BUSINESSES

Build the realtime web with XMPP and Wave

Collaborating in realtime on the web

2010-03-26 - Erlang Factory

Mickaël Rémond <mremond@process-one.net>

process one
INSTANT MESSAGES | CREATIVE BUSINESSES

Building the real time web: Initial problem

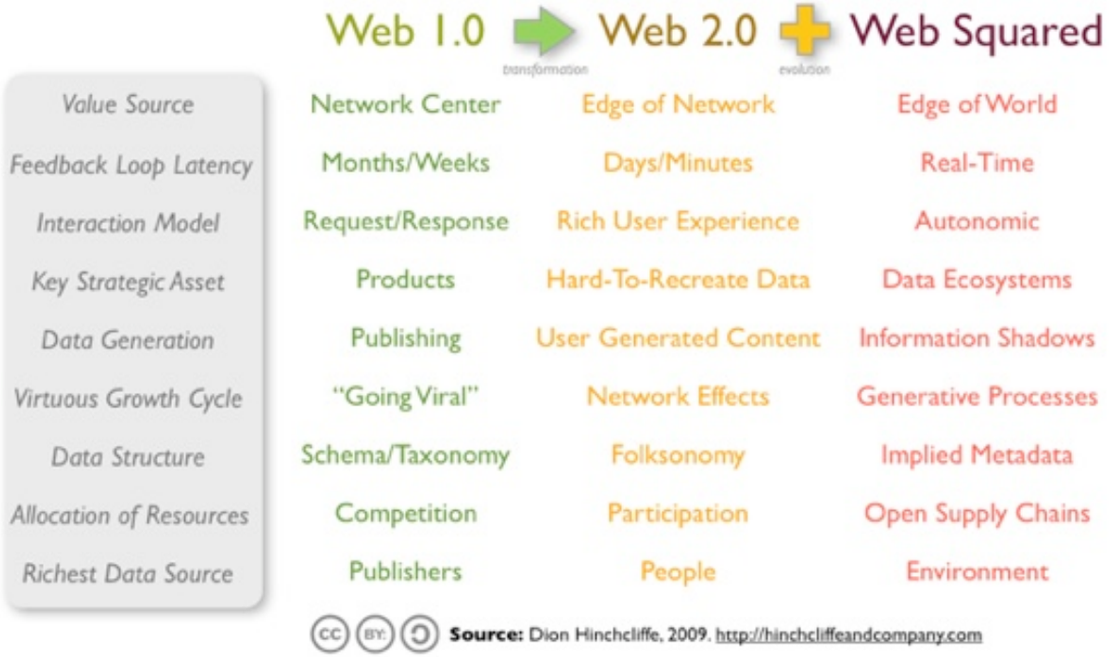
ProcessOne delivers scalable and robust systems to support creative Instant Messaging applications www.process-one.net

Realtime web: A natural trend of the web

Web 3.0 or Web² : real-time platform for data & events

Web 2.0 : platform for persons

Web 1.0 : platform for info & documents



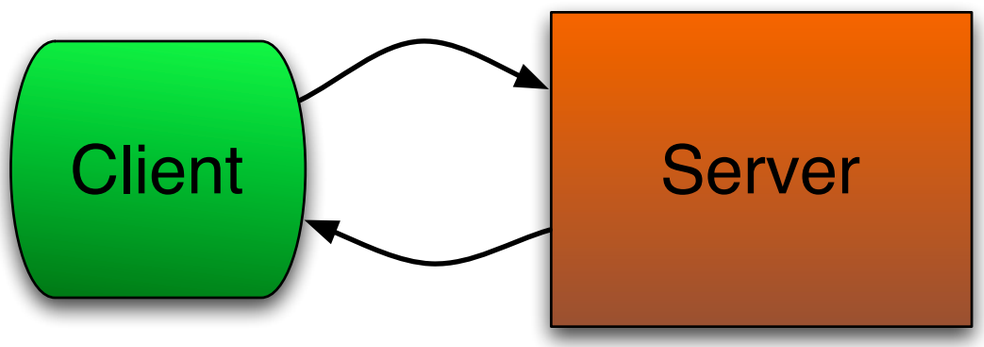
Build with inadequate technologies

- **Inadequate** technologies have been used for that.
- HTTP is **ubiquitous** so it has been used as a basis.
- **request and response** paradigm, not adequate for **push**
  - Push is the basis of realtime web:
    - = distribution of event coming from the server or another client.
- **AJAX** has been invented to **simulate push**, but it is a hack on a technology which is not adequate.

- Most services that claim to be real time are not trully real time.
- Example Twitter:
  - No push: polling based. A client need to send requests frequently to the server to check if there is new content.
  - Event received are most of the time delayed.

HTTP limitations

- Request and response mechanism.
- AJAX work around add an overhead with lots of HTTP headers.
- Lack of addressing scheme: You cannot address a user: You cannot only send content back to an HTTP connection.
- Architecture simple but not very flexible:



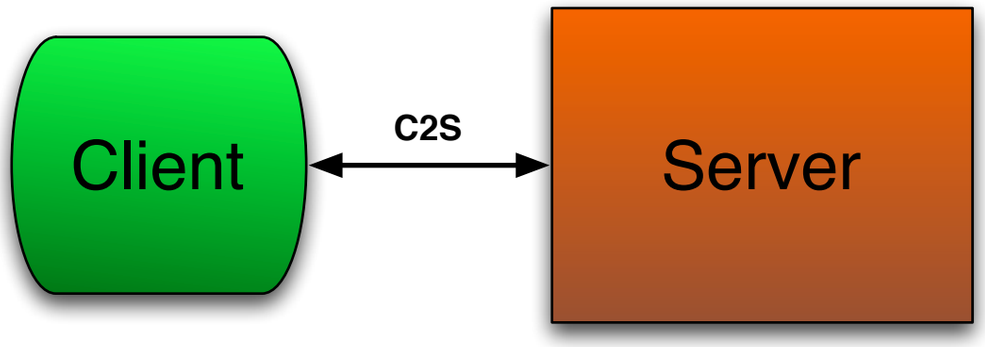
process one
INSTANT MESSAGES | CREATIVE BUSINESSES

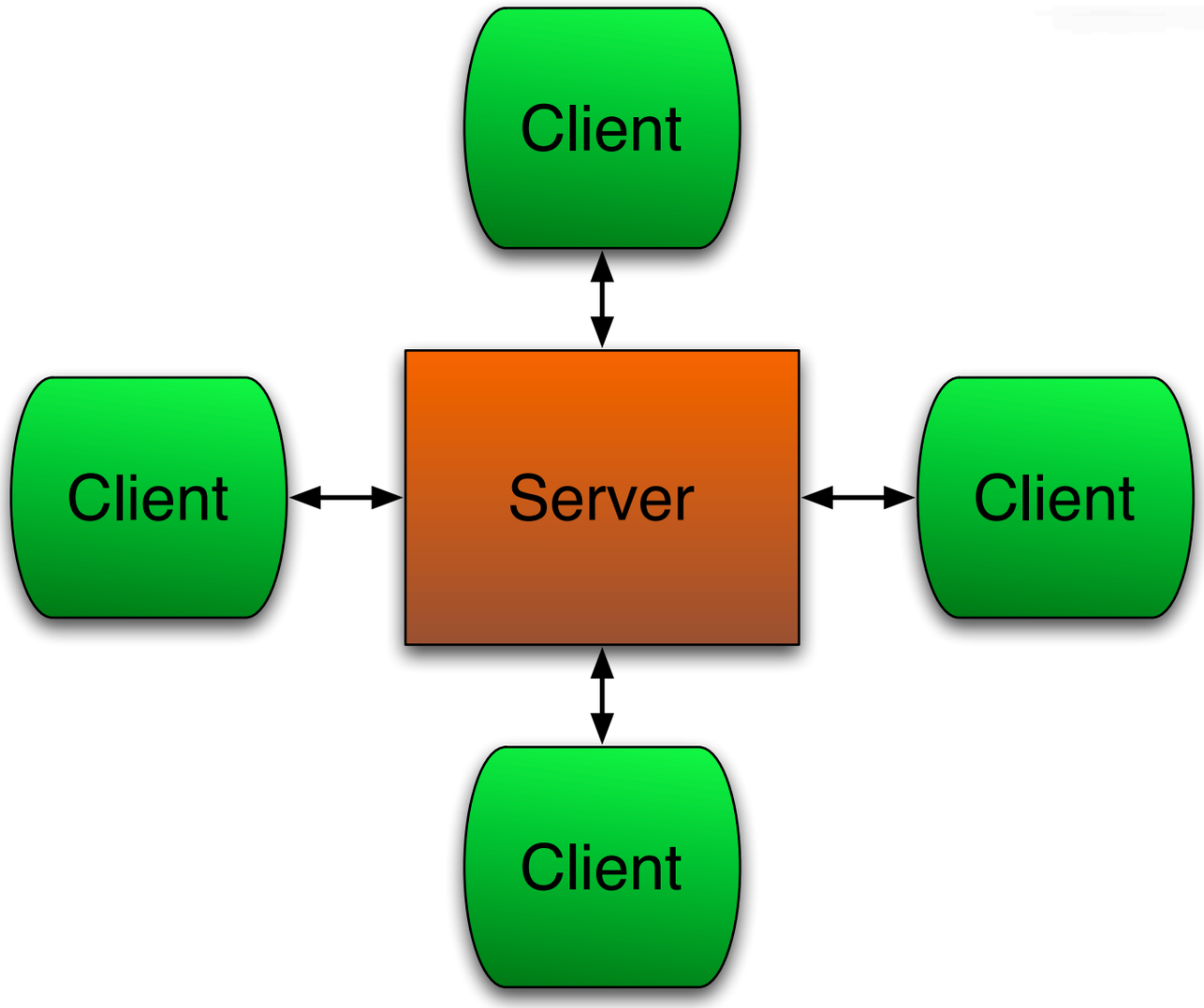
XMPP: emerging solution for realtime user interactions

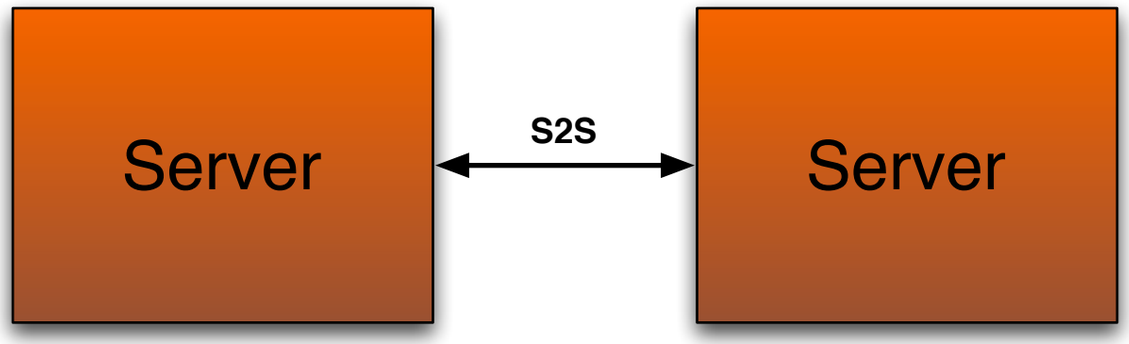
ProcessOne delivers scalable and robust systems to support creative Instant Messaging applications www.process-one.net

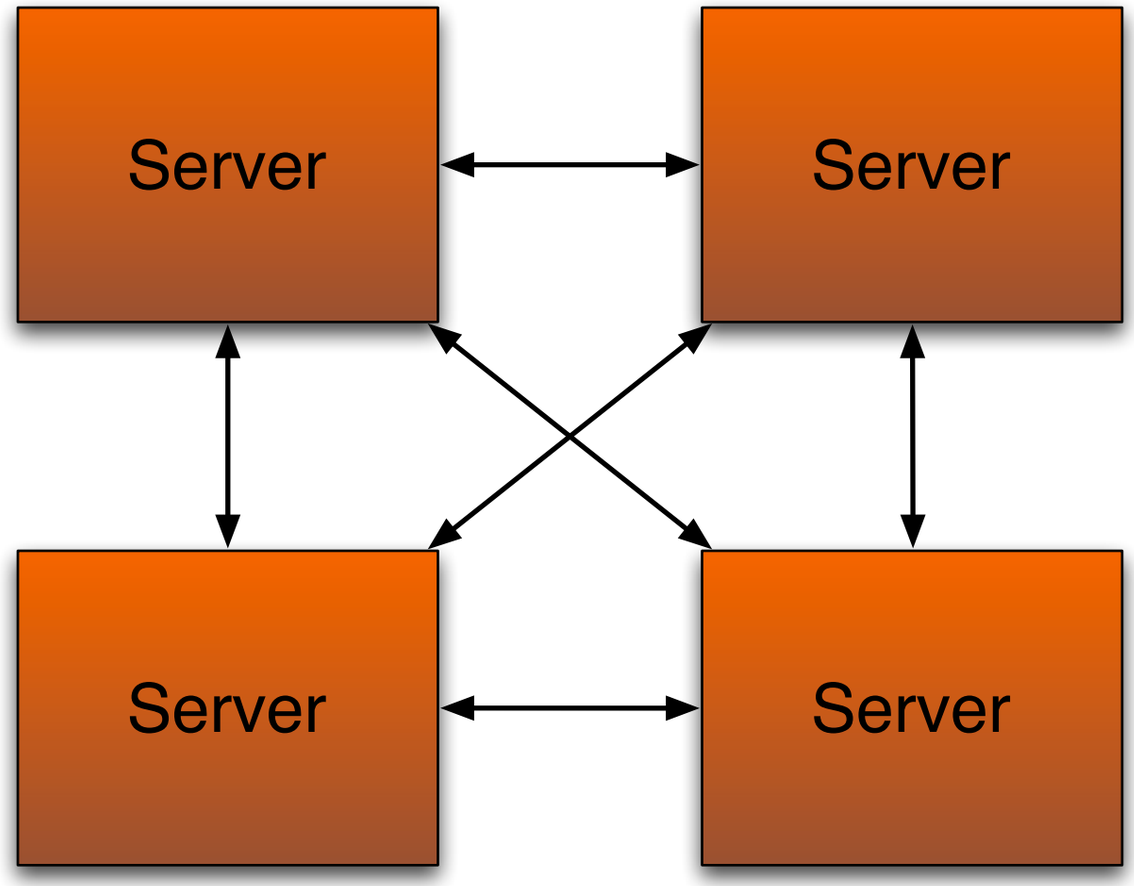
Emerging protocol for realtime web: XMPP

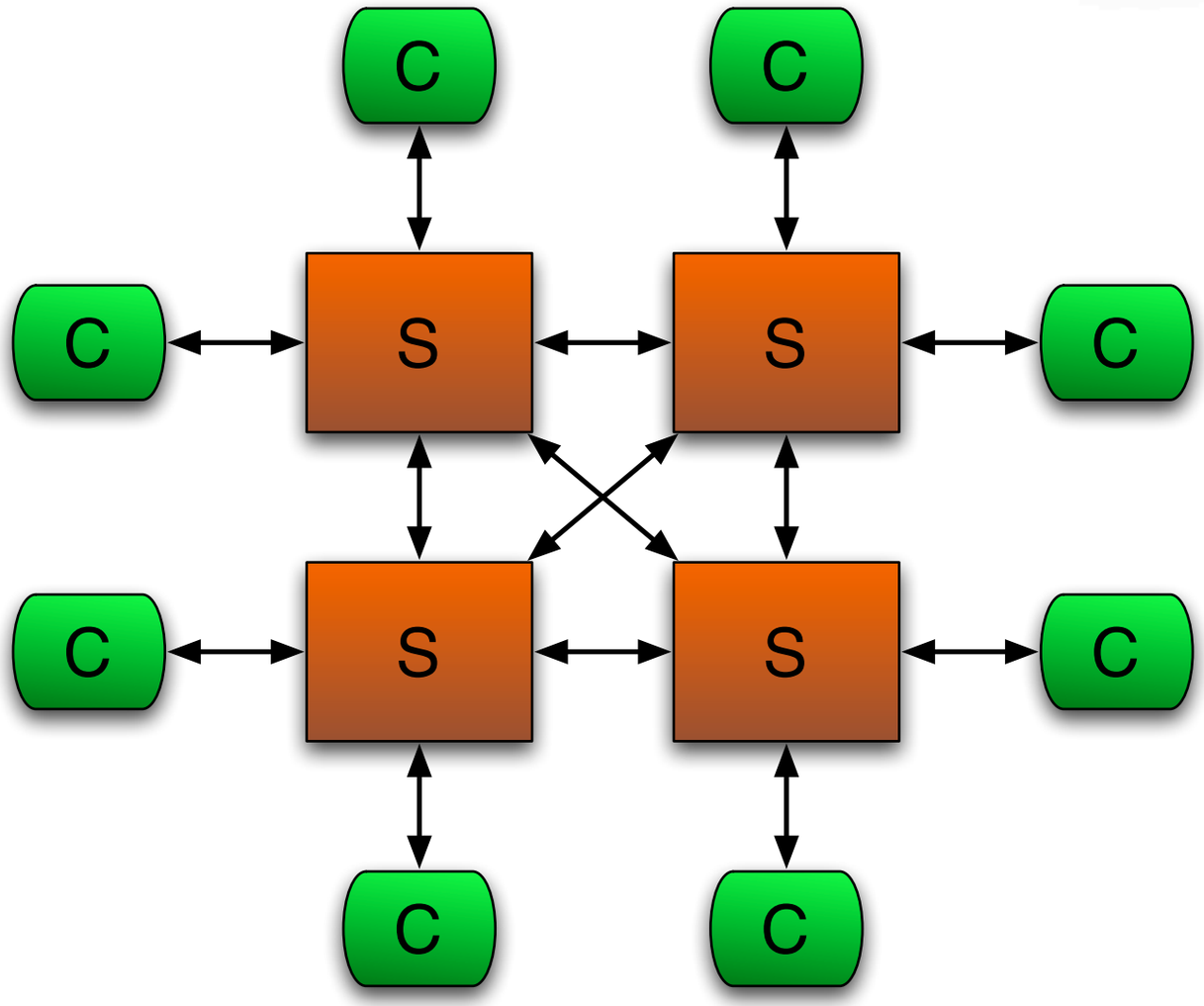
- XMPP = eXtensible Messaging and Presence Protocol
  - Protocol is formerly know as Jabber
  - **IETF** standard
- **Connected protocol** relying on a session. It means you can send but also receive information seamlessly.
- **Addressing scheme**: Each user can be reached by a message from any point in the network with his unique ID: JID.
- **Federated**: It means you can send information across services and across users through servers.
- It supports realtime message distributions that can covers the full scope of need to build realtime web:
  - Can optionally use **HTTP** as transport layer (Bosh).
  - Can use sophisticated and flexible **event distribution** mecanism (pubsub).
  - Can support all types of devices including **mobile**.
  - Can support **flexible** architecture.


Client
C2S
Server


Client
Client
Server
Client
Client


Server
S2S
Server


Server
Server
Server
Server


C
C
C
S
S
C
C
S
S
C
C
C

Demonstrating the power of XMPP for real time web

- **Collecta**: it is transforming Twitter and other social networking publication into true real time events.

- **Chesspark**: Play chess over XMPP in the browser.

- **Wordpress**: Distribute blog post in real time over XMPP.

- **BBC**: Live distribution of radio program in real time.

- **OneWeb**: Browser interaction tool. Control your browser and share bookmark in real time -> Demo.

- In all cases, the technology used is XMPP and pubsub. Oneweb also uses adhoc commands. Chesspark uses groupchat (multi user chat rooms).

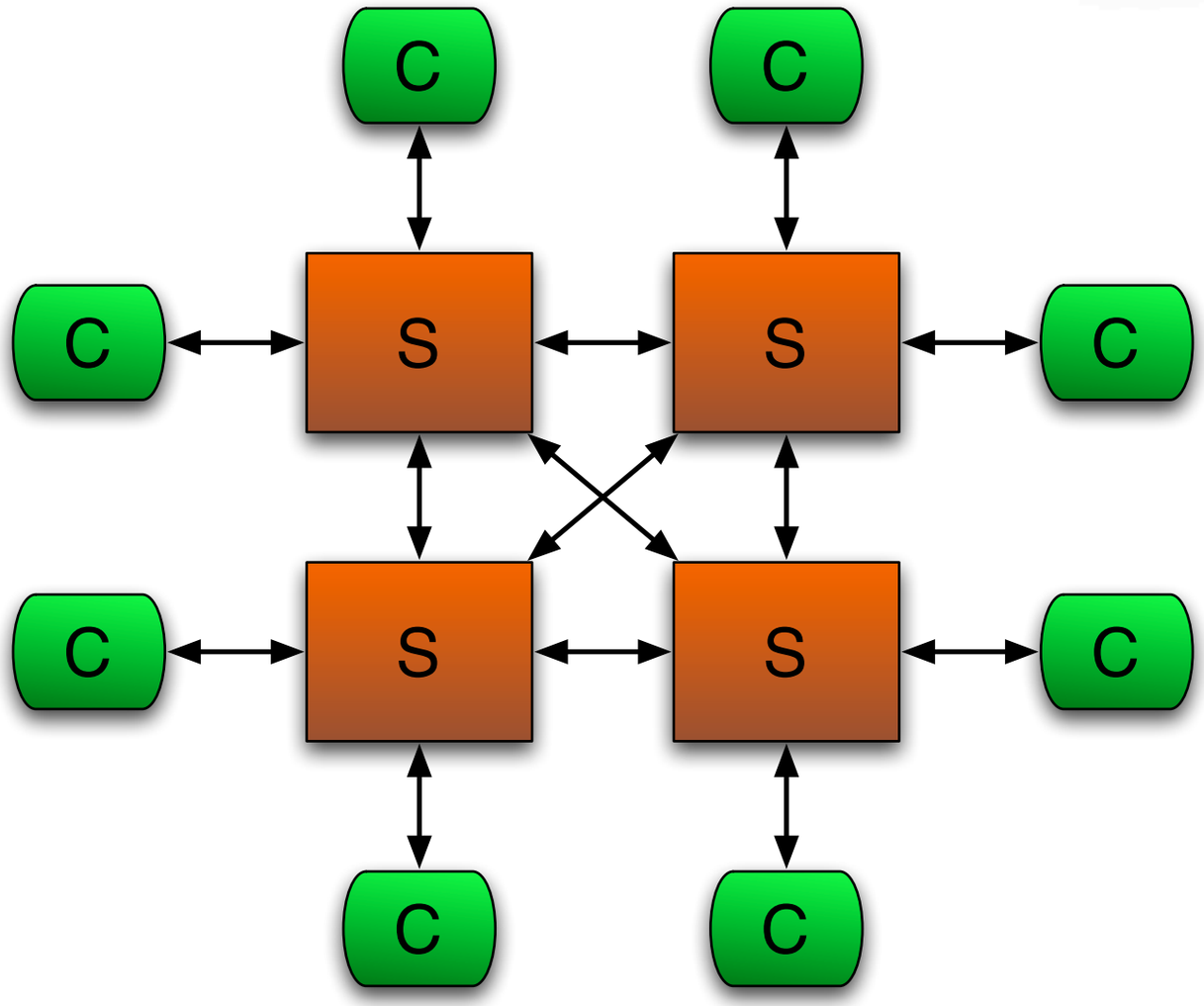
process one
INSTANT MESSAGES | CREATIVE BUSINESSES

Google Wave: emerging solution for realtime user interactions

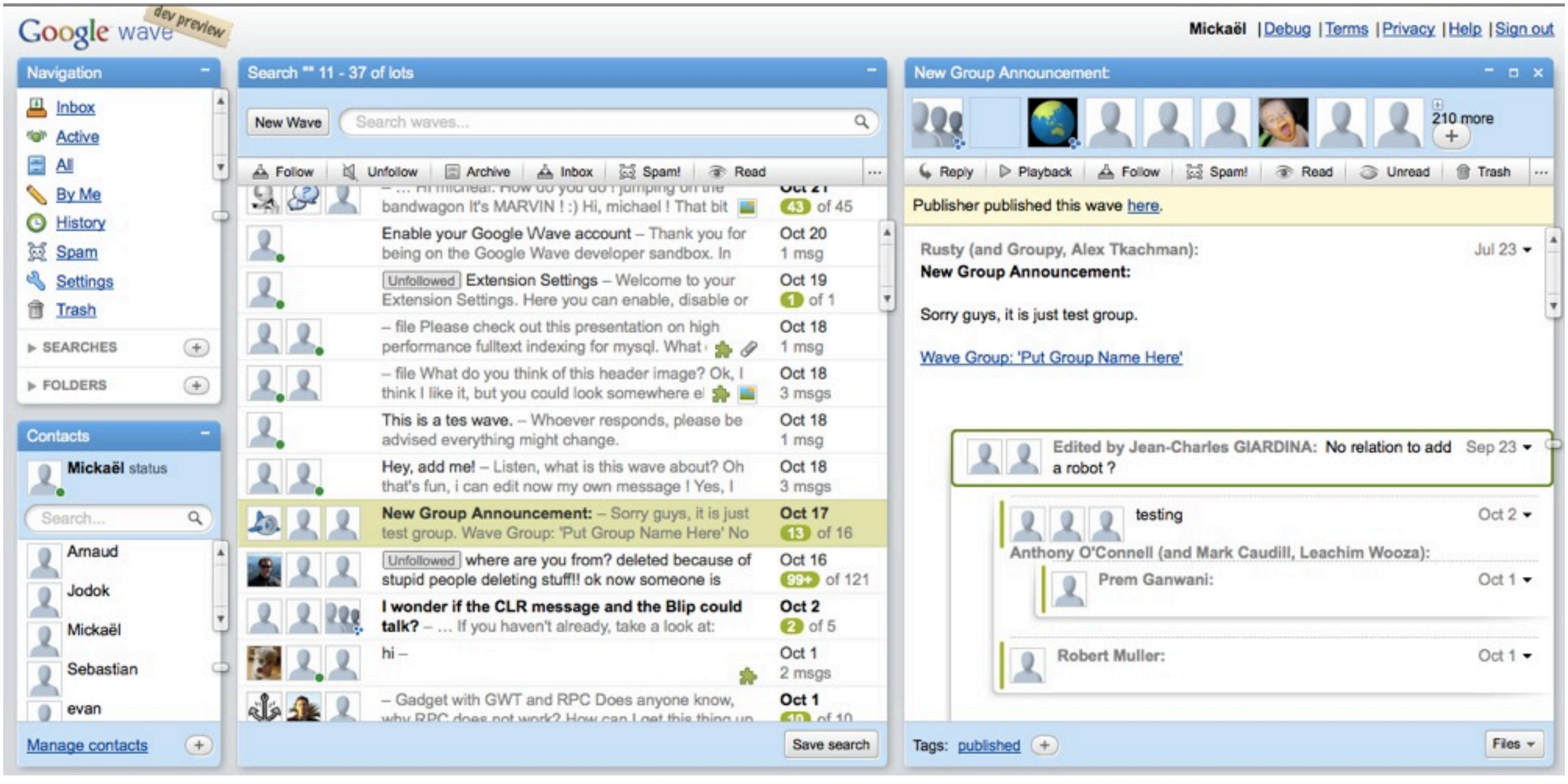
ProcessOne delivers scalable and robust systems to support creative Instant Messaging applications www.process-one.net

What is Wave ?

- A Wave is a real-time social web **object**.
- This « Webject » is a social element that can be **dynamically shared & embedded** with any web services like blogs, wikis, … in real time. Reply, archive, edit and add are available at any point in time in the process.
- **Versioning**: The playback function lets anyone rewind the Webject to see who waveleted, blipped what and when. all history is kept.
- A blended mix of Wave **extensions** : gadgets (run an app), robots (run smart-automated conversation participant), that could be accessed within Wave Inbox.
- **Federation**: There is no central server. You can use your own wave server, participate and invite people to wavelet on your server. Federation is based on XMPP.
- **Open** protocol: People are encouraged to implement their own client and server.


C
C
C
S
S
C
C
S
S
C
C
C

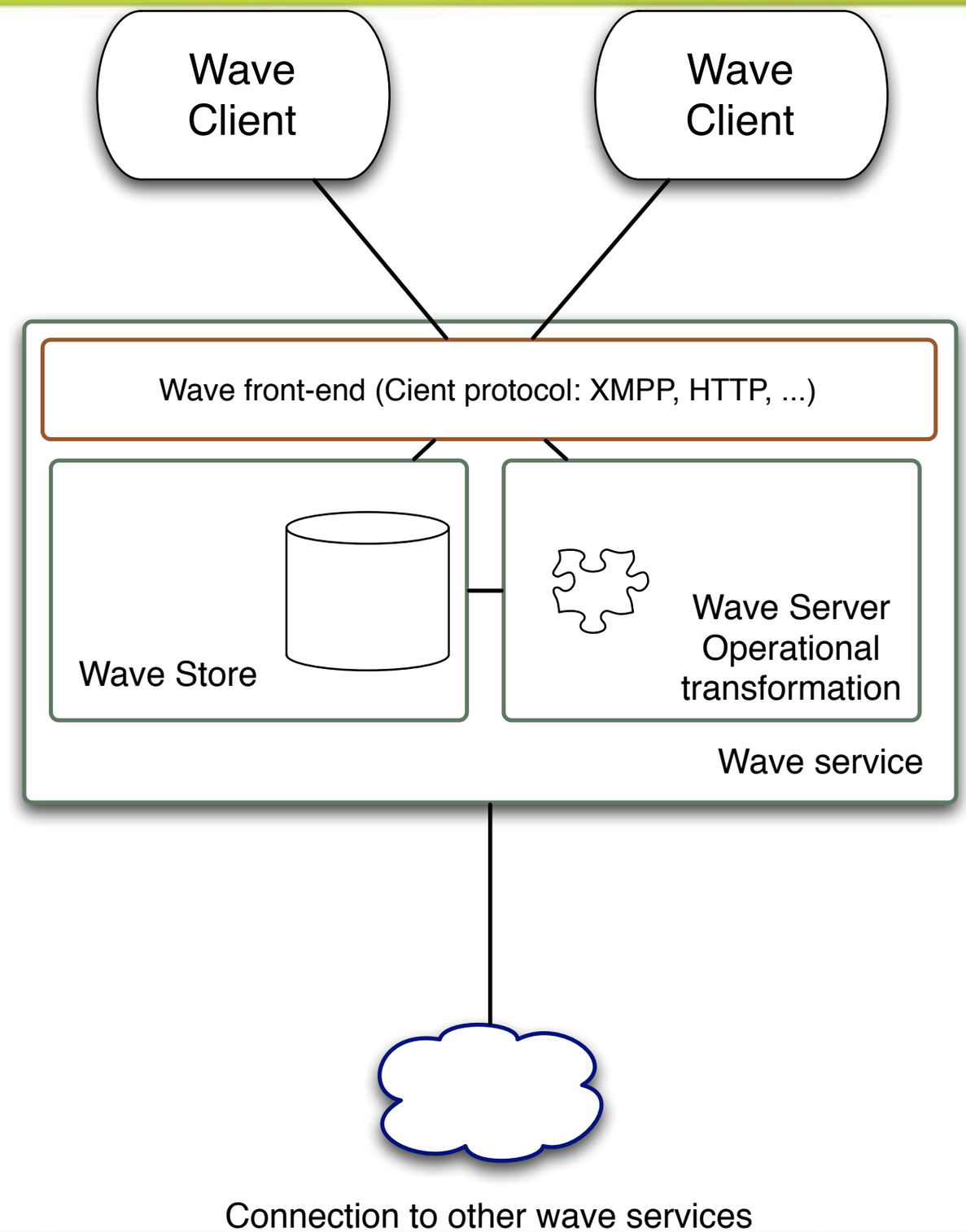
Wave client by Google



Terminology

- **Wave**: a collection of wavelets
- **Wavelet**: a collection of named documents and participants, and the domain of operational transformation. Operational transformation is the mathematical model that allows merging concurrent changes.
- **Blip**: Conversational message
- **Conversation model**: «document format»

How it works ?


Wave Client
Wave Client
Wave front-end (Cient protocol: XMPP, HTTP, ...)
Wave Store
Wave Server Operational transformation
Wave service
Connection to other wave services

The protocols used in Wave

- Low level wave Protocol – Protocol Buffer (protobuf)
- Federation Protocol – XMPP
- Robot Protocol – JSON
- Client-Server Protocol – As defined by the GWT but can be XMPP as well.
- Gadget API – OpenSocial
- Wave Embedded API – Javascript

Difference with XMPP pubsub

- The two technologies looks similar:
  - They are built to distribute events to several participant at the same time
  - They are based on XMPP
- But they have major differences:
  - The core of wave protocol is protobuf (binary) whereas pubsub is XMPP (XML).
  - Wave is XMPP as one of the possible transport for client and only transport for federation.
  - Pubsub is made to distribute events
  - Wave is made to edit a common shared memory space. Distributed events is a side effect.
- Wave and XMPP complete each other because they have different goals.

What is still missing ?

- Wave is still a **work in progress** by the community.
- True client protocol
  - Google Wave client use their own custom protocol (but XMPP can be used)
- Better integration with the XMPP protocol.
- More usage examples.
- Better ecosystem: Bots, Widget, Server and client.

ProcessOne Wave server

- Already implemented for running a wave service:
  - Wave **store**
  - Wave **server** (Operational transform)
  - ejabberd **XMPP** server plugin to run Wave server
  - Client **protocol** over XMPP
  - Federation with servers like the fedone example implementation proposed by Google.
  - Federation with Google Wave.
- Preliminary **demo** with TKabber XMPP client.

process one
INSTANT MESSAGES | CREATIVE BUSINESSES

The end

ProcessOne delivers scalable and robust systems to support creative Instant Messaging applications www.process-one.net

Useful Links

- XMPP: xmpp.org
- Wave:
  - wave.google.com
  - www.waveprotocol.org
- ProcessOne: www.process-one.net
- OneWeb: http://tinyurl.com/p1-oneweb