

DESCRIPTION

Title of Invention

COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND PROGRAM

Technical Field

[0001]

The present invention relates to a communication management system and a program.

Background Art

[0002]

Patent Literature 1 below describes a packet transmission network provided with multiple routing nodes that route transmission packets via routing links, and multiple transmission access interfaces that join one or more client terminals via a client access line on one side, and also connect to a routing node via a routing link on the other side. In this packet transmission network, each transmission access interface converts between client data on a client access line and a transmission packet on a routing link.

Citation List

Patent Literature

[0003]

Patent Literature 1: JP-A-2000-032058

Summary of Invention

Technical Problem

[0004]

An objective of the present invention is to optimize a bandwidth configuration value for each of multiple communication channels.

Solution to Problem

[0005]

A communication management system according to Claim 1 for solving the above problem comprises: communication means that respectively communicates with an information terminal belonging to one of a plurality of groups, via a communication channel assigned to the group to which the information terminal belongs, from among a plurality of communication channels; control means that controls a communication via the communication channel on the basis of a configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel; and bandwidth configuration means that, for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the group to which the communication channel is assigned.

[0006]

In the communication management system according to Claim 2, the communication management system according to Claim 1 further comprises: feature acquisition means that, for each communication channel, acquires features related to the communication traffic volume on the communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the group to which the communication channel is assigned, characterized in that, the bandwidth configuration means, for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel on the basis of whether or not the features acquired for the communication channel satisfy a condition unique to the communication channel.

[0007]

In the communication management system according to Claim 3, the communication management system according to Claim 1 or 2 further comprises: acquisition means that, after the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is configured, repeatedly acquires a total of measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel; comparison means that, every time the total is acquired, compares the acquired total to a total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel; and update means that, on the basis of a comparison result of the comparison means, updates the configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel.

[0008]

Also, the communication management system according to Claim 4 is characterized in that, in the communication management system according to Claim 3, when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means lowers the configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel.

Also, the communication management system according to Claim 5 is characterized in that, in the communication management system according to Claim 4, when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means lowers the configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel, so that the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel does not become less than or equal to the total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel.

[0009]

Also, the communication management system according to Claim 6 is characterized in that, in the communication management system according to Claim 4 or 5, when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means prioritizes lowering the configuration value of bandwidth on a communication channel before lowering the configuration value of bandwidth on a communication channel with a larger configuration value than the communication channel.

[0010]

Also, a program according to Claim 7 for solving the above problem causes a computer to function as: communication means that respectively communicates with an information terminal belonging to one of a plurality of groups, via a communication channel assigned to the group to which the information terminal belongs, from among a plurality of communication channels; control means that controls a communication via the communication channel on the basis of a configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel; and bandwidth configuration means that, for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of bandwidth on the

communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the group to which the communication channel is assigned.

Advantageous Effects of Invention

[0011]

According to claims 1 and 7, it is possible to optimize a bandwidth configuration value for each of multiple communication channels.

[0012]

Also, according to claim 2, it is possible to more reliably optimize a bandwidth configuration value for each of multiple communication channels.

[0013]

Also, according to claim 3, it is possible to continuously adjust a configuration value while accounting for a measured value of actual bandwidth on each communication channel.

[0014]

Also, according to claim 4, it is possible to continuously optimize a configuration value while accounting for a measured value of actual bandwidth on each communication channel.

[0015]

Also, according to claim 5, continuous optimization of a configuration value while accounting for a measured value of actual bandwidth on each communication channel may be conducted while ensuring user quality of experience.

[0016]

Also, according to claim 6, configuration value optimization may be conducted according to communication channel.

Brief Description of Drawings

[0017]

[FIG. 1] FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating an example of a configuration of a communication management system.

[FIG. 2] FIG. 2 is a diagram illustrating a subset of structural elements in a communication management system.

[FIG. 3] FIG. 3 is a diagram illustrating an example of transition data.

[FIG. 4] FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating an example of a time transition.

[FIG. 5] FIG. 5 is a diagram illustrating an example of stored content in a bandwidth database.

[FIG. 6] FIG. 6 is a diagram partially illustrating another subset of structural elements in a communication management system.

Description of Embodiments

[0018]

As illustrated in FIG. 1, as an example, a communication management system 2 according to the present exemplary embodiment is applied to a cloud service system 1 that provides an information processing service to respective terminals (information terminals) 10 that belong to any of multiple groups. Herein, client organizations 8 correspond to "groups", in which one client organization 8 represents one "group". The communication management system 2 manages communication traffic as the cloud service system 1 provides the information processing service to each terminal 10. Herein, the cloud service system 1 is operated by a mobile virtual network operator (hereinafter abbreviated MVNO) that leases multiple communication channels 6 from a telecommunications carrier possessing a physical communication network 4, and is made up of one or multiple servers that provide an information processing service. For example, the cloud service system 1 may include servers such as a multimedia server that delivers multimedia content, a document management server, and a translation server.

[0019]

Herein, suppose the MVNO leases three communication channels 6 (a communication channel 6G, a communication channel 6S, and a communication channel 6B), as illustrated in FIG. 1. The bandwidth of each communication channel 6 (that is, the communication capacity per unit time) has a variable configuration value, and as discussed later, the communication management system 2 manages the configuration value of each communication channel 6.

[0020]

A communication channel 6 is assigned to each client organization 8 which is a client of the MVNO, depending on the class of the client organization 8. The cloud

service system 1 communicates with each terminal 10 via the communication channel 6 assigned to the client organization 8 to which that terminal 10 belongs, and each client organization 8 uses the communication channel 6 assigned to itself to receive the provision of an information processing service. In the present exemplary embodiment, the communication channel 6G is assigned to a gold-class client organization 8G that has signed the most expensive contract with the MVNO. Communication with a terminal 10 belonging to the client organization 8G is conducted via the communication channel 6G. Also, the communication channel 6S is assigned to a silver-class client organization 8S that has signed the second most expensive contract with the MVNO. Communication with a terminal 10 belonging to the client organization 8S is conducted via the communication channel 6S. Also, the communication channel 6B is assigned to a bronze-class client organization 8B that has signed the least expensive contract with the MVNO. Communication with a terminal 10 belonging to the client organization 8B is conducted via the communication channel 6B.

[0021]

Note that a client organization 8 is an organization that includes multiple individuals, such as a company or association. Also, although the following describes the terminal 10 as being a portable information terminal such as a smartphone, tablet PC, or mobile phone, the terminal 10 may also be a stationary information terminal such as a desktop PC. In addition, since the terminal 10 is a portable information terminal, the following describes the physical communication network 4 and the terminal 10 as having a wireless connection, but the physical communication network 4 and the terminal 10 may also have a wired connection.

[0022]

The cloud service system 1 herein attempts to optimize the configuration value of the bandwidth of each communication channel 6 while ensuring the user quality of experience (QoE). This point is described below.

[0023]

Note that in the following, the communication channel 6G may be designated "Ch1" in some cases. Also, the communication channel 6S may be designated "Ch2" in some cases. Also, the communication channel 6B may be designated "Ch3" in some cases.

[0024]

FIG. 2 is a diagram illustrating a subset of structural elements in the communication management system 2. In the present exemplary embodiment, each structural element is realized by one of the servers constituting the cloud service system 1.

[0025]

[Transition data DB]

As illustrated in FIG. 2, the communication management system 2 is equipped with a transition data database (hereinafter designated the transition data DB) 2-1. The transition data DB 2-1 stores transition data.

[0026]

Transition data indicates time transitions in the communication traffic volume for each client organization 8 over a predetermined period. FIG. 3 is a diagram illustrating an example of transition data. In the present exemplary embodiment, the above predetermined period is "one day", and the transition data stores, in association with a client ID of each client organization 8, transition pattern data indicating time transitions in the communication traffic volume of that client organization 8 over one day, and a feature vector r indicating features related to the relevant time transitions. The transition pattern data is obtained by measuring the communication traffic volume of a client organization 8 over several days, and averaging the measured result for each day for individual time slots. The transition pattern data is updated as appropriate. The time transitions indicated by the transition pattern data are also called an action profile curve (APC).

[0027]

Note that, although not illustrated in the drawings, the transition data also stores other information in association with the client ID of each client organization 8, such as an ID of the communication channel 6 assigned to that client organization, and a list of terminals 10 belonging to that client organization 8. For this reason, by referencing the transition data, it is possible to identify the communication channel 6 assigned to an individual client organization 8, and the client organization 8 to which an individual terminal 10 belongs.

[0028]

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating an example of time transitions expressed by

transition pattern data. The horizontal axis T indicates the elapsed time since 0:00 midnight, while the vertical axis B indicates the communication traffic volume. Since a certain number of people belong to a client organization 8, individual randomness is cancelled out, and the time transitions become a static pattern. Also, if a client organization 8 is of sufficiently large scale, the shape of the time transitions approaches a Gaussian distribution. Note that T_{max} is the time T at which the communication traffic volume reaches a peak, while B_{max} is the peak value of the communication traffic volume. The feature vector r is a vector whose components are T_{max} and B_{max} (see FIG. 3).

[0029]

Ordinarily, time transitions reflect the characteristics of the business conducted by the client organization 8. For example, for a business that deals with customers concentrated in the evening, such as a bank, a peak appears in the evening. For this reason, the time transitions indicate a trend unique to the client organization.

[0030]

[Feature acquisition unit]

Additionally, the communication management system 2 is equipped with a feature acquisition unit 2-2. The feature acquisition unit 2-2 reads out transition data from the transition data DB 2-1. For example, the feature acquisition unit 2-2 reads out transition data at a predetermined time (for example, at 0:00 midnight). Subsequently, on the basis of the read-out transition data, the feature acquisition unit 2-2 acquires, for each communication channel 6, features related to the communication traffic volume on that communication channel 6.

[0031]

In the case of the present exemplary embodiment, the feature acquisition unit 2-2 includes a first feature acquisition unit 2-2G, a second feature acquisition unit 2-2S, and a third feature acquisition unit 2-2B. The first feature acquisition unit 2-2G, on the basis of the transition data, acquires features related to the communication traffic volume on the communication channel Ch1. Specifically, the first feature acquisition unit 2-2G computes the vector sum of a feature vector r associated with the client ID of the gold-class client organization 8G. Note that in FIG. 2, the feature vector r associated with the client ID of the client organization 8G is designated "r_G", and the vector sum is designated "Σr_G".

[0032]

Additionally, the first feature acquisition unit 2-2G computes the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_G|$ " of the vector sum " Σr_G " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_G)$ " of the vector sum " Σr_G " as the features.

[0033]

Also, the second feature acquisition unit 2-2S, on the basis of the transition data, acquires features related to the communication traffic volume on the communication channel Ch2. Specifically, the second feature acquisition unit 2-2S computes the vector sum of a feature vector r associated with the client ID of the silver-class client organization 8S. Note that in FIG. 2, the feature vector r associated with the client ID of the client organization 8S is designated " r_s ", and the vector sum is designated " Σr_s ". Additionally, the second feature acquisition unit 2-2S computes the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_s|$ " of the vector sum " Σr_s " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_s)$ " of the vector sum " Σr_s " as the features.

[0034]

Also, the third feature acquisition unit 2-2B, on the basis of the transition data, acquires features related to the communication traffic volume on the communication channel Ch3. Specifically, the third feature acquisition unit 2-2B computes the vector sum of a feature vector r associated with the client ID of the bronze-class client organization 8B. Note that in FIG. 2, the feature vector r associated with the client ID of the client organization 8B is designated " r_B ", and the vector sum is designated " Σr_B ". Additionally, the third feature acquisition unit 2-2B computes the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_B|$ " of the vector sum " Σr_B " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_B)$ " of the vector sum " Σr_B " as the features.

[0035]

[Determination unit]

Additionally, the communication management system 2, is equipped with a determination unit 2-3. The determination unit 2-3 determines, for each communication channel 6, whether or not the features acquired by the feature acquisition unit 2-2 for that communication channel 6 satisfy a condition unique to that communication channel. In the present exemplary embodiment, the determination unit 2-3 includes a first determination unit 2-3G, a second determination unit 2-3S, and a third determination unit 2-3B.

[0036]

The first determination unit 2-3G determines whether or not both the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_G|$ " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_G)$ " satisfy a condition unique to the communication channel Ch1. Specifically, the first determination unit 2-3G determines whether or not the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_G|$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit scalar quantity R_G unique to the communication channel Ch1, and also whether or not the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_G)$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit argument θ_G . In other words, the first determination unit 2-3G determines whether or not both of the following two inequalities hold true.

[0037]

$$|\Sigma r_G| \leq R_G \quad \dots \text{Inequality (1)}$$

$$\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_G) \leq \theta_G \quad \dots \text{Inequality (2)}$$

[0038]

Also, the second determination unit 2-3S determines whether or not both the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_S|$ " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_S)$ " satisfy a condition unique to the communication channel Ch2. Specifically, the second determination unit 2-3S determines whether or not the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_S|$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit scalar quantity R_S unique to the communication channel Ch2, and also whether or not the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_S)$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit argument θ_S . In other words, the second determination unit 2-3S determines whether or not both of the following two inequalities hold true.

[0039]

$$|\Sigma r_S| \leq R_S \quad \dots \text{Inequality (3)}$$

$$\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_S) \leq \theta_S \dots \text{Inequality (4)}$$

[0040]

Also, the third determination unit 2-3B determines whether or not both the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_B|$ " and the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_B)$ " satisfy a condition unique to the communication channel Ch3. Specifically, the third determination unit 2-3B determines whether or not the scalar quantity " $|\Sigma r_B|$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit scalar quantity R_B unique to the communication channel Ch3, and also whether or not the argument " $\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_B)$ " is less than or equal to an upper-limit argument θ_B . In other words, the third determination unit 3-3B determines whether

or not both of the following two inequalities hold true.

[0041]

$$|\Sigma r_B| \leq R_B \quad \dots \text{Inequality (5)}$$

$$\text{Arg}(\Sigma r_B) \leq \theta_B \dots \text{Inequality (6)}$$

[0042]

[Configuration unit, bandwidth database]

In addition, the communication management system 2 is equipped with a configuration unit 2-4 and a bandwidth database (hereinafter designated the bandwidth DB) 2-5. The bandwidth DB 2-5 stores, in association with each communication channel 6, a configuration value of the bandwidth on that communication channel 6. FIG. 5 illustrates an example of the stored content in the bandwidth DB 2-5. As illustrated in the figure, the bandwidth DB 2-5 stores, in association with an ID of each communication channel 6, a configuration value of the bandwidth on that communication channel 6. In other words, the bandwidth DB 2-5 stores a configuration value BW_G of the bandwidth on the communication channel Ch1 in association with the ID of the communication channel Ch1, stores a configuration value BW_S of the bandwidth on the communication channel Ch2 in association with the ID of the communication channel Ch2, and stores a configuration value BW_B of the bandwidth on the communication channel Ch3 in association with the ID of the communication channel Ch3. Note that the configuration values BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B are configured so that the inequality " $BW_G > BW_S > BW_B$ " holds true. In other words, the configuration value BW_G is configured to a value that is greater than a preset value $BW2$ but less than or equal to a preset value $BW1$, the configuration value BW_S is configured to a value that is greater than a preset value $BW3$ but less than or equal to the preset value $BW2$, and the configuration value BW_B is configured to a value that is greater than a preset value $BW4$ but less than or equal to the preset value $BW3$.

[0043]

Hereinafter, the configuration values BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B will be collectively designated BW in some cases.

[0044]

In addition, the configuration unit 2-4 configures, for each communication channel 6, the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on that communication

channel 6, on the basis of a determination result of the determination unit 2-3. In the present exemplary embodiment, the configuration unit 2-4 includes a first configuration unit 2-4G, a second configuration unit 2-4S, and a third configuration unit 2-4B.

[0045]

The first configuration unit 2-4G configures the configuration value BW_G on the basis of a determination result of the first determination unit 2-3G. Herein, the first configuration unit 2-4G configures the configuration value BW_G to the above $BW1$ if the above Inequality (1) or Inequality (2) does not hold true, and configures the configuration value BW_G to a value between the above $BW2$ and the above $BW1$ if Inequality (1) and Inequality (2) both hold true. Also, the second configuration unit 2-4S configures the configuration value BW_S to the above $BW2$ if the above Inequality (3) or Inequality (4) does not hold true, and configures the configuration value BW_S to a value between the above $B3$ and the above $B2$ if Inequality (3) and Inequality (4) both hold true. Also, the third configuration unit 2-4B configures the configuration value BW_B to the above $BW3$ if the above Inequality (5) or Inequality (6) does not hold true, and configures the configuration value BW_B to a value between the above $BW4$ and the above $BW3$ if Inequality (5) and Inequality (6) both hold true.

[0046]

In this way, the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on each communication channel 6 is configured periodically. Since the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on each communication channel 6 is configured from features related to the communication traffic volume on each communication channel 6, the configuration values BW are optimized while ensuring the user quality of experience.

[0047]

[Communication unit, delivery database]

Note that the communication management system 2 is equipped with a communication unit 2-6 and a delivery database (hereinafter, delivery DB) 2-7.

[0048]

The communication unit 2-6 communicates with each terminal 10 via the communication channel 6 assigned to the client organization 8 to which that terminal 10 belongs. In other words, the communication unit 2-6 provides an information processing service to each terminal 10 via the communication channel 6 assigned to

the client organization 8 to which that terminal 10 belongs. Specifically, delivery data generated by the cloud service system 1 is plurally stored in the delivery DB 2-7. For each individual piece of delivery data, information such as the delivery destination terminal 10 and the delivery execution time are decided, and the communication unit 2-6 transmits, via one of the communication channels 6, delivery data whose delivery execution time has arrived.

[0049]

More specifically, the communication unit 2-6 includes a Ch1 queue 2-6G, a Ch2 queue 2-6S, and a Ch3 queue 2-6B. These queues are buffers that hold data in a first-in, first-out format. When transmitting delivery data whose delivery execution time has arrived, the communication unit 2-6 splits the delivery data into a group of packets of a predetermined data size, and enqueues the packet group in the queue of the communication channel 6 assigned to the client organization 8 to which the delivery destination terminal 10 belongs. For example, if the client organization 8 to which the delivery destination terminal 10 belongs is the gold-class client organization 8G, the communication unit 2-6 enqueues the packet group in the Ch1 queue 2-6G. Delivery data inserted into the queue is sent to the corresponding communication channel 6 in a first-in, first-out order. In other words, delivery data enqueued in the Ch1 queue 2-6G is sent to Ch1, delivery data enqueued in the Ch2 queue 2-6S is sent to Ch2, and delivery data enqueued in the Ch3 queue 2-6B is sent to Ch3.

[0050]

The role of the communication unit 2-6 is not limited to the above. When providing an information processing service to each terminal 10, the communication unit 2-6 controls the transmission of delivery data from each communication channel 6 on the basis of the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on that communication channel 6. In other words, the communication unit 2-6 controls the transmission of delivery data from the communication channel Ch1 on the basis of the configuration value BW_G , controls the transmission of delivery data from the communication channel Ch2 on the basis of the configuration value BW_S , and controls the transmission of delivery data from the communication channel Ch3 on the basis of the configuration value BW_B .

[0051]

Specifically, the communication unit 2-6 includes a communication controller 2-

8. The communication controller 2-8 monitors each queue, and conducts traffic shaping (also called packet shift) so that the data volume per unit time sent to each communication channel 6 does not exceed the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on that communication channel 6. Hereinafter, the Ch1 queue 2-6G will be used as an example to describe traffic shaping. With traffic shaping, all time slots in a queue are sequentially configured as the current time slot CT starting from the first time slot, and the following process is executed for the current time slot CT. Namely, the communication controller 2-8 determines whether or not the current time slot has free space. Specifically, the communication controller 2-8 computes the total data volume of all packets in the current time slot, and determines whether or not the total value is less than or equal to the configuration value BW_G of the bandwidth on Ch1. Subsequently, if the total value exceeds the configuration value BW_G , or in other words, if there is no free space in the current time slot CT, excess packets are shifted to a trailing time slot with free space, whereas if there is free space in the current time slot CT, the next time slot is configured as the current time slot CT. Note that if there is no free space in the trailing time slot, the communication controller 2-8 may also search for another queue with free space in the current time slot CT, and shift excess packets to the current time slot CT of a found communication channel 6.

[0052]

The structural elements of the communication management system 2 are not limited to the above. For example, the data volume per unit time flowing through each communication channel 6, or in other words, the actual bandwidth of each communication channel 6 changes from one moment to the next. Accordingly, the communication management system 2 is also configured to use the actual bandwidth of each communication channel 6 as feedback, so that the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on each communication channel 6 is adjusted according to the feedback results. This point is described below.

[0053]

FIG. 6 is a diagram illustrating another subset of structural elements in the communication management system 2.

[0054]

[Actual bandwidth acquisition unit]

As illustrated in FIG. 6, the communication management system 2 is equipped

with an actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9. The actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 repeatedly acquires a measured value of the actual bandwidth on each communication channel 6, after the configuration value BW of the bandwidth is configured on each communication channel 6. In other words, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 acquires a measured value $BW_{Gtraffic}$ of the actual bandwidth on the communication channel Ch1, a measured value $BW_{Straffic}$ of the actual bandwidth on the communication channel Ch2, and a measured value $BW_{Btraffic}$ of the actual bandwidth on the communication channel Ch3, at a predetermined time interval (for example, a 10 minute interval). The time interval for acquiring the measured value $BW_{Gtraffic}$, $BW_{Straffic}$, and $BW_{Btraffic}$ is shorter than the time interval for configuring the configuration values BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B .

[0055]

Although there are many methods of acquiring the measured values, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 may acquire the measured values as described below, for example.

[0056]

Namely, at the above predetermined time interval, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 selects, one at a time, a terminal 10 belonging to the gold-class client organization 8G (hereinafter designated the terminal G), a terminal 10 belonging to the silver-class client organization 8S (hereinafter designated the terminal S), and a terminal 10 belonging to the bronze-class client organization 8B (hereinafter designated the terminal B), and transmits an actual bandwidth measurement instruction to each of the selected terminals 10. Subsequently, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 receives a measured value returned from the terminal G as the measured value $BW_{Gtraffic}$, receives a measured value returned from the terminal S as the measured value $BW_{Straffic}$, and receives a measured value returned from the terminal B as the measured value $BW_{Btraffic}$. Note that if a measured value is not returned from any of the terminal G, the terminal S, and the terminal B within a predetermined time since the transmission of the measurement instruction, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 may reselect any of the terminal G, the terminal S, and the terminal B, and retransmit the measurement instruction to each of the reselected terminal G, terminal S, and terminal B.

[0057]

Note that a terminal 10 receiving a measurement instruction measures the actual bandwidth as described below, for example. In other words, the terminal 10 receiving a measurement instruction transmits a dummy packet to the communication management system 2, and from the reception result of an acknowledgement returned in response, measures the packet loss ratio p and the round-trip time RTT . Subsequently, the packet loss ratio p , the round-trip time RTT , and a preset maximum segment size MSS are substituted into what is called a throughput equation, a measured value of the actual bandwidth is computed, and the computed measurement value is transmitted to the communication management system 2. The measured value computed by the terminal G corresponds to $BW_{Gtraffic}$, while the measured value computed by the terminal S corresponds to $BW_{Straffic}$, and the measured value computed by the terminal B corresponds to $BW_{Btraffic}$.

[0058]

[Total acquisition unit]

Additionally, the communication management system 2 is equipped with a total acquisition unit 2-10. The total acquisition unit 2-10 repeatedly computes the total $BW_{traffic}$ of the measured values $BW_{Gtraffic}$, $BW_{Straffic}$, and $BW_{Btraffic}$ of the actual bandwidth on each communication channel 6. Specifically, the total acquisition unit 2-10 computes the total $BW_{traffic}$ every time the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 acquires the measured values $BW_{Gtraffic}$, $BW_{Straffic}$, and $BW_{Btraffic}$.

[0059]

[Comparison unit, update unit]

Additionally, the communication management system 2 is equipped with a comparison unit 2-11 and an update unit 2-12. Every time the total $BW_{traffic}$ is computed, the comparison unit 2-11 reads out the configuration values BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B from the bandwidth DB 2-5, and compares the total BW_{SUM} of the read-out configuration values ($BW_G + BW_S + BW_B$) to the total $BW_{traffic}$.

[0060]

Also, every time the total $BW_{traffic}$ and the total BW_{SUM} are compared, the update unit 2-12 updates at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B on the basis of the comparison result. In the present exemplary embodiment, if the total $BW_{traffic}$ is smaller than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 lowers the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B so that the total BW_{SUM} does not become less than or equal to

BW_{traffic} .

[0061]

For example, if the total BW_{traffic} is smaller than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 computes a value δ that is one-third the difference Δ between the total BW_{SUM} and the total BW_{traffic} ($\delta = \Delta / 3$), and lowers the value of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B by δ .

[0062]

As another example, if the total BW_{traffic} is smaller than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 lowers each of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B by a value depending on the type of communication channel 6. For example, the update unit 2-12 computes a value δ_1 that is one-sixth Δ ($\delta_1 = \Delta / 6$), and lowers the value of BW_G by δ_1 , lowers the value of BW_S by the double of δ_1 , and lowers the value of BW_B by the triple of δ_1 .

[0063]

Herein, if the total BW_{traffic} is smaller than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 lowers the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B according to a priority order of BW_B ($BW_B < BW_S$, BW_G), BW_S ($BW_S < BW_G$), and BW_G . In other words, the update unit 2-12 prioritizes lowering the configuration value BW_B by Δ before lowering BW_S and BW_G . However, if " $BW_B - \Delta$ " becomes less than or equal to the lower-bound value BW_4 , the update unit 2-12 prioritizes lowering the configuration value BW_S by Δ before lowering BW_G . Note that if " $BW_S - \Delta$ " becomes less than or equal to the lower-bound value BW_3 , the update unit 2-12 lowers the final remaining configuration value BW_G by Δ .

[0064]

In this way, the update unit 2-12 repeatedly updates the value of at least one of the configuration values BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B at the above predetermined time interval.

[0065]

In this way, in the communication management system 2, the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on each communication channel 6 is continuously adjusted according to a measured value of the actual bandwidth on each communication channel 6. Thus, the configuration value BW of the bandwidth on each communication channel 6 is continuously optimized.

[0066]

Note that an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is not limited to

just the above exemplary embodiment.

[0067]

For example, in the above, contracts for client organizations 8 are prepared by the MVNO, but contracts for individuals may also be prepared. For example, the contracts prepared as contracts for individuals may be a gold contract for users with a high usage frequency during the nighttime (hereinafter designated night users), a silver contract for night users, a bronze contract for night users, a gold contract for users with a high usage frequency during the daytime (hereinafter designated day users), a silver contract for day users, and a bronze contract for day users. In this case, one contract represents one "group", rather than one client organization 8 representing one "group". In addition, Ch1 is assigned to the groups corresponding to each of the night user gold contract and the day user gold contract, while Ch2 is assigned to the groups corresponding to each of the night user silver contract and the day user silver contract, and Ch3 is assigned to the groups corresponding to each of the night user bronze contract and the day user bronze contract.

[0068]

For example, the communication management system 2 may also be realized by one server (hereinafter designated the communication management server) among the servers constituting the cloud service system 1. In this case, the transition data DB 2-1, the bandwidth DB 2-5, and the delivery DB 2-7 may be realized by a hard disk provided in the communication management server. In addition, the Ch1 queue 2-6G, the Ch2 queue 2-6S, and the Ch3 queue 2-6B may be realized by main memory provided in the communication management server. In addition, the feature acquisition unit 2-2, the determination unit 2-3, the configuration unit 2-4, the communication controller 2-8, the total acquisition unit 2-10, the comparison unit 2-11, and the update unit 2-12 may be realized by a microprocessor, provided in the communication management server, that executes a communication management program stored in the above main memory. In addition, the communication unit 2-6 may be realized by main memory that realizes the queues, a microprocessor that realizes the communication controller 2-8, and a network interface provided in the communication management server. Also, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 may be realized by a network interface and a microprocessor. Note that the above communication management program may be

stored in main memory by being read out from a computer-readable information storage medium such as a DVD (registered trademark)-ROM, or stored in main memory by being downloaded from a network.

[0069]

As another example, in the foregoing, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 obtained the measured values $BW_{G\text{traffic}}$, $BW_{S\text{traffic}}$, and $BW_{B\text{traffic}}$ by "receiving" from the terminal G, the terminal S, and the terminal B, but the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 itself may also measure the measured values $BW_{G\text{traffic}}$, $BW_{S\text{traffic}}$, and $BW_{B\text{traffic}}$. In this case, to measure the measured values $BW_{G\text{traffic}}$, $BW_{S\text{traffic}}$, and $BW_{B\text{traffic}}$, the actual bandwidth acquisition unit 2-9 may transmit a dummy packet to the terminal G, the terminal S, and the terminal B at a predetermined time interval, and compute the measured values $BW_{G\text{traffic}}$, $BW_{S\text{traffic}}$, and $BW_{B\text{traffic}}$ from the results of acknowledgements returned from each terminal 10.

[0070]

As another example, in the foregoing, the update unit 2-12 updates the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B only when the total BW_{traffic} is smaller than the total BW_{SUM} , but the update unit 2-12 may also update the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B even when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} . For example, when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 may raise the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B .

[0071]

Specifically, if the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 computes a value δ that is one-third the difference Δ between the total BW_{SUM} and the total BW_{traffic} ($\delta = \Delta / 3$), and raises the value of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B by δ . As another example, if the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 raises each of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B by a value depending on the type of communication channel 6. For example, the update unit 2-12 may compute a value δ_1 that is one-sixth Δ ($\delta_1 = \Delta / 6$), and raise the value of BW_G by the triple of δ_1 , raise the value of BW_S by the double of δ_1 , and raise the value of BW_B by δ_1 . In this way, the values of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B are raised so that the total BW_{traffic} becomes less than or equal to BW_{SUM} . In addition, when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 may also revert each of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B to an initial value. Herein, the "initial value" refers to the value of each of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B

configured by the configuration unit 2-4. In this case, the communication management system 2 may be additionally equipped with storage means that stores initial values configured by the configuration unit 2-4, and when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 may read out the initial values.

[0072]

In addition, when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 may raise the value of at least one of BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B according to a priority order BW_G , BW_S , and BW_B . In other words, when the total BW_{traffic} is larger than the total BW_{SUM} , the update unit 2-12 prioritizes raising the value of the configuration value BW_G by the above Δ before raising BW_S and BW_B . However, if

" $BW_G + \Delta$ " exceeds the upper-bound value $BW1$, the update unit 2-12 prioritizes raising the configuration value BW_S by Δ before raising BW_B . Note that if " $BW_S + \Delta$ " becomes less than or equal to the upper-bound value $BW2$, the update unit 2-12 raises the final remaining configuration value BW_B by Δ .

Reference Signs List

[0073]

- 1 cloud service system
- 2 communication management system
- 2-2 feature acquisition unit
- 2-2G first feature acquisition unit
- 2-2S second feature acquisition unit
- 2-2B third feature acquisition unit
- 2-3 determination unit
- 2-3G first determination unit
- 2-3S second determination unit
- 2-3B third determination unit
- 2-4 configuration unit
- 2-4G first configuration unit
- 2-4S second configuration unit
- 2-4B third configuration unit
- 2-5 bandwidth DB
- 2-6 communication unit

2-6G Ch1 queue
2-6S Ch2 queue
2-6B Ch3 queue
2-7 delivery DB
2-8 communication controller
2-9 actual bandwidth acquisition unit
2-10 total acquisition unit
2-11 comparison unit
2-12 update unit
4 physical communication network
6, 6G, 6S, 6B communication channel
8, 8G, 8S, 8B client organization
10 terminal

CLAIMS

[Claim 1]

A communication management system comprising:

communication means that respectively communicates with an information terminal belonging to one of a plurality of groups, via a communication channel assigned to the group to which the information terminal belongs, from among a plurality of communication channels;

control means that controls a communication via the communication channel on the basis of a configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel;

bandwidth configuration means that, for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the group to which the communication channel is assigned;

acquisition means that, after the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is configured, repeatedly acquires a total of measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel;

comparison means that, every time the total is acquired, compares the acquired total to a total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel; and

update means that, on the basis of a comparison result of the comparison means, updates the configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel such that the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is continuously adjusted according to the total measured value of actual bandwidth on each communication channel and the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is continuously optimized.

[Claim 2]

The communication management system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

feature acquisition means that, for each communication channel, acquires features related to the communication traffic volume on the communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the

group to which the communication channel is assigned,
characterized in that, the bandwidth configuration means
for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of
bandwidth on the communication channel on the basis of whether or not the features
acquired for the communication channel satisfy a condition unique to the
communication channel.

[Claim 3]

The communication management system according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein
when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each
communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of
bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means lowers the
configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel.

[Claim 4]

The communication management system according to Claim 3, wherein,
when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each
communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of
bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means lowers the
configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel, so that the
total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel
does not become less than or equal to the total of the configuration values of
bandwidth on each communication channel.

[Claim 5]

The communication management system according to Claim 3 or 4, wherein,
when the total of the measured values of actual bandwidth on each
communication channel is smaller than the total of the configuration values of
bandwidth on each communication channel, the update means prioritizes lowering the
configuration value of bandwidth on a communication channel before lowering the
configuration value of bandwidth on a communication channel with a larger
configuration value than the communication channel.

[Claim 6]

A program causing a computer to function as:

communication means that respectively communicates with an information terminal belonging to one of a plurality of groups, via a communication channel assigned to the group to which the information terminal belongs, from among a plurality of communication channels;

control means that controls a communication via the communication channel on the basis of a configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel;

bandwidth configuration means that, for each communication channel, configures the configuration value of bandwidth on the communication channel, on the basis of data indicating time transitions of communication traffic volume of the group to which the communication channel is assigned;

acquisition means that, after the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is configured, repeatedly acquires a total of measured values of actual bandwidth on each communication channel;

comparison means that, every time the total is acquired, compares the acquired total to a total of the configuration values of bandwidth on each communication channel; and

update means that, on the basis of a comparison result of the comparison means, updates the configuration value of bandwidth on at least one communication channel such that the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is continuously adjusted according to the total measured value of actual bandwidth on each communication channel and the configuration value of bandwidth on each communication channel is continuously optimized.