

Making the Case for Open, Softwarized, Data-Driven 802.11 Networks

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Authors:

Name	Affiliations	Address	Phone	email
Francesco Restuccia	Northeastern University, WIOT Institute	360 Huntington Ave, Boston, MA 02215 USA	617-373-3655	frestuc@northeastern.edu

What is the current threat

Risk of doing things as done now

**How a softwarized, data-driven 802.11 architecture
may drive costs down**

Emerging new markets

Enhancement of existing 802.11 business models

Creation of new 802.11 business opportunities

What is the current threat?

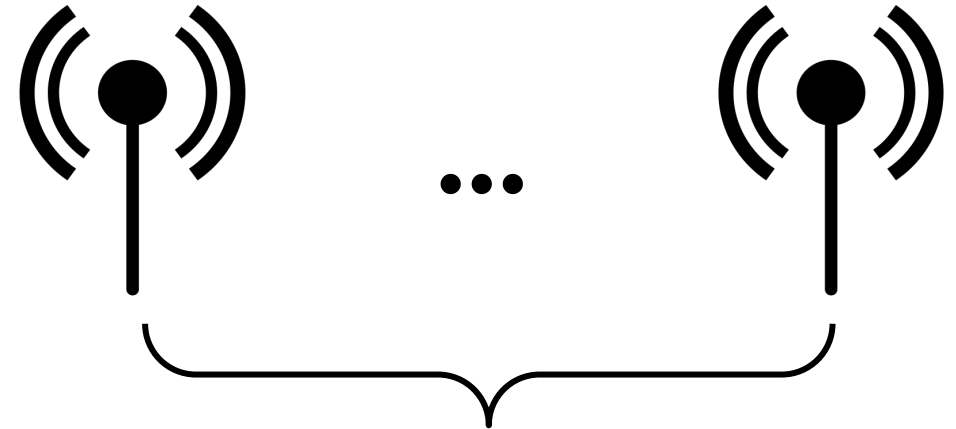
Strategy to improve 802.11 routers?

- Increase Bandwidth (2x)

160 MHz
(802.11ax)

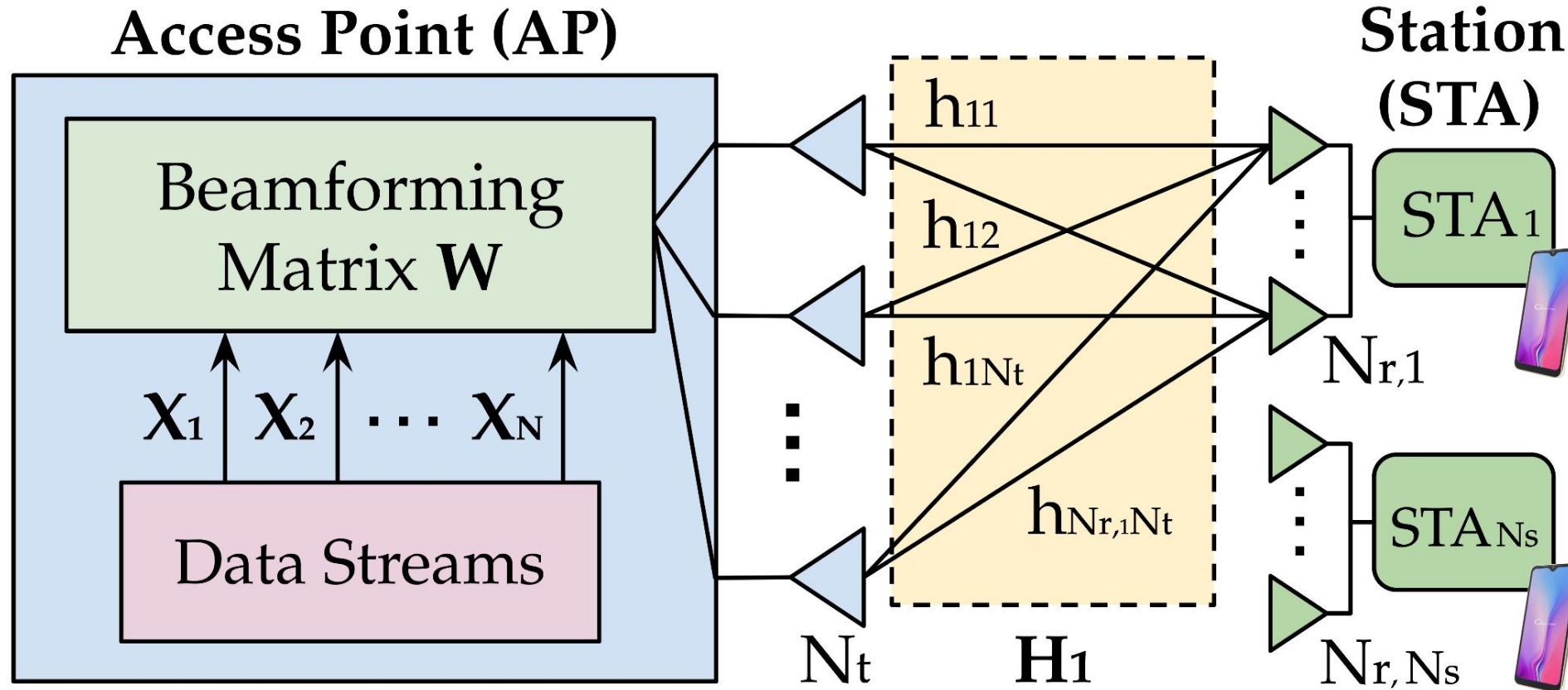
320 MHz
(802.11be)

- Increase Spatial Streams (2x)




- Does it come for free?
- No 802.11ac routers that do 8x8 MIMO! Why?

Complexity of MIMO in Wi-Fi Systems



8 x 8 @ 160 MHz, BM report is (486 subcarriers x 56 angles/subcarrier x 16 bits/angle) ~ **54.43 KB**

If BM reports are sent back every 10 ms, the airtime overhead is **435,456 / 0.01 ~ 43.55 Mbit/s**

- **Increasing complexity**
 - **Makes cost go UP!**
 - **Routers are becoming very expensive**
 - **With respect to a 802.11ac router**
 - **A Wi-Fi 6E router is ~6x more expensive**
 - **A tri-band Wi-Fi router is ~15x more expensive**
- 
- COST**

Ry Christ (CNET). Wi-Fi 6E routers are here, and we're not ready for them
<https://www.cnet.com/home/internet/wi-fi-6e-routers-are-here-and-were-not-ready-for-them/>

Threat:
**Fewer People Buy the
New, Fancy, Expensive Routers**

What's going on in the 5G/Cellular Community?



TSG SA priorities*

SA2 led - System Architecture and Services

- XR (Extended Reality) & media services
- System Support for AI/ML-based Services
- Enablers for Network Automation for 5G Phase 3
- Enh. support of Non-Public Networks Phase 2
- Network Slicing Phase 3
- 5GC LoCation Services Phase 3
- 5G multicast-broadcast services Phase 2
- Satellite access Phase 2
- 5G System with Satellite Backhaul
- 5G Timing Resiliency and TSC & URLLC enh.
- Evolution of IMS multimedia telephony service
- Personal IoT Networks
- Vehicle Mounted Relays

SA3 led - Security and Privacy

- Privacy of identifiers over radio access
- SECAM and SCAS for 3GPP virtualized network products and Management Function (MnF)
- Mission critical security enhancements Phase 3
- Security and privacy aspects of RAN & SA features

SA4 led - Multimedia Codecs, Systems and Services

Systems & Media Architecture:

- 5G Media, Service Enablers
- Split-Rendering
- 5G AR Experiences Architecture

Media:

- Video codec for 5G
- Media Capabilities for Augmented Reality, Glasses

- AI / ML Study

Real-time Communications:

- XR conversational services
- WebRTC-based services and collaboration models

Immersive Voice & Audio:

- EVS Codec Extension for Immersive Voice and Audio Services (IVAS_Codec)
- Terminal Audio quality performance and Test methods for Immersive Audio Services (ATIAS)

Streaming & Broadcast services:

- 5GMS Enh. (Network slicing, Low latency, Background Traffic, 5GMS Uplink)
- Further MBS Enh. (Free to air, Hybrid unicast/broadcast)

*These are preliminary lists (As at SA#94-e)

Release 18

- Access Traffic Steering, Switching & Splitting support in the 5G system architecture Phase 3
- Proximity-based Services in 5GS Phase 2
- UPF enh. for Exposure & SBA
- Ranging based services & sidelink positioning
- Generic group management, exposure & communication enh.
- 5G UE Policy Phase 2
- UAS, UAV & UAM Phase 2
- 5G AM Policy Phase 2
- RedCap Phase 2
- Support for 5WWC Phase 2
- System Enabler for Service Function Chaining
- Extensions to TSC Framework to support DetNet
- Seamless UE context recovery
- MPS when access to EPC/5GC is WLAN

SA5 led - Management, Orchestration and Charging

Operations, Administration, Maintenance and Provisioning (OAM&P):

- Intelligence and Automation: Self-Configuration of RAN NEs, Enh. autonomous network levels, Evaluation of autonomous network levels, Enh. intent driven management services for mobile networks, AI/ ML management, Enh. of the management aspects related to NWDAF

Management Architecture and Mechanisms: Network slicing provisioning rules, Enh. service based management architecture

- Support of New Services: Enh. Energy Efficiency for 5G Phase 2, New aspects of Energy Efficiency for 5G networks Phase 2, Enh. management of Non-Public Networks, Network and Service Operations for Energy Utilities, Key Quality Indicators(KQIs)for 5G service experience, Deterministic Communication Service Assurance

Charging:

- Charging Aspects for Enh. Support of Non-Public Networks

SA6 led - Application Enablement & Critical Communication Applications

Critical Communications:

- MCX Enhancements – MC over 5GS (5MBS, ProSe) Adhoc group comm., MCPTT Enh.
- Railways - Gateway UE, Interworking

Service Frameworks:

- Edge App Architecture Enh., SEAL Enh., Subscriber-Aware API (CAPIF Enh.)

Enablers for Vertical Applications:

- Enhancements to V2X, UAS application-enablement
- Future Factories, Personal IoT networks, Capability exposure for IoT platforms

See the 3GPP Work Plan for full details, as Release 18 develops: www.3gpp.org/specifications/work-plan

TSG RAN priorities*

RAN1 led - Radio Layer 1 (Physical layer)

- AI/ML - Air Interface
- NR MIMO Evolution
- Evolution of duplex operation
- NR Sidelink Evolution
- Positioning Evolution
- RedCap Evolution
- Network energy savings
- Further UL coverage enhancement
- Smart Repeater
- DSS
- Low power WUS
- CA enhancements

RAN2 led - Radio layer 2 & layer 3 Radio Resource Control

- Mobility Enhancements
- Enhancements for XR
- Sidelink Relay Enhancements
- NTN (Non-Terrestrial Networks) evolution - NR
- NTN (Non-Terrestrial Networks) evolution - IoT
- UAV (Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle)
- Multiple SIM (MUSIM) Enhancements
- In-Device Co-existence (IDC) Enhancements
- Small data
- MBS

RAN3 led - UTRAN/E-UTRAN/NG-RAN architecture & related network interfaces

Additional topological improvements – IAB/VMR

- AI/ML for NG-RAN WI
- AI/ML for NG-RAN SI
- SON/MDT Enhancements

- QoE Enhancements
- Resiliency of gNB-CU-CP

RAN4 led - Radio Performance and Protocol Aspects

- RAN4-led spectrum items
- <5MHz in dedicated spectrum

Rel-18 Workplan for TSG CT

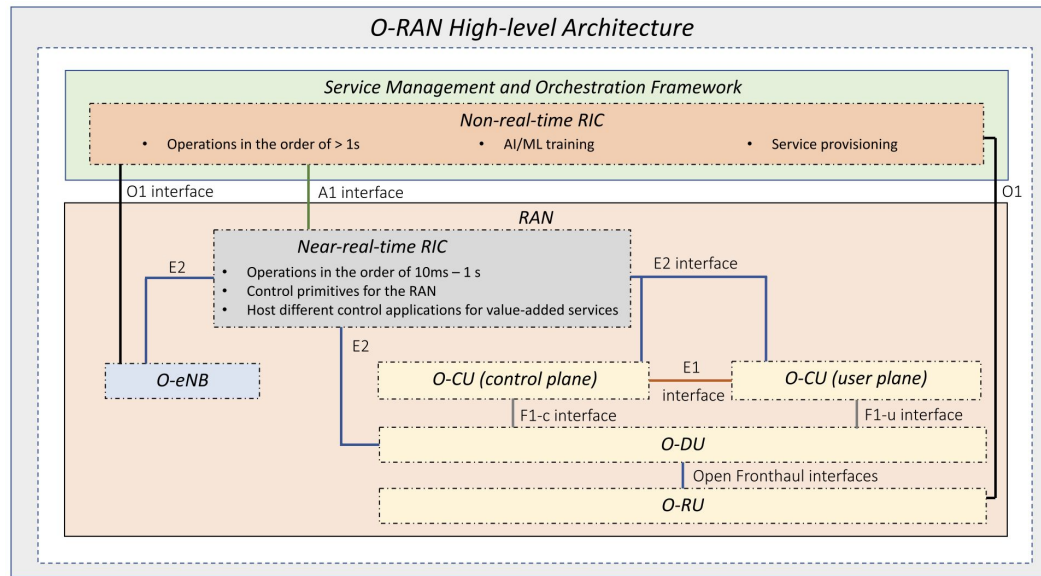
CT will work on Stage 3 completion and ASN.1 code and OpenAPI freeze of Rel-17 until June 2022 (TSG#96).
Work Item discussion on Rel-18 Stage 2 / Stage 3 (under CT) from June 2022.

*Source: RP-213697 (RAN#94-e)

(1) Decided to study “the benefits of augmenting the air-interface with features enabling improved support of AI/ML based algorithms for enhanced performance and/or reduced complexity/overhead”

<https://portal.3gpp.org/desktopmodules/Specifications/SpecificationDetails.aspx?specificationId=3983>

The Open RAN (O-RAN) Paradigm

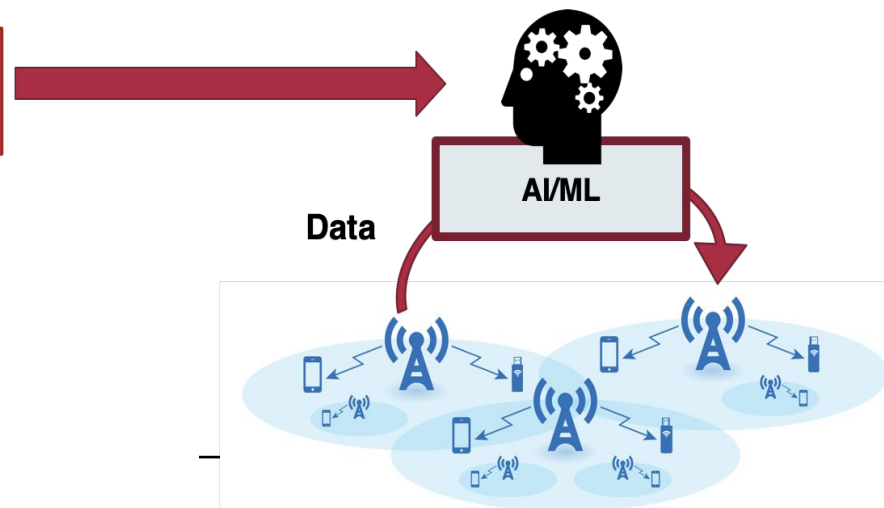


(1) Disaggregation of RAN **hardware** and **software**

(2) **RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC)** operating at different granularity levels

- Control is **hardware-** and **vendor-agnostic**, so software runs in any O-RAN compliant network
- Zero-touch AI-based control is **natively supported**,
 - best performance
 - self-adaptation

I need to stream **4K video** to **100 users** in Times Square, NY from **8pm** to **9pm**



Advantages of Open, Virtualized Networks

- 1. Interoperability reduces CAPEX (60%)**
- 2. Future-proof – no rip and replace infrastructure**
- 3. Easier maintenance results in reduced OPEX (65%)**
- 4. Faster deployments, higher throughput, coverage and capacity**

O-RAN market is estimated to attain a revenue of USD 419.51 Million in 2021 and USD 21,371.47 Million in 2028, CAGR of 83.1%

<https://www.researchnester.com/reports/open-radio-access-network-market/2781>

Parallel Wireless, “OpenRAN – 7 vital benefits for MNOs,” <https://www.parallelwireless.com/blog/openran-7-vital-benefits-for-mnos/>

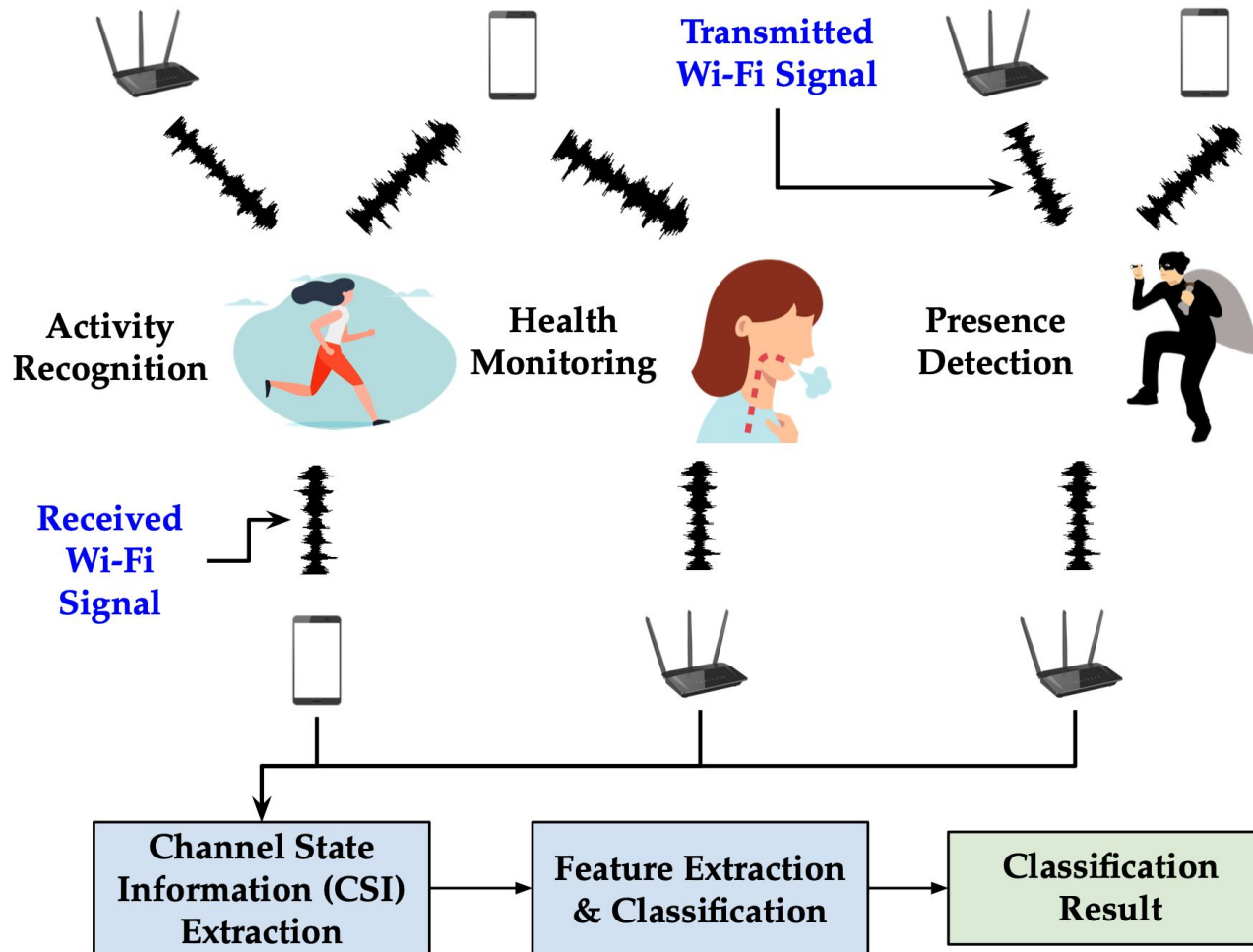
Apply the Same Concepts to Wi-Fi?

**Do more with less antennas and BW
(SW vs HW), yet more devices (unlicensed
bands!)**

**Router costs can be contained
(why? less complexity,
less maintenance costs)**

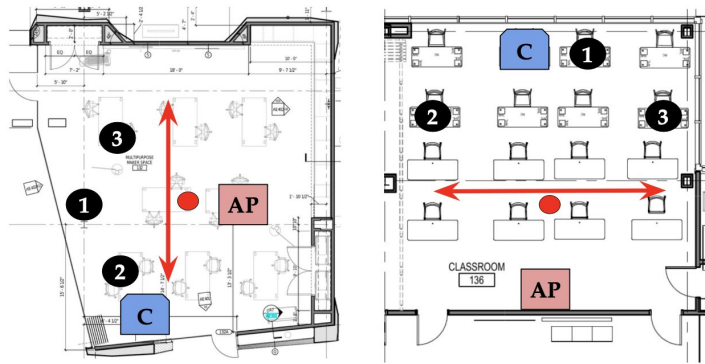
Emerging New Markets

New Market: 802.11bf



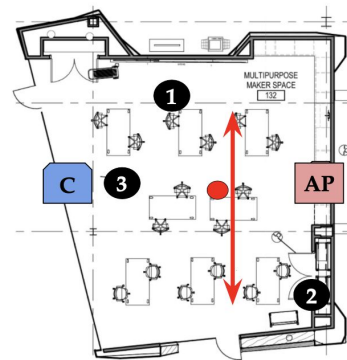
- The research community has worked on these topics for ~10 years
- First “See Through Walls With Wi-Fi!” paper in 2013
- Extreme commercial potential, that’s why 802.11bf was created

Problems: Generalization, Robustness



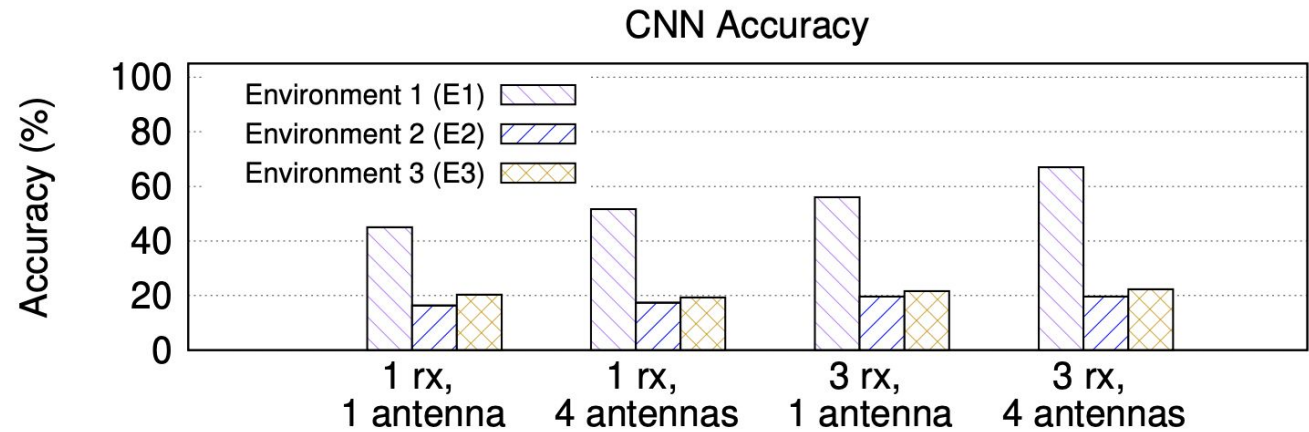
Environment 1 (E1)

Environment 2 (E2)



Environment 3 (E3)

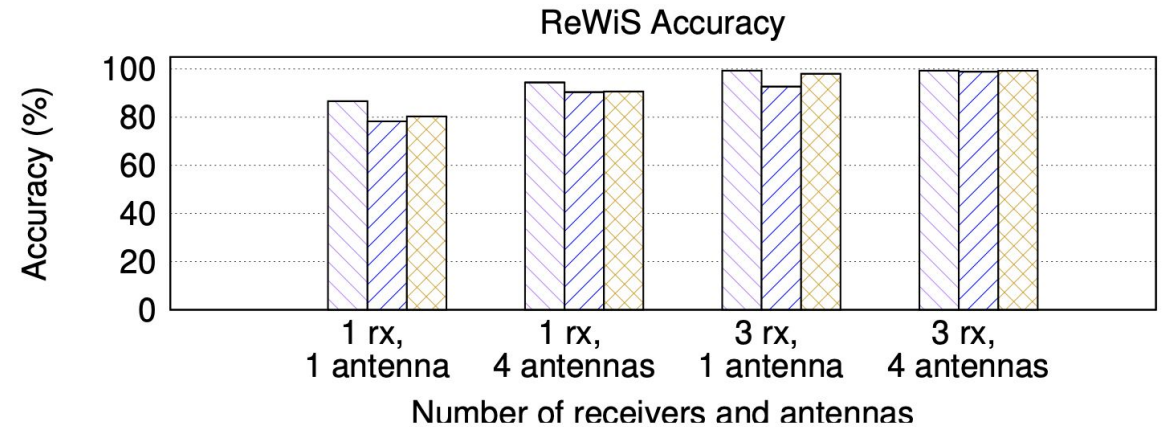
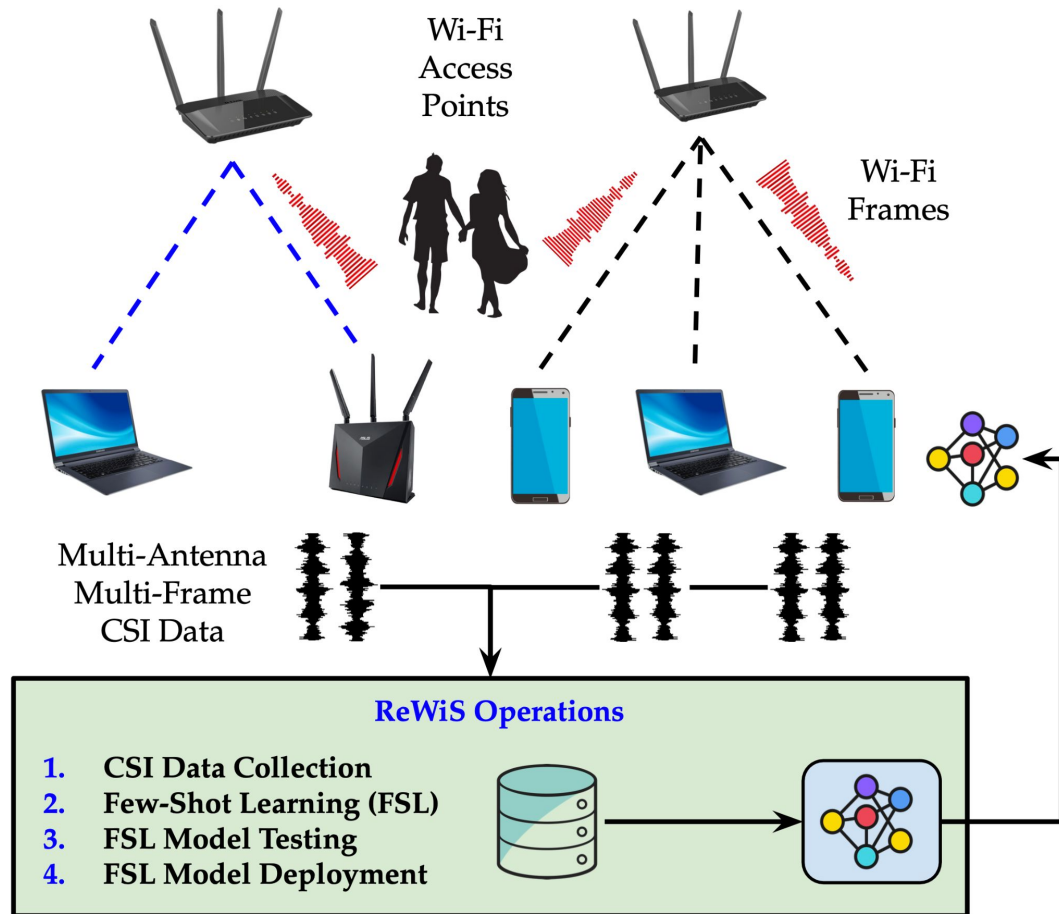
- ❶ CSI Receiver (C)
- AP Access Point (AP)
- C Client (C)
- ↔ Walking Pattern
- In-Place Activity



- Trained and tested in different environments
- Performance does not generalize to different environments
- Clients may not like the product
- Some Wi-Fi sensing devices have been shown to experience problems in actual deployments [1]

[1] Christopher Null (TechHive). "Aura review: This home monitoring system is more trouble than it's worth." <https://www.techhive.com/article/583109/aura-review.html>, December 27, 2017.

Better Performance Through Cooperation



- Through CSI fusion, we are able to generalize among different environments
- Ultimately, more sales because the product satisfies the customer better!

N. Bahadori, J. Ashdown, and F. Restuccia, “**ReWiS: Reliable Wi-Fi Sensing Through Few-Shot Multi-Antenna Multi-Receiver CSI Learning,**” to appear in **IEEE WOWMOM 2022**. Preprint available at <https://arxiv.org/abs/2201.00869>

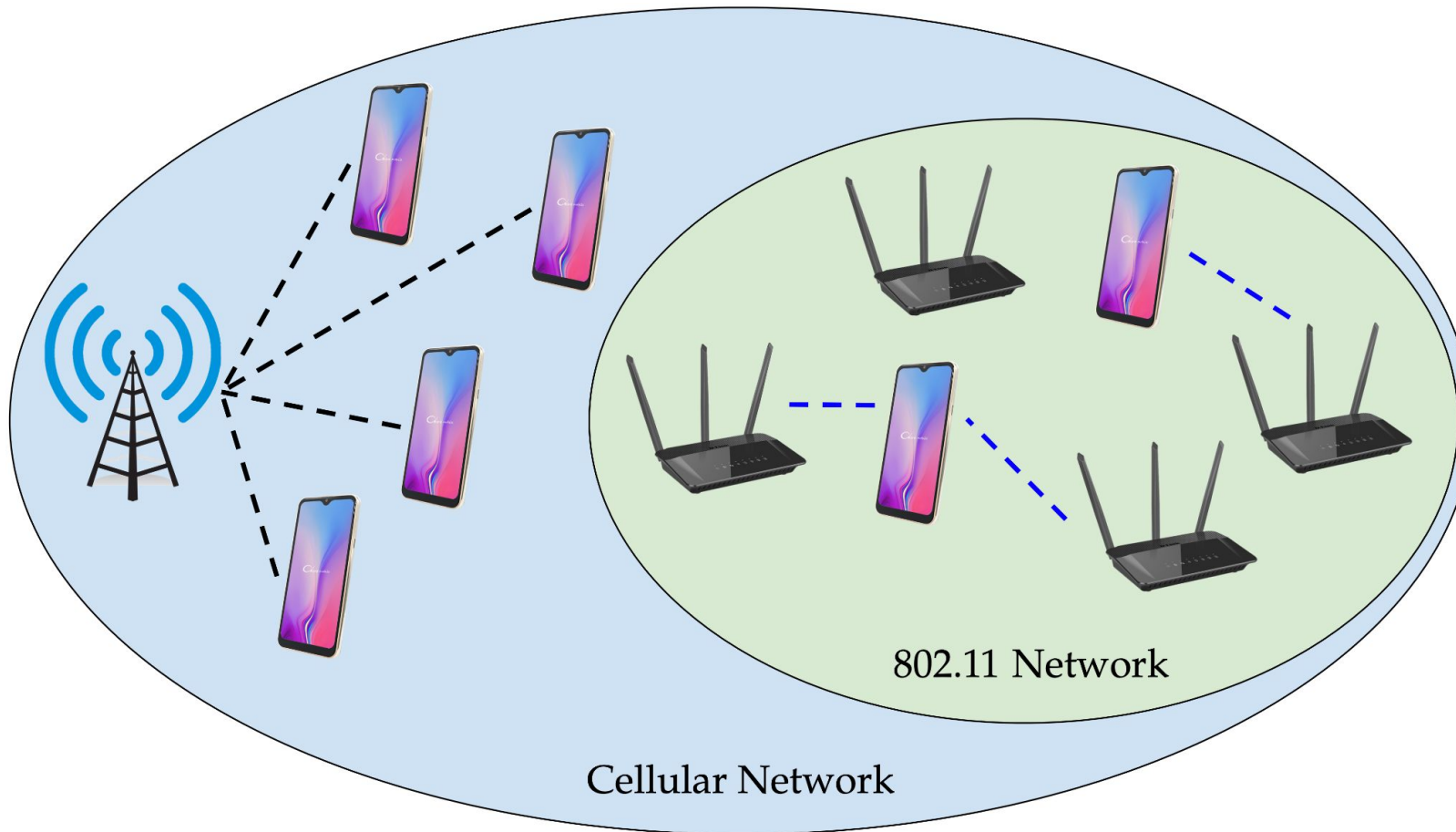
Reality: Today, it's **very hard** to extract CSI from routers

Tool	IEEE Std	Data points/CSI
CSI Tool [4]	802.11n	30
Atheros CSI Tool [8]	802.11n	56
Nexmon CSI [3]	802.11ac	up to 4096
AX-CSI [2]	802.11ax	up to 32768

CSI fusion techniques
are not supported by today's
802.11 standards

New companies that can be centered
around CSI sensing are **hindered**

New Market: AI-Driven Wi-Fi Offloading



- 5G will offload a whopping **71%** of its traffic to Wi-Fi by 2022
- Reduces **costs** for providers, and ultimately, for customers
- Improves service, so more **customer experience** and less **churning**

Claus Hetting, Cisco VNI predicts bright future for Wi-Fi,
<https://wifinowglobal.com/news-and-blog/new-cisco-vni-numbers-predict-bright-future-for-wi-fi-towards-2022/>

New Market: AI-Driven Wi-Fi Offloading

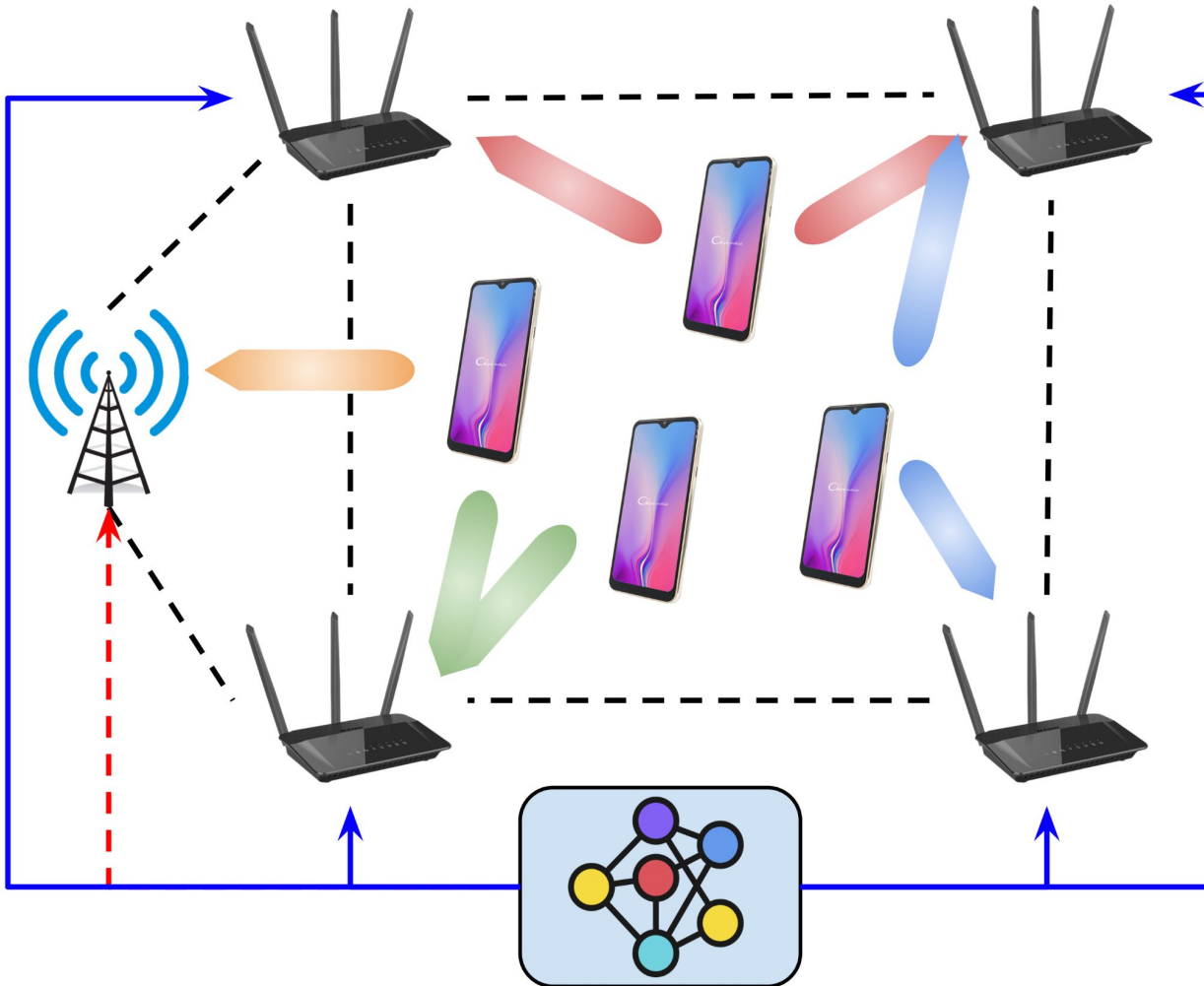
- **Exciting business opportunity**
 - Much cheaper for MNOs than deploying femtocells
 - Wi-Fi APs are ubiquitous in indoor settings
 - Networking-as-a-Service (NaaS)
- **Killer use cases:**
 - Shopping Malls
 - Stadiums
 - Concerts
 - ...
 - Crowded Places



Problem: Wi-Fi at Scale

- **Wi-Fi is not made for many users**
 - DL MU-MIMO is limited to **8** users in 802.11ax, **4** in 802.11ac
 - Maximum of **4** SS/user in 802.11ax, **2** SS/user in 802.11ac
- **Not scalable for these applications!**
 - More antennas, more BW is **not** the solution!
 - We cannot transform an **AP in a femtocell!**
 - We need **cost-effective** solutions

Solution: Cooperative AI-Driven Wi-Fi Offloading



- Cheaper APs, but smarter (AI) and cooperative!
- Target: deploy more APs, bring complexity (and costs down)
- Sharing **spectrum** and network **information** with 5G networks

To Summarize

802 networks should adopt **open, softwarized, AI-driven strategies to remain competitive**

802 networks should learn to coexist with other technologies and **embed AI by design into their architecture**

Straw Poll

Do you support the creation of a TIG to:

- a. describe use cases for AI/ML applicability in 802.11 systems
- b. investigate the technical feasibility of "features enabling support of AI/ML based algorithms in the 802.11 MAC/PHY"

Thanks!
Questions?