

Fundamental Simulation Concepts

Chapter 2 Subset Only

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What We'll Do ...

- **Underlying ideas, methods, and issues in simulation**
- **Software-independent (setting up for Arena)**
- **Centered around an example of a simple processing system**
 - Decompose the problem
 - Terminology
 - Simulation by hand
 - Some basic statistical issues
 - Overview of a simulation study

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**The System:
A Simple Processing System**

- **General intent:**
 - Estimate expected production
 - Waiting time in queue, queue length, proportion of time machine is busy
- **Time units**
 - Can use different units in different places ... must declare
 - Be careful to check the units when specifying inputs
 - Declare *base time units* for internal calculations, outputs
 - Be reasonable (interpretation, roundoff error)

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**Goals of the Study:
Output Performance Measures** (cont'd.)

- **Utilization of the machine (proportion of time busy)**

$$\frac{\int_0^{20} B(t) dt}{20}, \quad B(t) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if the machine is busy at time } t \\ 0 & \text{if the machine is idle at time } t \end{cases}$$
- **Many others possible (information overload?)**

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Analysis Options

- **Educated guessing**
 - Average interarrival time = 4.08 minutes
 - Average service time = 3.46 minutes
 - So (on average) parts are being processed faster than they arrive
 - System has a chance of operating in a stable way in the long run, i.e., might not “explode”
 - If all interarrivals and service times were exactly at their mean, there would never be a queue
 - But the data clearly exhibit variability, so a queue could form
 - If we'd had average interarrival < average service time, and this persisted, then queue would explode
 - Truth — between these extremes
 - Guessing has its limits ...

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Analysis Options (cont'd.)

- **Queueing theory**
 - Requires additional assumptions about the model
 - Popular, simple model: *M/M/1 queue*
 - Interarrival times ~ exponential
 - Service times ~ exponential, indep. of interarrivals
 - Must have E(service) < E(interarrival)
 - Steady-state (long-run, forever)
 - Exact analytic results; e.g., average waiting time in queue is $\frac{\mu_S^2}{\mu_A - \mu_S}$, $\mu_A = E(\text{interarrival time})$
 $\mu_S = E(\text{service time})$
 - Problems: validity, estimating means, time frame
 - Often useful as first-cut approximation

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Mechanistic Simulation

- **Individual operations (arrivals, service times) will occur “exactly” as in reality**
- **Movements, changes occur at the right “time,” in the right order**
- **Different pieces interact**
- **Install “observers” to get output performance measures**
- **Concrete, “brute-force” analysis approach**
- **Nothing mysterious or subtle**
 - But a lot of details, bookkeeping
 - Simulation software keeps track of things for you

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Arena View of Simulation

- **Later, will talk about “world-views”**
 - The way a modeler views the world
 - The way a coder makes time go by in a simulation
 - A particular implementation approach
- **In the next slides, Arena’s view of simulation is described**
 - Not the only way.
 - The authors see simulation through an Arena lens

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Pieces of a Simulation Model

- **Entities**
 - “Players” that move around, change status, affect and are affected by other entities
 - *Dynamic objects* — get created, move around, leave (maybe)
 - Usually represent “real” things
 - Our model: entities are the parts
 - Can have “fake” entities for modeling “tricks”
 - Breakdown demon, break angel
 - Though Arena has built-in ways to model these examples directly
 - Usually have multiple *realizations* floating around
 - Can have different types of entities concurrently
 - Usually, identifying the types of entities is the first thing to do in building a model

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• **Attributes**

- Characteristic of all entities: describe, differentiate
- All entities have same attribute "slots" but different values for different entities, for example:
 - Time of arrival
 - Due date
 - Priority
 - Color
- Attribute value tied to a specific entity
- Like "local" (to entities) variables
- Some automatic in Arena, some you define

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• **(Global) Variables**

- Reflects a characteristic of the whole model, not of specific entities
- Used for many different kinds of things
 - Travel time between all station pairs
 - Number of parts in system
 - Simulation clock (built-in Arena variable)
- Name, value of which there's only one copy for the whole model
- Not tied to entities
- Entities can access, change variables
- Writing on the wall (rewriteable)
- Some built-in by Arena, you can define others

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• **Resources**

- What entities compete for
 - People
 - Equipment
 - Space
- Entity *seizes* a resource, uses it, *releases* it
- Think of a *resource being assigned to an entity*, rather than an entity "belonging to" a resource
- "A" resource can have several *units* of capacity
 - Seats at a table in a restaurant
 - Identical ticketing agents at an airline counter
- Number of units of resource can be changed during the simulation

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• Queues

- Place for entities to wait when they can't move on (maybe since the resource they want to seize is not available)
- Have names, often tied to a corresponding resource
- Can have a finite capacity to model limited space — have to model what to do if an entity shows up to a queue that's already full
- Usually watch the length of a queue, waiting time in it

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• Statistical accumulators

- Variables that “watch” what's happening
- Depend on output performance measures desired
- “Passive” in model — don't participate, just watch
- Many are automatic in Arena, but some you may have to set up and maintain during the simulation
- At end of simulation, used to compute final output performance measures

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Pieces of a Simulation Model (cont'd.)

• Statistical accumulators for the simple processing system

- Number of parts produced so far
- Total of the waiting times spent in queue so far
- No. of parts that have gone through the queue
- Max time in queue we've seen so far
- Total of times spent in system
- Max time in system we've seen so far
- Area so far under queue-length curve $Q(t)$
- Max of $Q(t)$ so far
- Area so far under server-busy curve $B(t)$

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**Simulation Dynamics:
The Event-Scheduling “World View”**

- **Identify characteristic *events***
- **Decide on *logic* for each type of event to**
 - Effect *state changes* for each event type
 - Observe statistics
 - Update times of future events (maybe of this type, other types)
- **Keep a simulation *clock*, future *event calendar***
- ***Jump* from one event to the next, process, observe statistics, update event calendar**
- **Must specify an appropriate *stopping rule***
- **Usually done with general-purpose programming language (C, FORTRAN, etc.)**

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**Events for the
Simple Processing System**

- **Arrival of a new part to the system**
 - Update time-persistent statistical accumulators (from last event to now)
 - Area under $Q(t)$
 - Max of $Q(t)$
 - Area under $B(t)$
 - “Mark” arriving part with current time (use later)
 - If machine is idle:
 - Start processing (schedule departure), Make machine busy, Tally waiting time in queue (0)
 - Else (machine is busy):
 - Put part at end of queue, increase queue-length variable
 - Schedule the next arrival event

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**Events for the
Simple Processing System (cont'd.)**

- **Departure (when a service is completed)**
 - Increment number-produced stat accumulator
 - Compute & tally time in system (now - time of arrival)
 - Update time-persistent statistics (as in arrival event)
 - If queue is non-empty:
 - Take first part out of queue, compute & tally its waiting time in queue, begin service (schedule departure event)
 - Else (queue is empty):
 - Make the machine idle (Note: there will be no departure event scheduled on the future events calendar, which is as desired)

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Events for the Simple Processing System (cont'd.)

- **The End**
 - Update time-persistent statistics (to end of the simulation)
 - Compute final output performance measures using current (= final) values of statistical accumulators
- **After each event, the event calendar's top record is removed to see what time it is, what to do**
- **Also must initialize everything**

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Some Additional Specifics for the Simple Processing System

- **Simulation clock variable (internal in Arena)**
- **Event calendar: list of event records:**
 - [Entity No., Event Time, Event Type]
 - Keep *ranked* in increasing order on Event Time
 - Next event always in top record
 - Initially, schedule first Arrival, The End (Dep.?)
- **State variables: describe current status**
 - Server status $B(t) = 1$ for busy, 0 for idle
 - Number of customers in queue $Q(t)$
 - Times of arrival of each customer now in queue (a list of random length)

(Inappropriate snide remark: these guys would have failed in their 1st programming assignment due to poor choice of variable names.)

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Simulation by Hand

- **Manually track state variables, statistical accumulators**
- **Use "given" interarrival, service times**
- **Keep track of event calendar**
- **"Lurch" clock from one event to the next**
- **Will omit times in system, "max" computations here (see text for complete details)**

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Simulation Dynamics: The Process-Interaction World View

- Identify characteristic *entities* in the system
- Multiple copies of entities co-exist, interact, compete
- “Code” is non-procedural
- Tell a “story” about what happens to a “typical” entity
- May have many types of entities, “fake” entities for things like machine breakdowns
- Usually requires special simulation software
 - Underneath, still executed as event-scheduling
- The view normally taken by Arena
 - Arena translates your model description into a program in the SIMAN simulation language for execution

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Randomness in Simulation

- The above was just one “replication” — a sample of size one (not worth much)
- Made a total of five replications:

Performance Measure	Replication					Sample		95% Half Width
	1	2	3	4	5	Avg.	Std. Dev.	
Total production	5	3	6	2	3	3.80	1.64	2.04
Average waiting time in queue	2.53	1.19	1.03	1.62	0.00	1.27	0.92	1.14
Maximum waiting time in queue	8.16	3.56	2.97	3.24	0.00	3.59*	2.93*	3.63*
Average total time in system	6.44	5.10	4.16	6.71	4.26	5.33	1.19	1.48
Maximum total time in system	12.62	6.83	6.27	7.71	4.96	7.64*	2.95*	3.67*
Time-average number of parts in queue	0.79	0.18	0.36	0.16	0.05	0.31	0.29	0.36
Maximum number of parts in queue	3	1	2	1	1	1.60*	0.89*	1.11*
Drill-press utilization	0.92	0.59	0.90	0.51	0.70	0.72	0.18	0.22

Note substantial variability across replications

- Confidence intervals for expected values:
 - In general, $\bar{X} \pm t_{n-1, 1-\alpha/2} S / \sqrt{n}$
 - For expected total production, $3.80 \pm (2.776)(1.64 / \sqrt{5})$
 3.80 ± 2.04

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Comparing Alternatives

- Usually, simulation is used for more than just a single model “configuration”
- Often want to compare alternatives, select or search for the best (via some criterion)
- Simple processing system: What would happen if the arrival rate were to double?
 - Cut interarrival times in half
 - Rerun the model for double-time arrivals
 - Make five replications

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Results: Original vs. Double-Time Arrivals



- Original – circles
- Double-time – triangles
- Replication 1 – filled in
- Replications 2-5 – hollow
- Note variability
- Danger of making decisions based on one (first) replication
- Hard to see if there are really differences
- Need: Statistical analysis of simulation output data

Overview of a Simulation Study

- Understand the system
- Be clear about the goals
- Formulate the model representation
- Translate into modeling software
- Verify “program”
- Validate model
- Design experiments
- Make runs
- Analyze, get insight, document results
