

# **QED Q's:**

## **Quality- and Efficiency-Driven Queues**

with a focus on Call/Contact Centers

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**TAU, Stat + OR**, January 2008

Based on joint work with Students, Colleagues, . . .

**Technion SEE Lab: P. Feigin, S. Zeltyn, V. Trofimov, RA's, . . .**

# Contents

- ▶ Introduction to Service Science / Engineering / **QED Q's**
- ▶ The Anatomy of "Waiting for Service"
- ▶ The Basic (Operational) Call-Center Model:  
**Palm/Erlang-A** (M/M/N+M)
- ▶ Validating Erlang-A? All **Assumptions Violated**
- ▶ But **Erlang-A Works! Why?**  
Framework - Asymptotic Regimes: **QED, ED, ED+QED**
- ▶ Explain **Practice**: "Right Answers for the Wrong Reasons"
- ▶ Technion's **SEE** (Service Enterprise Engineering): **DataMOCCA**

# Main Messages

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**5. Service Science / Management / Engineering** are emerging **Academic Disciplines**. For example, universities and USA NSF (SEE), IBM (SSME), Germany IAO (ServEng), ...

## Background Material (Downloadable)

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- ▶ Trofimov, Feigin, M., Ishay, Nadjharov:  
"DataMOCCA: Models for Call/Contact Center Analysis."  
Technion Report, 2004-2006.
- ▶ M. "Call Centers: Research Bibliography with Abstracts."  
Version 7, December 2006.

## Queueing Science: Data-Based QED's Q's

**Traditional Queueing Theory** predicts that **Service-Quality** and **Servers' Efficiency** must be traded off against each other.

For example, **M/M/1 in heavy-traffic**: **91%** server's utilization goes with

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**Yet**, heavily-loaded queueing systems with **Congestion Index = 0.1** (Waiting one order of magnitude less than Service) are prevalent:

- ▶ **Call Centers**: Wait **"seconds"** for **minutes** service;
- ▶ **Transportation**: Search **"minutes"** for **hours** parking;
- ▶ **Hospitals**: Wait **"hours"** in ED for **days** hospitalization in IW's;

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and, moreover, a significant fraction are not delayed in queue. (For example, in well-run call-centers, **50%** served "immediately", along with over **90%** agents' utilization, is not uncommon ) **?**

## Prerequisite: Data

### Averages Prevalent.

But I need data at the level of the **Individual Transaction**: For each service transaction (during a phone-service in a call center, or a patient's stay in a hospital), its **operational history** = time-stamps of events.

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Sources: **"Service-floor"** (vs. Industry-level, Surveys, ...)

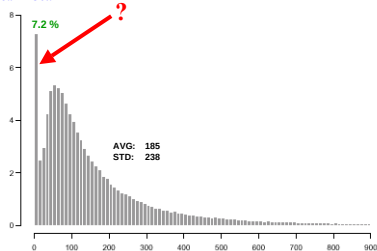
- ▶ **Administrative** (Court, via "paper analysis")
- ▶ **Face-to-Face** (Bank, via bar-code readers)
- ▶ **Telephone** (Call Centers, via ACD / CTI)
- ▶ Expanding:
  - ▶ **Hospitals** (via RFID)
  - ▶ IVR (VRU), internet, chat (multi-media)
  - ▶ Operational + Financial + Marketing / Clinical history

# Beyond Averages (+ The Human Factor)

## Histogram of Service Times in an Israeli Call Center

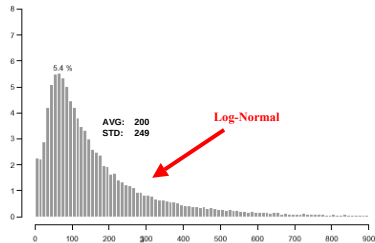
January-October

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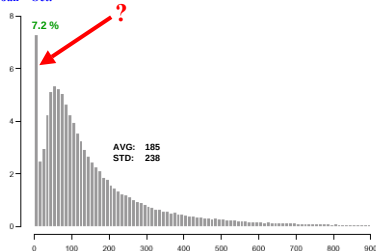
► **7.2% Short-Services:**

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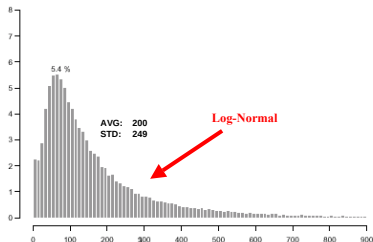
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- ▶ **7.2% Short-Services:** Agents' "Abandon" (improve bonus, rest)
- ▶ **Distributions**, not only Averages, must be measured.
- ▶ **Lognormal** service times prevalent in call centers (Why?)

## Present Focus: Call Centers

### U.S. Statistics (Relevant Elsewhere)

- ▶ Over 60% of annual business volume via the telephone
- ▶ 100,000 – 200,000 call centers
- ▶ 3 – 6 million employees (**2% – 4% workforce**)
- ▶ 1000's agents in a "single" call center = 70 % costs.
- ▶ 20% annual growth rate
- ▶ \$200 – \$300 billion annual expenditures

# Call-Center Environment: Service Network

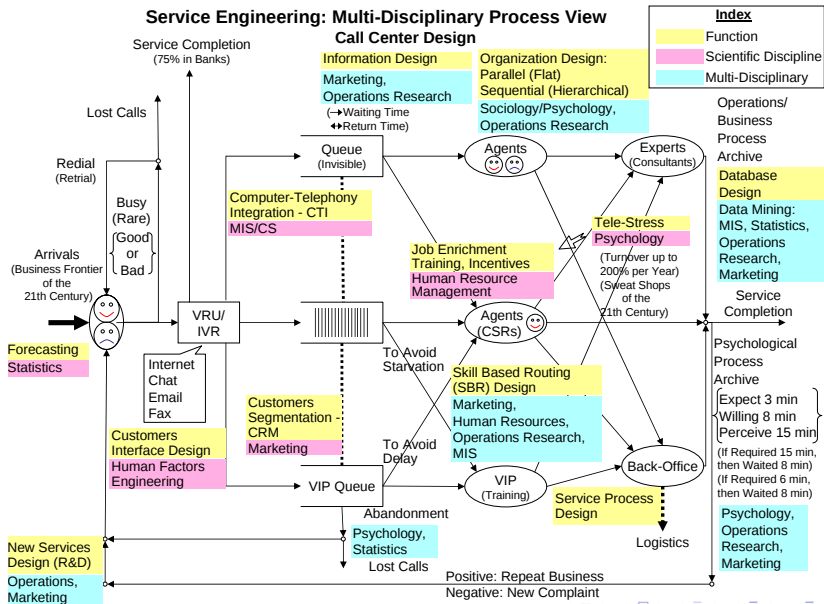


## Call-Centers: “Sweat-Shops of the 21st Century”



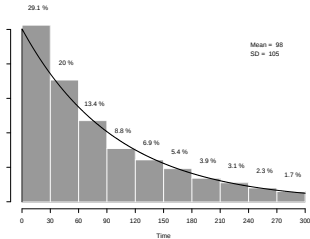
# Call-Center Network: Gallery of Models

## Service Engineering: Multi-Disciplinary Process View Call Center Design

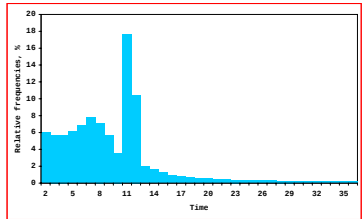


# Beyond Averages: Waiting Times in a Call Center

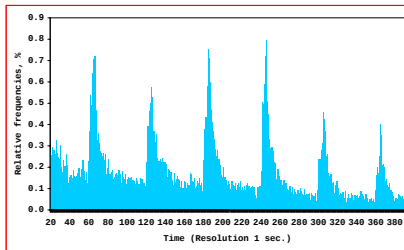
## Small Israeli Bank



## Large U.S. Bank



## Medium Israeli Bank



# The “Anatomy of Waiting” for Service

Common Experience:

- ▶ Expected to wait 5 minutes, Required to 10,
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An attempt at “Modeling the Experience”:

1. Time that a customer **expects** to wait
2. **willing** to wait  $((Im)Patience: \tau)$
3. **required** to wait  $(Offered\ Wait: V)$
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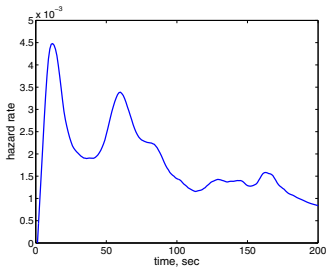
**Experienced** customers  $\Rightarrow$  Expected = Required  
**“Rational”** customers  $\Rightarrow$  Perceived = Actual.

Then left with  **$(\tau, V)$** .

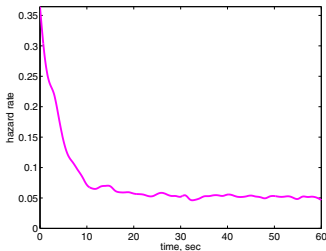
# Call Center Data: Hazard Rates (Un-Censored)

(Im)Patience Time  $\tau$

Israel



U.S.

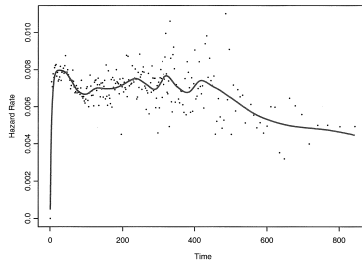
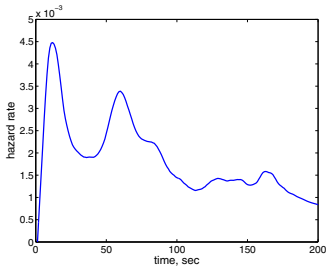


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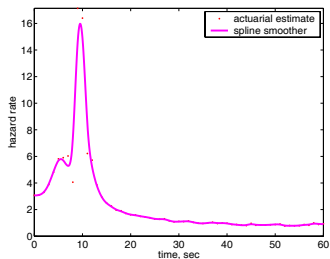
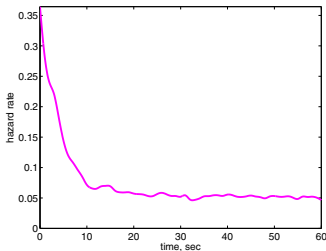
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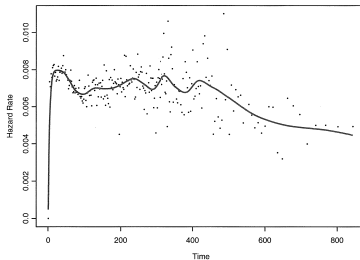
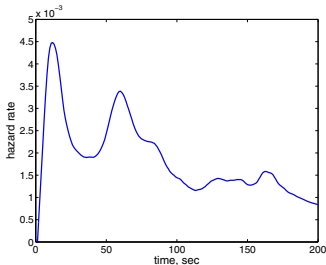


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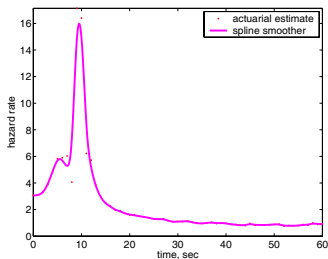
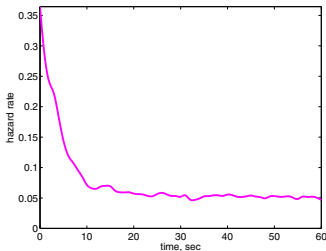
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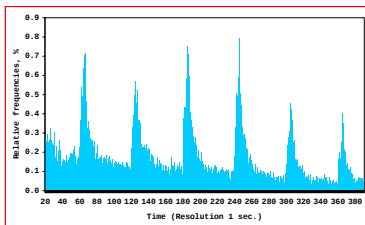


U.S.



**Note:** 5% abandoning  $\Rightarrow$  95% (im)patience-observations **censored** !

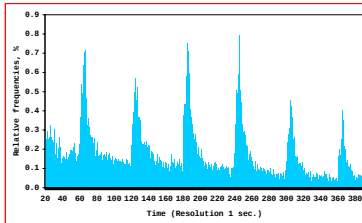
# A “Waiting-Times” Puzzle at a Large Israeli Bank



Peaks Every 60 Seconds. **Why?**

- ▶ Human: **Voice-announcement** every 60 seconds.

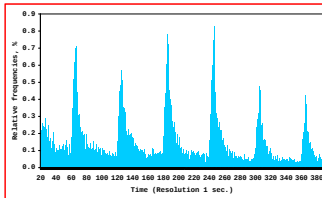
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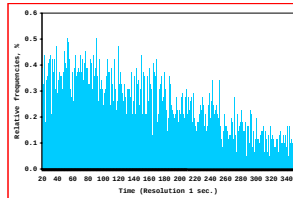
## Peaks Every 60 Seconds. Why?

- ▶ Human: **Voice-announcement** every 60 seconds.
- ▶ System: **Priority-upgrade** (unrevealed) every 60 sec's (Theory?)

### Served Customers



### Abandoning Customers



## Models for Performance Analysis

- ▶ **(Im)Patience:** r.v.  $\tau$  = Time a customer is **willing to wait**
- ▶ **Offered-Wait:** r.v.  $V$  = Time a customer is **required to wait**  
(= Waiting time of a customer with infinite patience).
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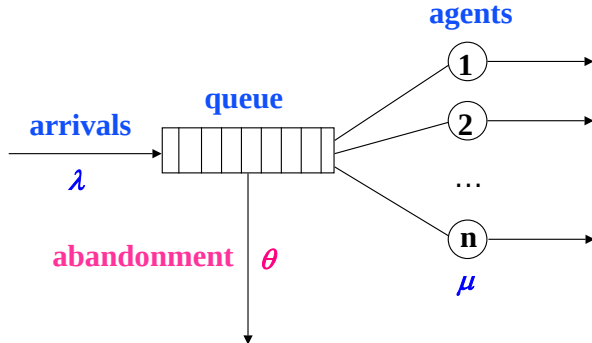
Modeling:  $\tau$  = **input** to the model,  $V$  = **output**.

Operational Performance-Measure calculable in terms of  $(\tau, V)$ :

- ▶ eg. **Avg. Wait** =  $E[\min\{\tau, V\}]$     ( $E[W_q | \text{Served}] = E[V | \tau > V]$ )
- ▶ eg. **% Abandon** =  $P\{\tau \leq V\}$     ( $P\{5 \text{ sec} < \tau \leq V\}$ )

Application: **Staffing – How Many Agents?** (then: When? Who?)

## The Basic Staffing Model: Erlang-A (M/M/N + M)



**Erlang-A** (Palm 1940's) = Birth & Death Q, with parameters:

- ▶  $\lambda$  – **Arrival** rate (Poisson)
- ▶  $\mu$  – **Service** rate (Exponential)
- ▶  $\theta$  – **Impatience** rate (Exponential)
- ▶  $n$  – Number of **Service-Agents**.

## Testing the Erlang-A Primitives

- ▶ **Arrivals:** Poisson?
- ▶ **Service-durations:** Exponential?
- ▶ **(Im)Patience:** Exponential?

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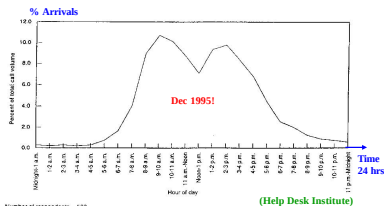
- ▶ **Arrivals:** Poisson?
- ▶ **Service-durations:** Exponential?
- ▶ **(Im)Patience:** Exponential?
- ▶ Primitives independent?
- ▶ Customers / Servers Heterogeneous?
- ▶ Service discipline FCFS?
- ▶ ... ?

**Validation:** Support? Refute?

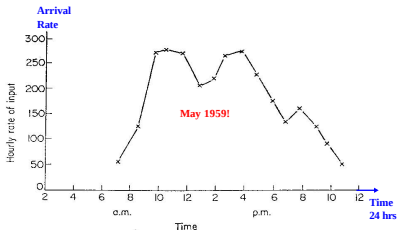
# Arrivals to Service: only Poisson-Relatives

## Arrival Rate to Three Call Centers

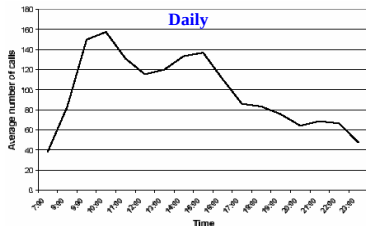
Dec. 1995 (U.S. 700 Helpdesks)



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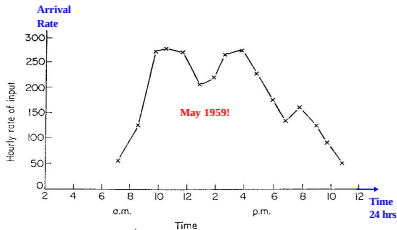
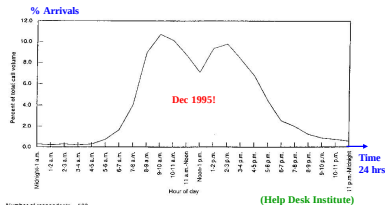


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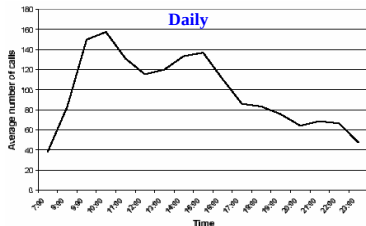
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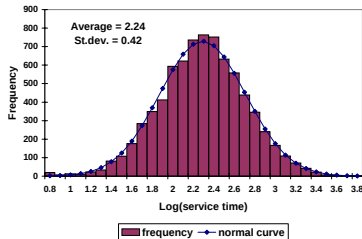


Observation:

**Peak Loads at 10:00 & 15:00**

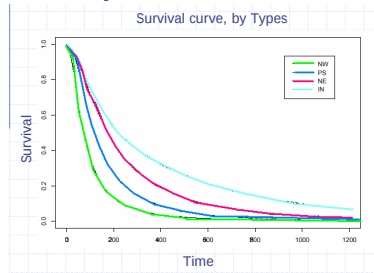
# Service Durations: LogNormal Prevalent

## Israeli Bank Log-Histogram



- ▶ **New** Customers: 2 min (NW);
- ▶ **Regulars**: 3 min (PS);

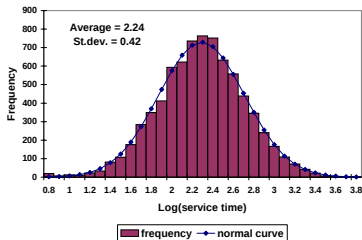
## Survival-Functions by Service-Class



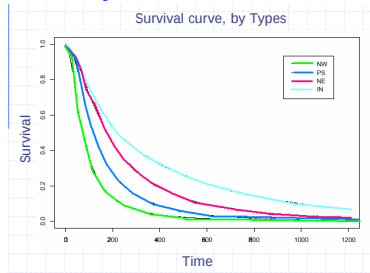
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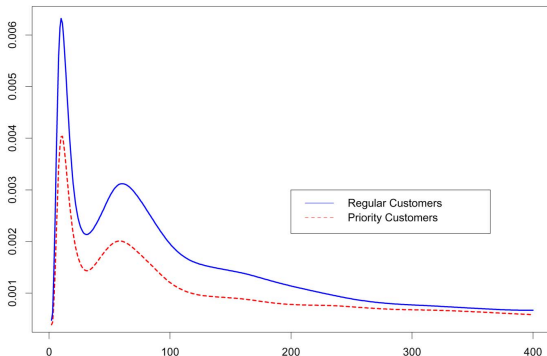


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Observation: **VIP** require **longer service** times.

## (Im)Patience while Waiting (Palm 1943-53)

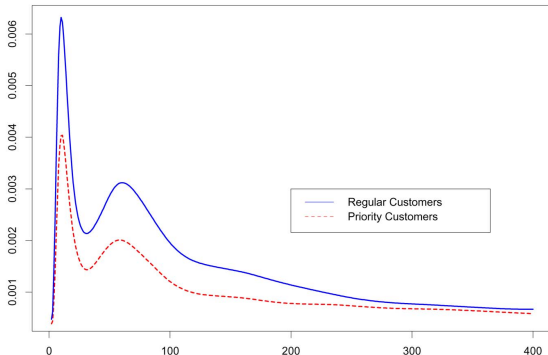
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**Regular** over **VIP** Customers – Israeli Bank



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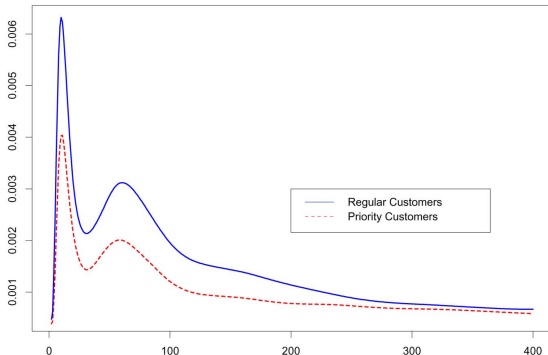
**Regular** over **VIP** Customers – Israeli Bank



- ▶ **Peaks** of abandonment at times of **Announcements**
- ▶ **Call-by-Call Data (DataMOCCA)** required (& Un-Censoring).

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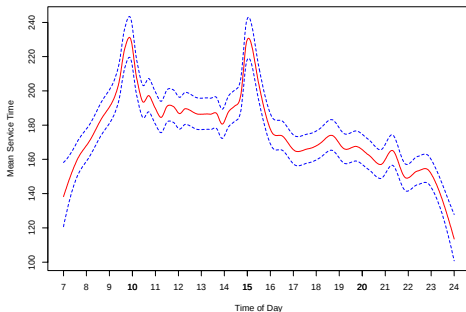
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Observation: **VIP** are **more patient** (Needy)

# A “Service-Time” Puzzle at an Israeli Bank

## Inter-related Primitives

### Average Service Time over the Day – Israeli Bank

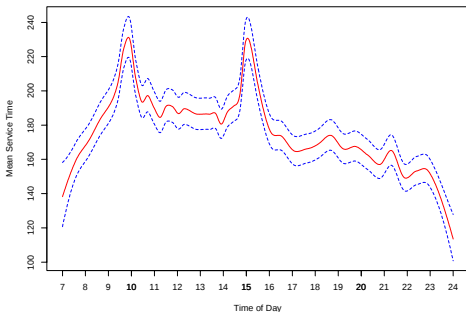


Prevalent: **Longest services** at **peak-loads** (10:00, 15:00). **Why?**

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Prevalent: **Longest services** at **peak-loads** (10:00, 15:00). **Why?**

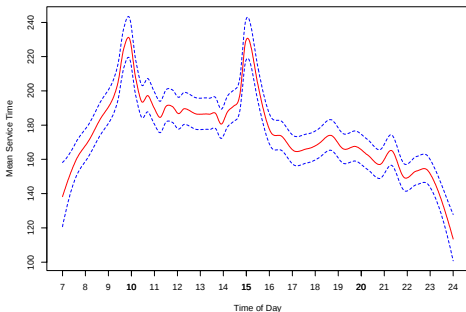
### Explanations:

- ▶ Common: Service protocol different (longer) during peak times.

# A “Service-Time” Puzzle at an Israeli Bank

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#### Explanations:

- ▶ Common: Service protocol different (longer) during peak times.
- ▶ Operational: The needy abandon less during peak times; hence the **VIP remain** on line, with their **long service** times.

## Erlang-A: Practical Relevance?

### Experience:

- ▶ Arrival process **not pure Poisson** (time-varying,  $\sigma^2$  too large)
- ▶ Service times **not Exponential** (typically close to LogNormal)
- ▶ Patience times **not Exponential** (various patterns observed).
- ▶ Building Blocks need **not be independent** (eg. long wait possibly implies long service)
- ▶ Customers and Servers **not homogeneous** (classes, skills)
- ▶ Customers return for service (after busy, abandonment)
- ▶  $\dots$ , and more.

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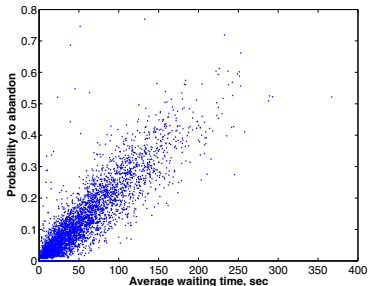
### Question: Is Erlang-A Practically Relevant?

## Estimating (Im)Patience: via $P\{Ab\} \propto E[W_q]$

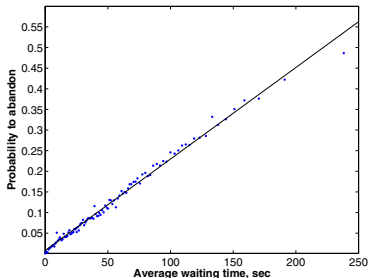
Assume **Exp**( $\theta$ ) (im)patience. Then,  $P\{Ab\} = \theta \cdot E[W_q]$ .

### Israeli Bank: Yearly Data

Hourly Data



Aggregated

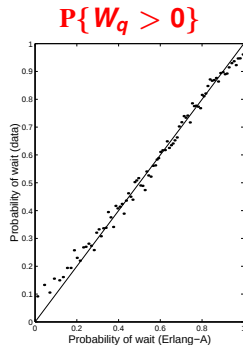
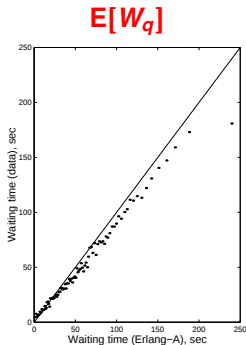
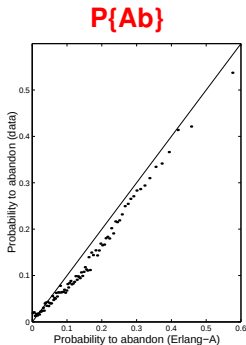


Graphs based on 4158 hour intervals.

Estimate of mean (im)patience:  $250/0.55 \approx 450$  seconds.

# Erlang-A: Fitting a Simple Model to a Complex Reality

- ▶ **Small Israeli Banking Call-Center** (10 agents)
- ▶ (Im)Patience ( $\theta$ ) estimated via  $P\{Ab\} / E[W_q]$
- ▶ Graphs: **Hourly Performance vs. Erlang-A Predictions**, during 1 year (aggregating groups with 40 similar hours).



## Erlang-A: Simple, but Not Too Simple

### Further Natural Questions:

1. Why does Erlang-A practically work? justify **robustness**.
2. When does it fail? chart **boundaries**.
3. Generalize: time-variation, SBR, networks, uncertainty , . . .

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**Answers** via **Asymptotic Analysis**, as load- and staffing-levels increase, which reveals model-essentials:

- ▶ **E**fficiency-**D**riven (**ED**) regime: Fluid models (deterministic)
- ▶ **Q**uality- and **E**fficiency-**D**riven (**QED**): Diffusion refinements.

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**Motivation:** Moderate-to-large service systems (**100's - 1000's** servers), notably **call-centers**.

Results turn out **accurate** enough to also cover **10-20** servers.  
Important – relevant to **hospitals** (nurse-staffing: de Véricourt & Jennings, 2006), ...

# Operational Regimes: Conceptual Framework

Assume: **Offered Load**  $R = \frac{\lambda}{\mu}$  ( $= \lambda \times E[S]$ ) not too small.

**QD Regime:**  $N \approx R + \delta R$   $[(N - R)/R \rightarrow \delta, \text{ as } N, \lambda \uparrow \infty]$

- ▶ Essentially **no** delays:  $[P\{W_q > 0\} \rightarrow 0]$ .

**ED Regime:**  $N \approx R - \gamma R$

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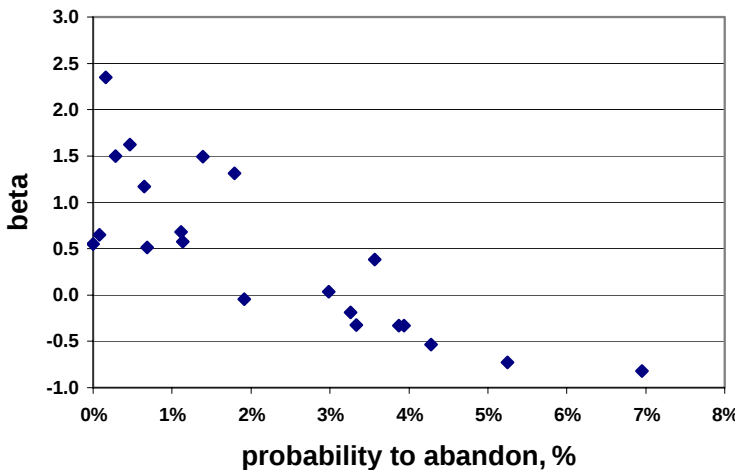
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**QED+ED:**  $N \approx (1 - \gamma)R + \beta\sqrt{R}$

- ▶ Zeltyn & M. 2006
- ▶ QED refining ED to accommodate “timely-delays”:  $P\{W_q > T\}$ .

## QED: Practical Support

QOS parameter  $\beta = (N - R)/\sqrt{R}$  vs. %Abandonment



## QED Theory (Erlang '13; Halfin-Whitt '81; Garnett MSc; Zeltyn PhD)

Consider a sequence of M/M/N+G models,  $N=1,2,3,\dots$

Then the following **points of view** are equivalent:

- **QED**  $\% \{\text{Wait} > 0\} \approx \alpha, \quad 0 < \alpha < 1;$
- **Customers**  $\% \{\text{Abandon}\} \approx \frac{\gamma}{\sqrt{N}}, \quad 0 < \gamma;$
- **Agents**  $\text{OCC} \approx 1 - \frac{\beta + \gamma}{\sqrt{N}} \quad -\infty < \beta < \infty;$
- **Managers**  $N \approx R + \beta\sqrt{R}, \quad R = \lambda \times E(S) \text{ not small};$

QED performance (ASA, ...) is easily computable, all in terms of  $\beta$  (the square-root safety staffing level) – see later.

## QED Approximations (Zeltyn, M. '06)

$G$  – patience distribution,

$g_0$  – patience density at origin ( $g_0 = \theta$ , if  $\exp(\theta)$ ).

$$N = \frac{\lambda}{\mu} + \beta \sqrt{\frac{\lambda}{\mu}} + o(\sqrt{\lambda}), \quad -\infty < \beta < \infty.$$

$$P\{\text{Ab}\} \approx \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} \cdot [h(\hat{\beta}) - \hat{\beta}] \cdot \left[ \sqrt{\frac{\mu}{g_0}} + \frac{h(\hat{\beta})}{h(-\beta)} \right]^{-1},$$

$$P\left\{W > \frac{T}{\sqrt{N}}\right\} \approx \left[ 1 + \sqrt{\frac{g_0}{\mu}} \cdot \frac{h(\hat{\beta})}{h(-\beta)} \right]^{-1} \cdot \frac{\bar{\Phi}(\hat{\beta} + \sqrt{g_0 \mu} \cdot T)}{\bar{\Phi}(\hat{\beta})},$$

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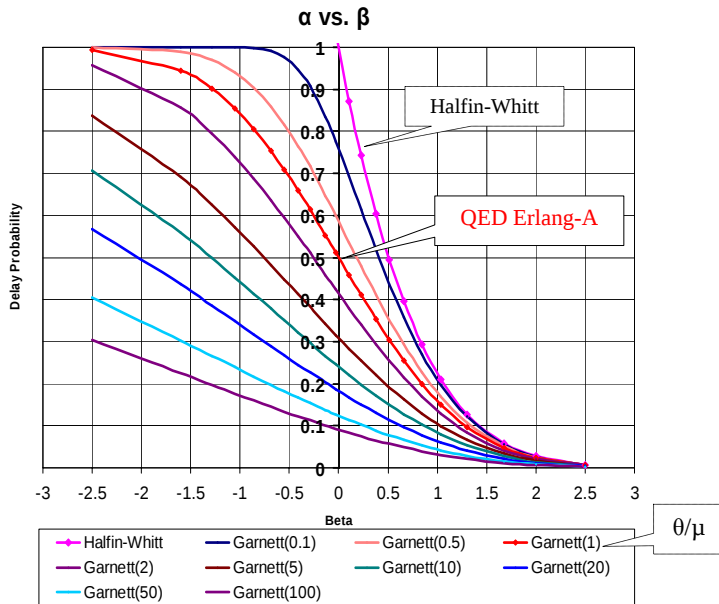
Here

$$\hat{\beta} = \beta \sqrt{\frac{\mu}{g_0}}$$

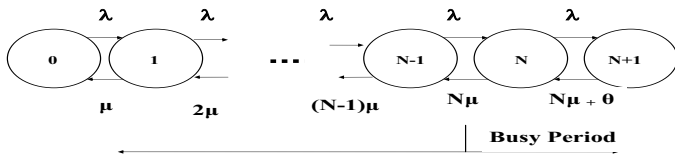
$$\bar{\Phi}(x) = 1 - \Phi(x),$$

$$h(x) = \phi(x)/\bar{\Phi}(x), \text{ hazard rate of } N(0, 1).$$

# Garnett / Halfin-Whitt Functions: $P\{W_q > 0\}$



## QED Intuition via Excursions: Busy/Idle Periods



$Q(0) = N$ : all servers busy, no queue.

Let  $T_{N,N-1}$  = Busy Period (down-crossing  $N \downarrow N-1$ )

$T_{N-1,N}$  = Idle Period (up-crossing  $N-1 \uparrow N$ )

$$\text{Then } P(\text{Wait} > 0) = \frac{T_{N,N-1}}{T_{N,N-1} + T_{N-1,N}} = \left[ 1 + \frac{T_{N-1,N}}{T_{N,N-1}} \right]^{-1}$$

## QED Intuition via Excursions: Asymptotics

Calculate  $T_{N-1,N} = \frac{1}{\lambda_N E_{1,N-1}} \sim \frac{1}{N\mu \times h(-\beta)/\sqrt{N}} \sim \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} \cdot \frac{1/\mu}{h(-\beta)}$

$$T_{N,N-1} = \frac{1}{N\mu\pi_+(0)} \sim \frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} \cdot \frac{\beta/\mu}{h(\delta)/\delta}, \quad \delta = \beta\sqrt{\mu/\theta}$$

Both apply as  $\sqrt{N}(1 - \rho_N) \rightarrow \beta, \quad -\infty < \beta < \infty.$

Hence,  $P(\text{Wait} > 0) \sim \left[1 + \frac{h(\delta)/\delta}{h(-\beta)/\beta}\right]^{-1}.$

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Special case:  $\mu = \theta$  (Impatient):

Then  $\mathbf{Q} \stackrel{d}{=} \mathbf{M}/\mathbf{M}/\infty$ , since sojourn-time is  $\exp(\mu = \theta).$

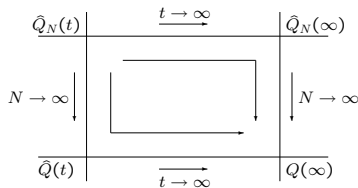
If also  $\beta = 0$  (Prevalent):  $\mathbf{P}\{\mathbf{Wait} > 0\} \approx 1/2.$

## Process Limits (Queueing, Waiting)

- $\hat{Q}_N = \{\hat{Q}_N(t), t \geq 0\}$  : stochastic process obtained by centering and rescaling:

$$\hat{Q}_N = \frac{Q_N - N}{\sqrt{N}}$$

- $\hat{Q}_N(\infty)$  : stationary distribution of  $\hat{Q}_N$
- $\hat{Q} = \{\hat{Q}(t), t \geq 0\}$  : process defined by:  $\hat{Q}_N(t) \xrightarrow{d} \hat{Q}(t)$ .



Approximating (Virtual) Waiting Time

$$\hat{V}_N = \sqrt{N} V_N \Rightarrow \hat{V} = \left[ \frac{1}{\mu} \hat{Q} \right]^+$$

(Puhalskii, 1994)

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Operational Regimes provide a **conceptual framework**.

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  - ▶ **Constraint Satisfaction**: eg. **Min.  $N$  , s.t. QOS constraints** .
3. Robustness depends:
  - ▶ **Without Abandonment: QED** covers all, at amazing accuracy.
  - ▶ **With Abandonment: ED, QED, ED+QED** all have a role.

## Operational Regimes: Rules-of-Thumb

| Constraint                          | P{Ab} |             | E[W]               |                                           | P{W > T}                                                   |                                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
|                                     | Tight | Loose       | Tight              | Loose                                     | Tight                                                      | Loose                                               |
|                                     | 1-10% | $\geq 10\%$ | $\leq 10\%E[\tau]$ | $\geq 10\%E[\tau]$                        | $0 \leq T \leq 10\%E[\tau]$<br>$5\% \leq \alpha \leq 50\%$ | $T \geq 10\%E[\tau]$<br>$5\% \leq \alpha \leq 50\%$ |
| Offered Load                        |       |             |                    |                                           |                                                            |                                                     |
| Small (10's)                        | QED   | QED         | QED                | QED                                       | QED                                                        | QED                                                 |
| Moderate-to-Large<br>(100's-1000's) | QED   | ED,<br>QED  | QED                | ED,<br>QED if $\tau \stackrel{d}{=} \exp$ | QED                                                        | ED+QED                                              |

**ED:**  $N \approx R - \gamma R$  ( $0.1 \leq \gamma \leq 0.25$ ).

**QD:**  $N \approx R + \delta R$  ( $0.1 \leq \delta \leq 0.25$ ).

**QED:**  $N \approx R + \beta\sqrt{R}$  ( $-1 \leq \beta \leq 1$ ).

**ED+QED:**  $N \approx (1 - \gamma)R + \beta\sqrt{R}$  ( $\gamma, \beta$  as above).

**ED**

DO NOT forget to insert

# ED+QED

## Back to “Why does Erlang-A Work?”

Theoretical Answer:  $M_t^J / G / N_t + G \stackrel{d}{\approx} (M / M / N + M)_t, \quad t \geq 0.$

- ▶ **General Patience**: Behavior at the origin is all that matters.
- ▶ **General Services**: Empirical insensitivity beyond the mean.
- ▶ **Time-Varying Arrivals**: Modified Offered-Load approximations.
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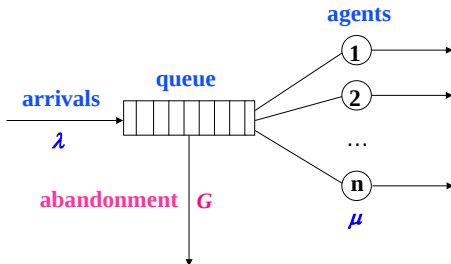
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**Practically:** Why do (stochastic-ignorant) Call Centers work?

**“The right answer for the wrong reason”**

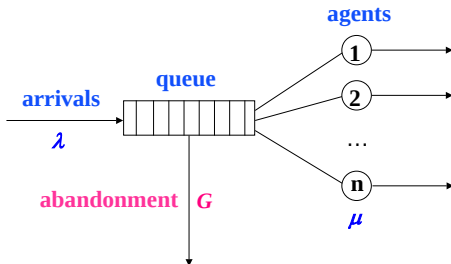
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(Im)Patience times **Generally Distributed**: M/M/ $n+G$

**Exact** analysis in steady-state (Baccelli & Hebuterne, 1981): solve Kolmogorov's PDE's (semi-Markov) for the offered-wait  $V$ ;  
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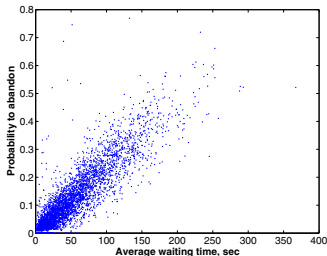
**QED** analysis (w/ Zeltyn, 2006):  $n \approx R + \beta\sqrt{R}$ .

- ▶ Assume (Im)Patience density  $g(0) > 0$ .
- ▶  $V$  asymptotics ( $\lambda \uparrow \infty$ ): Laplace Method, leading to
- ▶ **QED Approximations: Use Erlang-A** as is, with  $\theta \leftrightarrow g(0)$ .

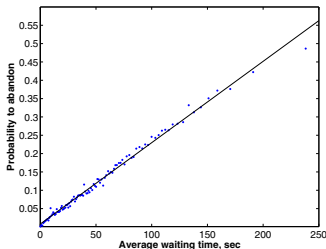
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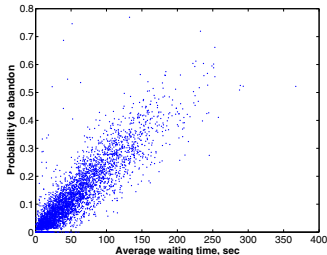
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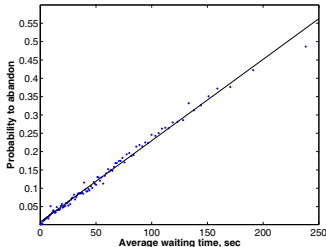
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### Recipe:

In both cases, use Erlang-A, with  $\hat{\theta} = \widehat{P\{Ab\}} / \widehat{E[W_q]}$  (slope above).

## Why Does Erlang-A Work? General Services

Established:  $M/M/N+G \approx M/M/N+M$  ( $\theta = g(0)$ ).

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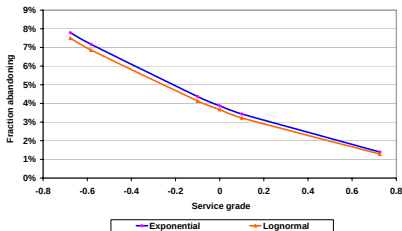
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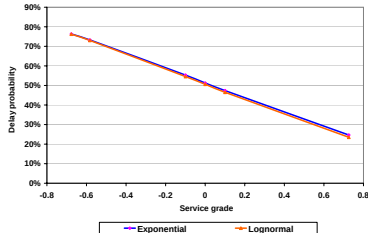
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100 agents, average patience = average service

Fraction Abandoning



Delay Probability



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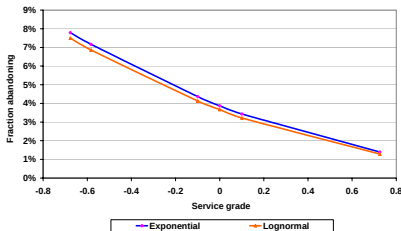
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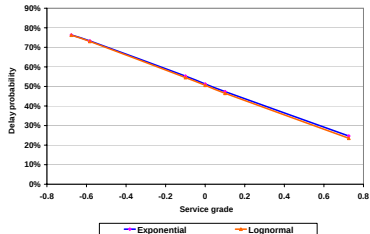
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**QED G-Services:**  $G/D_K/N+G$  (w/ Momčilović, ongoing).

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Two steps (Feldman, M., Massey & Whitt, 2006):

### 1. Modified Offered-Load: $\lambda$

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**Serendipity:** Time-stable performance, supported by **ISA** = Iterative Staffing Algorithm, and QED diffusion limits ( $M_t/M/N + M, \mu = \theta$ ).

# Stable Performance of Time-Varying $Q$ 's

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**Serendipity:** **Multi-Class Multi-Skill**, w/ **class-dependent** services.

Support: ISA, QED diffusion limits (Atar, M. & Shaikhet, 2007).

# Heterogeneous Customers (SBR): V-Model

# Additional Simple (QED) Models of Complex Realities: Exponential Services; i.i.d. Customers, i.i.d. Servers

## ► Performance Analysis:

- Khudiakova, Feigin, M. (Semi-Open): Call-Center + IVR/VRU;
- De Véricourt, Jennings (Closed + Delay), then w/ Yom-Tov (Semi-Open): **Nurse staffing** (ratios), bed sizing;
- Randhawa, Kumar (Closed + Loss): Subscriber queues.

## ► Optimal Staffing: Accurate to **within 1**, even with very small $n$ 's, for both **constraint-satisfaction** and cost/revenue **optimization** (staffing, abandonment and waiting costs).

- Armony, Maglaras: ( $M_x/M/N$ ) Delay information (Equilibrium);
- Borst, M., Reiman ( $M/M/N$ ): Asymptotic framework;
- Zeltyn, M. ( $M/M/N+G$ ): Optimization still ongoing.

## ► Time-Varying Queues, via 2 approaches:

- Jennings, M., Massey, Whitt, then w/ Feldman: **Time-Stable Performance** (ISA, leading to Modified Offered Load);
- M., Massey, Reiman, Rider, Stolyar: Unavoidable **Time-Varying Performance** (Fluid & Diffusion models, via Uniform Acceleration).

## Less-Simple (QED) Models: General Service-Times

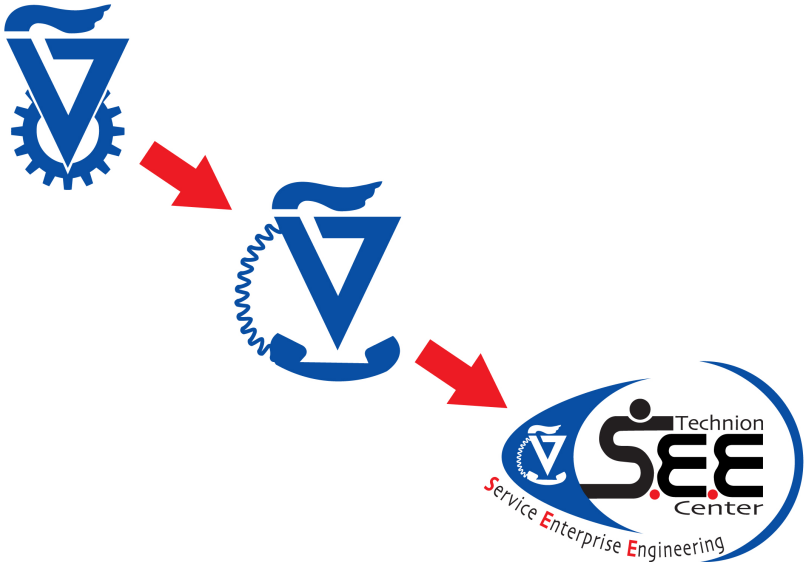
The Challenge: Must keep track of the state of  $n$  individual servers, as  $n \uparrow \infty$ . (Recall Kiefer & Wolfowitz).

- ▶ Shwartz, M. (M/G/N), Rosenshmidt, M. (M/G/N+G): Simulations; **LogNormal better than Exp**, 2-valued same as D.
- ▶ Whitt (GI/M+0/N): Covering  $CV \geq 1$ ;
- ▶ Puhalskii, Reiman (GI/PH/N): Markovian process-limits (no steady-state); also priorities;
- ▶ Jelencović, M., Momčilović (GI/D/N): steady-state (via round-robin); then M., Momčilović (G/D<sub>K</sub>/N): process-limits, via “Lindley-Trees”; G/D<sub>K</sub>/N+G ongoing.
- ▶ Kaspi, Ramanan (G/G/N): Fluid, next Diffusion (measure-valued ages, following Kiefer & Wolfowitz);
- ▶ Reed (GI/GI/N): Fluid, Diffusion (**Skorohod-Like Mapping**).

## Complex (QED) Models: Skills-Based Routing (Heterogeneous Customers or/and Servers - Theory)

- ▶ **V-Model**: Harrison, Zeevi; Atar, M., Reiman; Gurvich, M., Armony;  
then **Class-dependent** services: Atar, M., Shaikhet;
- ▶ **Reversed-V**: Armony, M.;  
then **Pool-dependent** services: Dai, Tezcan; Gurvich, Whitt (**G-c $\mu$** ); Atar, M., Shaikhet (Abandonment);
- ▶ **General**: Atar, then w/ Shaikhet (Null-controllability, Throughput-suboptimality); Gurvich, Whitt (FQR);
- ▶ **Distributed Networks**: Tezcan;
- ▶ **Random Service Rates**: Atar (Fastest or longest-idle server).

## The Technion SEE Center / Laboratory



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