

Firewall

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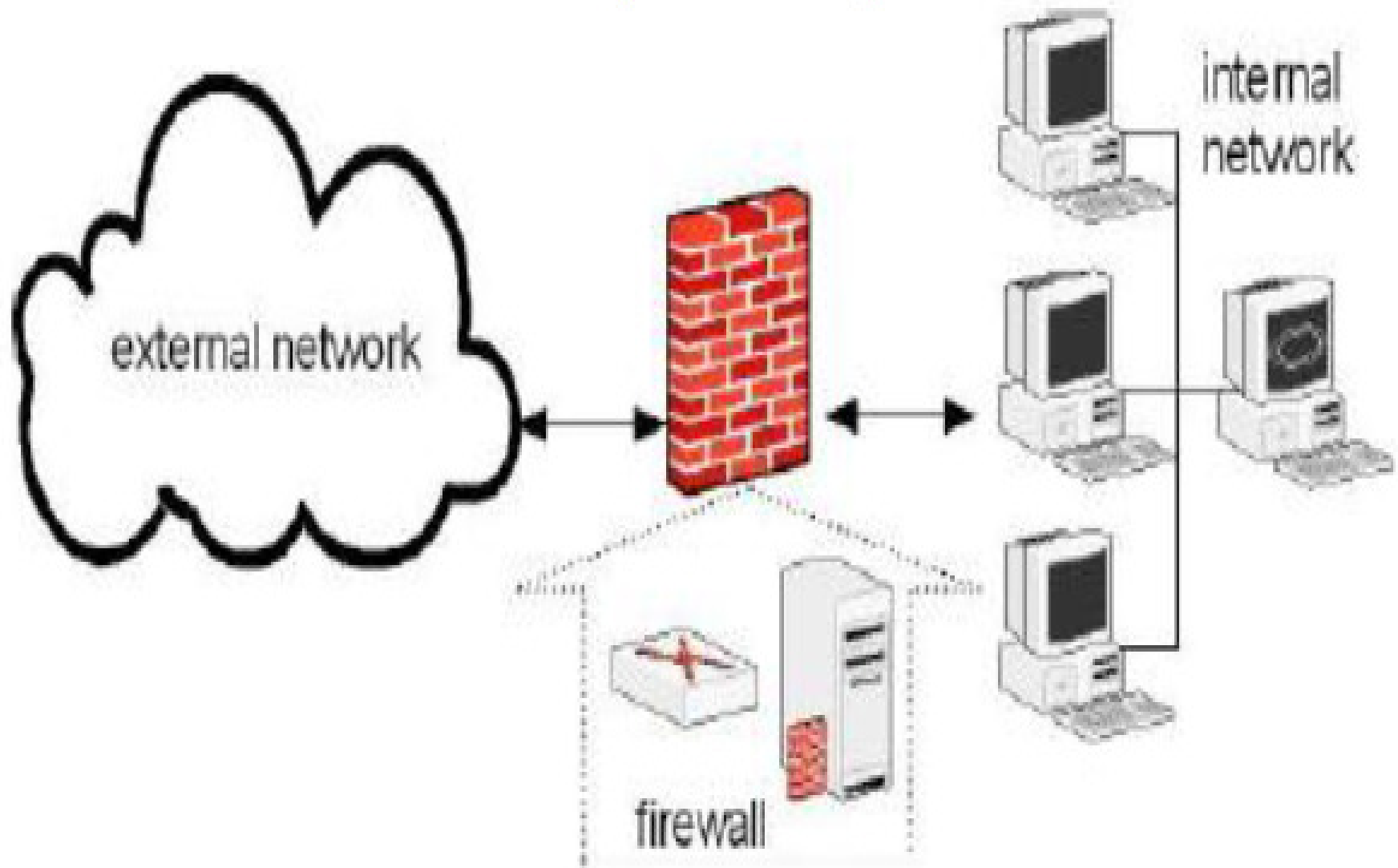
What is a Firewall?

- A firewall is a system that enforces access policy between two (or more) networks.
- A firewall makes the decision on what to do with connection packets based on rules/policies.
- The actions a firewall can take are:
 - Forward/accept the packet (Allows authorized traffic).
 - Drop the packet silently (Blocks prohibited traffic).
 - Drop the packet and send back ICMP messages to the source to notify why it was dropped (Blocks prohibited traffic with notification). but is this action wise?

Firewall Mechanism

- Two main approaches to setup a firewall:
 - Block all that is not explicitly authorized.
 - Allow all that is not specifically blocked.
- Firewall Mechanism:
 - Firewall examines all traffic packets between the networks.
 - Packets are evaluated against a list of “rules/policies” and conditions.
 - When the packet matches a rule: the action is triggered (reject or allow). The rest of the rules are not evaluated.
 - Rules are checked from top to bottom and the first rule found is applied. If no rules match, the packet is blocked by default.

Firewall Architecture



Firewall Architecture

- The previous example shows a firewall architecture made of two blocks. The external network (left side) and the internal network composed of four computers (right side) are two entities separated physically by a firewall, whose goal is filter the inbound traffic and outbound traffic.
- Inbound traffic: the traffic that comes from the external network and destined to the internal network.
- Outbound traffic: the traffic that goes from the internal network towards the external network.

Default Firewall Policies

- Default to block all
 - If we don't explicitly enable it, then it is blocked
 - May block unintended items
 - Most secure implementation
 - Often implemented by a refinement process...
- Default to allow all
 - If we aren't explicitly blocking it, then it is allowed
 - May miss things you want to block
 - Least secure implementation
 - Hard to refine, hard to audit. Can you really trust it???



Types of Firewalls

- Stateless Packet Filtering – Network Layer
- Stateful Packet Filtering – Network Layer
- Circuit Proxy – Transport Layer
- Application Proxy – Application Layer

Stateless Packet Filtering Firewalls

- Stateless packet filtering firewall acts at layer 3 (Network Layer)
- Control the forwarding or dropping of the data based on the IP header information, not the payloads.
- The information and fields that may be taken into consideration are:
 - IP destination address, IP source address, Protocol type (e.g. TCP, UDP, ICMP), Source protocol port number (e.g. TCP/80, UDP/53), Destination protocol port number, Flags (e.g. SYN, ACK, FIN)
- It does not keep track of the connection or session state.

Stateless Packet Filtering Example

A

action	ourhost	port	theirhost	port	comment
block	*	*	SPIGOT	*	we don't trust these people
allow	OUR-GW	25	*	*	connection to our SMTP port

B

action	ourhost	port	theirhost	port	comment
block	*	*	*	*	default

C

action	ourhost	port	theirhost	port	comment
allow	*	*	*	25	connection to their SMTP port

D

action	src	port	dest	port	flags	comment
allow	{our hosts}	*	*	25		our packets to their SMTP port
allow	*	25	*	*	ACK	their replies

E

action	src	port	dest	port	flags	comment
allow	{our hosts}	*	*	*		our outgoing calls
allow	*	*	*	*	ACK	replies to our calls
allow	*	*	*	>1024		traffic to nonservers



Stateful Packet Filtering

- Stateful packet filtering firewall acts at layer 3 (Network Layer)
- Perform all the functions of a stateless packet filtering firewall but also keep track of the state of the connection and past packets in the communication.
- Stateful packet filtering firewall allows inspecting both complex combinations of payload (message content) and context established by prior packets to influence filtering decisions.



Stateful Packet Filtering

- The firewall will attempt to track all the information in the communication. For instance:
 - If it evaluate a TCP packet from B to A that has a SYN-ACK flag, it will verify that it has seen a corresponding SYN packet from A to B before (is the TCP connection behaving correctly?).
- In other words: the stateful packet filter will keep track of all conversations and ensure that all packets transiting comply with proper protocol rules and operations.

Stateful Packet Filtering Example

-The connection tracking states used in building rules include the following:

State	Meaning
NEW	This packet belongs to a session that is not an already known connection. Thus, it is considered to be a NEW connection.
ESTABLISHED	Packets belong to a session that has seen traffic flowing in both directions.
RELATED	This connection is related to another connection (in NEW or ESTABLISHED state).
INVALID	A state that denotes an error.

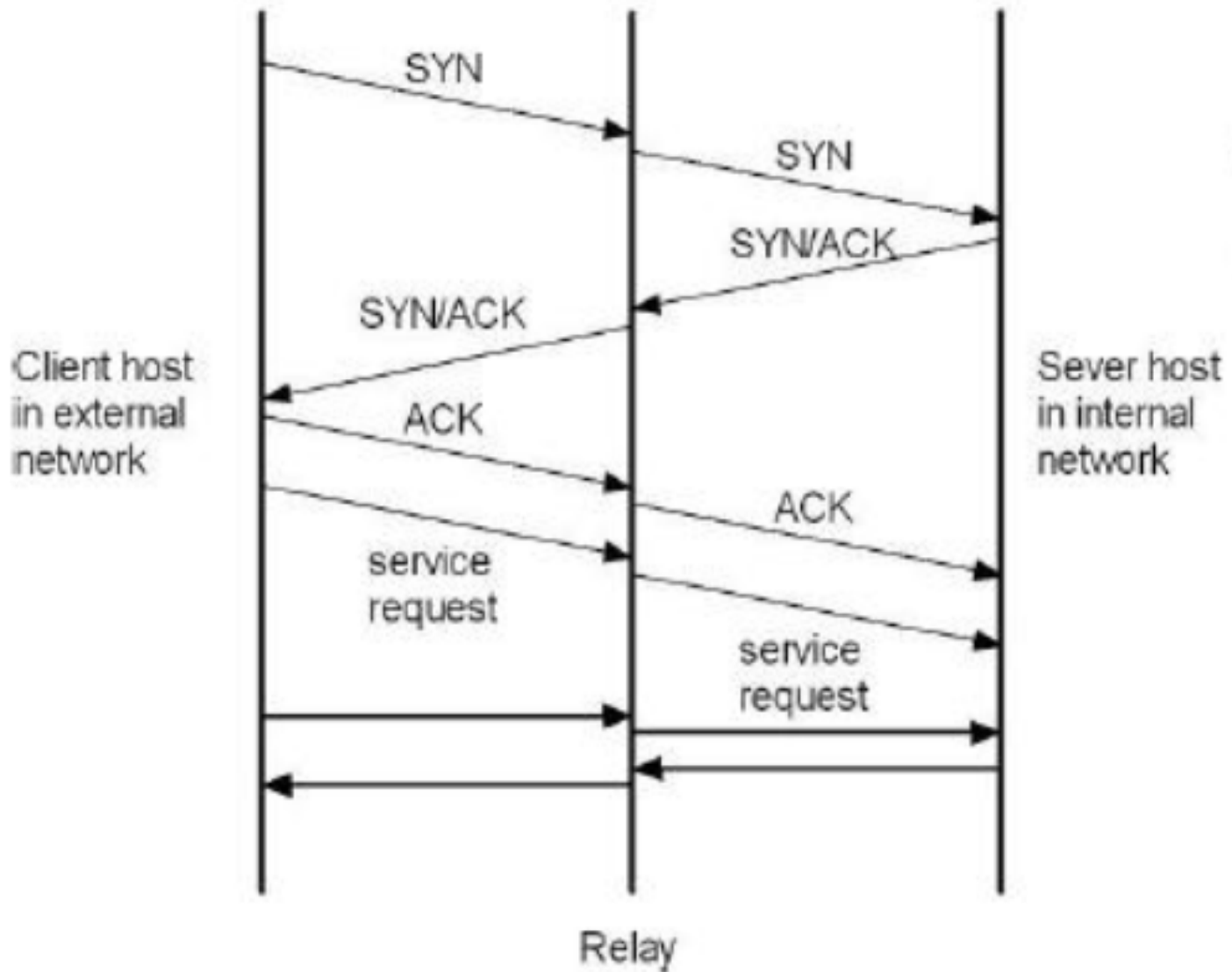
Connection state table example

<i>client addr</i>	<i>client port</i>	<i>server addr</i>	<i>server port</i>	<i>connection state</i>	<i>protocol</i>
219.22.101.32	1030	129.63.24.84	25	established	TCP
219.22.101.54	1034	129.63.24.84	161	established	UDP
210.99.201.14	2001	129.63.24.87	80	established	TCP
24.102.129.21	3389	129.63.24.87	110	established	TCP ¹²

Circuit Proxy

- Circuit proxy firewall acts at layer 4 (Transport Layer).
- Their purpose is to examine information of IP addresses and port numbers in TCP/UDP headers to determine if a connection is allowed.
- They act as intermediate that relay a TCP connection between an internal and external host.
- They disallow the direct connection between the external and the internal networks.

Circuit Proxy





Application Proxy

- Application proxy firewall acts as an intermediate communication point between 2 parties:
 - Each party “think” they directly communicate to the other.
 - Actually they communicate to the Application Proxy Firewall.
 - A – Proxy – B: A communicates to the proxy, the proxy then “acts” as A when communicating to B and vice-versa.
- These application proxy firewalls act at layer 7 (Application Layer).

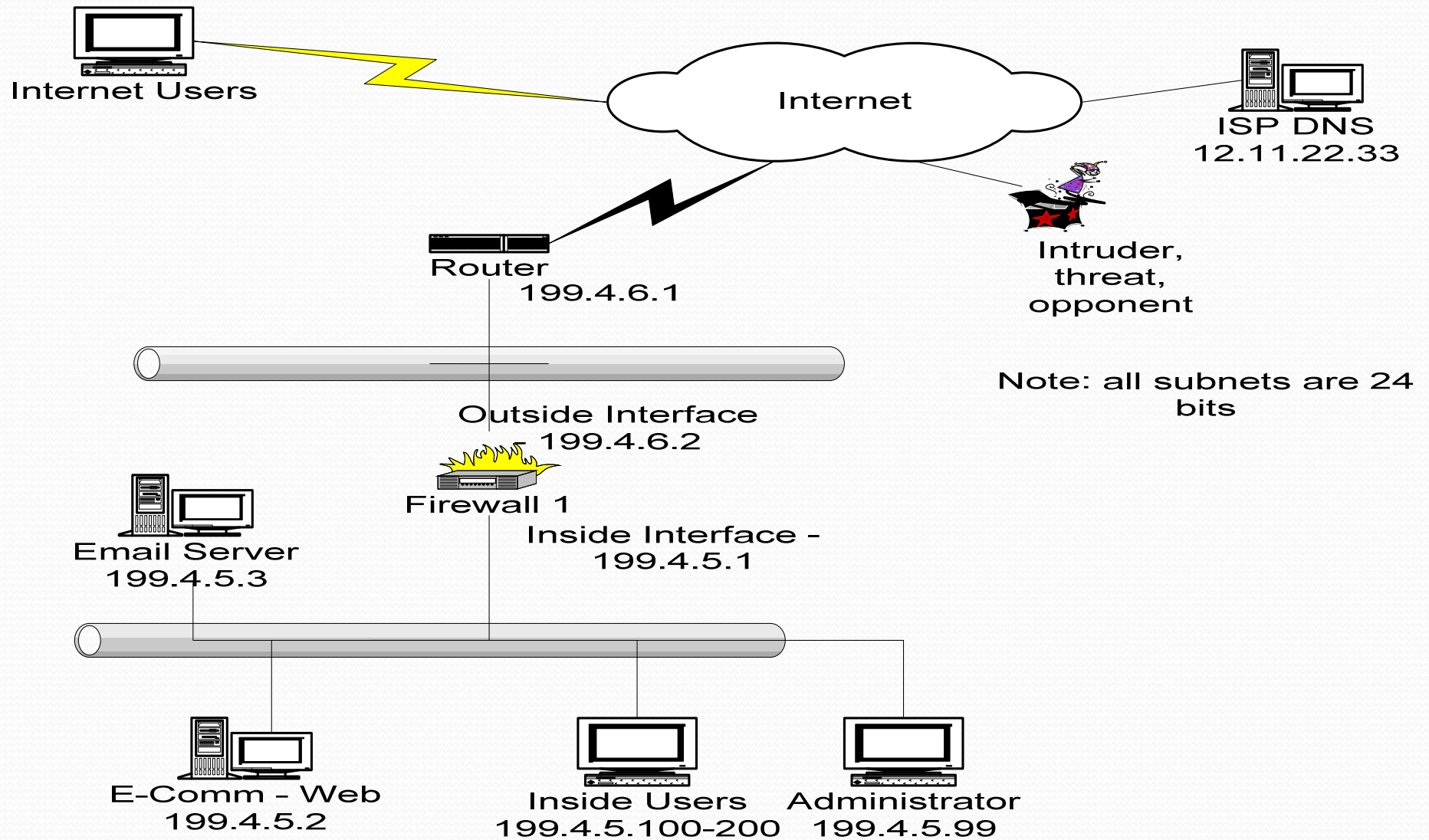


Application Proxy

- Basic functionalities of application proxy include:
 - Accepting the client sessions and appearing to them as a server.
 - Receiving from the client software the name of the actual server.
 - Contacting the actual server and appearing to it as a client.
 - Relaying all the data from the client to a server.
 - Performing access control and enforcement functions by checking, and accepting or rejecting the incoming and outgoing connections.

Firewall Policy

My-AC-store.com E-Commerce Infrastructure



Firewall Policy

Set Name	Rule #	Protocol	A/R	Source IP	Src Port	Dest IP	Dest Port	Flag	Comments
set1	1	tcp	R	any	any	any	any	SYN+FIN	
set1	2	tcp	A	any	any	199.4.5.2	80/443		
set1	3	tcp	A	any	any	199.4.5.3	smtp + pop3		
set1	4	tcp	A	any	80/443	199.4.5.99	any	ack	
set1	5	udp	A	any	53	199.4.5.0	any		
set1	6	IP	R	any	any	any	any	any	
set2	1	tcp	A	199.4.5.99	any	any	80/443		
set2	2	udp	A	199.4.5.0	any	any	53		
set2	3	tcp	A	199.4.5.99	any	199.4.5.1	23		
set2	4	tcp	A	199.4.5.2	80/443	any	any	ack	
set2	5	tcp	A	199.4.5.3	smtp + pop3	any	any	ack	
set2	6	IP	R	any	any	any	any	any	

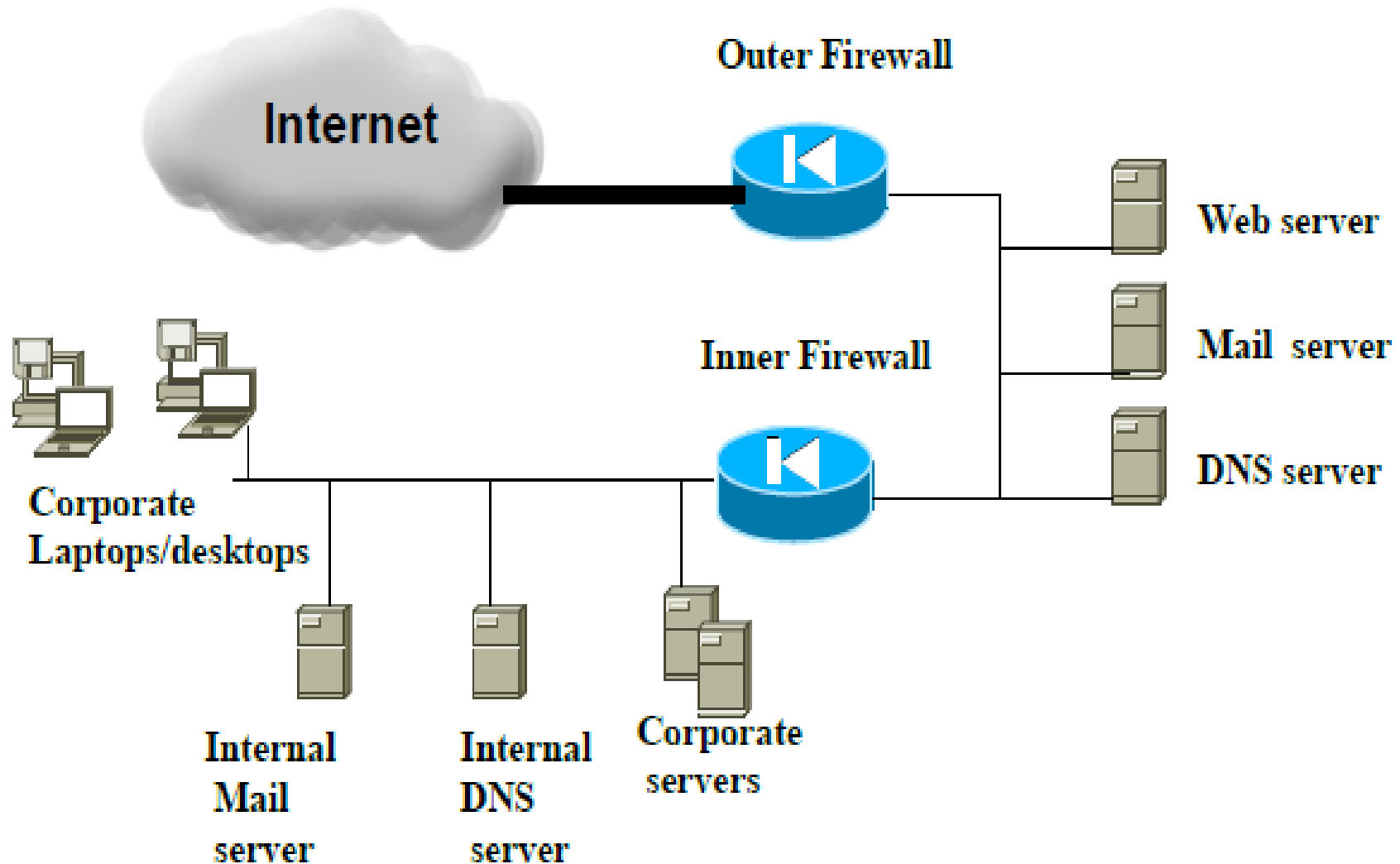
Set1 applied to outside interface of firewall
 Set2 applied to inside interface of firewall

Demilitarized Zones (DMZ)

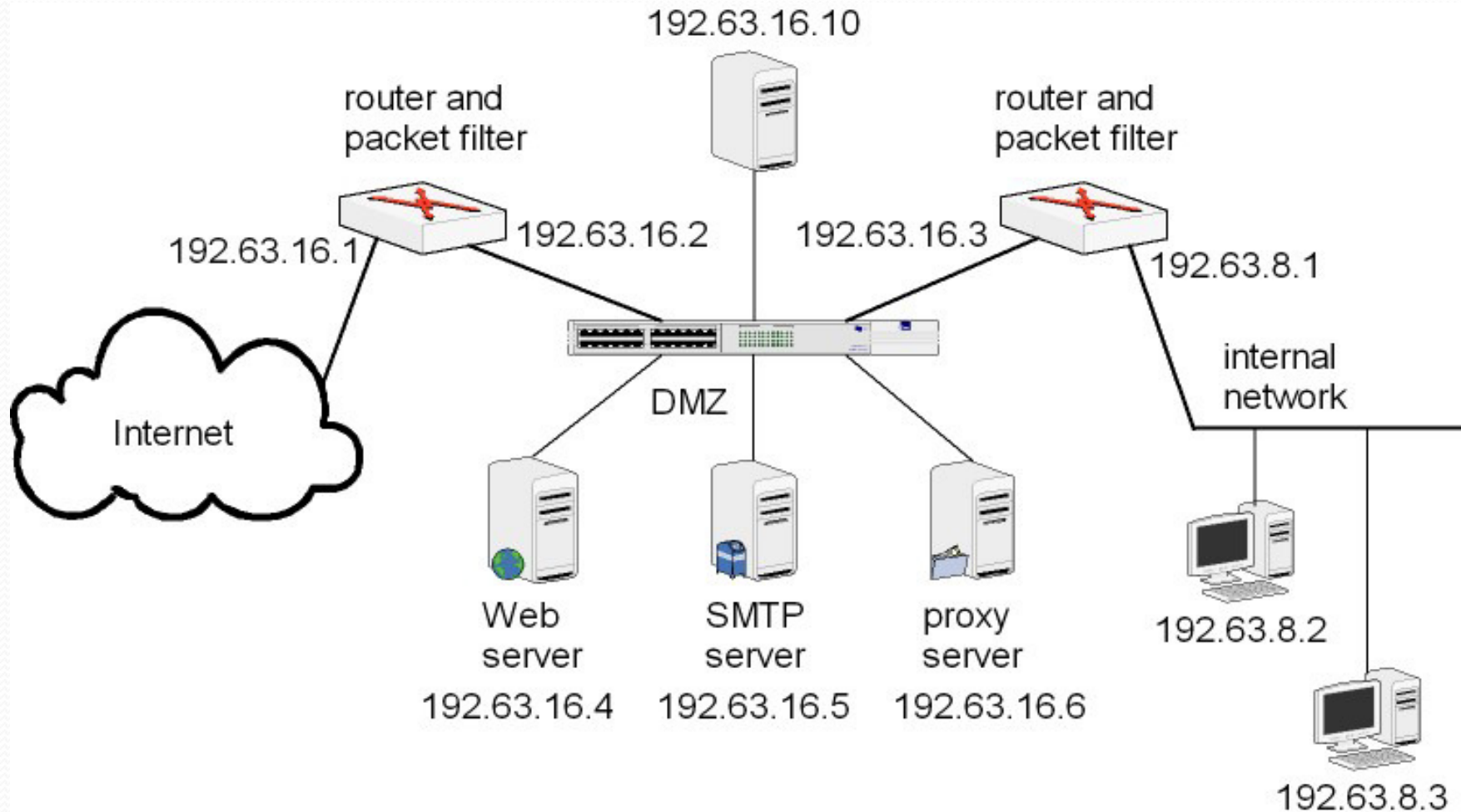
DMZ is a subnet between two firewalls in an internal network

- External firewall protects DMZ from external threats
- Internal firewall protects internal network from DMZ
- The role of the DMZ is to provide strong separation between the external and internal networks.

DMZ Example1



DMZ Example2



Benefits of Firewall

- Control access based on sender or receiver addresses.
- Control access based on the service requested.
- Hiding the internal network (e.g., topology, addresses, traffic, etc.)
- Authentication based on the source of traffic.
- Choke point for security audit (Logging activities).
- Reduce attacks by hackers.