

USENIX Acceptance: Later Isn't Necessarily Better

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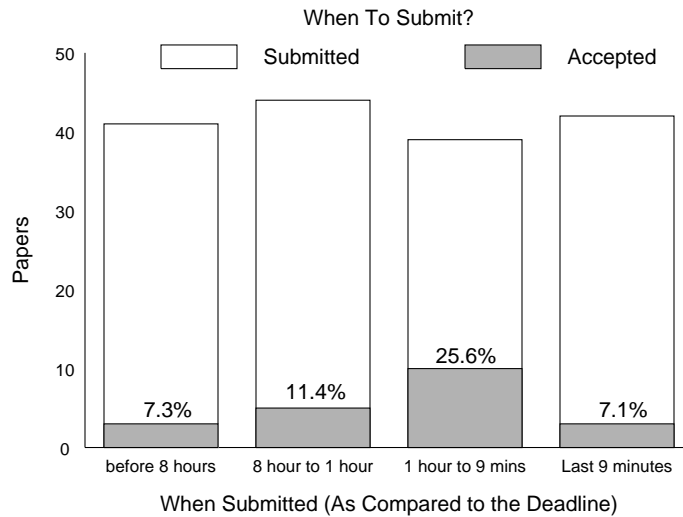


Figure 1: **Acceptance Rate as a Function of Submission Time.**

Abstract

We study the acceptance rate of papers submitted to the USENIX Annual Technical conference, as a function of when the papers were submitted. As previous research indicates, the 164 papers were submitted in roughly four groups: 41 were submitted 8 hours before the deadline or earlier, 44 with between 8 and 1 hours left, 39 with between 1 hour and 9 minutes left, and the final 42 in the last 9 minutes.

Of all 21 papers accepted, 18 were submitted within the last 8 hours. Of those 18, most (10 out of 21) came from the third quartile (1 hour to 9 minutes left), and the next biggest contributor (5 of 21) was the second quartile (8 hours to 1 hour). Indeed, in the third quartile, the acceptance rate was roughly twice that of the overall acceptance rate (25.6% as compared to 12.8%). Only 3 papers submitted in the last quartile (the last 9 minutes) were accepted.

We conclude that in submitting a paper, waiting until the last hour is a good strategy, but waiting until the last minute is not. Put simply, he or she who submits last does not necessarily submit best.