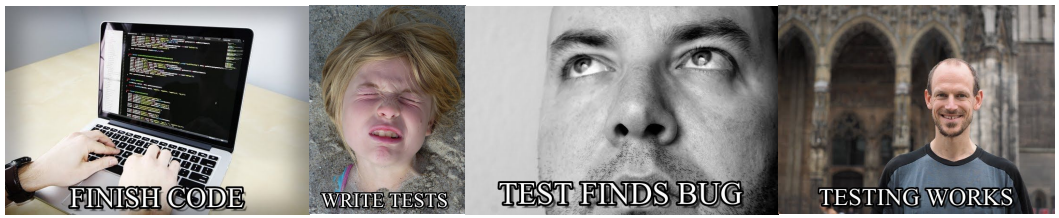
Google

Advances in Continuous Integration Testing @Google

By: John Micco - jmicco@google.com
投稿者:ジョン・ミッコ

Testing Scale at Google

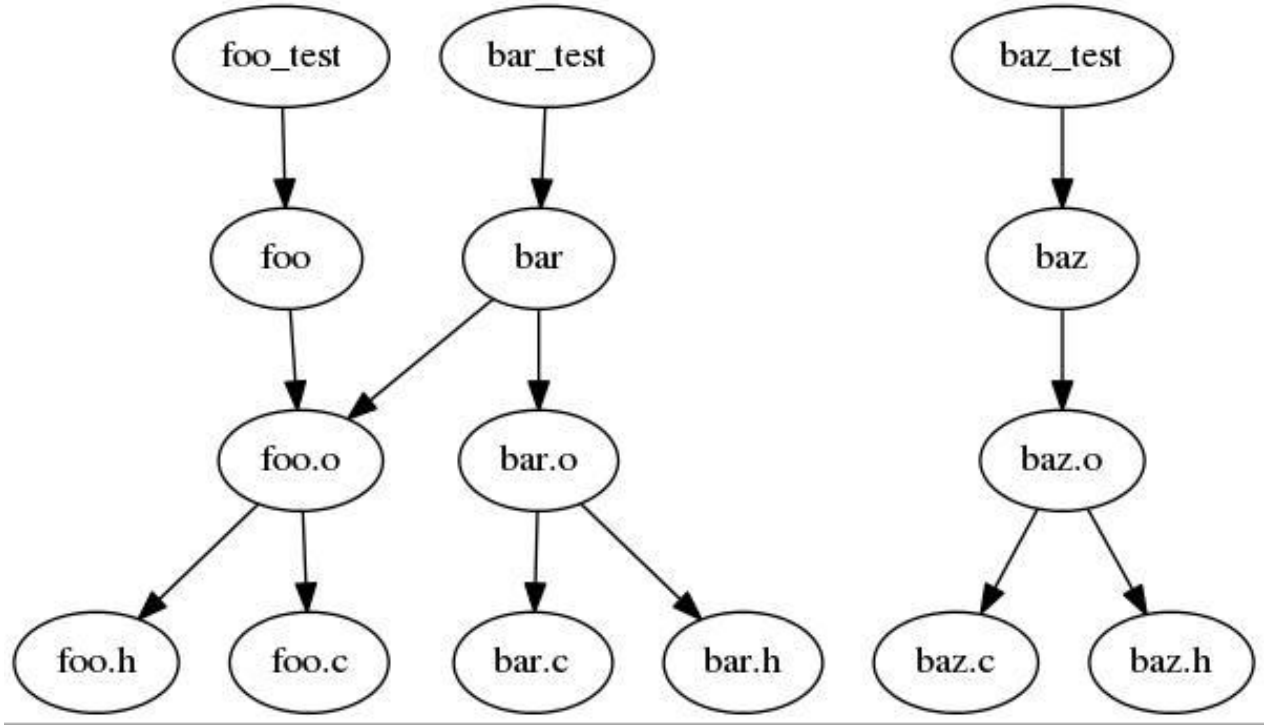
- 4.2 million individual tests running continuously
  - Testing runs before and after code submission
- 150 million test executions / day (averaging 35 runs / test / day)
- Distributed using internal version of bazel.io to a large compute farm
- Almost all testing is automated - no time for Quality Assurance
- 13,000+ individual project teams - all submitting to one branch
- Drives continuous delivery for Google
- 99% of all test executions pass



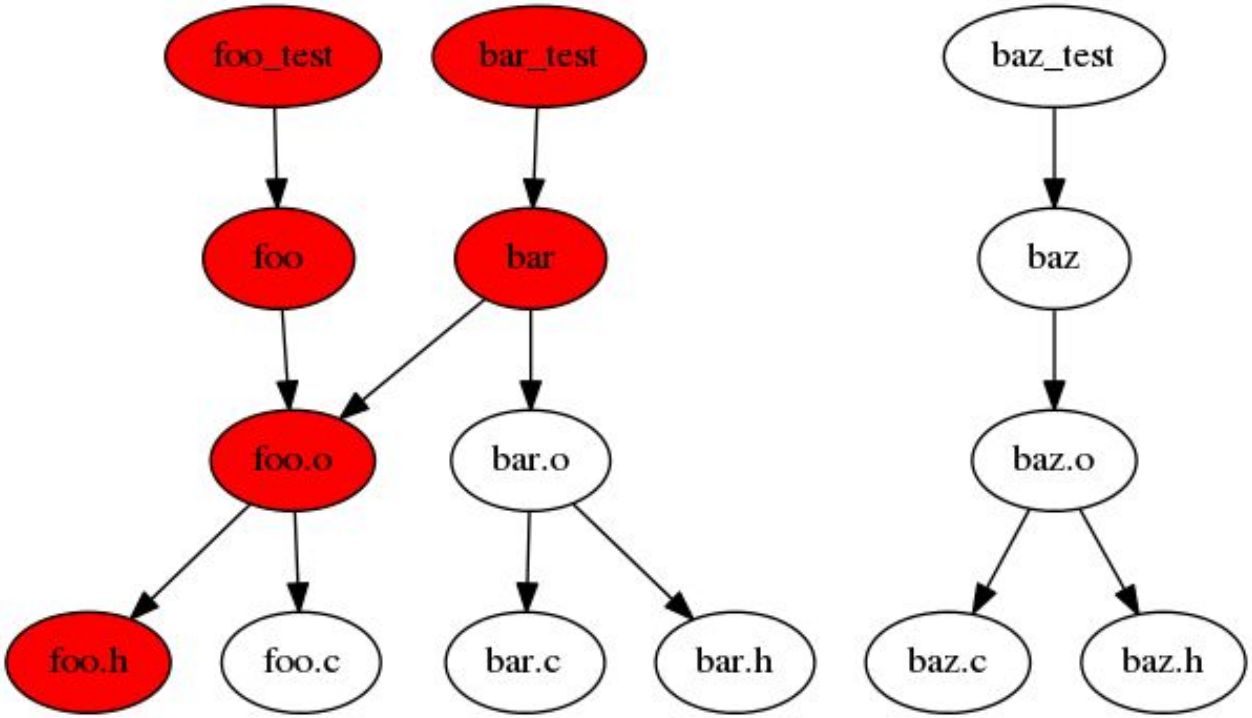
Testing Culture @ Google

- ~11 Years of testing culture promoting hand-curated automated testing
  - Testing on the toilet and Google testing blog started in 2007
  - GTAC conference since 2006 to share best practices across the industry
  - First internal awards for unit testing were in 2003!
  - Part of our new hire orientation program
- SETI role
  - Usually 1-2 SETI engineers / 8-10 person team
  - Develop test infrastructure to enable testing
- Engineers are expected to write automated tests for their submissions
- Limited experimentation with model-based / automated testing
  - Fuzzing, UI waltkthroughs, Mutation testing, etc.
  - Not a large fraction of overall testing

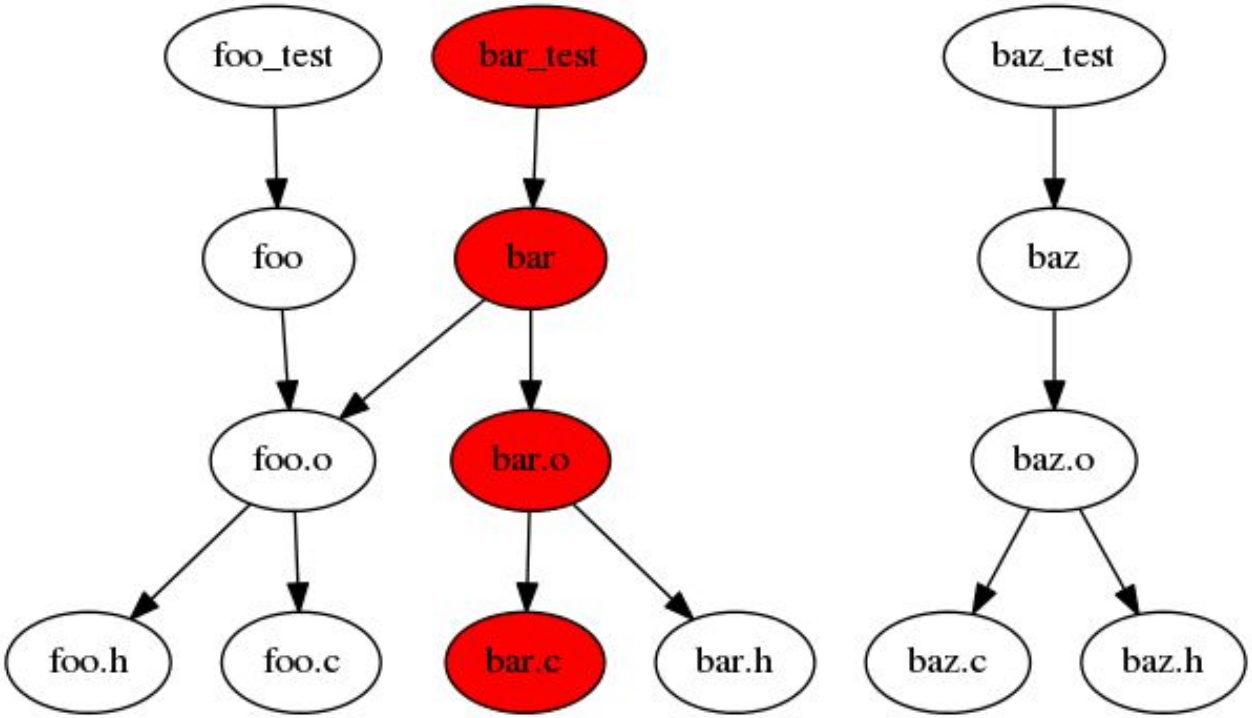
Regression Test Selection (RTS)



Regression Test Selection (RTS)



Current Regression Test Selection (RTS)

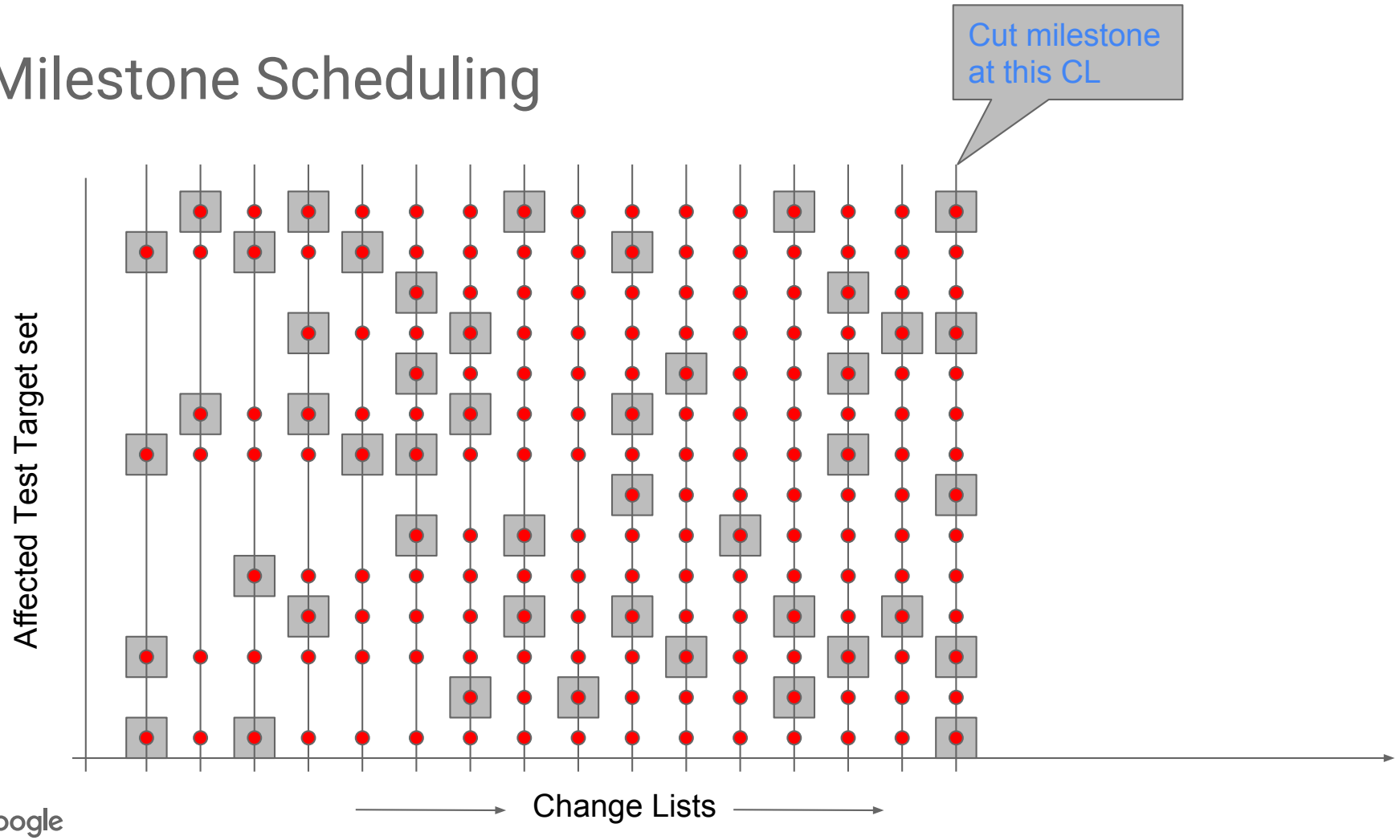


Postsubmit testing

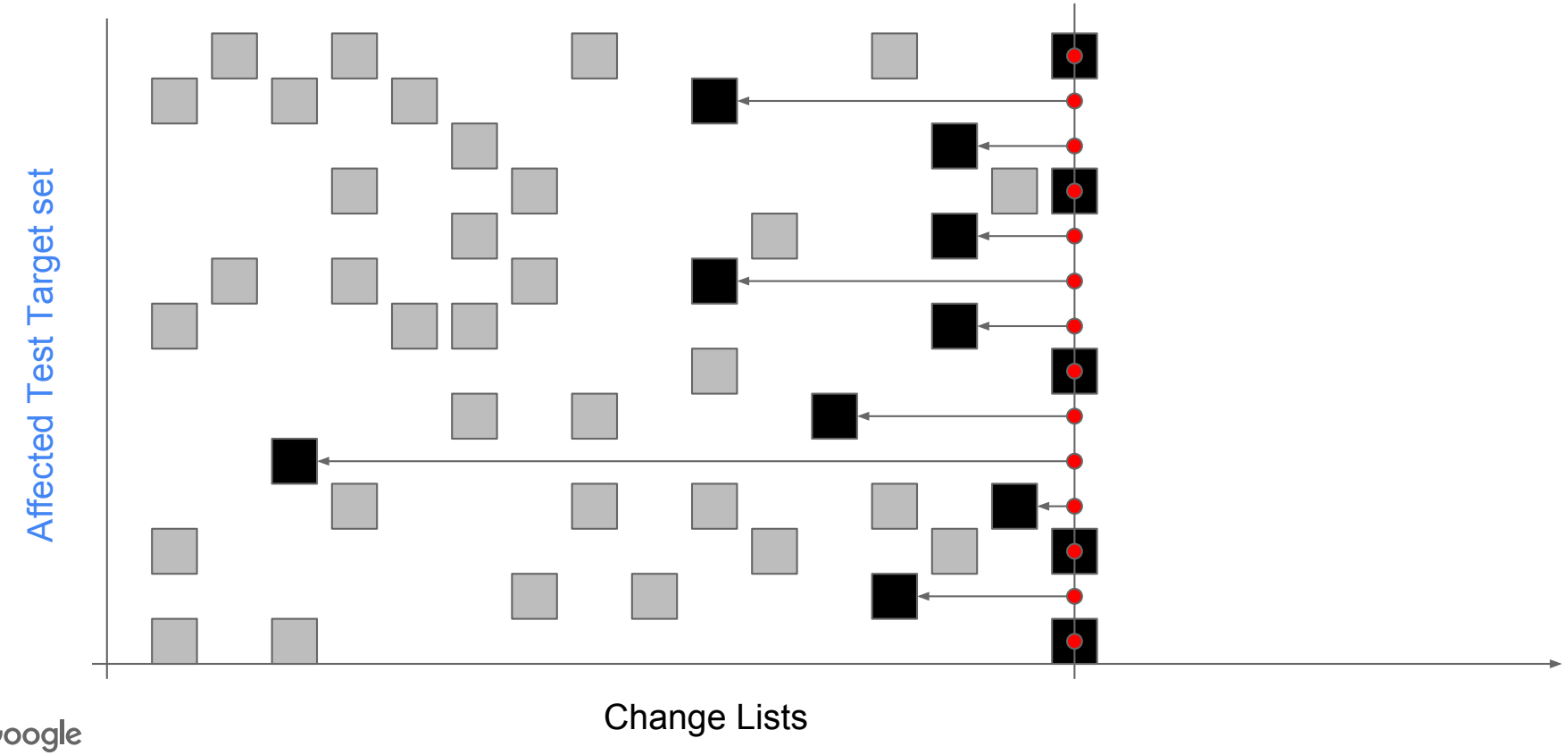
- Continuously runs 4.5M tests as changes are submitted
  - A test is affected iff a file being changed is present in the transitive closure of the test dependencies. (Regression Test Selection)
  - Each test runs in 1.5 distinct flag combinations (on average)
  - Build and run tests concurrently on distributed backend.
  - Runs as often as capacity allows
- Records the pass / fail result for each test in a database
  - Each run is uniquely identified by the test + flags + change
  - We have 2 years of results for all tests
  - And accurate information about what was changed

See: prior deck about Google CI System, See this paper about piper and CLs

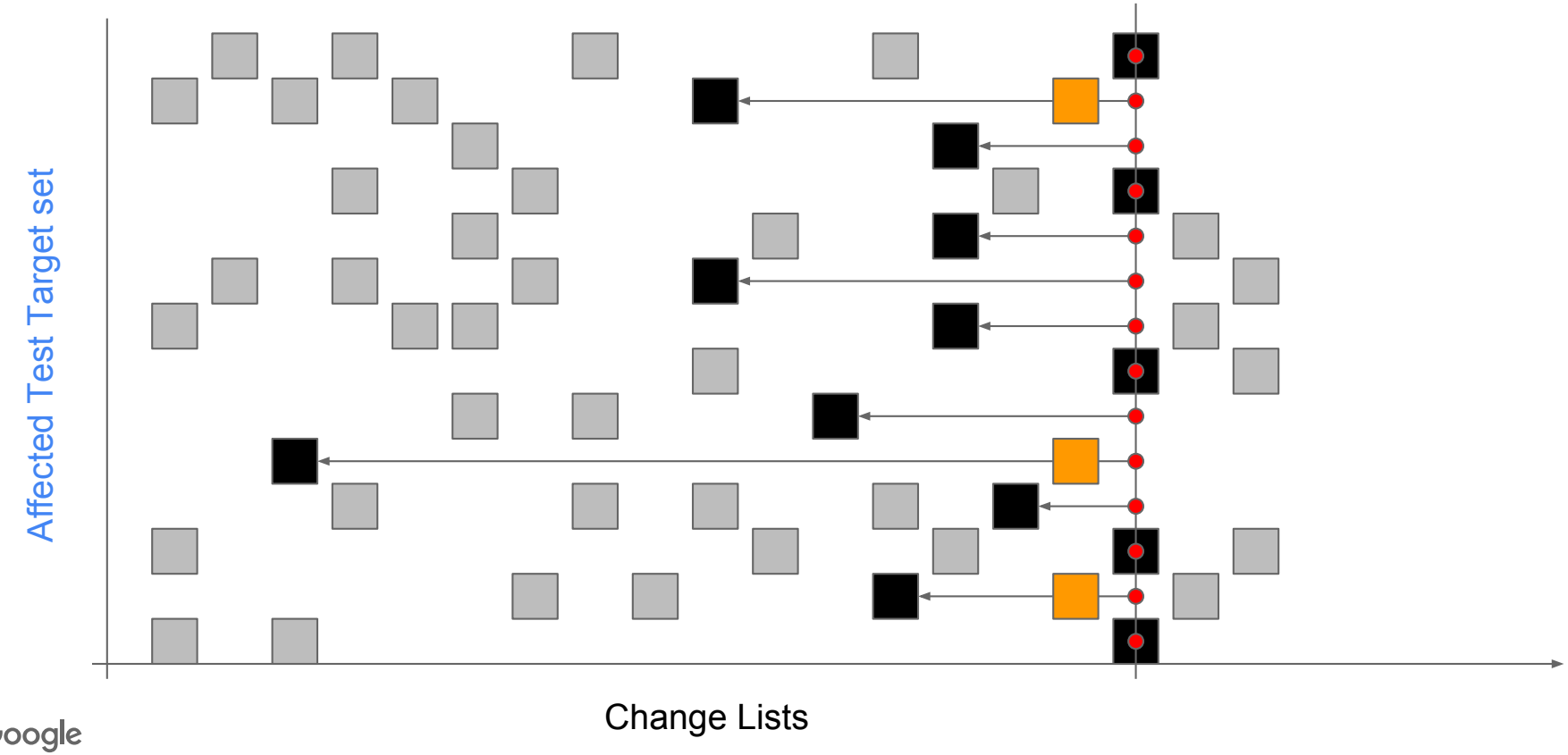
Milestone Scheduling



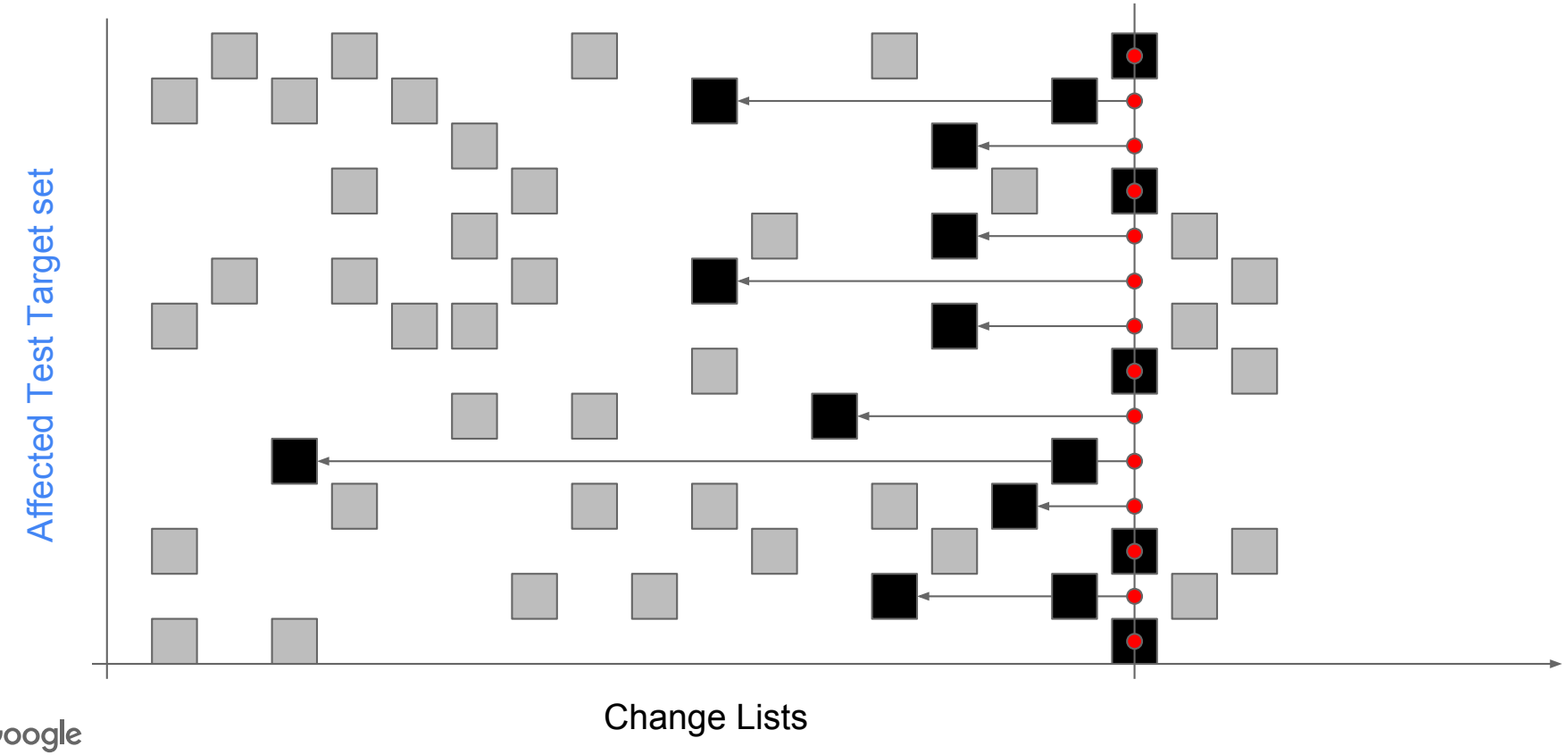
Milestone Scheduling



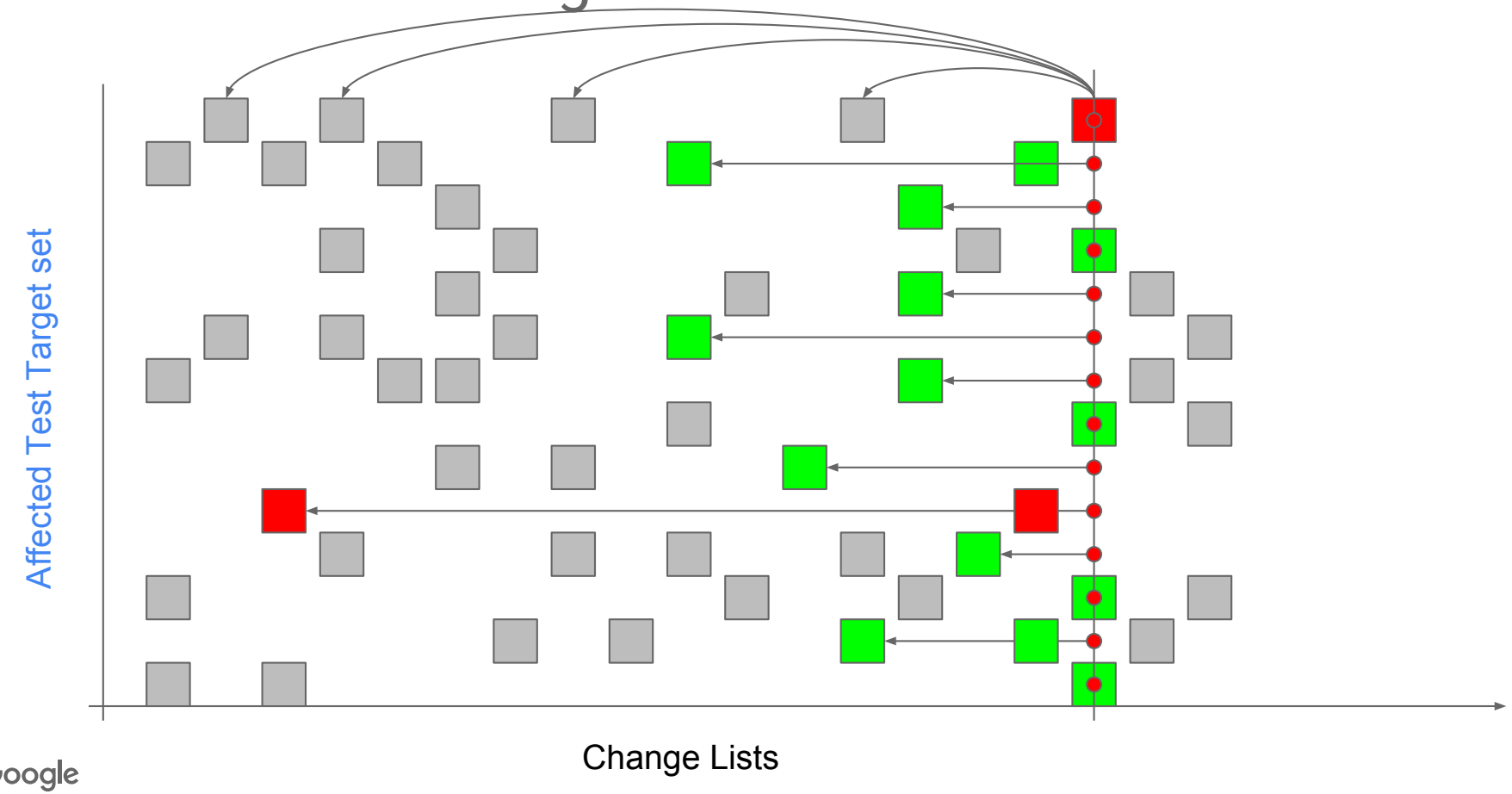
Milestone Scheduling



Milestone Scheduling



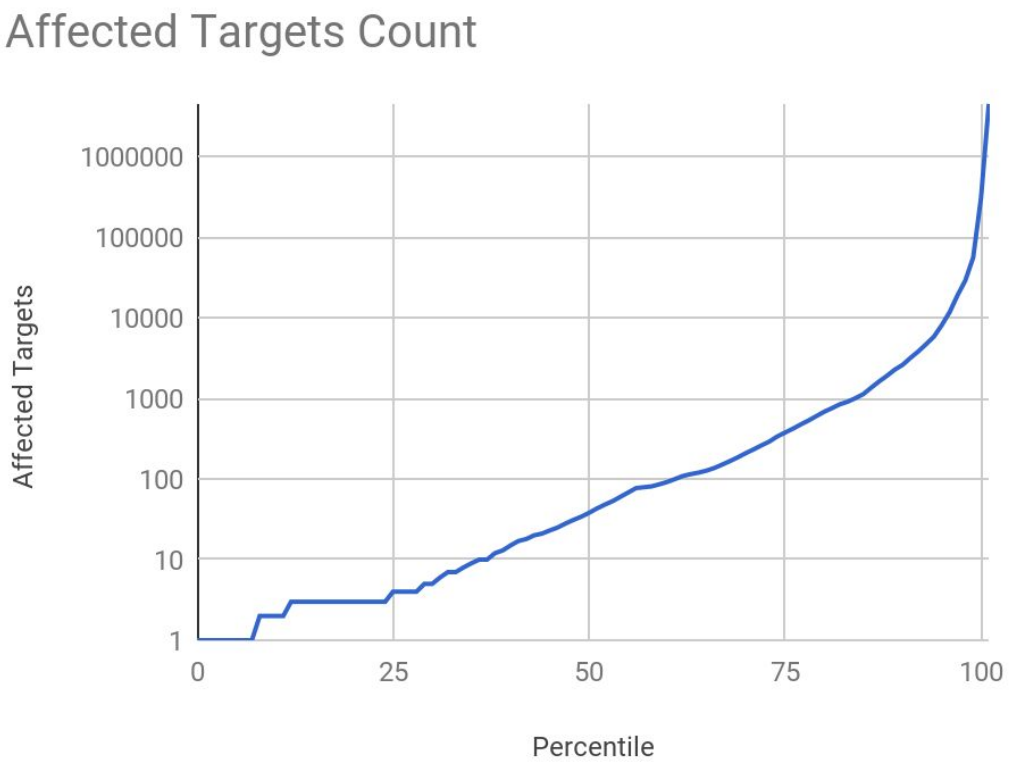
Milestone Scheduling



Reducing Costs

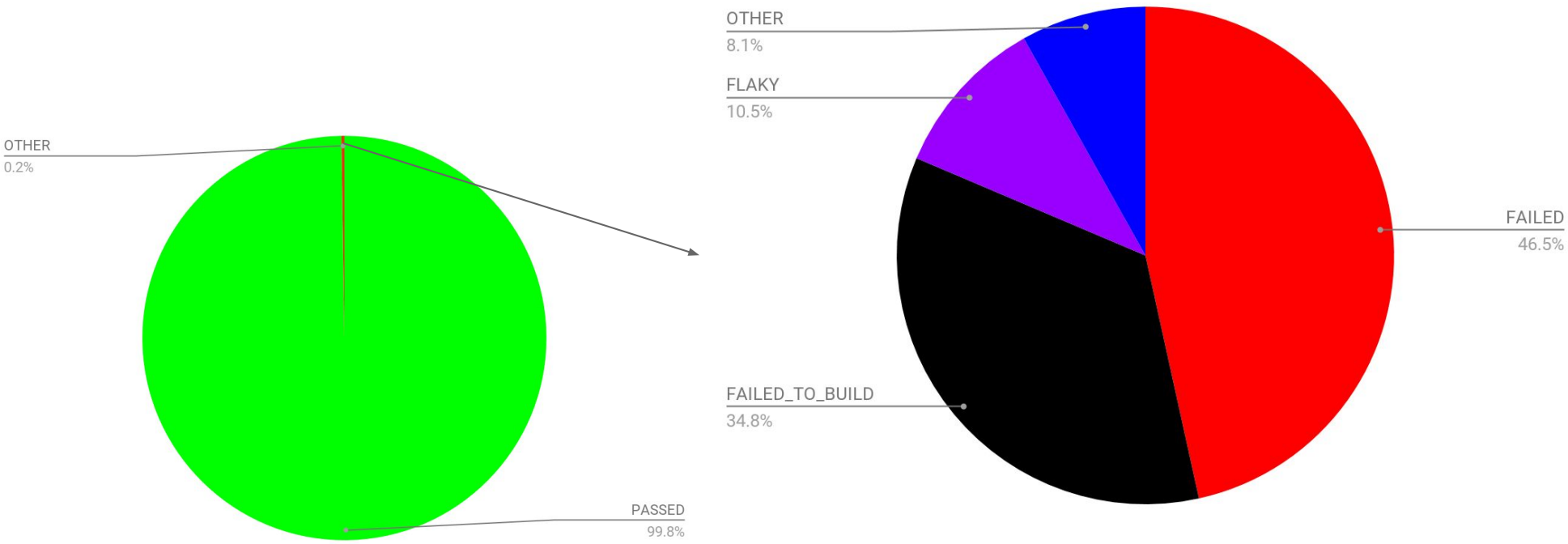
- RTS based on declared dependencies is problematic!
  - A small number of core changes impact everything
  - Milestone Scheduling ends up running all tests
  - Distant dependencies don't often find transitions
  - 99.8% of all test executions do not transition
    - A perfect algorithm would only schedule the 0.2% of tests that do transition
  - There must be something in between 99.8% and 0.2% that will find most faults

RTS Affected Target Counts Frequency



- Stats:
  - Median 38 tests!
  - 90th percentile 2,604
  - 95th perentile 4,702
  - 99th percentile 55,730
- A tiny number of CLs is causing over-scheduling
- It only takes 1 CL on the long tail to force a milestone to run all tests

Test Results

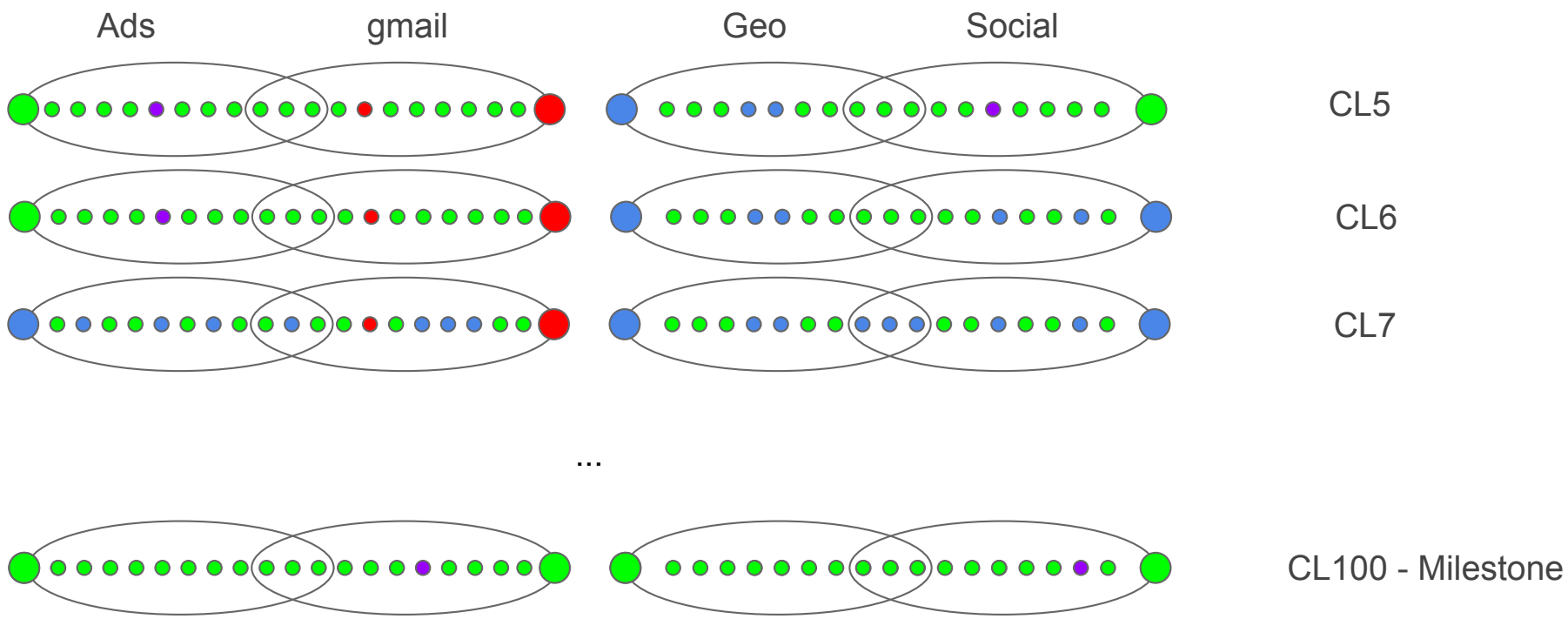


NOTE: Presubmit testing makes post-submit failures relatively rare - but we still spend 50% of testing resources on post-submit testing.

Project Status and Groupings

- Tests are grouped into "projects" that include all relevant tests needed to release a service
- This allows teams to release when unrelated tests are failing
- Current system is conservative
  - Gives a green signal iff all affected tests pass
  - 100% confidence that a failing test was not missed
- We require a definitive result for all affected tests (selected by RTS)
  - Projects only receive a status on milestones
  - We say that projects are "inconclusive" between milestones - when they get affected
  - Since milestones are far apart projects are frequently inconclusive

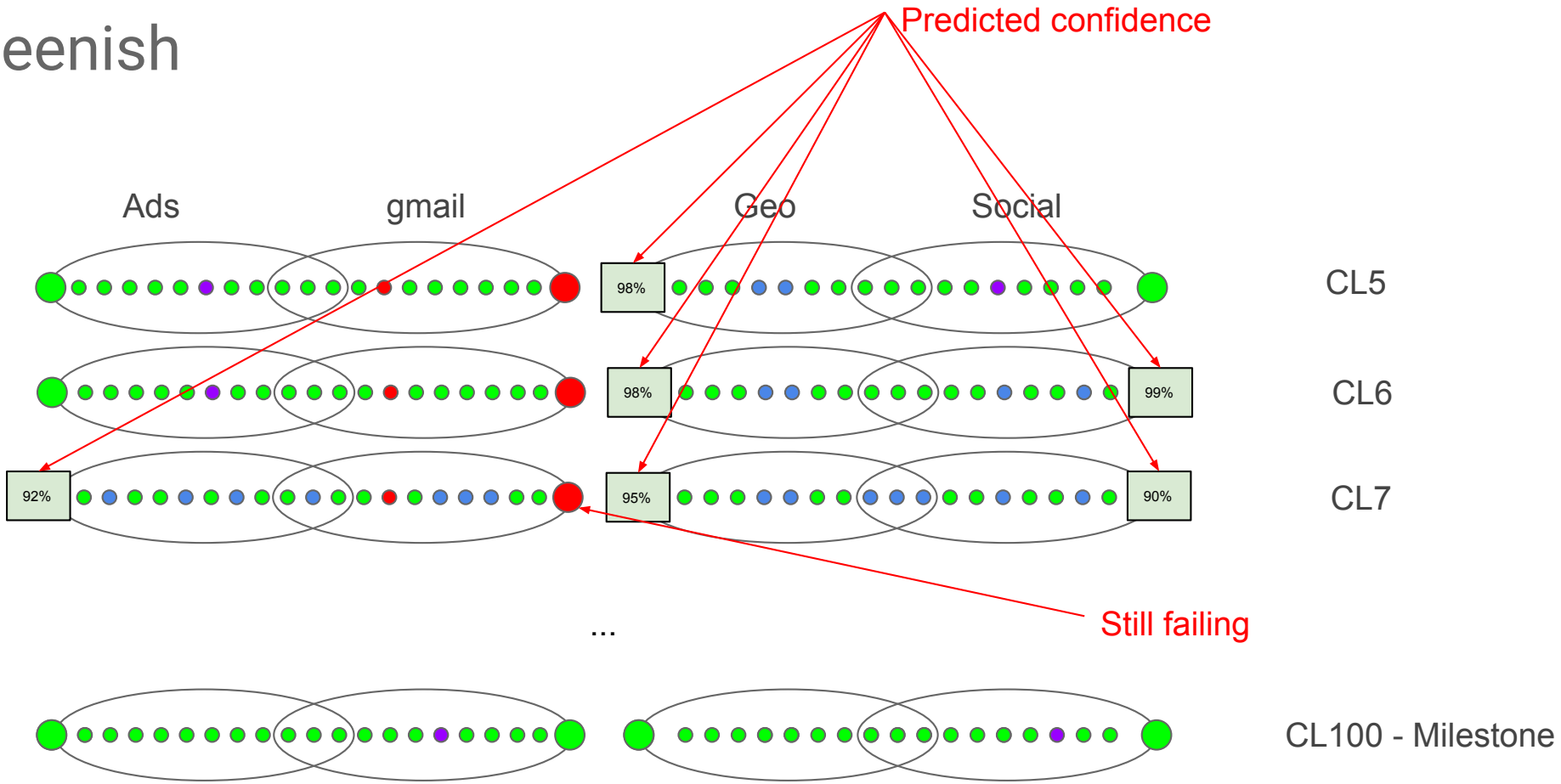
Project Status and Groupings



Greenish Service

- Reducing over-scheduling means < 100% confidence
  - Not all tests will be run!
  - Milestones will be far apart
- Need a signal for release
- Introduce "Greenish" service
  - Predicts likelihood that skipped tests will pass
  - Provides a probability rather than certainty of green

Greenish

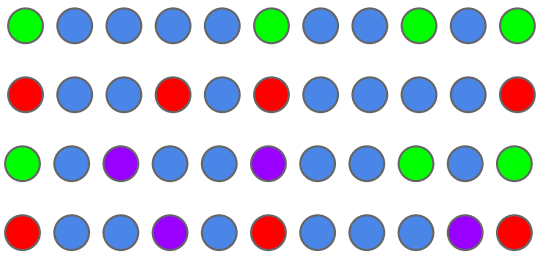

Predicted confidence
Ads
gmail
Geo
Social
98%
98%
99%
92%
95%
90%
CL5
CL6
CL7
Still failing
...
CL100 - Milestone

New Scheduling Algorithms

- Skip milestones and schedule tests with highest likelihood to find transitions
- Occasional milestones will find transitions missed by opportunistic scheduling
- Goal: Find all transitions using vastly reduced resources
- Decrease time to find transitions

Transitions?

Definition: A non-flaky change in state of a test from Pass -> Fail or Fail -> Pass.
The goal of CI is to find transitions quickly - it is important to know when tests are broken or fixed by code submissions

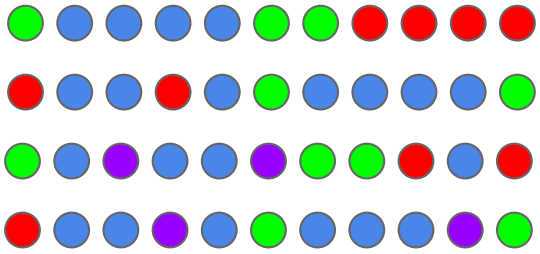


No transition

No transition

No transition

No transition



Transition Pass -> Fail (showing culprit finding)

Transition Fail -> Pass (No culprit finding)

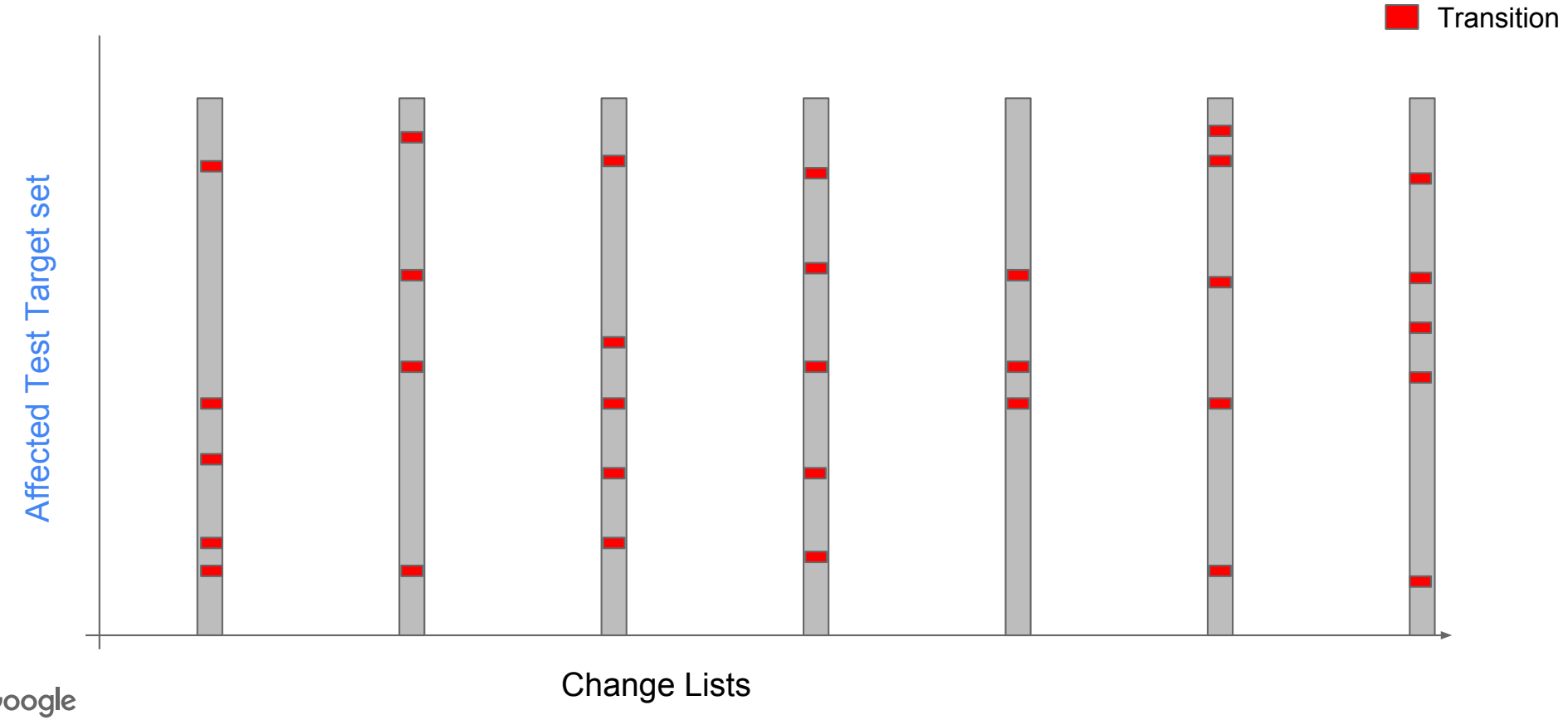
Transition Pass -> Fail (showing culprit finding)

Transition Fail -> Pass (No culprit finding)

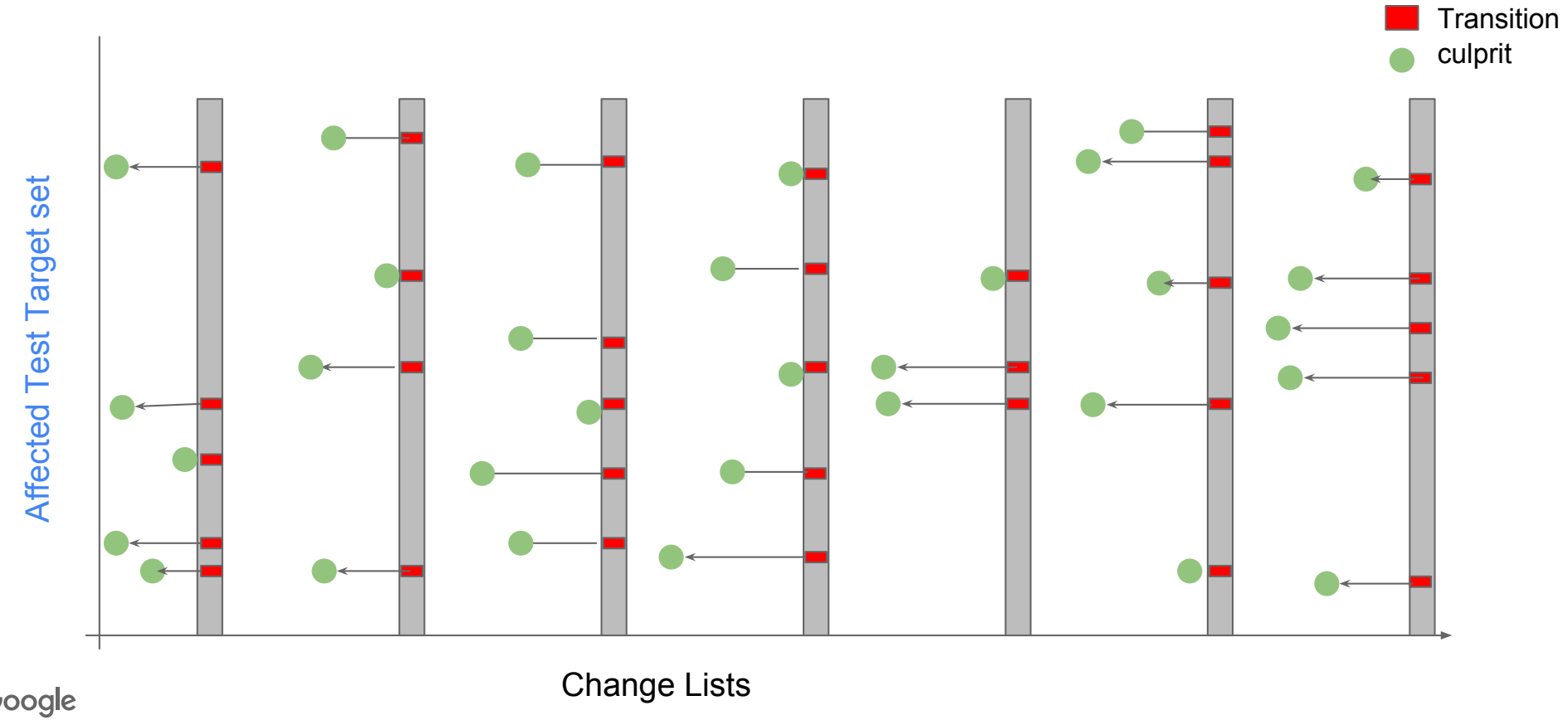
Google

Note: It is also important to eliminate / ignore flaky tests and to have good information about flaky tests.

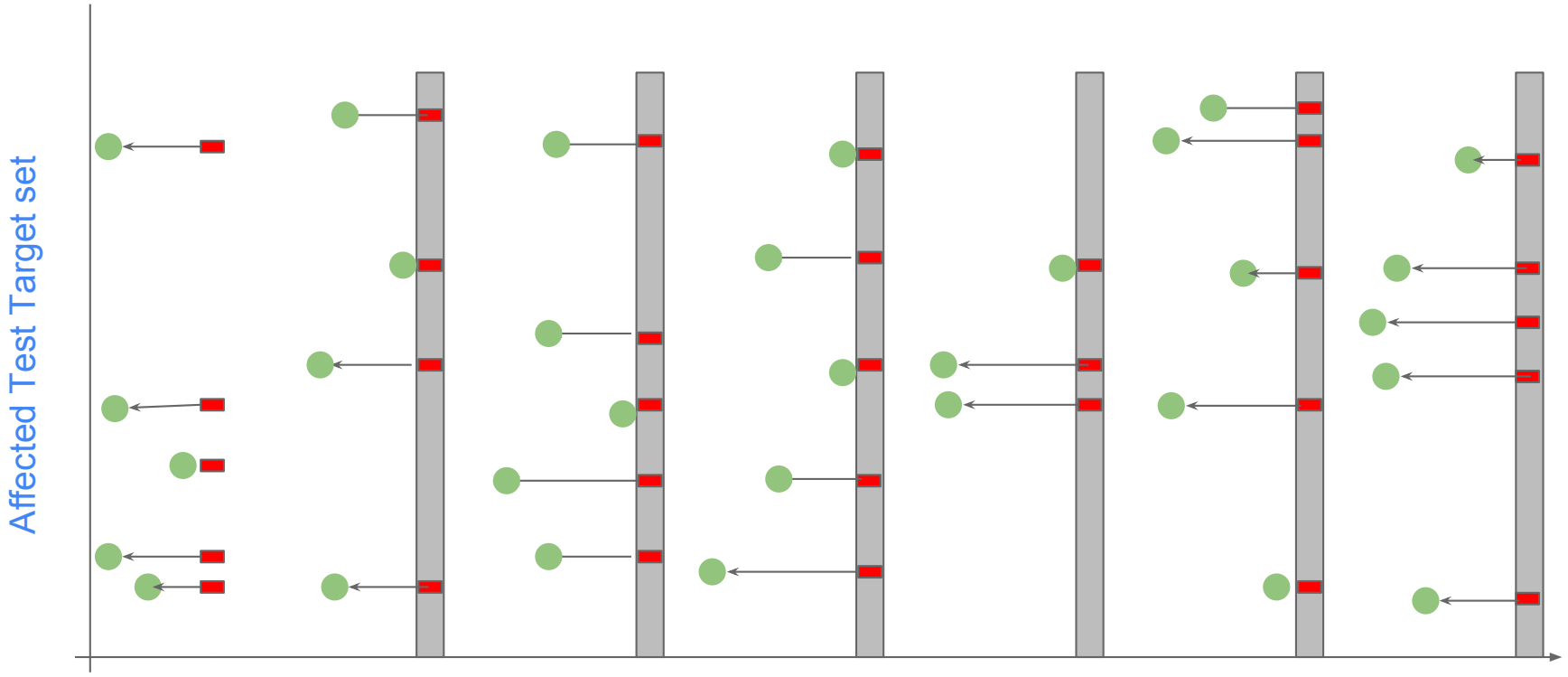
Skipping milestones: <1% test targets detect breakages



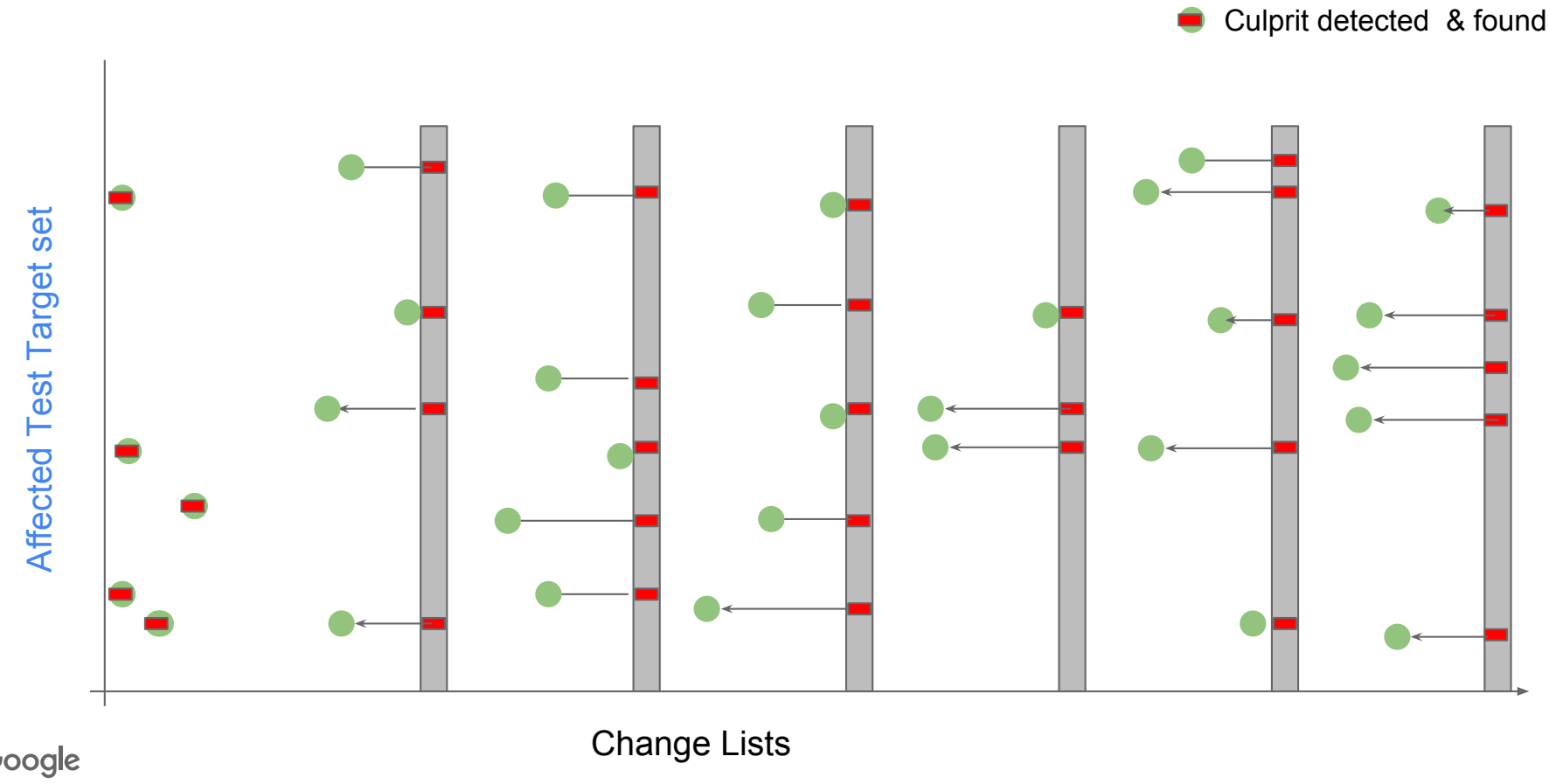
Skipping milestones: breakages imply cuprit finding



Skipping milestones: culprits detected and found



Skipping milestones: culprits detected and found



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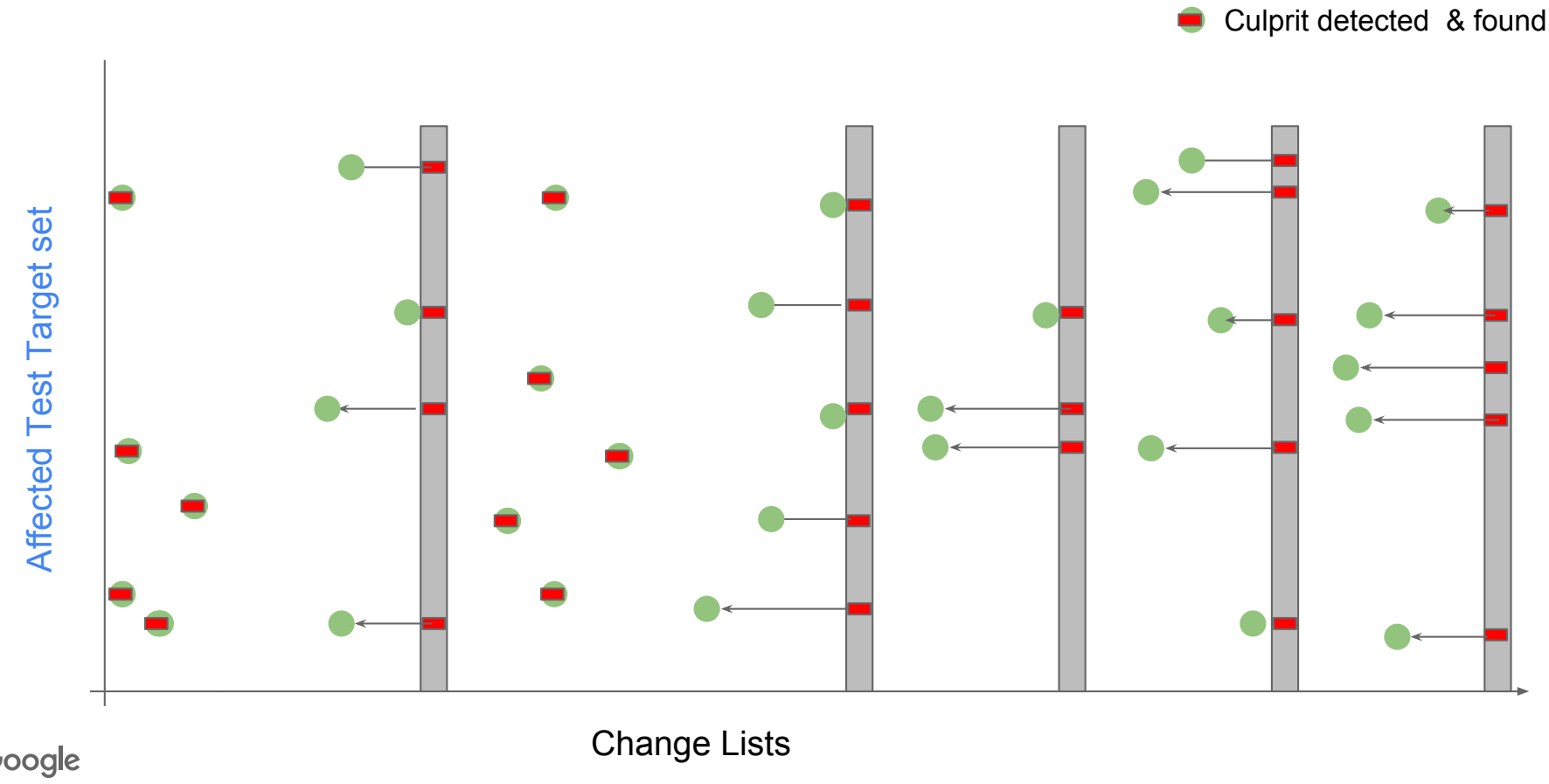

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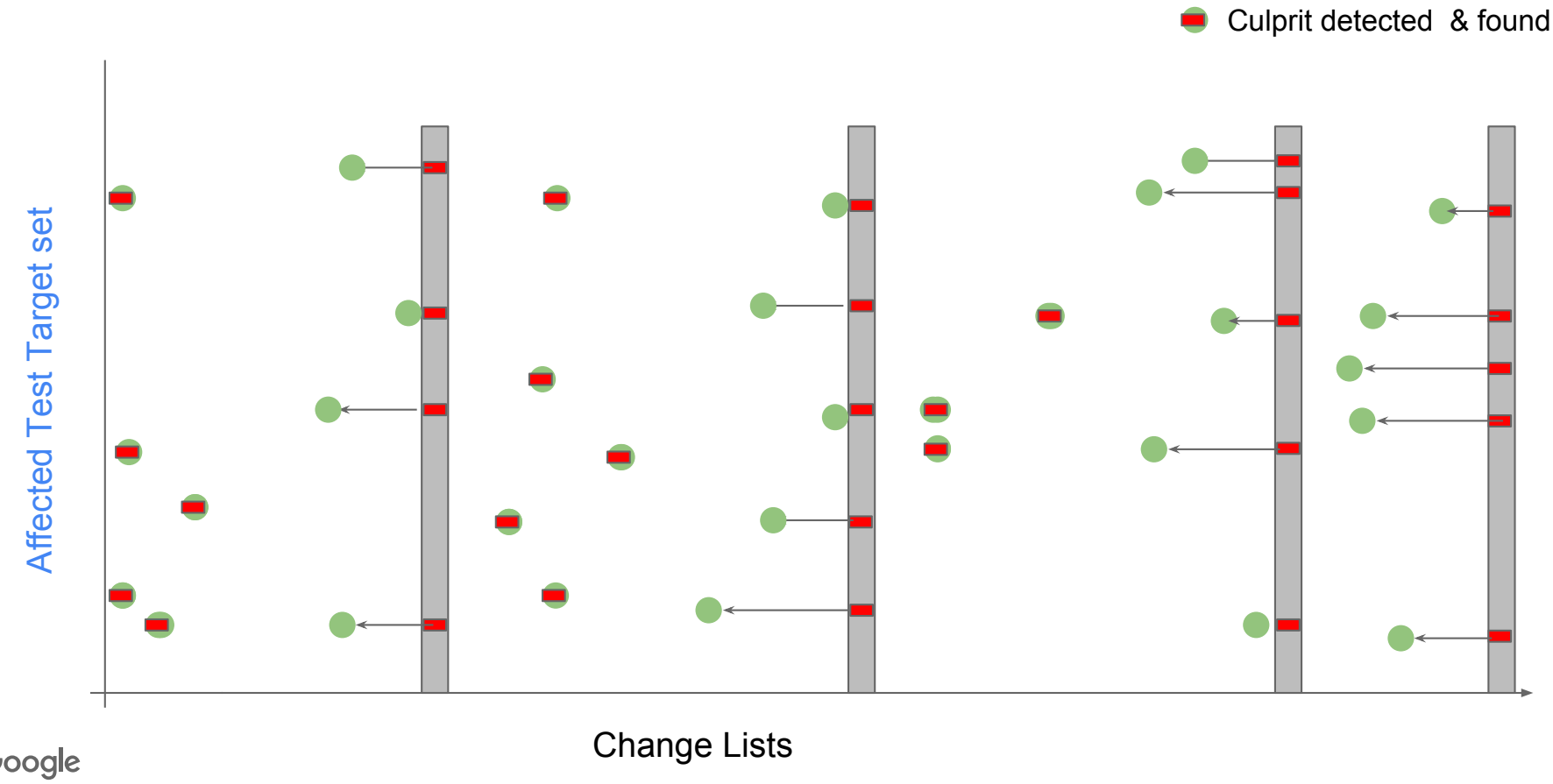

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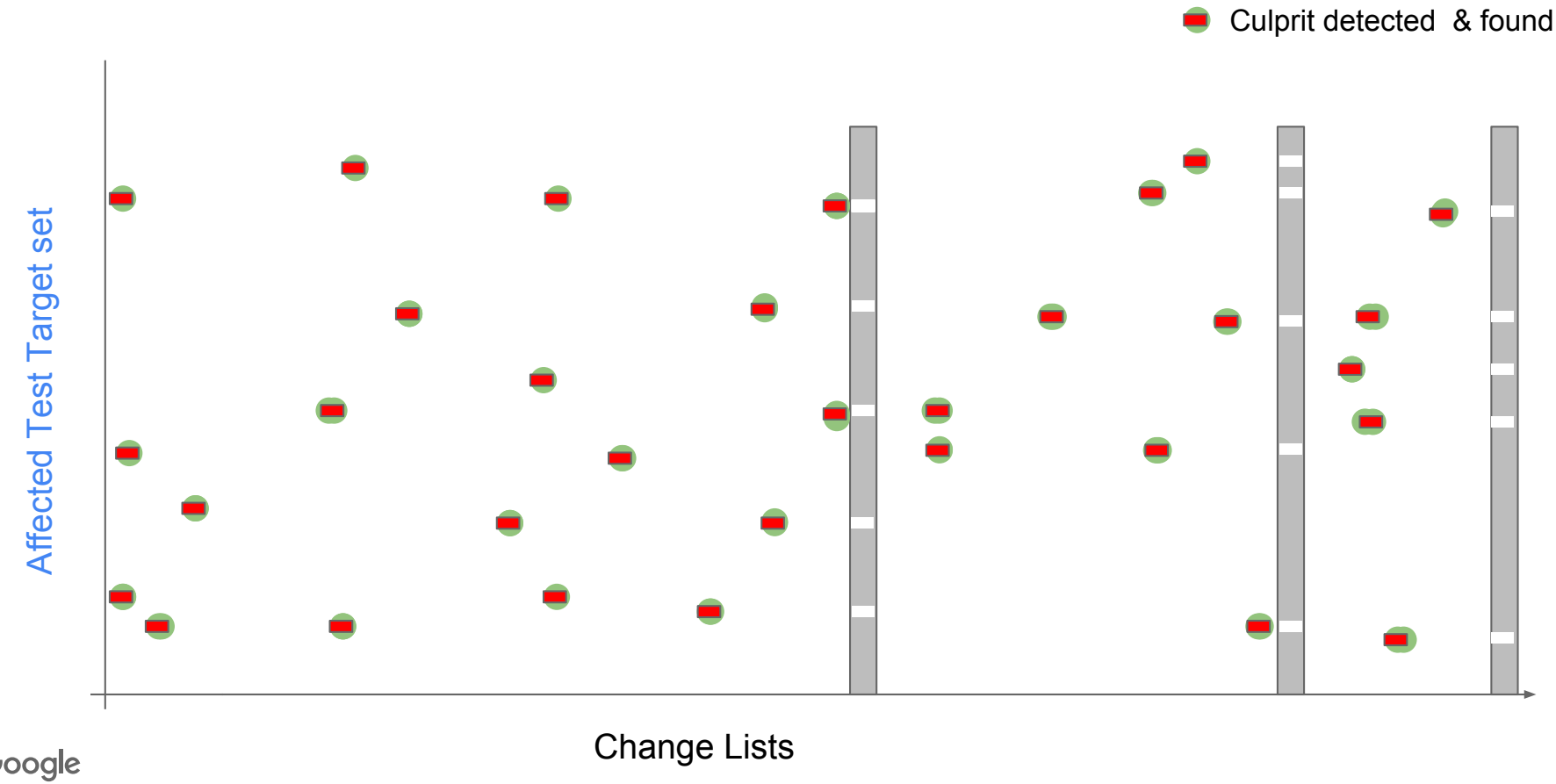
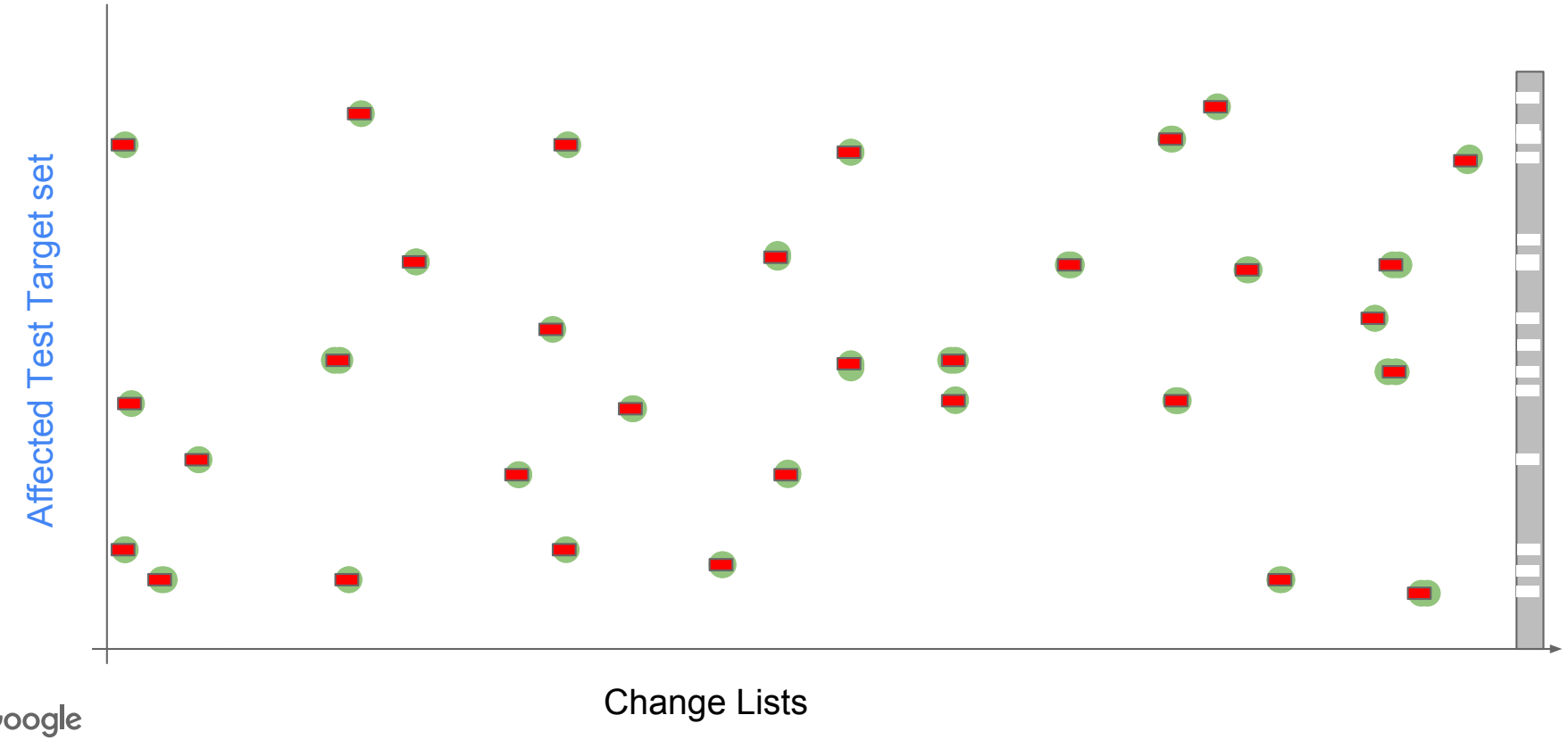
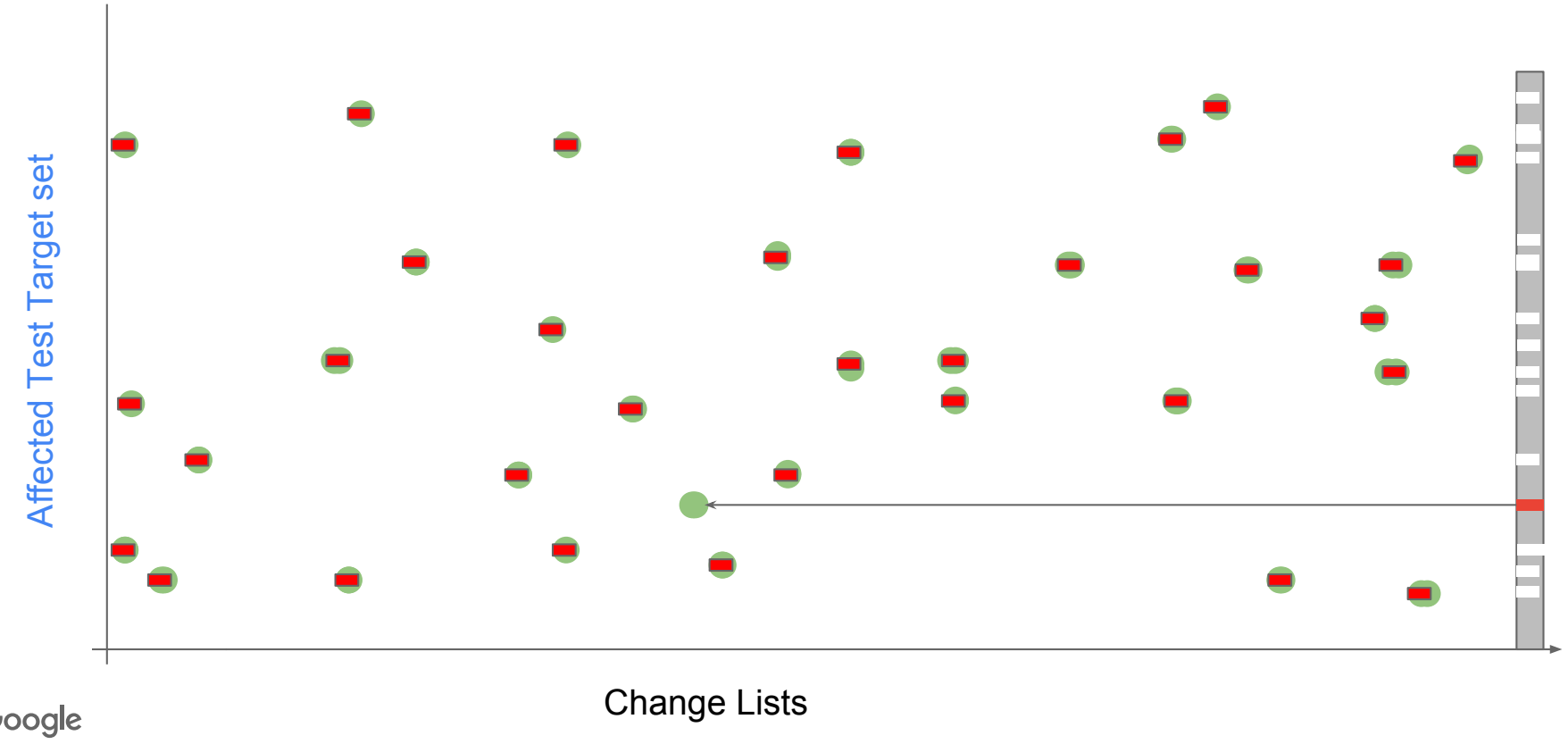


Skipping milestones



Skipping milestones: cuprit finding, acceptance tuning



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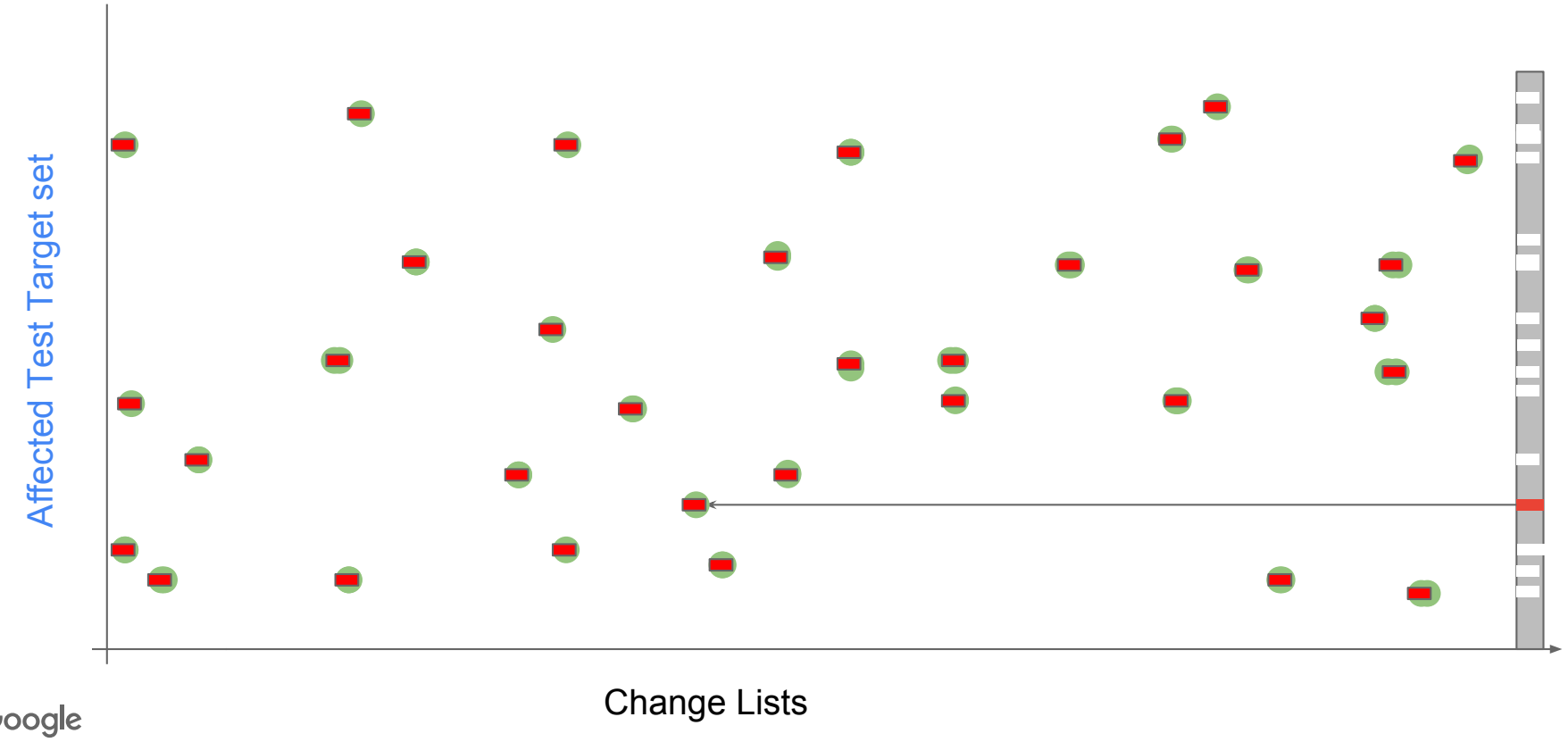
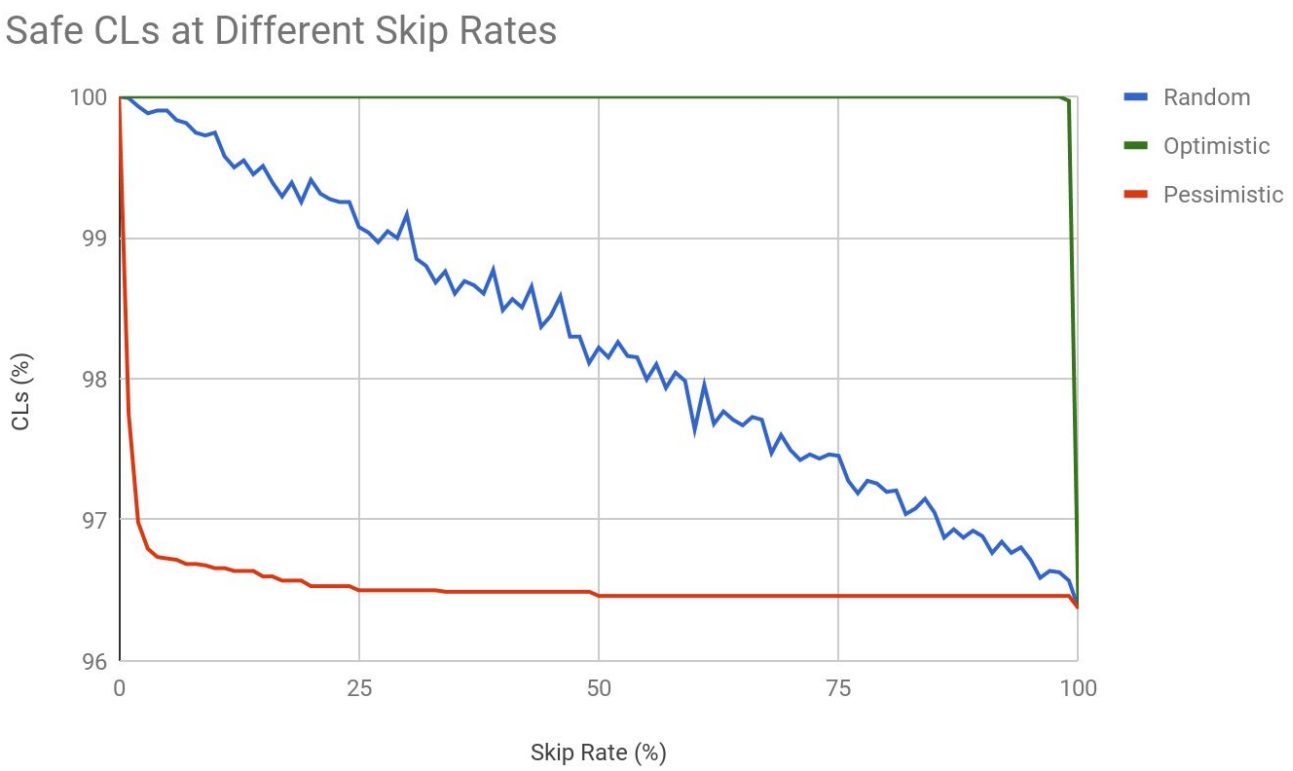


Evaluating Strategies

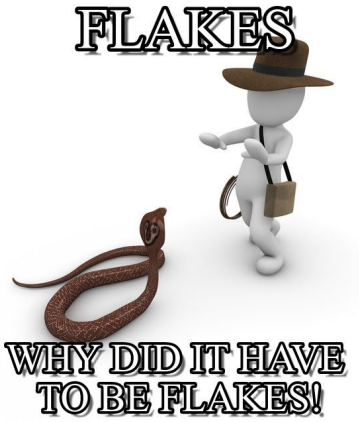
- Goals
  - Low testing cost
  - Low time to find a transition
  - Low risk of missing transitions
- Measure "Safety"
  - Skipping a test is "safe" if it did not transition
  - 100% safety means all transitions are found
- Evaluate new strategies against historical record
  - Allows Fast algorithm iteration time
  - Must excludes flaky test failures

Offline Safety Evaluation



- 96% of changes do not cause a transition - we could skip all testing for them!
- Of the remainder, a perfect algorithm could skip more than 98% of the currently selected tests and find all transitions

Analysis of Test Results at Google

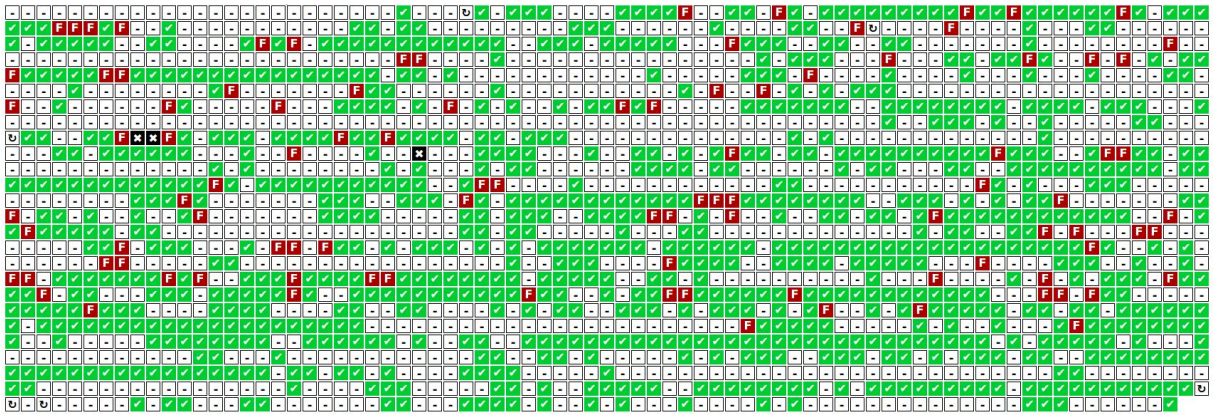


- Analysis of a large sample of tests (1 month) showed:
  - 84% of transitions from Pass -> Fail are from "flaky" tests
  - Only 1.23% of tests ever found a breakage
  - Frequently changed files more likely to cause a breakage
  - 3 or more developers changing a file is more likely to cause a breakage
  - Changes "closer" in the dependency graph more likely to cause a breakage
  - Certain people / automation more likely to cause breakages (oops!)
  - Certain languages more likely to cause breakages (sorry)
- See our accepted Paper at ICSE 2017

See: prior deck about Google CI System, See this paper about piper and CLs

Flaky Tests

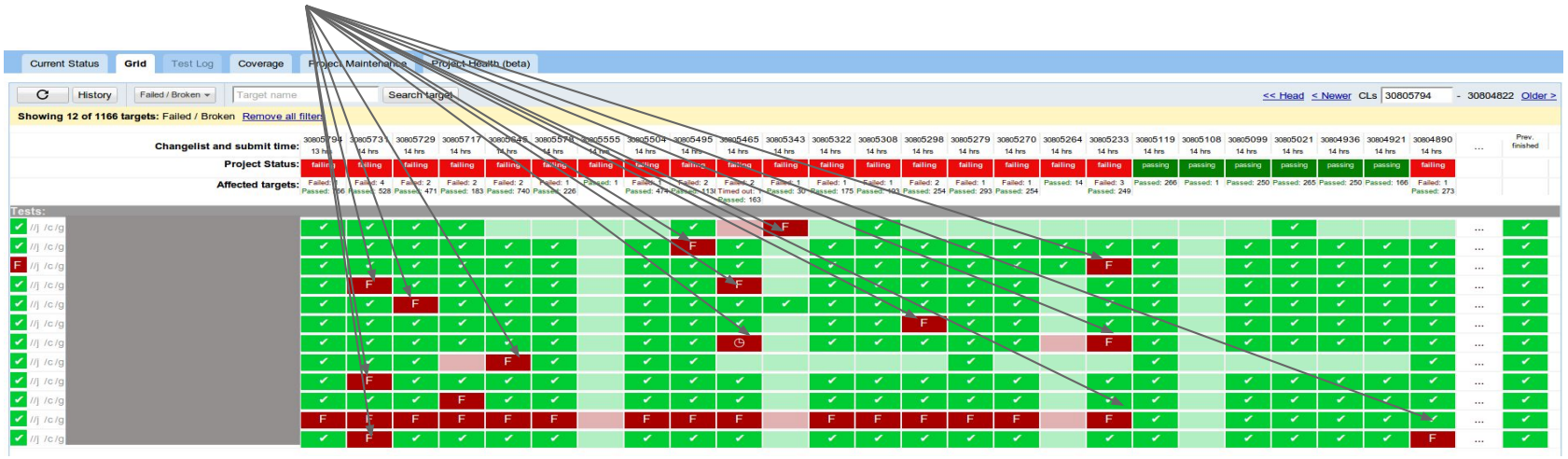
- Test Flakiness is a huge problem
- Flakiness is a test that is observed to both Pass and Fail with the same code
- Almost 16% of our 4.2M tests have some level of flakiness
- Flaky failures frequently block and delay releases
- Developers ignore flaky tests when submitting - sometimes incorrectly
- We spend between 2 and 16% of our compute resources re-running flaky tests



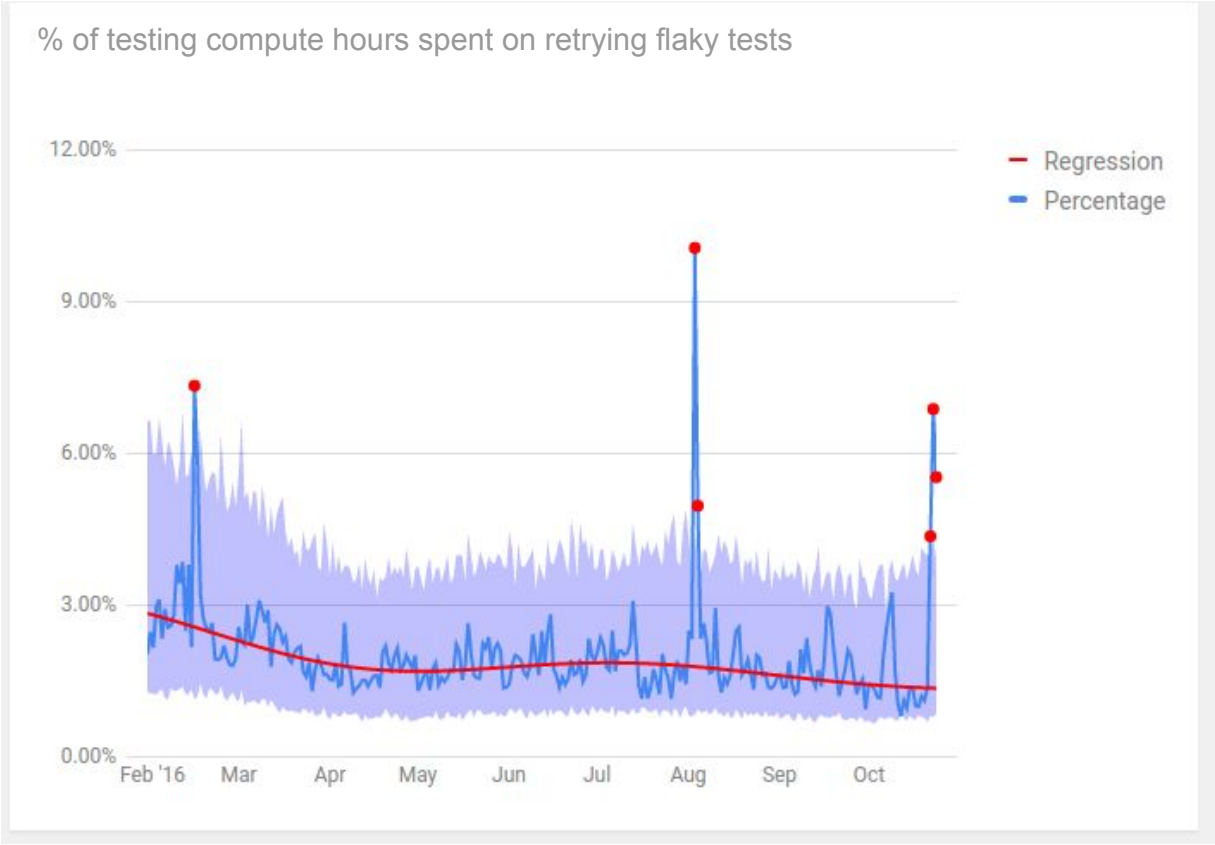
Flaky test impact on project health

- Many tests need to be aggregated to qualify a project
- Probability of flake aggregates as well
- Flakes
  - Consume developer time investigating
  - Delay project releases
  - Waste compute resources re-running to confirm

Flakes



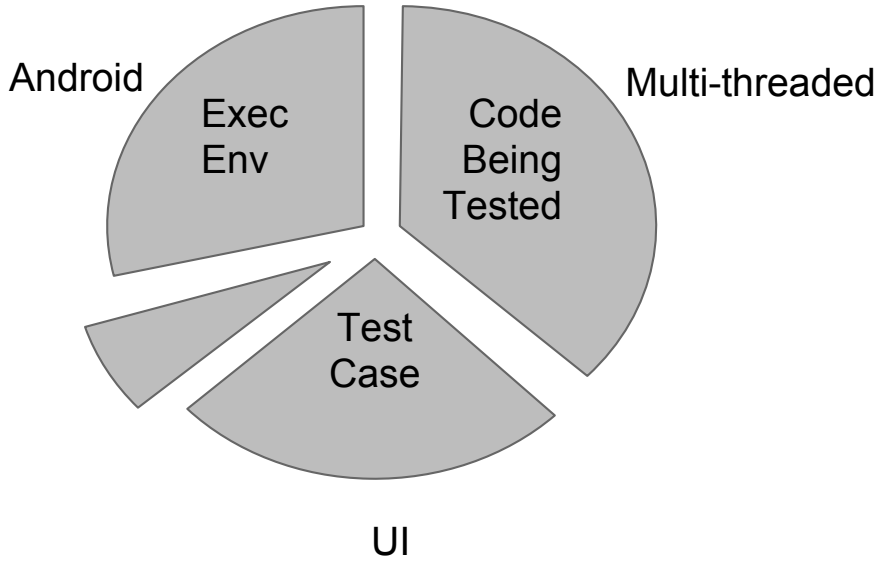
Percentage of resources spent re-running flakes



Google

Sources of Flakiness

- Factors that cause flakes
  - Test case factors
    - Waits for resource
    - sleep()
    - Webdriver test
    - UI test
  - Code being tested
    - Multi-threaded
  - Execution environment/flags
    - Chrome
    - Android
  - ...



 See: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/02da/46889ee3c6bc44bfa0fc45071195781b99ce.pdf

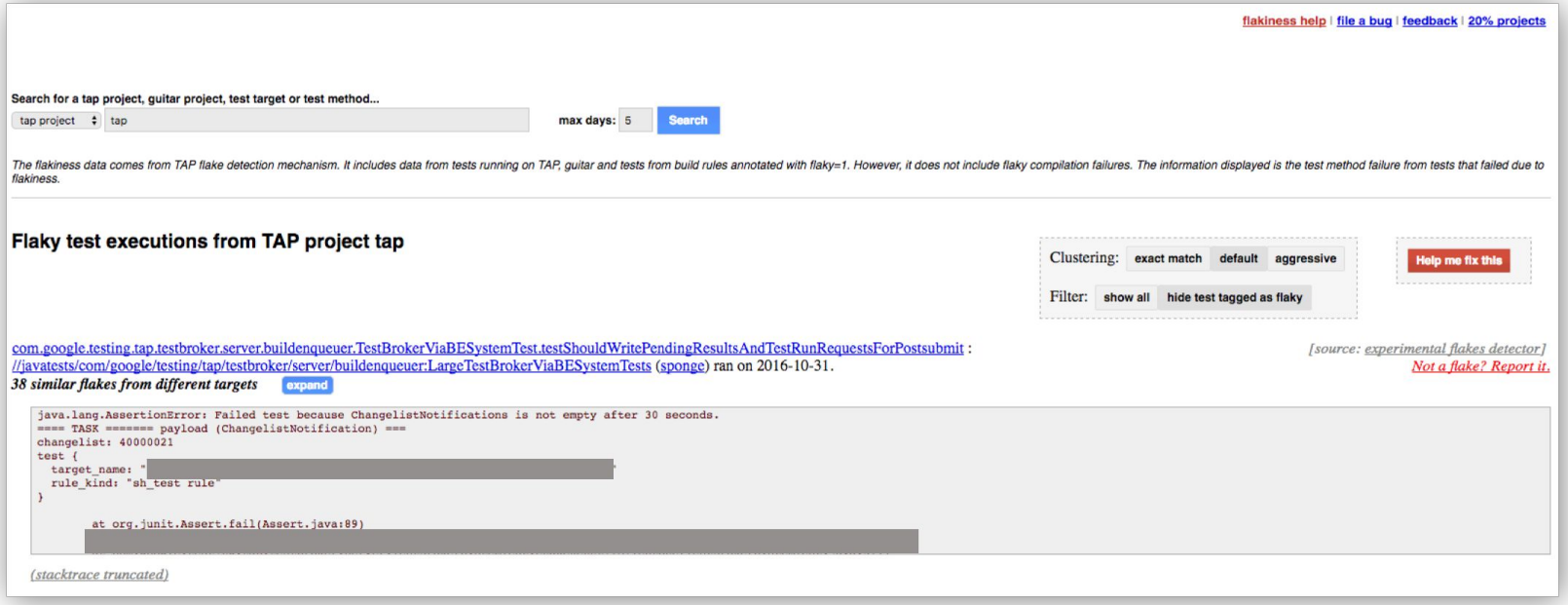
Flakes are Inevitable

- Continual rate of 1.5% of test executions reporting a "flaky" result
- Despite large effort to identify and remove flakiness
  - Targeted "fixits"
  - Continual pressure on flakes
- Observed insertion rate is about the same as fix rate

Conclusion: Testing systems must be able to deal with a certain level of flakiness. Preferably minimizing the cost to developers

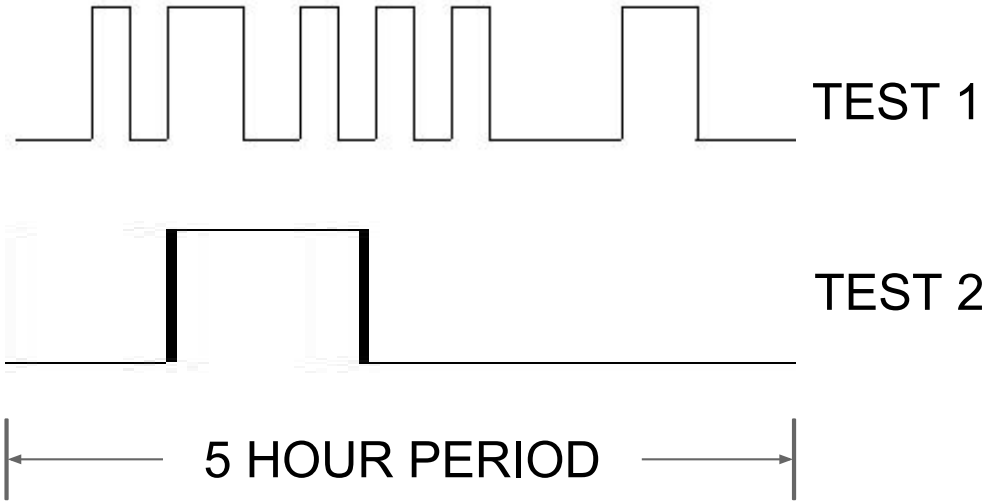
Flaky Test Infrastructure

- We re-run test failure transitions (10x) to verify flakiness
  - If we observe a pass the test was flaky
  - Keep a database and web UI for "known" flaky tests

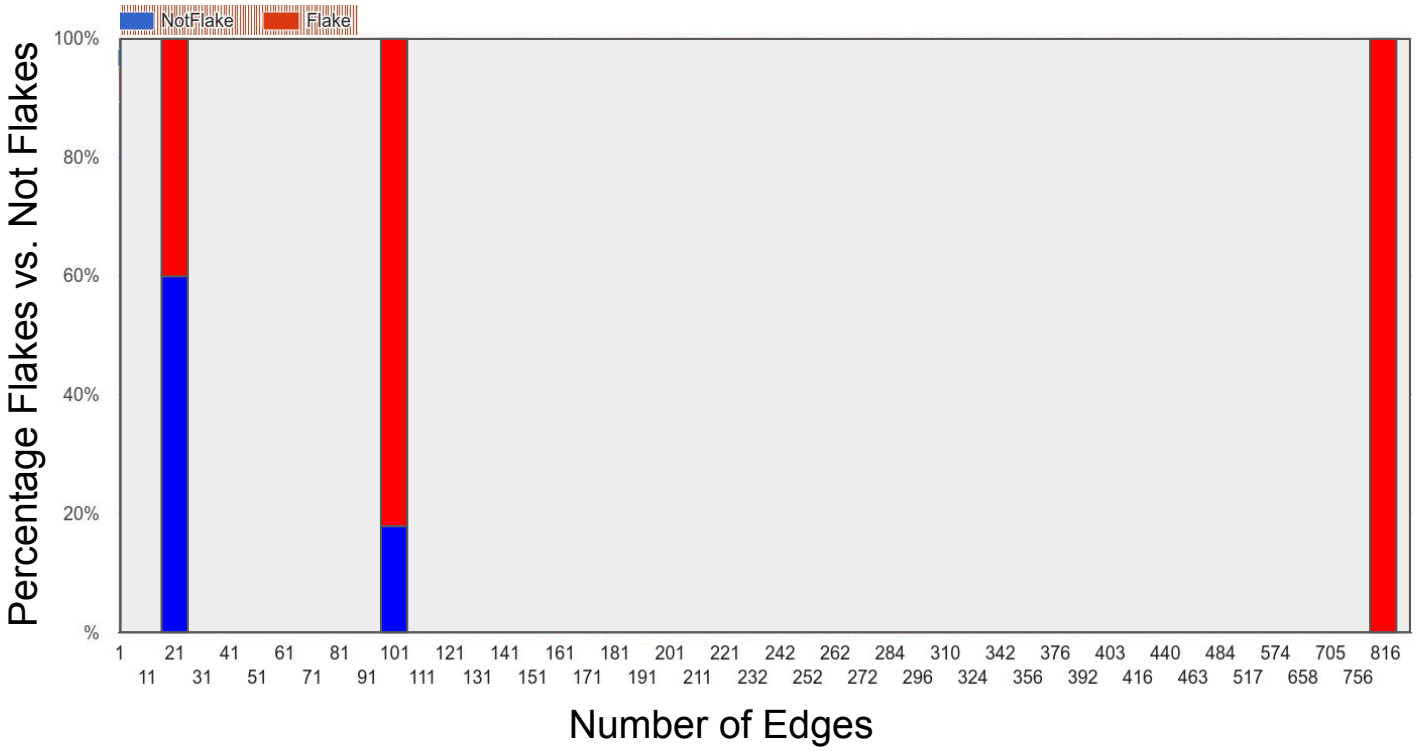


Finding Flakes using the historical record

- 84% of test transitions are due to flakiness
- Concentrated in 16% of the total test pool
- Conclusion: Tests with more transitions are flaky



Number of Edges Per Target by % Flakes/NotFlakes



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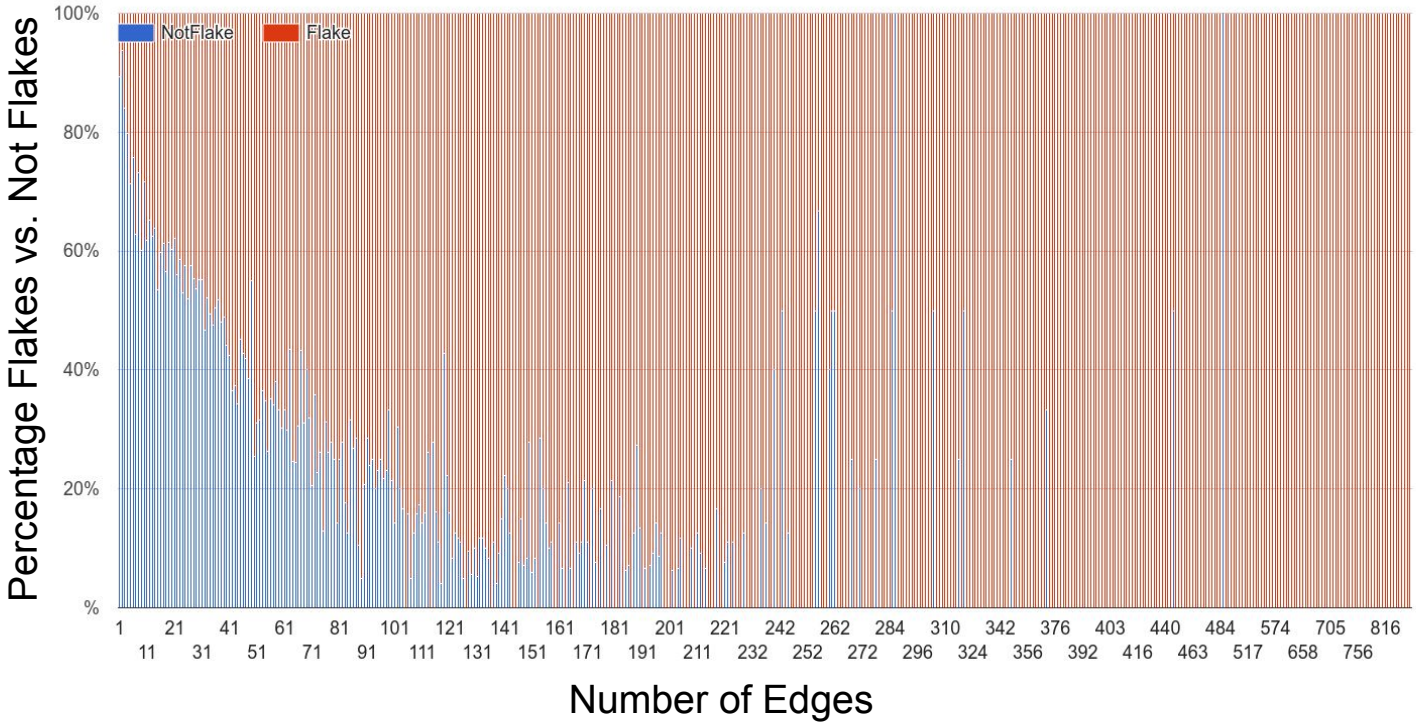

Take away message: Test targets with more transitions in their history are more likely to be flakes.
(Number of edges = signal for flake detection)

Flakes Tutorial

- Using Google BigQuery against the public data set from our 2016 paper
- Reproduce some of our results
  - Techniques to identify flaky tests using queries
  - Hands on!
- Hope to see you there!

Q&A

For more information:

- Google Testing Blog on CI system
- Youtube Video of Previous Talk on CI at Google

- Flaky Tests and How We Mitigate Them

- Why Google Stores Billions of Lines of Code in a Single Repo
- GTAC 2016 Flaky Tests Presentation
- (ICSE 2017) "Who Broke the Build? Automatically Identifying Changes That Induce Test Failures In Continuous Integration at Google Scale" by Celal Ziftci and Jim Reardon
- (ICSE 2017) “Taming Google-Scale Continuous Testing,” by Atif Memon, Zebao Gao, Bao Nguyen, Sanjeev Dhanda, Eric Nickell, Rob Siemborski and John Micco