
Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Photosensing in biomedical research and diagnosis | 1 |
| 1 | Using light in biomedical research and care | 1 |
| 1.1 | Photoplethysmography and pulse oximetry | 1 |
| 1.2 | Fluorescence, chemoluminescence, and bioluminescence | 1 |
| 1.3 | Practical use of fluorescence and chemoluminescence | 3 |
| 2 | Semiconductor photosensors | 5 |
| 2.1 | Optical absorption and free carriers production | 5 |
| 2.2 | The <i>p-n</i> and <i>p-i-n</i> photodiodes | 6 |
| 2.3 | Avalanche photodiodes (APDs) | 8 |
| 2.4 | Single-photon avalanche diodes (SPADs) | 9 |
| 2.5 | Phototransistors | 11 |
| 2.6 | Active-Pixel Sensors (APSs) and Charge-Coupled Devices (CCDs) | 12 |
| 2.7 | Hybrid MOS-PN photodetector | 15 |
| 3 | Noise | 16 |
| 3.1 | White noise | 16 |
| 3.2 | Low-frequency noise | 19 |
| | Conclusions | 23 |
| 2 | Digitizing the photocurrent | 25 |
| 1 | Target application | 25 |
| 1.1 | Concept | 25 |
| 1.2 | Feasibility | 26 |
| 2 | Charge integration with subsequent digitization | 28 |
| 2.1 | Charge integration | 28 |
| 2.2 | Sampling strategies | 29 |
| 2.3 | Voltage quantization | 31 |
| 3 | Current-to-frequency conversion of the photocurrent | 32 |
| 3.1 | Current-controlled oscillators (CCO) | 32 |
| 3.2 | First-order $\Sigma\Delta$ converters | 33 |

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 3.3 | Imperfections in these current-to-frequency converters | 36 |
| | Conclusions | 54 |
| 3 | Impact of noise in a continuous-time integrator-based ADC | 55 |
| 1 | A required work | 55 |
| 2 | Variance of a single measurement | 56 |
| 3 | Considering a calibrating measurement | 58 |
| 4 | Understanding the weighting function $\mathcal{W}(\omega)$ | 59 |
| 4.1 | About the terms that constitute $\mathcal{W}(\omega)$ | 59 |
| 4.2 | Geometrical representations for $\mathcal{W}(\omega)$ | 61 |
| 4.3 | The case of many measurements | 62 |
| 5 | Practical formulas for typical noises | 64 |
| 5.1 | White noise | 64 |
| 5.2 | Lorentzian noise | 65 |
| 5.3 | Flicker noise | 68 |
| 6 | About the used hypothesis | 69 |
| 6.1 | On the random delays hypothesis | 69 |
| 6.2 | On the stationary noise hypothesis | 74 |
| 7 | The practical case of a single transistor | 78 |
| 8 | From a pair of measurements to any combination of measurements | 81 |
| | Conclusions | 82 |
| 4 | Practical implementation of the error estimation | 85 |
| 1 | Computation issues | 86 |
| 2 | A proper implementation for the formulas established in chapter 3 | 87 |
| 2.1 | For Lorentzian noise | 87 |
| 2.2 | For Flicker noise with a frequency exponent $EF = 1$ | 90 |
| 2.3 | For Flicker noise with a frequency exponent $EF \neq 1$ | 96 |
| 2.4 | Overall implementation in the case of a Flicker noise | 104 |
| 3 | Implementing for the general case | 105 |
| 3.1 | Definition of the problem | 105 |
| 3.2 | The issue with $ H(j\omega) ^2$ | 105 |
| 3.3 | Working around in the case of a low-pass filtered Flicker noise | 107 |
| 3.4 | Transforming $\mathcal{W}(\omega)$ | 108 |
| 3.5 | Handling $ H(j\omega) ^2$ once $\mathcal{W}(\omega)$ has been replaced | 119 |
| | Conclusions | 124 |

| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 5 | A top-down tool-assisted design strategy | 127 |
| 1 | Design strategy | 127 |
| 2 | A suited tool for exploring design choices | 128 |
| 2.1 | The needs | 128 |
| 2.2 | Proposed solution | 128 |
| 3 | A tool for parameterized simulations using multiple softwares | 131 |
| 3.1 | The need | 131 |
| 3.2 | A configurations tree | 132 |
| 3.3 | Parameterized text files and commands | 132 |
| 3.4 | Adding cases, getting results | 133 |
| | Conclusions | 134 |
| 6 | Looking beyond the electronics: the case of heart-rate monitoring | 135 |
| 1 | Photoplethysmography | 135 |
| 2 | Power consumption: an insurmountable limit | 137 |
| 3 | Algorithms for heart rate monitoring | 137 |
| 4 | Reducing the sample rate | 139 |
| 4.1 | Peak localization with a low sampling rate | 139 |
| 4.2 | Identifying the systolic peaks | 140 |
| 4.3 | A prototype algorithm | 143 |
| 4.4 | Acquiring a photoplethysmograph with the hybrid MOS-PN photodiode | 144 |
| | Conclusions | 145 |
| 7 | Conclusion | 147 |
| 1 | Summary | 147 |
| 2 | Contributions | 148 |
| 3 | Outlook | 148 |
| | Appendices | 151 |
| A | Demonstrations of the impact of different noise types | 153 |
| 1 | Starting formulas | 153 |
| 2 | Computing the effect of white noise | 154 |
| 3 | Computing the effect of Lorentzian noise | 155 |
| 4 | Computing the effect of flicker noise | 155 |
| 4.1 | When the frequency exponent is 1, and $T > \frac{\tau_0 + \tau}{2}$ | 155 |
| 4.2 | When the frequency exponent is 1, and $T = \frac{\tau_0 + \tau}{2}$ | 156 |
| 4.3 | When the frequency exponent is not 1 | 158 |

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| B | Confirmatory transient analysis of non-stationary random processes | 159 |
| 1 | The case of a Lorentzian noise | 159 |
| 2 | The case of a 1/f noise | 161 |
| C | Matlab functions for computing the impact of noise | 165 |
| D | Useful integrals and primitives | 171 |
| 1 | Formulas for $\int_0^\infty (1 + (\frac{x}{p})^2)^{-n} (\frac{\sin(a\omega)}{\omega})^2 d\omega$, with $a \in \mathbb{R}^{++}$, $p \in \mathbb{R}^{++}$, $n \in [1..5]$. . . | 171 |
| 2 | Computing $\int x^k / (1 + (\frac{x}{p})^2) dx$, with $p \in \mathbb{R}^{++}$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ | 171 |
| 3 | Computing $\int x^\alpha / (1 + (\frac{x}{p})^2) dx$, with $p \in \mathbb{R}^{++}$, $\alpha \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \mathbb{Z}$ | 172 |
| E | Piecewise polynomial approximations of trigonometrical functions | 175 |
| 1 | Polynomial approximations for $\sin(\frac{x\pi}{2})$ and $\sin(\frac{x}{2})$ | 175 |
| 2 | Polynomial approximations for $\sin(\frac{x\pi}{2})^2$ and $\sin(\frac{x}{2})^2$ | 177 |
| F | Complements on the piecewise approximation of $x \mapsto \frac{1}{1+x}$ | 181 |
| 1 | Optimal approximation of $\frac{1}{1+x}$ as $\frac{1}{1+x} \simeq B x^{-A}$ on $[x_0, x_1] \subset \mathbb{R}^+$ | 181 |
| 2 | Initial segmentation of \mathbb{R}^+ when looking for a piecewise approximation of $\frac{1}{1+x}$. . | 182 |
| 3 | Refining a segmentation of \mathbb{R}^+ for a piecewise approximation of $\frac{1}{1+x}$ | 184 |
| G | Use of the Python tool for parameterized simulations | 187 |
| 1 | Parameterized files | 187 |
| 1.1 | Declaring the parameters and results | 187 |
| 1.2 | Parametrization | 188 |
| 1.3 | Creating and using the configurations tree | 188 |
| 1.4 | Adding and manipulating configurations | 189 |
| 1.5 | Saving, loading and exporting the configurations tree | 191 |
| | Bibliography | 193 |