# RF Measurement Techniques I

Manfred Wendt Advanced Accelerator Physics – CAS 2019 Slangerup, Denmark, 9<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>th</sup> June 2019

## **Learning Objectives**

#### This is an introduction to RF measurement techniques

#### To support the practical training in the afternoons

- Hands-on practical training with spectrum and network analyzers
- Numerical simulations (eigenmode) in the computer lab
- Give some basic understanding of RF measurement concepts
  - i.e. what so special to measure RF signals?!
  - Introduction to transmission-lines, characteristic impedance, forward and reflected waves, *Smith*-chart, S-parameters, signal detection, superheterodyne concept, RF instruments, etc.

#### "Pillbox" cavity resonator as example

- Characterization in terms of eigen-modes, Q-values, and R/Q
- How to measure those properties?

#### A few notes on the beam coupling impedance

How to measure Z<sub>||</sub> with a stretched-wire setup?

#### The CAS 2019 RF Playground



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#### Contents

#### Part I

- Introduction
- RF measurement methods
- Beam and RF signals
- The super-heterodyne concept
- Transmission-lines
- Voltage Standing Wave Ratio (VSWR)
- The Smith chart and some examples
   Part II
- Introduction to Scattering-parameters (S-parameters)
- The vector network analyzer (VNA)
- RF measurements on a "pillbox" cavity
- Stretched-wire measurement of the beam coupling impedance
- Appendices

### Introduction – A Cavity Resonator



### Introduction – A simple RF System



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#### Introduction – What are Radio Frequencies?



wavelength: C<sub>0</sub>  $\lambda =$ We care about **RF** concepts if the physical dimensions of an apparatus is >  $\lambda/10$ 

**Free space** 

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### **RF Measurements Methods (1)**

#### There are different options to observe RF signals Here some typical measurement tools:

- Oscilloscope: to observe signals in time domain
  - periodic signals
  - burst and transient signals with arbitrary waveforms
  - application: direct observation of signals from a beam pick-up, from a test generator, or from other sources
  - visualizes the shape of a waveform, etc.
  - Imited performance for the evaluation of non-linear effects.

### Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) Oscilloscope



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## **Today: Digital Storage Oscilloscope (DSO)**



#### Signal processing based on fast ADCs and DACs

- Similar "look and feel" as analog oscilloscopes, but better performance
  - 8...12-bit multi-GS/s ADCs, still, be aware of aliasing effects!
  - Fast sampling oscilloscope require sufficient memory resources.

#### AWG or pulse generator & digital oscilloscope: time domain (TD) test setup

- Device under test (DUT) characterization and trouble shooting
  - Impulse, step, or arbitrary waveform (e.g. beam signal) as stimulus signal
  - High impedance probe for measurements on the printed circuit board (PCB)

### **RF Measurements Methods (2)**

#### Spectrum analyzer: to observe signals in frequency domain

- sweeps in equidistant steps through a given frequency range
- application: observation of spectrum from the beam, or from a signal generator or RF source, or the spectrum emitted from an antenna to locate EMI issues in the accelerator tunnel, etc.
- Requires periodic signals
- Large dynamic range!

#### **RF detection (Schottky) diode (RF power meter)**

- Supplies a rectified (video) output signal proportional to the RF signal level
- Delivers no frequency or phase information, but operates over a very broad frequency range few MHz to many GHz, and up to 90 dB dynamic range.

### **RF Measurements Methods (3)**

#### Vector signal analyzer (VSA), sometimes called FFT analyzer

- Acquires the RF signal, after down-conversion to an intermediate (IF) signal, in time domain by fast sampling
- Further numerical treatment in digital signal processors (DSPs)
- Spectrum calculated using Fast Fourier Transform (FFT)
- Combines features of an oscilloscope and a spectrum analyzer: Signals can be observed directly in time or in frequency domain
- Contrary to the SA, also the spectrum of non-periodic signals and transients can be measured
- Application: Observation of tune sidebands, transient behavior of a phase locked loop, single pass beam signal spectrum, etc.
- Digital oscilloscopes and FFT analyzers share similar technologies, i.e. fast sampling and digital signal processing, and therefore can provide similar measurement options
  - The digital oscilloscope directly digitizes the RF signal
     → limited dynamic range, large instantaneous bandwidth
  - The FFT analyzer digitizes the downconverted IF signal
     → large dynamic range, limited instantaneous bandwidth

### **RF Measurements Methods (4)**

#### **Tools to characterize RF components and sub-systems:**

#### Coaxial (or waveguide) measurement transmission-line

 For study and illustration purposes only – not anymore used in today's RF laboratory environment.

#### **Vector Network Analyzer (VNA)**

- Combines the functions of a vector spectrum analyzer (FFT analyzer), a RF sweep generator, and a S-parameter test set (directional coupler)
- Excites a Device Under Test (DUT, e.g. circuit, antenna, amplifier, etc.) network at a given Continuous Wave (CW) frequency, and measures the response in magnitude and phase => determines the S-parameters
  - What are S-parameters?!
- Covers a selectable frequency range by measuring step-by-step at subsequent frequency points (similar to the spectrum analyzer)
- Applications: characterization of passive and active RF components, *Time Domain Reflectometry* (TDR) by Fourier transformation of the reflection response, etc.
- The VNA is the most versatile and comprehensive tool in the RF laboratory!

## Beam Current Signals (1)

#### Single charge e in time and frequency domain





## **Beam Current Signals (2)**

- Normalized representation in logarithmic amplitude scale
  - Typical magnitude spectrum, as it would be observed on a spectrum analyzer



- Beam bunches have different distribution functions and bunch length
  - Electron bunches are typical 100...1000x shorter than proton bunches
  - Ion bunches can be 10...1000 longer than relativistic proton bunches
  - Longitudinal particle distributions: Gaussian, parabolic, Cos<sup>2</sup>, Square, etc.

### "dB" [dee-bee] or not to be...



#### "dBm" is not "dB"



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### **RF Signals & Modulation**

Beam current signals: transient (pulse-like) signals

#### **RF signals: Sinusoidal signals (CW: continuous wave)**

- High frequency carrier modulated with low frequency information
- In ring accelerators:



### A (too) simple Radio Receiver



direct detection of radio and RF signals is challenging!

### **The Super-Heterodyne Receiver**



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#### The RF Mixer as Downconverter

$$y_{RF}(t) = A_{RF} \sin(\omega_{RF}t + \varphi_{RF})$$

$$F = \int_{V_{LO}} F y_{IF}(t) = y_{RF}(t)y_{LO}(t)$$

$$Heal mixer: \int_{IF} = f_{RF} \pm f_{LO}$$

$$y_{LO}(t) = A_{LO} \sin(\omega_{LO}t + \varphi_{LO})$$

$$y_{IF}(t) = \frac{1}{2}A_{LO}A_{RF}\{\sin[(\omega_{RF} - \omega_{LO})t + (\varphi_{RF} - \varphi_{LO})] \text{ upper sideband}$$

$$+ \sin[(\omega_{RF} + \omega_{LO})t + (\varphi_{RF} - \varphi_{LO})] \text{ upper sideband}$$

$$I = f(V) \text{ of a Schottky diode}$$

$$f_{LO} - f_{RF} = f_{LO}: \text{ heterodyne receiver}$$

$$f_{RF} = f_{LO}: \text{ heterodyne, demodulator}$$

$$Real-world mixer: f_{IF} = mf_{RF} \pm nf_{LO}$$

$$\limage frequency: f_{IM} = f_{LO} - f_{IF}$$

$$AI = I_0 e^{V/V_T} - 1$$

$$AI = I_0 e^{V/V_T} + \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{\Delta V}{V_T}\right)^2 + \frac{1}{6} \left(\frac{\Delta V}{V_T}\right)^3 + \cdots \right]_{21}$$

## **Simplified Spectrum Analyzer**

#### based on the super-heterodyne principle



### Today, the IF, demodulation, video and display sections of a spectrum analyzer are realized digitally

Requires an analog-digital converter (ADC) with sufficient dynamic range

### Modern Spectrum (RF Signal) Analyzer



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#### **Characteristic Impedance**



• The characteristic impedance  $Z_0$  has the unit Ohm [ $\Omega$ ]

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**Telegrapher's Equation (TEM lines)**  $i + \frac{\partial z}{\partial z} dz$  $i \qquad R'dz \qquad L'dz$ A more general approach:  $G'dz \stackrel{\checkmark}{} C'dz \stackrel{\downarrow}{=} v + \frac{\partial v}{\partial z}dz$ v  $\frac{\partial v(z,t)}{\partial z} = -\left(R' + L'\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\right)i(z,t)$ dz  $\frac{\partial i(z,t)}{\partial z} = -\left(G' + C'\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\right) \boldsymbol{v}(z,t)$ voltage and current along a transmission-line:  $V(z) = V_0 \cosh \gamma z - Z_0 I_0 \sinh \gamma z$ in steady state:  $I(z) = I_0 \cosh \gamma z - \frac{V_0}{Z_0} \sinh \gamma z$  $\frac{dV}{dz} = -(R' + j\omega L')I$  $V_0, I_0$ : voltage and current at the beginning of the line (z = 0) attenuation phase propagation constant  $\frac{dI}{dz} = -(G' + j\omega C')V$ constant constant  $\gamma = \sqrt{(R' + j\omega L')(G' + j\omega C')} = \alpha + j\beta$ phase characteristic  $\frac{d^2 V}{dz^2} = \gamma^2 V$ wave impedance velocity number  $Z_0 = \sqrt{\frac{R' + j\omega L'}{G' + j\omega C'}} \qquad k = \frac{2\pi}{\lambda} = \beta \qquad v_p = \frac{\lambda}{T} = \frac{\omega}{\beta}$ 

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## **Transmission-lines in Time Domain (1)**

- TEM: coaxial cables, striplines, micro-striplines, etc.
- TE / TM: waveguides (low losses)
  - Consider a 30 cm long coaxial cable with vacuum or air between the two conductors ( $\varepsilon_r = 1$ ), having a **characteristic impedance** of  $Z_0 = 50 \Omega$ .
  - RF generator with a source impedance Z<sub>s</sub> = 50 Ω is connected at the input port of this line.



- The output is terminated with a load impedance of:
  - $Z_L = 50$  Ω,  $\infty$  Ω (open), or 0 Ω (short)
- An oscilloscope with a high impedance probe (1MΩ) is connected at the input port.

more on transmission-lines and guided waves: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9m2w4DgeVk

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53.7

42.8 ·

35.5 31.8



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### **Transmission-lines in Frequency Domain**



#### **Standing and traveling waves:**

- The patterns for the short and open case are equal; only the phase is opposite, which correspond to different position of nodes.
- In case of perfect matching:
  - traveling wave only.
- Otherwise:
  - mixture of traveling and standing waves.

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Caution: the color coding corresponds to the radial electric field strength – these are not scalar equipotential lines, which are anyway not defined for time varying fields

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## Voltage Standing Wave Ratio VSWR (1)

#### • On a transmission-line (single frequency, CW):

- Superposition of forward a (E<sup>inc</sup>) and backward b (E<sup>refl</sup>) traveling waves ⇒ standing waves
- Slotted coaxial air-line is used as standing wave detector
  - Probes the radial electric field along the slotted line.
  - Measurement of E-field minima's  $E_{min}$  and maxima's  $E_{max}$  with a diode detector, thus detect  $|V_{min}|$  and  $|V_{max}|$  along the line.
  - Evaluate the reflection coefficient  $\Gamma$ of a DUT of unknown  $Z_L$  at the end of the line







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### Voltage Standing Wave Ratio VSWR (2)

#### The VSWR is defined as:

VSWR =	$ V_{max} $	$-\frac{ a + b }{ a + b }$	$\frac{1+ \Gamma }{ }$
	$ V_{min} $	$\overline{ a - b }$	$1 -  \Gamma $

- The phase of the detected E-field along the lossless coaxial line is purged by the diode detection.
  - Requires a mixer as detector!

Г	Return Loss [dB]	$VSWR = Z_L/Z_0$	Refl. Power 1-///2	
0.0	×	1.00	1.00	
0.1	20	1.22	0.99	
0.2	14	1.50	0.96	
0.3	10	1.87	0.91	
0.4	8	2.33	0.84	
0.5	6	3.00	0.75	
0.6	4	4.00	0.64	
0.7	3	5.67	0.51	
0.8	2	9.00	0.36	
0.9	1	19	0.19	
1.0	0	œ	0.00	





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## The Smith Chart (1)

- The Smith Chart (in impedance coordinates) represents the complex Γ-plane (in polar coordinates) within the unit circle.
  - It is a conformal mapping of the complex Z-plane on the Γ-plane by applying the transformation:  $_{\Lambda}\Im\{Z\}$



➡ the real positive half plane of Z is thus transformed (*Möbius*) into the interior of the unit circle! E 1/1/1/1/1

## The Smith Chart (2)

The impedance Z is usually normalized Z =

 $\overline{Z_0}$ to a reference impedance  $Z_0$ , typically the characteristic impedance of the coaxial cables of  $Z_0 = 50 \Omega$ .

The normalized form of the transformation follows then as:

$$\Gamma = rac{z-1}{z+1}$$
 resp.  $rac{Z}{Z_0} = z = rac{1+\Gamma}{1-\Gamma}$ 

#### This mapping offers several practical advantages:

- The diagram includes all "passive" impedances, i.e. those with positive real part, from zero to infinity in a handy format.
  - Impedances with negative real part ("active device", e.g. reflection amplifiers) would be outside the (normal) Smith chart.
  - The mapping converts impedances or admittances into reflection factors and viceversa. This is particularly interesting for studies in the radiofrequency and microwave domain where electrical quantities are usually expressed in terms of "incident" or "forward", and "reflected" or "backward" waves.
    - This replaces the notation in terms of currents and voltages used at lower frequencies.
- Also the reference plane can be moved very easily using the *Smith* chart.

### The Smith Chart (3)



## The Smith Chart (4)

- The distance from the center of the directly proportional to the magnitude of the reflection factor |Γ|, and permits an easy visualization of the matching performance.
  - In particular, the perimeter of the diagram represents total reflection: |Γ| = 1.
  - (power dissipated in the load) =
     (forward power) (reflected power)



available source power



or + + 0.13

mismatch

losses

### The Smith Chart – "Important Points"



### **Coming back to our Example...**

#### matched case:

#### pure traveling wave=> no reflection



### Impedance Transformation using Transmission-lines

The S-matrix for an ideal, lossless transmission line of length *l* is given by

 $\boldsymbol{S} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & e^{-j\beta l} \\ e^{-j\beta l} & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ 

Г<sub>load</sub>  $2\beta l$  $\Gamma_{in}$  $\Gamma_{in} = \Gamma_{load} e^{-j2\beta l}$ 

where  $\beta = 2\pi/\lambda_g$ 

is the propagation coefficient at the guide wavelength  $\lambda_g$  (this refers to the wavelength on the line containing some dielectric).



How to remember when adding a section of transmission-line? We have to turn clockwise: assume we are at  $\Gamma = -1$ (short circuit) and add a short piece of e.g. coaxial cable. We actually introduced an inductance, thus we are in the upper half of the *Smith*-Chart.

N.B.: The reflection factors are evaluated with respect to the characteristic impedance  $Z_0$  of the line segment.

### $\lambda/4$ -line Transformations



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### Again our Example: Short at the end

#### short : standing wave



 If length of the transmission line changes by λ/4 a short circuit at one side is transformed into an open circuit at the other side.

### Again our Example: Open end

#### open : standing wave



#### Fun with the Smith Chart...

#### Download the Smith 4.1 software (Windows)

- http://www.fritz.dellsperger.net/smith.html
- Home exercise:
  - Find the values of two elements to match to  $Z_{in} = 50 \Omega$  at f = 500 MHz



#### Find two reactive elements to match: (two solutions are possible)

ZL	C Series	L Series	C Shunt	L Shunt	
Z = (32 – j66) Ω					
Z = (13 – j9) Ω					
Z = (37 + j34) Ω					
Z = (78 + j78) Ω					

E 1/1/1/1/1

#### **End of Part I**

