The Cricket Indoor Location System

Hari Balakrishnan

Cricket Project
MIT Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab
http://nms.csail.mit.edu/~hari
http://cricket.csail.mit.edu

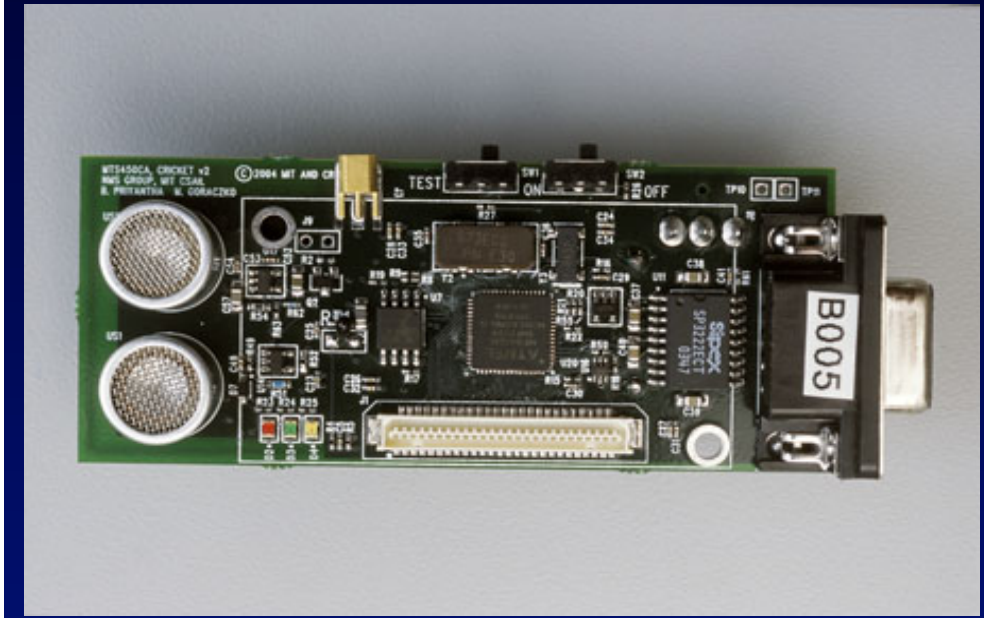
Joint work with Bodhi Priyantha and others

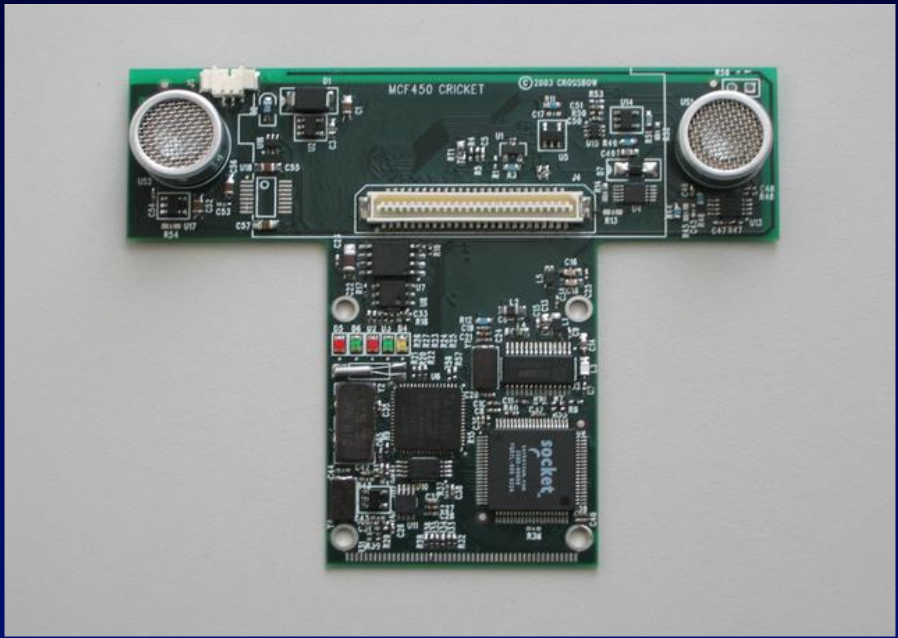
Outline

- **Some Cricket applications**
- Cricket architecture
- Distance and location estimation
- Other features, status, demo

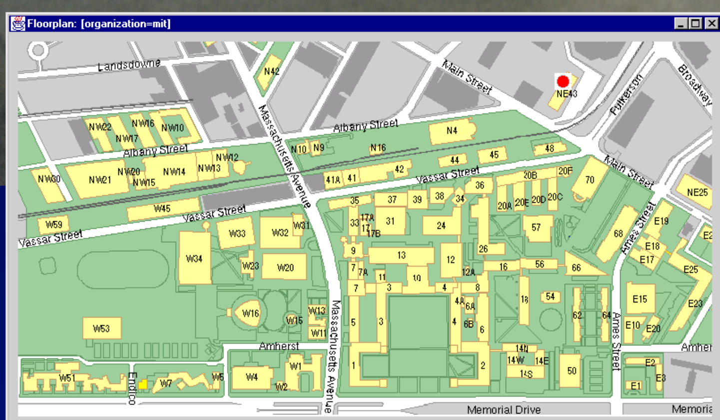
Cricket

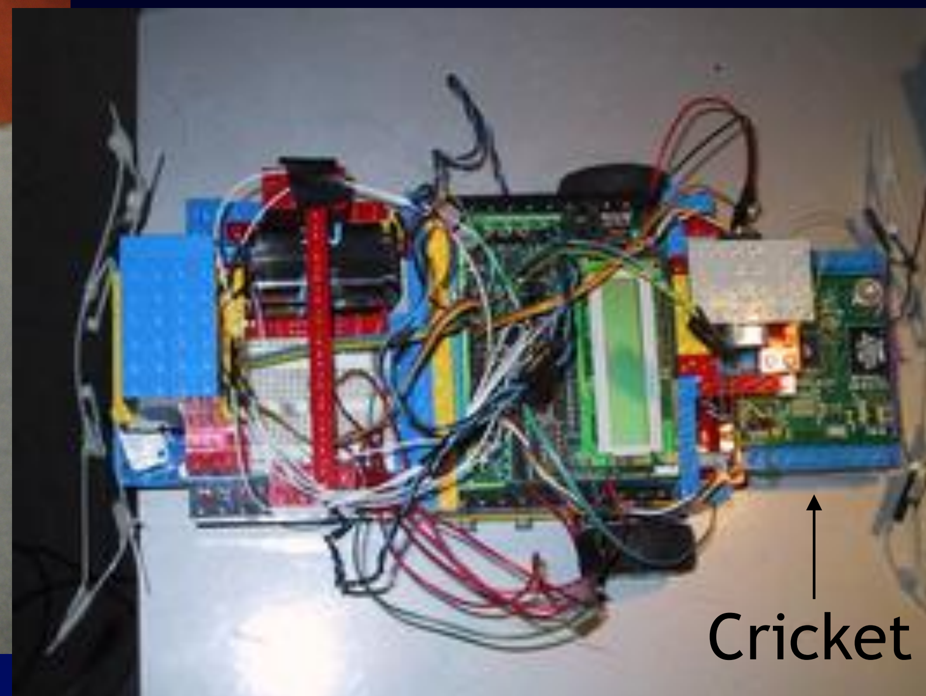
A general-purpose indoor location system for mobile and sensor computing applications



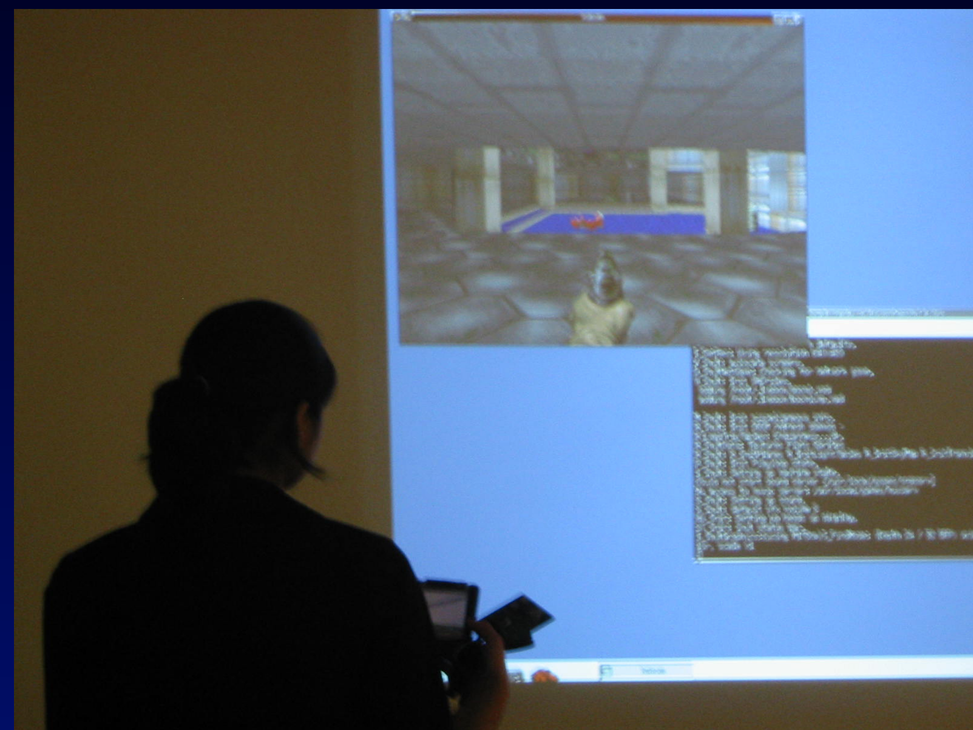


Indoor Human/Robot Navigation





Virtual/Physical Games



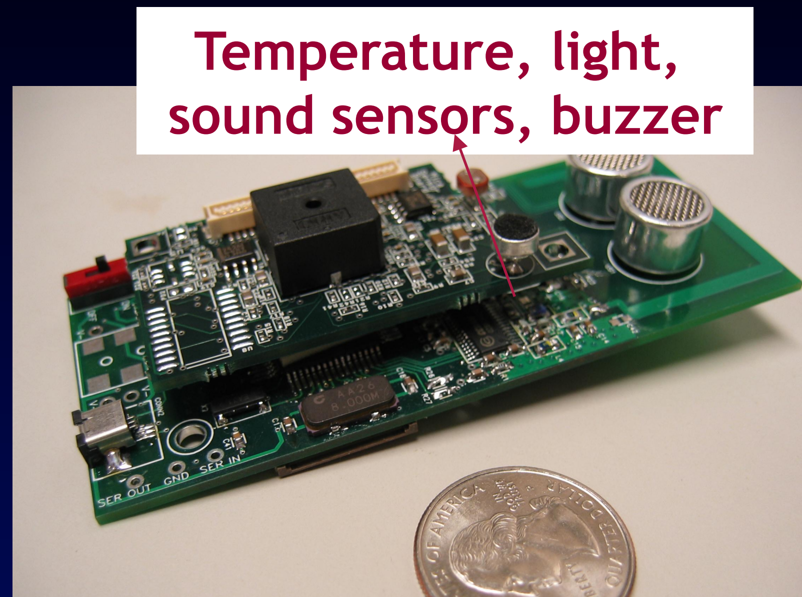
Rudolph et al., MIT Project Oxygen

Hospital Applications

Tracking patients and equipment in hospitals

Location-Aware Sensing

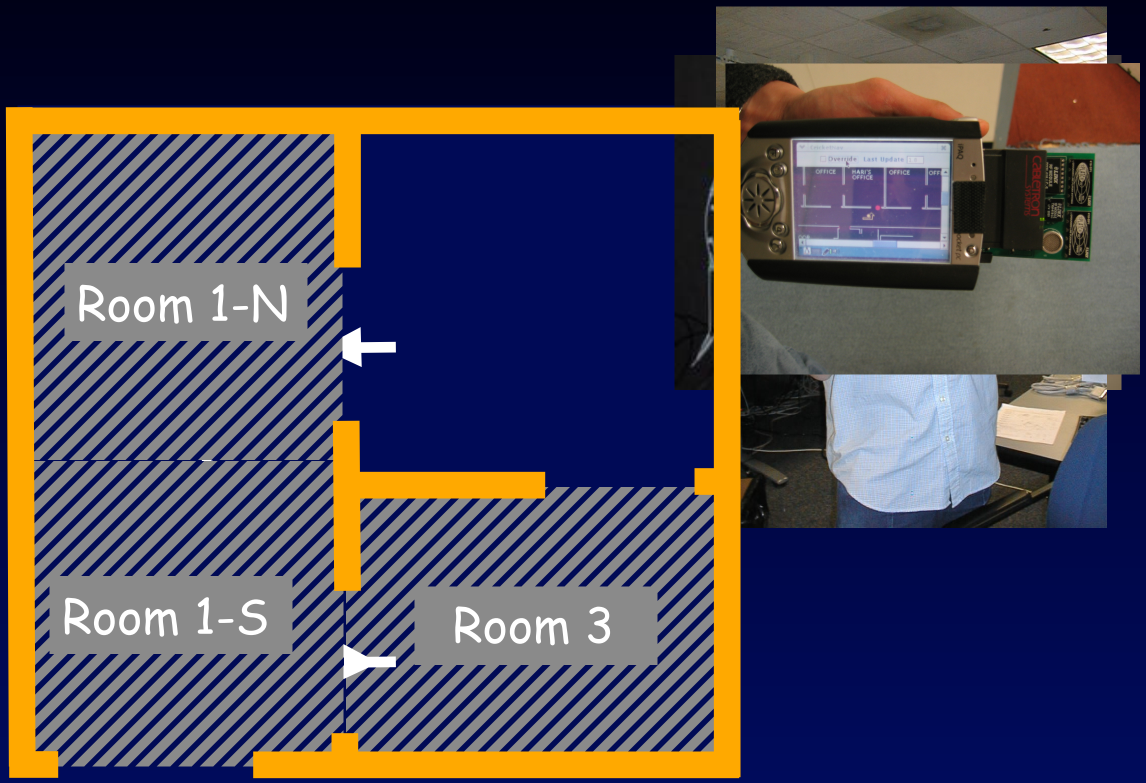
- Networked sensors enable remote monitoring and control
  - Asset tracking
  - Environmental monitoring
  - Supply chain
  - Remote actuation
- Sensor streams need to be annotated with *location*



Outline

- Applications
- **Cricket architecture**
- Distance and location estimation
- Other features, status, demo

Location = Space, Position, Orientation

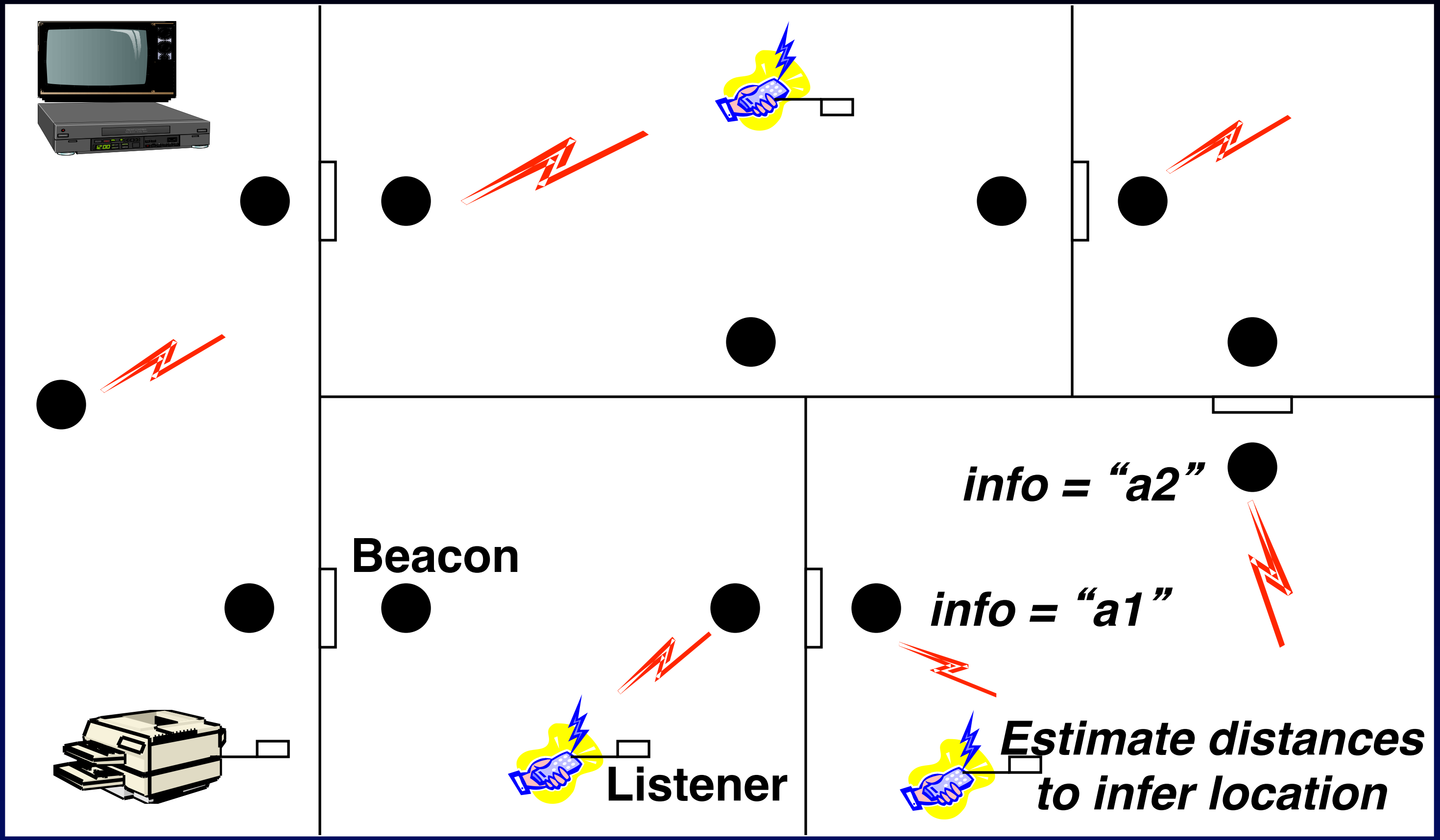


- Space: Rooms, parts of rooms
- Position: (x, y, z) coordinates
- Orientation: Direction vector

Design Goals

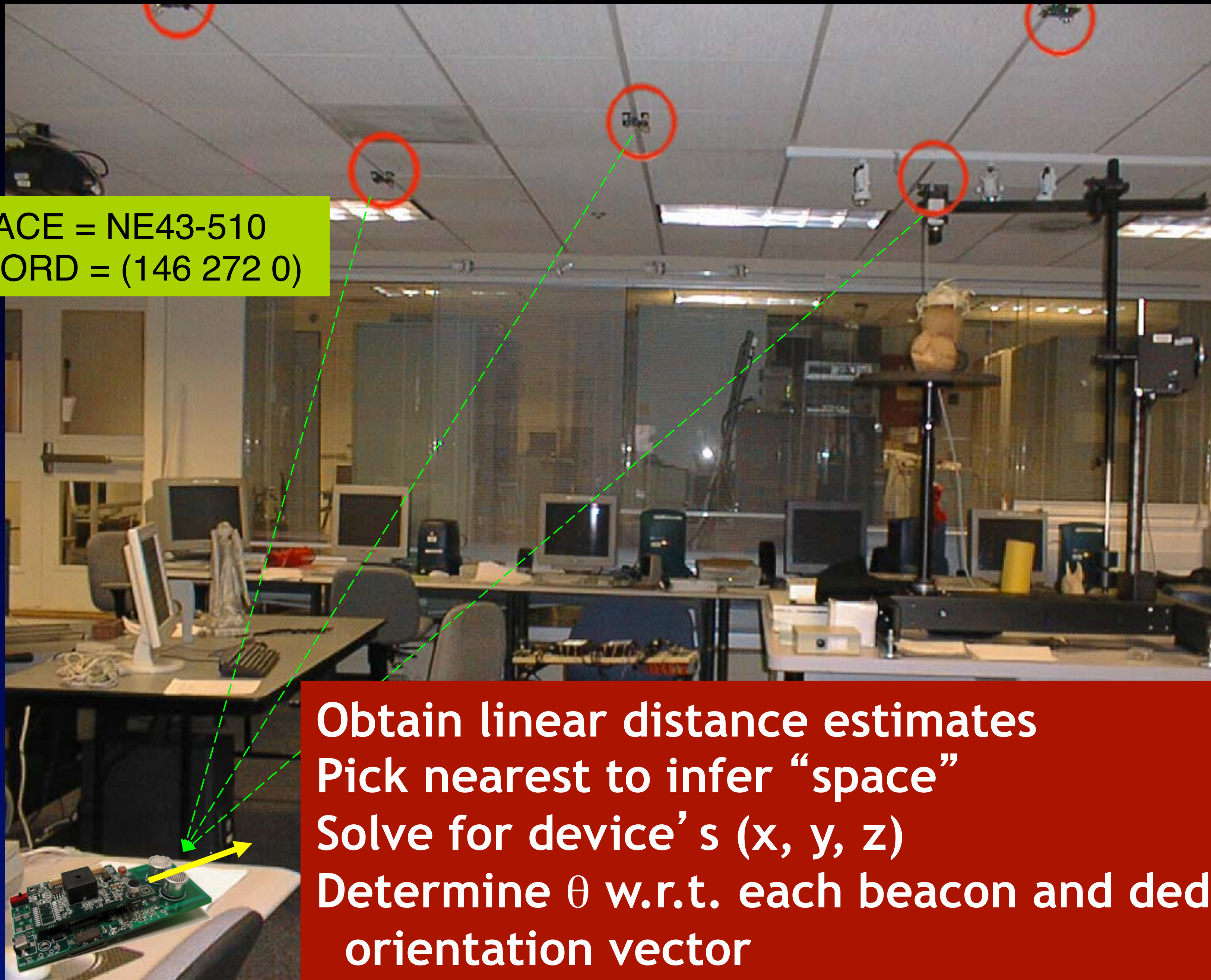
- Must work well indoors
- Must scale to large numbers of devices
- Should not violate user location privacy
- Must be easy to deploy and administer
- Should have low energy consumption

Cricket Architecture



Passive listeners + active beacons scales well, helps preserve user privacy (cf. active bat)

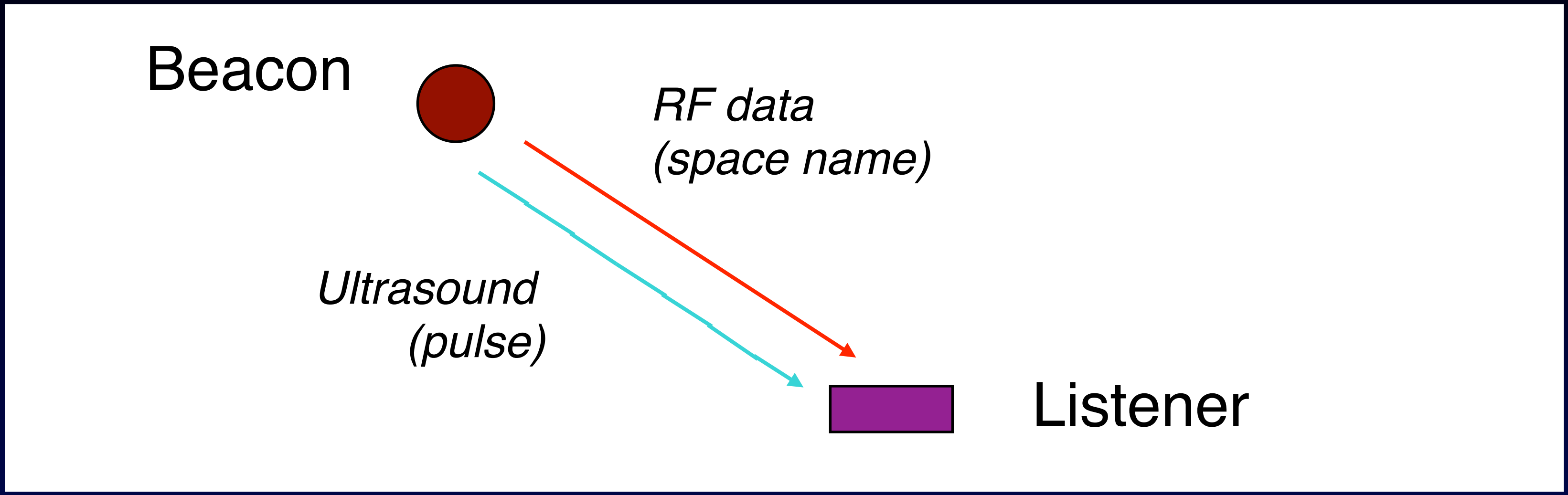
Decentralized, self-configuring network of autonomous beacons



SPACE = NE43-510
COORD = (146 272 0)

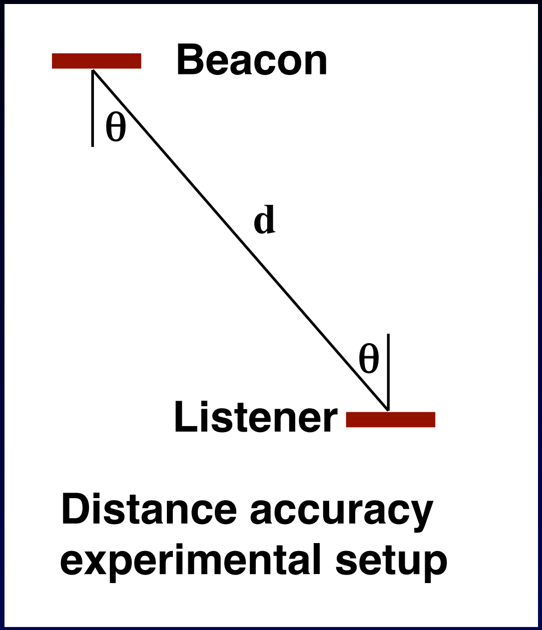
- Obtain linear distance estimates
- Pick nearest to infer "space"
- Solve for device's (x, y, z)
- Determine θ w.r.t. each beacon and deduce orientation vector

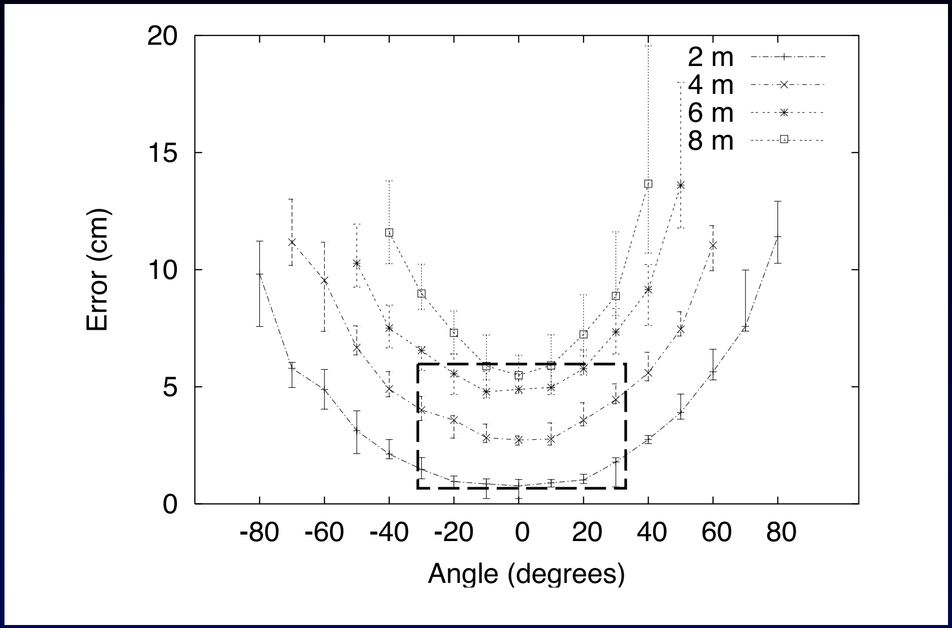
Determining Distance

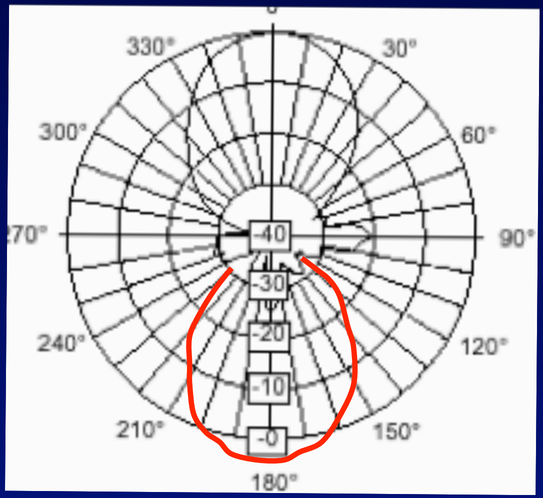


- The listener measures the time gap between the receipt of RF and ultrasonic (US) signals
  - Velocity of US << velocity of RF

Distance Measurement Performance

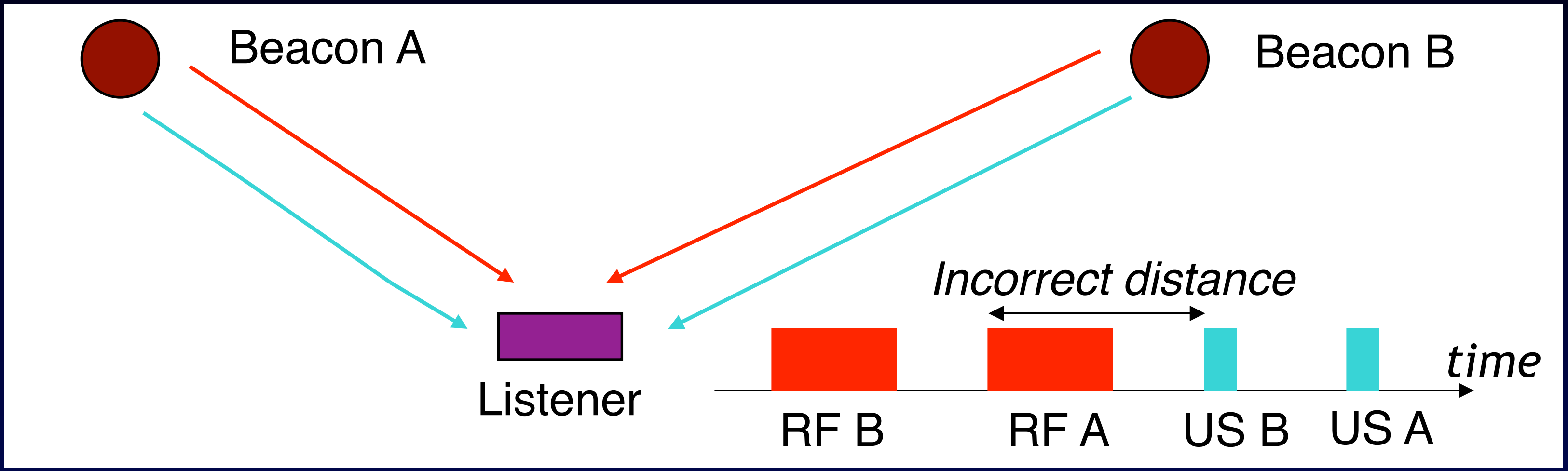






- Error increases with *d* and θ
  - Signal gets weaker with increasing *d* and θ
  - Takes longer to detect at listener
  - Errors are on the order of US wavelength

Multiple Beacons Cause Complications



- Beacon transmissions are uncoordinated
- Ultrasonic pulses reflect off walls

These make the correlation problem hard and can lead to incorrect distance estimates

Solution: Beacon interference avoidance + listener interference detection

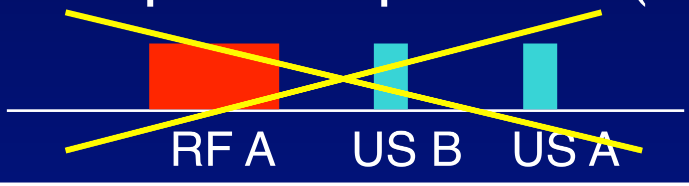
Solution (Part 1): Beacon Interference Avoidance

- Use carrier-sense + randomized transmission at each beacon
  - Listen-before-transmit
  - Delay for random time in [T1, T2], then xmit

- Engineer RF range to be > 2x US range (approx.)

- Idle time between beacon chirps to allow US signal to “die down” (e.g., 50 ms)
  - Upon hearing any RF xmission, delay for 50 ms

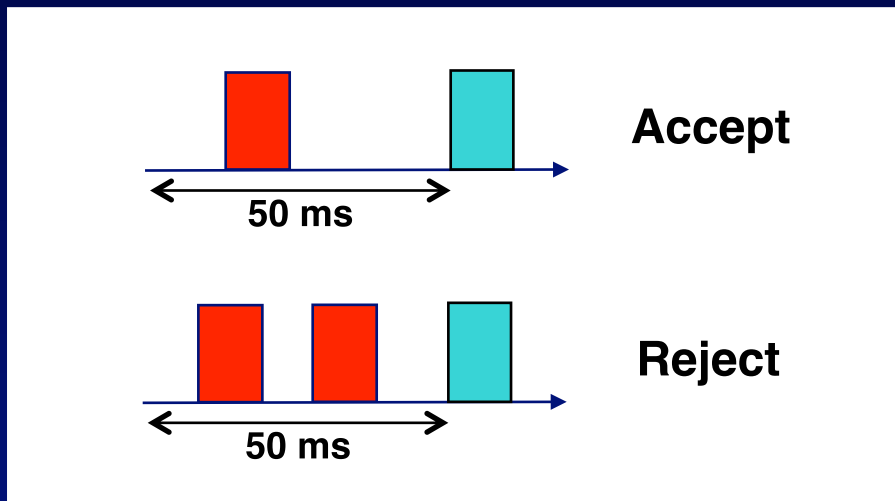
- Result: No “US interference” pattern possible (if carrier sense works)



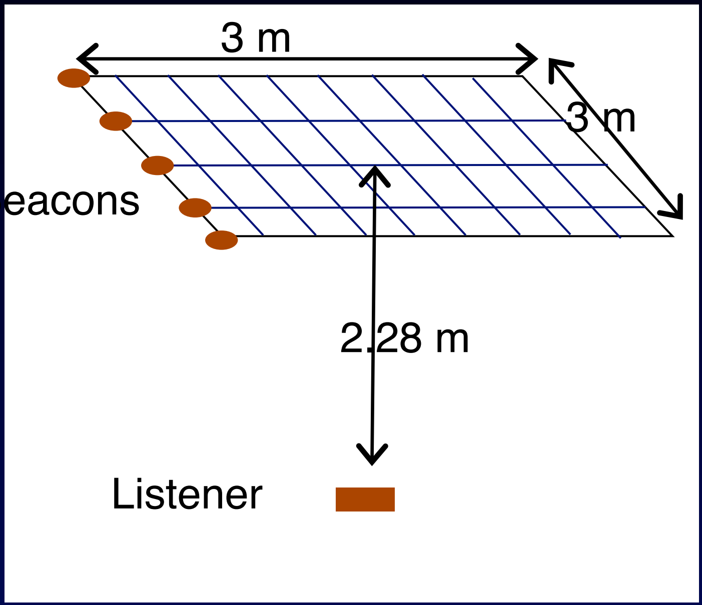
Solution (Part 2): Listener Interference Detection

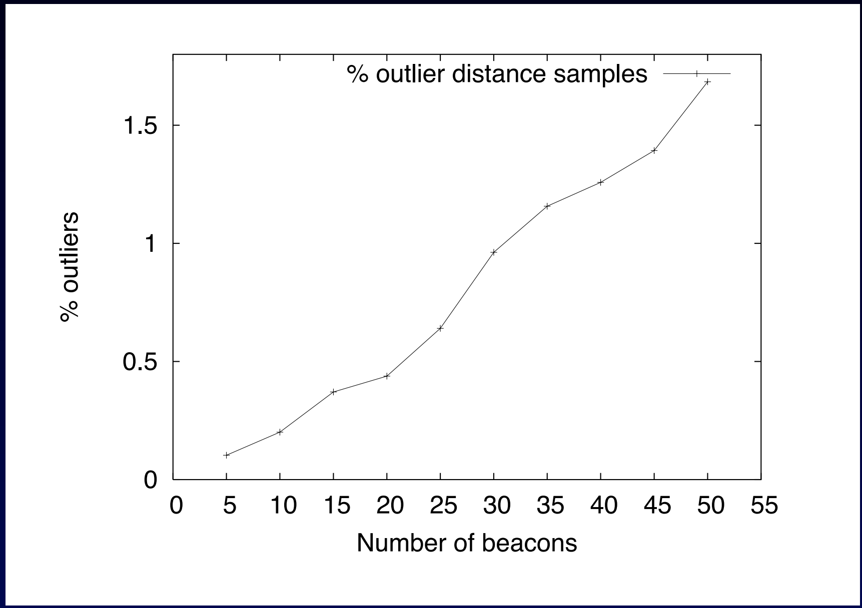
- "RF interference" still possible

- Solution: Listener counts the number of RF messages during 50 ms before US signal
  - Only one RF? Then, accept
  - More than one? Then, reject



Beacon Interference Detection/Avoidance Performance





- Outliers (>5% error) caused by:
  - RF vagaries: dead spots, fading, imperfect carrier sensing
  - Ultrasonic noise: Jangling keys, faulty lights
- Hence, position estimators need to handle outliers

Position Estimation

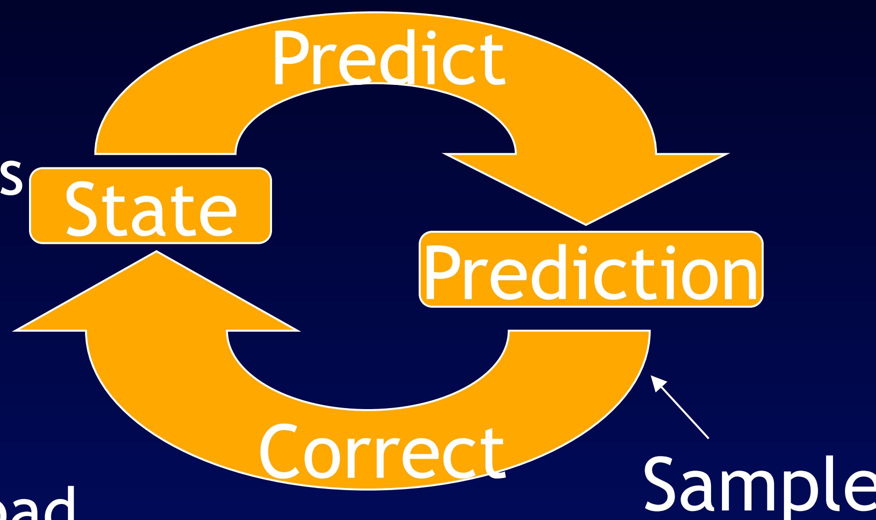
- Static outlier detection: MinMode algorithm
  - Find mode of each beacon's measured distances over recent time window
  - Space = beacon with smallest mode
- Mobile case is harder

$$f : \begin{bmatrix} t_1 & d_1 & p_1 \\ t_2 & d_2 & p_2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ t_n & d_n & p_n \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \Re^3$$

Samples Position estimate

Listener: Extended Kalman Filter

- Single-constraint-at-a-time Kalman filter (similar to Welch et al.)
- Handle non-Gaussian errors
- Cope with bad state

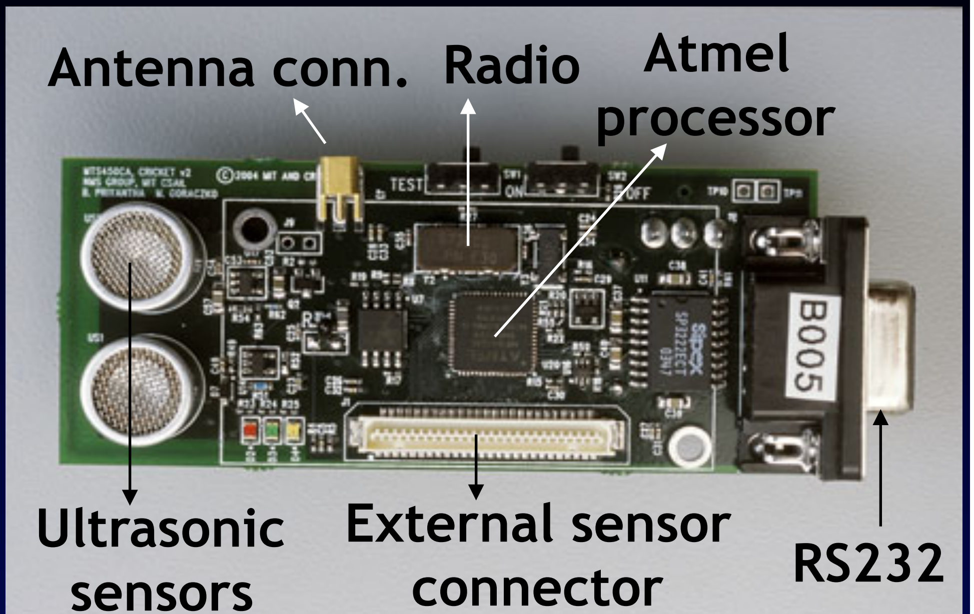


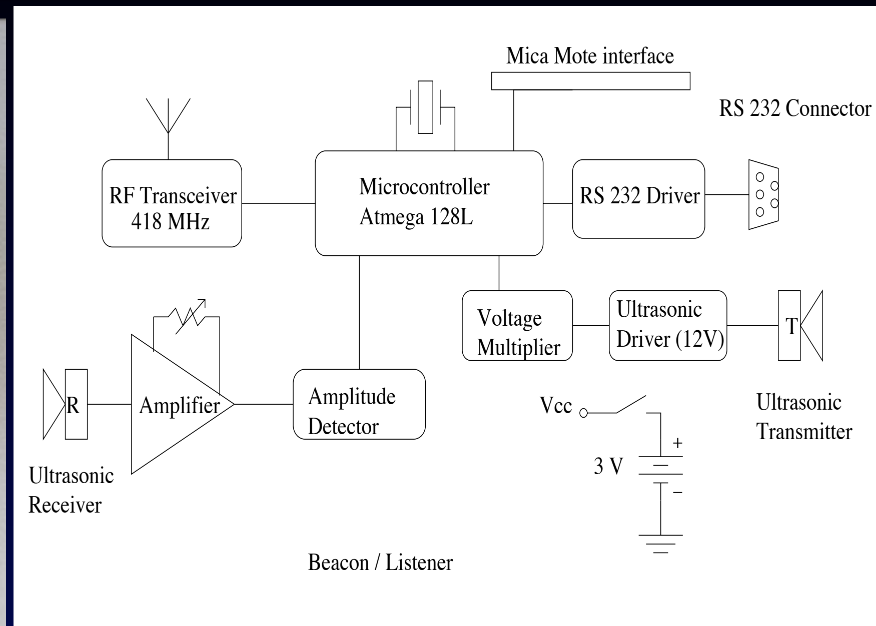
- If prediction consistently bad, then reset by active chirp
  - With some care to preserve privacy and scalability

Outline

- Applications
- Architecture
- Distance and location estimation
- Other features, status, demo

Prototype

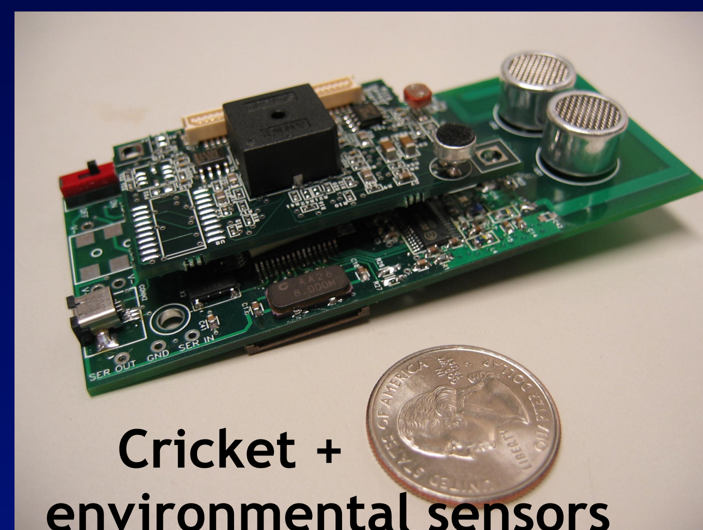




Distance accuracy: 1-5 cm
Position accuracy: 10-15 cm
Orientation accuracy: 3-5 degrees

Beacon power consumption: 1.5 mA @ 2.7 V
Two AA batteries last 6-8 weeks

Embedded software in TinyOS
Commercially available



Demo: Tracking a Moving Robot with Cricket

Other Features of Cricket

- Orientation
  - Listener ultrasound array for differential distances
- Filtering and tracking algorithms
- Reducing energy consumption
  - Sleep/wakeup scheduling and hardware optimizations
- Health monitoring and maintenance
- Location API

Conclusion

- Indoor location-aware applications have great potential
- Cricket provides location information for mobile & sensor computing applications
  - Accurate space, position, orientation
  - Designed for both handheld and sensor apps
- Passive mobile architecture is scalable and helps preserve user privacy
- Attractive R&D platform: Hardware commercially available; software is open-source
- Many interesting challenges for both systems and theory research

http://cricket.csail.mit.edu/