Introduction in SDR and GNUradio project 101

Belgian SDR Meetup

Kristoff Bonne (ON1ARF) 4/9/2020

Agenda

- Introduction to SDR
 - Question time 1
- Project RTTY decode:
 - the hardware
 - the RTTY-signaal
 - Intro GNU Radio + DWD demodulator in GNU Radio
 - Question time 2

Agenda (2)

- Project RTTY decoder:
 - Baudot Decoder
 - Everything together
- GNU Radio .. summary
- Question time 3

Practical Issues

This is a video-conference, so please follow these rules

- Use a headset
- Best browsers:
 - chrome / chromium / ...
 - Firefox
- Mute mic if you have nothing to say
- Switch off your camera if you have nothing to show

Practical Issues

This is a video-conference, so please follow these rules

- Feel free to give feelback!
 - There are three "question time" moments
 - You can also use the "chat"
 - Feel free to use your own language to ask questions
 - I will reply in English

Practical Issues

The video-presentation will be recorded and can be placed online.

Note, that, if you speak, your video (if on) and your name / call will be visible!

Goal

- Practicle goal:
 - Receive, demodulate and decode RTTY signal
 - DWD: always active, very strong
- Secundairy goals:
 - Starting to learn GNUradio
 - Starting to learn decoding
 - RTTY: simpel, easy to demodulate (FSK), slow

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What we want to achieve

\$telnet pan2.local 5301

Connected to pan2.local.

9579 10018 47998 /3116 10051 21050 40069 52015 700// 22200 10910 70048=

NNNN ZCZC 993 FQEW57 EDZW 030600

SEEWETTERBERICHT FUER WESTEUROPAEISCHE GEWAESSER HERAUSGEGEBEN VOM SEEWETTERDIENST HAMBURG 03.04.20, 00 UTC:

WETTERLAGE: STURMTIEF 966 BO

SDR: ... a very Confusing Name

SDR: Software Defined Radio

Although SDR is based on software, it is not the main element of SDR

A better name should be .. MDR (more on that later)

Explaining SDR

SDR

My (personal) definition:

The use of DSP techniques and hardware peripherals to simulate a radio receiver and/or transmitter inside a computing-device

So .. what is DSP?

Explaining SDR / DSP

SDR: Software Defined Radio is based on DSP.

DSP: "Digital Signal Processing"

So ... what is a signal?

Explaining SDR / DSP / Signal

Signal: a medium carrying information

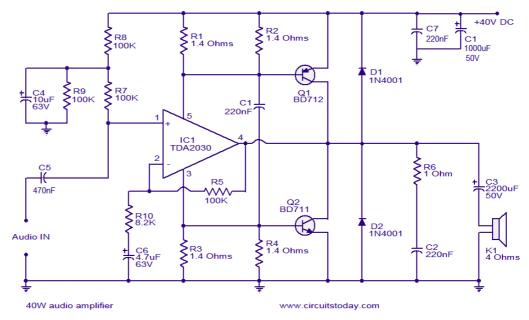
- Medium: electricity, light, Electromagnetic waves (i.e. radiowaves)
- Information: .. audio, video, text, data, ...

Signal Processing

Analog:

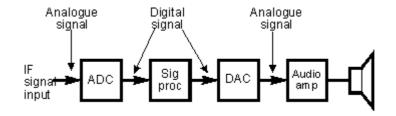
e.g. using analog electronics:

 E.g. Circuits using electronic components (active, passive) or physical characteristics of the components (speaker, PCB trace, ...)



Signal Processing

Digital signal processing: Processing signal using "digital" components



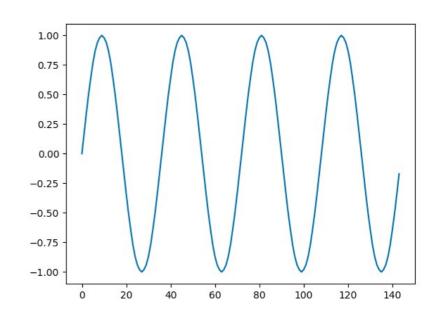
Note: most signals are in essence analog by nature

- ADC: Analog Digital Convertor
- DAC: Digital Analog Convertor

Signal Processing

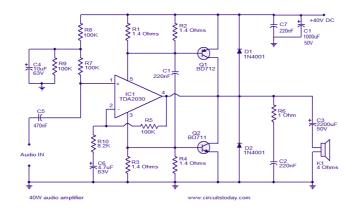
Analog signal: (sine wave)
 a voltage on the input port of an amplifier circuit, as it varies over time

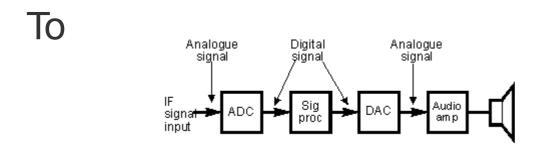
Digital Signal:
 A list of values, that
 represent an analog
 signal (voltage,
 current, ...), either in
 time or Frequency
 domain



But what does this mean?

How do you go from





Some misconceptions:

- Well, it's a computer, and the computer does this, no?
 - But how does the computer know how to do this?

Some misconceptions:

- Well, it's software
 - OK, but software is only as good as the person who wrote this.
 - So, how does this software work?

Some misconceptions:

I guess it is .. magic ?Not really ...

Some misconceptions:

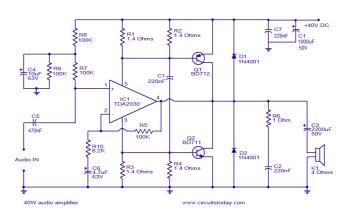
I guess is it .. magic ?Not really ... it is MATH!

Mathematical functions

DSP program-code is based on mathematical functions ("algorithms")

- Functional equivalent to the analog circuit.
- Examples:

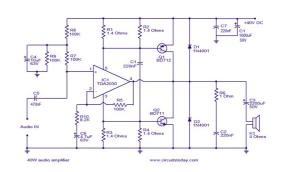
Amplifier: y(t) = A * x(t)

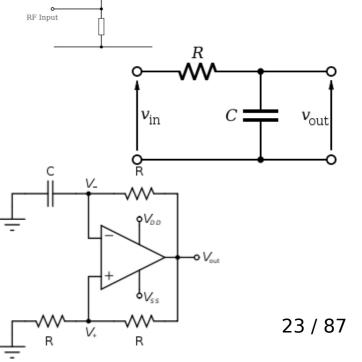


Every value of the output-stream at time "t", is the value of the input stream at time "t" multiplied by "A" (amplification value)

Mathematical functions

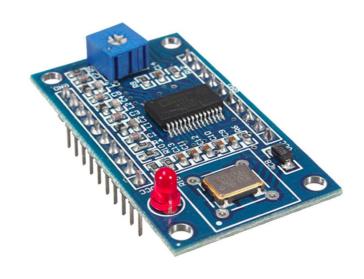
- Amplifier: y(t) = A * x(t)
- Frequency Mixer: $y(t) = x_1(t) * x_2(t)$
- Low-pass Filter: $y(t) = \frac{1}{2} (A_1 * x(t) + A_2 * x(t-1))$
- Oscillatory(t) = sin(t*(2*pi)/F)





DSP applications

AD9851 Sinewave generator



DSP Filter



DSP applications

Baycom modem (packet radio)

TCM3105 tx: SDR





```
RADIO CONN:
IGN IGN
PTT COS
TX RX
NC RSSI
GND GND

J21

1 2

3 4

5 6

7 8

9 10

CONNEXZ
RADIO

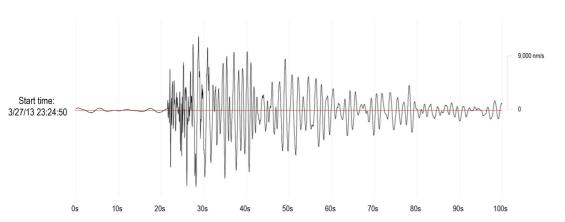
Status indicator, normal LED flashes, PWM on
```

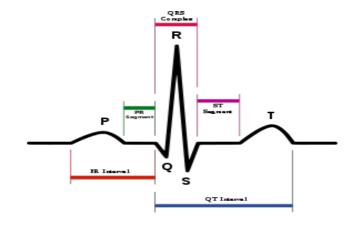
MMDVM

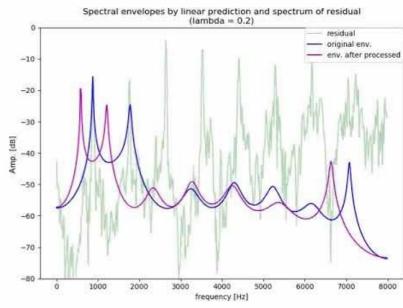
```
::memset(m_rrcState,
                               0x00U, 70U * sizeof(q15_t));
      ::memset(m_gaussianState, 0x00U, 40U * sizeof(q15_t));
      ::memset(m_boxcarState, 0x00U, 30U * sizeof(q15_t));
::memset(m_nxdnState, 0x00U, 110U * sizeof(q15_t));
      ::memset(m_nxdnISincState, 0x00U, 60U * sizeof(q15_t));
      ::memset(m_dcState, 0x00U, 4U * sizeof(q31_t));
      m_dcFilter.numStages = DC_FILTER_STAGES;
      m_dcFilter.pState = m_dcState;
      m_dcFilter.postShift = 0;
      m_rrcFilter.numTaps = RRC_0_2_FILTER_LEN;
      m rrcFilter.pState = m rrcState;
19
      m rrcFilter.pCoeffs = RRC 0 2 FILTER:
      m_gaussianFilter.numTaps = GAUSSIAN_0_5_FILTER_LEN;
      m_gaussianFilter.pState = m_gaussianState;
      m_gaussianFilter.pCoeffs = GAUSSIAN_0_5_FILTER;
      m_boxcarFilter.numTaps = BOXCAR_FILTER_LEN;
      m_boxcarFilter.pState = m_boxcarState;
      m boxcarFilter.pCoeffs = BOXCAR FILTER;
```

DSP code in MMDVM: https://github.com/g4klx/MMDVM/blob/master/IO.cpp

DSP applications







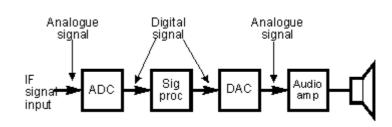
SDR: definition (2nd try)

Use of Mathematical functions

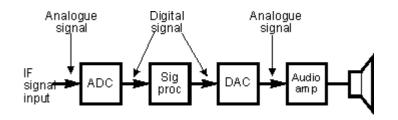
to process digital radio signals,

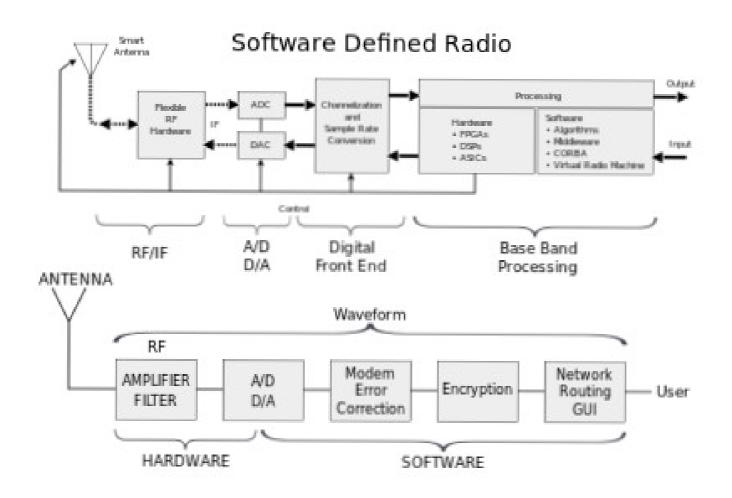
as implemented in **software** on a digital device (mpu, cpu, gpu) or digital logic (fpga, asic)

Low-pass Filter: $y(t) = \frac{1}{2} (A_1 * x(t) + A_2 * x(t-1))$



SDR: Overview



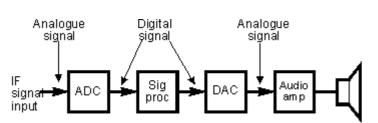


SDR: features (1)

Uses "SDR Peripheral" (receiver / transmitter)

- RTL-SDR, hackRF, PlutoSDR







It's like a soundcard, only for radio-signals (M. Ossman)

SDR: features (2)

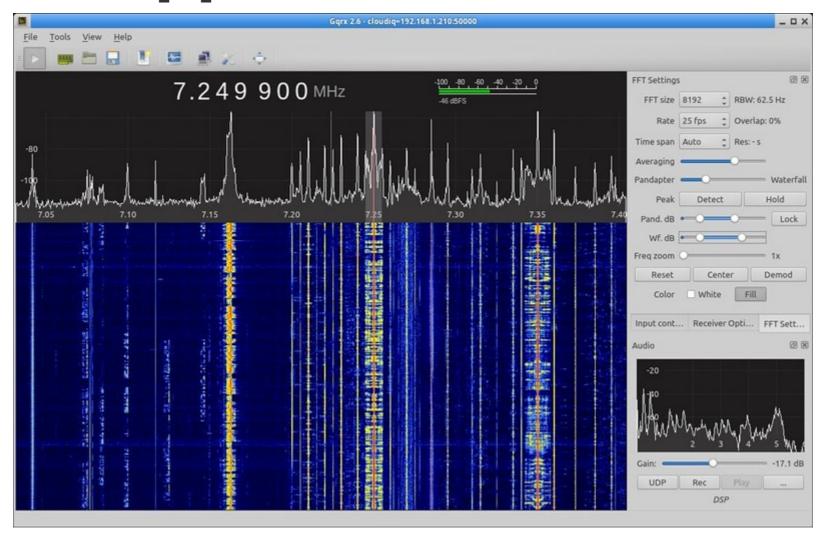
Uses I/Q signals



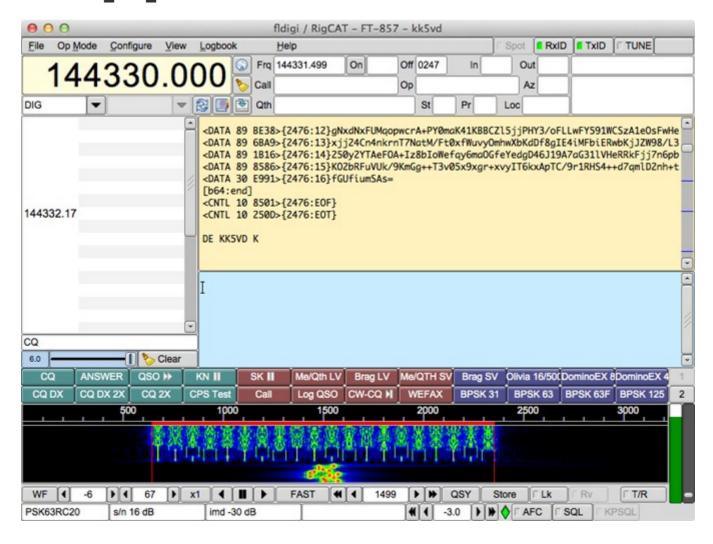
For every sample, two values are samples, 90 degrees apart.

Adds phase-information to the received signals

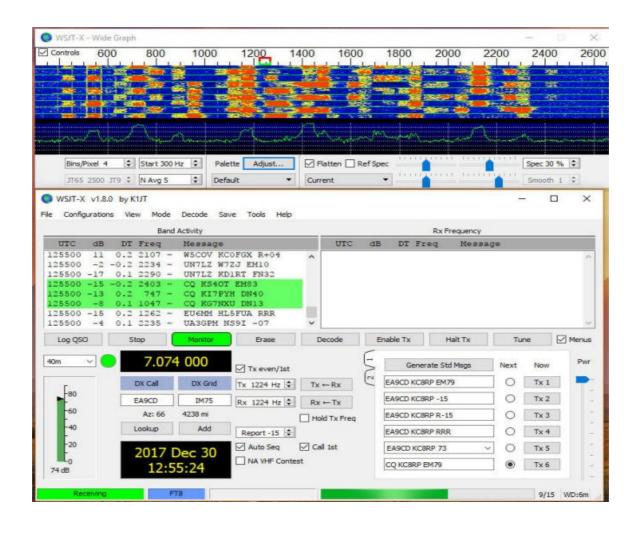
SDR applications



SDR applications



DSP/SDR applications



SDR applications



SDR applications

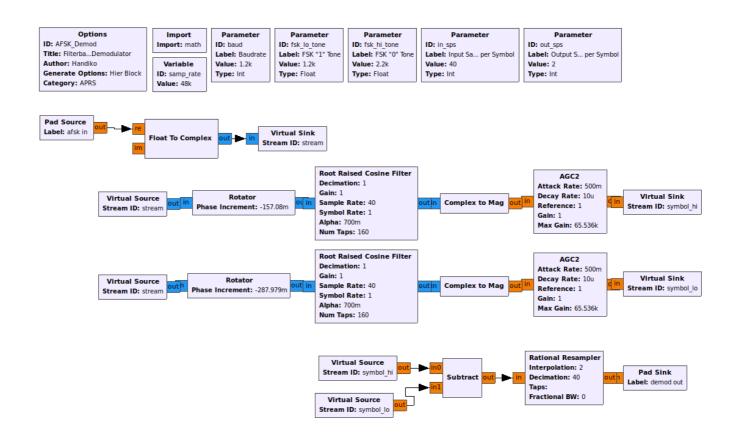


DSP/SDR applications



DSP/SDR applications

GNU Radio



Question time (1)

Questions?

SDR project: RTTY receiver project

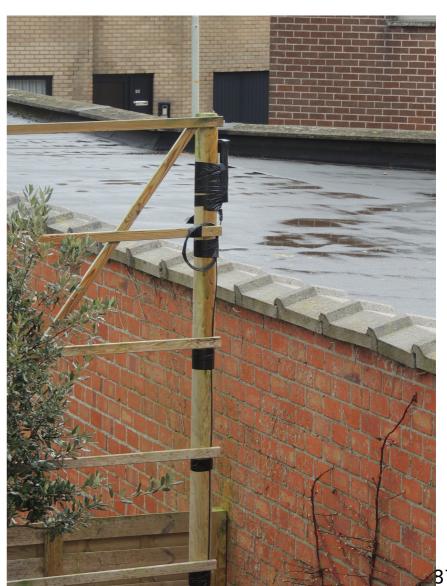
Goal:

Receive Deutsche Wetter Dienst RTTY (147.3 Khz): 50 baud RTTY

Learn GNU Radio

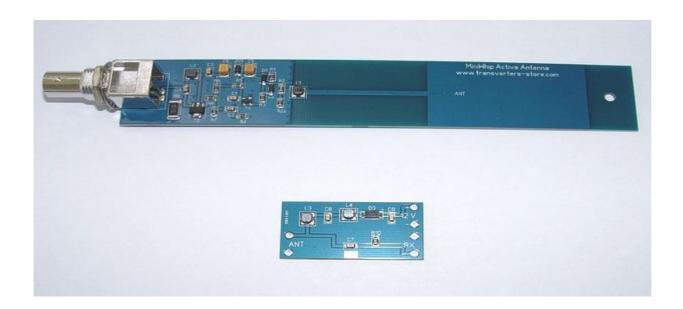
Hardware

The antenna



Hardware

Antenna: active whip-antenna: http://transverters-store.com/whippcb.htm



Hardware

- RTLSDRv3 in "direct mode"
- Bias-T (12 V) for Antenna
- Netbook (debian)
 - Power Supply (relative 'clean')



Software: RTL_TCP (1)

RTL_TCP: Part of the "RTL-SDR" software under linux / MacOS:

Allows you to "listen to" a rtl-sdr dongle at a distance.

(e.g. RPi or other single-board computer + RTL-SDR dongle at the attic / mast / garage ...)

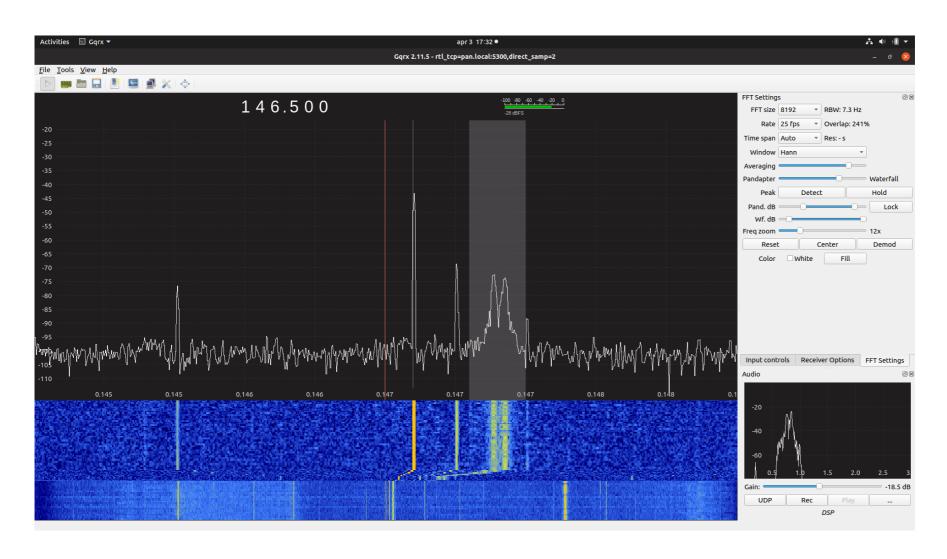
- active whip antenne
- QO-100 receiver

Software: RTL_TCP (2)

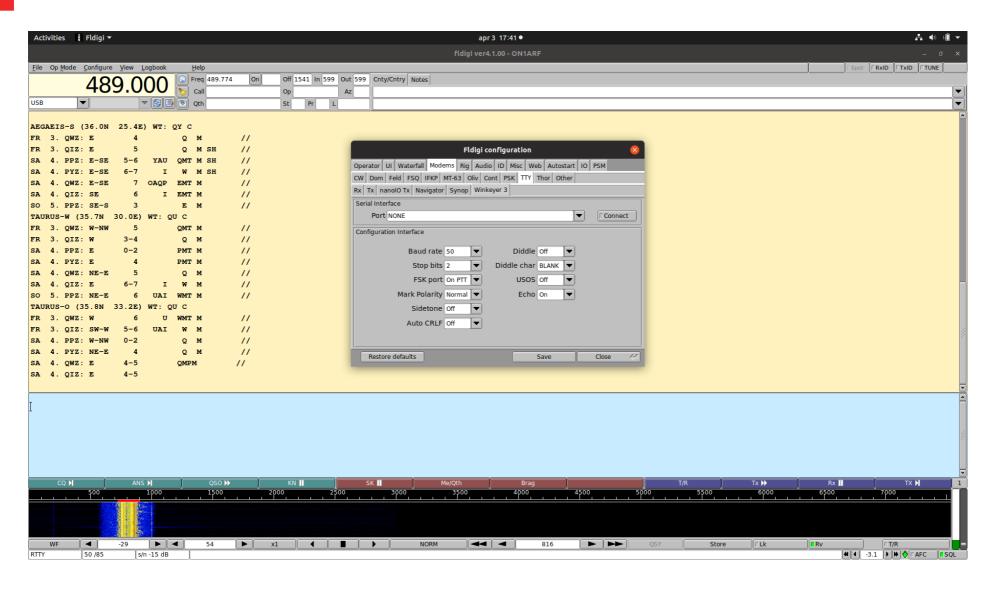
RTL TCP: "RTL-SDR" software

- Note: you need a special version for the RTL-SDRv3 dongle in "direct mode"
- rtl_tcp -p 5300 -a 0.0.0.0 -s 960000 -D 1

The Signal (1): gqrx



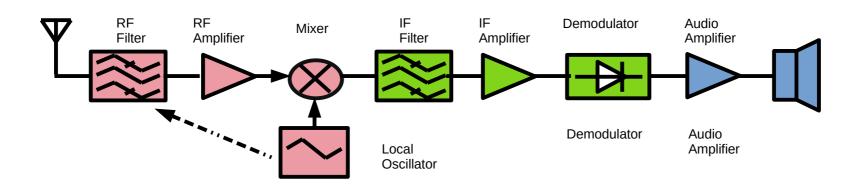
The Signal (2): fldigi



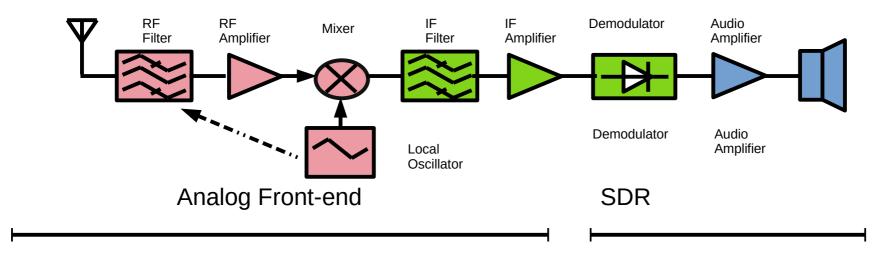
GNU Radio: design your own SDR application

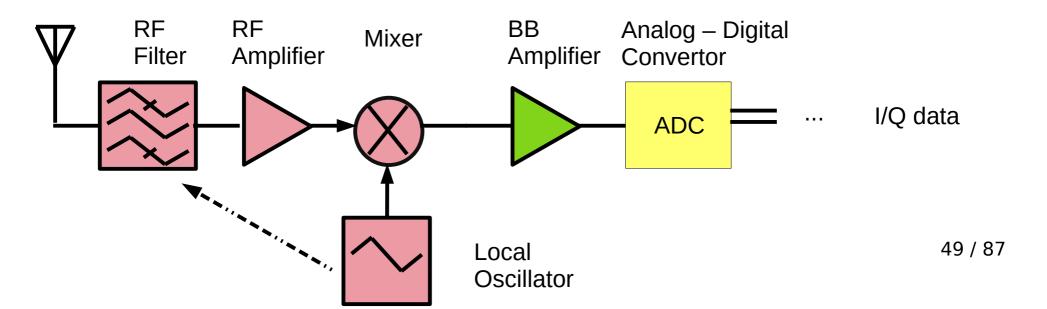
- SDR Framework
- Create SDR "flowgraphs"
- Visual: "GNURadio Companion" (GRC)
- Blocks (but: what do they exactly do?, Which one? Parameters?)
- Block: implements a SDR or DSP "function"
- Note: you do are creating an radio-device, so radio-knowledge IS REQUIRED

How to make a receiver? (analog)

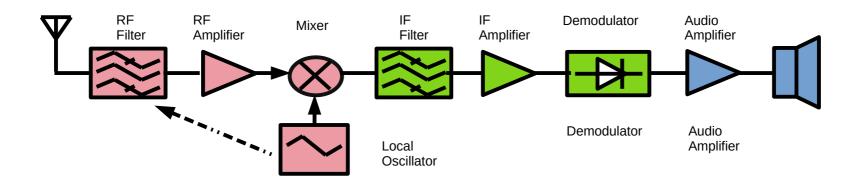


How to make a receiver? (SDR)





But this is how you must think!

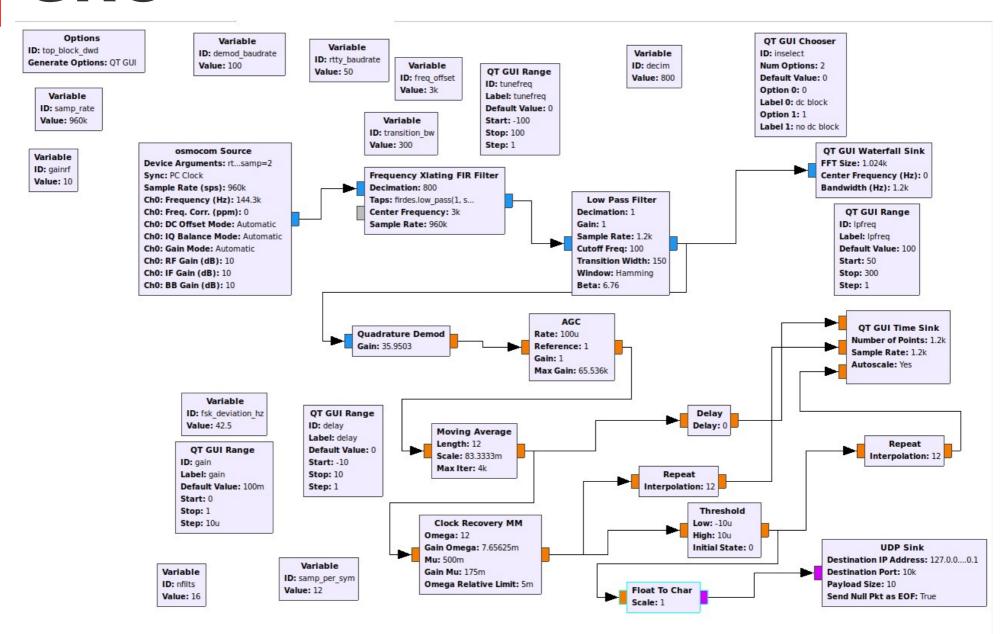


How to make a receiver? (SDR)

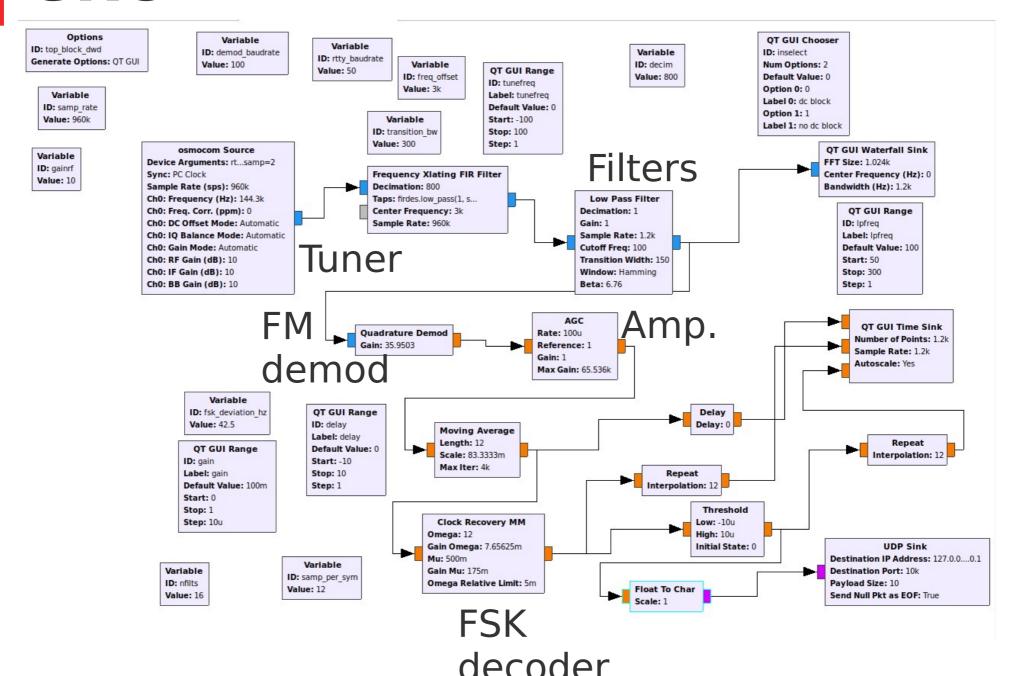
What do we need?

- Receiver (RTL-SDR dongle + rtl_tcp)
- Tuner (down-convertor IF / AF)
- Filters + amplifiers
- Demodulator
 - Audio out (speaker)
 - Decoder (RTTY)

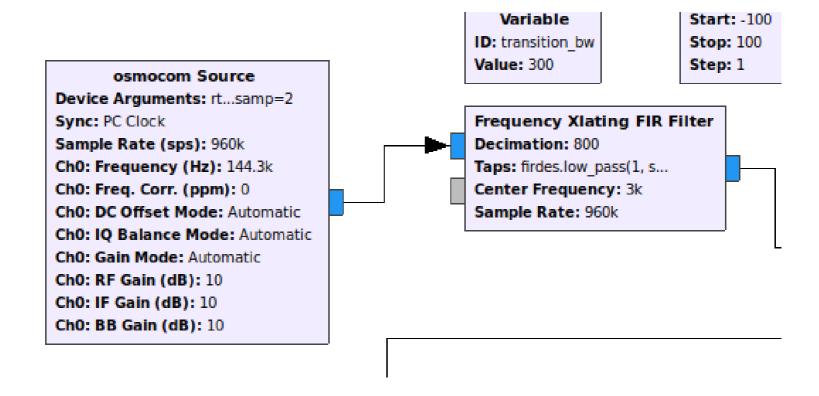
GRC



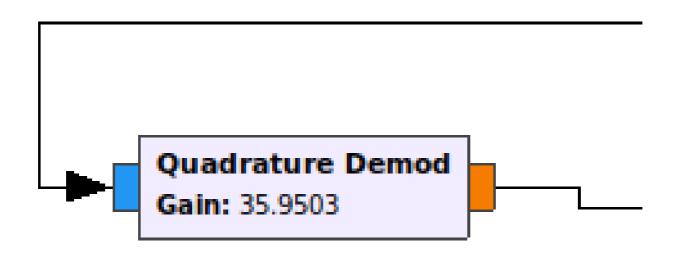
GRC



Tuner + reduce bandwidth



FM demodulator



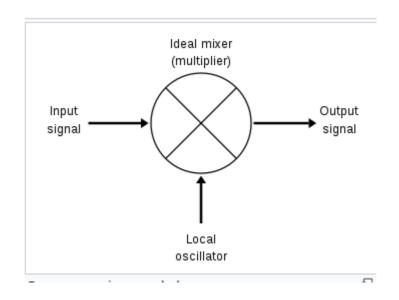
FM demodulator + filter

Let's experiment !!!

Frequency mixer? (1)

```
Mixer (analog):
input 1 = f1
input 2 = f2
```

output: ?

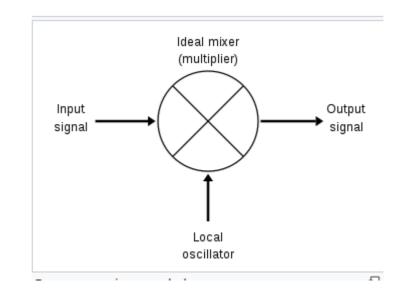


Frequency Mixer? (2)

```
Mixer (analog):
input 1 = f1
input 2 = f2
```

output:

- f1 + f2
- f1 f2



So: $1000Hz * 1001 Hz \rightarrow 1 Hz + 2001 Hz$

Frequency Mixer? (3)

```
Mixer (Digital):
input 1 = f1
input 2 = f2
```

Frequency Mixer:

$$y(t) = x_1(t) * x_2(t)$$

output IF USING I/Q SIGNALS:

$$- f1 + f2$$

So: 1000Hz * 1001 Hz → 2001 Hz

Negative frequencies? (SDR) (1)

I/Q signal have a 'direction' (does 'I' preceed 'Q' or does 'Q' preceed 'I'?)

- Q Preceeds I: + frequency
- I Preceeds Q: frequency

So:

1000Hz * 1001 Hz $\rightarrow 2001$ Hz 1001 Hz * -1000 Hz $\rightarrow 1$ Hz

https://www.khanacademy.org/science/electrical-engineering/ee-circuit-analysis-topic/ee-ac-analysis/v/ee-negative-frequency

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Negative frequencies? (SDR) (2)

1000Hz * 1001 Hz → 2001 Hz 1001 Hz * -1000 Hz → 1 Hz

So:

1001 Hz * -1000 Hz → 1 Hz 999 Hz * -1000 Hz → -1 Hz

→ Baseband signal

FSK demodulation step 1: hardware tuner

- DWD: 147.3 KHz +- 37.5 Hz
- Hardware Tuner: 144.3 Khz
 - 2 tones on output of "tuner": 3000 Hz +- 37.5 Hz
 - -3000 Hz + 37.5 Hz = 3037.5 Hz3000 Hz - 37.5 Hz = 2962.5 Hz

FSK demodulation step 2: Freq.Xlating filter

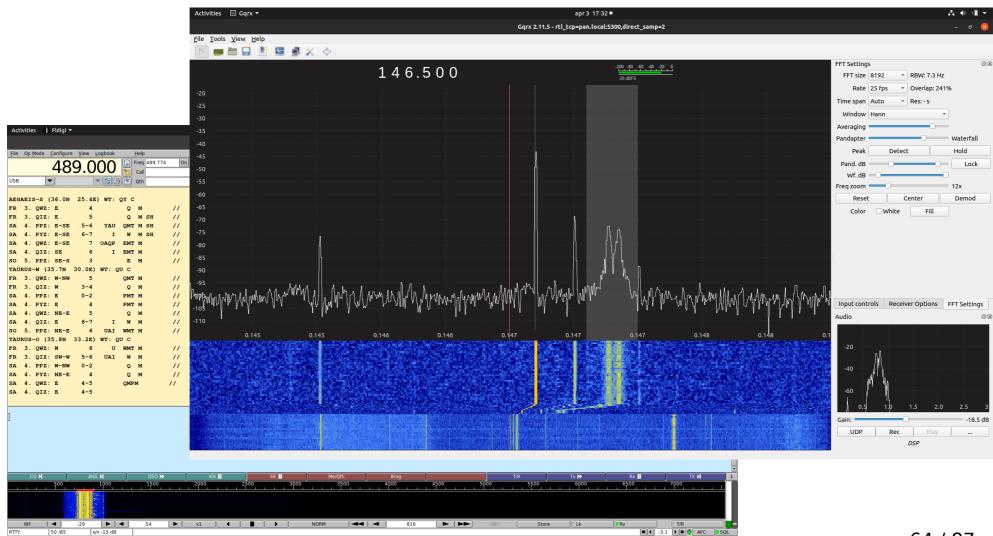
```
3000 \text{ Hz} + 37.5 \text{ Hz} = 3037.5 \text{ Hz}

3000 \text{ Hz} - 37.5 \text{ Hz} = 2962.5 \text{ Hz}
```

"freq. Xlating FIR filter":

- Bandpassing filter
- Tuner: -3 Khz
 - +37.5 Hz
 - 37.5 Hz
- Decimation: Reduce bandwith
 - $-960 \text{ Khz bw} \rightarrow 1200 \text{ Hz}$

FSK demodulation step 2: Freq.Xlating filter



FSK demodulatie: Step 3: FM demod

Mixer ("freq. Xlating FIR filter): 3 Khz

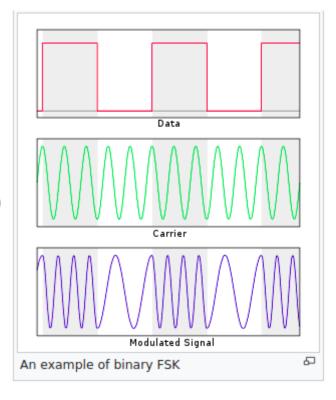
+37.5 Hz

- 37.5 Hz

FM demod ("quadrature demod")

+37.5 Hz → positive output

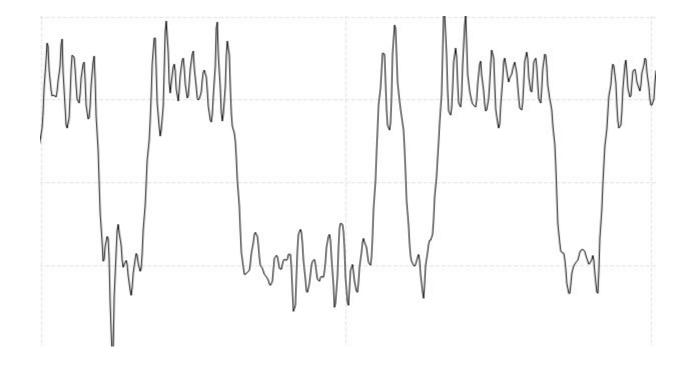
-37.5 Hz → negative output



Clock recovery (1)

Sampling-rate (I/Q signal from receiver)
: 1200 samples / sec
Bitrate RTTY = 100 bits / sec.
(why?)

• 1 bit = 12 samples



Clock recovery (2)

Sampling-rate (I/Q signal from receiver)
: 1200 samples / sec

Bitrate RTTY = 100 bits / sec.
(why?)

1 bit = 12 samples



Clock recovery (3)

- Clock Recovery MM block
- Based on a PLL
- Requires "peaks" to well synchronize
- "dark magic"

Samples to bits

Comparator:

- >0 → "1"<0 → "0"

→ output uit GNURadio → UDP pakket

Outputting the bits (to baudot decoder)

Output from GNURadio to external python script

→ UDP pakket

This can probably also work with GNU Radio "messages"

Bits (dump)

Baudot Decoder

(No Model.)

11 Sheets-Sheet 6.

PRINTING TELEGRAPH. No. 388,244.

Patented Aug. 21, 1888.

		•			
	1 + 1++ 1+1 + + + + + + + + + + +	2 11 1++++++ 1 1+++++ 1 1 1 1 1+++ 1+ 1 1 1	3 +++ + + ++++++++++	<u>* 1+++ 1+++ ++++ </u>	8
LBC DEEF CHI J KLMN OP QRSTUY WXYZEVA	+.	-	-	_	
\mathcal{B}	1-	<u>-</u>	+	+	
C	1+	-	+	+	
JI	-+-	-+-	+	+	
Ę,		+	-		
E	-	1+	1-		-
F	_	1-	1+	+	
æ	1-	1+	-	+	
\mathcal{H}	1+	+	i —	+	1
1	_	+	+	-	-
J	1+		-	+	_
K	1+	_	-	+	+
L	+	+-	-	+	+
M	1 —	+		+	+
N.	I —	+	+	+	+
0	+	+	+		
P	-	+	+	+	+-
Q	-	—	+	+	+1
R	_	-	+	+	+1
S	l —		+-		+
\boldsymbol{T}	+		+		+1
\boldsymbol{v}	1+	-	+		
V	1-	1+1	+	_	+-
W		+	+		+
\boldsymbol{x}	-	+		_	+1
Y	I — I		+		<u>-</u>
Z	1	-		-1	+
Z	-	<u> </u>			-i-
5/	<u>-</u>	_	_	4	-
1				<u> </u>	- 1
					- 1

J. M. E. BAUDOT.

- "telex" alphabet
- 5 bits

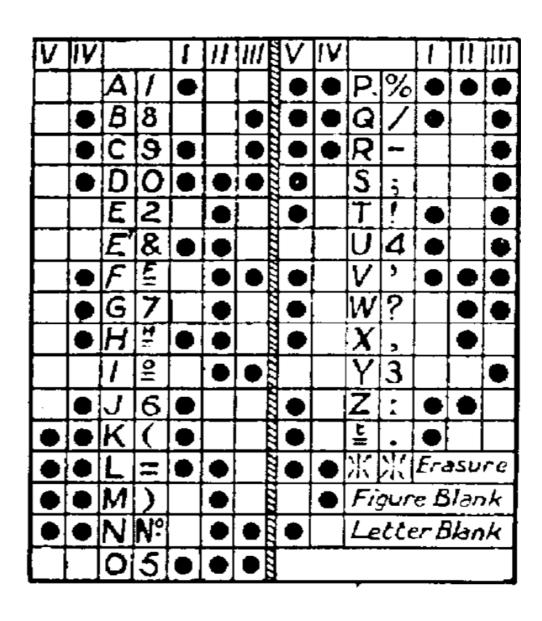
RTTY: RADIO teletype

- 1 or 2 startbits
- 1, 1.5 or 2 stopbits Maurice Emile Baudot.

DWD: 50 baud, 1 startbit, 1.5 stopbits

→ demodulate FSK at 100 Baud

Baudot Decoder



Baudot Decoder (3)

Decode at double bitrate So we are looking for ?

- 2 startbits ("1")
- 5 * 2 databits (which should be equal)
- 3 stopbits ("0")

```
S1 S2 | D11 D12 | D21 D22 | D31 D32 | D41 D42 | D51 D52 | E1 E2 E3 1 1 d1 d1 d2 d2 d3 d3 d4 d4 d5 d5 0 0 0
```

Baudot Decoder (3)

Take in 29 bits and search for the "baudot" pattern

Compare received bits with pattern, give "score"

Once found, shift out bit-pattern with the highest score, and fill up the buffer (up to 29 bits)

Baudot Decoder (4)

Look for character in the table, or switch to other table

Print character

Putting it all together

- Run GNU Radio flow on receiver PC
 - Demodulated bits → UDP packets (IP multicast)
- Additional python script:
 - tcp server (i.e. wait for incoming connections)
 - Per tcp session: baudot decoder

Baudot decoder enhancements (1)

- FSK demodulator at 200 bits/sec (instead of 100 bits/sec.)
 - 100 bits/sec: For every "baudot" bit → 2 bits received
 - Ex. 3 bits received (010):

```
a1 a2 : b1 b2 : c1 c2
0 0 1 1 0 0
```

- 200 bits/sec: For every "baudot" bit → 4 bits received
 - Ex. 3 bits received (10):

```
a1 a2 a3 a4 : b1 b2 b3 b4 : c1 c2 c3 c4 78/87 0 0 0 0 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0
```

Baudot decoder enhancements (1b)

• Ex. 3 bits received:

```
a1 a2 a3 a4 : b1 b2 b3 b4 : c1 c2 c3 c4 0 \ 0 \ 0 \ 1 \ 1 \ 1 \ 1 \ 0 \ 0 \ 0
```

- Ignore bits "1" and "4" (adjacent to previous / next bits). Only look at bits 2 and 3.
- Should help against "inter-symbolinterference

Q: but is that the real problem?

 Q: will the clock recovery block be able to handle this?

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Baudot decoder enhancements (2)

- DWD transmissions contain a lot of text, a lot of very simular text
- "SEEWET?..."
 Next char? "U" (10100) or "T" (10101)
- Machine learning:
 - Make lists, what character is the most common after "WET"?
 - Based on texts that are known to be correct (100 % "baudot pattern" match)

Question time (2)

Questions?

GNU Radio ... summary (1)

Use:

- Practical applications:
 - Less known protocols:
 - Satellite telemetry decoder
 - Simulations
 - Radio Channel simulations
- Experimenting / learning receivers/decoders encoders/transmitters
- Educational tool

GNU Radio ... summary (2)

Use:

- Advanced telecom techniques
 - e.g. spacial diversity reception
- Cybersecurity

GNU Radio ... summary (3)

- Already a lot of blocks ready to use
 - But what block does what?
 - What do all these parameters do?
- Relative easy to create your own blocks
- But you must understand signal-processing techniques

GNU Radio ... Getting started (1)

- Main development environment is linux
 - apt / yum / ...
- Mac: brew, MacPorts
- Windows:
 - No idea (no personal experience)
 - Run GNU Radio in Linux VM
 - Pentoo linux: GNU Radio pre-installed
 - Use single-board computer (raspberrypi, ...)

GNU Radio ... Getting started (2)

- Tutorials
 - Articles on GNU Radio website
 - Videos
- SDR knowledge
 - See resources list
- "sdrbelgium" mailinglist
- Workshop ???

Question time (final)

Questions?