Acknowledgements

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Abstract

Solar power is becoming increasingly prevalent as governments and private entities look to move away from the use of fossil fuels towards renewable energy. As this transition is made, solar panel owners will look to optimize the amount of energy generated, in order to achieve maximal efficiency.

The Internet of Things (IoT) is also an area of rapid growth, with the number of IoT-connected devices growing exponentially year-on-year. Accordingly, the number of gateways used to connect devices with the cloud is also growing as increased network capacity is required.

This report details the update made to an existing solar powered LoRa gateway with the aim of improving system up time, via enhanced power management. The aforementioned update involved replacing legacy hardware from the previous system, and rewriting the existing code base to allow customisation of operation parameters.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This report presents the final year project titled LoRa Power Management, in the area of Networks and Telecommunications

1.1 Project Overview

1.1.1 Solar Energy

At of 2011, world energy consumption was 10 terawatts per year, by 2050 that figure is forecast to triple to 30 terawatts per year[Raz11]. With such a large growth in energy consumption, along with the rapid exhaustion of fossil fuels, renewable sources of energy are being looked to as the solution to these impending energy deficits. As one of the most developed renewable power sources in terms of technology, solar is a viable answer for many bodies looking to move away from non-renewable sources. The system described in this project uses solar energy as its power source. It aims to take into consideration the varying nature of solar irradiance when in operation.

1.1.2 LoRa Gateway

LoRa gateways are used by Internet of Things devices to connect with the cloud, in order to relay data and receive downlink communications. Operators of gateways aim for maximal system up time, in order to provide the most reliable service possible. As the system described is used to power a LoRa gateway, it follows that an aim of this project is to maximize gateway operation time, to provide ample coverage to IoT devices within its range.

Figure 1.1: Previous gateway implementation

The previous implementation of the solar powered gateway, in operation January-September 2017, was handed down before beginning the project (see fig. 1.1)

1.1.3 On Board Computer

Some hardware from the old implementation had become faulty, and would need to be replaced. The system requires a low power board, as one with a high current draw would greatly affect the up time of both the power management program and the gateway by using unnecessary energy. In-built RTC and power management capabilities are also requirements of the board, in order for the system to power on and off at designated times and battery thresholds. The system connects to phidgets, which are data I/O boards that relay sensor information from the solar panels back to the computer, in addition to providing a visual output in the form of a screen that displays the current device state (see figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Phidget screen

1.2 Reader's Guide

- Chapter 2 will cover the project background and related work.
- Chapter 3 will discuss the body of work including project methodology.
- Chapter 4 will present the conclusions and suggest potential future work in this area.
- Chapter 5 will provide the reference list.
- Chapter 6 will contain documentation for the code.

Chapter 2

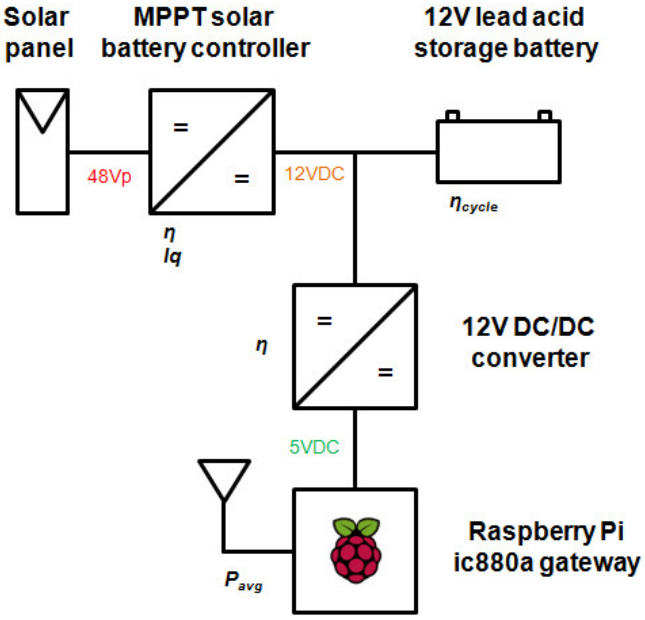
Background

2.1 Motivation

The Internet of Things (IoT) is a rapidly growing area. According to Forbes, the global market for IoT is project to grow from "$2.99T in 2014 to $8.9T in 2020, attaining a 19.92% Compound Annual Growth Rate"[For17]. With its expansion comes the demand for additional capacity, to allow new devices to connect with the cloud. Considering the fledgling nature of the market and the relatively low barrier to entry when compared to other telecommunications markets such as cellular, there is much work that can be done in improving the state of IoT. From security management, to coverage optimization and maximizing up time, IoT solutions still have plenty of distance left to cover.

Solar Power is also an area of rapid expansion. Between 2000 and 2017, solar power has seen a growth factor of 57 [Nan17]. Combining the areas of solar and

Figure 2.1: Solar Powered Gateway, Epyon, *TheThingsNetwork 2017*



2.2 State-of-the-art

The intersection between solar power and IoT gateways is a mostly unexplored area. There is a briefly documented solution available on the web, posted in February of 2017 [DSG17], the design for which can be seen in figure 2.1. The aforementioned system was relatively successful, able to stay up for "6 days" during cloudy weather. However, apart from this project there is a distinct lack of work in the solar/IoT cross section.

Chapter 3

Project

3.1 Methodology

The approach to creating the system was as follows

- Inspect the previous implementation, and retain the adequately working parts (both hardware and software)
- Replace defunct hardware pieces with up-to-date alternatives
- Run old software implementation on new hardware as proof-of-concept
- Design new software system
- Implement, test and tweak new system

3.2 Setup

Before beginning work on implementing the software system, it was necessary to bring the hardware up-to-date. Some parts of the handed-down equipment had become defunct and required replacement. The Eurotech Proteus board, used to control operation of the gateway, was no longer functioning. The solar charge controller, which regulates the solar energy received from the panels was also non-functional.

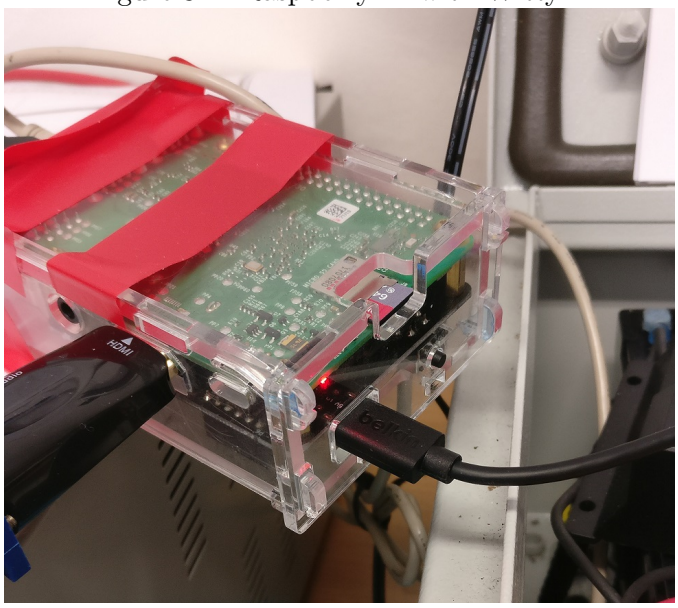
A Raspberry Pi 3 was acquired to run the power management application [rPi18], along with a solar charge controller to power the Pi via energy harvested by the panels [SCC18]. As the Pi does not have built-in RTC and power management capabilities, a WittyPi was also obtained, which adds these functionalities to the Raspberry Pi. The WittyPi is a small extension board that attaches to the Raspberry Pi, as can be seen in figure 3.1.

Once the necessary equipment was purchased, system assembly began. After being attached to the WittyPi, the Raspberry Pi was connected to the solar charge controller via USB to micro USB cable. The Pi connects to the phidget interface via Ethernet, to display current status on screen and track battery voltage. The solar charge controller was wired into the batteries and a generator as the power source, as solar panels are not usable from inside the development office.

Post assembly, software setup was done as follows

- Install Pi from NOOBS
- Follow instructions to use phidgets with the Pi[PHI14]
- Clone and make the pbm mercurial repo[PBM17]
- Install WittyPi on Raspberry Pi[WPI18]

Figure 3.1: Raspberry Pi with WittyPi



3.3 Design

The previous implementation of the system came from a 2017 project to build a solar powered LoRa gateway[PBM17]. The program flow is described in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: System setup

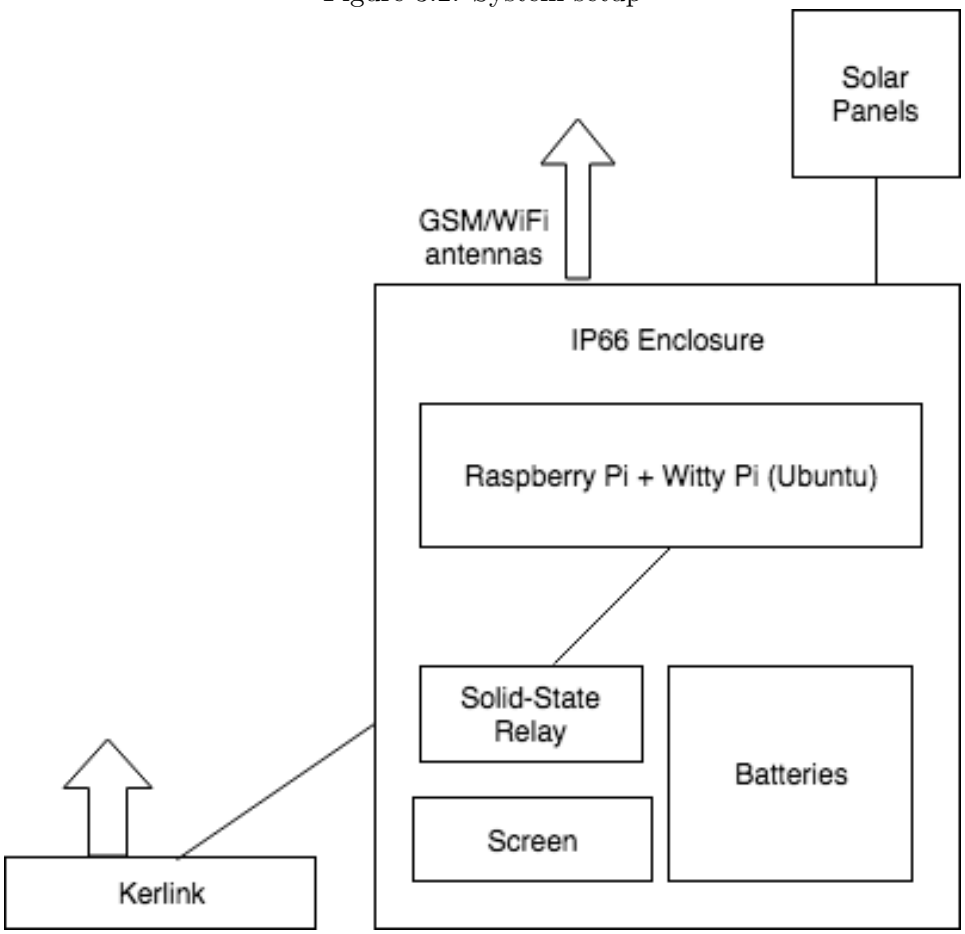
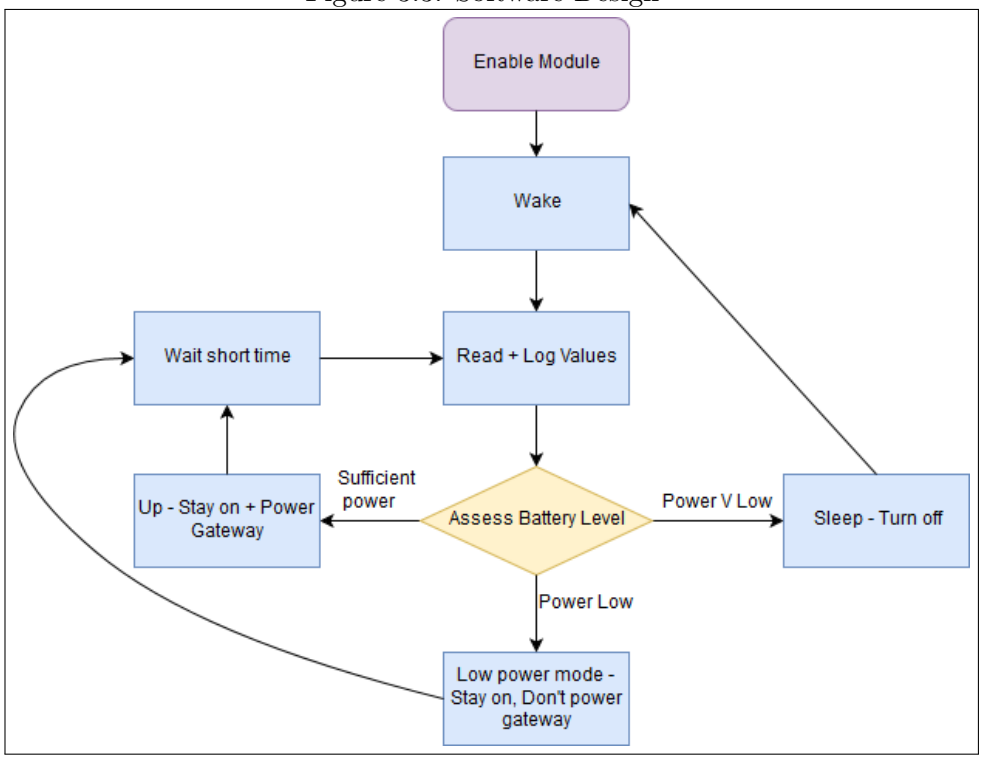


Figure 3.3: Software Design



3.4 Implementation

Two files were used from the previous implementation of the project[PBM17] - handlers and phidgets. These libraries are available from the phidgets website [PHA18], and provide interface kit functionality which enables retrieval of data values from sensors and updating of the screen displaying current system status. The rest of the fragmented code base was rewritten, with some usable functions salvaged. In particular,

```
updateLogfile
```

and

```
updateSnapshotFile
```

were re-used, as they create log files. Maintaining consistent logging formats simplifies comparison between the old and new power management programs. A full list of re-used functions can be found at the end of the chapter.

3.5 Testing

Tested the things

3.6 Updates

Updated some stuff

3.7 Salvaged Functions

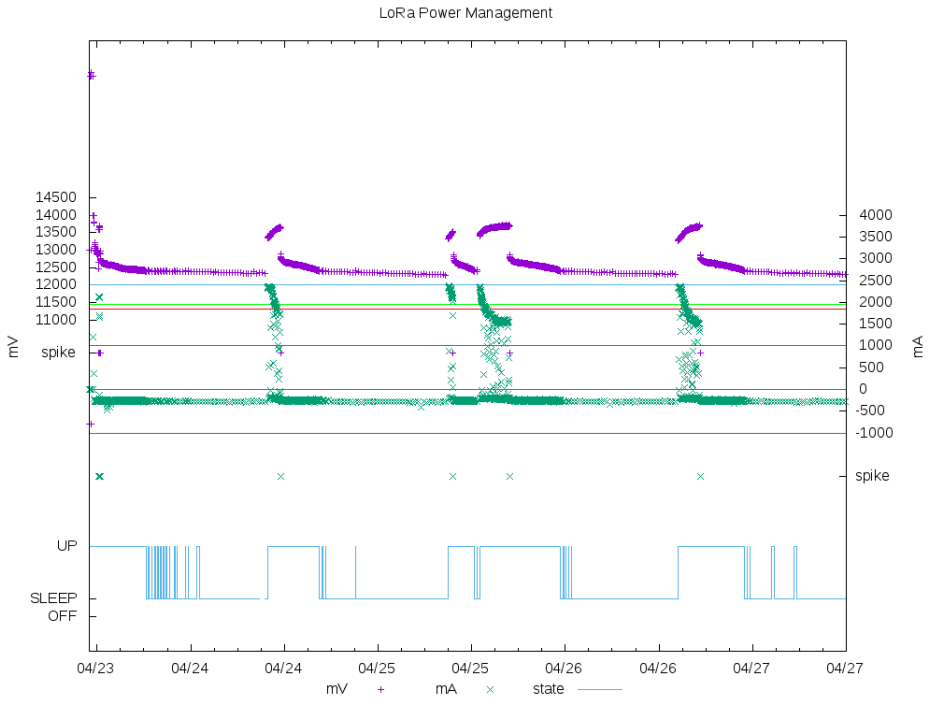
```
updateLogfile
updateSnapshotfile
getTimeString
clearSnapFile
getProgName
kerOn
kerOff
```

Chapter 4

Conclusions

4.1 Future Work

Figure 4.1: Results



Chapter 5

References

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Chapter 6

Appendix - Documentation

LoRa Power Management

1.0

Generated by Doxygen 1.8.14

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1 Documentation for LoRa gateway power management program

Main file
Phidget handlers
Phidget functions

2 File Index

2.1 File List

Here is a list of all documented files with brief descriptions:

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Phidget handlers **2**

C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/handlers.h **??**

C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/pbmd.c
State machine + logging for power management daemon **2**

C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/phidgets.c
Functions for interacting with phidgets **8**

C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/phidgets.h **??**

3 File Documentation

3.1 C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/handlers.c File Reference

Phidget handlers.

```
#include "handlers.h"
```

Functions

- int **IFK_DetachHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr)
- int **IFK_ErrorHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr, int ErrorCode, const char ∗unknown)
- int **IFK_OutputChangeHandler** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, void ∗userptr, int Index, int Value)
- int **IFK_InputChangeHandler** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, void ∗userptr, int Index, int Value)
- int **IFK_SensorChangeHandler** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, void ∗userptr, int Index, int Value)
- int **IFK_AttachHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr)
- int **LCD_AttachHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr)
- int **LCD_DetachHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr)
- int **LCD_ErrorHandler** (CPhidgetHandle IFK, void ∗userptr, int ErrorCode, const char ∗unknown)
- void **setHandlers** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD)

3.1.1 Detailed Description

Phidget handlers.

Date

30 April 2018

3.2 C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/pbmd.c File Reference

State machine + logging for power management daemon.

```
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>
#include <time.h>
#include <unistd.h>
#include <phidget21.h>
#include <syslog.h>
#include "phidgets.h"
```

Macros

- #define **_GNU_SOURCE**
- #define **BATTERY_LOG** "/var/log/battery-new.log"
- #define **SNAP_LOG** "/var/log/battery-snapshot-new.log"
- #define **BOOTFLAGS** "/etc/bootflag-new"
- #define **SLEEP_STATE** 0
- #define **UP_STATE** 1
- #define **LOW_POWER** 2
- #define **OVERRIDE** 3
- #define **GREEDY_STR** "GREEDY"
- #define **MODERATE_STR** "MODERATE"
- #define **SIMULATE_STR** "SIM"
- #define **NOSIM_STR** "NOSIM"
- #define **DEPLETE** "DEP"
- #define **GREEDY_SLEEP** 10
- #define **MODERATE_SLEEP** 20
- #define **CONSERVATIVE_SLEEP** 60
- #define **SECONDS_TO_MINUTES** 60
- #define **SLEEP_DURATION** 30
- #define **SIMULATE** 0
- #define **NO_SIMULATE** 1
- #define **min**(a, b) (a < b ? a : b)

Functions

- int updateLogfile (FILE *logfile, int voltage, int amps, int dutAmps, int state, int spiking, const char *prog↩ Name)

  Updates snapshot file showing snapshot of recent activity.
- int updateSnapshotfile (const char *snapFileName, int voltage, int amps, int state, int spiking, char *mode)

  Updates snapshot file showing snapshot of recent activity.
- void getTimeString (int wakeTimeSec, char *wakeTimeStr)

  Gets time as a string.
- int clearSnapFile (char *snapFileName)

  Clears snapshot file.
- char * getProgName (char *path)

  Gets program name.
- char * getStateDesc (int state)

  Gets description of current state as string.
- int simulateVoltage (struct tm *time, int currentV)

  Simulates voltage for testing purposes.
- int simulateAmps ()

  Simulates amps for testing purposes.
- int simulateDUTAmps ()

  Simulates DUT amps for testing purposes.
- char * concat (const char *s1, const char *s2)

  Concatenates strings.
- char * createStartupString (int timeToSleep)

  Creates startup string to be given to wittyPi as parameter.
- char * createShutdownString (int timeToWait)

  Creates shutdown string to be given to wittyPi as parameter.
- int getSleepDuration (char *mode)

Get length of time to sleep for.

- void kerOn ()

  Turn on kerlink Gateway.

- void kerOff ()

  Turn off kerlink Gateway.

- int getVoltMode (char ∗mode)

  Check if voltages should be read or simulated.

- void **init** ()
- int main (int argc, char ∗argv[ ])

  Handles phidget interactions, state machine, logging.

Variables

- CPhidgetTextLCDHandle **LCD**
- CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle **IFK**
- char ∗ **batteryLogLocation**
- char ∗ **snapshotLocation**
- char **bootflag**
- char ∗ **mode**
- int **sleepDuration**
- int **sleepTime**
- int **wakeTime**
- int **voltMode**
- int **batteryDeplete**
- FILE ∗ **logFile**

3.2.1 Detailed Description

State machine + logging for power management daemon.

Author

Robert Cooney

Date

23 April 2018

3.2.2 Function Documentation

3.2.2.1 clearSnapFile()

```
int clearSnapFile (
            char * snapFileName )
```

Clears snapshot file.

Parameters

snapFileName	Name of the snapshot file

3.2.2.2 concat()

```
char * concat (
            const char * s1,
            const char * s2 )
```

Concatenates strings.

Parameters

s1	First string to be concatenated
s2	Second string to be concatenated

Returns

Result (s1 + s2)

3.2.2.3 createShutdownString()

```
char * createShutdownString (
            int timeToWait )
```

Creates shutdown string to be given to wittyPi as parameter.

Parameters

timeToWait	How long to wait until shutting down

Returns

String used to tell Pi when to shutdown

3.2.2.4 createStartupString()

```
char * createStartupString (
            int timeToSleep )
```

Creates startup string to be given to wittyPi as parameter.

Parameters

timeToSleep	How long to sleep for in seconds

Returns

String used to tell Pi when to startup

3.2.2.5 getSleepDuration()

```
int getSleepDuration (
            char * mode )
```

Get length of time to sleep for.

Parameters

mode	Current operation mode

Returns

How long to sleep for in seconds

3.2.2.6 getStateDesc()

```
char * getStateDesc (
            int state )
```

Gets description of current state as string.

Parameters

state	The current state of device - Sleep/low power/override/up

Returns

State as a string

3.2.2.7 getTimeString()

```
void getTimeString (
            int wakeTimeSec,
            char * wakeTimeStr )
```

Gets time as a string.

Parameters

wakeTimeSec	How long from now the time is in seconds
wakeTimeStr	The desired time in string format

3.2.2.8 getVoltMode()

```
int getVoltMode (
            char * mode )
```

Check if voltages should be read or simulated.

Parameters

mode	Simulate string parameter (SIM or NOSIM)

Returns

Int that describes mode (simulate or no simulate)

3.2.2.9 main()

```
int main (
            int argc,
            char * argv[] )
```

Handles phidget interactions, state machine, logging.

Clearing Pi shutdown and startup times

< Set up handlers for the Interface Kit & TextLCD

Get simulated voltages if necessary, otherwise get actual values
Continue loop until time to shutdown arrives

3.2.2.10 updateLogfile()

```
int updateLogfile (
            FILE * logfile,
            int voltage,
            int amps,
            int dutAmps,
            int state,
            int spiking,
            const char * progName )
```

Updates snapshot file showing snapshot of recent activity.

Parameters

logfile	Name of log file
voltage	Current voltage
amps	Current amps
dutAmps	Current amps of device under test
state	Current state
spiking	Whether voltage is spiking
progName	Name of running program

Returns

0 if all ok, -1 if error occurs

3.2.2.11 updateSnapshotfile()

```
int updateSnapshotfile (
            const char * snapFileName,
            int voltage,
            int amps,
            int state,
            int spiking,
            char * mode )
```

Updates snapshot file showing snapshot of recent activity.

Parameters

snapFileName	Name of snapshot file
voltage	Current voltage
amps	Current amps
state	Current state
spiking	Whether voltage is spiking
mode	Current mode

Returns

0 if all ok, -1 if error occurs

3.3 C:/Users/Robert/iCloudDrive/Documents/loradtn-pi/stable/phidgets.c File Reference

Functions for interacting with phidgets.

```
#include "phidgets.h"
```

Macros

- #define **PATH_MAX** 1024
- #define **LCDINDEX** 0
- #define **IFKINDEX** 0
- #define **BUFFER_SIZE** 21

Functions

- void **display_generic_properties** (CPhidgetHandle phid)
- void **display_IFK_properties** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle phid)
- void **display_LCD_properties** (CPhidgetTextLCDHandle phid)
- int **getVoltage** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK)
- int **getAmps** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK)
- int **getDUTAmps** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK)
- void **closeCPhidget** (CPhidgetHandle handle)
- int **testVoltageSpike** (int ∗prevVoltage, time_t ∗prevVoltageTime, int ∗voltage, time_t ∗voltageTime)
- int **phidgetInit** ()
- CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle **createInterfaceKit** ()
- CPhidgetTextLCDHandle **createLCDHandle** ()
- void **setupHandlers** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD)
- void **openPhidgets** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD)
- int **checkLCD** (CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD, CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK)
- void **setStartupDisplay** (CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD)
- int **checkIFK** (CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK, CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD)
- void **spikeError** (int spikeCount, CPhidgetTextLCDHandle LCD, CPhidgetInterfaceKitHandle IFK)
- int **updateDisplay** (int voltage, int amps, char ∗wakeTimeStr, char ∗stateDescription, CPhidgetTextLCD↩ Handle LCD, char ∗mode)

Variables

- char **topBuffer** [BUFFER_SIZE]
- char **bottomBuffer** [BUFFER_SIZE]

3.3.1 Detailed Description

Functions for interacting with phidgets.

Date

30 April 2018

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