Chapter 2

Ideal Transmission Line Fundamentals

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Outline

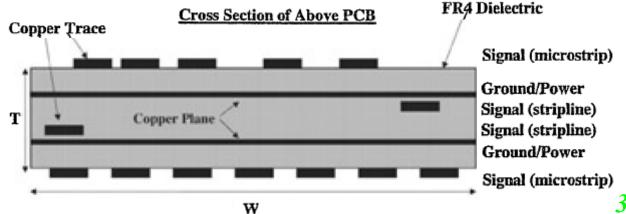
- Transmission Line Structures on a PCB or MCM
- Wave Propagation
- Transmission Line Parameters
- Launching Initial Wave and Transmission Line Reflections
- Additional Examples

Transmission Line Structures on a PCB or MCM

- Typical Design Built on a PCB
 - 3D View
 - Microstrip line: outer layer
 Stripline: inner layer Microstrip
 PCB substrate
 Cross Section view taken here

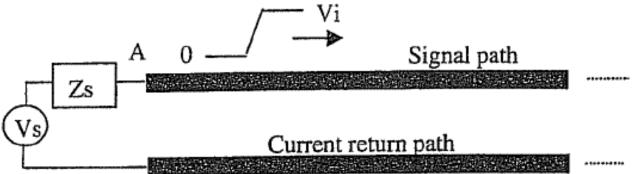
• For *ac* signal: Ground/Power could be viewed as *ac* ground.

Typical conductor: copper
Typical dielectric: FR4



Wave Propagation

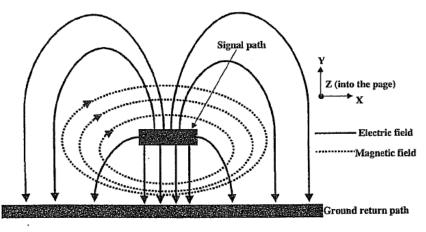
- Transmission Line Propagation
 - Typical Method of Portraying a Digital Signal
 - When the rise time or fall time is small compared to the propagation delay down the trace.
 - Wave propagation is like the waterfront.
 - Voltage: height of the water
 - Current: flow of the water
 - V_s and Z_s : source or driver (output buffer)



- Introduction
 - Characteristic Impedance
 - *V/I* for a matched load (the impedance for the wave)
 - Propagation Velocity
 - The speed of the wave
 - Relationship between (V, I) and (E, H)

• Actually, transmission lines transfer energy using (E, E)



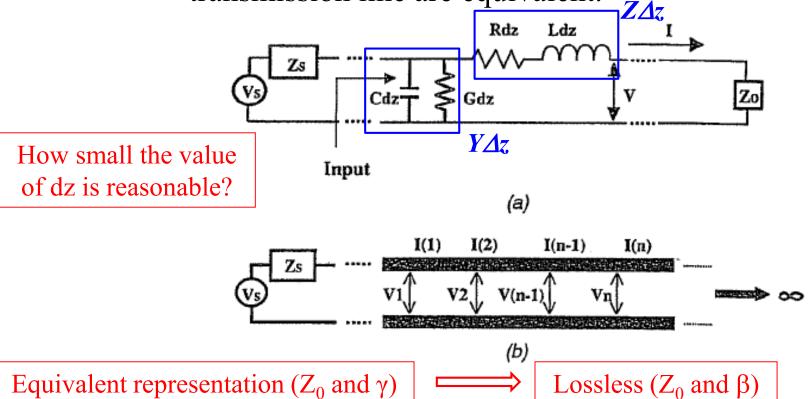


Introduction

- Equivalent Circuit
 - TEM: When no components of the *E* or *H* fields propagate in the *z*-direction.
 - R: the losses due to the finite conductivity of the conductor
 - L: the energy stored in the magnetic field
 - C: the energy stored in the electric field
 - G: the losses due to the finite resistance of the dielectric separating the conductor and the ground plane

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Characteristic Impedance

• The following two circuit representations of a transmission line are equivalent.



- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Characteristic Impedance
 - With a short length of Δz , the derivation is as follows:

$$jwL(\Delta z) + R(\Delta z) = Z\Delta z$$
 (series impedance for length of line Δz)
 $jwC(\Delta z) + G(\Delta z) = Y\Delta z$ (parallel admittance for length of line Δz)

 $Y\Delta z$ in parallel with $Z\Delta z + Z_0$.

$$Z(\text{input}) = Z_o = \frac{(Z_o + Z\Delta z)(1/Y\Delta z)}{Z_o + Z\Delta z + 1/Y\Delta z}$$
 (assuming the load is equal to the characteristic impedance)

$$Z_o\left(Z\Delta z + Z_o + \frac{1}{Y\Delta z}\right) = (Z_o + Z\Delta z)\frac{1}{Y\Delta z}$$

$$\Rightarrow Z_oZ\Delta z + Z_o^2 + \frac{Z}{Y\Delta z} = \frac{Z_o}{Y\Delta z} + \frac{Z\Delta z}{Y\Delta z}$$

$$\Rightarrow Z_o(Z\Delta z + Z_o) = \frac{Z}{Y}$$

$$\Rightarrow Z_oY(Z\Delta z + Z_o) = Z$$

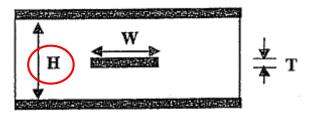
$$\Rightarrow \lim_{\Delta z \to 0} [Z] = Z_o^2Y$$

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Characteristic Impedance

$$Z_o = \sqrt{\frac{Z}{Y}} = \sqrt{\frac{R + j\omega L}{G + j\omega C}}$$

- When the line is lossless, we have $Z_o = \sqrt{L/C}$
- Only at very high frequencies, or with very lossy lines, do the *R* and *G* components of the impedance become significant.
- Approximations for Typical TX lines
 - Microstrip line

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Approximations for Typical TX lines
 - Stripline



$$Zo_{sym} \approx \frac{60}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}} \ln \left(\frac{4H}{0.67\pi(T+0.8W)} \right) \text{ Ohms}$$

$$(Valid when W/H < 0.35 \text{ and } T/H < 0.25)$$

(b)

$$\begin{array}{c|c} B \uparrow \\ \hline \uparrow A \end{array} \begin{array}{c} W \\ \hline \uparrow \end{array} T$$

$$Zo_{sym} = 2 \frac{Zo_{sym}(2A, W, T, \varepsilon_r) \cdot Zo_{sym}(2B, W, T, \varepsilon_r)}{Zo_{sym}(2A, W, T, \varepsilon_r) + Zo_{sym}(2B, W, T, \varepsilon_r)}$$

Average by using the equation in (b)

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Propagation Velocity, Time, and Distance

$$v=\frac{c}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}}$$
 $v=$ propagation velocity, in meters/second $c=$ speed of light in a vacuum (3 × 10⁸ m/s)

 $D=\frac{1}{v}=\frac{\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}}{c}$
 $D=\frac{x\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}}{c}$

 ε_r = dielectric constant

PD = propagation delay, in seconds per meter

TD = time delay for a signal to propagate down a transmission line of length x

x = length of the transmission line, in meters

- The time delay could also be expressed as $TD = \sqrt{LC}$
- where L: total series inductance of length x
- and C: total shunt capacitance of length x

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Propagation Velocity, Time, and Distance
 - TD depends on the dielectric constant of the dielectric material, the line length, and the geometry of the transmission line cross section.
 - For the same FR4 board:
 - Stripline: the effective dielectric constant is larger → the speed of the signal is slower → TD is larger
 - Microstrip line: the effective dielectric constant is smaller
 → the speed of the signal is faster → TD is smaller
 - Formula for calculating the effective dielectric constant of a microstrip line: $F = \begin{cases} 0.02(\varepsilon_r 1) \left(1 \frac{W}{H}\right)^2 & \text{for } \frac{W}{H} < 1 \\ 0 & \text{for } \frac{W}{H} > 1 \end{cases}$ $\varepsilon_e = \frac{\varepsilon_r + 1}{2} + \frac{\varepsilon_r 1}{2} \left(1 + \frac{12H}{W}\right)^{-1/2} + F 0.217(\varepsilon_r 1) \frac{T}{\sqrt{WH}}$

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Equivalent Circuit Models for SPICESimulation
 - Since it is not practical to model a transmission line with an infinite number of elements, a sufficient number can be determined based on the minimum rise or fall time.
 - TD is no larger than one-tenth of the minimum system rise or fall time.
 - Rise times are typically measured between the 10 and 90% values of the maximum swing.

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Equivalent Circuit Models for SPICESimulation
 - How many segments should be chosen? segments $\geq 10 \left(\frac{x}{T_{N_v}} \right)$
 - The circuit parameters for a single segment must be

$$C_{
m segment} = rac{(x)(C/{
m meter})}{{
m segments}}$$
 $L_{
m segment} = rac{(x)L/{
m meter}}{{
m segments}}$
 $R_{
m segment} = rac{(x)R/{
m meter}}{{
m segments}}$
 $G_{
m segment} = rac{(x)R/{
m meter}}{{
m segments}}$
 $G_{
m segment} = rac{(x)G/{
m meter}}{{
m segments}}$
 $G_{
m segment} = \sqrt{L_{
m segment}C_{
m segment}} \leq rac{T_r}{10}$

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Example 2.1 Creating a TX Line Model
 - Z_0 =50 Ω , line length x=5 in., τ_r =2.5 ns, ε_r =4.5.
 - First, using the equations mentioned previously

$$\frac{14.7 \text{ mils}}{\frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{5 \text{ mils}}{\varepsilon_{r} = 4.5}} \stackrel{\frac{1}{4}}{=} 0.7 \text{ mil} \quad Z_{o} \approx \frac{60}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_{r}}} \ln \frac{4H}{0.67\pi(T + 0.8W)} = \frac{60}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_{r}}} \ln \frac{4(14.7)}{0.67\pi[0.7 + 0.8(5)]} = 50 \text{ }\Omega$$

$$TD = \frac{x\sqrt{\varepsilon_{r}}}{c} = 5 \text{ in.} (0.0254 \text{ m/in.}) \frac{\sqrt{4.5}}{3 \times 10^8 \text{ m/s}} = 898 \text{ ps}$$

$$v = \frac{c}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_{r}}} = \frac{3 \times 10^8 \text{ m/s}}{\sqrt{4.5}} = 1.41 \times 10^8 \text{ m/s}$$

• The total inductance and capacitance are

TD =
$$\sqrt{LC}$$
 $L_{\text{total}} = (\text{TD})(Z_o) = (898 \times 10^{-12})(50 \ \Omega) = 44.9 \text{ nH}$

$$Z_o = \sqrt{L/C}$$
 $C_{\text{total}} = \frac{\text{TD}}{Z_o} = \frac{898 \times 10^{-12} \text{ s}}{50 \ \Omega} = 17.9 \text{ pF}$

- Derivation and Detailed Descriptions
 - Example 2.1 Creating a TX Line Model
 - The segments needed are

segments
$$\geq 10 \left(\frac{X}{T_r v} \right) = 10 \left[\frac{5 \text{ in.}(0.0254 m/\text{in.})}{2.5 \text{ ns}(1.41 \times 10^8 m/\text{s})} \right] = 3.6$$

• The capacitance and inductance for a single segment are

$$C_{\text{segment}} = \frac{C_{\text{total}}}{\text{segments}} = \frac{17.9 \text{ pF}}{4} = 4.48 \text{ pF}$$

$$L_{\text{segment}} = \frac{L_{\text{total}}}{\text{segments}} = \frac{44.9 \text{ nH}}{4} = 11.23 \text{ nH}$$

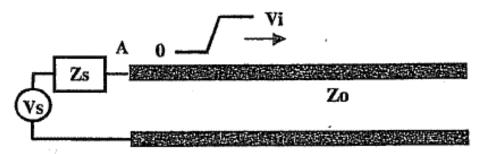
For checking

$$TD_{\text{segment}} = \sqrt{L_{\text{segment}}} C_{\text{segment}} = \sqrt{(4.48 \text{ pF})(11.23 \text{ nH})} = 0.224 \text{ ns} \le \frac{T_r}{10}$$

$$-\frac{11.23 \text{nH}}{4.48 \text{pF}} -\frac{11.23 \text{nH}}{4.48 \text{pF}} -\frac{11.23 \text{nH}}{4.48 \text{pF}} -\frac{11.23 \text{nH}}{4.48 \text{pF}}$$

- Initial Wave
 - Launching a Wave onto a Long TX Line
 - The magnitude of V_i is determined by the voltage divider between the source and the line impedance:

$$V_i = V_s \frac{Z_o}{Z_o + Z_s}$$



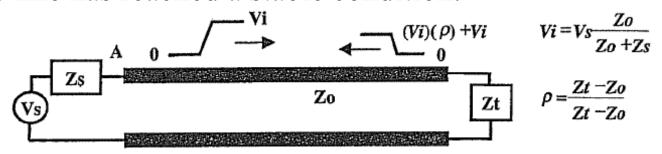
• When $Z_L = Z_0$, the voltage V_i is the dc steady-state value.

How long does it take? A time delay: TD

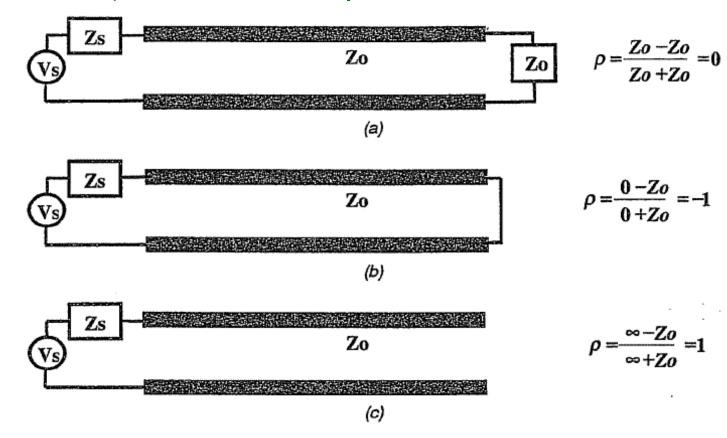
- Initial Wave
 - Incident Signal Being Reflected from an Unmatched Load
 - Junction: impedance discontinuity on a TX line
 - The reflection coefficient is calculated as:

$$\rho = \frac{V_{\text{reflected}}}{V_{\text{incident}}} = \frac{Z_t - Z_o}{Z_t + Z_o}$$

• This reflection and counter-reflection continues until the line has reached a stable condition.



- Initial Wave
 - Matched, Shorted and Open Loads



- Multiple Reflections
 - Descriptions

$$V_{i} = V_{s}Z_{o}/(Z_{o} + R_{s})$$

$$TD$$

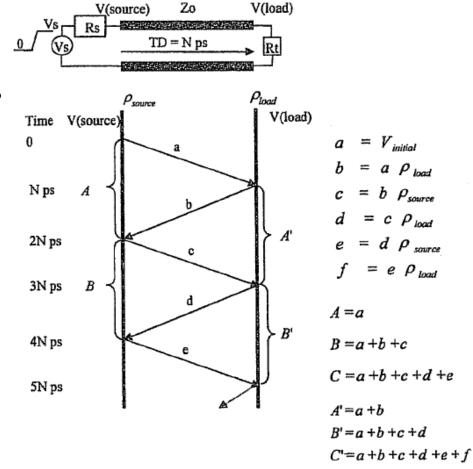
$$V_{s}$$

$$V_$$

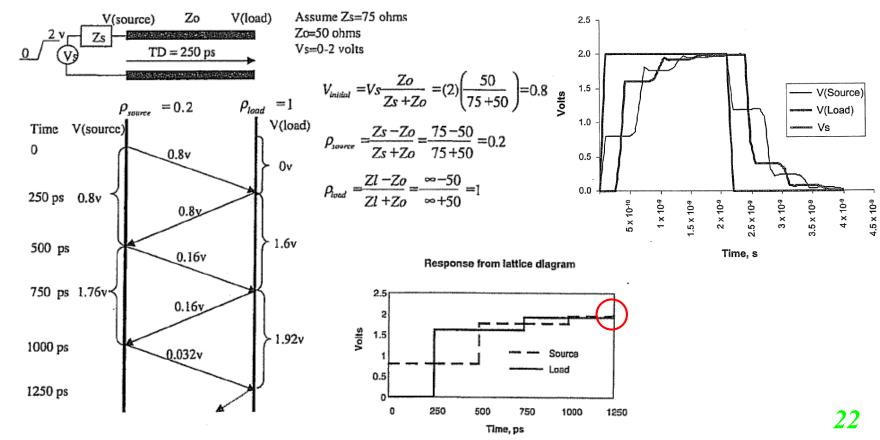
• The reflections could take a long time to settle out if the termination is not matched and can have some significant timing impacts.

- Multiple Reflections
 - Lattice Diagrams
 - A bounce diagram
 - Diagonal lines: waves
 - Increasing time: ↓
 - Time increment: TD
 - The steady state *V*:

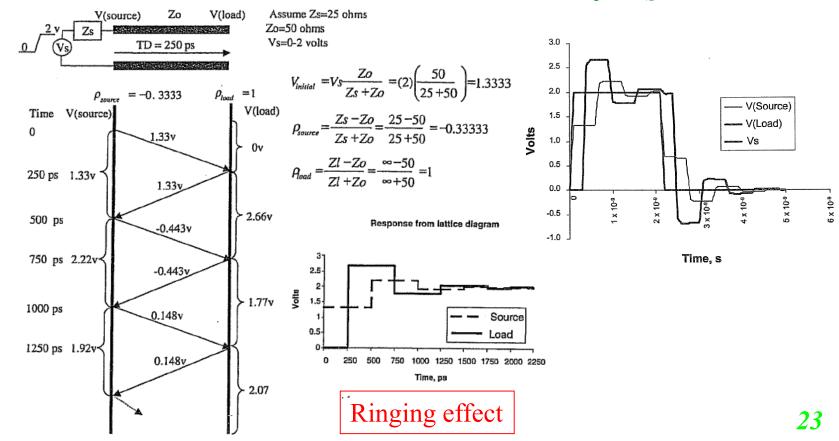
$$V_s \frac{R_t}{R_t + R_s}$$



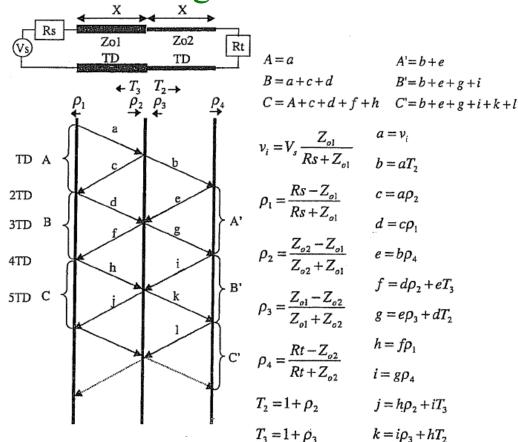
- Lattice Diagrams and Over- and Underdriven TX Lines
 - Example 2.2 Underdriven TX Line ($Z_0 < Z_S$)



- Lattice Diagrams and Over- and Underdriven TX Lines
 - Example 2.2 Overdriven TX Line $(Z_0 > Z_S)$



- Lattice Diagrams and Over- and Underdriven TX Lines
 - Two Segments of TX Lines



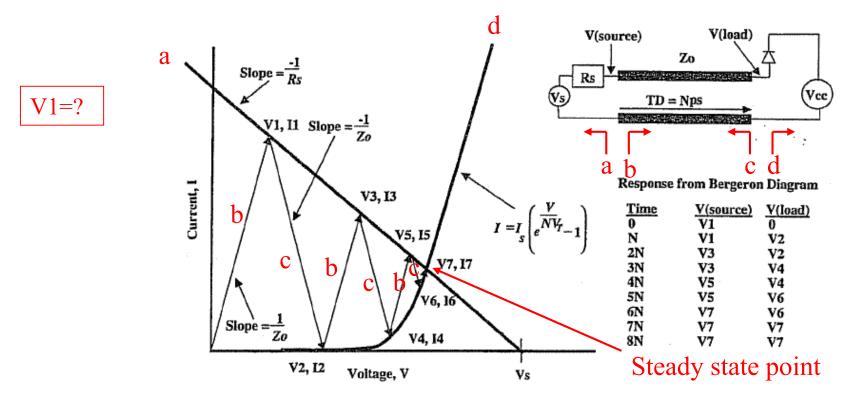
At the junction of Z_{01}/Z_{02} , part of the signal will be reflected (ρ) and part of the signal will be transmitted ($T=1+\rho$)

How about the signal at the junction Z_{01}/Z_{02} ?

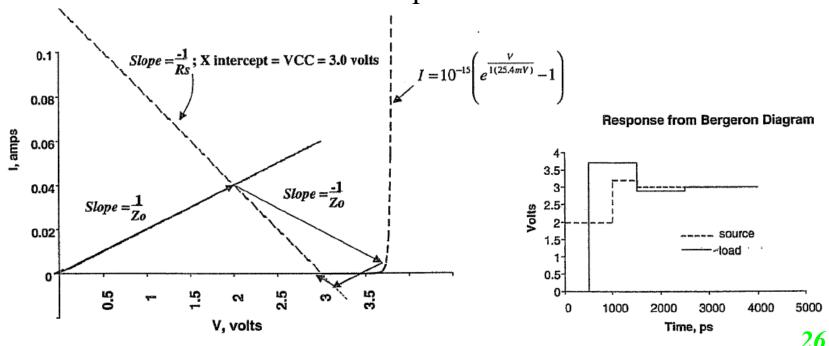
- Bergeron Diagrams and Reflections from Nonlinear Loads
 - Bergeron Diagrams

Solve for the intersections of the source (a, b) Solve for the intersections of the load (c, d)

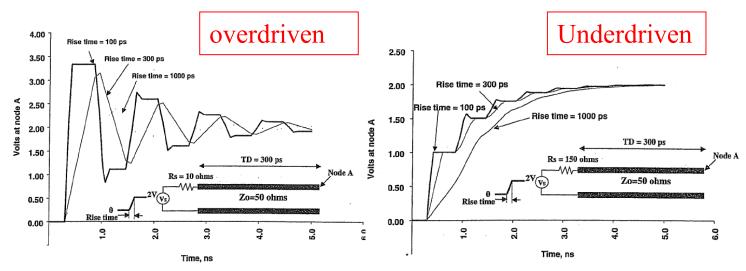
When nonlinear loads and sources exist.



- Bergeron Diagrams and Reflections from Nonlinear Loads
 - Example of Bergeron Diagrams
 - V_S =3V, TD = 500ps, Z_0 =50 Ω , R_S =25 Ω , and the diode behaves with the equation shown.



- Effect of Rise Time on Reflections
 - Criterion
 - The rise time will begin to have a significant effect on the waveform when : $\tau_r < 2\text{TD}$.
 - When $\tau_r > 2TD$, reflection from the source will occur at a time in the transition region, which will not affect the steady state value.



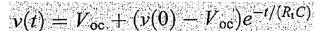
- Reflections from Reactive Loads
 - Reflections from Capacitive Loads-No Loss
 - The capacitor will initially look like a short circuit when the signal reaches the capacitor and will look like an open circuit after the capacitor is fully charged.

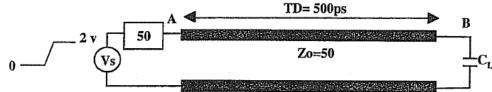
What is the effect of t_r on the waveform?

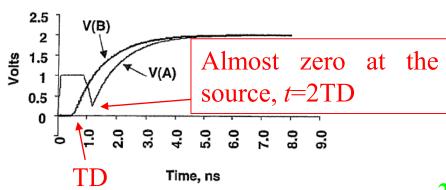
The signal data rate is slow down by adding C_L .

The voltage at the capacitor is

$$\begin{split} V_{\text{capacitor}} &= 2V_i (1 - e^{-(t - \text{TD})/\tau}), \qquad t > \text{TD} \\ \tau &= CZ_o \end{split}$$





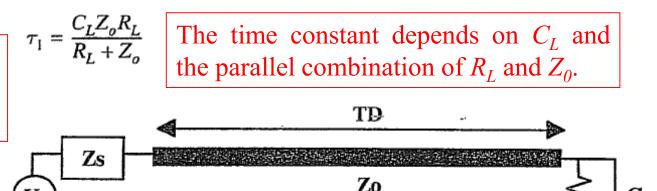


- Reflections from Reactive Loads
 - Reflections from Capacitive Loads-Lossy
 - If the line is terminated with a parallel resistor and capacitor, the voltage at the capacitor will be

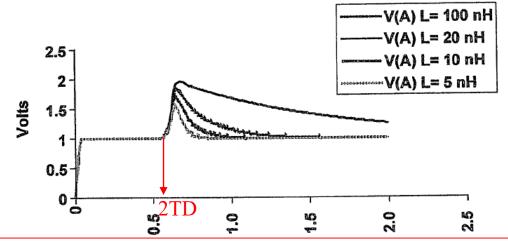
$$V_{\text{capacitor}} = 2V_i \frac{R_L}{R_L + Z_o} (1 - e^{-(t - \text{TD})/\tau_i}), \qquad t > \text{TD}$$

With $Z_S = Z_0$

By adding R_L , τ_1 could be made smaller.



- Reflections from Reactive Loads
 - Reflections from Inductive Loads 0-2V, 35ps (Vs) Zo=50 ohms
 - Initially, at time = 0, the inductor will resemble on open circuit. This produces a reflection coefficient of 1.
 - Eventually, the inductor will discharge its energy at a rate that depends on the time constant τ of L/Z_0 .



What if the series L was replaced with an parallel C?

- Termination Schemes to Eliminate Reflections
 - Two Impractical and One Practical Methods
 - Method 1: to decrease the frequency of the system so that the reflections on the TX line reach steady state before another signal is driven onto the line
 - Method 2: to shorten the PCB traces so that the reflections will reach steady state in a shorter time.
 - Method 3: to terminate the TX line with an impedance equal to the characteristic impedance of the line.
 - Source termination
 - Load (Parallel) termination

- Termination Schemes to Eliminate Reflections
 - On-Die Source Termination
 - This method requires that the *I-V* curve of the output buffer be very linear and yield an *I-V* curve with an impedance very close to the TX line impedance.
 - *Advantages*: this does not require any additional components that increase cost and consume area on the board.
 - *Disadvantages*: since there are numerous variables, it is difficult to achieve a good match. Some of them are silicon fabrication process variations, voltage, temperature, power delivery factors, and simultaneous switching noise.

- Termination Schemes to Eliminate
 Reflections
 - Series Source Termination Source impedance + R matched to line impedance
 - This method requires that a resistor be added in series with the output buffer to match the characteristic impedance of the TX line.
 - Designing the *I-V* curve of the output buffer to yield a very low impedance so that the matching mechanism is dominated by the series resistor.
 - Advantage: the total variation in impedance is small.
 - *Disadvantage*: the resistors add cost to the board, and it consumes significant board area.

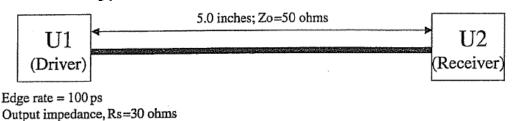
- Termination Schemes Eliminate Reflections Load Termination with Resistive Load
 - Load termination with a resistive load eliminates the unknown variables associated with the buffer impedance because a precision resistor can be used.
 - Advantage: low-impedance output buffers may be used.
 - *Disadvantage*: a large portion of the dc current will be shunted to ground, which exacerbates power delivery and thermal problems. As power consumption increases, cost also increases.

Load impedance matched to line impedance

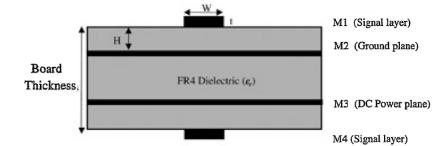
- - AC load termination uses a series capacitor and resistor at the load end. $R=Z_0$, $RC_L=1\sim 2\tau_r$.
 - *Advantage*: the power is only dissipated during the transition region. Thus, no dc power dissipation.
 - *Disadvantage*: the capacitive loading will increase the signal delay by slowing down the rising or falling times at the load. Furthermore, additional resistors and capacitors consume board area and increase cost.

- Termination Schemes to Eliminate Reflections
 - Common Termination Problems
 - Fabrication Variation: the characteristic impedance of the trace tends to vary significantly, due to PCB production variations. This tends to have a bigger impact on source termination.
 - *Crosstalk*: will introduce additional variations in the impedance.
 - Different line lengths:
 - For short lines, source termination is desirable. Since DC levels are prolonged, we don't want to consume them.
 - For long lines, load termination is preferable. Since we don't want the wave to be reflected toward the source.

- Design of a Trace
 - Problem
 - The driving buffers on component U1 have an impedance of 30 Ω , an edge rate of 100 ps, and a swing of 0 to 2 V.
 - The traces on the PCB are required to be 50 Ω and 5 in. long.
 - The relative dielectric constant of the board (ε_r) is 4.0, the transmission line is assumed to be a perfect conductor, and the receiver capacitance is small enough to be ignored.



- Design of a Trace
 - Goals
 - 1. Determine the correct cross-sectional geometry of the PCB trace in microstrip form that will yield an impedance of 50 Ω .
 - 2. Calculate the time it takes for the signal to travel from the driver, U1, to the receiver, U2.
 - 3. Determine the wave shape seen at U2 when the system is driven by U1.
 - 4. Create an equivalent circuit of the system.



- Design of a Trace
 - Calculating the Cross-Sectional Geometry of the PCB
 - For the purpose of transmission line design, a dc power plane will act like an ac ground.
 - The trace impedance in microstrip form is $Z_{o_{\text{microstrip}}} = \frac{87}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_r + 1.41}} \ln \frac{5.98H}{0.8W + t}$
 - Since the standard t=1.0mil and W=5mil, thus we have

$$50 = \frac{87}{\sqrt{4.0 + 1.41}} \ln \frac{5.98H}{0.8(5.0) + 1.0} \longrightarrow H = 3.2 \text{ mils}$$

• Since the internal metal layers are only 0.7 mil thick and a typical PCB board thickness requested by industry is 62 mils thick, 52.2 mil is determined.

MI (Signal layer)

M3 (DC Power plane

M4 (Signal layer)

3.2 mils

- Design of a Trace
 - Calculating the Propagation Delay
 - The effective dielectric constant is

$$\varepsilon_e = \frac{\varepsilon_r + 1}{2} + \frac{\varepsilon_r - 1}{2} \left(1 + \frac{12H}{W} \right)^{-1/2} + F - 0.217(\varepsilon_r - 1) \frac{t}{\sqrt{WH}}$$

• Since W/H = 5/3.2 > 1.0, then F = 0. Therefore,

$$\varepsilon_e = \frac{4.0 + 1}{2} + \frac{4.0 - 1}{2} \left[1 + \frac{12(3.2)}{5.0} \right]^{-1/2} + 0 - 0.217(4.0 - 1) \frac{1.0}{\sqrt{5.0(3.2)}}$$

$$= 2.84$$

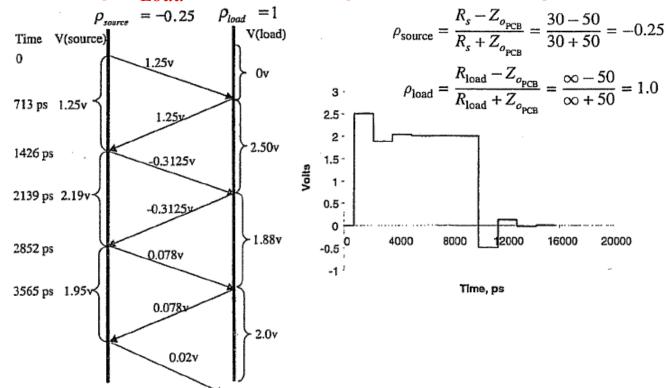
• The propagation velocity is

$$v = \frac{c}{\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}} = \frac{3.0 \times 10^8 \text{ m/s}}{\sqrt{2.84}} = 1.78 \times 10^8 \text{ m/s}$$

The time delay is

TD =
$$\frac{\text{length}\sqrt{\varepsilon_r}}{c} = \frac{5.0 \text{ in.}}{1.78 \text{ m/s}} \left(\frac{0.0254 \text{ m}}{1.0 \text{ in.}}\right) = 713 \text{ ps}$$

- Design of a Trace
 - Determining the Wave Shape Seen at the Receiver $V_{\text{initial}} = V_{\text{in}} \frac{Z_{o_{\text{PCB}}}}{Z_{o_{\text{PCB}}} + R_s} = 2.0 \left(\frac{50}{50 + 30}\right) = 1.25 \text{ V}$
 - Assuming $R_{Load} = \infty$ and using the lattice diagram,



- Design of a Trace
 - Creating an Equivalent Circuit
 - The minimum of 72 segments is required.

velocity (in./ps) =
$$\frac{5.0 \text{ in.}}{713 \text{ ps}} = 0.0070 \text{ in./ps}$$

segments
$$\geq 10 \left(\frac{\text{length}}{T_r v} \right) = 10 \left[\frac{5 \text{ in.}}{(100 \text{ ps})(0.0070 \text{ in./ps})} \right] = 71.4$$

• Since $Z_o = \sqrt{L/C}$ and $TD = \sqrt{LC}$, we have

$$C = \frac{\text{TD}}{Z_a} = \frac{\sqrt{LC}}{\sqrt{L/C}} = \underbrace{\frac{142.6 \text{ ps}}{50}} = 2.85 \text{ pF}$$
 TD per inch

$$L = (\text{TD})(Z_o) = \sqrt{LC}\sqrt{\frac{L}{C}} = 7.130 \text{ nH}$$

The inductance and capacitance per segment are

$$C_{\text{segment}} = \frac{(\text{length})(C/\text{in.})}{\text{segment}} = \frac{5.0 \text{ in.}(2.85 \text{ pF/in.})}{72} = 0.198 \text{ pF/segment}$$

$$L_{\text{segment}} = \frac{(\text{length})(L/\text{in.})}{segment} = \frac{5.0 \text{ in.}(7.13 \text{ nH/in.})}{72} = 0.495 \text{ nH/segment}$$

- Design of a Trace
 - Creating an Equivalent Circuit
 - Check the calculations with

delay/segment =
$$\frac{713 \text{ ps}}{72}$$
 = 9.9 ps $\approx \sqrt{(0.198 \text{ pF})(0.495 \text{ nH})}$ = 9.9 ps
impedance/segment = $\sqrt{\frac{0.495 \text{ nH}}{0.198 \text{ pF}}}$ = 50 Ω

• The equivalent circuit is shown below with the open circuit at the end of the line approximated with a very large resistor.

