

SUPSI

Software Defined Radio with Remote Head and Internet Clients

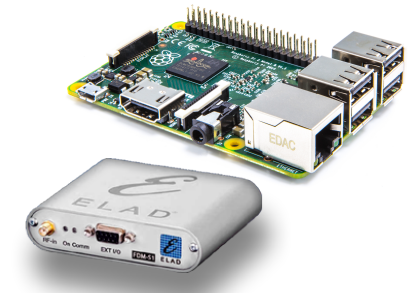
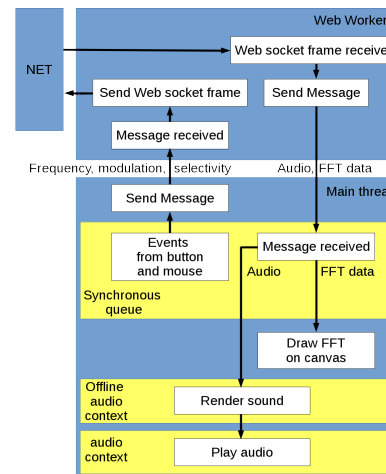
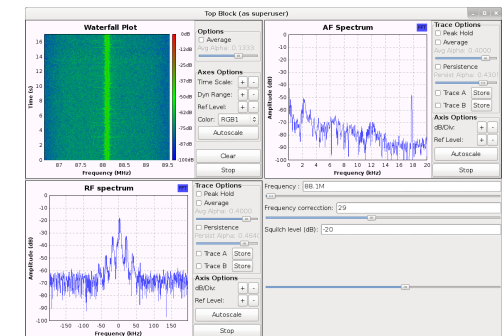
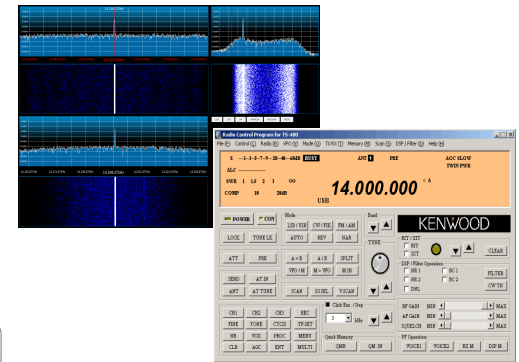
Studente/i	Relatore	Correlatore
Giovanni Franza	Tiziano Leidi	Loris Grossi

Corso di laurea	Modulo / Codice Progetto	Anno
Master of Science in Informatics	Tesi	2016

Committente	Data
	05/09/2017

Agenda

- Idea
 - Challenges / Framework
- Development
 - Tools / Devices / Computers /Software
- Technologies
 - USB / UDP / Websocket / Graphic & Audio context / DSP elaboration
- Demo
- Measures
- From Here



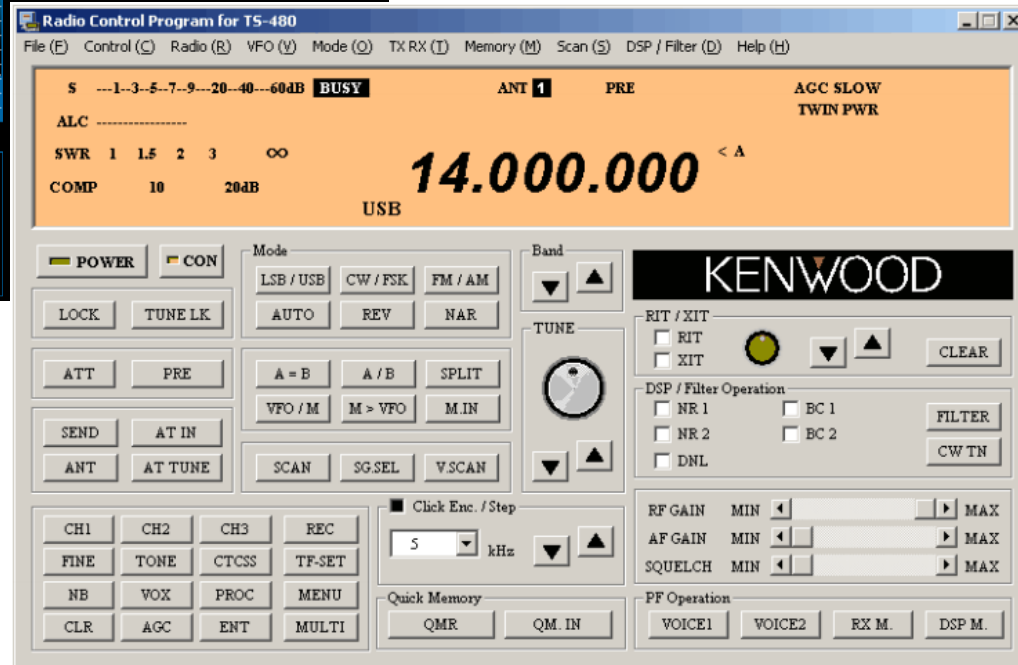
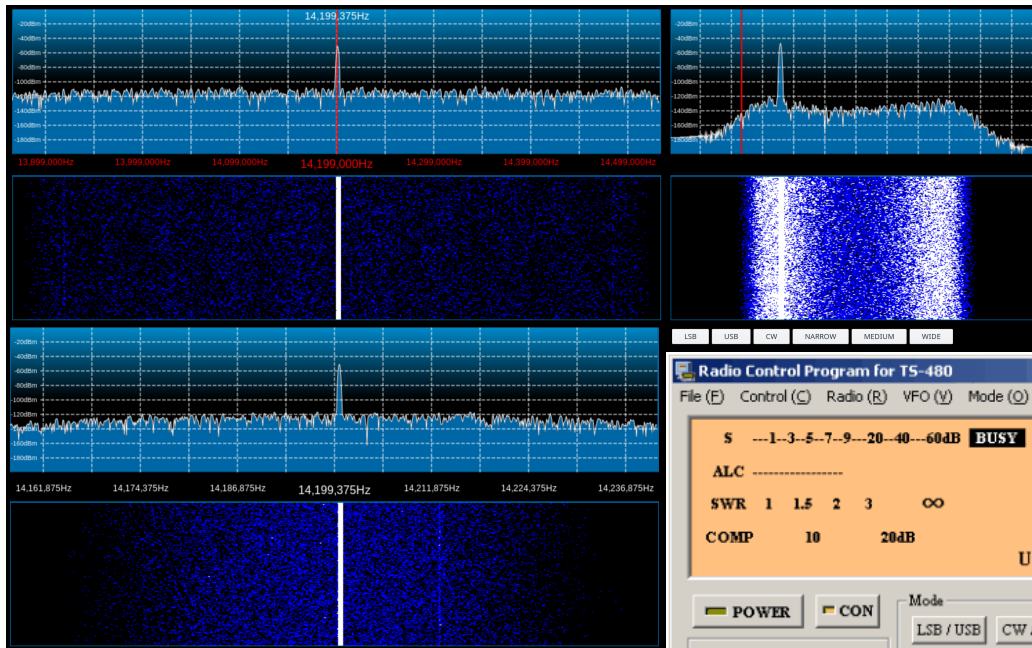
Idea

Is a crowded town the best position for a radio receiver ?



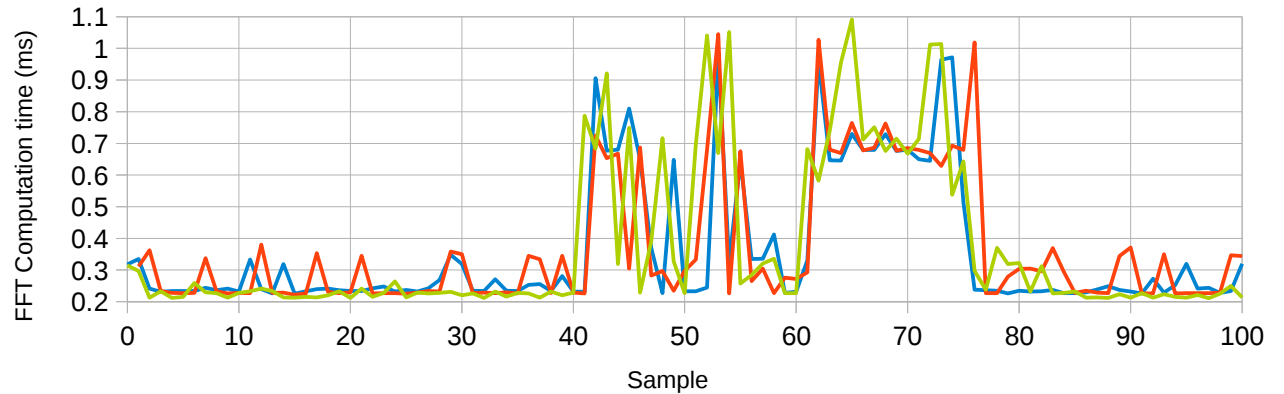
Challenges - UI

Can a SDR have the same UI of a normal Radio receiver ?



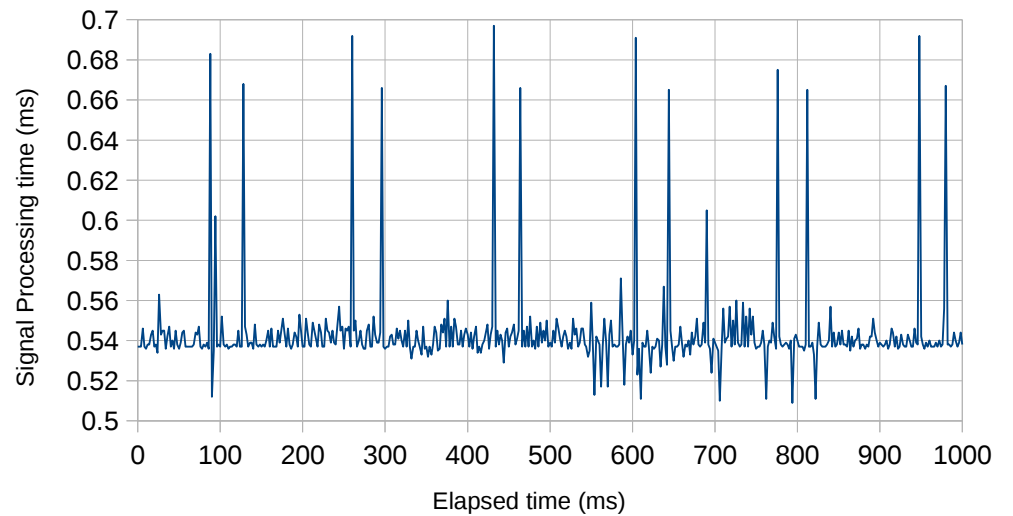
Challenge - OS

Can a non native RT system host a SDR program ?



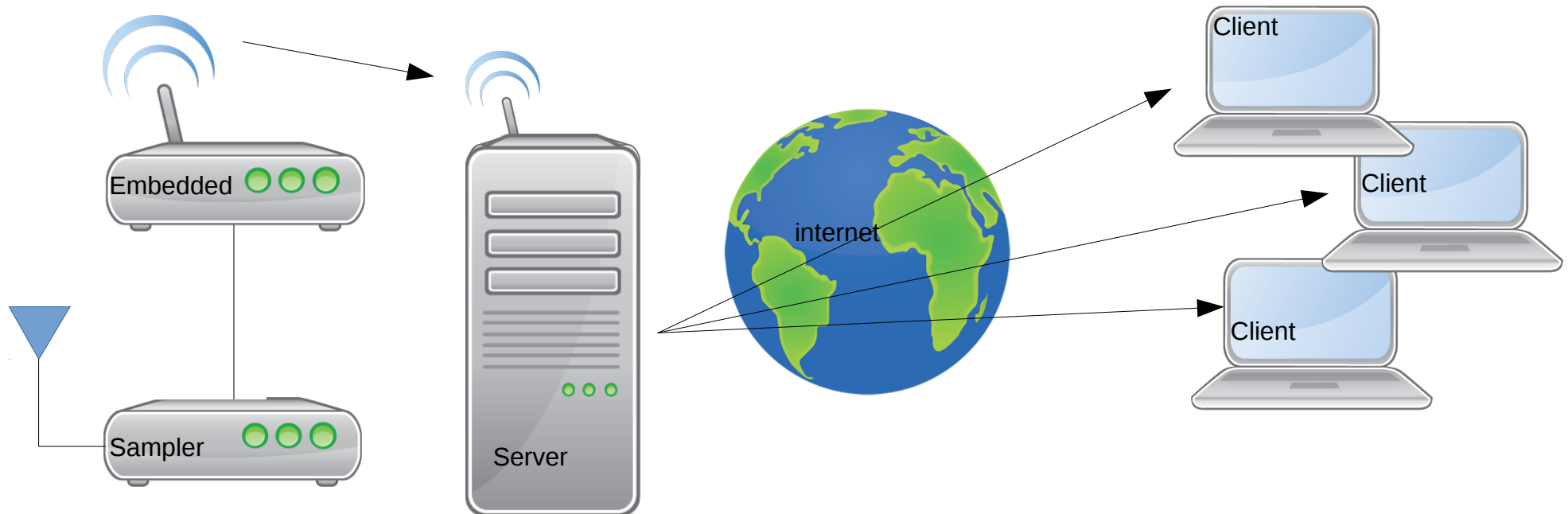
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Terminale - giovanni@mir: ~
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Device eth0 [192.168.1.116] (1/3):
=====
Incoming:
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#####
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```



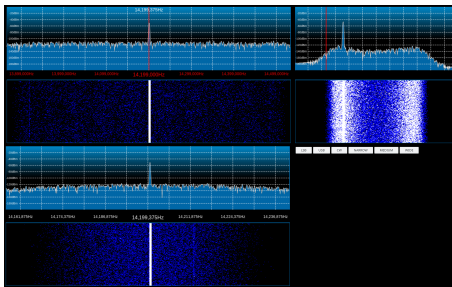
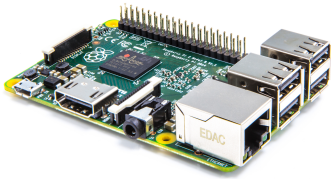
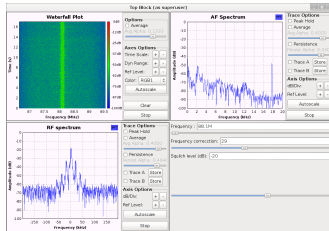
Framework

- Sampler: together with an embedded on the top of a hill
- Server: a PC in a webfarm nearby
- Clients: a browser anywhere



Development

- Hardware: COTS components off the shelf
 - Samplers
 - Embedded
 - PC
- Development: Spiral model
- Software: KISS keep it simple and stupid



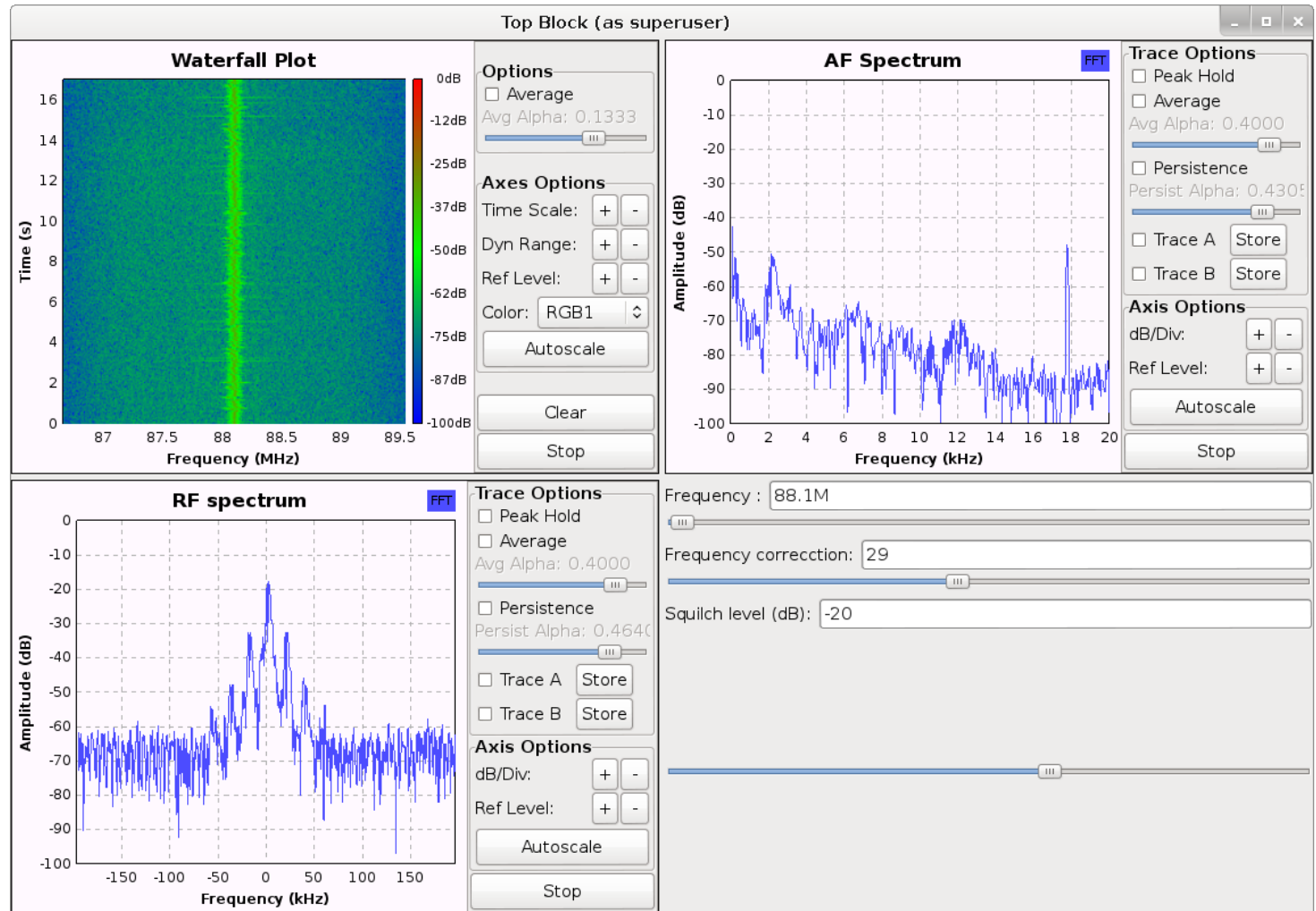
Devices



- Philosophy: COTS (components off the shelf)
- At the beginning very cheap RTL dongles
 - Tested with GNU Radio
- Then, thanks to an agreement with ELAD, much better and documented samplers S1 and S2
 - First, developed GNU Radio drivers
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Tools

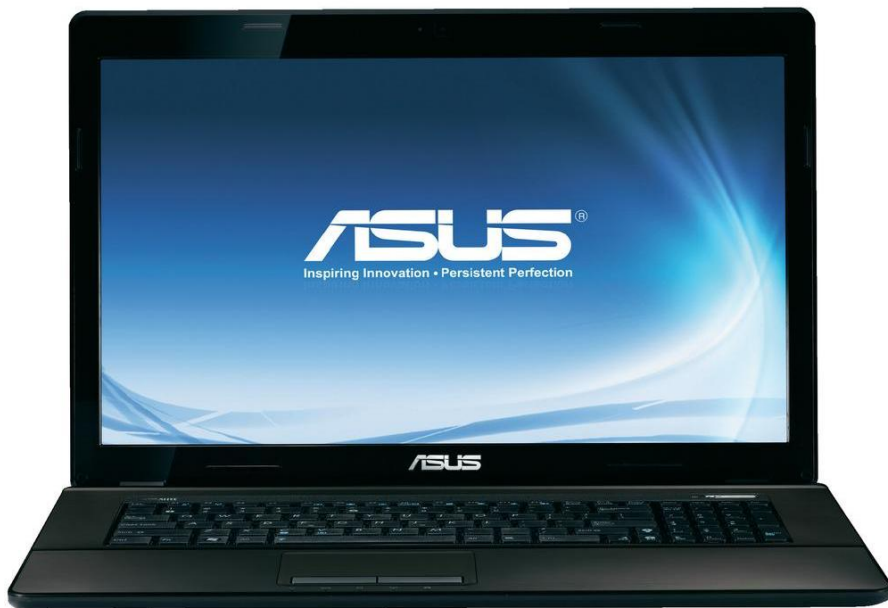
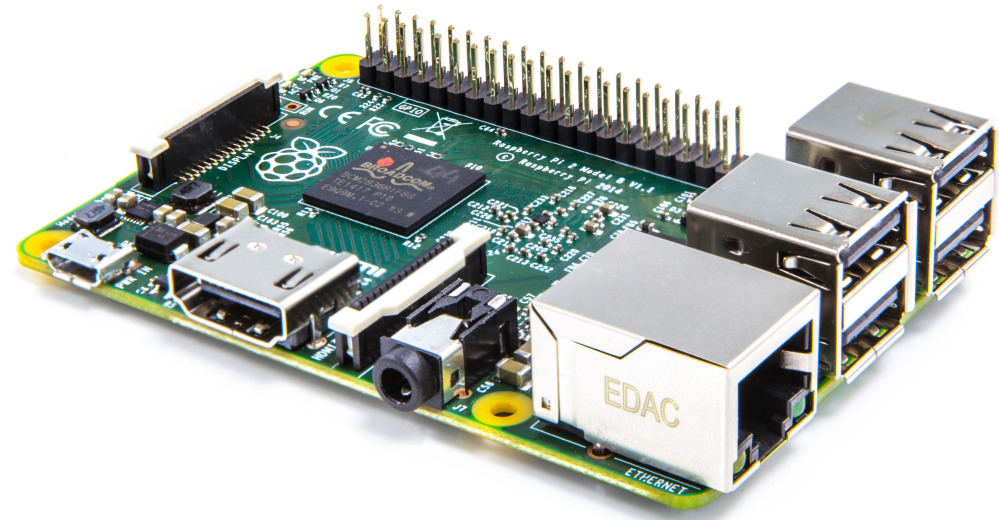
GNU Radio as
a reference
and a test bed



Computers

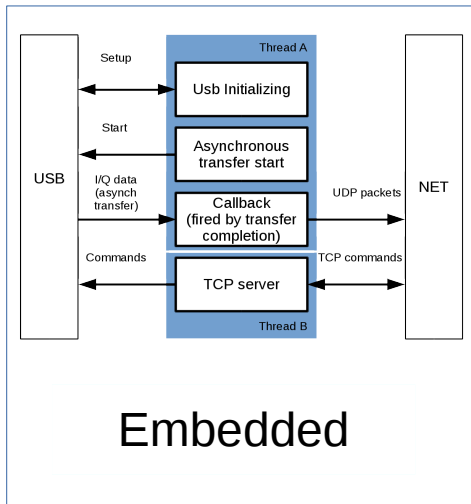
Also here, COTS

Raspberry PI 2 as
embedded that hosts
USB → UDP bridge

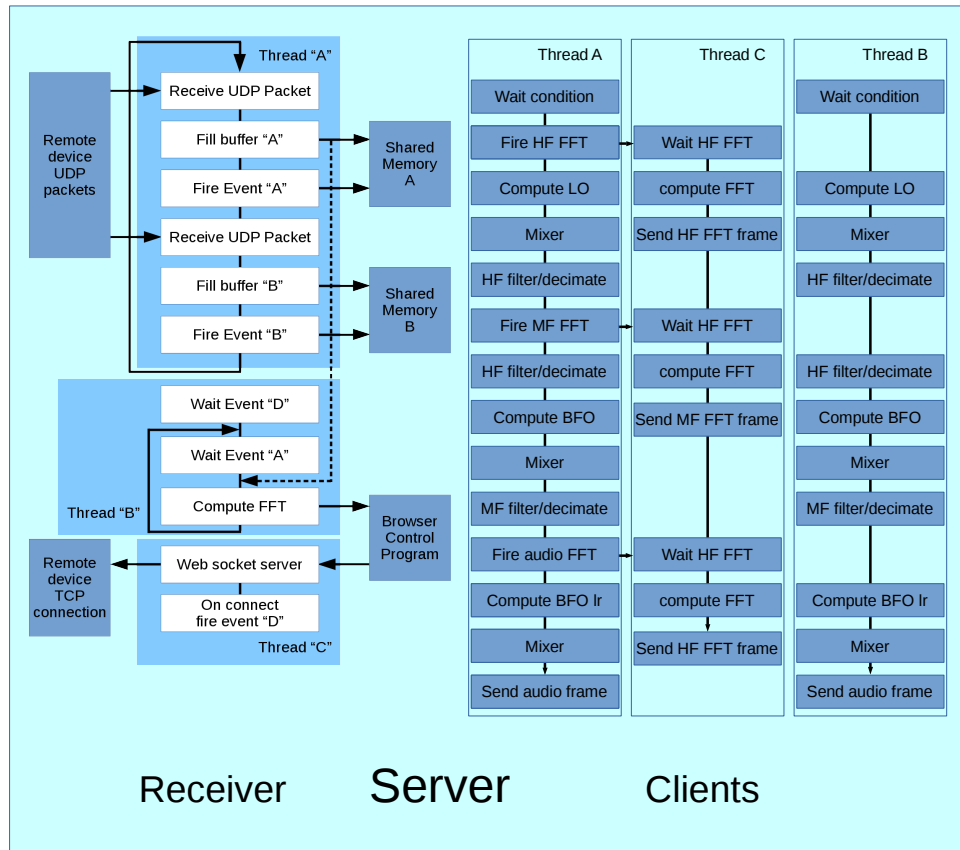


Computer with I7 Intel
hyperthreaded quad core
CPU as “server”

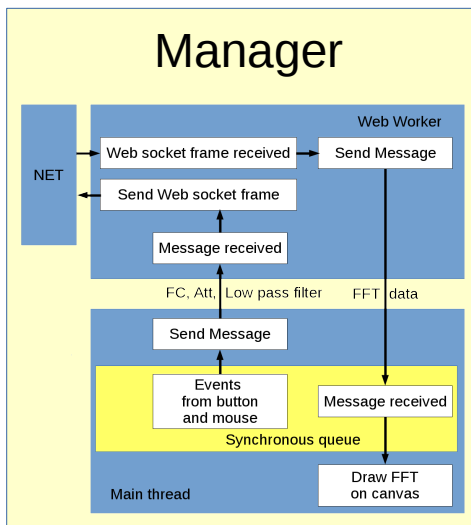
Software



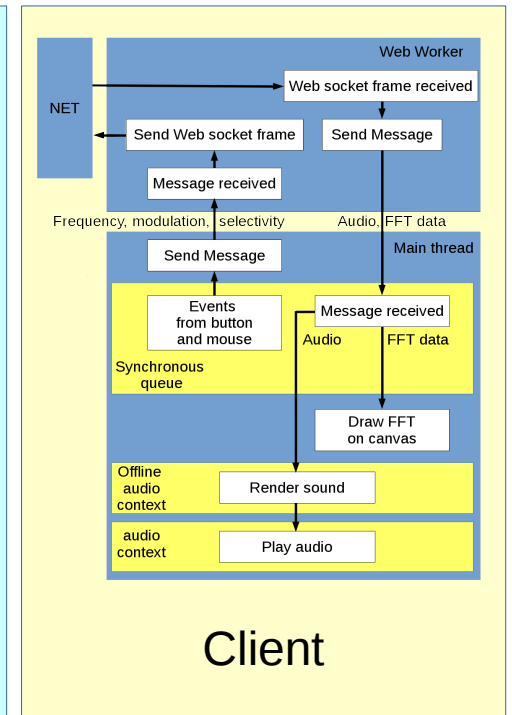
Embedded



Receiver Server Clients



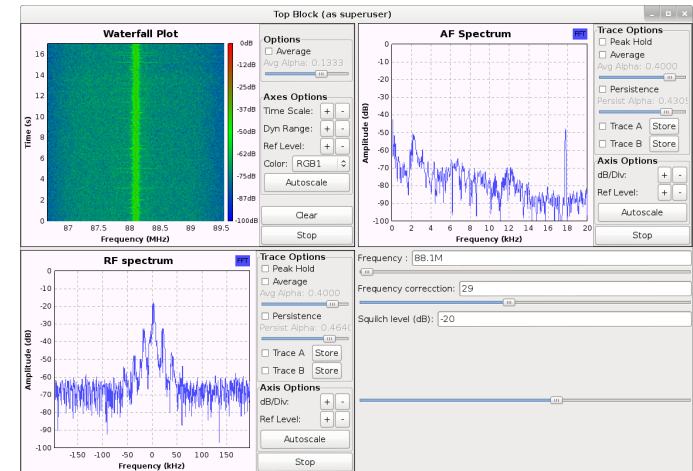
Manager



Client

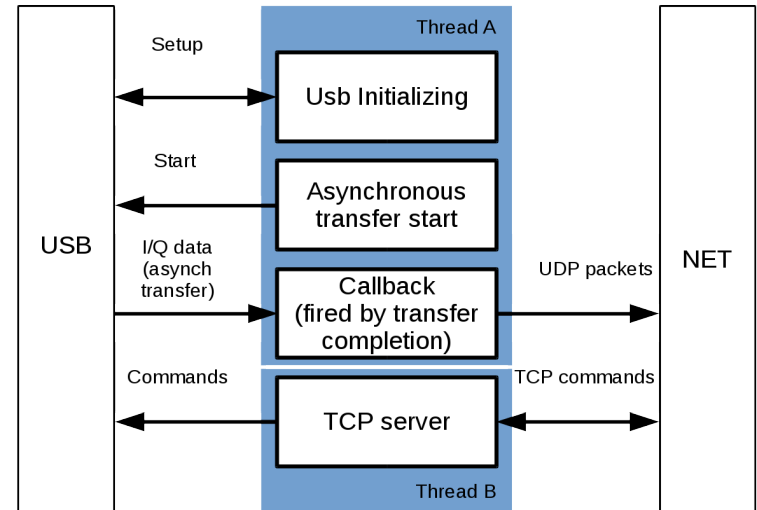
First phase

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 - To verify RTL-SDR usability
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 - They resulted useful to test RTL-SDR
- RTL-SDR discarded in favor of ELAD samplers
 - Development of modules useful for project (callbacks structure reused)



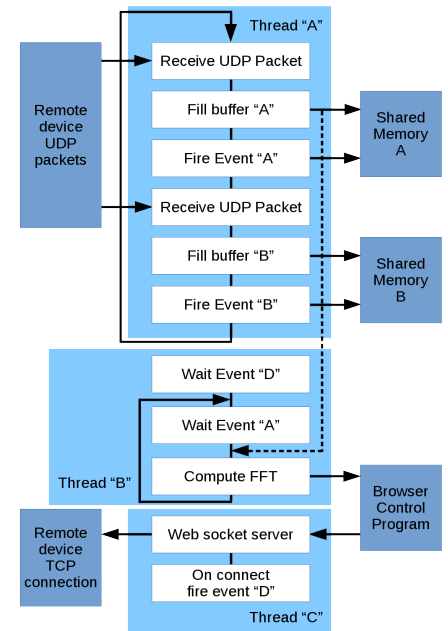
Embedded

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 - For some devices also FPGA setup
- Data transfer via callback
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 - To exploit its characteristics.



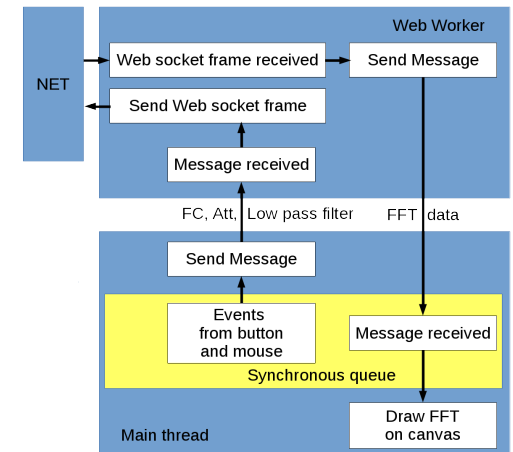
Receiver

- It receives UDP packets
- It fills shared memories
 - Two banks, with associated events
 - To allow clients to work on a bank at a time
- It talks with Manager (web application)
 - Via Websocket
- It computes FFT
 - To allow manager to draw spectrogram and waterfall



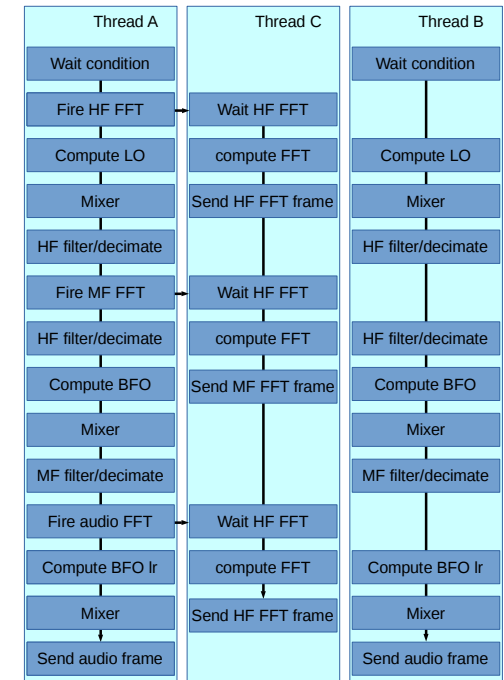
Manager

- Web worker to escape javascript monothreading
 - Events/messages bwtween worker and main thread
- Graphic context to design graphic elements
 - Layered graphics to reduce computation load
- WebSocket communications



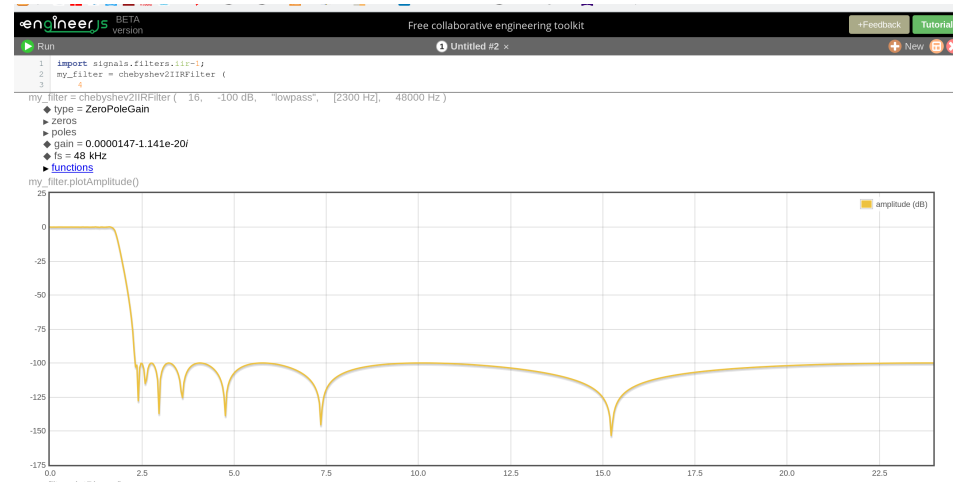
Client

- One client for each external request
 - Developed as TCP server daemon
- Two threads to manage data processing
 - All “normal superhet” processing: VFO, mixer, MF filtering, BFO, audio
- One thread to manage FFT
 - Periodically computed at three different levels: input, intermediate, audio
- One thread to manage Websocket



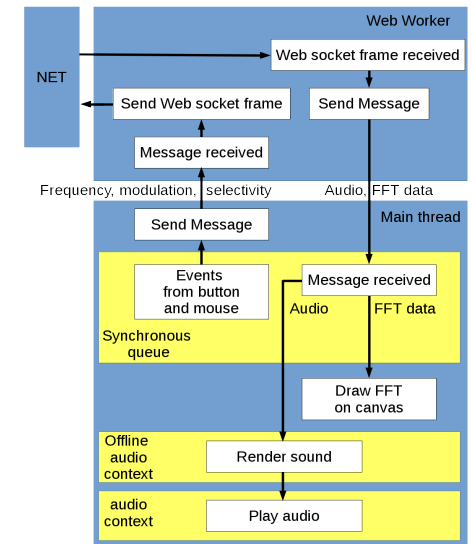
Data processing

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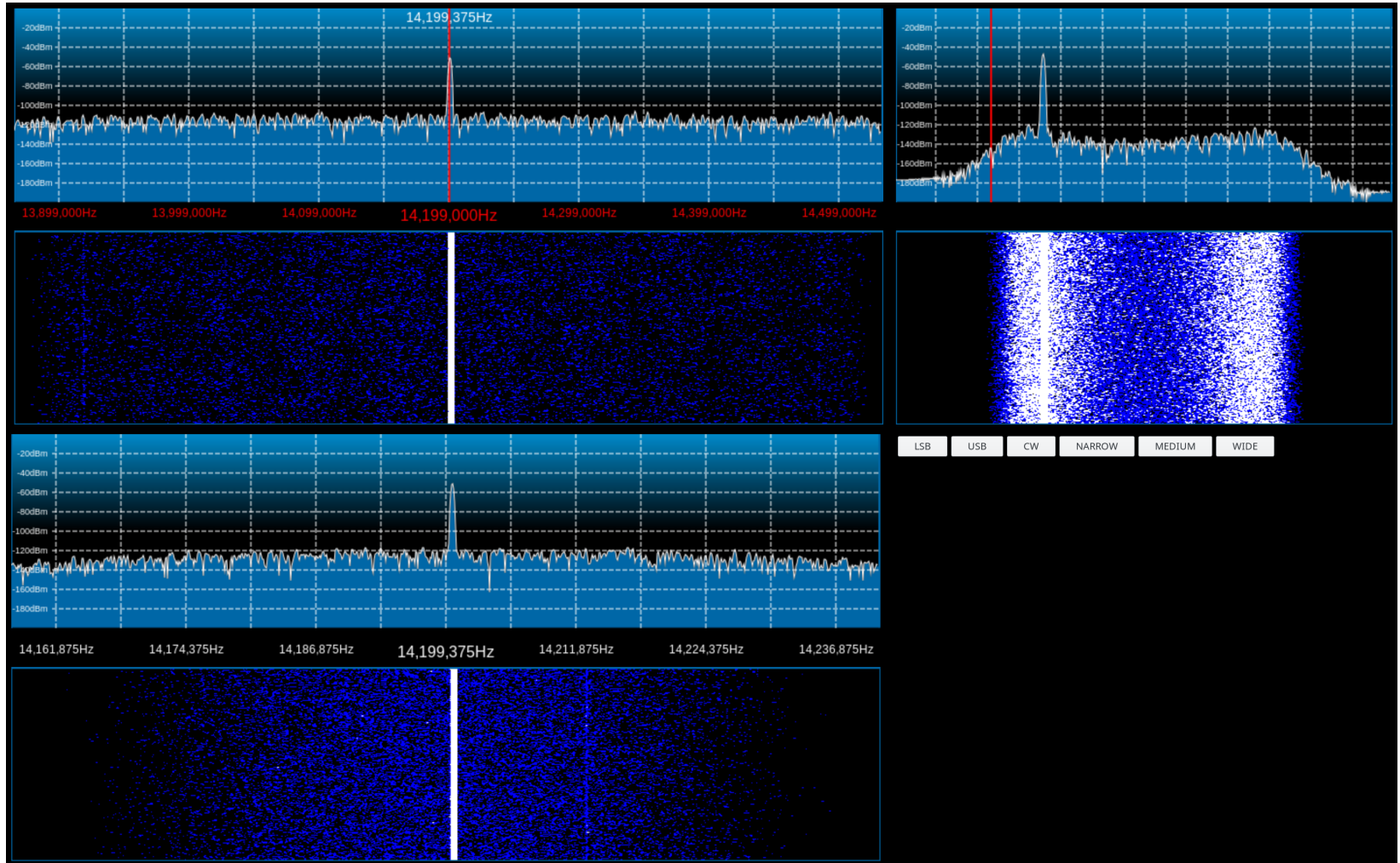
Web client

- Webworker that manages Websocket
 - Uses messages to talk to main thread
- Graphic context that draws spectrograms
- Audio context that plays audio
 - After offline audio context sound conversion
- Offline audio context



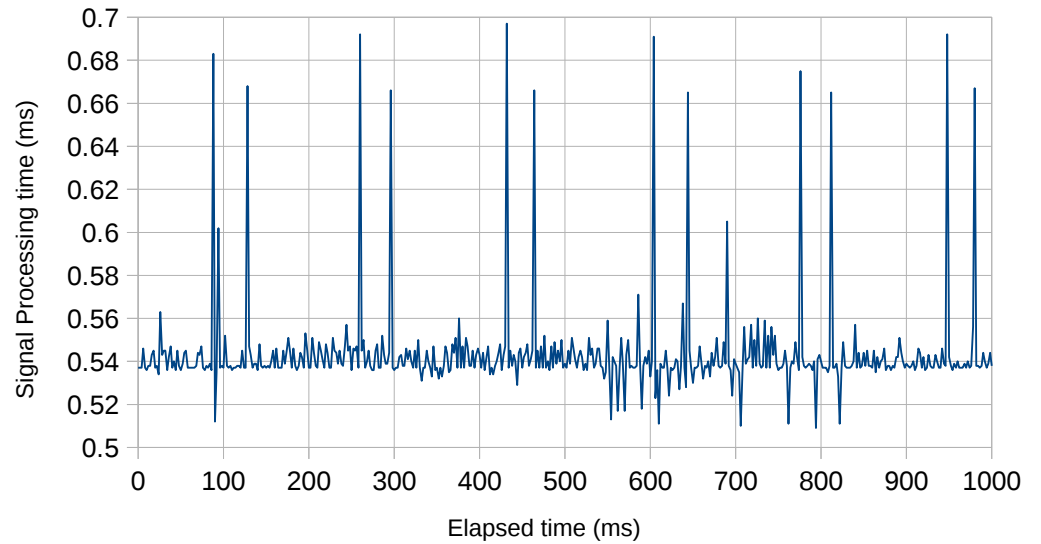
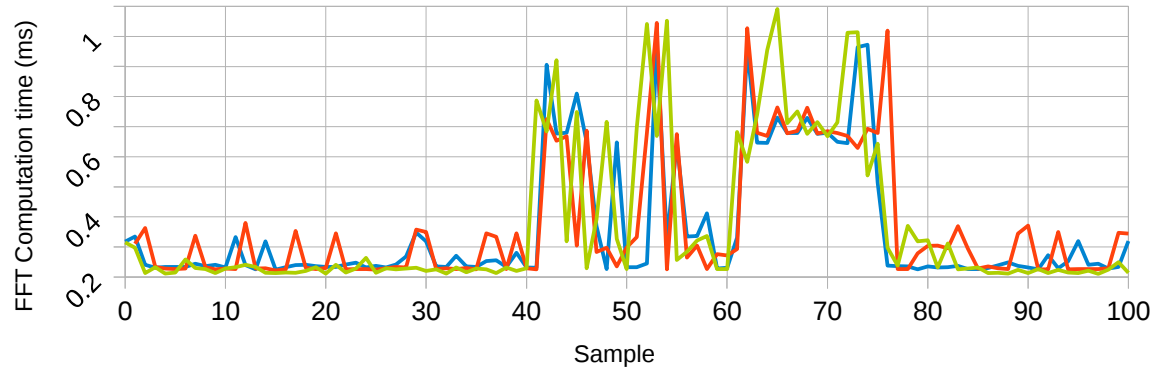
Demo

Client



Measures

50Mb/s on bridge
 1Mb/s each client
 4 simultaneous clients



```

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```

From here

- Change UDP data stream format
- Change Audio format (codec)
- CIC filters for decimator
- FFT filters for Bandwidth
- Other modulations
- AGC, Volume control

SUPSI

***Software Defined Radio with Remote Head
and Internet Clients***

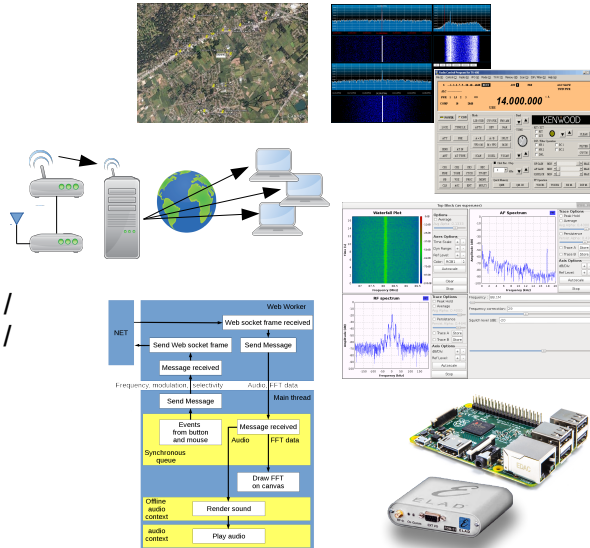
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Software Defined Radio with remote head and Internet clients

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Why I do this project

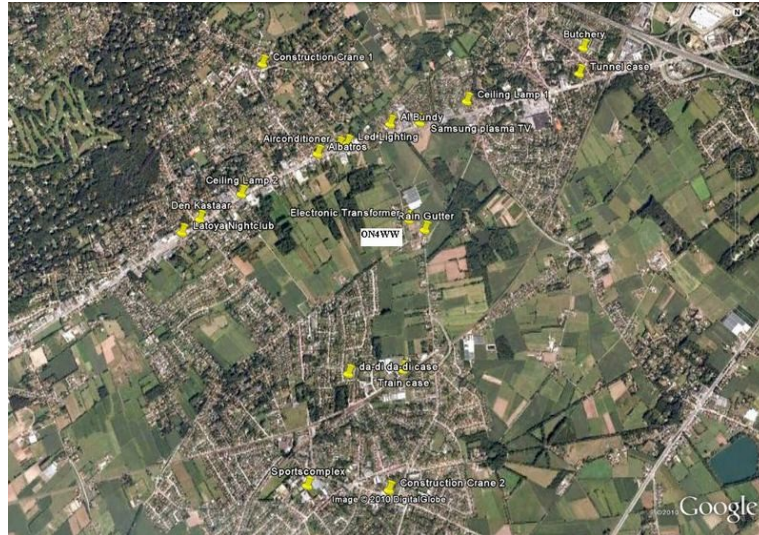
How I developed it

Which are the results

What I plan to do after it

Idea

Is a crowded town the best position for a radio receiver ?



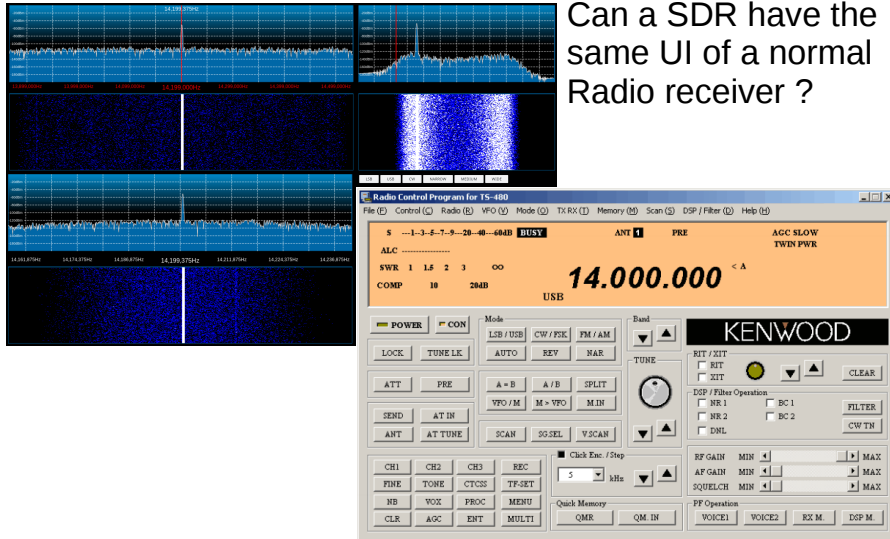
Old good times, when cities were electrically silent, are gone, a lot of noise is generated by any sort of appliances.

“Normal” people fears antennas, ORNI + building regulations could make antennas installation a nightmare.

Even when on holidays, in a distant location, an OM wishes to use his/her radio without issues related to customs.

The solution can be remotization.

Challenges - UI



Can a SDR have the same UI of a normal Radio receiver ?

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Software Defined Radio with remote head and Internet clients

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There are challenges in the development of such an idea.

One aspect of the challenge is to build something substantially new, not simply a copy of the front panel of a good old radio.

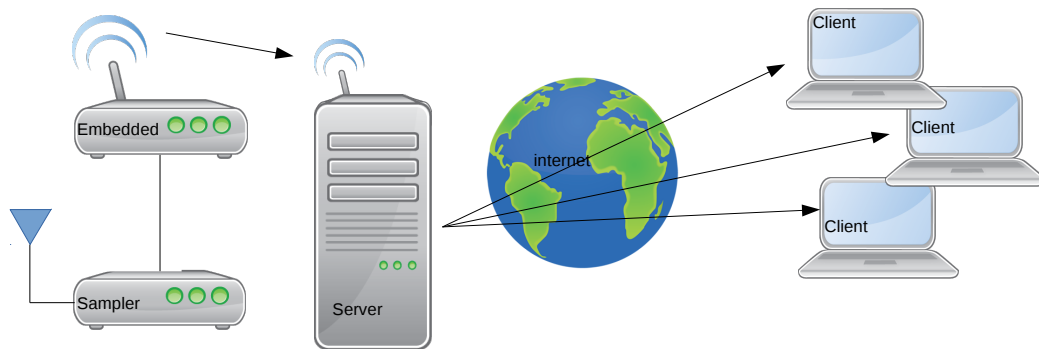
SDR, with FFT, changes the scenario of a radio receiver: no more “blind tuning” but “click and point”.

Don't throw the child with the dirty water: a sort of “knob” is really useful also because OMs are used to tune “rotating their wrist”.

UI based on web browser, to exploit their ubiquity.

Framework

- Sampler: together with an embedded on the top of a hill
- Server: a PC in a webfarm nearby
- Clients: a browser anywhere



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A simple scheme:

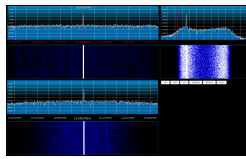
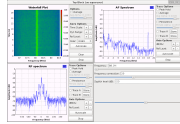
On a top of a hill I put antenna, sampler, an embedded that sends UDP data.

On a webfarm I put a server.

Connection between top-of-the-hill and server can be made with a WiFi bridge in the 5GHz band.

The server is accessible via Internet.

Bridge tested on S.Salvatore-Barbengo for 68MBit/s data rate, flow required is 50Mbit/s, if could be feasible.



Development

- Hardware: COTS components off the shelf
 - Samplers
 - Embedded
 - PC
- Development: Spiral model
- Software: KISS keep it simple and stupid

I believe in the philosophy of COTS, to reduce costs and to have quick replacements.

I also try to make the software as simple as possible to allow further development.

I use a spiral model tinkering – coding – testing – changing, one phase at a time.

First phase was acquiring experience on GNURadio.

Then I've used GNURadio to test hardware.

Then I wrote software using GNURadio to test output or as a reference.



Devices

- Philosophy: COTS (components off the shelf)
- At the beginning very cheap RTL dongles
 - Tested with GNU Radio
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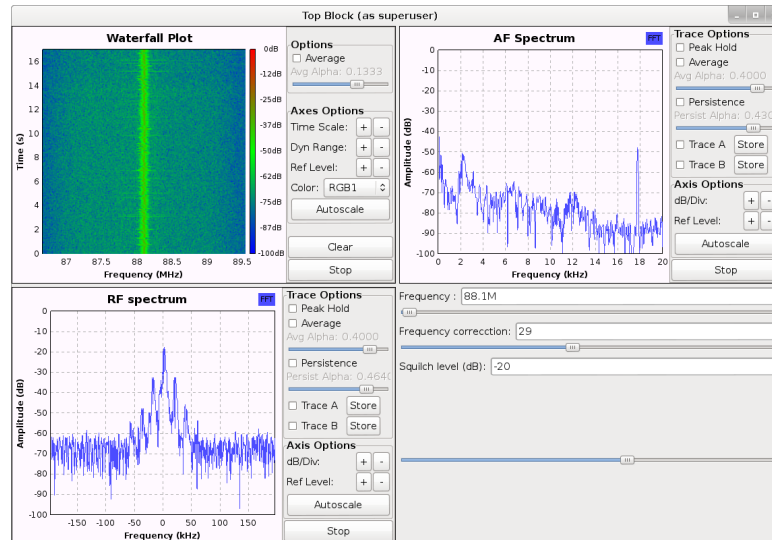
Following COTS, at the beginning I've used very inexpensive RTL-SDR devices (10\$/unit). But these devices have poor performances.

During this phase GNURadio has been carefully studied, and some modules has been developed (see appendix 1)

An agreement with ELAD allowed me to gather much better samplers, fully documented, with access to company engineers at the higher level: I revamped the old GNU Radio module and wrote new modules, so I have gained the knowledge to build the USB → UDP module.

Tools

GNU Radio as
a reference
and a test bed



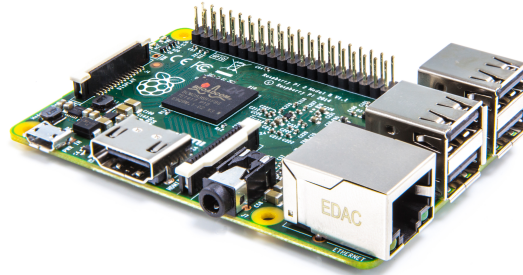
To verify the feasibility and to have a reference, I've used GNU Radio (mostly in the first part of work).

During the test of the first two modules, instead of client not yet developed, I've used GQRX that is based on GNU Radio.

Computers

Also here, COTS

Raspberry PI 2 as
embedded that hosts
USB → UDP bridge

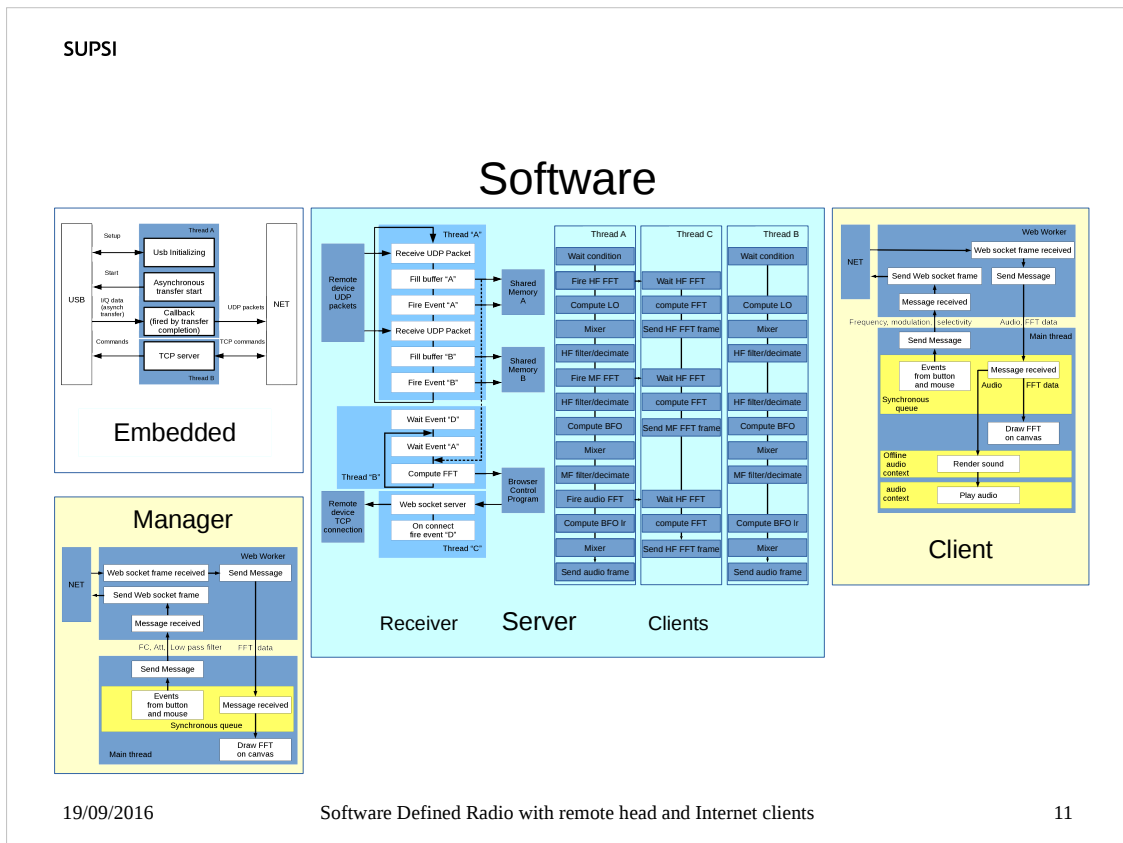


Computer with I7 Intel
hyperthreaded quad core
CPU as “server”

I've used Raspberry PI for a lot of projects and I realized that its computation power could be enough.

A series of measurements confirm my assumption, after some measures, I only increase the number of USB reception buffers from 2 to 4 to avoid any risk of data loss.

As server I used my laptop: it is old, but not so outdated, it could be used as reference for a little server, for one OM personal station (I've successfully run 3 clients) and a state-of-the-art server could manage many more clients.



This is a panoramic view of the software developed.

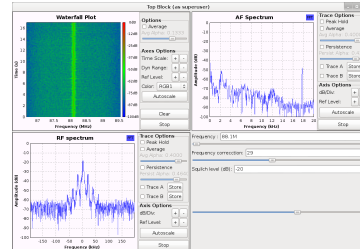
The yellow areas are inside a web browser.

Some new development in “web socket”, “web worker”, “audio context” was necessary to use efficiently the web browser (development done in javascript).

There is a lot of work made to convert analogic heterodyne to DSP algorithms.

First phase

- Before any work an RTL-SDR test was done using GNURadio
 - To verify RTL-SDR usability
- Before testing GNURadio was studied
 - To be able to use it correctly
- Some flowgraphs were developed
 - They resulted useful to test RTL-SDR
- RTL-SDR discarded in favor of ELAD samplers
 - Development of modules useful for project (callbacks structure reused)



Work with GNURadio has taken more than 4 months.

It was fundamental to test RTL-SDR dongles (and to discard them).

Once seen ELAD samplers, a module to link them with GNURadio was developed, with support of ELAD and using as a reference an old module developed by CSI Piemonte.

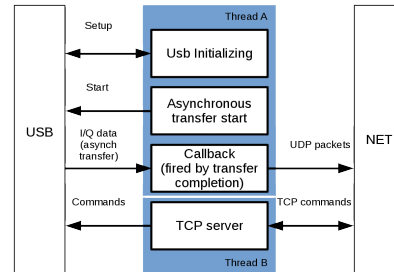
The new module allows some tests of ELAD samplers usage.

The new module has been used as reference for USB async data transfer transfer.

All this work is listed in appendixes 1 and 2.

Embedded

- USB initialization (device dependent)
 - For some devices also FPGA setup
- Data transfer via callback
 - To avoid data loss callbacks and USB data transfer overlaps
- Network data flow via UDP
 - No data loss, verified
- Commands received and confirmed using TCP
 - To exploit its characteristics.



The first part developed is Device initialization via USB, then asynch data transfer.

Nothing really new, core tool is libusb-1.0

Data flow via UDP, TCP accumulates delays.

OS tailored to run on a “read-only” SD card.

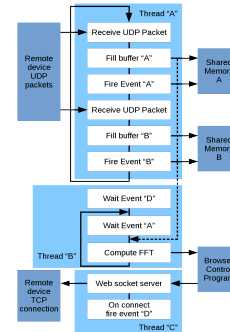
Used threads to implement concurrency between USB and TCP control communications.

All implementations are developed by me, few libraries used (libusb-1.0, libpthread, libm, libc).

All-in-one source code, to enhance readability.

Receiver

- It receives UDP packets
- It fills shared memories
 - Two banks, with associated events
 - To allow clients to work on a bank at a time
- It talks with Manager (web application)
 - Via Websocket
- It computes FFT
 - To allow manager to draw spectrogram and waterfall



Still nothing really new.

Different threads to shape parallelism, condition variables to synchronize threads.

Shared memories filled with data to be processed by clients, condition variables on shared data to synchronize client-threads (via broadcast).

Websocket newly coded by me to allow operations as simple as possible.

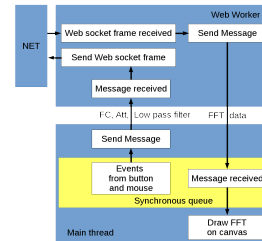
FFT computed to send its data to Manager.

As few as possible libraries (pthread, libssl, crypto).

All packed in a single C source file to enhance readability.

Manager

- Web worker to escape javascript monothreading
 - Events/messages bwtween worker and main thread
- Graphic context to design graphic elements
 - Layered graphics to reduce computation load
- Websocket communications



Written in Javascript, that is interpreted in a single thread.

Use of web worker to use an other thread.

Web worker implements Websocket (very simple in Javascript)

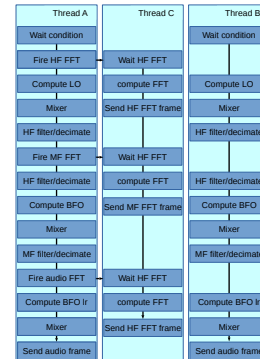
Messages to communicate between two threads.

Use of graphic context to draw spectrograms.

Two programs: the main one (index.html) and a separate web worker (web workers request a separate javascript source)

Client

- One client for each external request
 - Developed as TCP server daemon
- Two threads to manage data processing
 - All “normal superhet” processing: VFO, mixer, MF filtering, BFO, audio
- One thread to manage FFT
 - Periodically computed at three different levels: input, intermediate, audio
- One thread to manage Websocket



Client is a daemon that implements a TCP server.

Once connected, launch a WebSocket server, two data processing threads, and a thread that computes FFTs.

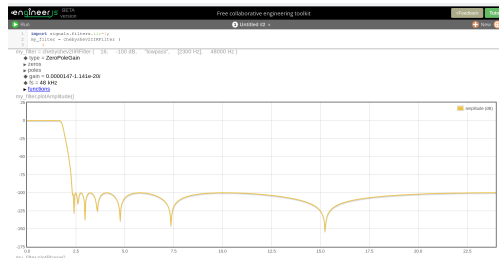
Websocket and FFT use the same code used in the other programs, no functions, no libraries for sake of simplicity.

The data processing threads mimic a “superhet” receiver (see next slide) and are started by shared memory condition variable.

FFTs are computed and sent to client web browser that draws spectrograms to help operator to tune the frequency.

Data processing

- VFO / mixer to center to 0Hz the wanted band
- Antialiasing filter and decimation to spread the band and make “downsampling gain”
- BFO / mixer to center to 0Hz the middle of wanted baseband
- Filtering and decimation to fit to a reasonable sampling rate
- BFO / mixer to move filtered band to baseband
- Classic FIR / IIR
- Classic “prostapheresis” mixer



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This is not a telecomm thesis so the data processing section is quite “classic”.

The reference is a superhet receiver with the main difference that digital filters are implemented around 0Hz, so a triple conversion is needed.

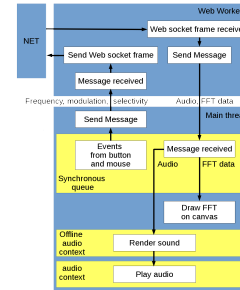
The oscillators are waveforms generated a bank at a time, using prostapheresys formulas to avoid trigonometric functions usage. An amplitude compensation algorithm is used.

Also mixers uses the prostapheresis formula: having I and Q signals this is straightforward.

Filters are classical FIR and IIR.

Web client

- Webworker that manages Websocket
 - Uses messages to talk to main thread
- Graphic context that draws spectrograms
- Audio context that plays audio
 - After offline audio context sound conversion
- Offline audio context



The web client has many things in common with Manager: web worker, web socket, graphic context

The main difference is the audio management: audio arrives at 24kS/s (audio context manages 20.5kS/s to 48kS/s) and it is converted to the native audio output samplerate (not manageable) by an offline audio context, than it is used by the audio context.

The audio context uses a “processing” block that is fired when the audio card needs data: at that time it reads the samples produced by the offline audio context.

There are callbacks triggered by clicks on spectrograms and by the mouse wheel

SUPSI

Demo

Client

19/09/2016

Software Defined Radio with remote head and Internet clients

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Here we can watch a quick demo of the project.

To make simple the demo I use a small signal generator.

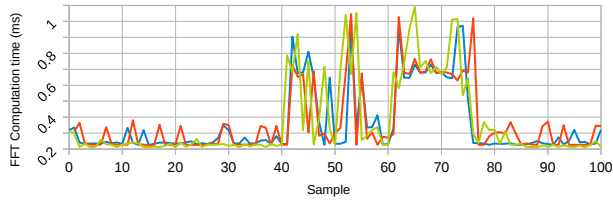
See the click and point frequency set and, also, the mouse wheel usage.

There is a lot of space for other buttons and functionality.

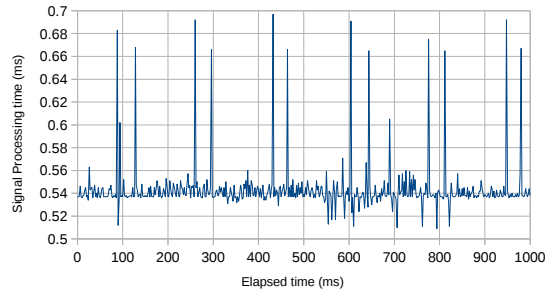
The client is far from complete, but it is born as a proof of concept.

Measures

50Mb/s on bridge
1Mb/s each client
4 simultaneous clients



```
Terminale - giovanni@mir -  
File Modifica Visualizza Terminale Schermata Guida  
Device eth0 [192.168.1.116] (1/3):  
-----  
Incoming:#####  
#####  
##### Curr: 51692656.00 Bit/s  
##### Avg: 51689168.00 Bit/s  
##### Min: 51624960.00 Bit/s  
##### Max: 51742832.00 Bit/s  
##### Ttl: 11.79 GByte  
Outgoing:#####  
#####  
##### Curr: 1047304.00 Bit/s  
##### Avg: 1056816.00 Bit/s  
##### Min: 1014624.00 Bit/s  
##### Max: 1080560.00 Bit/s  
##### Ttl: 181.04 MByte  
#####  
I
```



Network traffic in input (UDP) has an acceptable value (it could also be lowered by changing UDP packet format).

The packet loss monitoring shows no UDP packet loss.

Output network traffic could be seen as a bit higher, but nowadays network connections are far higher (mine is 50/500 allowing tens of output streams).

Elaboration times, even with discontinuity, fall in an acceptable range.

From here

- Change UDP data stream format
- Change Audio format (codec)
- CIC filters for decimator
- FFT filters for Bandwidth
- Other modulations
- AGC, Volume control

It could be interesting to make a certain amount of changes, suggested by measures and evaluation, to build a real product (idea for a new work?).