
Applying Codec2 To Amateur Satellite Operations

Bruce Robertson, VE9QRP
Amsat Symposium, 2012



QSO with ZL3IN in Early 2011



About 45 min.
conversation



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About 45 min.
conversation

The complete
recording of both
sides of the
conversation could fit
on a 1.4MB floppy
disk



Codec2

- ▶ A very low-bitrate sound **encoder** / **decoder**



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- ▶ Attuned to the human voice
- ▶ Open-source
- ▶ Under active development



History

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History

- ▶ Bruce Perens, K6BP, noted the absence of a free and open-source low-bitrate voice codec
- ▶ Encouraged David Rowe, VK5DGR, to repurpose the work in his Ph.D. thesis to this end
 - ▶ Built community and code base
 - ▶ Won ARRL technical innovation award in 2012



Software

- ▶ Free and open source



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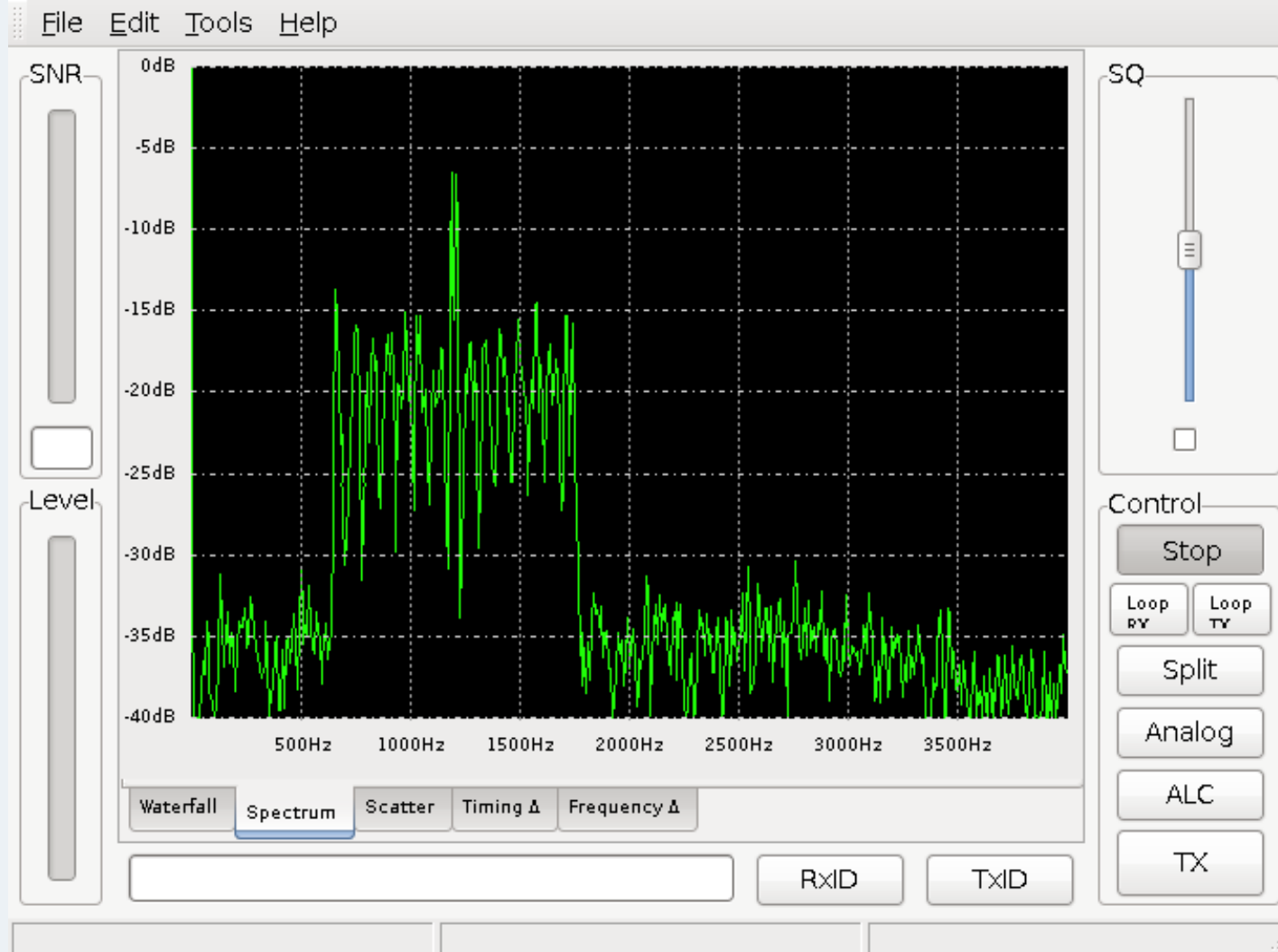


Software

- ▶ Free and open source
- ▶ Codecs from 3200 bit/s to 1200
- ▶ Unix command line for now, but Dave Whitten, KD0EAG is making a GUI for Windows, etc.
- ▶ Modems:
 - ▶ 1400 bit/s FDMDV
 - ▶ 4800 and 2400 (early) GMSK



FDMDV2 Teaser



Hardware

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 - ▶ Nokia N800: 330 MHz ARM11



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- ▶ Integer FFT not yet integrated
- ▶ But many satellite stations have a computer attached



Philosophy

Comment pending on "Conversation Using Codec2"



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YouTube Service noreply@youtube.com

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Oct 6 ☆



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Philosophy

- ▶ **Not about**
 - ▶ Hijacking D-Star



Philosophy

- ▶ *Not about*
 - ▶ Hijacking D-Star
- ▶ Current emphasis on HF voice



Philosophy

The best part about Codec2 is that it allows us to experiment!

Kristoff Bonne, ONIARF



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For example?



I. Experiment With Today's Satellites

- ▶ FDMDV through FM birds



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- ▶ FDMDV through FM birds
- ▶ TWO FDMDV channels ($\times 1050$ Hz) through one FM bird



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- ▶ FDMDV signal acquisition and doppler correction



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2. A Codec2 Demo. Mode

- ▶ **Codec2 can bridge the voice / digital gulf**
 - ▶ Allows a functionally digital mission
 - ▶ To assist in improving voice communications
 - ▶ To provide voice communications
 - ▶ No more 'beep boxes'
- ▶ **Digital comms. should be arranged with this possibility in mind**
 - ▶ 1200 AFSK won't cut it
 - ▶ 2000-2400 BPSK/QPSK?



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- ▶ Offers interesting research problems for undergraduate cubesat programs:
 - ▶ E.g., what sort of modulation technique and how much error correction would be helpful in LEO?



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- ▶ Advantages:
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 - ▶ Transmission efficiency for satellite
- ▶ Challenge:
 - ▶ Including efficient codec2 modulation code in on-board computing system



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 - ▶ (Twit's live stream to shoutcast)
 - ▶ `gst-launch souphttpsrc location=http://twit.am:80/listen !
Mad ! Audioconvert ! Audioreample ! Audio/x-raw-int,
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 - ▶ Introduce random errors into FEC-encoded Codec2 to evaluate interleaving approaches
 - ▶ Extra points: make a website that crowd-sources the scoring of various approaches



Last Word to the Codec

- ▶ 2.1 kB message at 1200 bits/s
- ▶ Come see me for a record/playback session with my laptop

