NEW ENABLING TECHNOLOGY

The NIST Compact Atomic Magnetometer is based on a diverging (or converging) beam of light that passes through an alkali atom vapor cell and that contains a distribution of beam propagation vectors. The existence of more than one propagation direction permits longitudinal optical pumping of atomic system and simultaneous detection of the transverse atomic polarization. This design can be implemented with a micro machined alkali vapor cell and light from a single semiconductor laser. A small modification to the cell contents and excitation geometry allows for use as a gyroscope. Atomic magnetometers are scalar sensors - they sense the magnitude of the magnetic field, rather than the projection along one spatial direction. This is particularly important for applications on moving platforms since platform motion adds considerable noise to a vector sensor as the angle between the field and the sensor axis changes.

BEETR FASTER EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY

This technology simultaneously achieves high sensitivity, simple fabrication and small size. For example, the NIST gyroscope’s sensitivities for the magnitude and direction of the rotation measurements are 0.033 degrees per second and 0.27 degrees with one second averaging time, respectively. A variety of magnetometer/gyroscope combinations exist but are expensive.

The NIST compact atomic gyroscope enables multitasking measurement capabilities. It simultaneously measures rotation, rotation angle and acceleration with a single source of atoms. Signal strength and data acquisition speed increased to increase sensitivity measurements. In addition, it features a smaller design for compact systems that can be used in the field.

ILLUSTRATION OF AN ATOMIC MAGNETOMETER

Illustration of an atomic magnetometer 100. Light is emitted from a semiconductor laser 20. It passes through some optics 30 that makes the laser polarization circular, attenuates the light beam and changes its spatial mode. A set of radio-frequency coils 40, positioned about the cell creates an oscillating magnetic field in the cell. The light then enters an alkali vapor cell 50 with some divergence. The magnetic field, B, 70 is oriented along the direction of the average propagation direction of the light field. Alkali atoms in the cell are thereby polarized along this direction by the circularly polarized light field. The transmitted light power is detected by photodetectors 60.

CONTACT

Technology Partnerships Office (TPO)
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Gaithersburg, MD 20899
licensing@nist.gov
**MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS OF GYROSCOPES EXIST WITHIN INERTIAL NAVIGATION SYSTEM AND MULTIPLE END-USE APPLICATIONS INCLUDING MANNED AIRCRAFT, AUTOMOTIVE AND AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES**

**THE SOLUTION FOR A HOST OF ISSUES THAT PLAGUE MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES**

Gyroscopes sense rotation. In combination with magnetometers, gyroscopes are used in inertial navigation and platform stabilization applications. The NIST Compact Atomic Magnetometer and Gyroscope is the first to demonstrate simultaneous measurement of rotation, rotation angle and acceleration with a single source of atoms.

**MARKET**

Multiple addressable markets exist based on the combined performance of the magnetometer and gyroscope in inertial navigation systems (INS) as well as multiple end-use applications including manned aircraft, automotive and autonomous vehicles. NIST is seeking partnerships via CRADAs and patent license agreements.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs), Patent License Agreements (PLAs) Abound

Gyroscope applications include inertial navigation and platform stabilization (anti-roll systems in cars, for example). Other applications include those requiring ultra-precise navigation with extreme size, weight and power limits, such as on spacecraft or submarines.

**CONTACT**

Technology Partnerships Office (TPO)
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Gaithersburg, MD 20899
licensing@nist.gov