1. Overview

The Fourier transform infrared spectrometer (FTIR) engine is compact enough to carry in just one hand. A Michelson optical interferometer and control circuit are built into a palm-sized enclosure. Spectrum and absorbance can be measured by connecting a PC via USB. It can be applied to real-time measurement performed on site without bringing the measurement sample into the analysis room as well as continuous monitoring.

The FTIR engine’s optical interferometer has a movable mirror (φ3 mm) that uses Micro Electro Mechanical Systems (MEMS) technology and a fixed mirror. The built-in semiconductor laser (VCSEL: vertical cavity surface emitting laser) for monitoring the movable mirror position allows spectrum measurement with high wavelength accuracy. The product includes evaluation software with functions for setting measurement conditions, acquiring and saving data, drawing graphs, and so on. Furthermore, the dynamic link library (DLL) function specifications are disclosed, so users can create their original measurement software programs.

2. Structure

The FTIR has the following features compared to the dispersive type (diffraction grating type) spectrometer.

- High S/N because simultaneous signal measurements are possible in the entire spectral range
- High light utilization efficiency if the resolution is the same as the dispersive type spectrometer since the incident hole can be enlarged
- High wavelength accuracy and reproducibility because laser wavelength is used for calibration

The FTIR’s optical interferometer is composed of a light input section, beam splitter (semi-transparent mirror), fixed mirror, φ3 mm movable mirror, photodetector, and so on. The incident light is split into two light beams, transmitted light and reflected light, by a beam splitter. The two light beams are reflected by the fixed mirror and movable mirror and return to the beam splitter, where they are recombined, causing optical interference. The photodetector acquires light intensity signals that vary depending on the movable mirror position. The optical spectrum is obtained by taking the Fourier
transform of this light intensity signal. An optical fiber is connected to the connector at the light input section of the FTIR engine. Light from the measurement sample can be input to the FTIR engine through an optical fiber, which provides a highly flexible measurement system.

Figure 2-1 FTIR configuration and operating principle

2-1 Movable mirror

The FTIR engine has a built-in electrostatically driven movable mirror [Figure 2-2]. When a voltage is applied to the comb electrodes, an electrostatic driving force is generated. As a result, the torsion bars twist causing the beams to move, and the movable mirror moves vertically in parallel. The movable mirror moves by a great amount when driven at the resonant frequency.

Figure 2-2 Movable mirror and electrostatic actuator

2-2 Optical interferometers

Figure 2-3 (a) shows a typical interferometer used in an FTIR, and Figure 2-3 (b) shows the interferometer used in the FTIR engine. The optical interferometer is composed of a light input section, beam splitter, fixed mirror, movable mirror, photodetector, and so on. Using a wavelength dispersion compensator made of the same material as the beam splitter, a fixed mirror is formed on the back side. The optical interferometer is designed so that the optical path difference between the movable mirror side and fixed mirror side is zero at the position where the movable mirror has moved about 70 µm (thickness of the movable mirror) below the position of the movable mirror in Figure 2-3 (b). The optical interferometer has a built-in MEMS chip shown in Figure 2-4. The MEMS chip is resin-sealed in a package [Figure 2-5]. It prevents the entry of fine particles, but moisture is permeable. Make sure condensation does not form on the beam splitter, lens, or movable mirror, as condensation may degrade the characteristics.

Figure 2-3 Optical interferometer

(a) FTIR interferometer

(b) FTIR engine interferometer

Figure 2-4 MEMS chip (built into the optical interferometer)

Structure

Figure 2-5 shows the optical system of the FTIR engine. There are two interferometers in the FTIR engine: infrared interferometer and laser interferometer. The infrared interferometer measures the near infrared light input from the optical fiber, and the laser interferometer monitors the movable mirror position using a semiconductor laser (VCSEL).
The positions of the two optical interferometers are separated by a dichroic mirror. An InGaAs PIN photodiode (G12183-003K) is used for the infrared interferometer's photodetector and a Si PIN photodiode (S5821-03) for the laser interferometer's photodetector.

2 - 4 Software

The FTIR engine is equipped with a USB interface (USB 2.0), which is used to connect to the PC. By using the DLL, you can drive the movable mirror, set measurement conditions (gain, integration count, etc.), start a measurement, acquire data, and so on. The optical signals acquired by the two photodetectors are each integrated by the FPGA and sent to the PC. On the PC, the optical interference signal necessary to obtain the optical spectrum is calculated, and Fourier transform is taken. The supplied CD-ROM contains evaluation software and DLL as well as sample code that you can use to create your own measurement software [Figure 2-7].

2 - 3 Control circuit

Figure 2-6 shows the block diagram of the FTIR engine. The control circuit consists of an analog controller, digital controller, and external interface. The power is supplied through the USB bus from the PC. The analog controller drives the movable mirror and VCSEL and amplifies the optical signal from the photodetector. The preamp amplifies the optical signal. The gain can be switched between five levels. The amplified optical signals are converted into digital signals by the A/D converter and sent to the digital controller. The field-programmable gate array (FPGA) of the digital controller configures the analog controller and controls the drive timing and data acquisition timing. The FPGA also performs optical signal integration in sync with the drive timing. The external interface contains a microcontroller unit (MCU) and connects to a PC via a USB cable. The MCU receives the control signals from the PC and sends the optical signal data from the two photodetectors to the PC.
3. Operating principle

3-1 Movable mirror

The movable mirror drive conditions are stored in the EEPROM of the control circuit. The movable mirror can be driven in resonance by reading information from the EEPROM.

The electrostatic actuator that drives the movable mirror can be represented by the dynamic model in Figure 3-1. The spring constant is mainly determined by the Young’s modulus and Poisson’s ratio of the spring material and the spring shape (length, thickness, width). The spring is formed with high accuracy by applying semiconductor lithography technology and etching technology, but there are some variations in the spring dimensions and spring constant. Therefore, the drive frequency of the movable mirror varies by product.

[Table 3-1] Electrical characteristics (drive frequency) of movable mirror

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Typ.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive frequency</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>Hz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Figure 3-1] Dynamic model of electrostatic actuator

The spring characteristic of an electrostatic actuator has a non-linear characteristic called hardening, and the movable mirror’s amplitude changes drastically at a specific drive frequency. This is shown by the duffing equation [Equation (3-1)]. In the range where the amplitude changes drastically, the characteristics differ from low frequency to high frequency and from high frequency to low frequency. In the range where the characteristics are the same, a stable amplitude can be obtained by setting the drive frequency [Figure 3-2].

\[ m\ddot{x} + c\dot{x} + (1 + \beta x^2)kx = F \cos(\omega t) \]  \hspace{1cm} (3-1)

\[ \omega_0 = \sqrt{\frac{k}{m}} \hspace{1cm} (3-2) \]

\[ \omega_1 = \omega_0 \left(1 + \frac{3}{4} \beta x^2\right) \hspace{1cm} (3-3) \]

The natural frequency of a movable mirror is expressed by equation (3-2). The resonant frequency of the movable mirror that has a non-linear spring shifts according to the amplitude [Equation (3-3)]. When the amplitude of the movable mirror increases due to hardening, the spring constant increases, which increases the resonant frequency [Figure 3-3].

\[ F = \frac{1}{2} \frac{dC}{dx} V^2 \hspace{1cm} (3-4) \]

F: electrostatic driving force
C: capacitance of comb electrodes (composed of multiple parallel plates)
V: drive voltage
Since the movable mirror spring is made of single-crystal silicon, it has the advantage of low metal fatigue and long life. As the temperature increases, the Young’s modulus of the single-crystal silicon decreases. Therefore, when the temperature changes, the spring constant changes, which causes the movable mirror’s resonant frequency to change [Figure 3-4].

[Figure 3-4] Temperature characteristics of drive frequency (typical example)

(a) Amplitude vs. drive frequency

(b) Maximum amplitude vs. drive frequency

[Figure 3-5] Temperature characteristics of drive frequency and amplitude (typical example)

(a) Drive frequency vs. temperature

(b) Drive frequency vs. ambient temperature

-Control method-

The FTIR engine stores the optimum conditions in EEPROM in order to stably drive the movable mirror. In addition, the thermistor embedded in the FTIR engine enclosure measures the temperature, and the optimal drive frequency is set according to the temperature change. Figure 3-5 shows the temperature characteristics of the movable mirror’s drive frequency and amplitude.
The wavenumber resolution of the FTIR is defined by wavenumber $\Delta v$ (unit: cm$^{-1}$), which is the reciprocal of the wavelength of light. The wavenumber resolution is determined by the movable mirror's amplitude, the light beam's spread angle in the optical interferometer, the movable mirror's tilt, and so on [Figure 3-7]. The wavenumber resolution is expressed by equation (3-6) and improves as the movable mirror's amplitude increases.

$$\Delta v = \frac{1}{4L_1}$$  \hspace{1cm} (3-6)

$\Delta v$: wavenumber resolution  
$L_1$: amplitude

The effect of the light beam's spread angle is expressed by equation (3-7).

$$\Delta v = \frac{d_f^2}{2f}v$$  \hspace{1cm} (3-7)

d$f$: diameter of input optical fiber  
f: focal distance of incident lens  
v: wavenumber [cm$^{-1}$]

[Figure 3-7] Lens and light beam

Wavenumber resolution (unit: cm$^{-1}$) can be converted to spectral resolution (unit: nm) [Equation (3-8)]. The spectral resolution varies depending on the wavelength and degrades at longer wavelengths. Figure 3-8 shows a typical example of the measured wavelength resolution.

$$\Delta \lambda = \frac{1}{V} \cdot \frac{1}{V + \Delta v} \times 10^7$$  \hspace{1cm} (3-8)

$\Delta \lambda$: spectral resolution  
$V$: wavenumber

[Figure 3-8] Spectral resolution vs. wavelength (typical example, FWHM)
Table 3-2 shows the optical specifications of the FTIR engine.

**[Table 3-2] Optical specifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Typ.</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optical input connector</td>
<td>SMA connector for optical fiber</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident lens focal distance</td>
<td>$\lambda = 1150 \text{ nm}$</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident lens NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectral resolution (FWHM)</td>
<td>$\lambda = 1532 \text{ nm}$</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>nm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Zero fill processing**

One method of smoothing the acquired optical spectrum is zero fill processing [Figure 3-9]. This is a process of adding zeros at each end of the optical interference signal before the Fourier transform, which allows interpolation between points plotted after the Fourier transform. The resolution does not change in this case.

**[Figure 3-9] Zero fill processing**

![Zero fill processing diagram](image)

3 - 3. Control circuit

The FPGA of the digital controller drives the movable mirror and controls the measurement timing. The movable mirror is driven when the built-in high voltage IC (HVIC) applies a square-wave drive voltage to the comb electrodes. The number of times the drive voltage is applied from when driving is started is counted.

The optical signals detected by the infrared interferometer and laser interferometer are amplified by the preamplifier and then converted to 16-bit digital signals by two A/D converters whose sampling timing is synchronized.

**[Table 3-3] Electrical characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Typ.</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/D resolution</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/D sampling rate</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The FTIR engine measurement starts when the drive voltage of the movable mirror is input. Data is acquired for the specified number of cycles, and the acquired optical signals are integrated in the FPGA [Figure 3-10]. The measurement data is defined by using the “0” or “1” of the least significant bit (LSB) according to the movable mirror’s vertical movement. The relationship between the movable mirror’s vertical movement and the “0” and “1” of the least significant bit changes each time drive start is set.

**[Figure 3-10] Timing chart (Direction=1, Cycle=2)**

![Timing chart](image)

The deviation between the phases of the movable mirror and the drive voltage decreases as the frequency approaches the resonant frequency, and the phases match at the resonant frequency. At the resonant frequency, the mirror amplitude changes drastically as shown in Figure 3-2, making it difficult to control. The drive frequency under the FTIR engine’s recommended operating conditions is lower than the resonant frequency. As a result, a phase shift occurs between the movable mirror and the drive voltage [Figure 3-11]. Due to the phase shift, the digital data of the control circuit is valid up to the amplitude peak and invalid after the peak in Figure 3-11.

**[Figure 3-11] Amplitude and drive voltage of movable mirror (typical example)**

![Amplitude and drive voltage diagram](image)

Figures 3-12 and 3-13 show the digital data measured by the infrared interferometer and laser interferometer.
The FTIR engine performs data communication with the PC over a USB 2.0 connection. Figure 3-14 shows the measurement flowchart. For details, refer to the DLL and sample code in the supplied CD-ROM. Stable measurement using the FTIR engine is achieved by the thermistor measuring the internal temperature of the FTIR engine and waiting until the temperature stabilizes. It is recommended to perform reference measurement and sample measurement under the same movable mirror drive conditions and measurement conditions.
4. Characteristics

4 - 1 S/N

The FTIR engine’s signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) is defined as the ratio between the maximum value of the optical spectrum and the effective noise value (RMS) when halogen light is incident. The light source output needs to be adjusted or an ND filter needs to be used to obtain an appropriate incident light level to prevent the FTIR engine’s A/D converter from saturating. Since the FTIR engine uses 16-bit A/D converters, adjust the incident light level so that the optical interference signal is between 40000 and 64000 counts p-p. The incident light level needs to be adjusted for each product as the sensitivity differs by product [Figure 4-2].

Table 4-1 shows a typical example of the S/N characteristics in the measurement system of Figure 4-1. The S/N is 10000 or more at a gain setting between 1 and 4. The lower the gain, the lower the noise and the higher the S/N.
The output optical spectrum changes depending on the transmission loss characteristics of the optical fiber connected to the FTIR engine. A quartz fiber has a loss depending on the length of the optical fiber in the wavelength range longer than 2.1 µm. For this reason, a short optical fiber or fluoride fiber is recommended. Figure 4-6 shows the optical spectra when a fluoride fiber and quartz fibers of different lengths are used.

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**Table 4-1** S/N characteristics (typical example, Ta=25 °C, halogen light source, optical fiber core diameter: 600 µm, NA: 0.22, integration count: 512, optical interference signal: approx. 40000 counts p-p)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gain setting</th>
<th>Gain typ.</th>
<th>S/N typ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>526400</td>
<td>7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>246400</td>
<td>15000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>112000</td>
<td>30000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>52640</td>
<td>45000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24640</td>
<td>55000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Figure 4-3** S/N characteristics (measurement example)

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**Figure 4-4** shows the relationship between the effective value (RMS) of the noise and integration count. The noise is averaged by the movable mirror's integration count and is reduced to 1/√N. Increasing the integration count increases the measurement time but increases the S/N.

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**Figure 4-5** Effects of optical fiber transmission loss

(a) Measurement system

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**Figure 4-6** shows the temperature characteristics of the peak wavelength and wavelength resolution (FWHM) of the laser spectrum measured by the FTIR engine in the measurement system shown in Figure 4-5. In this setup, a laser light (1532.8 nm) is input through an optical fiber, and the FTIR engine is placed in a constant temperature chamber. The FTIR engine is installed on a vibration isolation table to mitigate the effects of vibration in the constant temperature chamber.

---

**Figure 4-7** shows the temperature characteristics of the peak wavelength and wavelength resolution (FWHM) of the laser spectrum measured by the FTIR engine in the measurement system shown in Figure 4-5. In this setup, a laser light (1532.8 nm) is input through an optical fiber, and the FTIR engine is placed in a constant temperature chamber. The FTIR engine is installed on a vibration isolation table to mitigate the effects of vibration in the constant temperature chamber.
about 5 °C due to the heat generated by the circuit driven by the FTIR engine. The peak wavelength of the laser spectrum detected by the FTIR engine shifts with temperature, and the wavelength temperature dependence is ±0.06 nm/°C or less. Note that the wavelength resolution (FWHM) is almost constant even when the temperature changes.

The FTIR engine’s wavelength temperature dependence depends on the oscillation wavelength of the VCSEL used to monitor the movable mirror. Since the VCSEL changes its oscillation wavelength depending on temperature, the wavelength accuracy measured by the FTIR engine has temperature characteristics. In Figure 4-7, the temperature measured by the thermistor in the FTIR engine when the temperature of the constant temperature chamber is changed is shown on the horizontal axis. The temperature inside the FTIR engine rises by

![Figure 4-6](image_url) System for measuring temperature characteristics of wavelength accuracy and wavelength resolution

![Figure 4-7](image_url) Wavelength temperature dependence (typical example)

(a) Peak wavelength

![Graph](image_url)

(b) Spectral resolution

![Graph](image_url)
5. Measurement example

5 - 1 Absorption spectrum

In near-infrared spectroscopy, absorbance is calculated from the measured optical spectrum, and second derivative analysis, partial least squares (PLS) regression analysis, or the like is generally used. Absorbance is given by equation (5-1). Absorbance is also expressed by equation (5-2), and this is referred to as Lambert-Beer’s law.

\[ A_\lambda = -\log_{10} \left( \frac{I_1}{I_0} \right) \]  \hspace{1cm} (5-1)

\[ A_\lambda = \alpha LC \]  \hspace{1cm} (5-2)

\( A_\lambda \): absorbance at wavelength \( \lambda \)  
\( I_1 \): transmitted light level  
\( I_0 \): incident light level

\( \alpha \): light absorption coefficient  
\( L \): optical path length of quartz cell  
\( C \): sample concentration

\[ \text{Figure 5-1] Absorption spectrum measurement system} \]

**Ethanol**

Figure 5-3 shows a measurement example of the ethanol absorption spectrum. The ethanol absorption spectrum has a peak after 2200 nm. In this measurement, a zirconium fluoride (ZrF₄) fiber is used as the optical fiber for high sensitivity measurement in the long wavelength band (2100 to 2500 nm). Zero-fill processing is performed before the Fourier transform, and data points are interpolated to display a smooth spectrum.

\[ \text{Figure 5-3] Ethanol absorption spectrum (measurement example)} \]

**Water**

Figure 5-2 shows an example of a water absorption spectrum measurement by the FTIR engine in the measurement system shown in Figure 5-1. The absorbance changes according to the optical path length of the quartz cell. Absorbance is measured well up to about 2.

\[ \text{Figure 5-2] Water absorption spectrum (measurement example)} \]

**Alcohols**

Figure 5-4 shows the near-infrared absorption spectra of beer, sake, brandy, ethanol, and water. Absorption by water OH groups (1450 nm band, 1900 nm band) and absorption (2100 to 2500 nm) that differs depending on the molecular structure of the alcohol CH group exist. Absorbance is measured well in the range around 1 or 2.

\[ \text{Figure 5-4] Alcohols near-infrared absorption spectra (measurement example)} \]
Figure 5-5 shows an example of measuring the alcohol concentration from the absorbance in the 2260 nm band. Alcohol concentration and measured values are highly correlated.

![Figure 5-4] Absorption spectra of alcohols (measurement example)

![Figure 5-5] Concentration of alcohols (measurement example in 2300 nm band)

**Glucose**

Figure 5-6 shows a measurement example of glucose concentration. Glucose concentrations are 0%, 0.2%, 0.4%, 0.8%, and 1%. Figure 5-6 shows the results of a PLS regression analysis based on absorbance data acquired for each concentration. The glucose concentration and measured values are highly correlated.

![Figure 5-6] Glucose concentration (measurement example in 1100 to 2500 nm band)

### 5-2 Reflected light spectrum

Figure 5-7 shows the measurement system for the reflected light spectrum. A halogen light source is connected to a 6:1 reflection probe (a bundle of seven optical fibers: one at the center for receiving light, six at the periphery for irradiation), and light is incident on the FTIR engine. A reference plate is installed at the tip of the reflection probe, and the diffuse reflection light is measured by the FTIR engine.

![Figure 5-7] Reflected light spectrum measurement system

Figure 5-8 shows a measurement example of white plastic (PP: polypropylene) containing brominated flame retardant. The absorption spectra due to the added compounds decabromodiphenyl ether (DBDE) and tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBA) are measured.
Since the FTIR engine is easily affected by vibration, a vibration isolation table is provided for stable measurement (sold separately). Anti-vibration gels are contained within the vibration isolation table to mitigate the effects of vibration. Mounting screws are used to secure the FTIR engine to the vibration isolation table.

### Evaluation software

The data acquired by the FTIR engine is integrated and averaged by using the evaluation software supplied with the FTIR engine. The stability of the measurement differs depending on the selected integration mode [Table 6-1], but stable measurement is possible by using the vibration isolation table.

#### [Table 6-1] Integration mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration mode</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The required data is transferred repeatedly to the PC (scanned). Fourier transform, integration, and averaging are performed repeatedly on the PC (scanned). This mode takes time but ensures stable measurements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Integration and averaging are performed by the control circuit in the FTIR engine (scanned). The averaged data is transferred to the PC once, and Fourier transform is performed on the PC. This mode allows shorter measurements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Related information

www.hamamatsu.com/sp/ssd/doc_en.html

### Precautions

- Disclaimer
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