

# NIH Public Access

**Author Manuscript** 

*IEEE Trans Circuits Syst II Express Briefs*. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2014 October

#### Published in final edited form as:

*IEEE Trans Circuits Syst II Express Briefs*. 2013 October ; 60(10): 707–711. doi:10.1109/TCSII. 2013.2278104.

# A Power-Efficient Wireless Capacitor Charging System Through an Inductive Link

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# Abstract

A power-efficient wireless capacitor charging system for inductively powered applications has been presented. A bank of capacitors can be directly charged from an ac source by generating a current through a series charge injection capacitor and a capacitor charger circuit. The fixed charging current reduces energy loss in switches, while maximizing the charging efficiency. An adaptive capacitor tuner compensates for the resonant capacitance variations during charging to keep the amplitude of the ac input voltage at its peak. We have fabricated the capacitor charging system prototype in a 0.35- $\mu$ m 4-metal 2-poly standard CMOS process in 2.1 mm<sup>2</sup> of chip area. It can charge four pairs of capacitors sequentially. While receiving 2.7-V peak ac input through a 2-MHz inductive link, the capacitor charging system can charge each pair of 1  $\mu$ F capacitors up to ±2 V in 420  $\mu$ s, achieving a high measured charging efficiency of 82%.

## Keywords

Adaptive capacitor tuning; capacitor charger; charging efficiency; inductive power transmission

# I. Introduction

Inductive power transmission across the skin is currently the only viable solution to deliver sufficient power to implantable medical devices (IMDs) without imposing size and capacity constraints of rechargeable batteries [1]. In these IMDs, large capacitors have been utilized as temporary energy sources, which supply the low-power IMDs or augment the inductive power when it is interrupted or insufficient [2], [3]. Capacitors are also used in neural stimulation by storing charge and transferring it to the tissue periodically at high efficiency [4], [5]. Therefore, it is important to rapidly charge implanted capacitors efficiently not from batteries but directly through inductive transcutaneous links, while reducing the IMD size and the risk of tissue damage from overheating.

Charging capacitors from a voltage source through a switch achieves maximum 50% efficiency, wasting half of input energy in the switch. On the other hand, charging capacitors with a current source can minimize the switching loss as the fixed charging current becomes smaller [6]. Fig. 1 shows the conventional Li-ion battery charging techniques in inductively powered devices. AC–DC converters, e.g., a rectifier or a voltage doubler, convert an ac input voltage from an inductive link to a dc supply voltage  $V_{DD}$ , resulting in ac–dc power loss [7]. In Fig. 1(a), the current source (CS) charges the capacitor directly without switches by controlling its gate voltage [8]. However, the current source still wastes energy because

of the difference between supply and capacitor voltages  $V_{\text{DD}} - V_C$ . Generating an adaptive supply voltage  $AV_{\text{DD}}$  in Fig. 1(b)-keeps the dropout voltage of the current source small  $AV_{\text{DD}} - V_C$ , while suffering from the additional dc-dc power loss [9]. The charging system in Fig. 1(c) utilizes a back telemetry link to control the inductive power, adjusting  $V_{\text{DD}}$  depending on the  $V_C$  level to reduce the voltage drop across the current source [10]. However, it requires additional sensing and control circuits as well as an external feedback loop through an optical link.

In this brief, we propose a novel capacitor charging system, which charges a bank of capacitors efficiently with a fixed charging current, directly from an ac input voltage through an inductive link. A series charge injection capacitor following the secondary  $L_2C_2$  tank generates a predefined charging current, like a current source, while the voltage drop across this capacitor does not dissipate power. Consequently, the fixed charging current reduces the energy loss in the charger switches, boosting the capacitor charger efficiency. The proposed system can be utilized for a power-efficient neural stimulator which efficiently charges capacitor banks and injects charge into the neural tissue periodically [5]. In the rest of this brief, Section II describes the concept and implementation of the proposed wireless capacitor charging system. Section III presents circuit details and design considerations, including an active switch driver, an adaptive capacitive tuner, and a dual-output  $V_{\text{TH}}$ -compensated rectifier. Measurement results are in Section IV, followed by conclusions in Section V.

#### II. System Architecture

#### A. Capacitor Charging Concept

The concept of the proposed capacitor charging system starts from utilizing a series charge injection capacitor as a current source, which generates a fixed amount of predefined charging current. Fig. 2 shows the simplified circuit diagram of the inductive capacitor charging system, which charges a pair of positive and negative capacitors  $C_P$  and  $C_N$ , respectively. The secondary coil  $L_2$  and its parallel resonant capacitor  $C_2$ , which generate a coil voltage  $V_{\rm COII}$ , are followed by a series charge injection capacitor  $C_S$ , which provides an input voltage  $V_{IN}$  to  $C_P$  and  $C_N$  through switches SW<sub>P</sub> and SW<sub>N</sub>, respectively. SW<sub>P</sub> turns on when  $V_{\rm IN} > V_{\rm CP}$  form positive  $C_P$  charging, and SW<sub>N</sub> turns on when  $V_{\rm IN} < V_{\rm CN}$  for negative  $C_N$  charging with respect to the ground GND. When  $V_{CN} < V_{IN} < V_{CP}$ , both switches turn off, and  $V_{IN}$  follows  $V_{COIL}$ . Then, when either SW<sub>P</sub> or SW<sub>N</sub> turns on, the switch connects  $V_{\rm IN}$  to a positive or negative capacitor voltage  $V_{\rm CP}$  or  $V_{\rm CN}$ , holding  $V_{\rm IN}$  relatively constant and generating a fixed charging current  $I_{CH}$  through  $C_S$ . For example, when  $V_{IN} > V_{CP}$ , SW<sub>P</sub> connects  $V_{IN}$  to  $V_{CP}$  to hold  $V_{IN}$  around  $V_{CP}$ , while  $V_{COIL}$  keeps increasing. Thus, the voltage variation across  $C_S$ ,  $V_{\text{COIL}} - V_{\text{IN}}$ , generates the positive  $I_{\text{CH}}$  until  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  reaches its positive peak. When  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  starts decreasing from its peak,  $V_{\text{IN}}$  also decreases below  $V_{\text{CP}}$ , and SW<sub>P</sub> turns off. The charging current  $I_{CH}$  can be expressed as

$$I_{\rm CH} = C_{\rm S} \times d \left( V_{\rm COIL} - V_{\rm IN} \right) / dt. \quad (1)$$

The  $I_{CH}$  value can be adjusted by choosing proper  $C_S$ , which will be discussed in Section II-B. Fixed  $I_{CH}$  minimizes the switch loss, while unlike a real current source, the voltage drop across  $C_S$  does not dissipate power, improving the charging efficiency from  $L_2$  to the capacitor pair.

#### **B. Charging Time and Efficiency Analysis**

The smaller the charging current, the higher the capacitor charging efficiency and the smaller the power loss in switches, leading to longer charging time. Hence, the charging

current  $I_{\text{CH}}$  should be optimized to charge the capacitors efficiently within a desired period. We modeled the charging time and efficiency depending on  $I_{\text{CH}}$  with simplified voltage and current waveforms of the capacitor charging system in Fig. 3. In this analysis,  $f_c$  is the carrier frequency that is received via  $V_{\text{COIL}}$ , n is the number of charging cycle, and t[n] is the transition time of  $V_{\text{IN}}$  when  $V_{\text{CN}} < V_{\text{IN}} < V_{\text{CP}}$ . In this simplified model, we assume the following: 1)  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  is sinusoidal with a constant peak voltage  $V_{\text{Peak}}$ ; 2) switches turn on and off at ideal times, and  $V_{\text{IN}}$  becomes equal to  $V_{\text{CP}}$  or  $V_{\text{CN}}$  with negligible voltage drop across closed switches when connected to capacitors; 3) during each charging cycle,  $V_{\text{CP}}$  and  $V_{\text{CN}}$  are constant, and small voltage increments  $\Delta V_{\text{CP}}$  and  $\Delta V_{\text{CN}}$  are added to  $V_{\text{CP}}$  and  $V_{\text{CN}}$  at the end of each cycle, respectively; and 4)  $C_P$  and  $C_N$  are equal and charged by the same amount of  $I_{\text{CH}}$ , i.e.,  $V_{\text{CP}} = -V_{\text{CN}}$ .

When V<sub>IN</sub> is connected to V<sub>CP</sub> or V<sub>CN</sub> for charging, V<sub>COIL</sub> and I<sub>CH</sub> can be expressed as

$$V_{\text{COII.}}(t) = V_{\text{Peak}} \sin(2\pi f_c t) \quad (2)$$
$$I_{\text{CH}}(t) = 2\pi f_c C_S V_{\text{Peak}} \cos(2\pi f_c t) . \quad (3)$$

 $V_{\rm CP}$  at the *n*th charging cycle  $V_{\rm CP}[n]$  can be obtained from

$$V_{\rm CP}\left[n\right] = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \Delta V_{\rm CP}\left[i\right] \quad (4)$$

where  $\Delta V_{CP}[n]$  is the  $V_{CP}$  increment at the *n*th charging cycle, from the initial condition of  $V_{CP}[0] = V_{CN}[0] = 0$  V.

At the *n*th charging cycle, t[n] is equal to the transition time, in which  $V_{IN}$  increases from  $V_{CN}[n-1]$  to  $V_{CP}[n-1]$ . Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} V_{\rm CP}\left[n-1\right] - V_{\rm CN}\left[n-1\right] &= 2V_{\rm CP}\left[n-1\right] \\ &= \left[V_{\rm COIL}\left(t\right)\right]_{\frac{f_c}{f_c} - \frac{1}{4f_c} + t[n]}^{\frac{n}{f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}} (5) \\ &= V_{\rm Peak}\left[\sin\left(2\pi f_c t\right)\right]_{\frac{f_c}{f_c} - \frac{1}{4f_c} + t[n]}^{\frac{n}{f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}} \end{aligned}$$

In (5), t[n] can be written as

$$t[n] = \frac{\sin^{-1}\left(-1 + \frac{2V_{\rm CP}[n-1]}{V_{\rm Peak}}\right)}{2\pi f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}.$$
 (6)

With t[n] in (6),  $\Delta V_{CP}[n]$  can be derived as

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta V_{\rm CP}\left[n\right] &= \ \frac{1}{C_P} \int_{\frac{n}{f_c}}^{\frac{n}{f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}} I_{\rm CH}\left(t\right) dt \\ &= \ \frac{C_S}{C_P} V_{\rm Peak} \left[\sin\left(2\pi f_c t\right)\right]_{\frac{n}{f_c} - \frac{1}{4f_c} + t[n]}^{\frac{n}{f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}} \\ &= \ 2 \frac{C_S}{C_P} V_{\rm Peak} \left(1 - \frac{V_{\rm CP}[n-1]}{V_{\rm Peak}}\right). \end{aligned}$$
(7)

Therefore, the charging period  $T_{CH}$  during which  $C_P$  and  $C_N$  are charged to a target charging voltage  $\pm V_{TG}$  at the  $n_{CH}$ th charging cycle, can be obtained from

$$T_{\rm CH} = \frac{n_{\rm CH}}{f_c}$$
, where  $V_{\rm CP} [n_{\rm CH}] = \sum_{i=1}^{n_{\rm CH}} \Delta V_{\rm CP} [i] = V_{\rm TG}$ . (8)

The total energy loss in SW<sub>P</sub> and SW<sub>N</sub> during  $n_{\text{CH}}$  charging cycles  $E_{\text{SW}}[n_{\text{CH}}]$  can be calculated as a sum of switching energy losses in each cycle  $\Delta E_{\text{SW}}[n]$ 

$$\Delta E_{\rm SW}[n] = 2 \int_{\frac{n}{f_c} - \frac{1}{4f_c} + t[n]}^{\frac{n}{f_c} + \frac{1}{4f_c}} I_{\rm CH}^2(t) \times R_{\rm SW} dt \quad (9)$$

$$E_{\rm SW}\left[n_{\rm CH}\right] = \sum_{i=1}^{n_{\rm CH}} \Delta E_{\rm SW}\left[i\right] \quad (10)$$

where  $R_{SW}$  is the switch resistance.

The capacitor charging efficiency  $\eta_{CAP}$  from  $L_2$  to the  $C_P$  and  $C_N$  pair of capacitors can be expressed as

$$\eta_{\rm CAP} = \frac{E_{\rm CP} + E_{\rm CN}}{E_{\rm CP} + E_{\rm CN} + E_{\rm SW} [n_{\rm CH}] + E_{\rm SYS}} \quad (11)$$

where  $E_{\rm CP}$  and  $E_{\rm CN}$  are the stored energies in  $C_P$  and  $C_N$ , respectively, which are  $E_{\rm CP} = C_P V_{\rm TG}^2/2$  and  $E_{\rm CN} = C_N V_{\rm TG}^2/2$ , respectively, and  $E_{\rm SYS}$  is the energy consumed by the rest of the system during  $n_{\rm CH}$  charging cycles.

Smaller  $I_{CH}$  increases  $T_{CH}$  in (4)–(8), while smaller  $I_{CH}$  and  $R_{SW}$  increase  $\eta_{CAP}$  in (9)–(11). Therefore, when the maximum tolerable  $T_{CH}$  is known,  $I_{CH}$  can be selected to be as small as it takes  $T_{CH}$  to charge  $C_P$  and  $C_N$  for  $C_S$  and  $V_{Peak}$  values in (3)–(8).  $C_S$  should be smaller than  $C_R$ , and  $V_{Peak} > V_{TG}$ .

#### C. Implementation of the Capacitor Charging System

The overall architecture of the proposed capacitor charging system is shown in Fig. 4. A power transmitter drives the primary coil  $L_1$  at the designated carrier frequency  $f_c$ , which induces  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  across  $L_2$ . The capacitor charger consists of switches driven by high-speed active drivers to charge a bank of four pairs of capacitors  $C_P$  and  $C_N$ . A control unit sets a user-defined target charging voltage  $V_{\text{TG}}$  and generates a sequence signal  $S_{\text{CH}}$  to operate the four-channel capacitor charger sequentially, which can be utilized in a programmable multielectrode neural stimulation [5]. When charging, the capacitor charger connects  $V_{\text{IN}}$  to positive and negative capacitors alternately to hold  $V_{\text{IN}}$  at  $V_{\text{CP}}$  or  $V_{\text{CN}}$ , while generating the fixed charging current  $I_{\text{CH}}$  through  $C_S$ . In other words,  $C_S$  operates like a current source that does not dissipate power, while reducing the switching loss in the capacitor charger and significantly improving the charging efficiency from  $L_2$  to the capacitor bank.

In this capacitor charging system, the secondary resonance capacitance  $C_R$ , connected across  $L_2$ , can be expressed as

$$C_{R} = C_{2} + C_{A} + \frac{C_{S}C_{\text{Eff}}}{C_{S} + C_{\text{Eff}}}$$
 (12)

where  $C_2$  is the parallel resonant capacitor,  $C_A$  is the adaptive tuning capacitor, and  $C_{\text{Eff}}$  is the effective capacitance of the capacitor bank, which varies as the capacitor bank voltage and switching duty cycle change. An adaptive capacitor tuner compensates for  $C_{\text{Eff}}$ variations by automatically adjusting  $C_A$  to keep  $C_R$  constant. Therefore, the secondary  $L_2C_2$ tank is maintained at resonance during charging, while maximizing  $V_{\text{COIL}}$ . After the charging cycle, an end-of-charge (EOC) signal connects  $V_{\text{IN}}$  to GND, and the adaptive capacitor tuner is deactivated, setting  $C_R = C_2 + C_S$ . A dual-output  $V_{\text{TH}}$ -compensated rectifier followed by low-dropout regulators generates the supply voltages  $V_{\text{DD}}$  and  $V_{\text{SS}}$ from  $V_{\text{COIL}}$ , which has little effect on the charging operation as long as the  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude is kept constant by the adaptive capacitor tuner.

#### III. Circuit Details and Design Considerations

Fig. 5 shows the schematics of the capacitor charger and one of its active switch drivers. In Fig. 5(a), if  $V_{TG} > V_{CP}$  and  $S_{CH}$  = high, the capacitor charger starts charging the capacitor bank  $C_P$  and  $C_N$ , with EN = high. When  $V_{IN} > V_{CP}$ , the active switch driver DRV<sub>P</sub> turns on the switch  $P_1$  with  $V_P$  = low to provide the positive charging current + $I_{CH}$  to  $C_P$  with a small switch loss. Fig. 5(b) shows the active switch driver (DRV<sub>P</sub>) in which  $P_2$ ,  $P_3$ ,  $N_2$ , and  $N_3$ form a common-gate comparator, whose inputs are connected to  $V_{CP}$  and  $V_{IN}$ . Since the current drawn from  $V_{\rm IN}$  is much smaller than the charging current, it has little effect on the charging operation. An offset block, which consists of current sources  $P_4$  and  $N_4$  and control switches  $P_5$  and  $N_5$ , injects additional positive or negative offset current, depending on a feedback voltage  $V_F$ , to expedite  $V_O$  transition for fast  $P_1$  switching, maximize the forward current delivered to the capacitor, and minimize the back current to improve the charging efficiency [11]. Since the  $V_{O}$  level depends on  $V_{IN}$  amplitude, which varies during charging, shoot-through limited inverters level-shift  $V_Q$  to supply levels to drive  $P_1$  with proper  $V_P$ levels. An offset reset switch  $N_{10}$ , which is driven by  $V_N$ , resets the offset by pulling  $V_F$  = low after  $P_1$  turns off and  $V_{IN} \leq V_{CN}$  for the next  $C_P$  charging cycle. Here, the timing of the reset signal depends on  $V_{IN}$ , which, unlike the process-dependent inverter delay in [11], is independent of process variations.  $DRV_N$  has a symmetrical structure with respect to  $DRV_P$ .

Fig. 6 shows the schematic diagram of the adaptive capacitor tuner. A dynamic bias and envelope detector sense the positive  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude and compare it to a threshold window around  $V_{\text{REF}} = 1.2$  V. If  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  is outside a designated window (2.7–2.8 V<sub>P</sub>), UP or DN signals from comparators CMP<sub>1</sub> or CMP<sub>2</sub> trigger a 7-bit up/down counter to progressively adjust a 7-bit binary-scaled set of tuning capacitors  $C_A = 0 \sim 127 \times (8 \text{ pF})$ , between  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  and GND, to bring  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude back within this window.  $C_A$  can accommodate the capacitance variations in (12), which result from  $C_S$  (=1 nF in this system) in series with  $C_{\text{Eff}}$  as it varies with  $V_{\text{CP,CN}}$ . The switches for tuning capacitors  $P_{17}$  to  $P_{23}$  are driven by  $V_{\text{DDH}}$ , which is the higher voltage between  $V_{\text{DD}}$  and  $V_{\text{COIL}}$ , to ensure proper turnoff.

Fig. 7 shows the schematic diagram of the dual-output  $V_{\text{TH}}$ -compensated rectifier.  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  is converted to two half waves  $V_{\text{INP}}$  and  $V_{\text{INN}}$  to prevent overvoltage across the following transistors that constitute a positive and negative rectifier pair, generating  $V_{\text{RECP}}$  and  $V_{\text{RECN}}$ , respectively. In the positive rectifier,  $V_{\text{TH}(P28)}$  of the diode-connected transistor  $P_{28}$ compensates for  $V_{\text{TH}(P27)}$  of the rectifying switch  $P_{27}$ , resulting in a small voltage drop of  $V_{\text{GS}(P27)} - V_{\text{GS}(P28)}$  and high ac-dc power conversion efficiency.  $R_4$  reduces the gate voltage of  $P_{27}$  by discharging  $C_6$  in case  $V_{\text{RECP}}$  decreases.

#### **IV. Measurement Results**

#### A. Chip Micrograph and Measured Waveforms

The four-channel capacitor charging system was fabricated in the TSMC 0.35- $\mu$ m 4M2P nwell standard CMOS process, occupying 2.1 mm<sup>2</sup>. Fig. 8 shows the chip micrograph and floor plan of the charging system along with the inductive powering setup. A class-E power amplifier on the transmitter side drives the primary coil ( $L_1 = 6.8 \mu$ H and  $\phi_1 = 4$  cm) at 2 MHz and delivers power across a 15-mm gap to the secondary coil ( $L_2 = 1.2 \mu$ H and  $\phi_2 = 1$  cm).

The waveforms in Fig. 9 show how the capacitor bank is being efficiently charged from  $V_{\text{COIL}}$ . In Fig. 9(a), the peaks of  $V_{\text{IN}}$  follow  $V_{\text{CP}}$  and  $V_{\text{CN}}$  traces during charging because the fixed charging current  $I_{\text{CH}}$  results in a small constant voltage drop across the capacitor charger switches  $P_1$  and  $N_1$ . With  $C_P = C_N = 1 \ \mu$ F, each capacitor pair was charged to  $V_{\text{CP}} = 2 \text{ V}$  and  $V_{\text{CN}} = -2 \text{ V}$  in 420  $\mu$ s when  $V_{\text{COIL}} = 2.7 \text{ V}_P$ . Fig. 9(b) shows the active switching waveforms when  $V_{\text{CP},\text{CN}} = 0, \pm 1$ , and  $\pm 2 \text{ V}$ . When  $V_{\text{IN}} > V_{\text{CP}}$ ,  $P_1$  turns on, holding  $V_{\text{IN}}$  to  $V_{\text{CP}}$  plus voltage drop across SW<sub>P</sub>, and the voltage across  $C_S$ ,  $V_{\text{COIL}} - V_{\text{IN}}$ , starts to increase, flowing  $+I_{\text{CH}}$  into  $C_P$ . As  $V_{CP}$  increases, the switching duty cycle decreases while the slope of  $V_{\text{COIL}} - V_{\text{IN}}$  remains almost the same, generating a fixed charging current.

Fig. 10 shows how the adaptive capacitor tuner compensates for the  $C_{\text{Eff}}$  variations and maintains  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude constant during charging. In Fig. 10(a), the UP signal triggers the up/down counter, automatically increasing the adaptive tuning capacitor  $C_A$  to 624 pF as  $V_{\text{CP}}$  increases. Therefore,  $C_A$  compensates for the  $C_{\text{Eff}}$  variations, and the secondary resonance capacitance  $C_R$  in (12) stays at  $C_2 + C_S$  during charging, generating a relatively constant  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  with small  $\Delta V_{\text{COIL}} = \pm 50$  mV variations. In Fig. 10(b), where the adaptive capacitor tuner is deactivated, the  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude has dropped by 500 mV because of the resonance capacitor detuning, resulting in  $V_{\text{DD}}$  reduction and limitation of  $V_{\text{CP}}$  to only 1.8 V, instead of the 2-V target. Therefore, the adaptive capacitor tuner ensures proper charging operation with sufficient  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  amplitude against  $C_R$  detuning.

#### **B.** Capacitor Charging Time and Efficiency

Fig. 11 shows the measured, simulated, and calculated values of the capacitor charging time and efficiency, while sweeping the target charging voltage  $V_{\text{TG}}$  from ±1 to ±2 V, to verify the accuracy of our measurement as well as provide insight for further improvements. The calculated charging time and efficiency have been derived from (4)–(8) and (9)–(11) in Section II-B, respectively, with  $f_c = 2$  MHz,  $C_S = 1$  nF,  $C_P = C_N = 1 \mu$ F, and  $V_{\text{Peak}} = 2.7$  V. We assumed that  $R_{\text{SW}} = 1.5-6 \Omega$  depending on  $V_{\text{CP,CN}}$  and the system supply power  $P_{\text{SYS}} =$ 400  $\mu$ W from simulations. In Fig. 11(a), the 1- $\mu$ F capacitor pair was charged up to ±2 V in 420  $\mu$ s. The amount of charging current at each charging cycle gradually decreases as capacitors are charged up because  $V_{\text{IN}}$  needs longer transition time t[n] in (6) before charging. Therefore, as the capacitor voltages increase, capacitors require longer charging time for the same amount of voltage increment. Shorter charging time in calculations is the result of the ideal switching of SW<sub>P</sub> and SW<sub>N</sub>, regardless of  $V_{\text{CP,CN}}$  levels, which also indicates the maximum possible capacitor charging efficiency.

In Fig. 11(b), the charging efficiency was defined as the stored dc energy in the capacitor bank over the total input ac energy of the capacitor charging system. The highest efficiency of 82% was measured when 1- $\mu$ F capacitors were charged up to  $V_{\text{TG}} = \pm 2$  V. Lower  $|V_{\text{CP,CN}}|$  increases  $R_{\text{SW}}$  of  $P_1$  and  $N_1$  switches, leading to larger switching loss and lower charging efficiency as  $V_{\text{TG}}$  decreases. Discrepancies between measured and simulated efficiencies mainly result from larger  $R_{\text{SW}}$  of the chip, which was estimated about 4–16  $\Omega$  by observing

voltage drops across switches, compared-to the simulated  $R_{SW} = 1.5-6 \Omega$ . The calculated charging efficiency with  $R_{SW} = 4-16 \Omega$  shows closer results to the measured efficiency. While  $R_{SW}$  can be further reduced by optimizing the switch sizes, the proposed capacitor charging system achieves a high measured charging efficiency of 63%–82% with  $C_P = C_N = 1 \mu F$  charged up to  $\pm 1 \sim \pm 2 V$  in 132–420  $\mu$ s. Table I summarized the specifications of the current inductive capacitor charging system prototype. Table II compares the estimated capacitor charging efficiencies  $\eta_{CAP}$  when the conventional Li-ion battery charging methods in Fig. 1 are applied to charge capacitors from 0 to 4.2 V in current source mode.

# **V.** Conclusion

We have demonstrated a power-efficient wireless capacitor charging system for inductively powered applications. A fixed charging current generated by applying part of the coil voltage across a series charge injection capacitor charges a capacitor bank with small energy loss, improving the charging efficiency. During charging, an adaptive capacitor tuner maintains the inductive link at resonance, providing a constant coil voltage within a designated window. The charging time and efficiency of the system have also been analyzed to provide designers with better insight toward maximizing the charging efficiency for given charging time and capacitor bank values. This system is expected to improve the overall power efficiency in IMDs that utilize capacitor banks for energy storage and stimulation [5].

#### Acknowledgments

This work was supported in part by the National Institute of Health under Grant 5R21EB009437 and in part by the National Science Foundation under Award ECCS-824199. This brief was recommended by Associate Editor G. Wang.

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#### Fig. 1.

Conventional inductive Li-ion battery charging techniques in CS mode from (a) a fixed supply voltage [8], (b) an adaptive supply voltage [9], and (c) a supply voltage adjusted by an external control loop [10].





Simplified circuit diagram of the inductive capacitor charging system.







Simplified voltage and current waveforms of the capacitor charging system for modeling and theoretical analysis.





Overall architecture of the proposed power-efficient capacitor charging system through an inductive link.







**Fig. 6.** Schematic diagram of the adaptive capacitor tuner.











#### Fig. 9.

Measured waveforms of (a) the capacitor charger and (b) its zoomed-in switching as  $V_{CP,CN}$  of 1- $\mu$ F capacitor pairs reach ±2 V in 420  $\mu$ s.



## Fig. 10.

Measured waveforms of  $V_{\text{COIL}}$  and  $V_{\text{CP,CN}}$  variations during capacitor charging (a) with and (b) without the adaptive capacitor tuning mechanism.





Measured, simulated, and calculated (a) capacitor charging time and (b) charging efficiency versus target charging voltage at  $f_c = 2$  MHz,  $C_S = 1$  nF,  $C_P = C_N = 1 \mu$ F, and  $V_{\text{Peak}} = 2.7$  V.

# Capacitor Charging System Specifications

Overa	ll System	Capacitor Charger		
Process	0.35 µm CMOS	# of channel	4	
$L_2/C_2/C_S$	1.2µH / 4nF / 1nF	Target voltage	±1 ~ ±2 V	
Carrier freq.	2 MHz	Charging off.	63 ~ 82%	
Coil distance	1.5 cm	Charging time	132 ~ 420 μs	
V <sub>coil</sub> peak	2.7 V	$C_P/C_N$	1 μF / 1 μF	
Area	2.1 mm <sup>2</sup>	$P_{Supply}(Charging)$	240 μW	
Rectifier	/ Regulator	Adaptive Capacitor Tuner		
V <sub>RECP</sub> / V <sub>RECN</sub>	2.25 V / -2.25 V	Tuning bit	7-bit	
$V_{DD}$ / $V_{SS}$	2.1 V / -2.1 V	Adaptive cap.	0 ~ 1024 pF	
Rec. PCE	72% w/50 kΩ	P <sub>Static</sub>	20 μW <sup>*</sup>	

\* Simulation

#### TABLE II

# Benchmarking Capacitor Charging Efficiency

Ref.	<i>V<sub>C</sub></i> ( <b>V</b> )	$V_{DD}(\mathbf{V})$	I <sub>CS</sub> (mA)	$\eta_{ACDC}(\%)^*$	$\eta_{DCDC}(\%)$	η <sub>CHG</sub> (%) <sup>**</sup>	η <sub>CAP</sub> (%) <sup>***</sup>
[8]	0~4.2	4.3	3	80	-	48.8	39
[9]	0~4.2	V <sub>C</sub> +0.2	800	80	90	91.3	65.7
[10]	0~4.2	<i>V<sub>C</sub></i> +0.3	698	80	-	87.5	70
This work	0~±2	$2.7 V_{\text{Peak}} AC (V_{coil})$	34 (max)	Not needed	-	82	82

\* Power efficiency of the active rectifier in [7]

\*\* Charger efficiency,  $\eta_{CHG} = \arg (V_C / V_{DD})$ 

\*\*\*  $\eta CAP = \eta ACDC \times \eta DCDC \times \eta CHG.$