

VISION IMPAIRED SWIM AID

DESIGN DOCUMENT

Team 5

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS & PRACTICES USED

- For prototyping
 - Arduino (Programmed in C)
 - IR sensors
 - Sharp GP2D12



- Ultrasonic/Sonar
 - Vexilar Sonar
 - Parallax PING)))™



- MaxBotix MB7072-200



- BlueRobotics Ping Sonar Altimeter and Echosounder



SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

- All components waterproof
- Device should be completely operable by blind and vision impaired users
- Device should detect the user when they are near the end of the
- Device should warn the user when they are near the end of the pool

APPLICABLE COURSES FROM IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

- CPR E 288
- EE 224/324
- EE 201/230
- EE 321
- EE/CPR E 185
- COMS 327

NEW SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED THAT WAS NOT TAUGHT IN COURSES

- Using sensors in the water
- Researching commercially available parts/devices

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction.....	6
1.1	Acknowledgement.....	6
1.2	Problem and Project Statement	6
	Problem.....	6
	Project Statement.....	6
	Goals.....	6
1.3	Operational Environment	6
1.4	Requirements	7
1.5	Intended Users and Uses.....	7
1.6	Assumptions and Limitations.....	7
	Assumptions.....	7
	Limits.....	7
1.7	Expected End Product and Deliverables	7
2.	Specifications and Analysis	8
2.1	Proposed Design.....	8
2.2	Design Analysis.....	8
2.3	Development Process.....	8
2.4	Design Plan	9
3.	Statement of Work.....	9
3.1	Previous Work And Literature.....	9
3.2	Technology Considerations	10
3.3	Task Decomposition	10
3.4	Possible Risks And Risk Management.....	10
3.5	Project Proposed Milestones and Evaluation Criteria.....	10
	Key Milestones.....	10
	Tests.....	11
3.6	Project Tracking Procedure.....	11
3.7	Expected Results and Validation.....	11
4.	Project Timeline, Estimated Resources, and Challenges.....	11
4.1	Project Timeline	11
4.2	Feasibility Assessment.....	11
4.3	Personnel Effort Requirements	12
4.4	Other Resource Requirements.....	12

4.5 Financial Requirements..... 13

5. Testing and Implementation..... 13

5.1 Interface Specifications..... 14

5.2 Hardware..... 15

5.3 Software..... 15

5.4 Functional Testing..... 15

5.5 Non-Functional Testing..... 15

5.6 Process..... 15

5.7 Results..... 17

 IR Test 1..... 17

 IR Test 2..... 18

 Sonar Test..... 19

 Radio Test..... 19

6. Closing Material..... 20

6.1 Conclusion..... 20

6.2 References..... 20

6.3 Appendices..... 21

 IR Test Data..... 21

 Sonar Test Data..... 22

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Overview of the system..... 8

Figure 2: AquaEye device in use..... 9

Figure 3: Project timeline..... 11

Figure 4: Diagram of the hardware components and their connections..... 15

Figure 5: Flow diagram of progress..... 16

Figure 6: Image testing the IR sensor..... 17

Figure 7: A frame from the video of the IR test with the sensor data overlaid..... 18

Figure 8: MaxBotix sensor in the water for testing..... 19

Figure 9: Sonar test data above water..... 22

Figure 10: Sonar test data below water..... 22

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: List of personnel effort requirements.....	12
Table 2: FM Transmitter results from channel 1 in the pool.....	19
Table 3: FM Transmitter results from channel 2 in the pool.....	20
Table 4: FM Transmitter results from channel 3 in the pool.....	20
Table 5: IR testing results from 20 degrees.....	21
Table 6: IR testing results from 25 degrees.....	21
Table 7: IR testing results from 30 degrees.....	21

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our advisor, Lee Harker, is the overall manager of the project and all the products being purchased have to be confirmed and funded by the ETG.

The ISU swim coach, Micheal Peterson, has helped by providing information about how competitive swimmers compete and what accommodations that are made to a visually impaired swimmer. We also reached out to Brandon Schellhorn, the swim coach for Heartland AEA, and he gave us good information about how the swimmer would be able to set up the device, who it would be helpful for, and why this would be a useful device.

Contact Information

Micheal Peterson, Coach for ISU swim team, Iowa State University, coachmike@swimacac.com

Brandon Schellhorn, Coach for the Visually Impaired, Iowa Braille School/IESBV - Heartland AEA, 515-249-6312

1.2 PROBLEM AND PROJECT STATEMENT

PROBLEM

Swimmers who are visually impaired cannot see the lines at the bottom of the pool to indicate to a lap swimmer when they are close to the wall. Because of this, those who cannot see the lines are forced to have assistance from another person who taps them on the head with a stick when it is time to turn around. This forces vision impaired people to have to work around an additional person's schedule to find time to swim.

PROJECT STATEMENT

To allow visually impaired people to be able to swim without other's assistance, we set out to create a device that would allow the swimmer to independently swim laps on their own time. This device will tell the swimmer when they are getting close to the end of the pool, so they know to turn around. We plan to create a device that will be easy to set up and takedown, and be accommodating for vision impaired people.

GOALS

- Deliver a complete final product that allows vision impaired swimmers to swim laps independent of another person
- Improve our understanding of the complete engineering design process
- Gain further technical insight beyond what we have learned in our previous coursework

1.3 OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- The headphones and radio receiver on the swimmer will be used for extended periods of time in chlorinated pool water. They will need to be completely sealed and waterproof. They will need to be able to withstand the effects of any chemicals in pool water. They will need to be powered by a rechargeable battery that can power them for the duration of a swim.
- The control boxes and sensors will be placed at the ends of the pool. They may be used in both indoor and outdoor pools. They need to withstand splashes from the pool, the humid climate of an indoor pool,

- The environment for this project will be outside in a pool or inside for lap swim competitions

1.4 REQUIREMENTS

- All components waterproof
- Device should be completely operable by blind and vision impaired users
- Device should detect the user when they are near the end of the lane
- Device should warn the user when they are near the end of the pool
- Device should detect the user while they are performing any of the four main competitive swimming strokes
- All instructions and indications should be helpful and accommodating for vision impaired users

1.5 INTENDED USERS AND USES

The intended user would be vision impaired lap swimmers. We are designing this product to help vision impaired lap swimmers know when they are getting close to the edge of the pool so they could turn around before hitting their head while at the same time not having two other people tap their shoulders when they get close.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

ASSUMPTIONS

- The product will primarily be for vision impaired lap swimmers
- The vision impaired will have someone available to help them set it up
- The product will have two sensors on each side of the pool
- Product will be used in a freshwater lap swimming pool
- The pool will be no longer than 50 meters

LIMITS

- Vision impaired and blind people will need to be able to use it
- The system needs a sensor on both ends to detect swimmer, otherwise pool length is too long
- The system needs to be wireless and operate in wet conditions
- The system needs to be battery powered

1.7 EXPECTED END PRODUCT AND DELIVERABLES

The end products are going to be:

- Control Boxes with sensors attached
 - These boxes will be mounted on each end of the swimming lane. Each box will have an attached sensor to detect when the user is nearing the end of the lane, as well as an FM transmitter to communicate and audio signal to the user.
- Sensor Selection
 - For this project we will need to find a sonar or IR sensor that can reliably detect the user as they are swimming towards the end of the lane. The sensor should work for all the main competition swimming strokes.

- Wireless headphones/earbuds
 - This device will allow the user to receive the audio signal from the control boxes when it is necessary for the user to turn around.

2. SPECIFICATIONS AND ANALYSIS

2.1 PROPOSED DESIGN

The first thing we did in our design process was to come up with a high-level overview of the whole system. The overview is shown below in Figure 1.

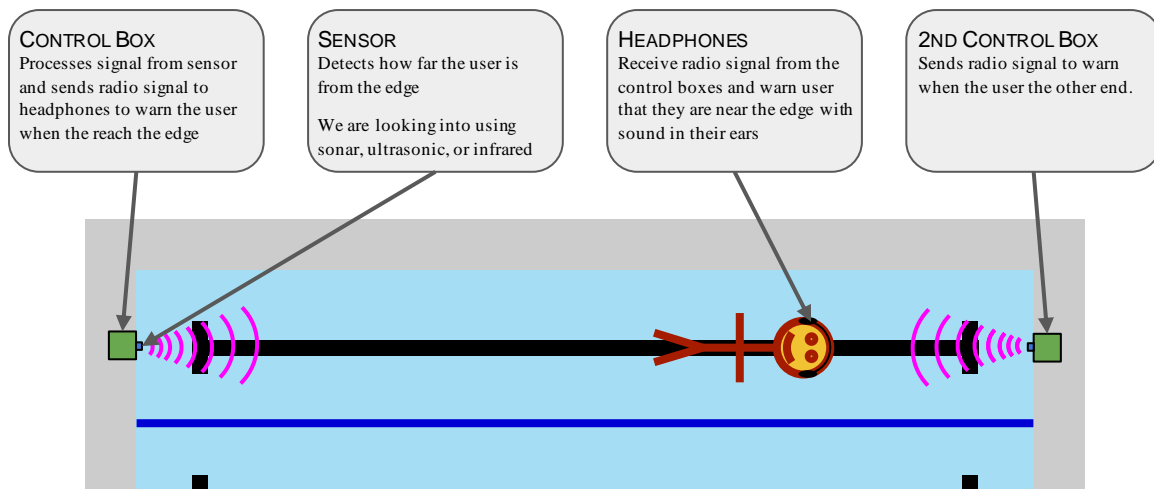


Figure 1: Overview of the system

2.2 DESIGN ANALYSIS

- We started off by going to the pool to test the different sensors
- Different types of sensors like IR and Sonar are used to test how they react to the swimmer on the surface of the water
- The first sensors we used from the ETG
- The microcontroller that is being used is the Arduino Uno
- After we get a good tracking of the swimmer, then we can focus on the communication from the control box to the swimmer

2.3 DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

It is hard to imagine how disabled people go about their everyday needs. We met with the Student Accessibility Services office here at Iowa State to reach out to members in our community that are disabled. We want to determine some norms that vision impaired swimmers might follow. Our goal is to make our product as user friendly as possible. We also reached out to the coach from the Iowa Braille School and he said that most vision impaired have someone there to help set up the equipment. He also mentioned that about 10-20% of his students get tapped on the shoulder, and a lot of his swimmers would benefit from it when they do the backstroke. After we establish some more norms that need to be followed, then we just need to get the system to work.

Right now our biggest issue is tracking the swimmer. We have obtained good data from our IR sensor that would work kind of like a break beam to detect the swimmer. We have established that we can communicate well over FM, and now need to integrate the output audio with our sensors and controller.

2.4 DESIGN PLAN

We plan to use an IR or sonar sensor to detect the swimmer that will be connected to an Arduino inside the control box. When the sensor detects that the swimmer is at the T then Arduino will send a signal through an FM transmitter to a pair of FM headphones that the swimmer would be wearing. For it to work, we would need the same control box on both sides of the pool and a transmitter that does not reach the other side of the pool so the FM headphones can connect to the FM transmitter that is closer.

3. STATEMENT OF WORK

3.1 PREVIOUS WORK AND LITERATURE



Figure 2: AquaEye device in use

In all the research we have done, we have only found one product that has a similar concept as ours. In 2009 a group created a device called AquaEye. The device has the same idea of tracking a vision impaired swimmer and then sending them a signal via headphones so that they know where they are located in the pool. The way that they track their swimmer is with a light beam, and when it gets broke the digital signal is sent back to the processor. In our product we are trying

to get the specific distance of the swimmer away from the wall. With the light beam, it limits which lane the swimmer can use because it has to be placed on the outside of the pool lane.

If their product is used as shown above then no one would be able to swim in the lane closest to the sensor otherwise it would alter the performance of the device.

3.2 TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

The strength of our device is that it will be able to function no matter what lane the user is in. With the AquaEye they can only swim in the lane near the edge. This advantage given to the user, makes tracking the swimmer more difficult. We need to be able to detect the swimmer no matter where they are at in the lane, but we can't get any interference from the neighboring lanes, otherwise it will alter the performance of our device. There always seems to be negative side effects to improve the functionality of a preexisting device. Other options we have thought about include using a break sensor on the side of the pool, but the problem for this would be that the sensor would detect swimmers in other lanes so it would only be able to allow one swimmer to use it at a time.

3.3 TASK DECOMPOSITION

For this project we have split it into tasks which include: find sensor and find communication. Within the find sensor we want to research, test, and conclude if the sensor will work and continue this process until we find a sensor that would work for the project. Then for finding communication we want to do the same thing but need to find a transmitter that will work underwater and can be connected to a pair of headphones that would allow us to tell the swimmer when they need to turn.

3.4 POSSIBLE RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

One concern that we have is with the waterproofing so that the electronics do not shock anyone swimming, since the sensor might have to go into the water. It is also possible that the control boxes have water accidentally splashed on them, so they will need to be water resistant to ensure the device's durability.

Another concern we have is in finding a reliable sensor that will be able to detect the user without interference from the water or other swimmers. Depending on the sensor that we end up choosing, we will have to match the design of the control box to the positioning requirements of the sensor.

During prototyping, we have also had some issues transmitting a clear signal via FM to the user's earbuds in the pool environment.

3.5 PROJECT PROPOSED MILESTONES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

KEY MILESTONES

- Finding consistent sensors for detecting the location of swimmer in the pool
- Choosing a transmitter and receiver for the signal to the swimmer for when to turn around
- Interfacing all of the components to work together

break sensor for a lane, but we would have trouble if the swimmer was completely under water when the swimmer crossed that point because it does not detect objects under the water. Then we also had troubles waterproofing the sonar sensor to put it under water. We started with the sensor out and were getting good readings which we found out was due to the ground wire coming loose. After we fixed that we got it working again and put it back in the PVC elbow we are using to water proof, but did not get it in all the way and think water got on the wires or sensors or sensor so are getting different result before and are working to figure out how to fix that now.

4.3 PERSONNEL EFFORT REQUIREMENTS

Table 1: List of personnel effort requirements

Task	Description	Estimated Hours
Contacting Potential Visually Impaired Users	Reaching out to visually impaired community members, ideally who are also swimmers, to learn more about the challenges they face and specifications for our project that we may not have known/thought of.	30 Hours
Research and General Planning	Brainstorming design ideas and evaluating the potential implementation of those ideas.	40 Hours
Sensor Testing	Testing swimmer detection sensors in a pool to determine what sensors will be ideal for our application.	60 Hours
Communications Testing	Testing devices to communicate with the swimmer when they are near the end of the pool.	20 Hours
Prototype Assembly and Internal-Testing	Integrating our chosen sensor and our communication devices into one system. Testing our system with team-members simulating vision impairment.	40 Hours
Design Revision and User-Testing	Getting feedback from our targeted users and making revisions based off of their feedback.	30 Hours

4.4 OTHER RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The sensors used to identify the swimmer's location that we have tested so far are the XL-MaxSonar sonar sensor and the Sharp GP2D12 IR sensor. We plan on testing various scenarios with each sensor to decide which gives us the most accurate data. Committing to the sonar sensor will require 2 units for each end of the pool while committing to the IR sensor may require 4 units, 2 for each end of the pool. We are using the Arduino system to interpret sensor data and send a signal to a communication device. The communications device we are using is a

waterproof FM radio bud headset (UWaterK7) that will receive FM radio signal from a transmitter (Adafruit Stereo FM Transmitter) connected to the Arduino device. The sonar device is housed in a PVC pipe to keep out water and connect to the Arduino device. For the PVC casing we will screw the sonar into an elbow that is connected to a 2 ft PVC pipe that goes up to the pool edge and to another elbow that will be connected to another 2 ft piece going to the control box. We also will use Beyer Halls lap swim pool to test and State Gyms pool when Beyer Hall is closed.

4.5 FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

The FM radio headset (UWaterK7) costs \$40. The XL-MaxSonar sensor costs \$100. The Sharp GP2D12 IR sensor costs \$20. BlueRobotics Sonar costs \$250. The Adafruit Stereo FM Transmitter costs \$20. The PVC piping costs \$5. The Arduino costs \$30. We will need a microcontroller for the device which will cost around \$10. Depending on what sensor we commit to, the pricing will vary for the final product. Each will require the Arduino device, a waterproof box to house the Arduino, the FM transmitter, the microcontroller, and the receiver device. Assuming we need a box on each side of the pool, the total cost of the universally necessary components will be approximately \$160. If we commit to the XL-MaxSonar, then the price of the sensor component will be \$205 making the total device cost \$365. If we commit to the Sharp GP2D12 IR sensor, then the price of the sensor components will be \$80 making the total device cost \$240. If we commit to the BlueRobotics Sonar, then the price of the sensor component will be \$505 making the total device cost \$665.

5. TESTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. We had to start by unit testing different types of sensors including sonar and IR sensors. We tested how they reacted to the water and if they could detect a swimmer in the water. For communicating with the swimmer, we plan to test an FM Transmitter and FM headphones to broadcast our audio.
2. We needed to test if the IR and sonar sensors would be able to track a swimmer's distance accurately. For communication we need to test the sound quality of the FM headphones and how far the FM transmitter would transmit.
3. To begin we wanted to test how the sensors reacted to water so we took them to the pool and had someone swimming to see what results we would get. We tried getting data, but we realized that we had to take a different approach in software to obtain usable data. Once we knew a little more about the sensors, we calibrated them to read correctly and then went to the pool to record data as someone swam. For the IR we found it most useful to line up the time stamp of the data we were receiving and then calibrate it with a video to determine how it functioned. For the MaxBotix sonar we set up test for the swimmer to go back and forth to track what the sensor was reading. Also, with both sensors we tested the width of detection

4. For the IR we cannot implement it in the water so it will have to have the correct angle to perform properly. Our thought is that the sonar sensor would work better in the water and be able to obtain the swimmer's actual distance more accurately.
5. IR sensor detected swimmer, but the distance it detects the swimmer depends on the angle of the sensor. We couldn't obtain accurate distance measurements, but we did determine that we could implement this sensor in a digital application and use it as a break point. The sonar didn't perform like we hoped. The voltage in and serial in ports both have a filter on them, this filter requires that 3 consecutive range readings are within 1cm of each other to be considered a valid range reading. If the range readings are outside 1cm, the sensor discards the range reading set and reports the last valid range reading. The analog envelope port is the only one that doesn't have this buffer.
6. We made the changes in code to try and capture this waveform but ran into many difficulties. First, we discovered one of our wires had broken when we screwed into the PVC mount. We fixed that and were able to obtain readings above water on an oscilloscope. Put together some code and went to the pool. When we went, we weren't getting good results and starting messing with the sensor. Then we discovered that we had some water damage and that started to affect our results. After we broke the first wires, we put some Teflon tape and didn't screw it in all the way with a pliers. This allowed some water to leak in and damaging the sensor.
7. Overall, the MaxBotix did not give us good results so we ordered a new sonar device that is more implemented for water. The MaxBotix 7072 is only rated for IP67 water conditions, so we had to make it more waterproof to submerge it in the pool. We will not have to do any waterproofing to the new sensor.

5.1 INTERFACE SPECIFICATIONS

We plan on using either an IR or sonar sensor to detect the swimmer. The sensor will send a signal to an Arduino, that will then send a signal through an FM transmitter to the FM headphones on the swimmer. This audio signal will tell them when they need to turn.

5.2 HARDWARE

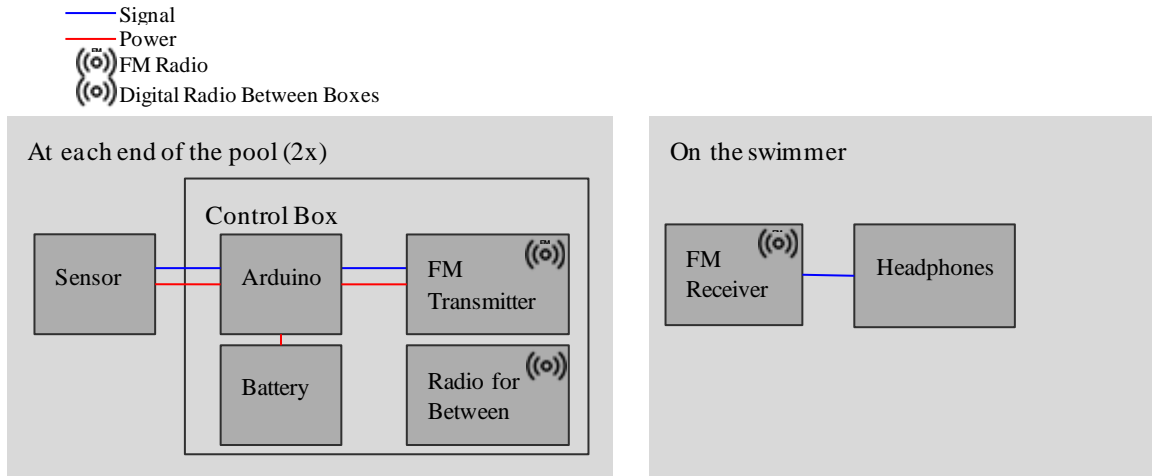


Figure 4: Diagram of the hardware components and their connections

At each end of the pool we will have a sensor to detect the swimmer. This is connected to an Arduino which processes the data from the transmitter and generates sound to be transmitted over FM. The swimmer has an FM receiver that connects to headphones, so they get the warning when they are near the edge of the pool.

5.3 SOFTWARE

We will be using an Arduino and programming with the Arduino C/C++ libraries. The program will read the data from the sensor. When it detects the swimmer is near it will generate a sound that will be transmitted with the FM transmitter.

5.4 FUNCTIONAL TESTING

For function test we used the two sensors we decided on from the non-functional performance test and took them to the pool. With both sensors we set them up and took measurements with a person in the water. We had the swimmer move back and forth to detect how close the swimmer would need to be. We also had the swimmer move side to side to see how far from the center of the sensor the swimmer would need to be. Then finally we had the swimmer swim towards the swimmer and away from the sensor to see if it would detect a moving object.

5.5 NON-FUNCTIONAL TESTING

For non-functional tests we had to do performance testing at the beginning to decide on what sensor would work for the application. We started with IR and sonar sensors that we had used in CPRE 288, but they did not have the range that we thought they did so we ordered new sensors with better range. To test this, we took the sensors and set them up at the pool and had the swimmer in the water swimming to see if the sensor could detect them.

5.6 PROCESS

Before we began, we got a sensor and an Arduino Uno from the ETG that we used in CPRE 288 and set up the sensor and code to get the correct distance from the sensor.

When we start testing different sensors in the pool we originally took sensor we knew from CPRE 288 and tested them in the pool to see if the sensors would be able to detect the swimmer in the water when the swimmer was at the “T” in the pool that tells the swimmer to turn.

The test above also doubled to allow us to see what values we would get with these sensors when we used them in the pool because we were unsure how the sensors would react to the water.

Now we have found two sensors we believe will work so starting to order FM headphones, FM transmitter, and an Arduino with more storage space. We have got one pair of FM headphones and the FM transmitter and tried testing it out of the water, but the headphones we ordered did not have an FM function like the website said so we had to order another pair of FM headphones. We did find that the FM transmitter worked by turning it on and plugging our phone into it to play a song on the FM station and our cars radio picked up the song when it was on that FM station

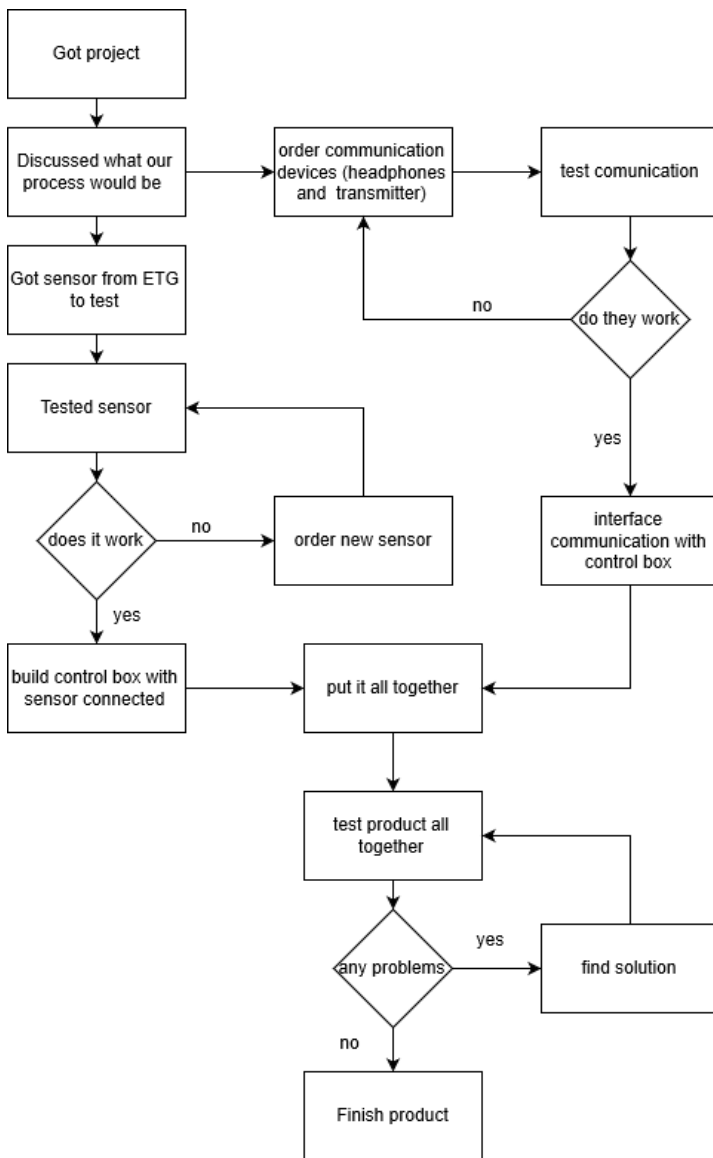


Figure 5: Flow diagram of progress

5.7 RESULTS

IR TEST 1

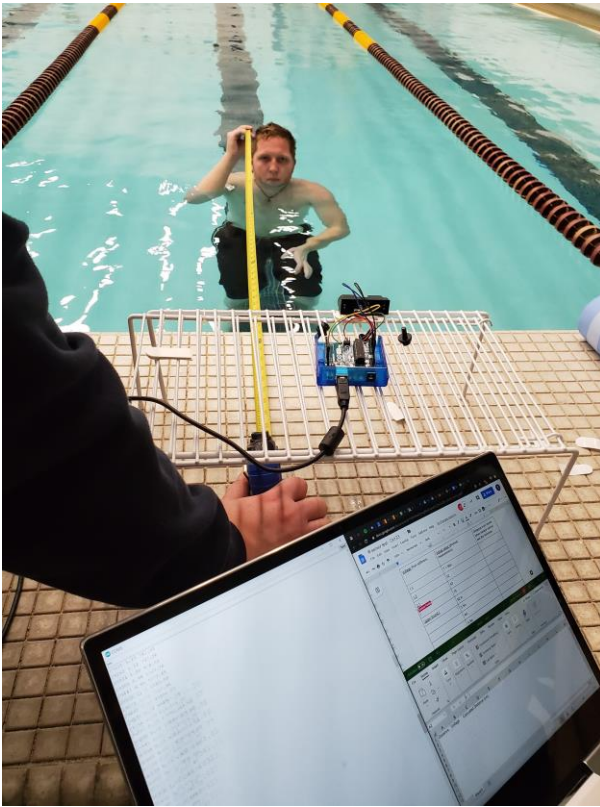


Figure 6: Image testing the IR sensor

We tested sensor to see if it would work in the pool. The sensor was placed 7 inches from the edge of the pool. We measured the voltage from the sensor with the swimmer at different distances from the edge. We tried this several times with the angle of the sensor adjusted each time. The data is in the appendix.

We were able to show through this test that the sensor could detect the presence of the swimmer, when the swimmer was standing. However, were not able to find any correlation with the voltage from the sensor and the distance of the swimmer from the sensor.

IR TEST 2

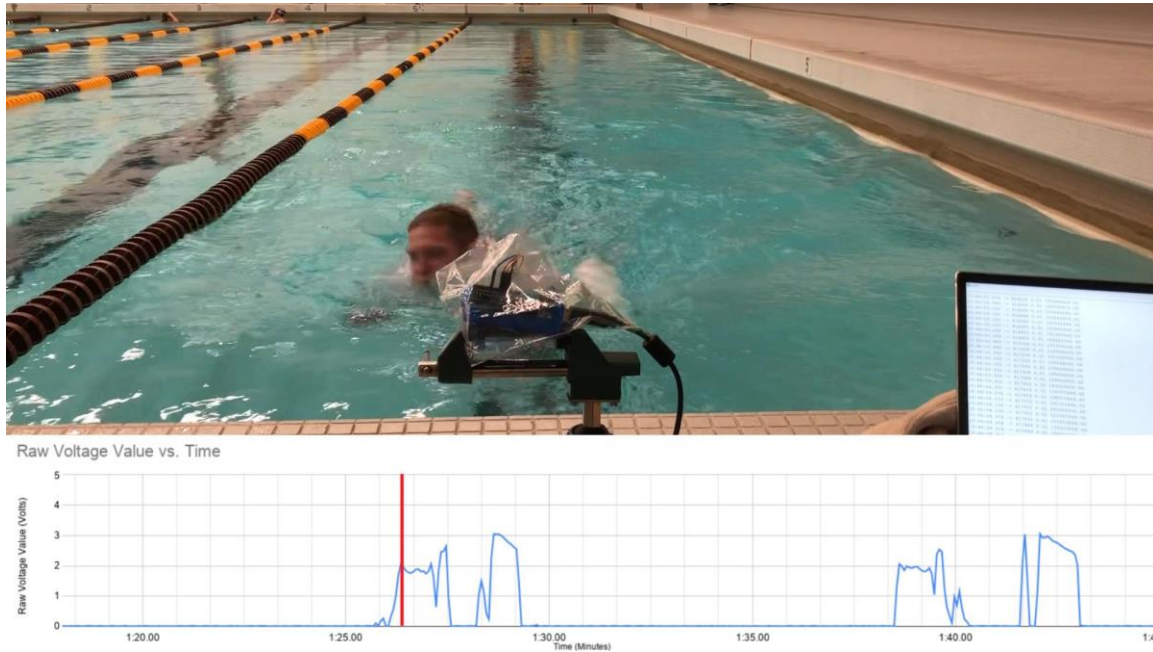


Figure 7: A frame from the video of the IR test with the sensor data overlaid

We took the IR sensor to the pool for a second test. This time we took a video and recorded the data from the sensor over several minutes. Afterwards we overlaid the data over the video so we could see how the sensors responded along with a video of the swimming. The video is linked in the appendix.

We found that the sensor was good at detecting when the swimmer was near the edge, but the sensor could not find the distance of the swimmer from the edge.

SONAR TEST

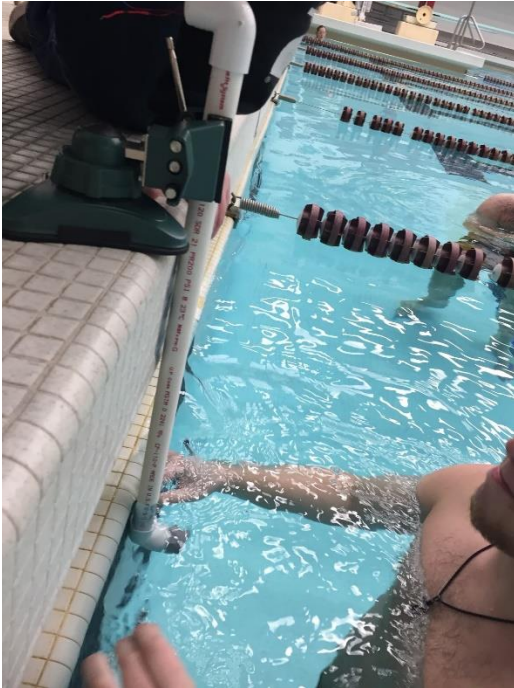


Figure 8: MaxBotix sensor in the water for testing

The next sensor we tested was the MaxBotix MB7072 XL-MaxSonar-WRA1. This is an ultrasonic range finder that was designed to be used above water, but we read on the internet that some people had success with this sensor in water (see Coconut Pi in references). We got the sensor working above water and were able to get it to work, but when we put it in water, we were not able to detect anything. See the appendix for graphs.

RADIO TEST

Inside the Beyer pool (Pool Length: 75 ft)

Signal Quality

- 0 - can't make out any music
- 1 - can hear static with soft music
- 2 - half static and half music
- 3 - low static and decent music
- 4 - decent music with no static
- 5 - good music with no static

Channel 1: 94.1

Table 2: FM Transmitter results from channel 1 in the pool

Distance from transmitter	Signal Quality (0-5)
0 in	5 until 2 inches under water

6 ft (T)	5 until 2 inches under
20 ft	5 until 2 inch under
60 ft	3 until 2 inch under

Channel 2: 89.3**Table 3: FM Transmitter results from channel 2 in the pool**

Distance from transmitter	Signal Quality (0-5)
0 in	5 until 15 inch under water
6 ft (T)	5 until 10 inches under
20 ft	5 until 5 inch
60 ft	5 until 2 inch

Channel 3: 99.6**Table 4: FM Transmitter results from channel 3 in the pool**

Distance from transmitter	Signal Quality (0-5)
0 in	5 until 5 inch under water
6 ft (T)	5 until 5 inches under
20 ft	4 until 5 inch under
60 ft	4 until 2 inch under

6. CLOSING MATERIAL

6.1 CONCLUSION

So far, we have done testing on multiple sensors to decide what sensor would work best to detect the swimmer and start ordering and doing some testing on communication devices.

Our goal would still be to find the sensor we would like to use for sure and start figuring out the communication we were going to use so we could finish the communication and start interfacing it all together next semester.

Our plan of action for the rest of the project is to figure out the communication and interface all the parts together.

6.2 REFERENCES

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E. Wei, "Individual Components testing and development," *CoconutPi*, 23-Nov-2012. [Online]. Available: <https://coconutpi.wordpress.com/2012/11/23/individual-components-testing-and-development/>. [Accessed: 08-Dec-2019].

6.3 APPENDICES

IR TEST DATA

Table 5: IR testing results from 20 degrees

Actual value (physical measurement)	Voltage (V) (from software)
46 in	1.2 V
50 in	1.8 V
54 in	1.7 V
58 in	2.0 V
62 in	1.8 V
66 in	1.9 V
70 in	1.5 V

Table 6: IR testing results from 25 degrees

Actual value (physical measurement)	Voltage (V) (from software)
46 in	1.2 V
50 in	1.8 V
54 in	1.7 V
58 in	2.0 V
62 in	1.8 V
66 in	1.9 V
70 in	1.5 V

Table 7: IR testing results from 30 degrees

Actual value (physical measurement)	Voltage (V) (from software)
46 in	1.2 V
50 in	1.8 V

54 in	1.7 V
58 in	2.0 V
62 in	1.8 V
	1.9 V
	1.5 V

Video from the second test:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BZhlLMk9uyB8V4Svc9BUzt_XRbIsGeoN/view?usp=sharing

SONAR TEST DATA

These are the graphs of the acoustic waveform from the sensor. The initial spike is generated by the sensor. Subsequent spikes are sound reflected back to the sensor.

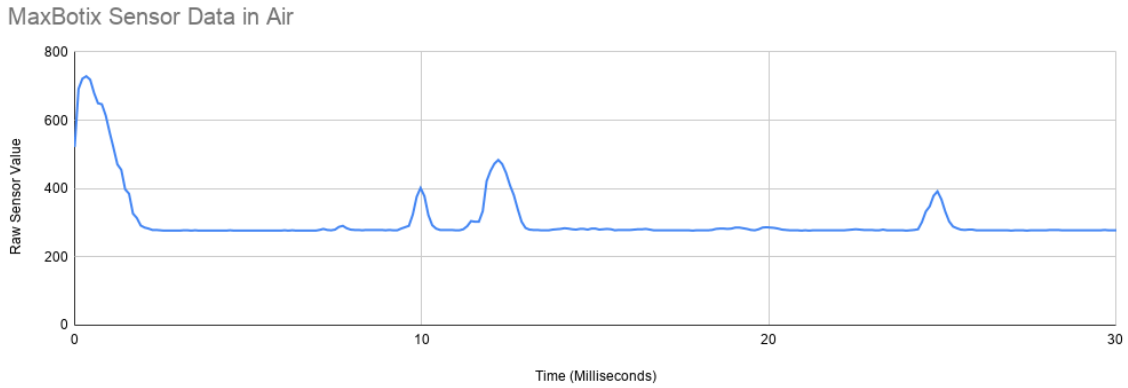


Figure 9: Sonar test data above water

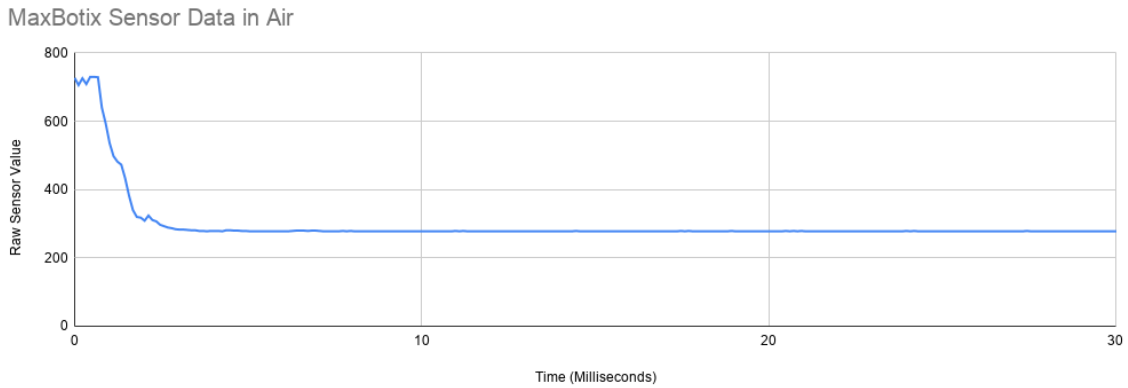


Figure 10: Sonar test data below water