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1 "Antenna for transceiver devices or the like"

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5 The invention relates to an antenna for transceiver devices or the like.

In the transceiver devices, extraction, from the modulated carrier wave received, of the modulation signals containing logic information, and superimposition, on the
10 carrier wave transmitted, of the logic information contained in local modulation signals are generally performed by means of demodulators and modulators. Modulators and demodulators are also used in so-called "transponders", i.e. receiving/reflecting devices which, instead of generating their own
15 transmission carrier wave, use for transmission the carrier wave, preferably unmodulated, which they receive from a remote transmitting station and which is modulated by them and then reflected back. These devices possess the advantage that they do not require local oscillators and the
20 corresponding power circuits for generation of the carrier wave. On account of their small dimensions, they are used extensively in telecommunications and in control and remote identification systems where they are combined with local control devices or with the identification units. The
25 frequency ranges used may be of any kind and in particular are within the microwave range. Owing to the growing automation and robotisation of industrial processes and plants of all kinds, there is a tendency towards increasingly widespread use of such systems. This has given
30 rise to the need to improve the transceiver/reflecting



1 devices and reduce their costs and dimensions as far as possible, with the development of special technologies in the microwave range.

The object of the invention, therefore, is to provide an
5 antenna for transceiver devices or the like, in particular for receiving/reflecting devices, which results in a simple, inexpensive and extremely compact design of such devices, all of which without adversely affecting, but on the contrary actually improving their operation and performance.

10 The invention achieves the above objects with an antenna for transceiver devices or the like, in which a single detector/mixer diode is associated with a radiating antenna structure so as to form a single integrated device which is alternately able to receive a modulated carrier wave and
15 demodulate from the said wave the modulation signals received as well modulate, with local modulation signals, a carrier wave transmitted, while the point for detecting and supplying the modulation signals of the modulated carrier wave received and the local modulation signals transmitted
20 coincides with a point of the radiating antenna structure, where the electric field of the carrier wave is equal to zero.

According to a preferred embodiment, the antenna has at least one resonating/radiating conductor which is connected
25 via a detector/mixer diode to an earth, the detector/mixer diode being oriented in the direction of conduction from the resonating/radiating conductor to the earth, and the connection of the detector/mixer diode to the resonating/radiating conductor being effected at such a
30 point of the said conductor (insertion point) as to obtain



1 optimum impedance matching, during reception and transmission, between the characteristic impedance of the radiating antenna structure at the insertion point and the impedance of the detector/mixer diode.

5 The antenna is able to receive a carrier wave, preferably unmodulated, and modulate the said wave with local modulation signals, reflecting it back.

Demodulation of the signals received and modulation with the local transmission signals is therefore performed
10 without having to use separate demodulators and modulators, together with the corresponding filters, local oscillators and the usual circuitry associated with them. In addition to the reduction in the number of components and the extremely simple design, a considerable reduction in the dimensions is
15 also achieved. The point chosen for detection and supplying of the modulation signals received and transmitted ensures that the carrier is confined entirely in the resonating/radiating conductor, and the point of insertion chosen for the detector/mixer diode on the
20 resonating/radiating conductor forms the optimum connection between diode and conductor. This results in optimisation of both the level of the demodulated signals received and the efficiency of reflection of the locally modulated carrier.

The invention also relates to other features which
25 further improve the abovementioned antenna and which are described in the subclaims.

The characteristic details of the invention and the advantages resulting therefrom will emerge more clearly from the description of a preferred embodiment, illustrated by
30 way of a non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings,



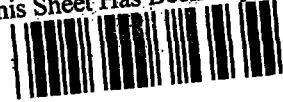
1 in which:

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of the side of the antenna constructed in microstrip technology, where the so-called patch is located;

5 Figure 2 shows a cross-section through the antenna of Figure 1 in the area of the detector/mixer diode and along the line II-II of Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows a plan view of the side of the antenna according to the preceding figures, where the so-called
10 reference earth plane is located.

In the example shown in the Figures, the antenna according to the invention is constructed in so-called microstrip technology, already used for the construction of waveguides for propagating signals in the microwave briefly
15 "antenna" below, consists of two conductors separated by a solid dielectric element. The said structure comprises a rectangular plate 2 of dielectric material, on each face of which a thin conducting plate 3, 4 is fixed. One of the two
conducting plates 4, called an "earth plane", covers the
20 entire surface of the dielectric plate 2. The other conducting plate 3, the so-called "patch", is arranged in the centre of the opposite face of the dielectric plate 2 and has a rectangular shape with dimensions significantly smaller than those of the earth plane 4. The so-called patch
25 3 forms the resonating/radiating conductor, while the earth plane 4 performs the function of an artificial earth. From a supply and detection point P of the patch 3, namely in this case the central point of one of its shortest sides 103, there extends an input/output conductor 5 to which the
30 remainder of the circuit of a transceiver device (not



1 shown), for example a transponder, is connected.

A diode 6 connects the patch 3 to the earth plane 4. The point of connection of the diode 6 to the patch 3, the so-called insertion point I, coincides with the median axis 5 M parallel to the shortest side 103 of the patch 3, while it is arranged at a given distance D from one of the longitudinal ~~sides~~ 203 of the patch 3 perpendicular to the said median axis M. The ~~diode 6~~ is arranged in the direction of conduction from the patch 3 to the earth plane 4 (Figure 10 2) and is fixed to the antenna 1 on the side where the earth plane 4 is located. In particular (Figure 2), in the region of the insertion point I, the earth plane 4 has a through-aperture 104, inside which an extension 7 of the patch 3 forming a connection to the detector/mixer diode 6 15 is accommodated so as to be electrically insulated from the earth plane 4 itself. The connection extension 7, on the side where the earth plane 4 is located, is connected electrically to the patch 3 by means of a tubular conducting bush 8 which passes from one side to the other of the 20 dielectric plate 2 through a hole 102 coinciding with the insertion point I itself.

The insertion point I of the detector/mixer diode 6 is determined so as to obtain the optimum impedance matching of the antenna 1 with the detector/mixer diode 6. Determination 25 of the insertion point I is not easy, since the detector/mixer diode 6 acts alternately as a loading device for the antenna 1 and generator, during reception and transmission. Matching of the impedance of the antenna 1 at the insertion point I with the impedance of the 30 detector/mixer diode 6 must be performed taking this into



1 account, in order to optimise simultaneously the efficiency during reception and that during transmission/reflection.

For this purpose, the insertion point I may be determined experimentally or theoretically. In the latter 5 case, the insertion point I is calculated to a good and adequate degree of approximation, as is the point of the patch 3, the input impedance of which assumes a predetermined value matching the impedance of the detector/mixer diode 6, in particular for example of the 10 order of magnitude of the impedance of the detector/mixer diode 6 or approximately identical to the impedance of the same at the resonant frequency w_{10} of the radiating antenna structure (1). Obviously the radiating structure (1) is constructed such that the resonant frequency w_{10} coincides 15 substantially with the frequency of the carrier wave.

With reference to the present example in which the insertion point I is arranged on the median axis M of the patch 3 parallel to the side 103 on which the detection and supply point P is provided, the distance D of the insertion 20 point I from one of the sides 203 of the patch 3 transverse relative to the said median axis M is defined by the relation with the input impedance Z_{in} of the radiating structure 1 at the insertion point I at the resonant frequency w_{10} :

$$25 \quad Z_{in} = Z_{in}(L, W, D, h, K_o, Z_o, \epsilon_r, Q_T, w_{10})$$

where:

L: length of the side 203 of the patch 3

W: length of the side 103 of the patch 3

D: distance of the insertion point I from the side 203 of 30 the patch 3



1 h: distance of the patch 3 from the earth plane 4

K_o : $2\pi/\lambda_o$ with λ_o : wavelength in air

Z_o : characteristic impedance of vacuum

ϵ_r : dielectric constant

5 Q_T : merit factor of the antenna (calculable)

w_{10} : resonant frequency.

The point P for detecting and supplying the demodulated signals received and the local modulation signals is determined so as to coincide with the point of the patch 3. 10 where the electric field generated by the carrier wave is equal to zero.

During reception of a modulated carrier wave, the diode 6 acts as detector, extracting from the modulated carrier the modulation signals and hence the information transmitted 15 therein. Owing to the particular arrangement of the insertion point I, the level of the demodulated signals is optimised. As a result of the positioning of the detection and supply point P, automatic filtering of all the components of the carrier wave confined in the patch 3 can 20 be achieved. Only the baseband signals relating to the information transmitted are output from the patch 3, thus avoiding the need for both a conventional envelope demodulator and the filters associated therewith.

During reflection, the diode 6 acts as a modulator of 25 the carrier wave which during this phase is transmitted preferably unmodulated and which is confined in the patch 3. The local modulation signals are sent to the antenna 1 at the detection and supply point P. Modulation can be performed without the use of local oscillators and the usual 30 additional circuits associated therewith. The arrangement of



1 the point P for detecting and supplying the modulated
signals received and transmitted, and of the insertion point
I of the diode 6 prevent diffusion of the carrier wave
beyond the detection and supply point P towards the internal
5 circuits and thus result in optimum efficiency of reflection
of the carrier wave itself, modulated with the local
modulation signals.

The efficiency of the antenna according to the invention
both during reception and transmission/reflection is also
10 influenced by additional parameters which depend in each
case on the operating conditions, such as type of
modulation, structure of the analog or digital signals,
wavelength of the carrier and frequency of the modulation
signals, and type of polarisation. All of this influences
15 the dimensions of the antenna, the choice of diode, the
polarisation current of the diode, where present, and the
orientation of the antenna and/or the diode itself.

In the case, for example, of a system with at least one
transmitting/receiving station and a transponder, in which a
20 carrier wave of between 5.72 and 5.8 GHz is used to send
information to the transponder, it is appropriate to
modulate the amplitude of the carrier, whereas, in order to
send data from the transponder to the station, the carrier
is frequency-modulated. When the data received and
25 transmitted are of the digital type it is preferable to use
ASK amplitude modulation during reception and frequency
modulation of the carrier during transmission/reflection, as
in the case where the carrier is mixed with a medium
frequency signal obtained from frequency modulation, for
30 example FEK modulation.



1 By varying the polarisation current of the
detector/mixer diode 6, it is possible to modify and correct
the waveform and the amplitude of the modulating signals, in
particular during reception.

5 In this case, the dimensions of the antenna, in
particular the patch 3, are extremely small, namely of the
order of ten millimetres or so for the side 103 and 203,
while the distance D of the insertion point from the side
203 of the patch 3 is a few millimetres. Further-more, in
10 view of the extremely small dimensions of the patch 3, the
tolerances for determining the insertion point I are
relatively large, the extension of the pins 106 of the
detector/mixer diode 6 not being insignificant compared to
the surface area of the patch 3. In this case, for most of
15 the commercially available diodes 6 with characteristics
suitable for the purpose, it has been shown that the
impedance matching between radiating antenna structure 1 and
diode 6 is almost always ensured, within the context of the
operational requirements of the antenna, when the impedance
20 of the radiating structure 1, or the patch 3, at the
insertion point is between 10 and 100 ohms, in particular
from 40 to 50 ohms.

With special plane polarisation of the carrier wave, the
efficiency of the antenna both during reception and
25 reflection is optimum when, as shown in Figure 3, the diode
6 is oriented with the axis C which joins the two pins 106,
parallel to the side 203 of the patch 3, the said side 203
of the patch 3 and the said axis C being oriented at an
angle of 90° with respect to the plane containing the
30 electric field of the carrier wave.



1 Obviously, the invention is not limited to the
embodiments described and illustrated herein, but may also
be substantially varied and modified, in particular from a
constructional point of view. The antenna/diode structure of
5 the present invention may be used with any type of radiating
antenna structure for any type of use, all of which without
departing from the underlying principle described above and
claimed below.

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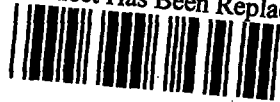
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1. Antenna for transceiver devices or the like
5 characterised in that a single detector/mixer diode (6) is
associated with a radiating antenna structure (1) so as to
form a single integrated device which is alternately able to
receive a modulated carrier wave and demodulate from the
said wave the modulation signals received as well as
10 modulate, with local modulation signals, a locally generated
carrier wave transmitted, or modulate an unmodulated carrier
wave received, reflecting it back, while the modulation
signals of the modulated carrier wave received and the local
modulation signals transmitted are respectively detected and
15 supplied to the radiating structure (1) at a point (P) of
the said structure, where the electric field of the carrier
wave is equal to zero.

2. Antenna according to Claim 1, characterised in that it
has at least one resonating/radiating conductor (3) which
20 has a resonant frequency corresponding to the frequency of
the carrier wave used and which is connected via a
detector/mixer diode (6) to an earth (4), the detector/mixer
diode (6) being oriented in the direction of conduction from
the resonating/radiating conductor (3) to the earth (4) and
25 the detector/mixer diode (6) being connected to the
resonating/radiating conductor (3) at such a point (I) of
the said conductor (insertion point) as to obtain optimum
impedance matching between the characteristic impedance of
the radiating structure (1), or the resonating/radiating
30 conductor (3), with reference to the said insertion point

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- 1 (I), and the impedance of the detector/mixer diode (6).
3. Antenna according to Claims 1 or 2, characterised in that the point of insertion (I) of the detector/mixer diode (6) on the resonating/radiating conductor (3) coincides with
- 5 the point of the resonating/radiating conductor (3) where the characteristic impedance is of the order of magnitude of or substantially identical to the impedance of the detector/mixer (6) at the resonant frequency w_{10} corresponding to the frequency of the carrier wave.
- 10 4. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterised in that the detector/mixer diode (6) may have applied to it a polarisation current which constitutes a parameter for adjusting and correcting the waveform and amplitude, in particular of the modulation
- 15 signals received.
5. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterised in that, with a predetermined direction of polarisation of the carrier waves, the detector/mixer diode (6) and/or the radiating structure (1)
- 20 are also oriented in a predetermined manner with respect to the direction of polarisation of the carrier wave corresponding to maximum efficiency of reception and transmission or reflection.
6. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding
- 25 claims, characterised in that it is able to be associated with a receiving/reflecting device, of the known type called a "transponder", in particular for use with carrier waves in the microwave range, the radiating structure (1) being formed by a waveguide with a so-called microstrip structure.
- 30 7. Antenna according to Claim 6, characterised in that the

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1 resonating/radiating conductor (3), the so-called patch, is
formed by a conductor plate of quadrilateral, preferably
rectangular, shape which coincides with the middle zone of
an earth conductor plate (4), a so-called earth plane, from
5 which it is separated by a layer of dielectric material (2),
preferably by a plate of solid dielectric material.

8. Antenna according to Claim 7, characterised in that the
point (P) for detecting and supplying the modulating
signals, during reception and transmission, coincides with
10 the middle point of one of the lateral edges (103) of the
resonating/radiating conductor (3).

9. Antenna according to Claims 7 or 8, characterised in
that the insertion point (I) of the detector/mixer diode (6)
is provided so as to coincide with the median axis (M)
15 parallel to the side (103) of the resonating/radiating
conductor (3) on which the detection and supply point (9) is
provided, and at a predetermined distance (D) from one of
the sides (203) of the resonating/radiating conductor
transverse relative to the said median axis (M), which
20 distance is determined experimentally and/or theoretically
so as to ensure optimum impedance matching of the
resonating/radiating conductor (3) at the insertion point
(I) with the impedance of the detector/mixer diode (6) at
the carrier wave frequency.

25 10. Antenna according to Claim 9, characterised in that the
distance (D) of the insertion point (I) on the median axis
(M), from the side of the resonating/radiating conductor (3)
is determined by the relation with the input impedance Z_{in}
of the resonating/radiating conductor (3) at the insertion
30 point (I) at the said carrier wave frequency w_{10} , defined by



1 the following equation:

$$Z_{in} = Z_{in}(L, W, D, h, K_o, Z_o, \epsilon_r, Q_T, w_{10})$$

where:

5 L, W: dimensions of the sides (103, 203) of the resonating/radiating conductor (3)

D : distance of the insertion point (I) from the side (203) of the resonating/radiating conductor (3) transverse relative to the median axis (M)

h : thickness of the dielectric element (2)

10 K_o : $2\pi/\lambda_o$ with λ_o : wavelength in air

Z_o : characteristic impedance of vacuum

ϵ_r : dielectric constant

Q_T : merit factor of the antenna (calculable)

w_{10} : resonant frequency,

15 while the input impedance Z_{in} corresponds to an empirical or experimental value aimed at optimising the impedance matching between detector/mixer diode (6) and resonating/radiating conductor (3), during reception and transmission/reflection, in particular of the order of
20 magnitude of or even identical to the impedance of the detector/mixer diode (6).

11. Antenna according to one or more of Claims 7 to 10, characterised in that the detector/mixer diode (6) is connected to the radiating antenna structure (1), on the
25 side where the earth conductor plate (4) is located, an extension (7) being provided on the said side for connecting the resonating/radiating conductor (3) to the detector/mixer diode (6) which coincides with the zone of the insertion point (I) and is insulated electrically from the earth
30 conductor plate (4), while the said connection extension (7)





- 1 is connected electrically to the opposite resonating/radiating conductor (3) by means of a tubular conducting bush (8) coaxial with the insertion point (I) and passing through from one side to the other of the dielectric plate (2).
- 5 12. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterised in that, in the case of polarised carrier waves, the detector/mixer diode (6) is oriented, with the axis (C) connecting the two pins (106), in a predetermined manner with respect to the sides of the
- 10 resonating/radiating conductor (3) and, in particular, in the case of plane polarised waves, the said axis (C) is oriented parallel to the side (203) of the resonating/radiating conductor (3) which is transverse relative to the median axis (M) coinciding with the
- 15 insertion point (I), the said side (203) being oriented at angle of 90° with respect to the plane of polarisation of the electric field of the carrier wave.
13. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterised in that the detector/mixer diode (6)
- 20 constitutes a demodulator preferably of amplitude-modulated carrier waves received and a frequency modulator of the carrier waves transmitted/reflected, preferably a mixer of the carrier wave transmitted/reflected with a frequency-modulated medium frequency signal.
- 25 14. Antenna according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterised in that in the range of microwaves, in particular of the order of magnitude of 1A to 20 GHz, preferably 5 to 10 GHz, the distance (D) of the insertion point (I) is determined in correspondance with a matched
- 30 input impedance Z_{in} of the resonating/radiating conductor



1 (3) at the insertion point (I) from 10 to 100 ohms, in particular from 40 to 50 ohms.

15. Antenna according to Claim 14, characterised in that, for a carrier wave at 5.76 GHz, the dimensions of the

5 resonating/radiating conductor (3) are of the order of ten millimetres or so for the sides (203) oriented transversely relative to the median axis (M) and for the sides (103) parallel to the said median axis (M), whereas the distance

(D) of the insertion point (I) from one of the said

10 transverse sides is of the order of a few millimetres.