

5100 T/R Module Test Environment





- Complete Synthetic Test Environment Hardware, software, processes, support
- Optimized for T/R Module Test
 Test module subassemblies, modules
 and multi-module assemblies on one
 system
- Highest Test Throughput Available
- Proven Systems Deployment
 5th generation solution major
 customers worldwide
- Full Range of Required Mixed Signal Capabilities DC, digital, analog, RF/microwave
- System Level Architecture
 Calibration, verification, alignment
- Open System Architecture
 System hardware and software, TPSs

The SMART E 5100 is a complete test environment for testing T/R (and other RF/microwave) modules. It provides the stimulus and measurement resources required for performing a complete suite of transmit and receive mode tests to ensure that the amplitude and phase control functions meet their specifications. The environment is particularly adept at high fidelity error-corrected s-parameter measurements at very high throughput rates.

The SMART E 5100 T/R Module Test Environment is a member of the SMART E 5000 Series, which is a complete test solutions environment from Aeroflex. The Model 5100 encompasses hardware, software, test practices and support along with standard and customizable test programs tailored to the specific problems of testing high performance modules utilized in a variety of phased array radars. The unique combination of integrated tests, system calibration methods and greater throughput in the 5100 provides a superior solution for the testing of the thousands of modules required for phased array radar.

The Aeroflex SMART E 5000 Test Environment is based upon the 5th generation evolution of Aeroflex's synthetic test technology. Aeroflex synthetic test systems are successfully deployed in a variety of high performance test applications including satellite payload test, advanced T/R module test and military ATE.

Aeroflex began shipping synthetic test systems for T/R modules in 2001, providing the industry's highest available throughput and accuracy for testing of T/R modules. The product roadmap has evolved over the past several years from two-rack systems populated with proprietary components to systems composed primarily of COTS components at about half the size and cost of the initial systems. With these test systems, customers have reduced complex module test times from hours to, nominally, 5 minutes for the same test suite.



SMART ^E 5140 40 GHz T/R Module Test Environment

SMART E fundamentally brings about the advantages of integrating COTS system components from multiple vendors in the Aeroflex hybrid test environment thus providing a cost effective test solution fully optimized for the requirements of the devices to be tested.

The SMART E 5100 provides greater configurability through COTS modularity characterized by the use of recognized and well established industry standards, a highly developed software suite, proven operational test practices, and long-term, leadership support programs. The finely balanced combination of these attributes is what makes SMART E a complete environment offering with the convenience and advantages brought by a single-vendor system responsibility.

Synthetic test environments offer the lowest total cost of test, largest throughput increases, and typically take less than half the rack space, weight, and power consumption/heat generation of conventional, rack-and-stack instrument-based systems. In addition, even for hybrid configurations, the number of instruments and associated dedicated measurement paths is reduced. Thus, the scope and complexity of calibration is also reduced. Furthermore, since most groups of measurements for any given configuration utilize the same down-converter – digitization channel, there is a much greater time correlation and lower uncertainty among these measurements than when individual instruments are sequentially multiplexed.

Typical SMART^E 5100 Characteristics

A SMART^E Model 5100 T/R Module Test Environment may be flexibly composed of various combinations of the following hardware, software and support elements.

Hardware

Stimulus Subsystem Including

- One or more Synthetic RF/microwave stimulus channels operating from DC to 8, 12, 20, 26.5 or 40 GHz in pulsed, CW or AWG source modes
- Noise generator
- Auxiliary stimulus channel(s) for multi-tone measurements or other multi-source applications
- Power amplifier units
- High performance digital I/O (DIO) modules up to 100-MHz clock rates in configurable control word widths and serial bit depths, with timing synchronized to the T/R control signals and pulse modulation edges
- General purpose DIO modules providing up to 400 MHz clock rates at LVDS levels, up to 200 MHz at programmable levels
- Configurable COTS DC modular or other DC power supplies
- Numerous choices of other mixed signal stimulus components.

Measurement Subsystem Including

- One or more synthetic RF/microwave response measurement channels configured for operation to 8, 26.5 or 40 GHz with an RF bandwidth of 400 MHz, and either narrowband or both narrowband and broadband digitizer subsystems
- Optional auxiliary measurement channels implemented as synthetic channels or as specific purpose instrumentation components
- Switched low-noise amplifier units
- Interrupt-enabled DC power supply monitoring subsystem with programmable limits
- High performance digitizers which may be used for any of a variety of signal capture functionalities.

Signal Calibration and Routing

- Local Calibration Unit (LCU) for calibrating RF/microwave signals to NIST traceable standards
- RF Switch matrix for multiplexing RF/microwave I/O signals to multi I/O-port UUTs – standard and customized designs available
- s-parameter test set for microwave vector measurements

Software

- Microsoft Windows[®] operating system with Microsoft Office[®]
- National Instruments TestStand Test Management Software
- Aeroflex Measurement Console (AMC) sequencer and user operating interface
- Aeroflex designed API DLL functions enabling customer driven interfaces to be connected to the system
- T/R module measurements library
- General measurements library
- Test customization
- Simulator software

Test Practices

- Hierarchical Calibration
 - Base, operational, reference plane extensions
 - Base Cal requires calibration of only a few transfer standards, not the synthetic components (i.e., the test environment does not require disassembly)
- System verification while the Unit-Under-Test (UUT) is connected
- Built-in reference plane extension from the calibration plane to the test ports plane via measurements or s-parameter files
- Uncertainty specifications at the system level

Support

- System Diagnostics to Field Replaceable Unit module level
- Regional spares pools
- Guaranteed response-time service
- Customer self-support training
- Remote expert direct connect assistance via internet

T/R Module Testing Using the SMART^E 5100

Aeroflex has more than seven years of experience in fielding synthetic test systems specifically configured for T/R modules used to build state-of-the-art phased array radar systems. Customers also utilize these same systems for testing sub-system components associated with these modules as well as RF/microwave components and subsystems in general.

There are numerous similarities among T/R modules across the many vendors who supply them. On the other hand, no two modules are exactly alike and no two manufacturers have precisely the same test strategies and methodologies. Consequently, while there are many common core elements among each of the T/R module test systems implemented and sold by Aeroflex, there are also unique aspects for systems provided to any single customer.

From a test system vendor perspective, the objective is to create a tester solution based upon a necessary and sufficient core capability set which addresses the common aspects of T/R module test but remains flexible enough that it can be easily customized to match the unique requirements of any given module and associated customer.

In moving to its 5th Generation SMART ^ E test environments, Aeroflex first changed the implementation of the core RF/microwave functions to be more modular in terms of the frequency ranges and power characteristics to be provided for the various applications. In fact, T/R modules operate at different frequencies and different power levels depending upon the system application/mission to which they are applied. Frequency and power are two of the most basic cost drivers for microwave equipment. Consequently, the most cost efficient solution is inevitably going to be associated with the test system that optimally and dynamically matches the range of frequency and power characteristics of the modules to be tested.

Thus, configuration of a SMART E solution begins with the selection of the stimulus and measurement channel modular base components associated with the required operating frequency ranges. Subsequently, an assessment is made for the selected modules to be able to handle the overall power levels required by the test plan and T/R module characteristics. As a result, either standard

modules/system input/output power will be sufficient, or a customized variable attenuator/power amplifier subsystem option will be seamlessly added to the standard modular solution. Like power levels, signal routing and multiplexing may also be implemented by means of standard or customized sub-assemblies to address specific module characteristics. Each module to be tested may include a single T/R circuit or multiple T/R circuits. All modules must be tested with minimal uncertainty for phase and amplitude control characteristics – typically 64 to 256 amplitude states and 64 phase states controlled via a digital command usually in a serial format. Amplitude and phase error corrected vector measurements are core requirements and an s-parameter test set is a standard element of the test system.

The s-parameter test set provides the forward and reverse ports which can be applied to all transmit and receive port-combinations associated with the T/R module function. Transmit tests are usually pulsed while receive functions are tested in CW mode.

Accordingly, the Model 5100 provides modular capabilities for pulse generation and digital I/O requirements and timing relationships are programmable and very tightly controlled. The fundamental DIO control is implemented via 32-bit modules operating at the tester interface at LVDS levels. Level circuits for LVDS levels translation may be integrated into the DIO interface either at the test interface panel or remotely in order to optimize pulse fidelity.

While a variety of COTS options are available for the digital functionality required in the tester, the Aeroflex modules are designed for minimum programming overhead. Since the fundamental control of the T/R module is an "inside test loop" function which is exercised every time a state of the T/R module is changed during a test, throughput optimization requires that the overhead costs of this programming be minimized. The Aeroflex implementation is optimally designed to fully minimize this cost function.

Pulse generator modules provide combinations of edge and pulse width programmability with internal and external synchronization and clocking, four sets of PRF, delayed edge and pulse width events from a module, with multimodule configurations also supported. This collection of signals and states is utilized for T/R modulation as well as for any of a variety of required time-based event programming.

The Aeroflex supplied standard tests library designed to address these types of tests is reported in Table 1.

s-parameters	Frequency
DC Control	Pulse Measurements
Harmonics	Spurious
Noise Figure	Third-Order Intercept
Pout vs. Pin	Total Absorbed Power

Table 1. T/R Module Test Library

A typical T/R module test plan with the associated test sequences is briefly reported in Table 2.

Typical Module Test Plan		
TX	RX	
s-parameter (pulsed)	s-parameter (CW)	
Phase Setting	Phase Setting	
Amplitude Setting	Amplitude Setting	
Pout versus Pin	Pout versus Pin	
Power Added efficiency (PAe)	Third-Order Intercept (TOI)	
Total Absorbed Power	Total Absorbed Power	
Harmonics	Noise Figure	
Spurious		
Pulse Profile		
Amplitude and Phase		
Droop Across Pulse		

Table 2. Typical T/R Module Test Plan

In developing the SMART ^ E environment for the new Model 5000 Series product, Aeroflex has introduced a universal test management interface called the Aeroflex Measurement Console (AMC). From this interface the test engineer or operator may select and execute tests, create sequences of tests, input variable parameters, access test results, set up default settings and parameters, and perform a wide variety of test related functions.

Figure 1 illustrates the topology of the AMC User Interface. This includes a tree view of test sequences saved in a file, an area for user interactive input of variable parameters presented by the test sequence, and a window for viewing the results of the tests. Test data are presented in graphs, and tables and records of various scalar values associated with the test. Examples include test execution times and all the parameter settings active at the time of execution of the test, as well as error logs or logs of the steps individually followed in executing the test.

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Fig 1. Topology of the Aeroflex Measurement Console (AMC)

Figure 2 depicts the application of the AMC to a T/R module test sequence when a pulse characterization test has been executed and displayed in a graph showing pulse shape as a function of time.



Fig 2. Transmit Mode Pulse Measurement

Selecting another tab in the results display window (Figure 3) provides access to the rise time characteristics of the pulse as derived from the magnitude-time samples which were measured.



Fig 3. Transmit Mode Pulse Risetime

The test results area is programmed as a tabbed window where various result format choices and derivative tabulated data sets may be presented as seen in Figure 4. Results can be automatically saved to files with formula names reflecting tests, and date and time of execution. Integration with existing data storage schemas is easily implemented. All results can be exported to Excel and XML.

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Fig 4. Tabulated Measurement Results

In this case the test system utilizes one of two digitizers configured in the baseband of the measurement response channel; one for narrow band measurements and one for broadband measurements, to be applied to time measurements such as rise time.

The test results may be transferred to an Excel workbook with the tabbed results mapped to spreadsheets on a one-to-one basis as illustrated in Figure 5.



Fig 5. Test Results Exported to Excel Workbook

Graphical analysis and interpretation tools are provided in conjunction with the results window. Figure 6 shows the results of an s21 measurement with markers activated for interactive use in interpreting the results of the sparameter measurement.



Fig 6. s-parameter Plot with Cursors Activated

SMART^E 5100 Summary Options

The following table lists the baseline components and options for the 5100.

Item	Description
Frequency Ranges	Base system frequency coverage:
	■ 50 MHz to 8 GHz
	Options:
	Extend stimulus and response to 12 GHz
	Extend stimulus and response to 20 GHz
	Extend stimulus and response to 26.5 GHz
	Extend stimulus and response to 40 GHz
Output Power (typical)	Base system output power:
	■ 0.5 to 8 GHz 12 dBm
	■ 8 to 12 GHz 12 dBm
	■ 12 to 20 GHz 9 dBm
	■ 20 to 26.5 GHz 5 dBm
	■ 26.5 to 40 GHz 0 dBm
	High power options available up to 30 dBm
Stimulus Modulation	Base system modulation:
	CW, pulse
Modulation Options:	
	AM, FM, PM
	 Narrowband arbitrary stimulus waveforms
	 Wideband arbitrary stimulus waveforms
Number of Ports	Base system ports:
	■ Two bi-directional ports (typically forward and reverse)
	Options:
	■ 6 ports and 12 ports
	Other customer options available
Additional Sources	One or more additional sources available
DUT Control	Baseline:
	■ 32 bits at 50 MHz or 16 bits at 100 MHz, LVDS
	Up to 4 programmable timing signals (pulses)
	Options:
	Level shifting to any customer defined levels
	Additional timing signals (pulses)
	PXI COTS digital I/O
DUT Power Supplies	Options:
	50/100 W modules in programmable mainframe
	High current individual programmable power supplies
Standard Available Measurements	■ Pout vs. Pin
	Output power
	s-parameters
	Spurious
	Harmonics
	Third-Order intercept (TOI)
	■ Noise figure
	Pulse measurements
	Total absorbed power
	DC control

PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS

• TR Module testing features

The SMART ^ E 5100 configuration is optimized for measurements of TR modules

The SMART ^ E provides CW and pulsed high power measurements Control of the Device Under Test (DUT) is tightly coupled with measurements

DUT control is provided via a programmable pattern generator and interfaced via a DUT.dll that may be developed by the customer

Programmable DUT power supplies can be included in the system and are tightly integrated with the data collection

SMART^E 5100 Performance Specifications

The stimulus, response and measurement performance of the SMART ^ E 5100 system is specified for typical operating conditions

The majority of the specifications apply at the forward and reverse ports of the system

Some measurements are specified at both the forward and reverse ports as well as at the interface ports of a standard Aeroflex 12 port MUX

The following measurement types are supported by the SMART[^]E 5100

DUT operating voltages and power consumption Output power vs. input power and DUT efficiency **RF** Frequency Harmonic Levels Noise Figure Time Domain pulse measurements; rise and fall times DUT recovery time Fully corrected s-parameters, both CW and pulsed Spur Searches Two-Tone measurements and third-order intercept • The performance is specified for the following measurement elements RF Power

S-Parameter Spectrum Noise Figure Time Domain Frequency

The following tables list the specifications for the SMART ^ E 5100. Specifications are subject to change without notice.

STIMULUS SPECIFICATIONS

PARAMETER

Frequency Range

50 MHz to 40 GHz

Frequency Setability Resolution

(RF Stimulus Channel) 4 Hz

Maximum Output Power

	LCU (dBm)		MUX (dBm)
0.5 to 5 GHz	12		11
5 to 8 GHz	12		10
8 to 12 GHz	12		10
12 to 20 GHz	9		5
20 to 26.5 GHz	5		0
26.5 to 40 GHz	-3		-10
OUTPUT POWER RANGE			
<2 GHz			
95 dB			
>2 GHz			
100 dB			
Output Power Resolution			
0.02 dB			
Spectral Purity			
General spurious	-60 dBc		
Power line related	-50 dBc		
Modulation Capability			
CW, Pulse, Arbitrary ⁽¹⁾			
Calibration Uncertainty			
0.05 to 18 GHz	4	⊦ 0.2 dB	
18 to 26.5 GHz	4	⊦ 0.3 dB	
At LCU interface Typical values by more than 3 dB	ues. Actual val	ues shou	ld not exceed these
26.5 to 40 GHz	-	⊦ 0.5 dB	
0.05 to 18 GHz	-	⊦ 0.3 dB	
18 to 26.5 GHz	4	⊦ 0.4 dB	At MUX interface
26.5 to 40 GHz	4	⊦ 0.6 dB	
Phase Noise			
Phase noise values are in c	IBc/Hz		

FreqOffset	0.05-8 GHz	8-26.5 GHz	26.5-40 GHz
10 Hz	-65	-50	-45
100 Hz	-80	-75	-65
1 kHz	-90	-90	-85
10 kHz	-90	-90	-85
100 kHz	-110	-110	-100
1 MHz	-120	-120	-110

Notes:

^{1.} Requires Arbitrary waveform generator option.

RESPONSE SPECIFICATIONS

RESPONSE SPECIFICAI	IUNS
PARAMETER	
Frequency Range	
50 MHz to 40 GHz	
Power Measurement Range	
+30 to -100 dBm (Noise	floor is lower)
Residual Noise Level	
< -110 dBm Residual (Nois	e Level with Input Terminated)
Maximum Input Power (Aver	age)
2 Watt Reverse port, at In	put Attenuator >0
High power dissipation loo	ps/pads
required in MUX for higher	power
Maximum Input Power (Puls	ed)
30 Watt Pulse width < 250	с
Calibration Uncertainty At I (CU interface
0.05 to 18 GHz	+ 0.2 dB
18 to 26 5 GHz	+ 0.3 dB
26 5 to 40 GHz	+ 0.5 dB
Calibration Lincertainty At L	I interface At MUX interface
0.05 to 18 GHz	+ 0.3 dB
18 to 26 5 GHz	$\pm 0.4 dB$
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S- PARAMETER MEASU	IREMENT SPECIFICATIONS
PARAMETER	
Frequency Range	
500 MHz – 40 GHz	
Modes	
CW, Pulsed	
S21 Amplitude Uncertainty (At LCU Interface	(±)(at 10 dB insertion loss)
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.125 dB
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	0.25 dB
26.5 to 40 GHz	0.25 dB
S21 Amplitude Uncertainty (At MUX Interface	(±)(at 10 dB insertion loss)
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.2 dB
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	0.4 dB
26.5 to 40 GHz	0.4 dB
S21 Phase Uncertainty (±)(at 10 dB insertion loss)
At LCU Interface	
50 MHz to 20 GHz	1.5 deg
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	2.0 deg
26.5 to 40 GHz	3.0 deg
S21 Phase Uncertainty (±)(at 10 dB insertion loss)
At MUX Interface	
50 MHz to 20 GHz	2.1 deg
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	2.8 deg
26.5 to 40 GHz	4.0 deg

S11 Reflection Coefficient Uncertainty

(±, Linear) At LCU Interface	
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.015
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	0.020
26.5 to 40 GHz	0.025

S11 Reflection Coefficient Uncertainty

PARAMETER	
SPECTRAL MEASURE	MENT SPECIFICATIONS
70 dB	
Instantaneous Dynamic Ra	nge
110 dB	
Total Dynamic Range	
26.5 to 40 GHz	0.035
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	0.030
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.020
(±, Linear) At MUX Interf	ace

Frequency Range	
50 MHz to 40 GHz	
Resolution Bandwidth Range	
1 Hz to 10 MHz	
Video Bandwidth Range	
RBW / N where $1 < N < 65536$ (N = powers	s of 2)
Reference Level Range	
+30 dBm to noise level	
Amplitude resolution	
Same as power resolution, 0.02 dB	
Relative Power Uncertainty	
Input level > -60 dBm	0.5 dB
-90 dBm < Input level < –60 dBm	1.0 dB
-100 dBm < Input Level < -90 dBm	2.0 dB
Spurious Free Noise Residual Floor	-
110 dBm With input terminated	
Noise Power in 1 Hz Bandwidth	
-144 dBm At 10 GHz	
Spurious Free Dynamic Range	
~ 75 dB	

NOISE FIGURE MEASUREMENT SPECIFICATIONS"

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PARAMETER		
Frequency Range		
50 MHz to 40 GHz		
At LCU interface		
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.3 dB	
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	0.5 dB	
26.5 to 40 GHz	0.5 dB	
Measurement Uncertainty (±) A	t MUX interface	
50 MHz to 20 GHz	0.5 dB	
20 GHz to 26.5 GHz	1.0 dB	
26.5 to 40 GHz	1.0 dB	
Notes:		
1. For gain noise figure product > 3	30 and DUT input VSWR better than 1.9:1.	

TIME DOMAIN MEASUREMENT SPECIFICATION

PARAMETER	
Frequency Range	
50 MHz to 40 GHz	
Sensitivity	
-60 dBm	
Time Domain Measurement	
Resolution	
Narrowband ⁽¹⁾	20 nsec minimum
Wideband	1 nsec
Notes:	

1. Narrowband measurements can utilize the hardware decimator and provide lower sample rates.

FREQUENCY MEASUREMENT SPECIFICATION

PARAMETER

Frequency Range 1 MHz to 40 GHz

Frequency Resolution

1 Hz

Time base Accuracy

See frequency reference specifications Sensitivity -60 dBm

ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATIONS

PARAMETER

Input Voltage(1)(V) 230 VAC, 50 Hz (Single Phase) 110 VAC, 60 Hz Power Consumption (excluding DUT power supplies) (VA) < .3000 Temperature Range of Operation 10°C to 40°C Humidity Range of Operation 10-90% RH (non-condensing) Temperature Range for Storage 0°C to 45°C Humidity Range for Storage 5-93% RH (non-condensing) Safety Standards EN 61010-1, IEC 61010-1 EMC Standards EN 61326-1, IEC61010-1 Cabinet Dimensions 37" (w) x 42.25" (d) x 81.5" (h) Notes:

1. Un-interruptable Power Supply is specified based on input voltage

GERMANV

FREQUENCY REFERENCE SPECIFICATIONS

PARAMETER

External Reference Inpu	t
Frequency	10 MHz
Amplitude	0 +/- 3 dBm
External Reference Outp	but
Frequency	10 MHz
Amplitude	0 +/- 3 dBm
Internal Reference (Features low phase noise rubidium standard.)	
Frequency	10 MHz

Long term stability <1 x 10-12 / month Short term stability 3 x 10-11 / sec

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The SMART ^ E 5100 system is CE marked and complies with all relevant Eurpoean Directives as listed below.

Application of Council Directive

72/23/EEC (Low Voltage Directive)

Standards to which Conformity is Declared BSEN 61010-1:2001 (LVD)

Application of Council Directive

89/336/EEC and Amending Directive 92/31/EEC

Standards to which Conformity is Declared

BSEN 61326:1998

Manufacturer Name

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Manufacturer Address

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USA Type of Equipment

Professional Laboratory RF Test Equipment

Model Number SMART ^ E 5000

Serial Number

ALL

First Year of Manufacture 2006

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