7.3 - The Wilkinson Power Divider

Reading Assignment: pp. 318-323

The Wilkinson power divider is the most **popular** power divider designs.

It is very similar to a lossless 3dB divider, but has one **additional** component!

This additional component gives this power **divider** many of the important attributes of a power **combiner**.

HO: THE WILKINSON POWER DIVIDER

Q: I don't see how the Wilkinson power divider design provides the scattering matrix you claim. Is there any way to analyze this structure to verify its performance?

A: Yes! But first we must learn about two very important and related concepts in microwave engineering—circuit symmetry and odd/even mode analysis.

HO: SYMMETRCI CIRCUIT ANALYSIS HO: ODD/EVEN MODE ANALYSIS

Now we can analyze a Wilkinson power divider!

HO: WILKINSON DIVIDER EVEN/ODD MODE ANALYSIS

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<u>The Wilkinson</u> <u>Power Divider</u>

The Wilkinson power divider is a 3-port device with a scattering matrix of:

$$\mathcal{S} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -j/\sqrt{2} & -j/\sqrt{2} \\ -j/\sqrt{2} & 0 & 0 \\ -j/\sqrt{2} & 0 & 0 \\ -j/\sqrt{2} & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Note this device is **matched** at port 1 ($S_{11} = 0$), and we find that magnitude of column 1 is:

$$|S_{11}|^2 + |S_{21}|^2 + |S_{31}|^2 = 1$$

Thus, just like the lossless divider the incident power on port 1 is **evenly** and **efficiently** divided between the outputs of port 2 and port 3:

$$P_2^- = |S_{21}|^2 P_1^+ = \frac{P_1^+}{2}$$
 $P_3^- = |S_{31}|^2 P_1^+ = \frac{P_1^+}{2}$

But now look closer at the scattering matrix. We also note that the ports 2 and 3 of this device are **matched**!

$$S_{22} = S_{33} = 0$$

Likewise, we note that ports 2 and ports 3 are isolated:

 $S_{23} = S_{32} = 0$

Q: So just how do we make this Wilkinson power divider?

It looks a lot like a lossless 3dB divider, only with an additional resistor of value $2Z_0$ between ports 2 and 3:





(a)

(b)

This resistor is the secret to the Wilkinson power divider, and is the reason that it is **matched** at ports 2 and 3, and the reason that ports 2 and 3 are **isolated**.

Note however, that the **quarter-wave** transmission line sections make the Wilkinson power divider a **narrow-band** device.





Figure 7.12 (p. 322)

Frequency response of an equal-split Wilkinson power divider. Port 1 is the input port; ports 2 and 3 are the output ports.



Symmetric Circuit

<u>Analysis</u>

Consider the following D_1 symmetric two-port device:



Q: Yikes! The plane of reflection symmetry slices through two resistors. What can we do about that?

A: Resistors are easily split into two equal pieces: the 200Ω resistor into two 100Ω resistors in series, and the 50Ω resistor as two 100Ω resistors in parallel.



Recall that the **symmetry** of this 2-port device leads to **simplified** network matrices:



Q: Yes, but can circuit symmetry likewise simplify the procedure of **determining** these elements? In other words, can symmetry be used to **simplify circuit analysis**?

A: You bet!

First, consider the case where we **attach sources** to circuit in a way that **preserves** the circuit **symmetry**:







$$\begin{aligned}
 V_1 &= V_2 \\
 V_{1a} &= V_{2a} \\
 V_{1b} &= V_{2b} \\
 V_{1c} &= V_{2c} \\
 & I_{1c} &= I_{2c} \\
 I_{1d} &= I_{2d}
 \end{aligned}$$

Q: Wait! This can't possibly be correct! Look at currents I_{1a} and I_{2a} , as well as currents I_{1d} and I_{2d} . From KCL, this must be true:

$$I_{1a} = -I_{2a} \qquad \qquad I_{1d} = -I_{2d}$$

Yet you say that this must be true:

$$I_{1a} = I_{2a} \qquad \qquad I_{1d} = I_{2d}$$

There is an **obvious contradiction** here! There is **no way** that both sets of equations can simultaneously be correct, **is there**?

A: Actually there is! There is one solution that will satisfy both sets of equations:

$$I_{1a} = I_{2a} = 0$$
 $I_{1d} = I_{2d} = 0$

The currents are **zero**!



If you **think** about it, this makes **perfect sense**! The result says that **no current** will flow from one side of the symmetric circuit into the other.

If current did flow across the symmetry plane, then the circuit symmetry would be destroyed—one side would effectively become the "source side", and the other the "load side" (i.e., the source side delivers current to the load side).

Thus, **no current** will flow **across** the reflection symmetry plane of a **symmetric circuit**—the symmetry plane thus acts as a **open circuit**!

The plane of symmetry thus becomes a virtual open!







This situation still preserves the symmetry of the circuit somewhat. The voltages and currents in the circuit will now posses odd symmetry—they will be equal but opposite (180 degrees out of phase) at symmetric points across the symmetry plane.







 $V_{1c} = V_{2c} = 0$

Vs

For the case of **odd symmetry**, the symmetric plane must be a plane of **constant potential** (i.e., constant voltage)—just like a **short circuit**!

Thus, for odd symmetry, the symmetric plane forms a virtual short.



Virtual short V=0

This **greatly** simplifies things, as we can again **break** the circuit into **two** independent and (effectively) identical circuits!



Odd/Even Mode Analysis

Q: Although symmetric **circuits** appear to be plentiful in microwave engineering, it seems **unlikely** that we would often encounter symmetric **sources**. Do virtual shorts and opens typically ever occur?

A: One word—superposition!

If the elements of our circuit are **independent** and **linear**, we can apply superposition to analyze **symmetric circuits** when **non-symmetric** sources are attached.

For example, say we wish to determine the admittance matrix of this circuit. We would place a voltage source at port 1, and a short circuit at port 2—a set of asymmetric sources if there ever was one!



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Now, the above circuit (due to the sources) is obviously **asymmetric**—no virtual ground, nor virtual short is present. But, let's say we **turn off** (i.e., set to V=0) the **bottom** source on **each side** of the circuit:



Our symmetry has been restored! The symmetry plane is a virtual open.

This circuit is referred to as its **even mode**, and analysis of it is known as the **even mode analysis**. The solutions are known as the even mode **currents** and **voltages**!

Evaluating the resulting even mode half circuit we find:



 I_2

V<u>s</u> 2



We now have a circuit with odd symmetry—the symmetry plane is a virtual short!

This circuit is referred to as its **odd mode**, and analysis of it is known as the **odd mode analysis**. The solutions are known as the odd mode **currents** and **voltages**!

Evaluating the resulting odd mode half circuit we find:



Q: But what good is this "even mode" and "odd mode" analysis? After all, the source on port 1 is $V_{s1} = V_s$, and the source on port 2 is $V_{s2} = 0$. What are the currents I_1 and I_2 for **these** sources?

A: Recall that these sources are the **sum** of the even and odd mode sources:

$$V_{s1} = V_s = \frac{V_s}{2} + \frac{V_s}{2}$$
 $V_{s2} = 0 = \frac{V_s}{2} - \frac{V_s}{2}$

and thus—since all the devices in the circuit are **linear**—we know from superposition that the currents I_1 and I_2 are simply the **sum** of the **odd** and **even** mode currents !

$$I_{1} = I_{1}^{e} + I_{1}^{o} \qquad I_{2} = I_{2}^{e} + I_{2}^{o}$$

$$100\Omega \qquad 100\Omega$$

$$I_{1} = I_{1}^{e} + I_{1}^{e} \qquad 100\Omega \qquad I_{2} = I_{2}^{e} + I_{2}^{e}$$

$$I_{1} = I_{1}^{e} + I_{1}^{e} \qquad 100\Omega \qquad I_{2} = I_{2}^{e} + I_{2}^{e}$$

$$I_{2} = I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o}$$

$$I_{2} = I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o}$$

$$I_{2} = I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o}$$

$$I_{2} = I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o}$$

$$I_{2} = I_{2}^{o} + I_{2}^{o$$





And then the **admittance parameters** for this two port network is:

$$Y_{11} = \frac{I_1}{V_{s1}}\Big|_{V_{s2}=0} = \frac{V_s}{80}\frac{1}{V_s} = \frac{1}{80}$$

$$Y_{21} = \frac{I_2}{V_{s1}}\Big|_{V_{s2}=0} = -\frac{3V_s}{400}\frac{1}{V_s} = \frac{-3}{400}$$

And from the **symmetry** of the device we know:

$$Y_{22} = Y_{11} = \frac{1}{80}$$

$$Y_{12} = Y_{21} = \frac{-3}{400}$$

Thus, the full admittance matrix is:

$$\boldsymbol{\mathcal{Y}} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{80} & -\frac{3}{400} \\ \frac{-3}{400} & \frac{1}{80} \end{bmatrix}$$

Q: What happens if both sources are non-zero? Can we use symmetry then?





One final word (I promise!) about circuit symmetry and even/odd mode analysis: precisely the same concept exits in electronic circuit design!

> Specifically, the **differential** (odd) and **common** (even) **mode** analysis of bilaterally symmetric electronic circuits, such as **differential amplifiers**!

> > Hi! You might remember differential and common mode analysis from such classes as "EECS 412- Electronics II", or handouts such as "Differential Mode Small-Signal Analysis of BJT Differential Pairs"



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<u>Even/Odd Mode Analysis</u> of the Wilkinson Divider

Consider a matched Wilkinson power divider, with a source at port 2:

 $\frac{\lambda}{4}$

 $\sqrt{2} Z_{c}$

 $\sqrt{2} Z_0$

 $2Z_{0}$

Port 3

SZ0

Port 1 <

 Z_0

Too **simplify** this schematic, we **remove** the ground plane, which includes the **bottom conductor** of the transmission lines:



 V_{s}

Q: How do we analyze this circuit ?

A: Use Even-Odd mode analysis!

Remember, even-odd mode analysis uses two important principles:

a) superposition

b) circuit symmetry

To see how we apply these principles, let's first rewrite the circuit with four voltage sources: $\frac{V_s}{2}$ V_5/2 V_2



Turning off one positive source at each port, we are left with an odd mode circuit: V_2°



 Z_0



$$+ V_1^o = 0 \qquad \sqrt{2} Z_0 \qquad Z_0 \qquad V_2^o \qquad O^{v_s/2}$$

This of course makes determining V_1^o trivial (hint: $V_1^o = 0$).

Now, since the transmission line is a **quarter wavelength**, this **short** circuit at the **end** of the transmission line transforms to an **open** circuit at the **beginning**!



As a result, determining voltage V_2° is nearly as **trivial** as determining voltage V_1° . **Hint**:

$$V_2^o = \frac{V_s}{2} \frac{Z_0}{Z_0 + Z_0} = \frac{V_s}{4}$$

And from the odd symmetry of the circuit, we likewise know:

$$V_3^o = -V_2^o = -\frac{V_3}{4}$$

Now, let's turn off the odd mode sources, and turn back on the even mode sources.





 $V_3^e = V_2^e = \frac{V_s}{4}$

And then due to the even symmetry of the circuit, we know:

Q: What about voltage V1e? What is its value?

A: Well, there's no direct or easy way to find this value. We must apply our transmission line theory (i.e., the solution to the **telegrapher's equations** + **boundary conditions**) to find this value. This means **applying** the knowledge and skills acquired during our scholarly examination of **Chapter 2**!



If we **carefully** and **patiently** analyze the above transmission line circuit, we find that (see if **you** can verify this!):



And thus, completing our **superposition** analysis, the voltages and currents within the circuit is simply found from the **sum** of the solutions of each mode:



sum of the incident and exiting waves at each port:

$$V_{1} \doteq V_{1} (z_{1} = z_{1P}) = V_{1}^{+} (z_{1} = z_{1P}) + V_{1}^{-} (z_{1} = z_{1P})$$

$$V_{2} \doteq V_{2} (z_{2} = z_{2P}) = V_{2}^{+} (z_{2} = z_{2P}) + V_{2}^{-} (z_{2} = z_{2P})$$

$$V_{3} \doteq V_{3} (z_{3} = z_{3P}) = V_{3}^{+} (z_{3} = z_{3P}) + V_{3}^{-} (z_{3} = z_{3P})$$

Since ports 1 and 3 are terminated in **matched loads**, we know that the **incident** wave on those ports are **zero**. As a result, the **total** voltage is equal to the value of the exiting waves at those ports:

$$V_1^+(z_1 = z_{1\rho}) = 0$$
 $V_1^-(z_1 = z_{1\rho}) = \frac{-jV_s}{2\sqrt{2}}$

$$V_3^+(z_3=z_{3P})=0$$
 $V_3^-(z_3=z_{3P})=0$

The problem now is to determine the values of the incident and exiting waves at port 2 (i.e., V_2^+ ($z_2 = z_{2P}$) and V_2^- ($z_2 = z_{2P}$)).

Recall however, the specific case where the source impedance is matched to transmission line characteristic impedance (i.e., $Z_s = Z_0$). We found for this specific case, the incident wave "launched" by the source always has the value $V_s/2$ at the source: Z_0

Now, if the length of the transmission line connecting a source to a port (or load) is **electrically very small** (i.e., $\beta \ell \ll 1$), then the source is effectively **connected directly** to the source (i.e.,



Z=Z≤=Z₽

For the case where a **matched source** (i.e. $Z_s = Z_0$) is connected directly to a port, we can thus conclude:

$$V^+(z=z_p)=\frac{V_s}{2}$$

$$V^{-}(z=z_{\rho})=V-\frac{V_{s}}{2}$$

Thus, for port 2 we find:

$$V_2^+(z_2=z_{2P})=\frac{V_s}{2}$$

$$V_2^{-}(z_2 = z_{2P}) = V_2 - \frac{V_s}{2} = \frac{V_s}{2} - \frac{V_s}{2} = 0$$

Now, we can **finally** determine the scattering parameters S_{12} , S_{22} , S_{32} :

$$S_{12} = \frac{V_1^{-}(z_1 = z_{1P})}{V_2^{+}(z_2 = z_{2P})} = \left(\frac{-jV_s}{2\sqrt{2}}\right)\frac{2}{V_s} = \frac{-j}{\sqrt{2}}$$

$$S_{22} = \frac{V_2^{-}(z_2 = z_{2P})}{V_2^{+}(z_2 = z_{2P})} = (0)\frac{2}{V_s} = 0$$

$$S_{32} = \frac{V_3^-(z_3 = z_{3P})}{V_2^+(z_2 = z_{2P})} = (0)\frac{2}{V_s} = 0$$

Q: Wow! That seemed like a **lot** of hard work, and we're only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way done. Do we **have** to move the source to port 1 and then port 3 and perform similar analyses?

A: Nope! Using the bilateral symmetry of the circuit $(1 \rightarrow 1, 2 \rightarrow 3, 3 \rightarrow 2)$, we can conclude:

$$S_{13} = S_{12} = \frac{-j}{\sqrt{2}}$$
 $S_{33} = S_{22} = 0$ $S_{23} = S_{32} = 0$

and from reciprocity:

$$S_{21} = S_{12} = \frac{-j}{\sqrt{2}}$$
 $S_{31} = S_{13} = \frac{-j}{\sqrt{2}}$

We thus have determined 8 of the 9 scattering parameters needed to characterize this 3-port device. The **remaining** holdout is the scattering parameter S_{11} . To find this value, we must move the **source to port 1** and analyze.



Note this source does **not** alter the bilateral symmetry of the circuit. We can thus use this symmetry to **help analyze** the circuit, **without** having to specifically define odd and even mode sources.





