

# EM Eye: Characterizing Electromagnetic Side-channel Eavesdropping on Embedded Cameras

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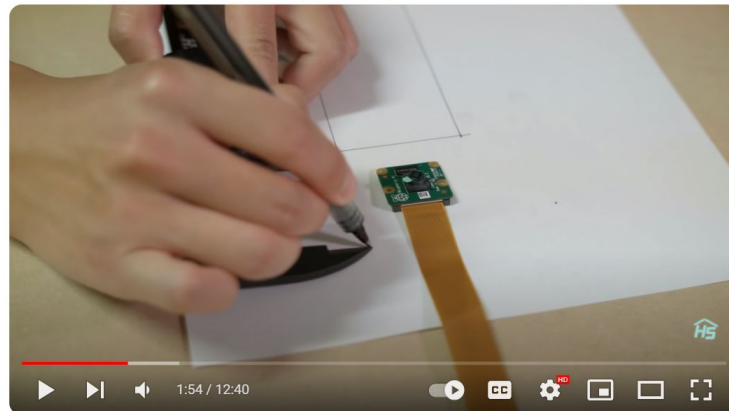


**Northeastern  
University**

# Cameras Getting Pervasive



[Photo: Car and Driver, NY Times, Simplified, Apple]



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# Camera Data Confidentiality

## Software Vulnerabilities

Default Password &  
Unencrypted Comms  
[Abdalla et al., 2020]

Brute-force Attacks  
against 4-digit Passwords  
[Ling et al., 2017]

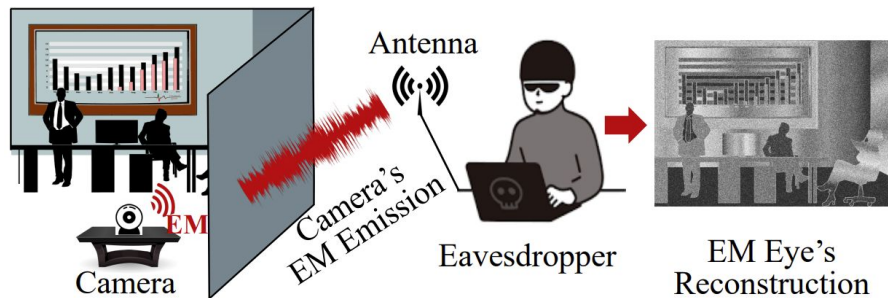
Known Serial Number  
Camera Hijacking  
[Herodotou et al., 2023]

Network Traffic Sniffing  
and Reconstruction  
[Tekeoglu et al., 2015]

## Hardware Vulnerabilities

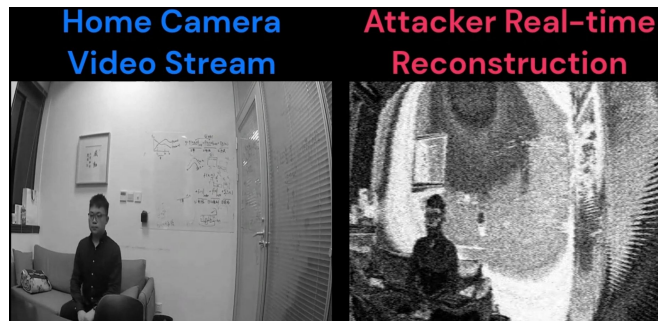
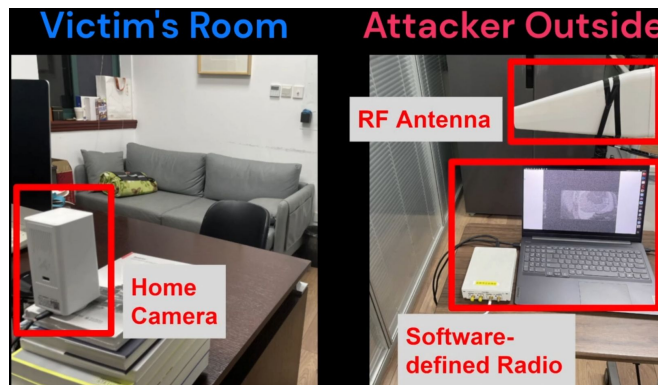
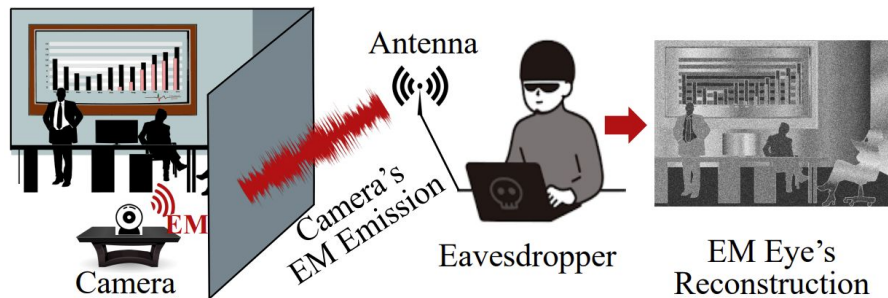


# Threat Model: EM Eavesdropping on Cameras



- No software/network entry point
- External physical eavesdropper
- **Unintentional electromagnetic leakage (not wireless comm signals)**

# Threat Model: EM Eavesdropping on Cameras



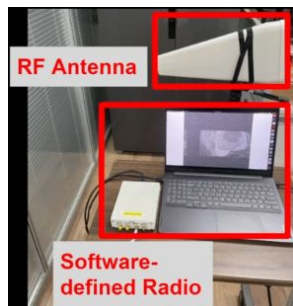
Demo, tutorial, simulation: <https://emeyeattack.github.io/Website/>

# Image-specific Electromagnetic Leakage

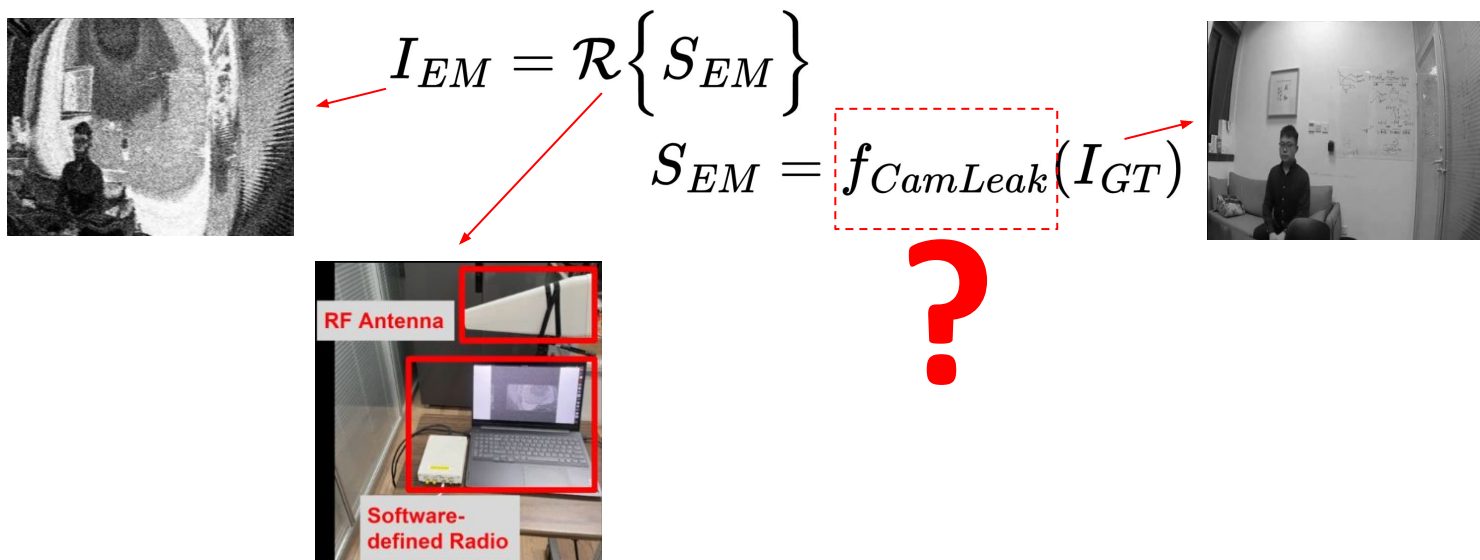


$$I_{EM} = \mathcal{R}\{S_{EM}\}$$

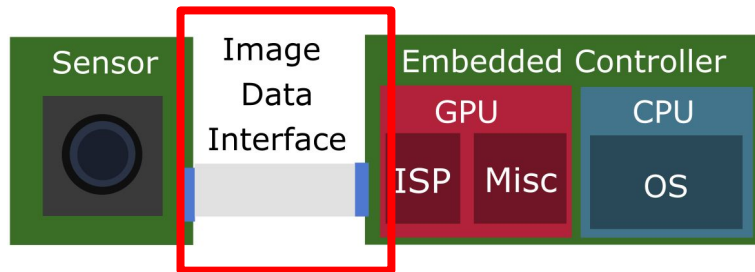
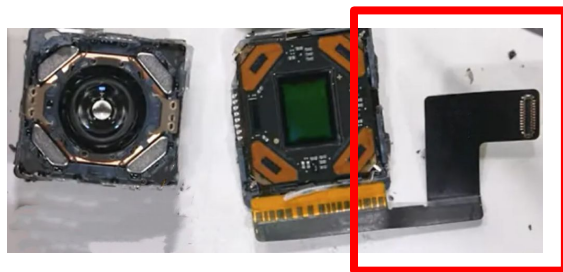
$$S_{EM} = f_{CamLeak}(I_{GT})$$



# Image-specific Electromagnetic Leakage



# Interface: Standardization



Rambus

Products Solutions

LOW POWER-HIGH PERFORMANCE

Home > Blogs > Automotive > Accelerating MIPI CSI-2 Adoption in Automotive

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## Accelerating MIPI CSI-2 Adoption in Automotive

August 15, 2023 by [Rambus Press](#) — [Leave a Comment](#)

By Joe Rodriguez | Product Marketing Manager, Interface IP

## MIPI Standards Gaining Traction In New Markets

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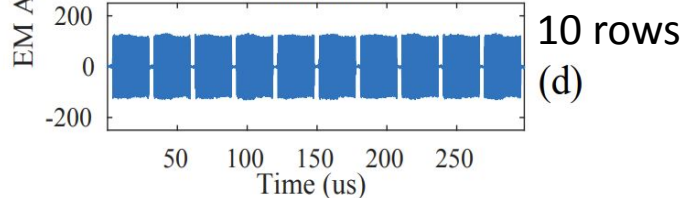
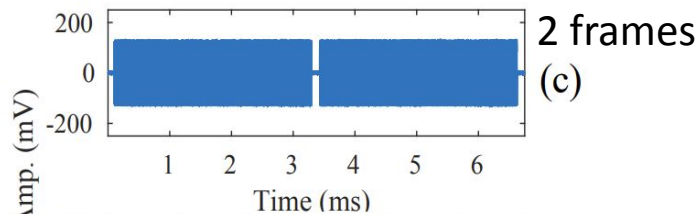
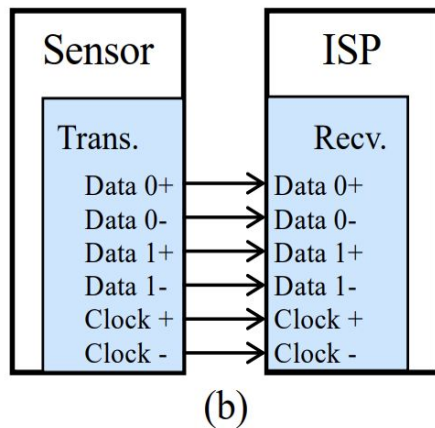
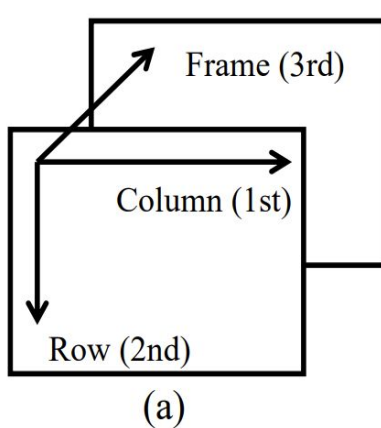
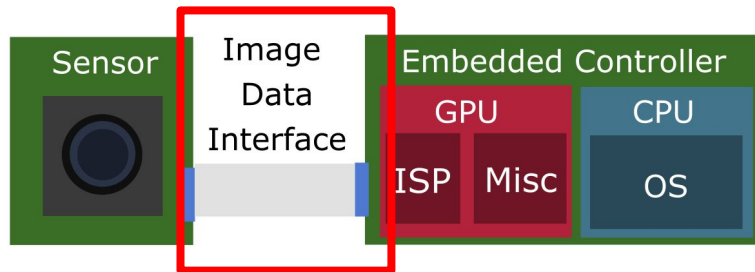
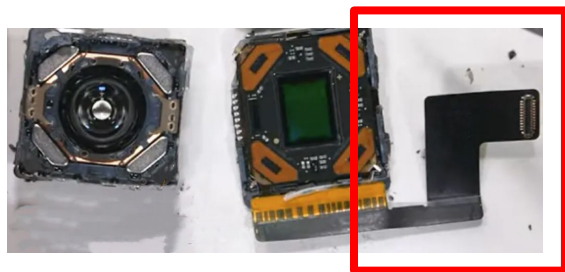
*Convergence of vision and AI is driving adoption of MIPI standards beyond just mobile phones.*

JANUARY 26TH, 2022 - BY: ANN MUTSCHLER





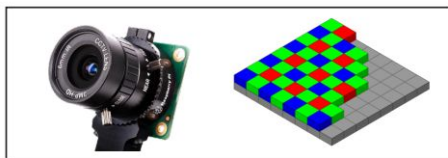
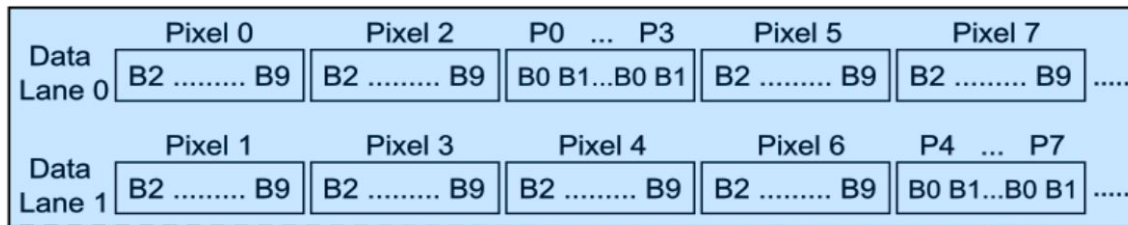
# Interface: Serialized, Predictable Data Structure



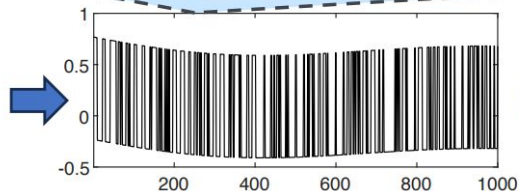
# Unprotected Data & EM Emanation

## Interface Protocol

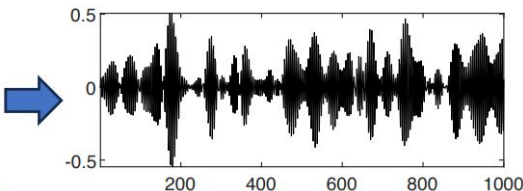
Bit Streams of Image Data



Optic



RAW Digital

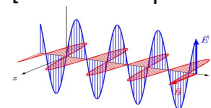


Electromagnetic

Unintentional Sender

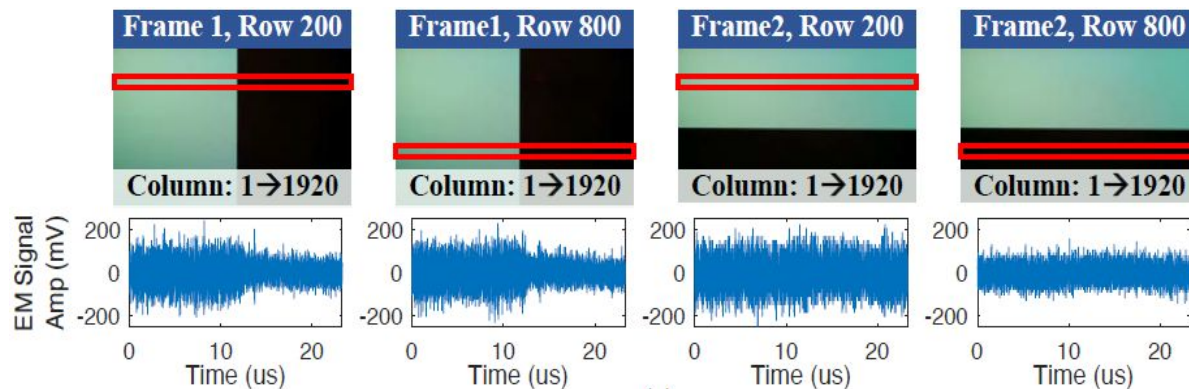
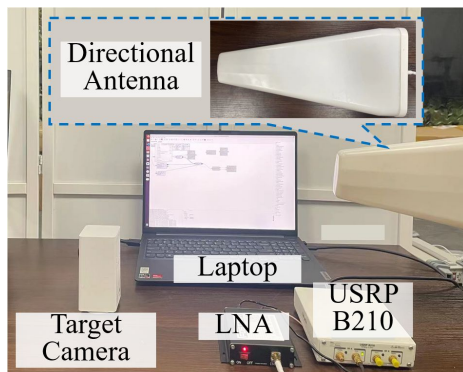


[Maxwell's Equations]

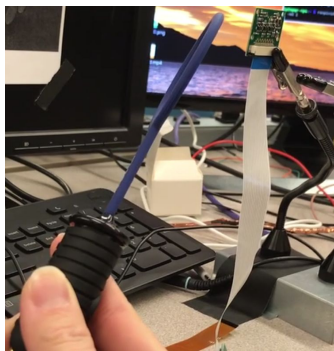
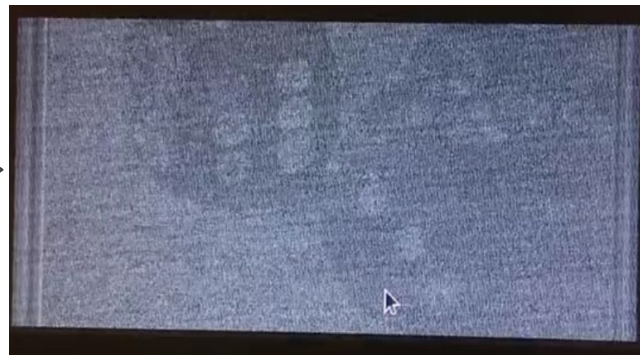


Adversary's Receiver

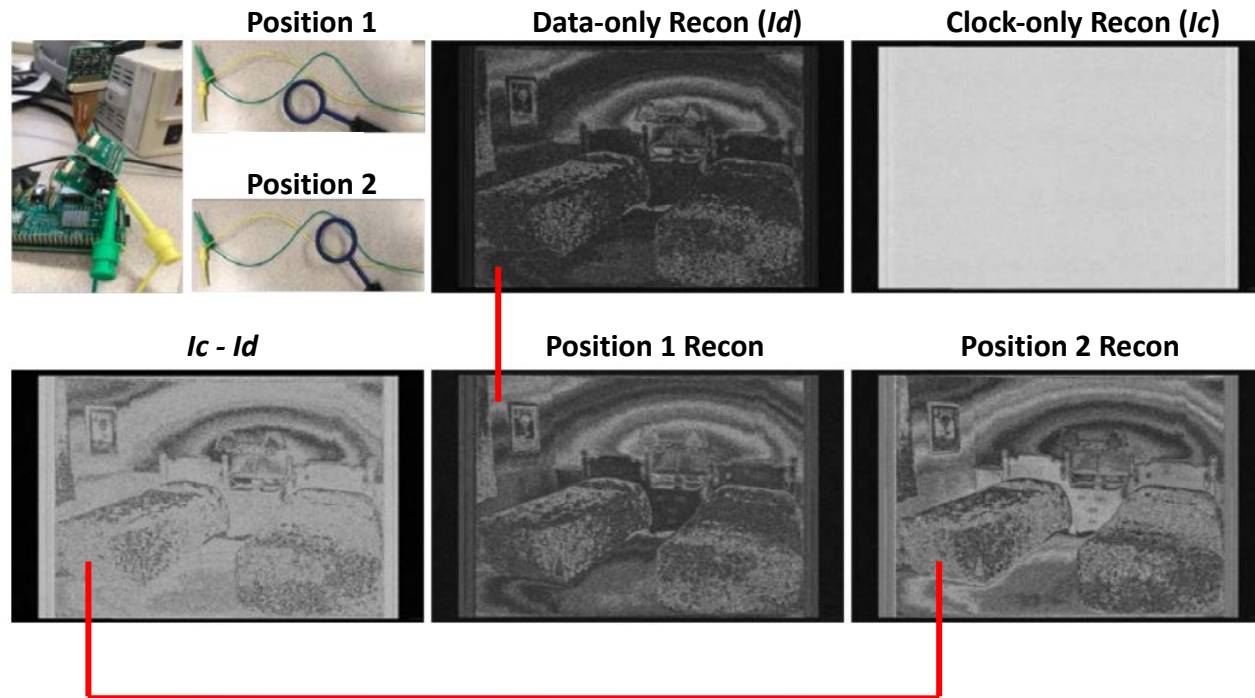
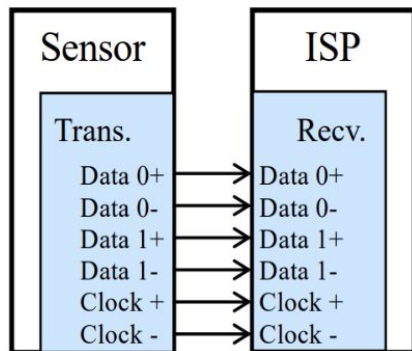
# EM-image Correlations



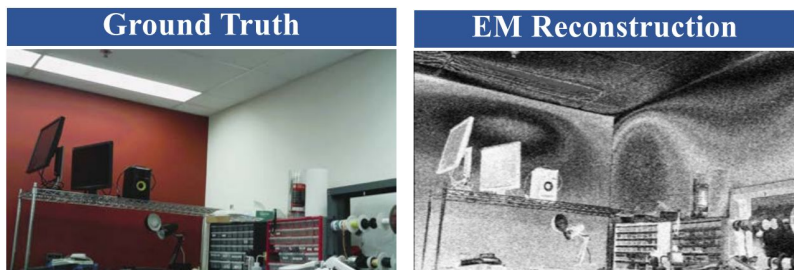
# Leakage Modeling: Multi-wire Signal Polarity Inversion



# Leakage Modeling: Multi-wire Signal Polarity Inversion

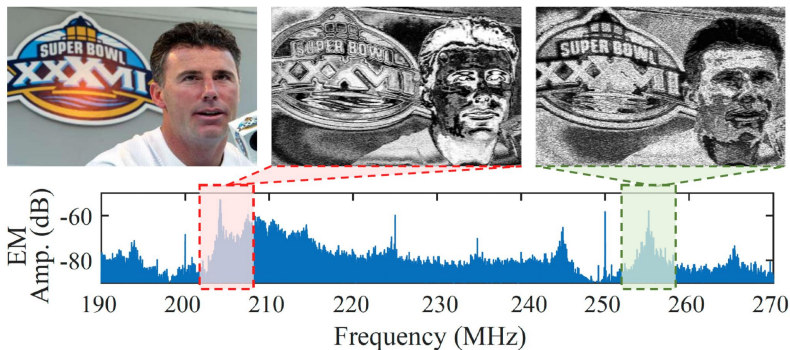


# Leakage Modeling: Practical Sampling Distortion



Practical Sampling:  $\sim 10$  MHz bandwidth  
(no info of individual bits)

- Loss of color
- Shuffled gray-scale mapping
- Light gradient & high-frequency noise
- Frequency dependency



# Reconstructions

$$I_{EM} = \mathcal{R}\{S_{EM}\}$$
$$S_{EM} = f_{CamLeak}(I_{GT})$$

EM Recon in  $[l, h]$

Response in Freq Band  $[l, h]$

Noise

Interface Protocol

Clock Interference

$$I_{EM}^{[l,h]} = \mathcal{R}\left\{z + b_{clk} + \mathcal{F}_{filt} [l, h, \mathcal{F}_{data}(I_{GT})]\right\}$$

# Reconstructions

$$I_{EM} = \mathcal{R}\{S_{EM}\}$$

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$$I_{EM}^{[l,h]} = \mathcal{R}\left\{ z + b_{clk} + \mathcal{F}_{filt} \left[ l, h, \mathcal{F}_{data}(I_{GT}) \right] \right\}$$

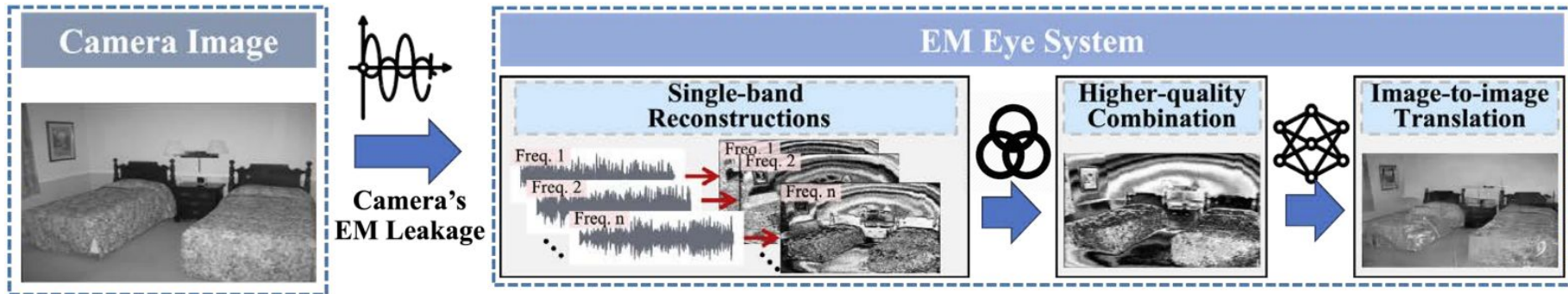
EM Recon in  $[l, h]$

Noise

Response in Freq Band  $[l, h]$

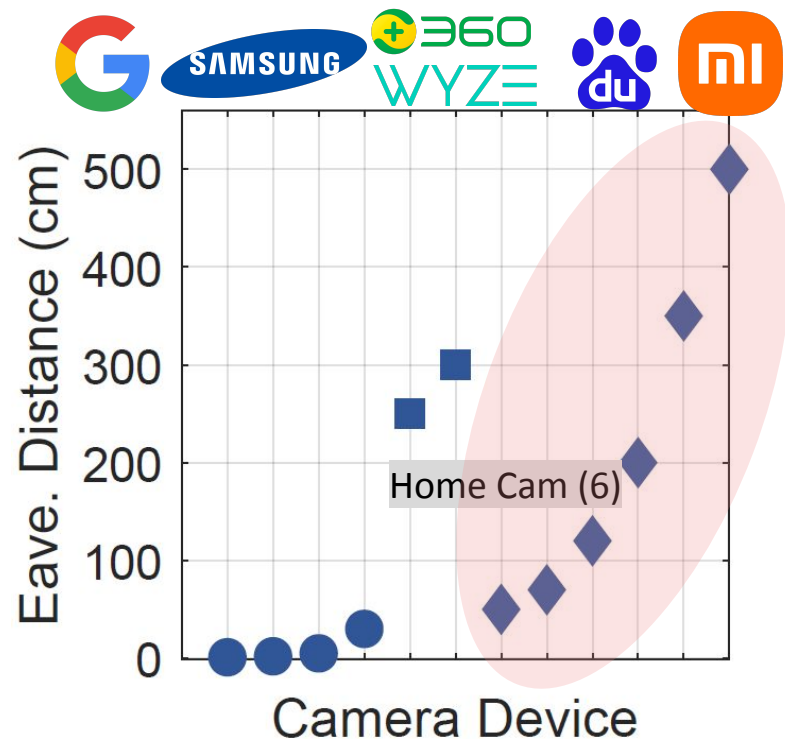
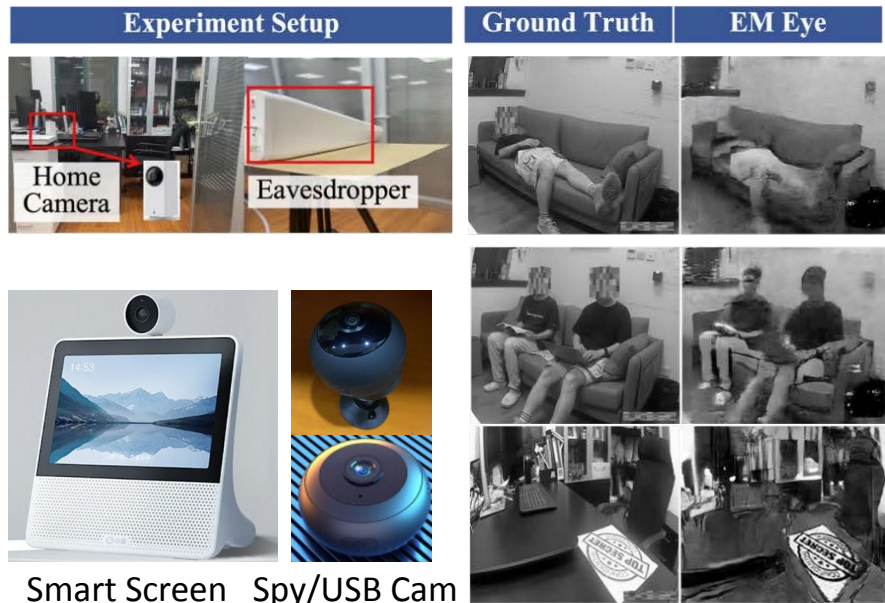
Interface Protocol

Clock Interference

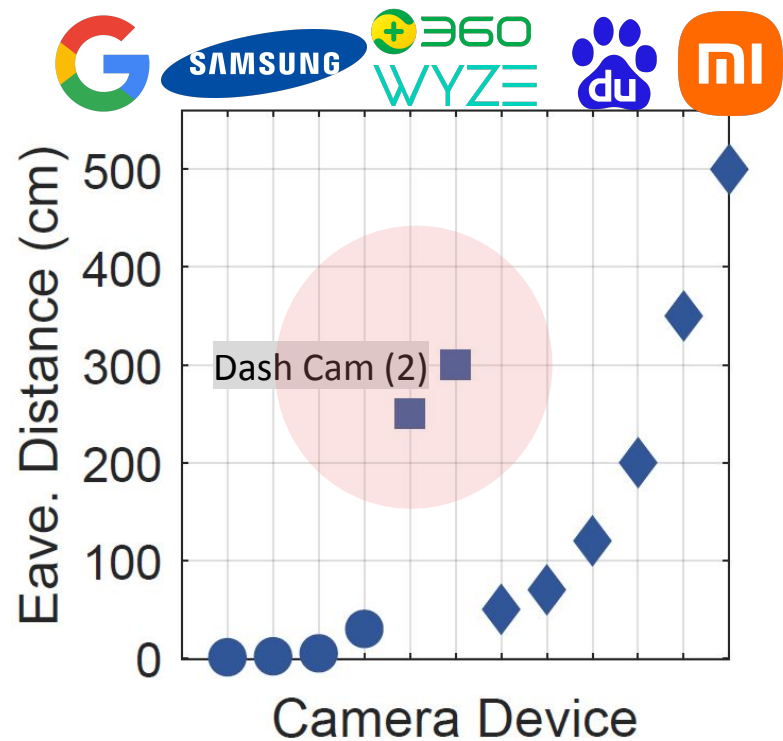
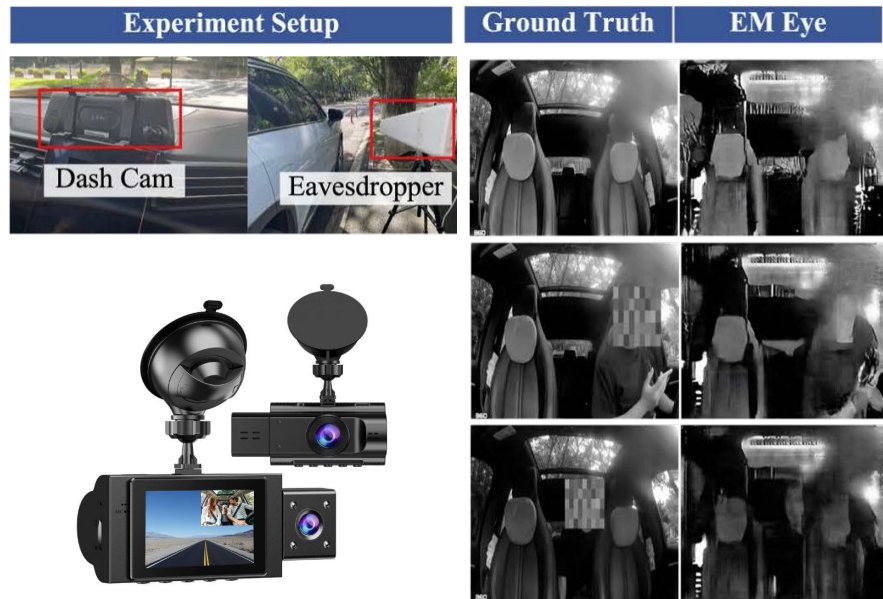




# Susceptible Devices: Home Cams



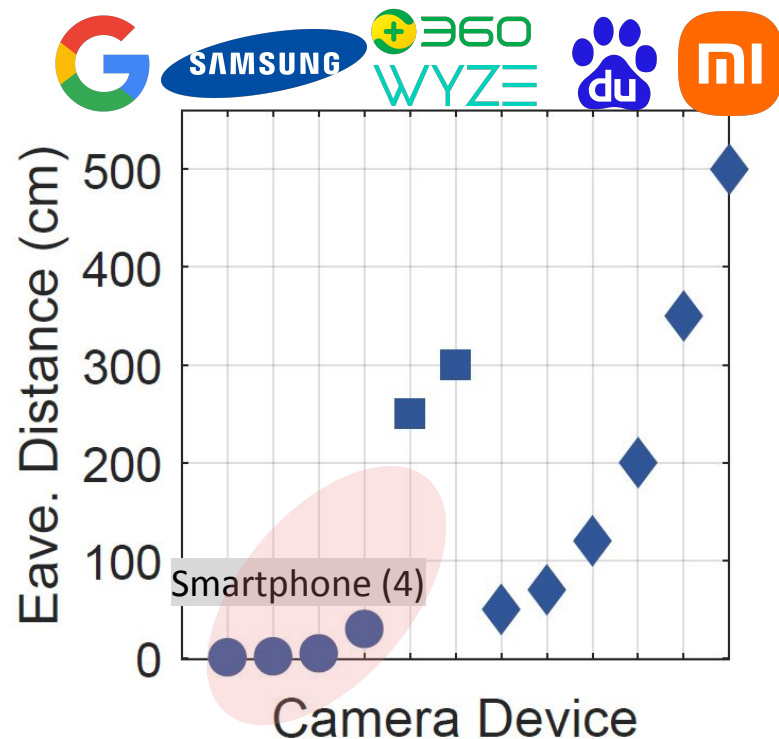
# Susceptible Devices: Dash Cams



# Susceptible Devices: Smartphone Cams



[Photo: Shutterstock]



# Factors & Mitigation: Shorter Cables

## Reconstruction with Different Cable Length @ Antenna-camera Distance

Ground Truth



3cm@1cm



3cm@20cm



10cm@1cm



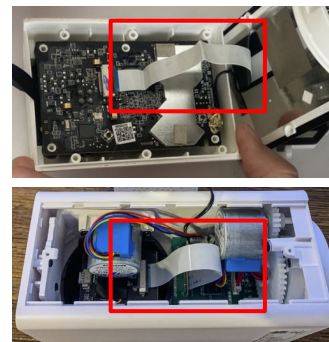
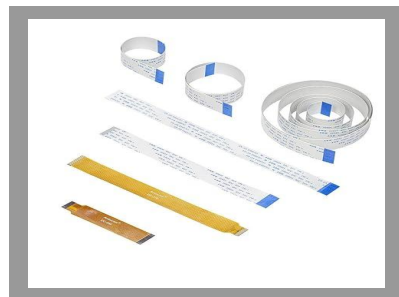
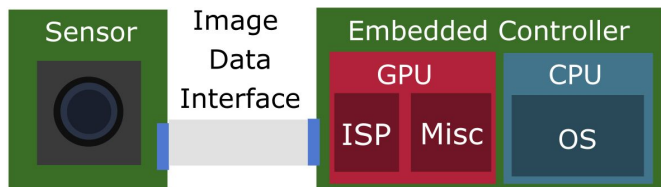
10cm@50cm



50cm@1cm

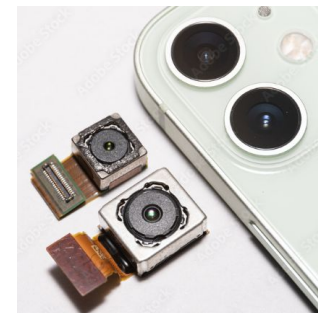


50cm@300cm

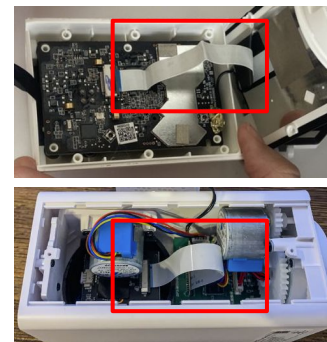
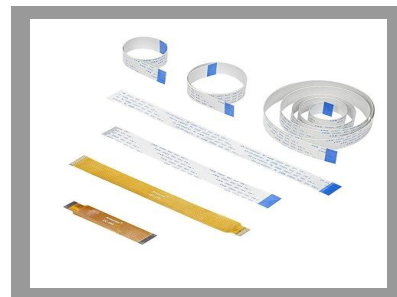
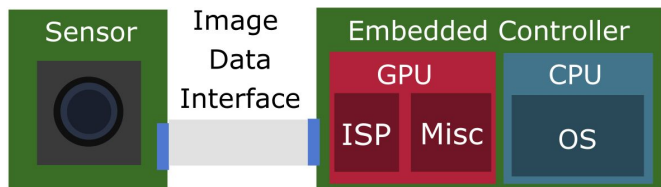


# Factors & Mitigation: Better Shielding

## Reconstruction with Different Cable Shielding Types



[Photo: Adobe Stock]



# Factors & Mitigation: Better Shielding

Gro

Sensor

Image Data Interface

Emb

ISP

How to Make a Smart Security Camera with a Raspberry Pi Zero

Hacker Shack ✓  
164K subscribers

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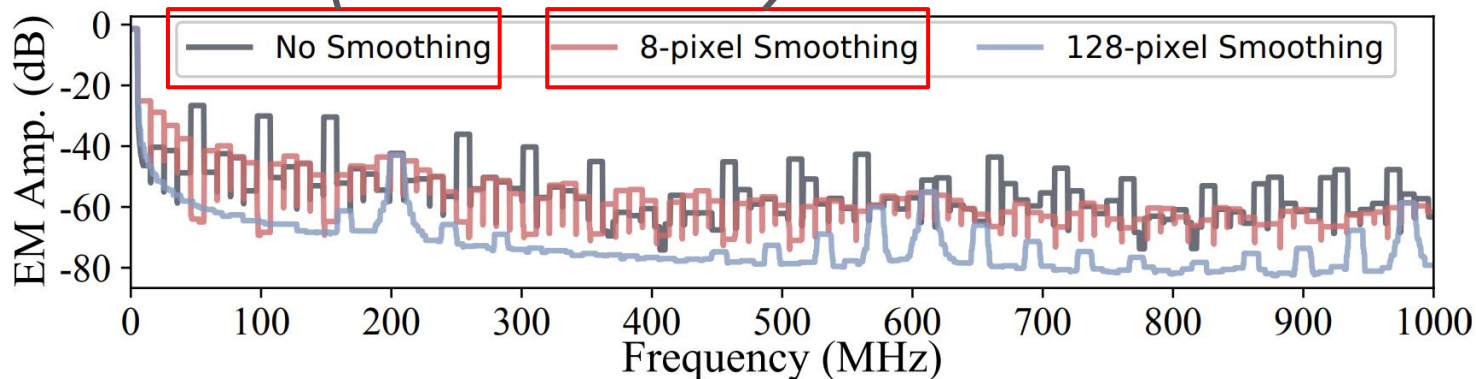
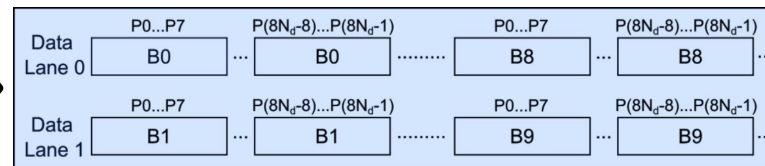
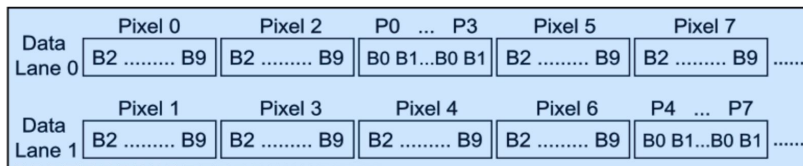
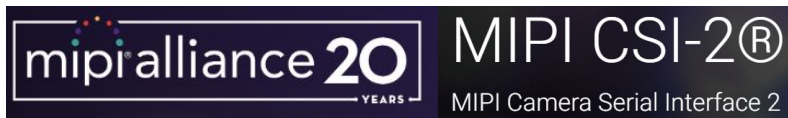
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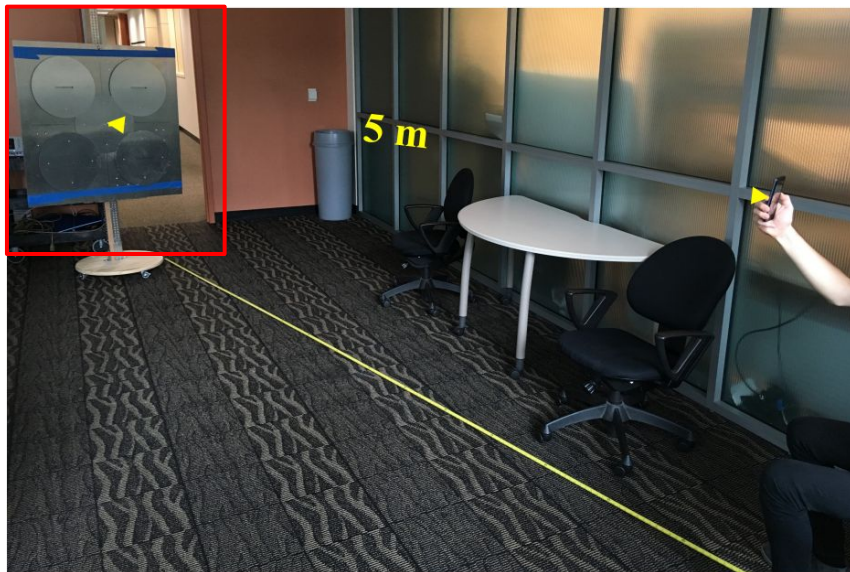
[Photo: Adobe Stock]

# Factors & Mitigation: Minimize Bit Transitions



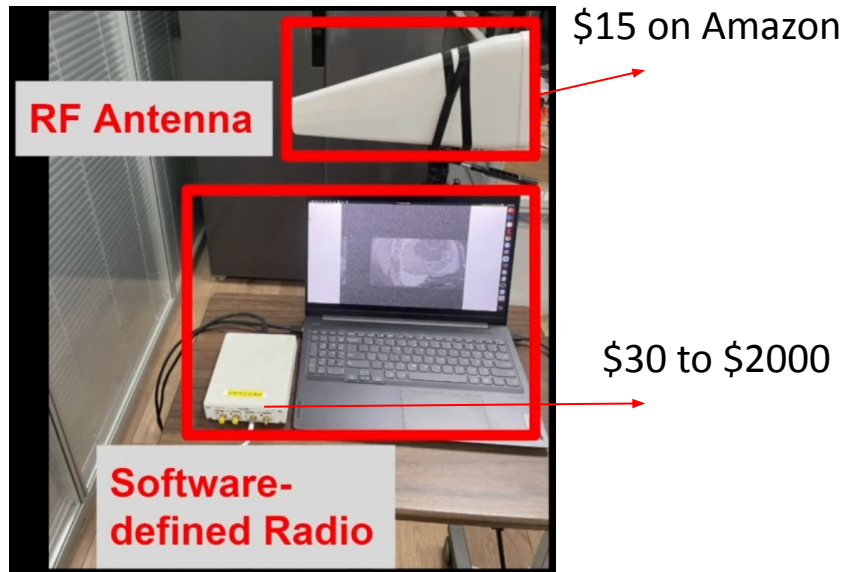
# Discussion: Distance

## Lab Customized Receiver



[Yilmaz et al., IEEE MILCOM 2019]

## COTS Receiver



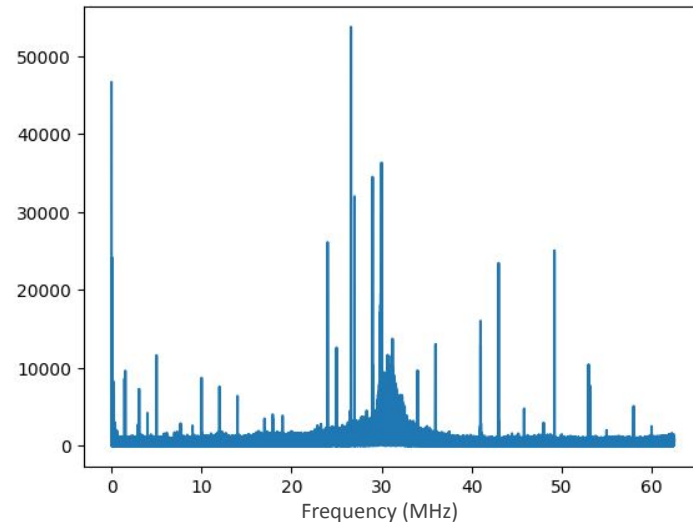
[EM Eye]



# Discussion: Encoded Image Transmission

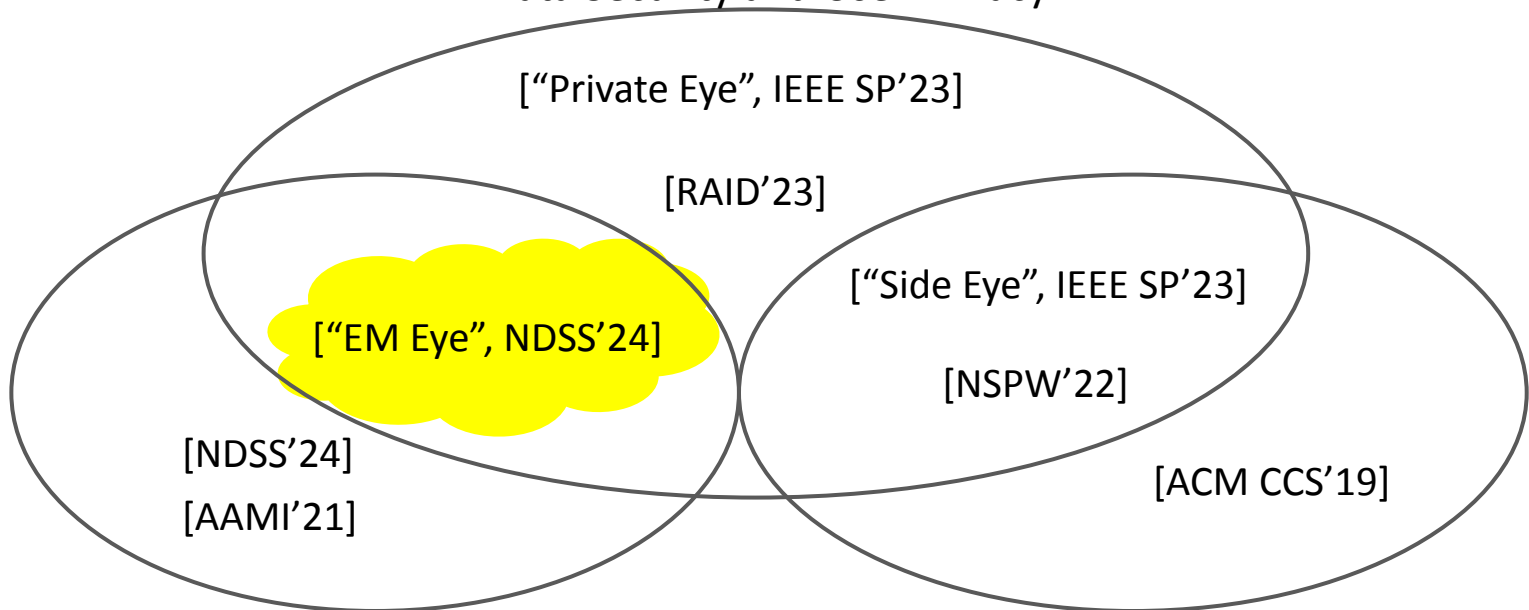


- Simple FFT-LDA (spectral) features
- >90% accuracy recognizing 100 scenes



# Discussion: Bigger Picture

**Leakage Channels:**  
Data Security and User Privacy



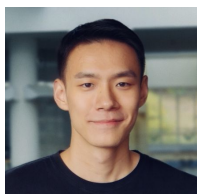
**Injection Channels:**  
CPS Infrastructure Security and Safety

**Novel Sensing Channels:**  
Multimodal Sensing for Authentication

# Summary

- EM leakage from cameras allows reconstructing image streams.
- Both hardware and software designs of existing systems can/should be improved.
- Better not DIY your own home security cameras.....

## Team



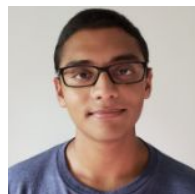
Yan Long



Qinhong Jiang



Chen Yan



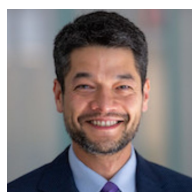
Tobias Alam



Xiaoyu Ji

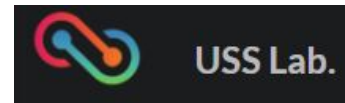


Wenyuan Xu

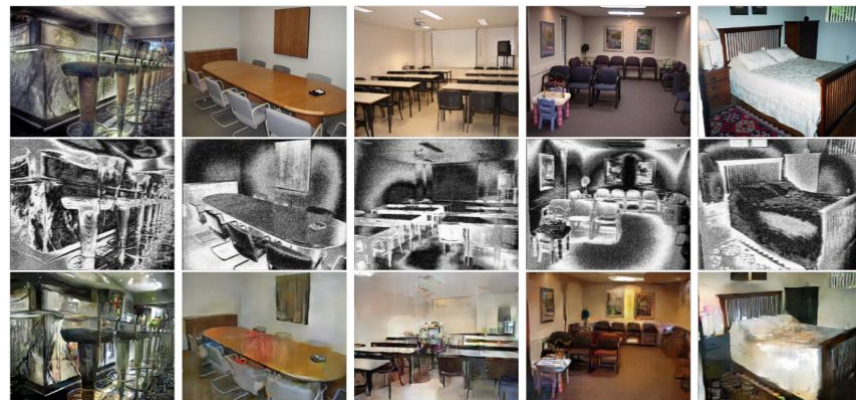


Kevin Fu

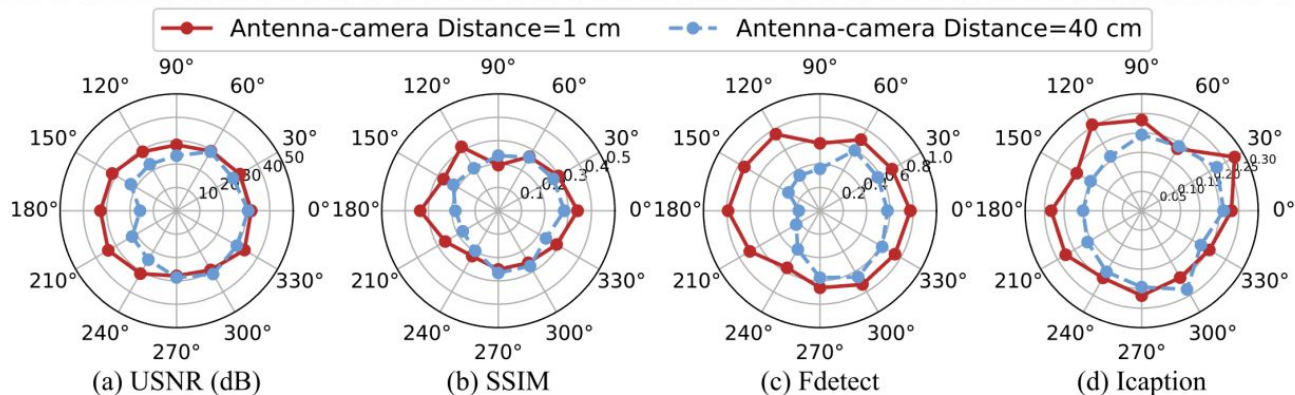
<https://emeyeattack.github.io/Website/>



# Color



# Angle



# Analog Filtering

Protocol	Frequency Band	Protocol	Frequency Band
GSM	880 - 960~MHz	Wi-Fi	2.4~GHz and 5~GHz
3G	800 - 2100~MHz	ZigBee	915~MHz and 2.4~GHz
LTE	700 - 2600~MHz	LoRa	868~MHz and 915~MHz
5G	850~MHz, 1900~MHz 1850 - 1990~MHz	NB-IoT	824 - 849~MHz, 869 - 894~MHz
Bluetooth	2.4~GHz	Z-Wave	868.42~MHz and 908.42~MHz

w/o Analog Filter



w/ Analog Filter

