Automated Pill Dispenser (Pillsnap)

ECE445 Design Document

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Taking medications as instructed and punctually can be a hard task for patients who need many kinds of medicine, especially for senior people with memory problems. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, most of the people in America took the drugs as prescribed, but 19 million people misuse their drugs. They often get drugs from their friends or relatives and took more than their doctor had prescribed [1]. Given the number of different types of medicine, it is often difficult and troublesome for the patients to keep track of the correct dose and consumption time for each type. It is also very common that many old people need notifications to remind them of taking the pills.

There are some companies trying to build the pill dispenser to solve this problem and make profits. However, it costs a lot of money and many people might not be able to afford that. For instance, The Hero Health Pill Dispenser is one of the most popular products on the market, but it sells for $99.99 and a membership fee (including app and some other services) $29.99 per month.

We will try our best to lower the cost as much as possible. At least, we want our app services to be free for all the users since people are likely to prefer the free software services that come with the devices they buy.

1.2 Objective

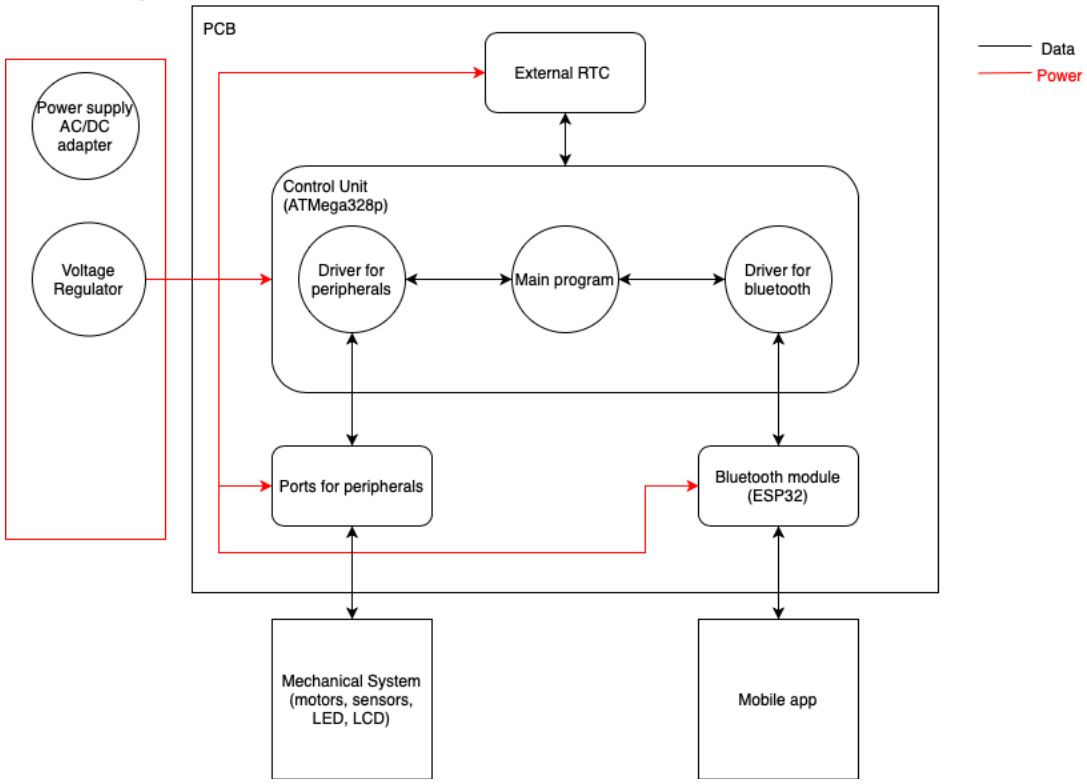
We want to design an automatic pill dispenser that can alert the user to take medicine on time and automatically dispense the correct type and dose of the pills. It will also show the instructions for those pills on a screen. To make the dispenser user-friendly, we plan to develop a mobile application for registering/keeping the information of the medicines and setting dose and consumption time. It can also send notification to the user at the set time. Ideally there will be different profiles for different users for easier family usage. The goal of this pill dispenser is to make it more convenient for people who need to take different kinds of medicine regularly without memorizing the exact dose and consumption.

1.3 High-level Requirements List

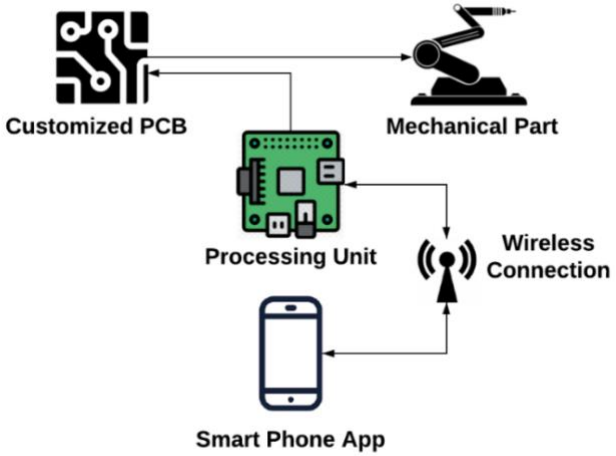
- Be able to provide power for motors in the mechanical system and control them by raising/lowering correct voltage outputs.
- Be able to keep track of the correct mapping among pills, chambers and dispensing information which can be displayed on an LCD screen.
- User should be able to setup the dispenser and register medicine information through the mobile app.

2. Design

2.1 Block Diagram



2.2 Physical Design



2.3 Subsystems

2.3.1 Control Module

The control module is the microcontroller and the software programs running on it. The software consists of the main program, driver for peripherals and driver for Bluetooth module. The control module is responsible for sending to and receiving data from the mobile app via Bluetooth module and interacting with peripherals such as motors and LCD screen. It also stores the dosage information in the on-chip memory.

Requirement	Verification
1. Successfully send data to the Bluetooth module. 2. Correctly stores and accesses data in the on-chip memory. 3. Can generate PWM signals for controlling motor drivers 4. Can send data stream for LCD display.	1. A. Correctly wire up the microcontroller and the Bluetooth board. B. Send data from the controller program through the Bluetooth driver and see if the transmitting blue light on Bluetooth board is lit. 2. A. Stores data at some memory address. B. Fetch at the address and print the result to see if the console output correct. 3. A. Can use oscilloscope to test PWM signal. 4. A. Connect the LCD display and see if the displayed data is correct.

2.3.2 Peripheral Module

The peripheral module contains the power/data ports for peripherals, software driver for peripherals (overlapping with control module) and peripherals such as LCD screen.

Requirement	Verification

1. Motors can be controlled by the output signal from control module. 2. LCD screen can display the correct information. 3. LEDs can be controlled by the control module.	1. A. Power the motor and connect to the microcontroller. B. Change the PWM output signal from the microcontroller and see if the motor speed changes. 2. A. Send test char from main program. B. See if LCD can display and display correctly. 3. A. Set digital pins on microcontroller to HIGH or LOW. B. See if LEDs light up.

2.3.3 Bluetooth Module

Requirement	Verification
1. Can pair with the phone. 2. Can receive data from the phone. 3. Can send data to the control module.	

2.3.4 Application for Phone

The app is the key to inform the user of any update or status. Our current plan is to build an iOS app connected via Bluetooth/Wi-Fi protocols. The user will have to set the dosing information through the app. Then the message will get transmitted to our processing unit via wireless protocols. Besides, the app will also listen from our processing unit for any update of pill dispensing or notification.

Requirement	Verification

1. The app should be able to display notification with the correct dosing information at the right time. 2. The app should be able to set user's profile including dosing information, pill kinds and etc.	1. A. Notification pops up when the medicine time is up. 2. A. Be able to set the user's dosing information and the notification could react accordingly.

2.3.5 Power Supply

Requirement	Verification
1. Power the components on the PCB (microcontroller, Bluetooth chip). 2. Power the ports for peripherals (motors, LCD screen). Note: The power supply should be able to drive the mechanical parts including a 12V/2A stepper motor, 3 5V/0.5A servo motors, 3 5V/50mA IR sensors, a 24V/20mA keypad, a 3.5V/35mA buzzer and several 5V LEDs for now.	1. A. Connect the ac adaptor. B. The microcontroller and Bluetooth chip can be turned on. 2. A. Connect the ac adaptor. B. Connect the motors to the correct ports on PCB. C. See if the motors are working.

2.4 Data Flow

2.5 Schematics

3. Cost and Schedule

3.1 Cost Analysis:

Labor:

Parts:
Microcontroller (ATMega)
Customized PCB
Power Supply - $20
Bluetooth Module
Wires - Given
(Motors, drivers and other parts from ME team)
Total:

3.2 Schedule

Week 1	Coding main program, generating correct control signals to any specific pin on the PCB and possibly Bluetooth channel set up
Week 2	Integrating with ME team for various motors' control signals and start developing iOS app development
Week 3	iOS app development and other collaboration details with ME team
Week 4	Any unfinished task from above and final integration
Week 5	Any unfinished task from above and final integration
Week 6	Prepare mock-up (if needed) and prototype refining

4. Ethics and Safety

There might be some potential safety problems with our projects. If the pill dispenser doesn't give pills at the proper time, it could be detrimental. Besides, little children might also find this device very interesting. They might take the pills as sugar and that could possibly have a negative effect on their health.

If this dispenser is exposed in a moist room, that will cause damage to the circuits. In order to avoid this, we need to tell the user to keep this device in dry area.

We thoroughly went over the 10 ethics mentioned on the IEEE Code of Ethics and we firmly believe that we will obey the rules of these ethics.

1. "to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, to strive to comply with ethical design and sustainable development practices, and to disclose promptly factors that might endanger the public or the environment;" [2]
    - Our project will not affect the safety of the public. It uses electricity as its main power supply, so it will not have a negative effect on the environment.
2. "to avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest whenever possible, and to disclose them to affected parties when they do exist;" [2]
    - Our project will not have conflict of interest and even if the conflict exists, we will inform the affected parties.

References

[1] Harris, Richard. “Federal Survey Finds 119 Million Americans Use Prescription Drugs.” NPR, NPR, 8 Sept. 2016, www.npr.org/2016/09/08/493157917/federal-survey-finds-119-million-americans-use-prescription-drugs.

[2] Ieee.org, "IEEE IEEE Code of Ethics", 2016. [Online]. Available: http://www.ieee.org/about/corporate/governance/p7-8.html. [Accessed: 29- Feb- 2016].