

# The Unhappy Motorcycle Speedometer Troubleshooting Case History



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EMC course instructor University of Oxford, England



Solutions for your noisy world.



# Instructor Biography

Lee Hill is Founding Partner of SILENT Solutions LLC, an independent electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) and RF design firm he established in 1992. Besides providing EMC design review and troubleshooting services, Lee is also a member of adjunct faculty at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) where he teaches graduate courses in EMC. He is also an EMC class instructor at the University of Oxford (England), and for the IEEE EMC Society's annual Global University program and EMC Fundamentals workshop. In past years Lee was also an EMC course instructor for UC Berkeley Extension as well for Hewlett Packard and Agilent Technologies. Previously Lee was Principal EMC and Systems Engineer at Digital Equipment Corporation's Workstation Systems Engineering Group in Palo Alto, CA. In 2017 Lee founded SILENT Solutions GmbH in Munich, Germany.

Lee received the Master of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering & Electromagnetics with highest honors from the University of Missouri-Rolla, (now Missouri University of Science and Technology). He is an inventor of three US patents for EMI control in electronic systems, and provides expert witness services for patent litigation.

In the past fifteen years he has been a frequent featured speaker at IEEE EMC Society fundraising events in cities throughout the US including Santa Clara, Seattle, Portland, Chicago, Milwaukee, Dallas/Fort Worth and Detroit. He has also provided technical presentations to Society chapters in Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Clara, Boston, Austin, Colorado Springs, Pittsburgh, and Orange County, CA. He served a term as an IEEE EMC Society Distinguished Lecturer from 1994-1996.

Lee has over twenty-five years of experience in the EMC design and retrofit of complex electronic systems. He has been teaching short courses on EMC design and troubleshooting for twenty years. Lee consults and teaches worldwide, and has presented classes in Taiwan, Singapore, Mexico, Norway, Canada, South Korea, France, Germany and United Kingdom. He has completed a three-year term on the Editorial Review Board of Printed Circuit Design Magazine.. He is an avid father, runner, motorcyclist, table tennis player and Amateur Radio operator, and has served as an officer on the board of directors of several non-profits.

Lee is past member of the IEEE EMC Society Board of Directors (2004-2007). From 1999-2006 he chaired the IEEE EMC Society's Distinguished Lecturer Program, and served as Co-Technical Chair of the 2003 IEEE Symposium on EMC in Boston, MA. In 1999 Lee received a Certificate of Appreciation from the EMC Society for significant contributions to education through his annual participation in the Demonstrations and Experiments portion of annual IEEE EMC Symposia.

# Thank You! Free Bonus Technical Presentation Available

Dear Demystifying EMC 2020 Attendee:

Randal and I would like to thank you again for taking time out from work to attend Lee's presentation(s) this year.

Please let us know if you would like to bring a SILENT EMC course to your work location. We offer intensive two, three, and four day format EMC courses for electrical hardware designers, PCB designers, mechanical engineers, and EMC engineers.

We have delivered these courses around the world to companies that develop a wide variety of electronic products and systems.

**If you would like to receive a free bonus technical presentation from SILENT, please just follow this link, [Bonus Presentation](#) then enter your name and email, and we'll send you an updated pdf copy of Lee's very popular talk "Mastering the Details of EMI Suppression Ferrites."**

This bonus presentation discusses the performance characteristics and high frequency EMI suppression ferrites and important considerations for practical applications. When this talk is given live, Lee includes a hardware demonstration of the effect of DC bias on a ferrite's impedance, using a network analyzer, power supply, and bias network. Lee has given this presentation throughout the US, Germany, and at DeMystifying EMC 2019 at Silverstone in the UK.

Warm Regards,



Lee Hill



Randal Vaughn

# SILENT Training Events - Europe 2020

Please get in touch and visit with me if you are traveling to one of these cities in 2020

Find more info at [www.silent-solutions.com](http://www.silent-solutions.com)

*EMV, Cologne, Germany*

*Posnań, Poland*

*University of Oxford, England*

*IEEE Symposium on EMC, SI+PI*

*SILENT EMC Courses*

*Dresden, Germany*

*March 2020*

*May 5-9, 2020*

*June 2020*

*July 2020 (Reno, Nevada)*

*May, October 2020 (Boston, Silicon Valley)*

*October 2020*

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### **Applying Practical EMI Design and Troubleshooting Techniques**

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*Tutor: Lee Hill, SILENT Solutions LLC & GmbH, USA & Germany*

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### **Advanced Printed Circuit Board Design for EMI & Signal Integrity**

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*Tutor: Lee Hill, SILENT Solutions LLC & GmbH, USA & Germany*

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### **Mechanical Design for EMC**

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### **Mastering High Speed Serial I/O Technology**

22 – 24 JUNE

*Tutor: Ransom Stephens, Signal Integrity Specialist*

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### **Resetting Your Signal Integrity Knowledge**

24 – 26 JUNE

*Tutor: Dr Istvan Novak, Senior Principal Engineer, Oracle*

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### **Making Successful Power Distribution Designs**

29 JUNE – 1 JULY

*Tutor: Dr Istvan Novak, Senior Principal Engineer, Oracle*

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## EMC Words of Wisdom

***“A rough estimate of the dominant EMI problem is more useful than a precise calculation of a negligible problem”***

Dr. Thomas Van Doren, Professor Emeritus,  
Missouri University of Science and Technology

***“EMC is the study of what is NOT on the schematic”***

Source unknown

# The Unhappy Motorcycle Speedometer





# The Unhappy Motorcycle Speedometer

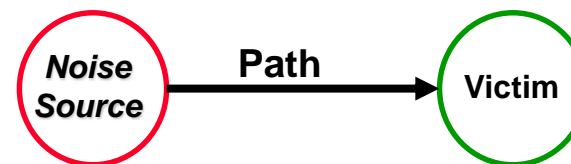
Radiated Immunity  
Conducted Emissions  
Radiated Emissions  
ESD  
Conducted Immunity  
POWER BUS FILTERING  
Self-Interference



Collect information from customer



Use the Noise Model, create a guess = “hypothesis”



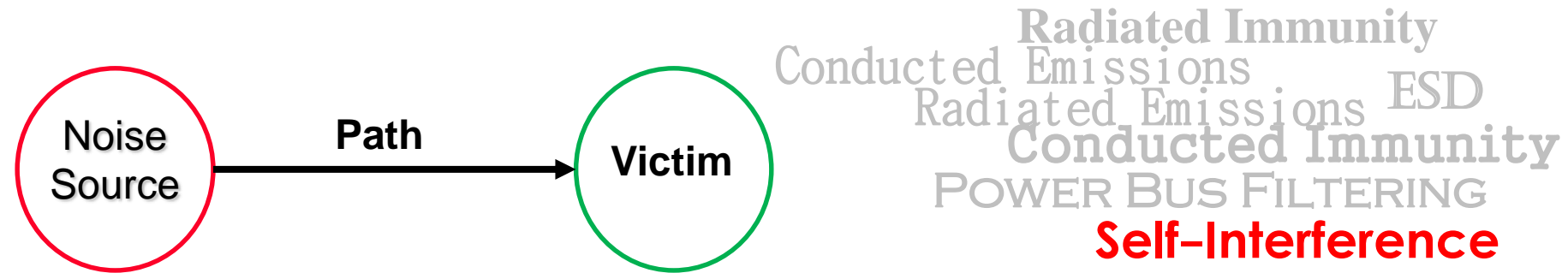
Fix the problem with a solution based on the guess



## Dear Customer: What KIND of Solution Would you Like?"

- A. Bike Retrofit at Local Bike Dealer- Fix motorcycle at customer's location or repair shop
- B. Bike Retrofit at Factory– Fix motorcycle at motorcycle factory  
AFTER motorcycle is built
- C. Part Factory Retrofit - Fix specific parts at motorcycle factory  
BEFORE motorcycle is built
- D. Redesign specific parts so that a new motorcycle is ok.  
It works well without any "extra" "fixes" or "pieces"

## Noise Model



Noise problem = “Self - Interference”

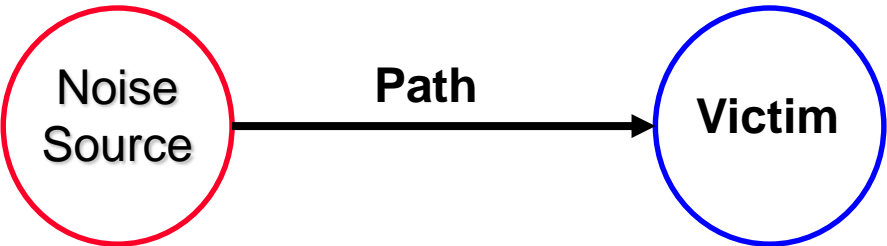
Let's view it as an “Immunity Problem”, at the speedometer

Information from the customer:

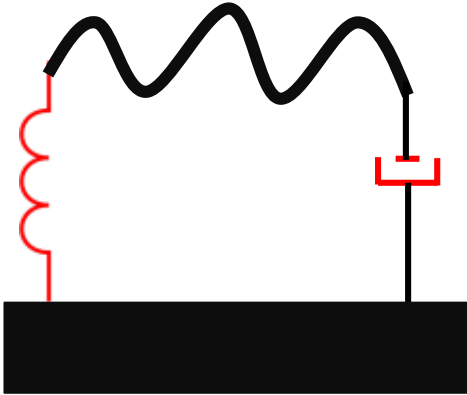
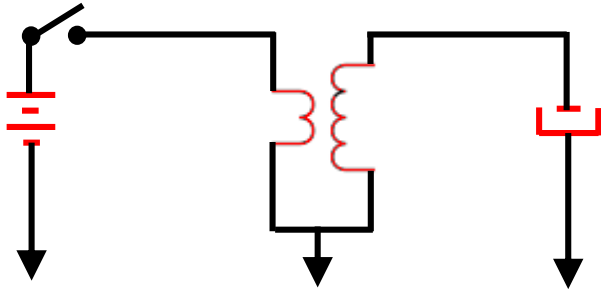
What is the noise source?

What is the victim?

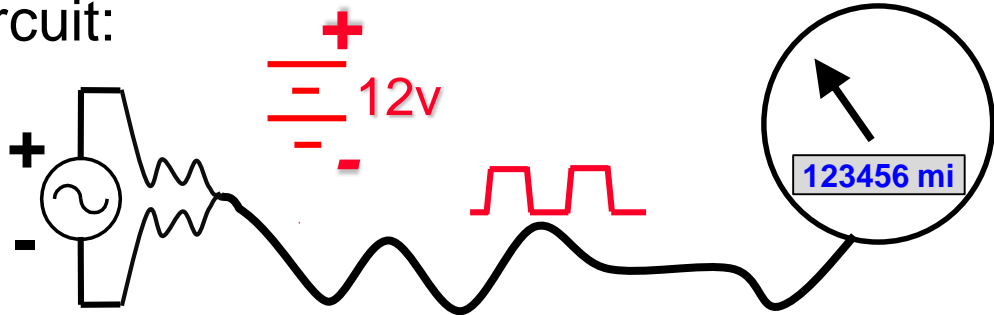
# Describe the Source and Victim Circuits



Noise Source Circuit:



Noise Victim Circuit:

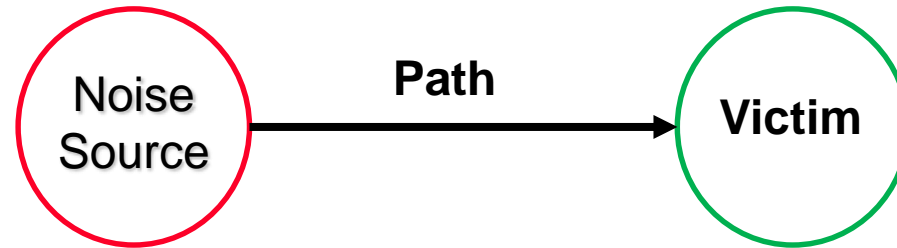


## Which Noise Paths are Possible?

Path	Dependence on Distance	Dependence on Frequency	Electrical Source	Physical Features
Radiative				
Conducted				
Capacitive				
Inductive				



## Determine Noise Path By “Process of Elimination”



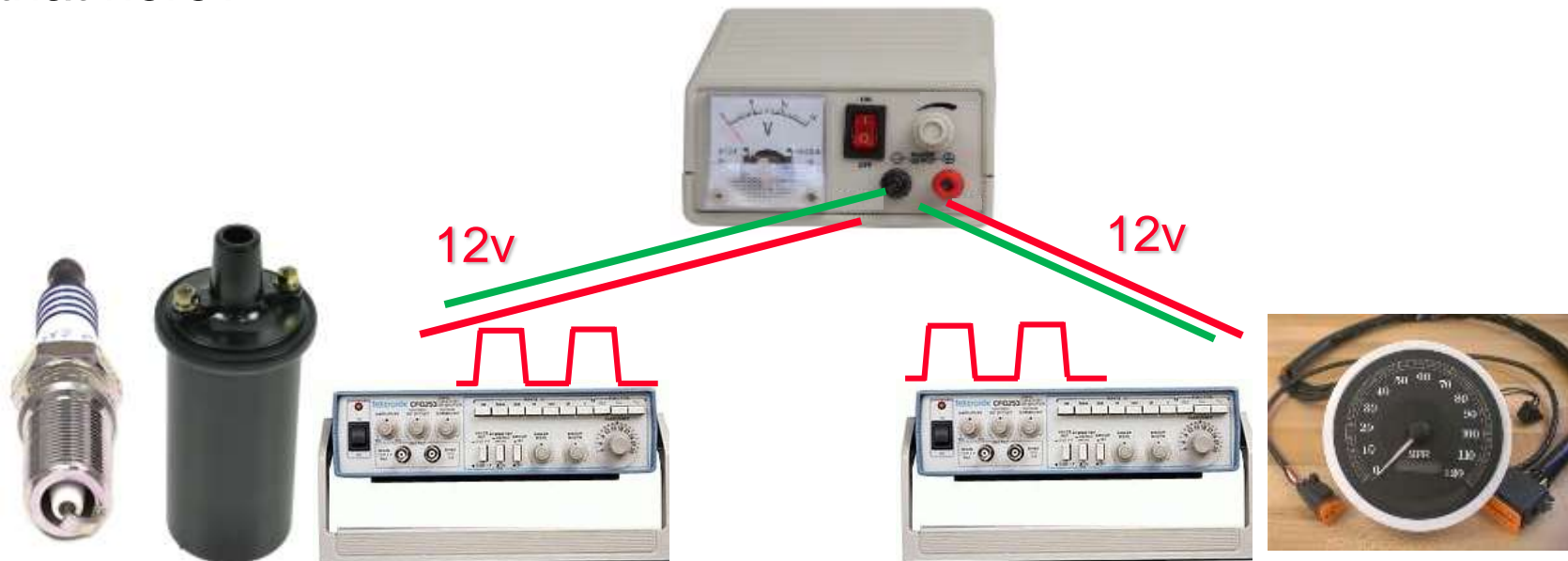
1) Use observations, simple calculations, simple experiments to prove that 1 or 2 of the 4 paths are NOT possible for this PARTICULAR noise problem.

Conductive?   Radiative?   Inductive?   Capacitive?

2) This reduces the number of possible paths that we should use for our noise model.

## Let's Try to Eliminate at Least 1 Path

- 1) When I arrive at the speedometer company, they have already simplified the system.
- 2) Which of the 4 noise paths is EASY to try to eliminate?  
How do I do that here?



## Can We Eliminate One More Path From Consideration?

All 3 of the remaining paths depend on distance between source and victim

We can better understand many noise problems if we study the effect of changing the distance between source and victim, or by studying the “normal” distance between source and victim.

We can usually eliminate \_\_\_\_\_ coupling as a possibility if we can prove that separation distance between source and victim is \_\_\_\_\_ than noise wavelength



## Can We Eliminate One More Path?

Repeating - We can usually eliminate \_\_\_\_\_ coupling as a possible path IF we can prove that separation distance between source is victim is \_\_\_\_\_ than noise wavelength

To find the noise wavelength, we need to measure or calculate the noise \_\_\_\_\_.

Is the noise signal periodic or aperiodic? Sinusoidal or non-sinusoidal?

Other parameters \_\_\_\_\_



## Try to Make Some Conclusions



How can I understand WHICH physical part of the circuit is responding to noise?  
This is VERY important, near-field coupling is very sensitive to |separation distance|

Step 1: I move the speedometer DISPLAY close to the ignition coil, cable and spark plug

Step 2: I move the speedometer CABLE close to the ignition coil, cable and spark plug.....

This observation makes sense. The electric or magnetic noise FIELD STRENGTH is MUCH larger AT THE VICTIM where these two objects are very close together on the motorcycle.

Is the problem capacitive or inductive?

Recall capacitive coupling requires big \_\_\_\_\_ and big \_\_\_\_\_

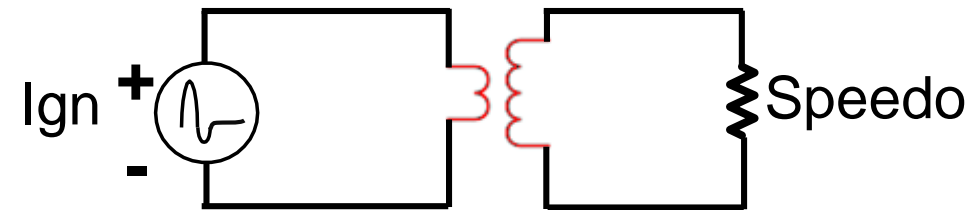
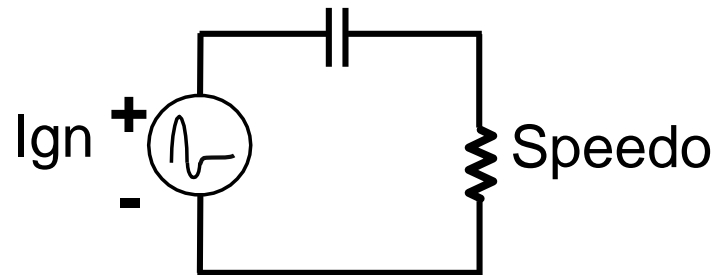
Inductive coupling requires big \_\_\_\_\_ and big \_\_\_\_\_



## Can We Eliminate One More Path?



The two remaining paths are then \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_



Remember: Our lumped element noise model won't work at (higher) frequencies where the largest physical dimensions of the source and victim get close to (noise wavelength)/4.

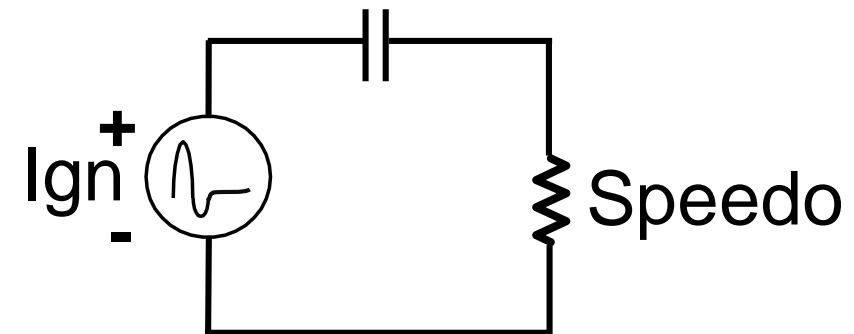
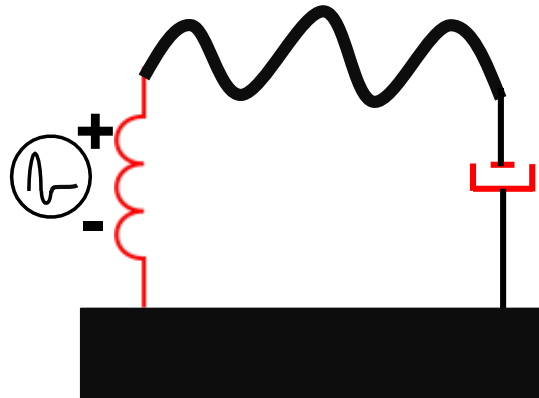
BUT, IF near-field noise coupling occurs over small physical areas, where small parts of the source and victim circuits are close together...THEN we can STILL use a near-field model at "HIGH" frequencies.

## Analyze the Source Circuit Does it Favor L or C Coupling?



What is typical ignition system  $di/dt$ ?  
What ignition system  $dv/dt$ ?

Ok, then the noise path is probably \_\_\_\_\_

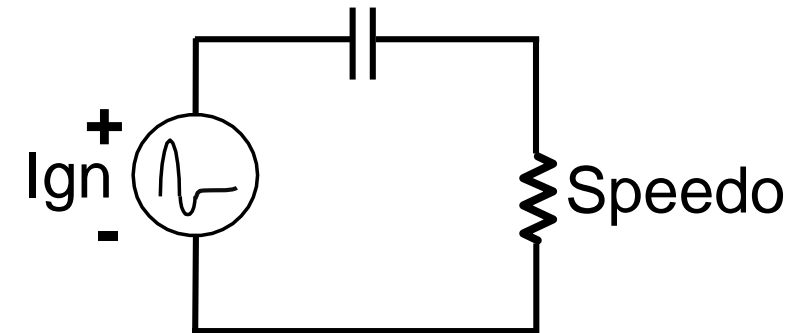
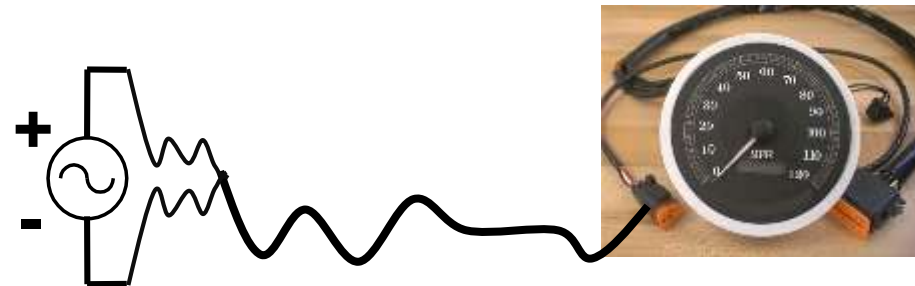
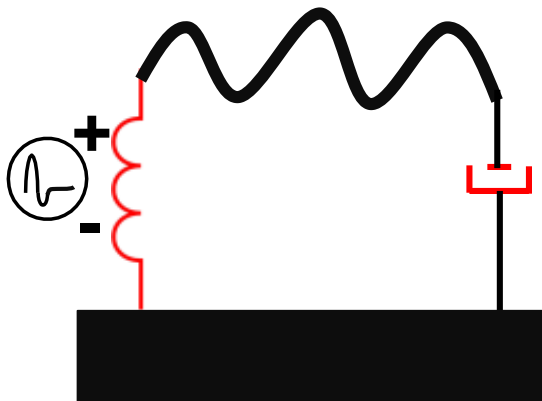


## Solutions For L Coupling, C Coupling



Typical solutions for magnetic (inductive) coupling in this example would be:

Typical solutions for electric (capacitive) coupling in this example would be:

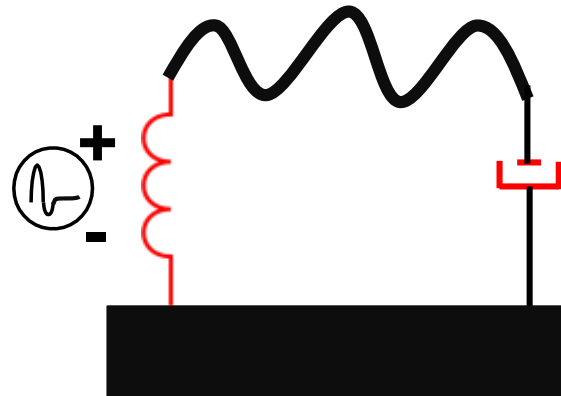


## Alternate Solution?



Bonus Question:

1) Would adding “resistive spark plugs” and/or “resistive ignition wire” help to solve the noise problem?



## Summary



- The “Noise Model” is the best thing we have to help us troubleshoot and solve electrical noise problems.
- Eliminate (“rule out”) as many paths as possible by observation and experiment.
- Modify 1 of the source’s 2 “electrical driving functions”.  
If big change in  $di/dt$  causes noise to decrease, then suspect \_\_\_\_\_.
- If big change in  $dv/dt$  causes noise to decrease, then suspect \_\_\_\_\_.
- Change the position of either the source or the victim. If noise problem stays the same, then suspect \_\_\_\_\_ to be the path.  
If the noise problem does not change, then suspect that \_\_\_\_\_ is NOT the path.



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