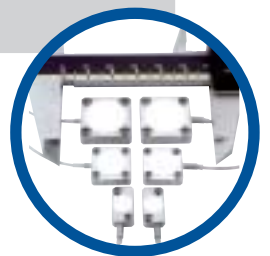
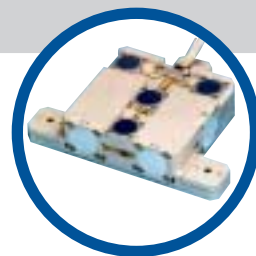


# Capacitive Displacement Sensors & Nano-Metrology Solutions

Updated 05/2007





# Contents

## Capacitive Displacement Sensors

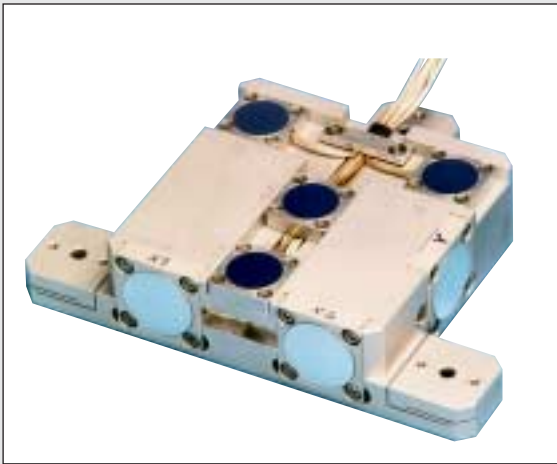
**See p. 5-3a - 5-3d  
for 2007 NEWS**

- Contents** ..... 5-2
- Overview** ..... 5-3
- Properties of PI Sensors ..... 5-3
- Reasons for Choosing PI ..... 5-3
- D-015, D-050, D-100** ..... 5-4
- Capacitive Position Sensors ..... 5-4
- Characteristics of Capacitive Position Sensors** ..... 5-6
- Stability and Linearity of PI Capacitive Position Sensors ..... 5-6
- Electrode Geometry, Sensor Surface Flatness and Finish ..... 5-7
- Special Design Eliminates Cable Influences ..... 5-7
- Materials Match for Greater Accuracy ..... 5-7
- Mounting, Calibration and Measuring Ranges ..... 5-7
- Parallelism of Measuring Surfaces ..... 5-8
- Electronics Support ..... 5-8

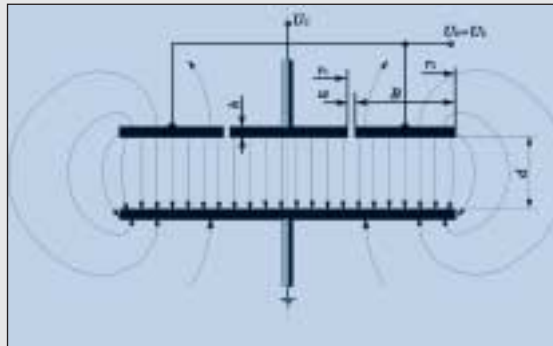
**For Piezo-Nanopositioning Systems click here:  
<http://www.pi.ws/fwd/Piezo-Stage>**

# Capacitive Position Metrology

## Overview



Capacitive position sensors in an ultra-high-accuracy, 6-degree-of freedom, scanning microscopy, nanostaging system designed by PI for the German Institute of Standards (PTB)



Two-plate capacitive sensor working principle

### Properties of PI Capacitive Displacement Sensors

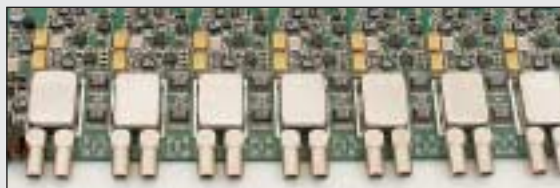
- Highest resolution (0.01 nanometer) of all commercially available position sensors
- Measuring ranges of up to 1 mm
- Ideal for parallel metrology applications
- Linearity to 0.003%
- Extremely high long-term stability (better than 0.1 nm / 3 hours)
- Vacuum compatible
- Bandwidth to 10 kHz
- Invar versions for highest temperature stability ( $5 \times 10^{-6} / \text{K}$ )
- Multi-channel digital electronics available
- Compatible with PI nanostaging system servo-controllers
- Two-plate and single-plate sensors
- Custom models

### Reasons for Choosing PI

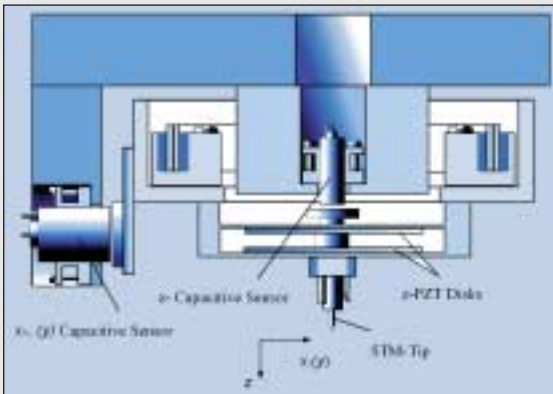
- Over 30 years experience in designing ultra-high-precision mechanics
- In-house design & manufacture of sensors and electronics
- State-of-the-art equipment for simulation, production and testing
- State-of-the-art metrology lab with multiple thermal, acoustic and seismic isolation for meaningful sub-nanometer measurements
- In-house controller development
- PI has the most-experienced nanostaging systems development and production teams in the field
- ISO-9001 certified since 1994



Quality control and long-term stability testing of capacitive displacement sensors at PI



Custom, 7-channel, capacitive position sensor electronics



Working principle of STM (scanning tunneling microscope) with integrated capacitive position sensors.

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Tutorial: Piezo-electrics in Positioning

**Capacitive Displacement Sensors**

Piezo Drivers &amp; Nanopositioning Controllers

Hexapods / Micropositioning

Photonics Alignment Solutions

Motion Controllers

Ceramic Linear Motors &amp; Stages

Index

## D-510

## PISeca™ Single-Electrode Capacitive Sensors for Sub-Nanometer Precision Measurements



- Non-Contact Measurement for Distance / Motion / Vibration
- Absolute Position Sensing
- Sub-Nanometer Resolution
- Measurement Ranges to 500 µm
- Easy Integration
- High Bandwidth

The new PISeca™ single-electrode capacitive sensors from PI perform non-contact measurements of distance, position or motion against any kind of electrically conductive target. They feature the highest resolution and linearity available.

The PISeca™ single-electrode capacitive gauges are fundamentally very temperature stable, have excellent dynamics and are easy to work with.

#### Application Examples

- Semiconductor technology / test & measurement
- Data storage
- Automotive industry
- Metrology
- Precision machining

#### Capacitive Displacement Sensors for Highest Accuracy and Lifetime

Single-electrode capacitive (capacitance) sensors are direct metrology devices. They use an electric field to measure change of capacitance between the probe and a conductive target surface, without physical contact. This makes them free of friction and hysteresis and provides high phase fidelity and bandwidth.

In combination with suitable sensor electronics (E-852.10) resolutions down to the sub-nanometer range and bandwidths to 10 kHz can be achieved. For high-dynamics measurements, a bandwidth up to 10 kHz is possible, with a resolution still down to the 1-nm range. With sufficient mounting accuracy, excellent linearity can be attained (up to 0.1%).

#### Guard-Ring Capacitor Provides Higher Linearity

Sensor design has a strong influence on linearity because the operating principle is based on that of an ideal parallel-plate capacitor. The superior PI design uses a guard-ring electrode that shields the sensor electrode from boundary effects. This ensures a homogeneous electric field in the measurement zone and results in higher measuring linearity.

#### Easy Handling and Integration

All PISeca™ sensor probes feature an integrated LEMO connector for easy mounting and replacement in the field. The standardized shaft diameter allows compatibility and flexibility.

#### Factory Calibration for Improved Linearity

Highest possible linearity and accuracy are achieved with factory calibration of the sensor probe together with the signal conditioner electronics. Two measurement ranges can be calibrated at the same time for one particular sensor probe. Factory calibration also optimizes parameters like ILS (linearization), gain and offset and eliminates cable capacitance influences. The E-852.10 provides two calibrated, optionally extended measurement ranges are available.

#### High-Precision Machining

The measuring surfaces of the PISeca™ sensors are machined with diamond tools using sophisticated process control techniques. The result is the smooth, ultra-flat, mirrored surface required to obtain highest resolution. The standard material is stainless steel.

#### Ordering Information

##### D-510.020

PISeca™ Single-Electrode Capacitive Sensor Probe, 8 mm diameter, 20 µm nominal range

##### D-510.050

PISeca™ Single-Electrode Capacitive Sensor Probe, 12 mm diameter, 50 µm nominal range

##### D-510.100

PISeca™ Single-Electrode Capacitive Sensor Probe, 20 mm diameter, 100 µm nominal range

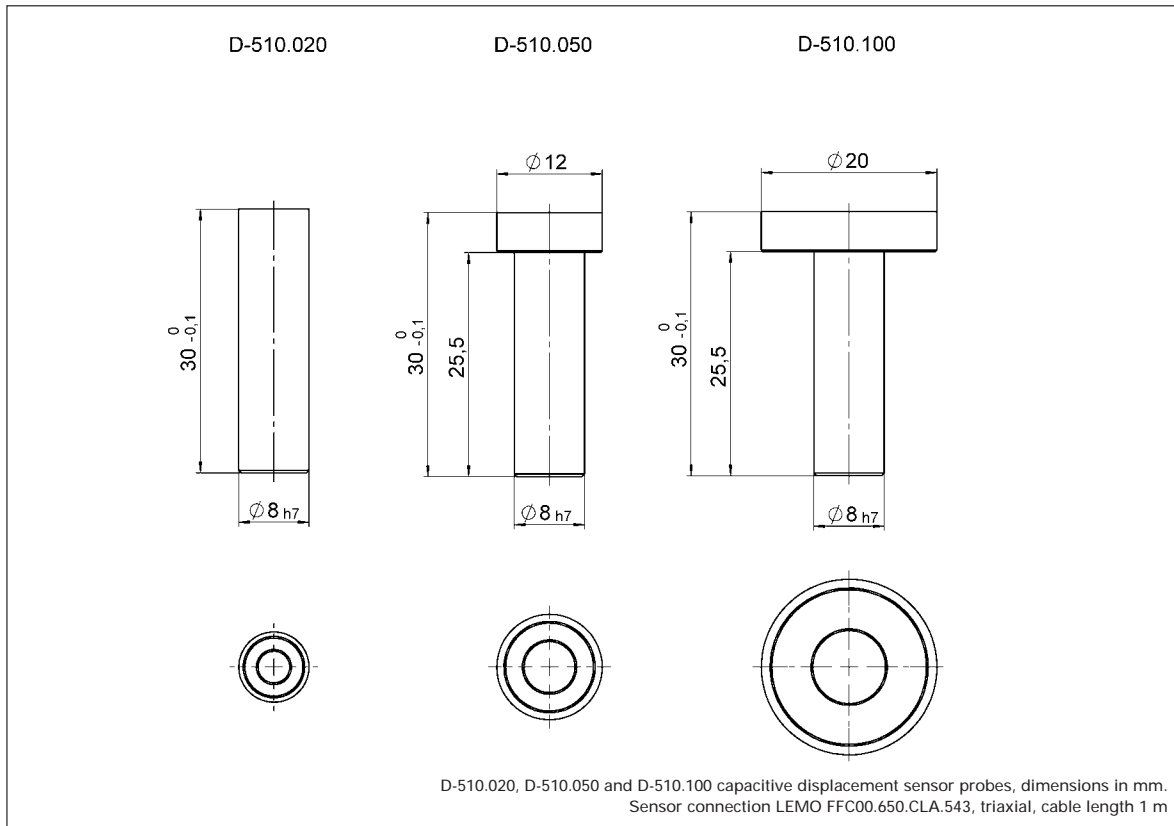
Ask about custom designs!

#### Custom Sensors / Two-Plate Sensors

In addition to the standard sensors listed here, PI can offer a variety of custom versions for different measuring ranges, geometries, materials match, etc. Systems with custom electronics are also available.

If ultimate performance is required, the D-100 series two-plate capacitive sensors are recommended, see page 5-4 ff.





### Technical Data

Models	D-510.020	D-510.050	D-510.100	Units	Tolerance
Sensor type	Single-electrode, capacitive	Single-electrode, capacitive	Single-electrode, capacitive		
<b>Measurement accuracy</b>					
Nominal measurement range*	20	50	100	μm	
Min. gap	10	25	50	μm	
Max. gap	150	375	750	μm	
Static resolution**	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	% of measurement range	typical
Dynamic resolution**	<0.002	<0.002	<0.002	% of measurement range	typical
Linearity***	<0.2	<0.1	<0.1	%	
<b>Mechanical properties</b>					
Sensor active diameter	3.8	6	8.4	mm	
Sensor active area	11.2	27.9	56.1	mm <sup>2</sup>	
Sensor diameter	8	12	20	mm	
Sensor area	50.3	113.1	314.0	mm <sup>2</sup>	
Mounting shaft diameter	8	8	8	mm	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>					
Operating temperature range	-20 to +100	-20 to +100	-20 to +100	°C	
Material	Stainless steel	Stainless steel	Stainless steel		
Mass	8	10	16	g	±5 %
Recommended signal conditioner electronics	E-852.10	E-852.10	E-852.10		

\* Extended measurement ranges available for calibration with E-852 signal conditioner electronics

\*\* Static resolution: bandwidth 10 Hz, dynamic: bandwidth 6.6 kHz, with E-852.10 signal conditioner electronics

\*\*\* Linearity over nominal measurement range

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**Capacitive Displacement Sensors**

Piezo Drivers &amp; Nanopositioning Controllers

Hexapods / Micropositioning

Photonics Alignment Solutions

Motion Controllers

Ceramic Linear Motors &amp; Stages

Index

# E-852

## Signal Conditioner Electronics for PISeca™ Single-Electrode Capacitive Sensors



- **Cost-Effective System Solution for PISeca™ Capacitive Displacement Sensor Probes**
- **Special Linearization System (ILS) for Maximum Linearity**
- **Bandwidth Adjustable from 10 Hz to 6.6 kHz**
- **Multiple Measurement Ranges per Probe**
- **LED-Bar Measuring-Range Display for Easy Setup & Sensor Installation**
- **External Synchronization for Multi-Channel Applications**

The economical E-852.10 signal conditioner electronics is specially designed for the PISeca™ D-510 series of single-electrode capacitive displacement sensor probes. It provides analog output with very high linearity, exceptional long-term-stability, sub-nanometer position resolution and bandwidths up to 6.6 kHz.

### Measurement Principle of Capacitive Sensors

Single-electrode capacitive (capacitance) sensors are direct

metrology devices. They use an electric field to measure change of capacitance between the probe and a conductive target surface, without physical contact. This makes them free of friction and hysteresis and provides high phase fidelity and bandwidth.

### Selectable Bandwidth and Measurement Range

The selectable bandwidth setting allows the user to adapt the system to different applications. For the highest accuracy and sub-nanometer resolution, the bandwidth can be limited to 10 Hz.

For high-dynamics measurements, a bandwidth up to 6.6 kHz is possible, with a resolution still down to the 1-nm range.

The user can choose a measurement range from 20 to

500 μm, depending on the nominal measurement range of the selected sensor. The E-852.10 provides different extended measuring ranges for each selected sensor.

### Easy Sensor Installation

The simple installation of the single-electrode PISeca™ probes is facilitated by the E-852's LED-bar indicating the optimum gap between probe and target.

### Factory Calibration for Improved Linearity

Highest possible linearity and accuracy are achieved with factory calibration of the sensor probe together with the signal conditioner electronics. Two measurement ranges can be calibrated at the same time for one particular sensor probe. Factory calibration also optimizes parameters like ILS (linearization), gain and offset and eliminates cable capacitance influences.

### Integrated Linearization System (ILS) for Highest Accuracy

A proprietary linearization circuit compensates the influences of parallelism errors between sensor and target and

### Ordering Information

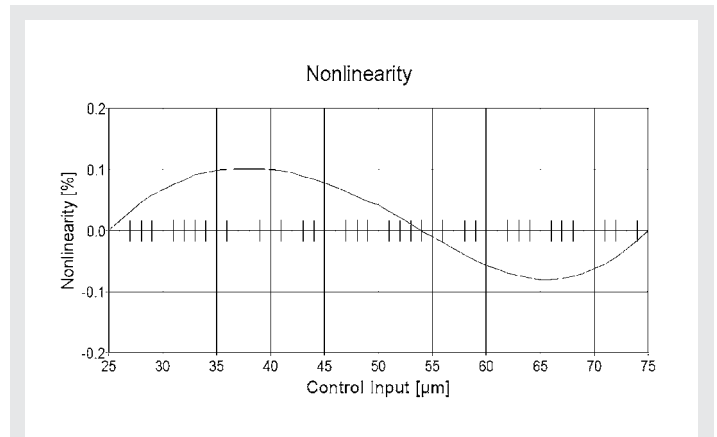
**E-852.10**  
PISeca™ Signal Conditioner Electronics for Single Electrode Capacitive Sensors, 1 Channel (with E-852.PS Power Supply)

**Ask about custom designs!**

guarantees an excellent measuring linearity (to 0.1%).

### Multichannel Measurements

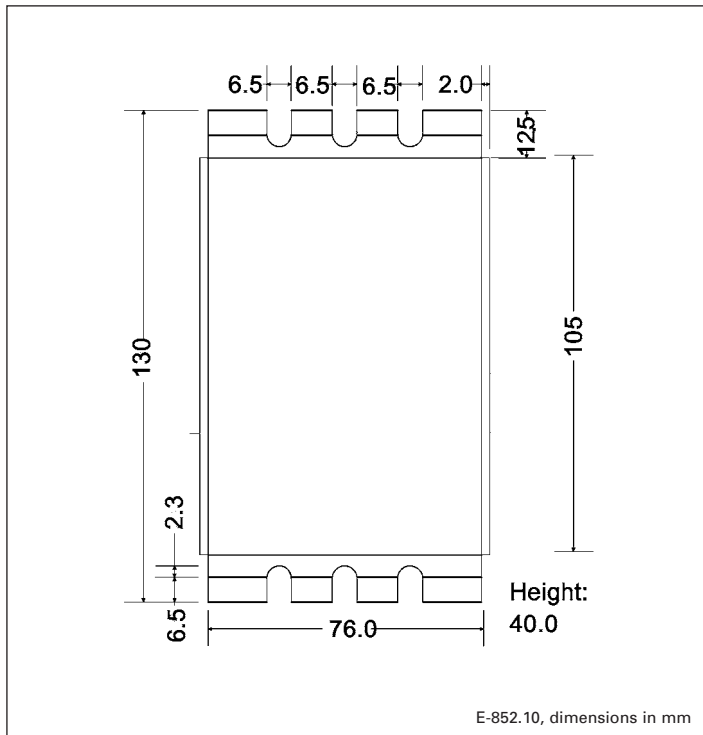
PISeca™ sensor electronics are equipped with I/O lines for the synchronization of multiple sensor systems.



Output linearity error of E-852 signal conditioner / D-510.050 sensor combination (nominal measurement range)

### Application Examples

- Semiconductor technology / test & measurement
- Data storage
- Automotive industry
- Metrology
- Precision machining



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Motion Controllers

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Index

## Technical Data

<b>Models</b>	<b>E-852</b>
Function	Signal conditioner for PISeca™ capacitive sensor probes
Channels	1
<b>Sensor</b>	
Sensor type	Single-electrode, capacitive
Sensor bandwidth	6.6 / 3 / 0.3 kHz 1.1 / 0.1 / 0.01 kHz (option)
Measurement range extension factors*	1 & 2.5 (calibrated), 2 & 5 (option)
Ext. synchronization	Auto master-slave
Temperature stability	1.56 mV / °C
<b>Electrical properties</b>	
Output voltage	-10 to +10 V / -5 to +5 V / 0 to +10 V
Output signal	1 kΩ / 1 nF
Supply voltage	±15 V (125 mA), +5 V (20 mA) supplied by E-852.PS / ±15 V
Static resolution**	<0.001 % of measurement range (RMS)
Dynamic resolution**	<0.002 % of measurement range (RMS)
Linearity @ nominal range	<0.1 % (<0.2 % for D-510.020)
<b>Interface and operation</b>	
Sensor connection	LEMO ECP.00.650.NLL.543 socket, triaxial
Analog output	BNC
Supported functionality	LED bar (gap indicator)
Linearization	ILS
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Operating temperature range	+5 to +40 °C
Weight	0.355 kg, E-852.PS: 1.2 kg
Dimensions	80 x 130 x 40 mm, E-852.PS: 100 x 170 x 62 mm
Target ground connector	Banana jack

\* Extension factors to multiply by the nominal measurement range

\*\* Static: bandwidth 10 Hz, dynamic: bandwidth 6.6 kHz, cable length 1 m

# D-015 · D-050 · D-100

## Dual-Electrode, Sub-Nanometer-Resolution Capacitive Position Sensors



Fig. 1. D-015, D-050, D-100 ultra-high-resolution capacitive position sensors provide up to 10,000 times higher resolution than calipers

- Measuring Range to 1000  $\mu\text{m}$
- Resolution <0.01 nm
- Linearity to 0.003 %
- Bandwidth to 10 kHz
- Integrated Linearization System (ILS)
- Custom Designs

### Measurement Method

Capacitive position sensors are analog non-contact devices. A two-electrode capacitive position sensor consists of two RF-driven plates that are part of a capacitive bridge. The high-frequency AC excitation provides better long term stability than DC excited sensors (see p. 5-6, Fig. 4). One plate (probe) is fixed, the other plate (target) is connected to the object to be positioned. Since the plate size and the dielectric medium (air) remains unchanged, capacitance is directly related to the distance between the plates. Ultra-precise electronics convert the capacitance information into a signal proportional to distance.

### Direct Metrology, Parallel Metrology

The sensors offered by PI are the most accurate measuring systems for nanopositioning applications currently on the

market. In contrast to high-resolution sensors measuring deformation in the drive train (see p. 2-5 *ff.*), like strain gauge or piezoresistive sensors, capacitive sensors are non-contact, direct-metrology devices—a fact which gives them many advantages:

- Better Phase Fidelity
- Higher Bandwidth
- No Periodic Error
- Non-Contacting
- Ideal for Parallel Metrology
- Higher Linearity
- Better Reproducibility
- Higher Long-Term Stability

Capacitive sensors are especially well-suited for parallel metrology configurations. In multi-axis nanopositioning systems, parallel metrology means that the controller monitors all controlled degrees of freedom relative to “ground” (the fixed frame) and uses each actuator to compen-

sate the undesired off-axis motion of the others automatically (active trajectory control). As a result, it is possible to keep deviations in the sub-nanometer and sub-microradian range (see p. 4-44 *ff.* in the “Tutorial” section).

### Resolution

Resolution on the order of picometers is achievable with short-range, two-electrode capacitive position sensors (single-electrode capacitive position sensors provide less resolution, linearity and accuracy than two-electrode sensors).

Theoretical measurement resolution is limited only by quantum noise. In practical applications, stray radiation, electronics-induced noise and geometric effects are the limiting factors. For example, with the 100  $\mu\text{m}$  range, a D-100.00 sensor and E-509.C1A electronics, the effective noise factor is 0.02 nm/ $\sqrt{\text{Hz}}$ . This translates to 0.2 nm at 100 Hz bandwidth. The maximum standard bandwidth (jumper selectable) is 3 kHz.

Figure 2 shows a D-015, 15  $\mu\text{m}$  capacitive position sensor and an interferometer, both measuring nanometer-range actuator cycles. The graphs clearly

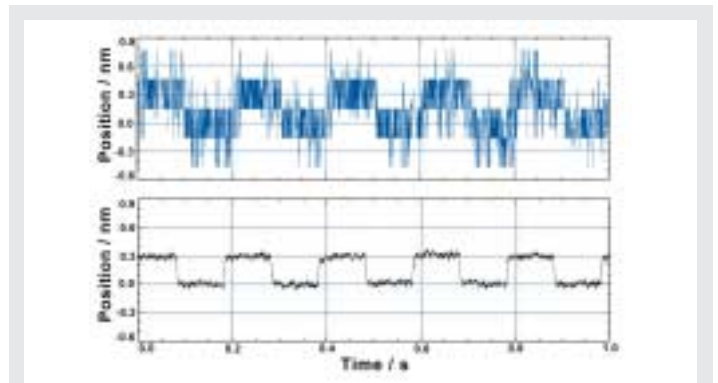


Fig. 2. Piezo nanopositioning system making 0.3 nm steps, measured with PI capacitive sensor (lower curve) and with a highly precise laser interferometer. The capacitive sensor provides significantly higher resolution than the interferometer.

### Ordering Information

**D-015.00**  
Capacitive Position Sensor, 15  $\mu\text{m}$ , Aluminum

**D-050.00**  
Capacitive Position Sensor, 50  $\mu\text{m}$ , Aluminum

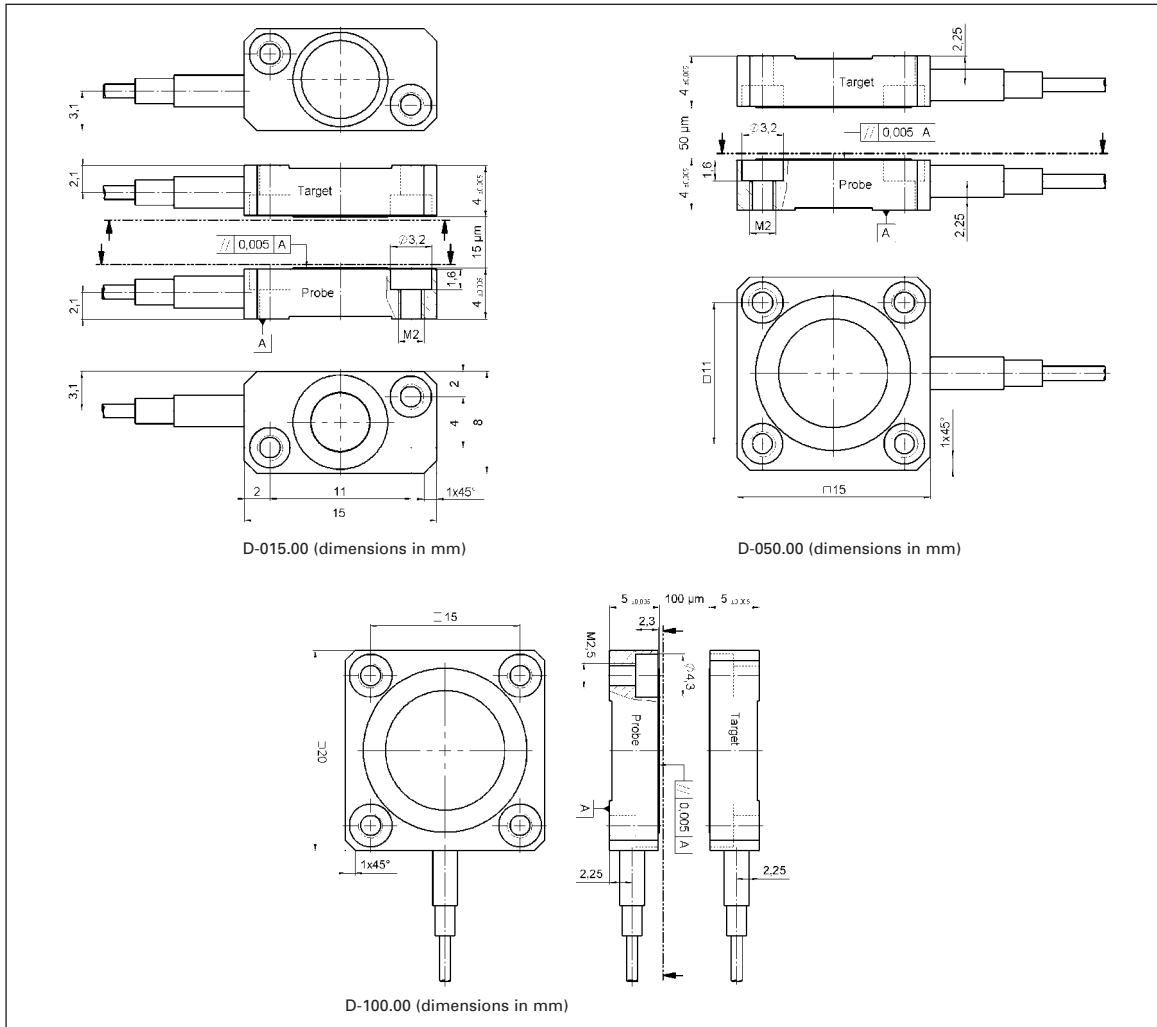
**D-100.00**  
Capacitive Position Sensor, 100  $\mu\text{m}$ , Aluminum

**Ask about custom designs!**

show the superior resolution of the capacitive position sensing technique.

### Notes

In addition to the standard sensors listed here, PI offers a variety of custom versions along with custom electronics for different measuring ranges, material match etc. If you don't find what you are looking for, please call your local PI Sales Engineer.



### Technical Data: Capacitive Sensor Electronics

<b>Models</b>	<b>E-509.CxA</b>
Power supply	±15 V
Analog output	±5 V (0V - 10V)
Noise factor*	0.115 ppm/√Hz
Bandwidth	0.3 to 3 kHz, selectable; up to 10 kHz on request
Temperature drift*	typ. -30 ppm/K
Linearity error (before digital polynomial linearization)	<0.05 %
Operating temperature range	-20 to 80 °C

\* Specifications in ppm (parts per million) refer to measuring range

### Technical Data: Capacitive Sensors

Sensor Models	D-015.00	D-050.00	D-100.00	Units
Material	Aluminum*	Aluminum*	Aluminum*	
Active Surface	16.6	67.7	113.1	mm <sup>2</sup>
Nominal Measuring Distance	15	50	100	μm
Extended Measuring Distance	45	150	300	μm
Therm. Drift **	50	50	50	ppm/K
Operating temperature range	-20 to +80	-20 to +80	-20 to +80	°C

\* Other materials, measuring ranges and form factors or request.

\*\* Change of the active measuring surface in parts per million as referred to the selected measuring range

# Characteristics of Capacitive Position Sensors

## Stability and Linearity of Dual-Electrode PI Capacitive Position Sensors



Fig 1. P-752.11C, 15  $\mu\text{m}$  piezo nanopositioning stage with integrated capacitive position sensor.

PI capacitive position sensor electronics incorporate a proprietary design providing superior linearity, low sensitivity to cable capacitance, low background noise and low drift.

The Integrated Linearization System (ILS) compensates for influences caused by errors, such as non-parallelism of the plates. A comparison between a conventional capacitive position sensor system and the results obtained with the PI ILS is shown in Figure 2 on this page. When used with PI digital controllers (which add polynomial linearization techniques) a positioning linearity of up to 0.003 % is achievable.

The exceptional long-term stability of the PI capacitive position sensor and electronics design is shown in Figure 4.

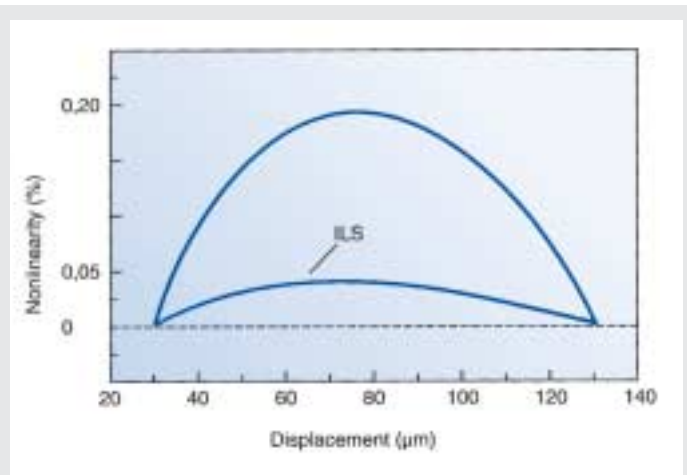


Fig 2. Linearity of conventional capacitive position sensor system vs. PI ILS (integrated linearization system), shown before digital linearization.

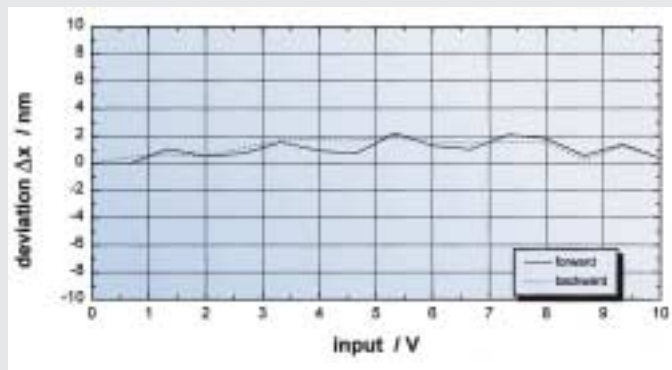


Fig 3. Linearity of a P-752.11C, 15  $\mu\text{m}$  piezo nanopositioning stage operated with E-500/E-509.C1 control electronics. The travel range is 15  $\mu\text{m}$ , the gain 1.5  $\mu\text{m}/\text{V}$ . Linearity is better than 0.02 %; even higher linearity is achievable with PI digital controllers.

Figure 3 shows the linearity of a P-752.11C piezo flexure nanopositioning stage with integrated capacitive position sensor operated in closed-loop mode with an analog controller. All errors contributed by the mechanics, PZT drive, sensors and electronics are included in the resulting linearity of better than 0.02 %. Even higher linearity is achievable with PI digital controllers, see the E-710 on pp. 6-14 ff.

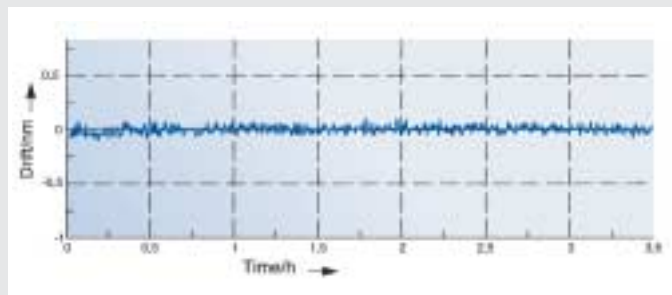


Fig 4. Measurement stability of an E-509.C1 capacitive position sensor control board with 10 pF reference capacitor over 3.5 hours (after controller warm-up).



## Characteristics of Dual-Electrode Capacitive Displacement Sensors (cont.)

### Parallelism of Measuring Surfaces

For optimum results, target and probe plates must remain parallel to each other during measurement (see Fig. 8a, 8b). Positioning systems with

multi-link flexure guidance reduce tip and tilt to negligible levels (see Fig. 9) and achieve outstanding accuracy.

### Electronics Support

Standard PI capacitive position sensor electronics are supported by all PI digital controllers (e.g. models E-750, E-710, see the "Piezo Drivers & Nanopositioning Controllers" section, p. 6-12 and p. 6-14). Inputs are also available on E-509.Cx Euroboard cards (fitting the

E-500 and E-501 series controllers) and on several OEM controllers (E-610.C0 Eurocard controller, E-612 high-speed parallel port PZT controllers, p. 6-38). In addition, custom designs providing up to 7 channels tailored to specific needs are available.

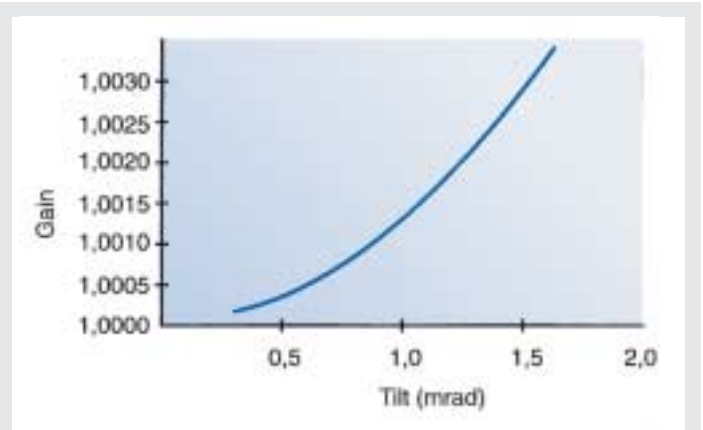


Fig. 8a. Relative sensor gain vs. tilt. This effect is negligible in nanopositioning systems with microradian-range guiding accuracy (see Fig. 9).

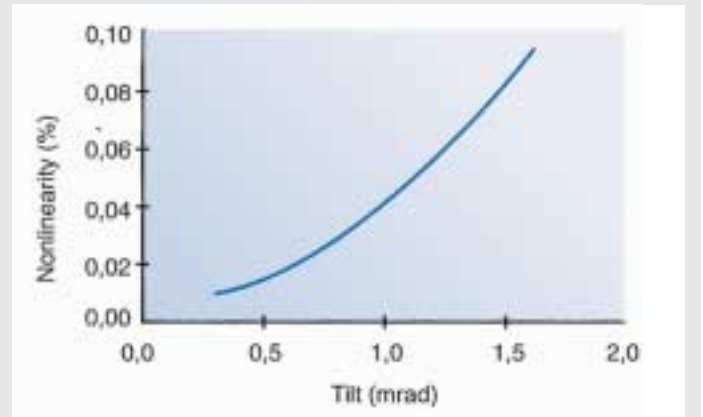


Fig. 8b. Nonlinearity vs. tilt. This effect is negligible in nanopositioning systems with microradian-range guiding accuracy (see Fig. 9).

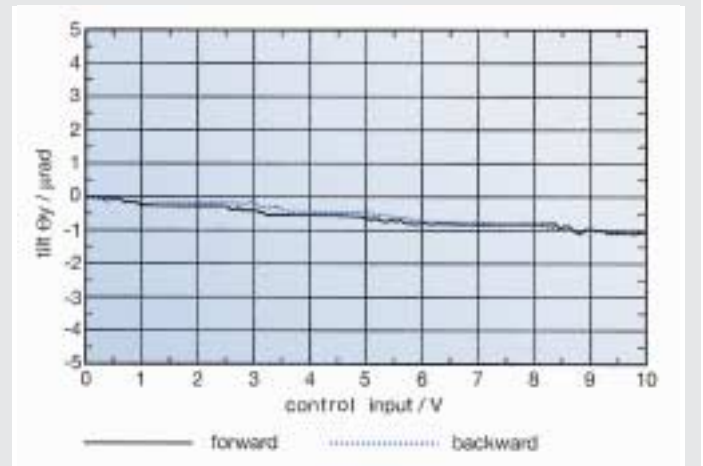


Fig. 9. Flexure-guided nanopositioning systems like the P-752 offer submicroradian guiding accuracy and are optimally suited for capacitive sensors.

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- Active Optics / Tip-Tilt Platforms
- Capacitive Sensors
- Piezo Electronics: Amplifiers and Controllers
- Hexapods
- Micropositioners
- Positioning Systems for Fiber Optics, Photonics and Telecommunications
- Motor Controllers
- Piezo Ceramic Linear Motors