Proceedings of CONF-MCEE 2026 Symposium: Advances in Sustainable Aviation and Aerospace Vehicle Automation
DOI: 10.54254/2755-2721/2026.KA29918

Applications of Multi-Sensor Fusion Technology in Electronic Information Acquisition

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Abstract. Multi-sensor fusion has emerged as a foundational enabling technology for modern electronic information acquisition systems, facilitating accurate, robust, and real-time environmental perception in complex operational scenarios. By combining complementary modalities—such as inertial, optical, radio-frequency and physiological sensors—fusion mitigates the limitations of single sensors with respect to noise, occlusion, drift and range. This paper surveys the conceptual levels of fusion (data-, feature- and decision-level) and typical hybrid designs, then reviews representative computational methods including Kalman filtering and its nonlinear variants, Bayesian inference and particle filtering[1], and deep learning–based multimodal models. Application domains are selected from four key fields: autonomous driving, healthcare and wearable monitoring, robotics and SLAM, and industrial condition monitoring, illustrating how fusion improves detection accuracy, continuity, and reliability. A concise comparative analysis is provided for different fusion strategies and algorithms, focusing on their performance in terms of information fidelity, latency, computational cost, and robustnessc. Open challenges—sensor synchronization, domain shift, explainability, privacy and security—are discussed together with emerging trends such as edge intelligence and collaborative sensing among distributed devices. The review aims to provide a practice-oriented map of methods and trade-offs to guide the design of electronic information acquisition systems that are safe, efficient, and scalable.

Keywords: Multi-sensor fusion, Electronic information acquisition, Kalman filtering, Bayesian inference, Deep learning

1. Introduction

Electronic information acquisition serves as the core foundational component of modern intelligent systems, which are required to operate in uncertain and dynamically changing environments. Yet, single-sensor solutions often suffer from intrinsic weaknesses such as noise, data loss, limited field of view, or modality-specific constraints—for example, the sensitivity of cameras to illumination changes or the drift of inertial sensors. These shortcomings have motivated the integration of heterogeneous sensors, which has evolved from early military surveillance and target tracking to a

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broad range of civilian application fields, including transportation, healthcare, robotics, and smart manufacturing [2-4].

The central challenge is how to design sensor fusion pipelines that can effectively combine diverse modalities while balancing competing requirements of information fidelity, robustness, interpretability, and computational efficiency. At the architectural level, sensor fusion is generally categorized into three distinct layers: data-level, which aggregates raw measurements; feature-level, which merges extracted descriptors; and decision-level, which reconciles outputs from independent subsystems. In practice, hybrid designs that combine these layers are prevalent, but they raise further challenges in synchronization, calibration, and scalability. Meanwhile, algorithmic progress has advanced along two major axes: probabilistic approaches—such as Kalman filtering and Bayesian inference—that offer principled uncertainty modeling, and deep learning–based methods that enable multimodal representation learning and end-to-end optimization. Each paradigm entails trade-offs between modeling assumptions, computational demands, and generalization capacity.

This paper aims to provide a structured synthesis of strategies and methods for multi-sensor fusion in electronic information acquisition. Comparative tables are used to highlight the advantages and limitations of different fusion layers and algorithm families, while a conceptual architecture figure clarifies system integration. Four application domains—autonomous driving, healthcare, robotics, and industrial monitoring—are analyzed to illustrate domain-specific requirements and design considerations. The paper concludes with a discussion of open challenges, including sensor synchronization, domain adaptation, explainability, and privacy, and identifies promising directions such as adaptive hybrid frameworks, edge intelligence, and collaborative sensing.

2. Sensor fusion strategies and algorithms

2.1. Data-level fusion

Data-level fusion operates directly on raw measurements (e.g., concatenation, temporal alignment and weighted averaging). The approach maximizes information preservation and can improve signal-to-noise ratio when noise sources are uncorrelated. Typical application examples include averaging redundant temperature sensor data to enhance measurement stability, fusing GPS data with barometric altitude data to generate smoother elevation trajectories, and combining signals from multiple microphones to implement acoustic beamforming. Critical requirements are calibration and synchronization: disparate sampling rates and latencies can introduce bias or ghost artifacts. Simple schemes weight each sensor inversely to its variance; adaptive filters update weights online when noise statistics drift.

2.2. Feature-level fusion

Feature-level fusion extracts descriptors (e.g., SIFT/ORB from vision, MFCC from audio, statistical or spectral features from physiological signals) and merges them into a joint representation. Dimensionality-reduction tools—PCA and LDA—are widely used, while convolutional neural networks (CNNs) learn high-level features automatically [5,6]. The key advantages of feature-level fusion include reduced data bandwidth and storage requirements, as well as simplified handling of modality heterogeneity after feature normalization. The challenge shifts to feature quality: if key invariances (viewpoint, illumination, motion) are not captured, downstream classifiers degrade. Late vs. early feature concatenation, attention mechanisms, and learned gating are common design levers.

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2.3. Decision-level fusion

Decision-level fusion combines outputs from independent classifiers or sub-systems when raw data sharing is infeasible (privacy, bandwidth) or components are geographically distributed. Majority voting, weighted averaging, Bayesian belief fusion, and Dempster–Shafer evidence theory are common choices [7]. Decision fusion often improves robustness to single-sensor failure, but may lose fine-grained information compared with earlier-level fusion; careful calibration of confidence scores is essential.

2.4. Hybrid fusion

Real systems frequently stack multiple levels—for example, applying filtering at the data level, learning features per modality, and reconciling subsystem outputs. Hybrid fusion architectures exploit the complementary advantages of different levels: information richness at the bottom, compactness in the middle, and modularity at the top . Adaptive hybrids can route difficult samples to more expensive fusion pathways and throttle computation for easy cases.

2.5. Algorithmic challenges

Persistent issues include temporal/spatial alignment under network jitter, handling missing or corrupted streams, and domain shift when environment statistics change. Computational budgets constrain deployment at the edge, motivating approximate inference and model compression. Explainability is vital for safety-critical decisions, and privacy-preserving analytics (secure aggregation, federated fusion) are gaining attention.

Table 1. Comparison of multi-sensor fusion levels

Fusion level	Typical operations	Advantages	Limitations
Data-level	Alignment, resampling, weighted averaging, filtering	Highest information fidelity; improved SNR	Requires strict calibration & time sync; sensitive to outliers
Feature-level	Handcrafted + learned descriptors, PCA/LDA, CNN features	Lower bandwidth & storage; modality heterogeneity handled after normalization	Performance tied to feature quality; risk of information loss
Decision-level	Voting/stacking, Bayesian/D–S fusion of classifier outputs	Modular, privacy-friendly, fault-tolerant	Lower granularity; needs well-calibrated confidences

The three conceptual levels of multi-sensor fusion are summarized in Table 1. At the data level, operations such as alignment, resampling, and filtering directly combine raw measurements, which maximizes information fidelity and improves signal-to-noise ratio, but requires strict calibration and is highly sensitive to outliers. Feature-level fusion, by contrast, aggregates handcrafted or learned descriptors (e.g., PCA, LDA, or CNN-based features), reducing bandwidth and enabling heterogeneous modalities to be normalized. Its performance, however, depends critically on the quality of extracted features, with an inherent risk of information loss. Finally, decision-level fusion integrates the outputs of independent classifiers or subsystems using methods such as voting, Bayesian belief fusion, or Dempster–Shafer theory. This approach is modular, privacy-preserving, and fault-tolerant, but compromises information granularity and requires well-calibrated confidence estimates. Together, these three levels illustrate the trade-off between information richness, computational efficiency, and robustness that underpins the design of sensor fusion architectures.

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3. Computational methods in fusion

3.1. Kalman filtering and variants — equations

The following equations are inserted as native Word equations (OMML) for direct editing and typesetting.

$$x_k = A\,x_{k-1} + B\,u_{k-1} + w_{k-1} \tag{1}$$

$$z_k = H\,x_k + v_k \tag{2}$$

$$w_{k-1} \sim N(0,\ Q),\quad v_k \sim N(0,\ R) \tag{3}$$

$$x_k^- = A\,x_{k-1} + B\,u_{k-1} \tag{4a}$$

$$P_k^- = A\,P_{k-1}\,A^T + Q \tag{4b}$$

$$K_k = P_k^-\,H^{T\,-1} \tag{5}$$

$$x_k = x_k^- + K_k\left(z_k - H\,x_k^-\right) \tag{6a}$$

$$P_k = (I - K_k\,H)\,P_k^- \tag{6b}$$

Table 2. Algorithm families for sensor fusion

Method family	Strengths	Typical applications	Key challenges
Kalman/EKF/ UKF	Real-time, low latency, interpretable	Navigation, tracking, pose estimation	Non-Gaussian, highly nonlinear regimes
Bayesian/Part icle	Uncertainty quantification; multi-modal posteriors	Multi-target tracking; clinical monitoring	Computational cost; model design
Deep multimodal	Learns complex cross-modal relations	Perception in AVs; wearables + EHR analytics	Data hunger; explainability; energy use

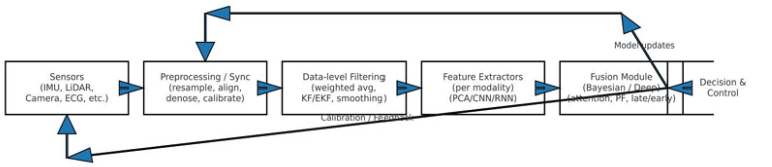

Figure 1. Conceptual architecture of an electronic information acquisition pipeline

4. Application scenarios

4.1. Autonomous driving and intelligent transportation

Autonomous vehicles (AVs) rely on a suite of complementary sensors: cameras for semantics, LiDAR for 3-D geometry, radar for long-range velocity, and IMU/GNSS for ego-motion. Fusion improves detection in corner cases such as low light or adverse weather. Map-based localization

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combines LiDAR/vision with high-definition maps to achieve lane-level accuracy in urban canyons . Recent surveys report production-grade stacks that rely on UKF/EKF for state estimation and deep multimodal networks for perception . Practical constraints include time synchronization across high-bandwidth sensors, deterministic runtime for safety certification, and cost–benefit trade-offs when scaling fleets.LiDAR-camera fusion for 3-D object detection typically projects point clouds into image space, learns cross-attention features, and aggregates with radar cues for radial velocity. The fusion head outputs 3-D boxes and confidence scores, which are filtered by a Bayesian tracker to maintain temporal continuity.

4.2. Healthcare and wearable monitoring

Clinical decisions benefit from fusing heterogeneous physiological signals—ECG, PPG, blood pressure, SpO_2, accelerometers—because single channels are susceptible to artifacts. Fusion reduces false alarms in ICUs and improves arrhythmia detection in ambulatory monitoring [8]. With the Internet of Medical Things, multimodal time series from wearables can be integrated with electronic health records; hybrid deep-Bayesian models have shown improved prediction of patient deterioration and adherence [9,10]. Key barriers are data privacy, interoperability across devices, and power constraints for on-body computation.

Illustrative case. A wearable cardiac monitor may employ data-level fusion to denoise ECG with accelerometer-derived motion estimates, feature-level fusion of HRV and PPG morphology, and decision-level fusion with clinician input for final triage.

4.3. Robotics and SLAM

Mobile robots require reliable state estimation and mapping in dynamic, cluttered spaces. SLAM systems integrate vision, LiDAR/sonar and IMU cues; tightly coupled visual-inertial odometry uses EKF/UKF to combine high-rate inertial data with camera reprojection errors, while back-ends optimize factor graphs for loop closure [11]. For manipulation, combining vision with tactile and force sensors enables robust grasping of deformable or occluded objects. Decision-level fusion supports human–robot collaboration by integrating operator intent with autonomous perception.

4.4. Industrial control and smart manufacturing

Manufacturing systems deploy distributed sensors—vibration, acoustic emission, thermal imaging and power meters—to monitor equipment health. Fusion enables condition-based maintenance, identifying bearing faults or tool wear early to minimize unplanned downtime [12]. In Industry 4.0, cyber-physical architectures connect edge devices to digital twins of production lines, using fused data for adaptive control and energy optimization [13]. Practical issues include sensor placement, network bandwidth, and the need for interpretable diagnostics to satisfy operators and regulators.

4.5. Cross-cutting considerations: reliability, privacy and edge intelligence

Reliability requires redundancy and graceful degradation strategies when streams fail. Privacy concerns motivate local processing and federated analytics. Edge computing reduces latency and backbone traffic by moving fusion closer to sensors; it also enables operation during connectivity outages [14]. Lightweight models, quantization, and pruning retain acceptable accuracy within power constraints typical of embedded controllers..

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5. Conclusion

Multi-sensor fusion is now central to electronic information acquisition across safety-critical and consumer applications. Surveying strategy levels and algorithm families reveals clear design trade-offs. Data-level fusion yields the richest information but depends on accurate calibration and synchronization. Feature-level fusion reduces bandwidth and is well suited to heterogeneous modalities, at the risk of discarding useful cues. Decision-level fusion provides modularity and privacy advantages, especially when subsystems are independently developed or geographically separated. Hybrid pipelines dominate in practice because they align well with system engineering constraints.

Among computational tools, Kalman-type estimators remain unrivaled for real-time linear-Gaussian regimes and are the backbone of navigation and tracking. Bayesian methods generalize these ideas to nonlinear and multi-modal settings, providing explicit uncertainty quantification that is essential in medicine and autonomy. Deep multimodal learning captures complex cross-sensor relationships and has driven significant gains in perception quality, although it requires significant data and computation and raises questions about interpretability and failure modes.

The application review demonstrates that tangible benefits include improved robustness in AV perception, reduced false alarms and richer context in healthcare, higher-fidelity state estimates in robotics, and earlier fault detection with lower maintenance costs in industry. Remaining challenges span technical and governance dimensions: robust synchronization and time-stamping, domain adaptation under distribution shift, explanation and calibration of model confidence, and protection of sensitive data streams. Promising directions include adaptive hybrid frameworks that route samples to appropriate fusion levels, edge intelligence to reduce latency and bandwidth usage, and collaborative sensing across device fleets. With sustained attention to these issues, multi-sensor fusion will continue to elevate the intelligence, safety and efficiency of electronic information systems.

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