iJRASET
International Journal For Research in
Applied Science and Engineering Technology

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 13 **Issue:** VIII **Month of publication:** August 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.73739

International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 13 Issue VIII Aug 2025- Available at www.ijraset.com

Wireless Battery Management System: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract: Wireless Battery Management Systems (WBMS) are gaining momentum as a breakthrough solution for electric vehicles (EVs), providing a viable alternative to traditional wired architectures. By eliminating complex cabling, WBMS lowers vehicle weight, streamlines pack assembly, and enhances flexibility and reliability. This paper reviews the essential building blocks of WBMS, its operating principles, and the wireless protocols that enable secure communication between battery modules and the controller. It also highlights the system's benefits and current challenges, while emphasizing future directions such as integration with cloud platforms, AI-enabled health prediction, hybrid communication models, and advanced security frameworks. The findings suggest that WBMS should not be viewed merely as a hardware shift but as a foundation for next-generation, intelligent, and sustainable EV energy platforms [1],[2],[7].
Keywords: Wireless Battery Management System (wBMS), Electric Vehicles, Communication Protocols, AI, IoT, Cybersecurity.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) is driving the need for efficient and intelligent battery management solutions. Batteries are the heart of EVs, and their performance directly influences driving range, charging efficiency, and vehicle safety. Traditional wired Battery Management Systems (BMS) have long been used to monitor parameters such as voltage, temperature, and state-of-charge (SOC). However, these systems rely on extensive wiring harnesses, which increase cost, weight, and complexity. Wireless Battery Management Systems (WBMS) offer an innovative alternative by replacing physical connections with secure, low-latency wireless communication. This approach eliminates bulky wiring, improves modularity, reduces assembly time, and supports advanced features such as real-time cloud diagnostics and AI-based analytics. Companies like General Motors and BMW have already deployed WBMS in commercial EVs, highlighting its readiness for mainstream adoption. This paper reviews the fundamental architecture of WBMS, the communication protocols enabling wireless data exchange, its advantages and challenges, and emerging research directions[3],[8].

II. FUNDAMENTALS OF WBMS

A WBMS typically consists of sensor nodes, wireless communication modules, and a centralized controller. Each sensor node is embedded within the battery pack to measure parameters such as:

1) Cell voltage
2) Temperature
3) Current flow
4) State-of-charge (SOC) and state-of-health (SOH)

The data is transmitted wirelessly to the main controller, which performs monitoring, balancing, protection, and fault diagnostics. By eliminating wiring harnesses, WBMS reduces system weight, enhances reliability, and allows flexible battery pack configurations.

A. Key characteristics of WBMS include

1) Weight reduction: Removing wiring lowers overall EV weight, improving range and efficiency.
2) Scalability: Additional modules can be integrated easily without rewiring.
3) Modularity: Enables swappable and second-life batteries for recycling and reuse.
4) Simplified maintenance: Reduced connectors and wiring improve reliability and serviceability[1],[2],[6].

III. KEY ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES

A. Advantages

1) Reduced Complexity: Fewer wires simplify design and assembly.
2) Cost Savings: Manufacturing and maintenance costs are lowered.
3) Improved Safety: Less risk of wiring failures or short circuits.
4) Real-Time Monitoring: Data can be transmitted to cloud platforms for predictive maintenance.
5) Fleet Optimization: Enables monitoring of large EV fleets with advanced analytics.

B. Challenges

1) Electromagnetic Interference (EMI): Dense metallic enclosures may disrupt wireless signals.
2) Cyber security Risks: Wireless communication is vulnerable to attacks such as spoofing or jamming.
3) Functional Safety: Compliance with ISO 26262 standards must be ensured.
4) Standardization: Lack of unified global standards complicates mass adoption[2],[5],[9],[10].

IV. COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The effectiveness of a WBMS depends largely on its communication backbone. Since critical cell data must be delivered reliably and in real time, the chosen protocol needs to balance energy efficiency, latency, coverage, and resilience against interference.

1) Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE): BLE is a popular option due to its ultra-low power profile and mature ecosystem. It suits compact and mid-range EV packs where cost and efficiency are priorities. However, the technology's limited range (10–30 m) and operation in the crowded 2.4 GHz spectrum can lead to interference, making it less effective for very large or modular systems[4].
2) Zigbee (IEEE 802.15.4): Zigbee enables mesh networking, which improves coverage and fault tolerance in distributed or large-scale packs. While its power usage is slightly higher than BLE, its robustness makes it a strong candidate for commercial fleets and modular EV designs. Complexity in large networks remains a challenge[2].
3) Ultra-Wideband (UWB): UWB offers exceptional latency performance and strong immunity to multipath fading, even in metallic battery enclosures. This makes it ideal for premium EV platforms requiring high reliability and precise synchronization. Its drawbacks include higher hardware costs and relatively lower commercial maturity compared to BLE or Zigbee[3],[8].
4) Near Field Communication (NFC): NFC is highly secure and operates at very short ranges (<10 cm). While it cannot handle continuous data transfer, it is valuable for diagnostic purposes, module authentication, and second-life management applications[5].
5) Proprietary RF/Optical Systems: Experimental solutions based on sub-GHz RF or optical infrared links are being tested. These methods may offer longer ranges or immunity to EMI but remain limited by regulatory issues, line-of-sight constraints, and lack of large-scale adoption[6].
6) Hybrid Systems: Modern designs increasingly use combinations of protocols. For instance, BLE may handle routine monitoring, UWB may secure time-critical commands, and NFC may manage authentication. Such hybrid solutions boost redundancy and system reliability[2],[7].

Protocol	Power Consumption	Range	Latency	EMI Resistance	Typical Use Case
Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE)	Very Low (µW–mW)	10–30 m	Moderate (~10–50 ms)	Low (susceptible)	Compact EVs, budget cars
Zigbee (IEEE 802.15.4)	Low	10–100 m (mesh)	Moderate (~20–100 ms)	Moderate	Modular packs, commercial EVs
Ultra-Wideband (UWB)	Medium	10–50 m	Very Low (<1 ms)	High (robust)	Premium EVs, safety-critical data
Near Field Communication (NFC)	Very Low	<10 cm	Very Low (<1 ms)	High (secure, short range)	Diagnostics, authentication
Proprietary RF/Optical	Variable (Low–Medium)	Up to 100 m+	Low (~1–10 ms)	High (depending on design)	Experimental automotive research

Table 1. Comparison of Wireless Protocols in Wireless Battery Management Systems

V. EMERGING TRENDS AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The future of WBMS lies at the intersection of advanced wireless technologies and digital ecosystems. Current research is moving toward smarter, more secure, and more sustainable designs:

1) Cloud and IOT Connectivity: By linking WBMS to cloud servers, manufacturers and fleet operators can perform predictive maintenance, track battery usage trends, and deliver software updates over the air. Vehicle-to-Cloud (V2C) communication also enables large-scale analytics for fleet optimization[1],[7].
2) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML): AI models such as LSTMs and RNNs are being applied to improve accuracy in SOC and SOH estimation. Unlike conventional Kalman filters, these models adapt to diverse driving conditions and detect anomalies earlier, reducing safety risks[1],[2].
3) Modular and Swappable Systems: WBMS simplifies battery replacement in shared mobility and fleet applications by removing the need for rewiring. It also supports second-life uses, allowing retired EV batteries to be repurposed for stationary energy storage[7].
4) Cyber security Measures: Since WBMS relies heavily on wireless communication, robust cyber security becomes critical. Mechanisms such as AES encryption, secure boot protocols, intrusion detection systems, and anomaly monitoring are being integrated into next-generation WBMS. Regulatory frameworks such as ISO/SAE 21434 ensure cyber security-by-design, reducing the risk of malicious interference [5],[10].
5) Standardization and Policy Development: The growth of WBMS requires harmonized international standards for interoperability across platforms. Standards such as ISO 26262 (Functional Safety), ISO 15118 (Vehicle-to-Grid Communication), and IEC 61851 (Charging Systems) are being extended to cover wireless BMS applications. This guarantees compatibility across EV ecosystems and enables smart charging integration with renewable energy systems [9],[11],[12].
6) Energy Harvesting & Low-Power Design: To minimize battery drain, modern research is exploring energy harvesting techniques that utilize cell voltage differentials, thermal gradients, or vibration energy to partially power the wireless sensor nodes. Duty-cycling and low-power microcontrollers further enhance efficiency. This reduces the overall auxiliary load of WBMS [1].
7) Digital Twin Technology: One of the most promising directions is the use of digital twin technology, where a virtual replica of the physical battery pack runs in real time, mirroring its electrochemical and thermal behavior. By integrating sensor data from the WBMS with predictive AI models, the digital twin can provide insights into cell degradation, fault progression, and optimal charging strategies. This allows proactive interventions, extending battery life and improving system safety [7].

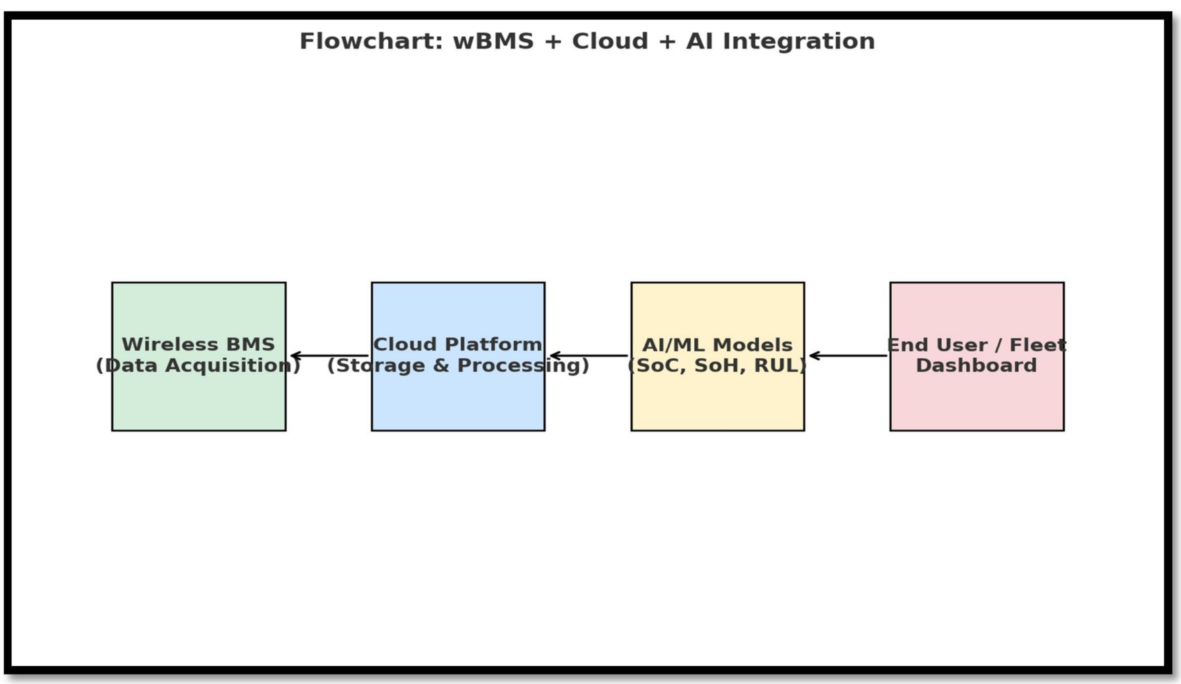

Fig.1 Flowchart of WBMS + Cloud + AI Integration

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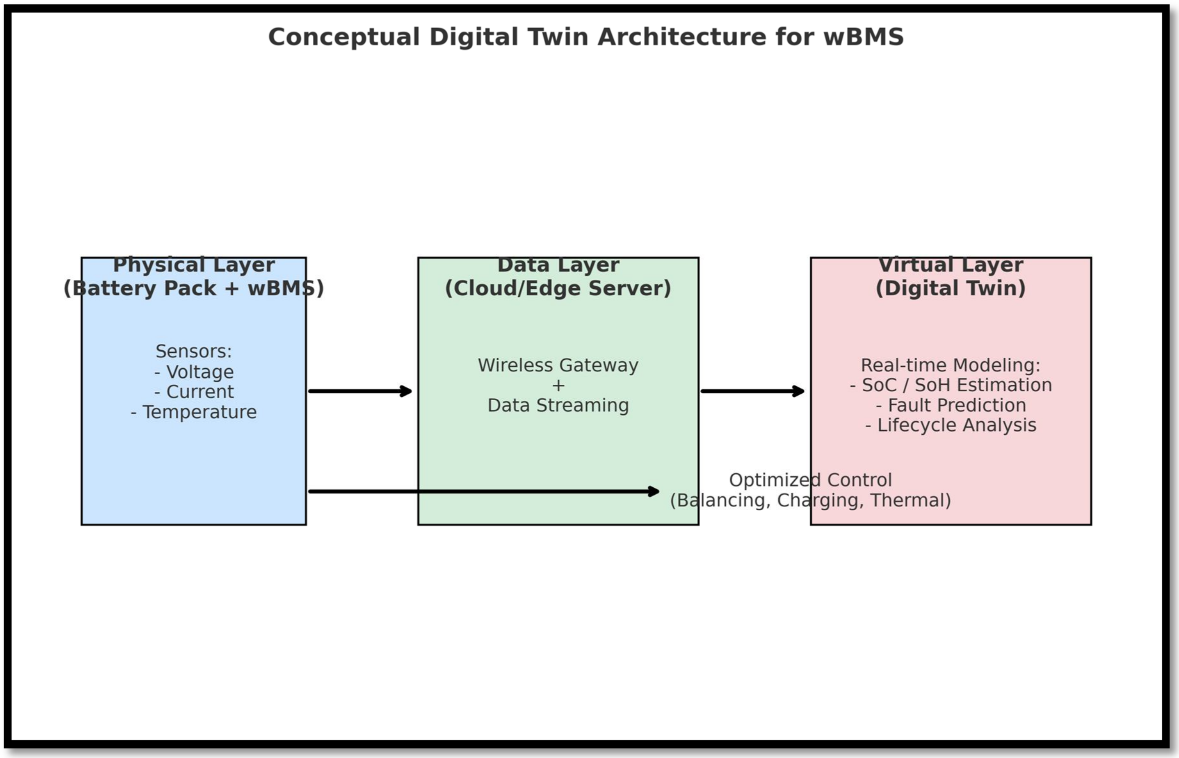

Fig.2 Conceptual Digital Twin Architecture for WBMS, linking real-time battery data with a virtual model for predictive monitoring.

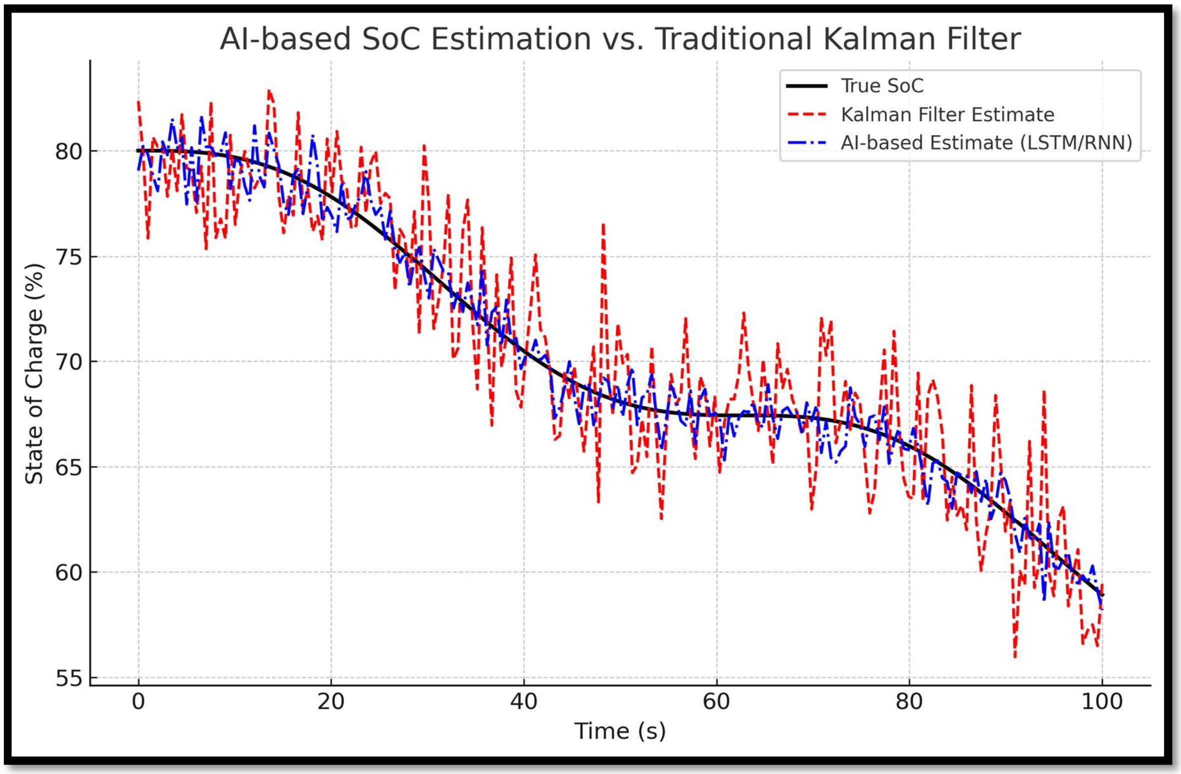

Fig.3 Comparison of AI-based SOC estimation (LSTM/RNN) and traditional Kalman filter, showing improved accuracy and reduced noise.

VI. CONCLUSION

Wireless Battery Management Systems mark a significant step forward in EV technology by eliminating traditional wiring, reducing system weight, and promoting modularity. When combined with AI, cloud platforms, and IOT, these systems become more than just monitoring tools—they evolve into enablers of intelligent, connected mobility. Although challenges such as EMI, cyber security risks, and the absence of unified standards remain, ongoing research and industrial adoption are steadily addressing them. With major automakers [3],[7],[8] already deploying WBMS in production models, it is clear that this technology will play a central role in shaping the next generation of safe, efficient, and sustainable electric vehicles [9],[10],[11],[12].

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