

Intel® FPGA Technical Training

Synchronization Circuits Design in Intel FPGAs

Course Description

This course focuses on synchronization circuits design in Intel FPGAs using TimeQuest to measure MTBF.

The course starts with the motivation to increase circuit reliability by understanding synchronization circuit role for cross clock domain design.

The course continues with deep dive study of the synchronization techniques for various use cases, then choosing the right solution for your specific design.

The course covers also the synchronization circuit design for reset.

The course ends with the flow in Quartus Prime to make sure the software identifies your synchronization circuits, then analyze their reliability (using circuits for cross clock domain designs MTBF calculations) in TimeQuest.

The course embeds hands-on lab that encapsulate all theory into one final practical work, where the participant will design a handshake synchronization protocol.

Course Duration

1 day

Goals

1. Increase circuit reliability and performance by applying synchronous design techniques
2. Be familiar with metastability formula
3. Understand the synchronization circuits role in synchronous design
4. Choose the right synchronization solution for your design
5. State advantages and disadvantages of synchronous and asynchronous reset
6. Apply a synchronization circuit for an asynchronous reset
7. Design synchronization circuits for multiple clock domain designs



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Intended Users

FPGA engineers who would like to enhance their skills and design reliable multi-clock domains FPGA projects, and analyze their solution in TimeQuest.

Previous Knowledge

Intel FPGAs architecture

Quartus Prime software

ModelSim

Course Material

1. Simulator: Modelsim
2. Synthesizer and Place & Route: Quartus Prime
3. Course book (including labs)

Table of Contents



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❖ Synchronization Circuits

• Multiple Clock Domains

- Why synchronous design?
- Synchronization circuits introduction
- Setup and Hold time violations
- Metastability effects
- MTBF formula
- Metastability problem
- Unique characteristics of MTBF

• Synchronizers

- Synchronizer definition
- Two FF synchronizer
- Three FF synchronizer
- Not recommended synchronization circuit
- Proper use of a synchronizer
- Unregistered signals sent across a CDC boundary
- Registered signals sent across a CDC boundary
- Passing a fast control signal
- Wide enable signal detection
- Narrow enable signal regeneration
- Level alternation scheme
- Synchronizing fast control signals into slow clock domains
- Sampling long CDC pulse
- Open loop solution and considerations
- Closed loop solution and considerations
- Passing multiple signals between clock domains
- Capturing a bus example
- Passing multiple control signals between clock domains
- Synchronized pulse generation logic
- Send-receive toggle-pulse generation
- Multicycle path and FSM solutions
- MCP with feedback
- MCP with acknowledge feedback
- Asynchronous FIFO
- FIFO pointers implemented as binary counters vs gray code counters
- Gray code incrementor design for high speed
- 1-deep 2-register FIFO synchronizer
- Design tips

• Design Partitioning for Synchronization

- Synthesis of a multiple clock system
- Where to synchronize?
- Guidelines for design partitioning
- Partitioning with multi-cycle path

• Reset Synchronizers

- Synchronous and asynchronous reset differences



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- When to use synchronous and asynchronous reset
- Asynchronous reset problem
- Reset synchronizer
- Non-coordinated reset removal
- Sequenced coordination of reset removal

- **Metastability Analysis in Quartus Prime**
 - Managing metastability with Quartus Prime
 - Metastability analysis in Quartus Prime
 - Identifying synchronizers for metastability analysis
 - Timing constraints & metastability analysis
 - Metastability & MTBF reporting
 - Design example & analysis
 - MTBF reporting in TimeQuest
 - Synchronizer data toggle rate in MTBF calculation
 - False path reporting in TimeQuest
 - MTBF optimization
 - Controlling MTBF optimization

- **Hands-On Lab: Build Handshake Synchronization Protocol**



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