

Design of a time-to-digital converter to be used  
as a phase detector in a PLL in 65 nm  
technology

Luis Guillermo Macias Rojas

March 7, 2025

# Abstract

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

# Acknowledgements

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque cursus luctus mauris.

# Dedications

Nulla malesuada porttitor diam. Donec felis erat, congue non, volutpat at, tincidunt tristique, libero. Vivamus viverra fermentum felis. Donec nummy pellentesque ante. Phasellus adipiscing semper elit. Proin fermentum massa ac quam. Sed diam turpis, molestie vitae, placerat a, molestie nec, leo. Maecenas lacinia. Nam ipsum ligula, eleifend at, accumsan nec, suscipit a, ipsum. Morbi blandit ligula feugiat magna. Nunc eleifend consequat lorem. Sed lacinia nulla vitae enim. Pellentesque tincidunt purus vel magna. Integer non enim. Praesent euismod nunc eu purus. Donec bibendum quam in tellus. Nullam cursus pulvinar lectus. Donec et mi. Nam vulputate metus eu enim. Vestibulum pellentesque felis eu massa.



# Contents

<b>List of figures</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>List of tables</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Context and motivation . . . . .	11
1.1.1 Low jitter PLLs in modern IC design . . . . .	11
1.1.2 Limitations of analog PLLs . . . . .	11
1.1.3 Limitations of traditional PFDs . . . . .	11
1.2 Problem statement . . . . .	11
1.3 Objectives . . . . .	11
1.3.1 General objective . . . . .	11
1.3.2 Specific objectives . . . . .	11
1.4 Significance . . . . .	11
1.4.1 Academic significance . . . . .	11
1.4.2 Industry significance . . . . .	11
1.5 Scope and limitations . . . . .	11
1.6 Thesis roadmap . . . . .	11
<b>2 Theoretical framework</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Phase-locked loop fundamentals . . . . .	12
2.1.1 Basic structure . . . . .	12
2.1.2 Key PLL parameters . . . . .	12

2.1.3	Analog phase-locked loops . . . . .	15
2.1.4	Linearized model . . . . .	15
2.1.5	Digital phase-locked loops . . . . .	15
2.2	Time-to-digital converters . . . . .	15
2.2.1	Delay-locked loop fundamentals . . . . .	15
2.2.2	TDC as a phase detector . . . . .	15
2.3	65 nm CMOS technology . . . . .	15
<b>3</b>	<b>Literature review</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Appendix</b>	<b>26</b>

# List of Figures

2.1	a) PFD block. . . . .	14
2.2	b) PFD output. . . . .	14



# List of Tables



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Context and motivation

#### 1.1.1 Low jitter PLLs in modern IC design

#### 1.1.2 Limitations of analog PLLs

#### 1.1.3 Limitations of traditional PFDs

### 1.2 Problem statement

### 1.3 Objectives

#### 1.3.1 General objective

#### 1.3.2 Specific objectives

### 1.4 Significance

#### 1.4.1 Academic significance

#### 1.4.2 Industry significance

# Chapter 2

## Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Phase-locked loop fundamentals

#### 2.1.1 Basic structure

#### 2.1.2 Key PLL parameters

##### Phase noise / jitter

Jitter is defined as the time deviation ( $\Delta_t$ ) of a signal's transition edges from their ideal positions in time. It is a metric of the outmost importance in the design of PLLs as it is a direct measure of the quality of the clock signal generated. Phase noise describes the same phenomenon in the frequency domain (the phase noise of a signal is the Fourier transform of the jitter) and is usually expressed in dBc/Hz.

##### Output frequency

It is defined as the range of frequencies that the PLL is capable of generating and can be determined by the VCO output range and the division ratio of the feedback frequency divider. This is a key metric in establishing the application of the PLL (e.g., clock generation or RF synthesizer) and it bears

significant importance in the design process due to the tradeoff it has with the phase noise performance of the PLL.

### Loop bandwidth

The closed-loop bandwidth of a PLL is the frequency range over which the PLL can track the phase/frequency variations of the input signal (from DC to -3 dB from the open-loop gain). It affects the acquisition time and phase noise performance of the PLL.

### Noise bandwidth

It is the PLL's noise due to the filter's loop bandwidth, the higher frequencies of the voltage-controlled oscillator (VCO) are the major contributor to this effect, therefore the need to set a low enough bandwidth in order to suppress the most out of it. Even if reducing the loop bandwidth would be desirable to suppress in-band phase noise, it's also necessary to take into consideration that there is a tradeoff between the lock-in time and in-band phase noise.

### Beat-note period

Defined as the time interval between successive "beats" (oscillations) observed at the phase detector output, in other words, is the inverse of the frequency difference's magnitude between the reference and feedback signals as shown in figure 2.2. Beat-note period is closely related to the acquisition time of the PLL and can be estimated by equation (2.1).

$$T_{beat} = \frac{1}{|f_{ref} - f_{feed}|} \quad (2.1)$$

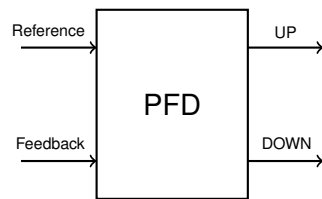


Figure 2.1: a) PFD block.

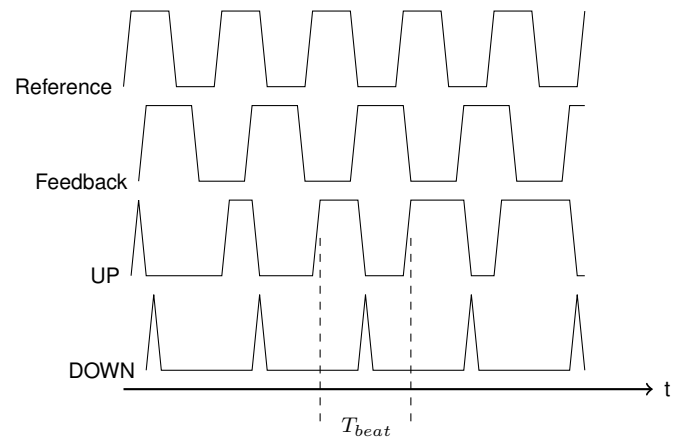


Figure 2.2: b) PFD output.

### Lock-in time

Lock-in time (also called aquisition time) is defined as the time for the PLL to lock onto the input reference phase and frequency within one beat-note period after a frequency change or startup of the system. It is a fast locking process.

### Pull-in time

danan

### Lock-in range

adnna

### Pull-in range

anan

### Pull-out range

nana

**Hold range**

fdan

**SNR**

adfn

**Power consumption**

dfanna

**Spurious tones**

fdafdhdhdah

### **2.1.3 Analog phase-locked loops**

dfanadn

### **2.1.4 Linearized model**

daan

### **2.1.5 Digital phase-locked loops**

anan

## **2.2 Time-to-digital converters**

### **2.2.1 Delay-locked loop fundamentals**

### **2.2.2 TDC as a phase detector**

## **2.3 65 nm CMOS technology**

# Chapter 3

## Literature review

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque



cursus luctus mauris. [1]

# Chapter 4

## Methodology

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque

cursus luctus mauris.

# Chapter 5

## Results

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque

cursus luctus mauris.

# Chapter 6

## Discussion

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque

cursus luctus mauris.

# Chapter 7

## Conclusion

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque



cursus luctus mauris.

# Appendix A

## Appendix

Quisque ullamcorper placerat ipsum. Cras nibh. Morbi vel justo vitae lacus tincidunt ultrices. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Integer tempus convallis augue. Etiam facilisis. Nunc elementum fermentum wisi. Aenean placerat. Ut imperdiet, enim sed gravida sollicitudin, felis odio placerat quam, ac pulvinar elit purus eget enim. Nunc vitae tortor. Proin tempus nibh sit amet nisl. Vivamus quis tortor vitae risus porta vehicula.

# Bibliography

- [1] Mark Van Paemel. “Analysis of a charge-pump PLL: A new model”. In: *IEEE Transactions on communications* 42.7 (1994), pp. 2490–2498.