

Intel® Quartus® Prime Standard Edition User Guide

Debug Tools

Updated for Intel® Quartus® Prime Design Suite: **18.1**



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1. System Debugging Tools Overview

This chapter provides a quick overview of the tools available in the Intel® Quartus® Prime system debugging suite and discusses the criteria for selecting the best tool for your debug requirements.

1.1. System Debugging Tools Portfolio

The Intel Quartus Prime software provides a portfolio of system debugging tools for real-time verification of your design.

System debugging tools provide visibility by routing (or “tapping”) signals in your design to debugging logic. The Compiler includes the debugging logic in your design and generates programming files that you download into the FPGA or CPLD for analysis.

Each tool in the system debugging portfolio uses a combination of available memory, logic, and routing resources to assist in the debugging process. Because different designs have different constraints and requirements, you can choose the tool that matches the specific requirements for your design, such as the number of spare pins available or the amount of logic or memory resources remaining in the physical device.

1.1.1. System Debugging Tools Comparison

Table 1. System Debugging Tools Portfolio

| Tool | Description | Typical Usage |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| System Console | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides real-time in-system debugging capabilities. Allows you to read from and write to Memory Mapped components in a system without a processor or additional software Communicates with hardware modules in a design through a Tcl interpreter. Allows you to take advantage of all the features of the Tcl scripting language. Supports JTAG and TCP/IP connectivity. | You need to perform system-level debugging. For example, if you have an Avalon®-MM slave or Avalon-ST interfaces, you can debug the design at a transaction level. |
| Transceiver Toolkit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows you to test and tune transceiver link signal quality through a combination of metrics. Auto Sweeping of physical medium attachment (PMA) settings help you find optimal parameter values. | You need to debug or optimize signal integrity of a board layout even before finishing the design. |
| Signal Tap logic analyzer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses FPGA resources. Samples test nodes, and outputs the information to the Intel Quartus Prime software for display and analysis. | You have spare on-chip memory and you want functional verification of a design running in hardware. |

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| Tool | Description | Typical Usage |
|--|--|--|
| Signal Probe | Incrementally routes internal signals to I/O pins while preserving results from the last place-and-routed design. | You have spare I/O pins and you want to check the operation of a small set of control pins using either an external logic analyzer or an oscilloscope. |
| Logic Analyzer Interface (LAI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Multiplexes a larger set of signals to a smaller number of spare I/O pins.Allows you to select which signals switch onto the I/O pins over a JTAG connection. | You have limited on-chip memory and a large set of internal data buses to verify using an external logic analyzer. Logic analyzer vendors, such as Tektronics* and Agilent*, provide integration with the tool to improve usability. |
| In-System Sources and Probes | Provides an easy way to drive and sample logic values to and from internal nodes using the JTAG interface. | You want to prototype the FPGA design using a front panel with virtual buttons. |
| In-System Memory Content Editor | Displays and allows you to edit on-chip memory. | You want to view and edit the contents of on-chip memory that is not connected to a Nios® II processor. You can also use the tool when you do not want to have a Nios II debug core in your system. |
| Virtual JTAG Interface | Allows you to communicate with the JTAG interface so that you can develop custom applications. | You want to communicate with custom signals in your design. |

1.1.2. Suggested Tools for Common Debugging Requirements

Table 2. Tools for Common Debugging Requirements⁽¹⁾

| Requirement | Signal Probe | Logic Analyzer Interface (LAI) | Signal Tap Logic Analyzer | Description |
|--|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| More Data Storage | N/A | X | — | An external logic analyzer with the LAI tool allows you to store more captured data than the Signal Tap logic analyzer, because the external logic analyzer can provide access to a bigger buffer. The Signal Probe tool does not capture or store data. |
| Faster Debugging | X | X | — | You can use the LAI or the Signal Probe tool with external equipment, such as oscilloscopes and mixed signal oscilloscopes (MSOs). This ability provides access to timing mode, which allows you to debug combined streams of data. |
| Minimal Effect on Logic Design | X | X ⁽²⁾ | X ⁽²⁾ | The Signal Probe tool incrementally routes nodes to pins, with no effect on the design logic. The LAI adds minimal logic to a design, requiring fewer device resources. The Signal Tap logic analyzer has little effect on the design, because the Compiler considers the debug logic as a separate design partition. |
| Short Compile and Recompile Time | X | X ⁽²⁾ | X ⁽²⁾ | Signal Probe uses incremental routing to attach signals to previously reserved pins. This feature allows you to quickly recompile when you change the selection of source signals. The Signal Tap logic analyzer and the LAI can refit their own design partitions to decrease recompilation time. |
| Sophisticated Triggering Capability | N/A | N/A | X | The triggering capabilities of the Signal Tap logic analyzer are comparable to commercial logic analyzers. |

continued...



| Requirement | Signal Probe | Logic Analyzer Interface (LAI) | Signal Tap Logic Analyzer | Description |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Low I/O Usage | — | — | X | The Signal Tap logic analyzer does not require additional output pins. Both the LAI and Signal Probe require I/O pin assignments. |
| Fast Data Acquisition | N/A | — | X | The Signal Tap logic analyzer can acquire data at speeds of over 200 MHz. Signal integrity issues limit acquisition speed for external logic analyzers that use the LAI. |
| No JTAG Connection Required | X | — | X | Signal Probe and Signal Tap do not require a host for debugging purposes. A FPGA design with the LAI requires an active JTAG connection to a host running the Intel Quartus Prime software. |
| No External Equipment Required | — | — | X | The Signal Tap logic analyzer only requires a JTAG connection from a host running the Intel Quartus Prime software or the stand-alone Signal Tap logic analyzer. Signal Probe and the LAI require the use of external debugging equipment, such as multimeters, oscilloscopes, or logic analyzers. |

Notes to Table:

- X indicates the recommended tools for the feature.
- — indicates that while the tool is available for that feature, that tool might not give the best results.
- N/A indicates that the feature is not applicable for the selected tool.

2. Valid when you use incremental compilation.

1.1.3. Debugging Ecosystem

The Intel Quartus Prime software allows you to use the debugging tools in tandem to exercise and analyze the logic under test and maximize closure.

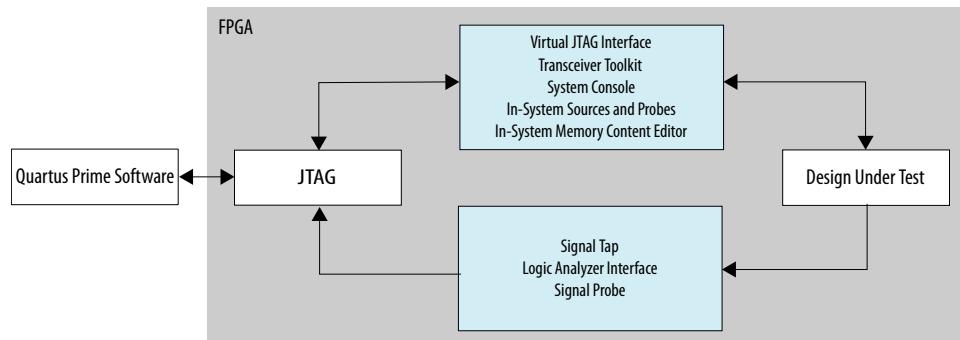
A very important distinction in the system debugging tools is how they interact with the design. All debugging tools in the Intel Quartus Prime software allow you to read the information from the design node, but only a subset allow you to input data at runtime:

Table 3. Classification of System Debugging Tools

| Debugging Tool | Read Data from Design | Input Values into the Design | Comments |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Signal Tap logic analyzer, | Yes | No | General purpose troubleshooting tools optimized for probing signals in a register transfer level (RTL) netlist |
| Logic Analyzer Interface | | | |
| Signal Probe | | | |
| In-System Sources and Probes | Yes | Yes | These tools allow to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read data from breakpoints that you define • Input values into your design during runtime |
| Virtual JTAG Interface | | | |
| System Console | | | |
| Transceiver Toolkit | | | |
| In-System Memory Content Editor | | | |

Taken together, the set of on-chip debugging tools form a debugging ecosystem. The set of tools can generate a stimulus to and solicit a response from the logic under test, providing a complete solution.

Figure 1. Debugging Ecosystem at Runtime



1.2. Tools for Monitoring RTL Nodes

The Signal Tap logic analyzer, Signal Probe, and LAI tools are useful for probing and debugging RTL signals at system speed. These general-purpose analysis tools enable you to tap and analyze any routable node from the FPGA or CPLD.

- In cases when the design has spare logic and memory resources, the Signal Tap logic analyzer can provide fast functional verification of the design running on actual hardware.
Note: CPLDs do not support the Signal Tap logic analyzer, because these devices do not have available memory resources.
- Conversely, if logic and memory resources are tight and you require the large sample depths associated with external logic analyzers, both the LAI and the Signal Probe tools simplify monitoring internal design signals using external equipment.

Related Information

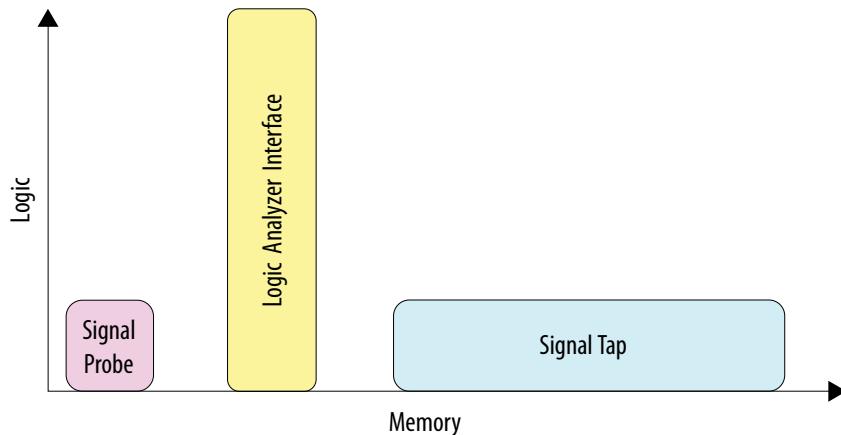
- [Design Debugging with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer](#) on page 145
- [In-System Debugging Using External Logic Analyzers](#) on page 221

1.2.1. Resource Usage

The most important selection criteria for these three tools are the remaining resources on the device after implementing the design and the number of spare pins.

Evaluate debugging options early on in the design planning process to ensure that you support the appropriate options in the board, Intel Quartus Prime project, and design. Planning early can reduce debugging time, and eliminates last minute changes to accommodate debug methodologies.

Figure 2. Resource Usage per Debugging Tool



1.2.1.1. Overhead Logic

Any debugging tool that requires a JTAG connection requires SLD infrastructure logic for communication with the JTAG interface and arbitration between instantiated debugging modules. This overhead logic uses around 200 logic elements (LEs), a small fraction of the resources available in any of the supported devices. All available debugging modules in your design share the overhead logic. Both the Signal Tap logic analyzer and the LAI use a JTAG connection.

1.2.1.1.1. For Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The Signal Tap logic analyzer requires both logic and memory resources. The number of logic resources used depends on the number of signals tapped and the complexity of the trigger logic. However, the amount of logic resources that the Signal Tap logic analyzer uses is typically a small percentage of most designs.

A baseline configuration consisting of the SLD arbitration logic and a single node with basic triggering logic contains approximately 300 to 400 Logic Elements (LEs). Each additional node you add to the baseline configuration adds about 11 LEs. Compared with logic resources, memory resources are a more important factor to consider for your design. Memory usage can be significant and depends on how you configure your Signal Tap logic analyzer instance to capture data and the sample depth that your design requires for debugging. For the Signal Tap logic analyzer, there is the added benefit of requiring no external equipment, as all of the triggering logic and storage is on the chip.

1.2.1.1.2. For Signal Probe

The resource usage of Signal Probe is minimal. Because Signal Probe does not require a JTAG connection, logic and memory resources are not necessary. Signal Probe only requires resources to route internal signals to a debugging test point.

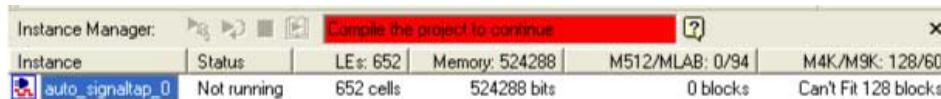
1.2.1.1.3. For Logic Analyzer Interface

The LAI requires a small amount of logic to implement the multiplexing function between the signals under test, in addition to the SLD infrastructure logic. Because no data samples are stored on the chip, the LAI uses no memory resources.

1.2.1.2. Resource Estimation

The resource estimation feature for the Signal Tap logic analyzer and the LAI allows you to quickly judge if enough on-chip resources are available before compiling the tool with your design.

Figure 3. **Resource Estimator**



1.2.2. Pin Usage

1.2.2.1. For Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

Other than the JTAG test pins, the Signal Tap logic analyzer uses no additional pins. All data is buffered using on-chip memory and communicated to the Signal Tap logic analyzer GUI via the JTAG test port.

1.2.2.2. For Signal Probe

The ratio of the number of pins used to the number of signals tapped for the Signal Probe feature is one-to-one. Because this feature can consume free pins quickly, a typical application for this feature is routing control signals to spare pins for debugging.

1.2.2.3. For Logic Analyzer Interface

The LAI can map up to 256 signals to each debugging pin, depending on available routing resources. The JTAG port controls the active signals mapped to the spare I/O pins. With these characteristics, the LAI is ideal for routing data buses to a set of test pins for analysis.

1.2.3. Usability Enhancements

The Signal Tap logic analyzer, Signal Probe, and LAI tools can be added to your existing design with minimal effects. With the node finder, you can find signals to route to a debugging module without making any changes to your HDL files. Signal Probe inserts signals directly from your post-fit database. The Signal Tap logic analyzer and LAI support inserting signals from both pre-synthesis and post-fit netlists.

1.2.3.1. Incremental Compilation

All three tools allow you to find and configure your debugging setup quickly. In addition, the Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation feature and the Intel Quartus Prime incremental routing feature allow for a fast turnaround time for your programming file, increasing productivity and enabling fast debugging closure.

Both the LAI and Signal Tap logic analyzer support incremental compilation. With incremental compilation, you can add a Signal Tap logic analyzer instance or an LAI instance incrementally into your placed-and-routed design. This has the benefit of both preserving your timing and area optimizations from your existing design, and



decreasing the overall compilation time when any changes are necessary during the debugging process. With incremental compilation, you can save up to 70% compile time of a full compilation.

1.2.3.2. Incremental Routing

Signal Probe uses the incremental routing feature. The incremental routing feature runs only the Fitter stage of the compilation. This leaves your compiled design untouched, except for the newly routed node or nodes. With Signal Probe, you can save as much as 90% compile time of a full compilation.

1.2.3.3. Automation Via Scripting

As another productivity enhancement, all tools in the on-chip debugging tool set support scripting via the `quartus_stp` Tcl package. For the Signal Tap logic analyzer and the LAI, scripting enables user-defined automation for data collection while debugging in the lab. The System Console includes a full Tcl interpreter for scripting.

1.2.3.4. Remote Debugging

You can perform remote debugging of a system with the Intel Quartus Prime software via the System Console. This feature allows you to debug equipment deployed in the field through an existing TCP/IP connection.

- For information about setting up a Nios II system with the System Console to perform remote debugging, refer to Application Note 624
- For information about setting up an Intel FPGA SoC to perform remote debugging with the Intel Quartus Prime SLD tools, refer to Application Note 693.

Related Information

- [Application Note 624: Debugging with System Console over TCP/IP](#)
- [Application Note 693: Remote Debugging over TCP/IP for Intel FPGA SoC](#)

1.3. Stimulus-Capable Tools

The In-System Memory Content Editor, In-System Sources and Probes, and Virtual JTAG interface enable you to use the JTAG interface as a general-purpose communication port.

Though you can use all three tools to achieve the same results, there are some considerations that make one tool easier to use in certain applications:

- The In-System Sources and Probes is ideal for toggling control signals.
- The In-System Memory Content Editor is useful for inputting large sets of test data.
- Finally, the Virtual JTAG interface is well suited for advanced users who want to develop custom JTAG solutions.

System Console provides system-level debugging at a transaction level, such as with Avalon-MM slave or Avalon-ST interfaces. You can communicate to a chip through JTAG and TCP/IP protocols. System Console uses a Tcl interpreter to communicate with hardware modules that you instantiate into your design.



1.3.1. In-System Sources and Probes

In-System Sources and Probes allow you to read and write to a design by accessing JTAG resources.

You instantiate an Intel FPGA IP into your HDL code. This Intel FPGA IP core contains source ports and probe ports that you connect to signals in your design, and abstracts the JTAG interface's transaction details.

In addition, In-System Sources and Probes provide a GUI that displays source and probe ports by instance, and allows you to read from probe ports and drive to source ports. These features make this tool ideal for toggling a set of control signals during the debugging process.

Related Information

[Design Debugging Using In-System Sources and Probes](#) on page 233

1.3.1.1. Push Button Functionality

During the development phase of a project, you can debug your design using the In-System Sources and Probes GUI instead of push buttons and LEDs. Furthermore, In-System Sources and Probes supports a set of scripting commands for reading and writing using the Signal Tap logic analyzer. You can also build your own Tk graphical interfaces using the Toolkit API. This feature is ideal for building a virtual front panel during the prototyping phase of the design.

Related Information

- [Toolkit API](#) on page 38
- [Signal Tap Scripting Support](#) on page 216

1.3.2. In-System Memory Content Editor

The In-System Memory Content Editor allows you to quickly view and modify memory content either through a GUI interface or through Tcl scripting commands. The In-System Memory Content Editor works by turning single-port RAM blocks into dual-port RAM blocks. One port is connected to your clock domain and data signals, and the other port is connected to the JTAG clock and data signals for editing or viewing.

Related Information

[In-System Modification of Memory and Constants](#) on page 229

1.3.2.1. Generate Test Vectors

Because you can modify a large set of data easily, a useful application for the In-System Memory Content Editor is to generate test vectors for your design. For example, you can instantiate a free memory block, connect the output ports to the logic under test (using the same clock as your logic under test on the system side), and create the glue logic for the address generation and control of the memory. At runtime, you can modify the contents of the memory using either a script or the In-System Memory Content Editor GUI and perform a burst transaction of the data contents in the modified RAM block synchronous to the logic being tested.



1.3.3. System Console

System Console is a framework that you can launch from the Intel Quartus Prime software to start services for performing various debugging tasks. System Console provides you with Tcl scripts and a GUI to access the Platform Designer (Standard) system integration tool to perform low-level hardware debugging of your design, as well as identify a module by its path, and open and close a connection to a Platform Designer (Standard) module. You can access your design at a system level for purposes of loading, unloading, and transferring designs to multiple devices. Also, System Console supports the Tk toolkit for building graphical interfaces.

Related Information

[Analyzing and Debugging Designs with System Console](#) on page 17

1.3.3.1. Test Signal Integrity

System Console also allows you to access commands that allow you to control how you generate test patterns, as well as verify the accuracy of data generated by test patterns. You can use JTAG debug commands in System Console to verify the functionality and signal integrity of your JTAG chain. You can test clock and reset signals.

1.3.3.2. Board Bring-Up and Verification

You can use System Console to access programmable logic devices on your development board, perform board bring-up, and perform verification. You can also access software running on a Nios II or Intel FPGA SoC processor, as well as access modules that produce or consume a stream of bytes.

1.3.3.3. Test Link Signal Integrity with Transceiver Toolkit

Transceiver Toolkit runs from the System Console framework, and allows you to run automatic tests of your transceiver links for debugging and optimizing your transceiver designs. You can use the Transceiver Toolkit GUI to set up channel links in your transceiver devices and change parameters at runtime to measure signal integrity. For selected devices, the Transceiver Toolkit can also run and display eye contour tests.

1.4. Virtual JTAG Interface Intel FPGA IP

The Virtual JTAG Interface Intel FPGA IP provides the finest level of granularity for manipulating the JTAG resource. This Intel FPGA IP allows you to build your own JTAG scan chain by exposing all of the JTAG control signals and configuring your JTAG Instruction Registers (IRs) and JTAG Data Registers (DRs). During runtime, you control the IR/DR chain through a Tcl API, or with System Console. This feature is meant for users who have a thorough understanding of the JTAG interface and want precise control over the number and type of resources used.

Related Information

- [Virtual JTAG \(altera_virtual_jtag\) IP Core User Guide](#)
- [Virtual JTAG Interface \(VJI\) Intel FPGA IP](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Help*



1.5. System-Level Debug Fabric

During compilation, the Intel Quartus Prime generates the System-Level Debugging Hub to allow multiple instances of debugging tools in a design.

Most Intel FPGA on-chip debugging tools use the JTAG port to control and read-back data from debugging logic and signals under test. The System-Level Debugging Hub manages the sharing of JTAG resources.

Note: For System Console, you explicitly insert debug IP cores into the design to enable debugging.

The System-Level Debugging Hub appears in the project's design hierarchy as `sld_hub:sld_hub_inst`.

1.6. System Debugging Tools Overview Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.05.07 | 18.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Moved here information about debug fabric on PR designs from the <i>Design Debugging with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer</i> chapter. |
| 2017.05.08 | 17.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Combined Altera JTAG Interface and Required Arbitration Logic topics into a new updated topic named System-Level Debugging Infrastructure. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | Added information that System Console supports the Tk toolkit. |
| November 2013 | 13.1.0 | Dita conversion. Added link to Remote Debugging over TCP/IP for Altera SoC Application Note. |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Maintenance release. |
| November 2011 | 10.0.2 | Maintenance release. Changed to new document template. |
| December 2010 | 10.0.1 | Maintenance release. Changed to new document template. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | Initial release |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.



2. Analyzing and Debugging Designs with System Console

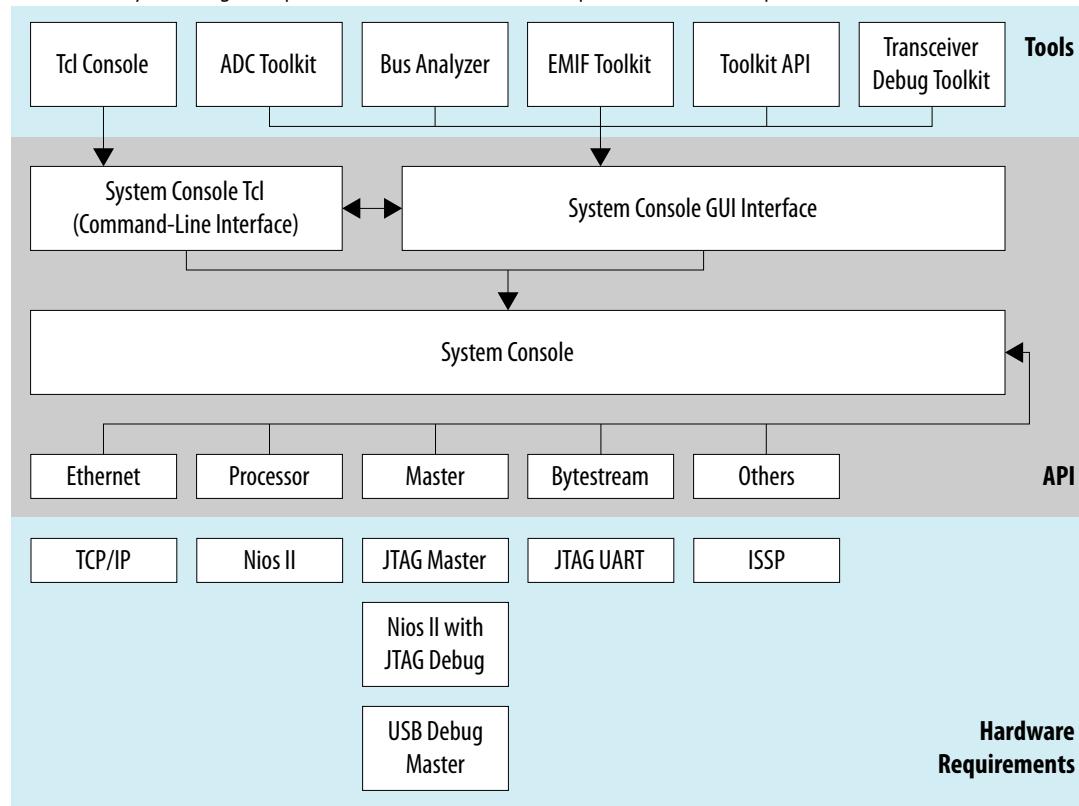
2.1. Introduction to System Console

System Console provides visibility into your design and allows you to perform system-level debug on a FPGA at run-time. System Console performs tests on debug-enabled Platform Designer (Standard) instantiated IP cores. A variety of debug services provide read and write access to elements in your design. You can perform the following tasks with System Console and the tools built on top of System Console:

- Bring up boards with both finalized and partially complete designs.
- Perform remote debug with internet access.
- Automate run-time verification through scripting across multiple devices in your system.
- Test serial links with point-and-click configuration tuning in the Transceiver Toolkit.
- Debug memory interfaces with the External Memory Interface Toolkit.
- Integrate your debug IP into the debug platform.
- Test the performance of your ADC and analog chain on a Intel MAX® 10 device with the ADC Toolkit.
- Perform system verification with MATLAB*/Simulink.

Figure 4. System Console Tools

(Tools) shows the applications that interact with System Console. The System Console API supports services that access your design in operation. Some services have specific hardware requirements.



Note: Use debug links to connect the host to the target you are debugging.

Related Information

- [Introduction to Intel Memory Solution](#)
In External Memory Interface Handbook Volume 1
- [Debugging Transceiver Links](#) on page 91
- [Application Note 693: Remote Hardware Debugging over TCP/IP for Intel SoC](#)
- [Application Note 624: Debugging with System Console over TCP/IP](#)
- [White Paper 01208: Hardware in the Loop from the MATLAB/Simulink Environment](#)
- [System Console Online Training](#)

2.2. System Console Debugging Flow

To debug a design with the System Console, you must perform a series of steps:

1. Add an IP Core to the Platform Designer (Standard) system.
2. Generate the Platform Designer (Standard) system.
3. Compile the design.
4. Connect a board and program the FPGA.



5. Start the System Console.
6. Locate and open a System Console service.
7. Perform debug operations with the service.
8. Close the service.

2.3. IP Cores that Interact with System Console

System Console runs on your host computer and communicates with your running design through debug agents. Debug agents are soft-logic embedded in some IP cores that enable debug communication with the host computer.

You instantiate debug IP cores using the Platform Designer (Standard) IP Catalog. Some IP cores are enabled for debug by default, while you can enable debug for other IP cores through options in the parameter editor. Some debug agents have multiple purposes.

When you use IP cores with embedded debug in your design, you can make large portions of the design accessible. Debug agents allow you to read and write to memory and alter peripheral registers from the host computer.

Services associated with debug agents in the running design can open and close as needed. System Console determines the communication protocol with the debug agent. The communication protocol determines the best board connection to use for command and data transmission.

The Programmable SRAM Object File (.sof) provides the System Console with channel communication information. When System Console opens in the Intel Quartus Prime software or Platform Designer (Standard) while your design is open, any existing .sof is automatically found and linked to the detected running device. In a complex system, you may need to link the design and device manually.

Related Information

[WP-01170 System-Level Debugging and Monitoring of FPGA Designs](#)

2.3.1. Services Provided through Debug Agents

By adding the appropriate debug agent to your design, System Console services can use the associated capabilities of the debug agent.

Table 4. Common Services for System Console

| Service | Function | Debug Agent Providing Service |
|---------|--|--|
| master | Access memory-mapped (Avalon-MM or AXI) slaves connected to the master interface. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nios II with debug• JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge• USB Debug Master |
| slave | Allows the host to access a single slave without needing to know the location of the slave in the host's memory map. Any slave that is accessible to a System Console master can provide this service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nios II with debug• JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge• USB Debug Master |

continued...



| Service | Function | Debug Agent Providing Service |
|-----------|--|--|
| | | If an SRAM Object File (.sof) is loaded, then slaves controlled by a debug master provide the slave service. |
| processor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Start, stop, or step the processor.Read and write processor registers. | Nios II with debug |
| JTAG UART | The JTAG UART is an Avalon-MM slave device that you can use in conjunction with System Console to send and receive byte streams. | JTAG UART |

Note: The following IP cores in the IP Catalog do not support VHDL simulation generation in the current version of the Intel Quartus Prime software:

- JTAG Debug Link
- SLD Hub Controller System
- USB Debug Link

Related Information

- [System Console Examples and Tutorials](#) on page 84
- [System Console Commands](#) on page 23

2.4. Starting System Console

2.4.1. Starting System Console from Nios II Command Shell

1. On the Windows Start menu, click **All Programs > Intel > Nios II EDS <version> > Nios II<version> > Command Shell..**
2. Type system-console.
3. Type -- help for System Console help.
4. Type system-console --project_dir=<project directory> to point to a directory that contains .qsf or .sof files.

2.4.2. Starting Stand-Alone System Console

You can get the stand-alone version of System Console as part of the Intel Quartus Prime software Programmer and Tools installer on the Intel website.

1. Navigate to the **Download Center** page and click the **Additional Software** tab.
2. On the Windows Start menu, click **All Programs > Intel FPGA <version> > Programmer and Tools > System Console.**

Related Information

[Intel Download Center](#)

2.4.3. Starting System Console from Platform Designer (Standard)

Click **Tools > System Console**.



2.4.4. Starting System Console from Intel Quartus Prime

Click **Tools > System Debugging Tools > System Console**.

2.4.5. Customizing Startup

You can customize your System Console environment, as follows:

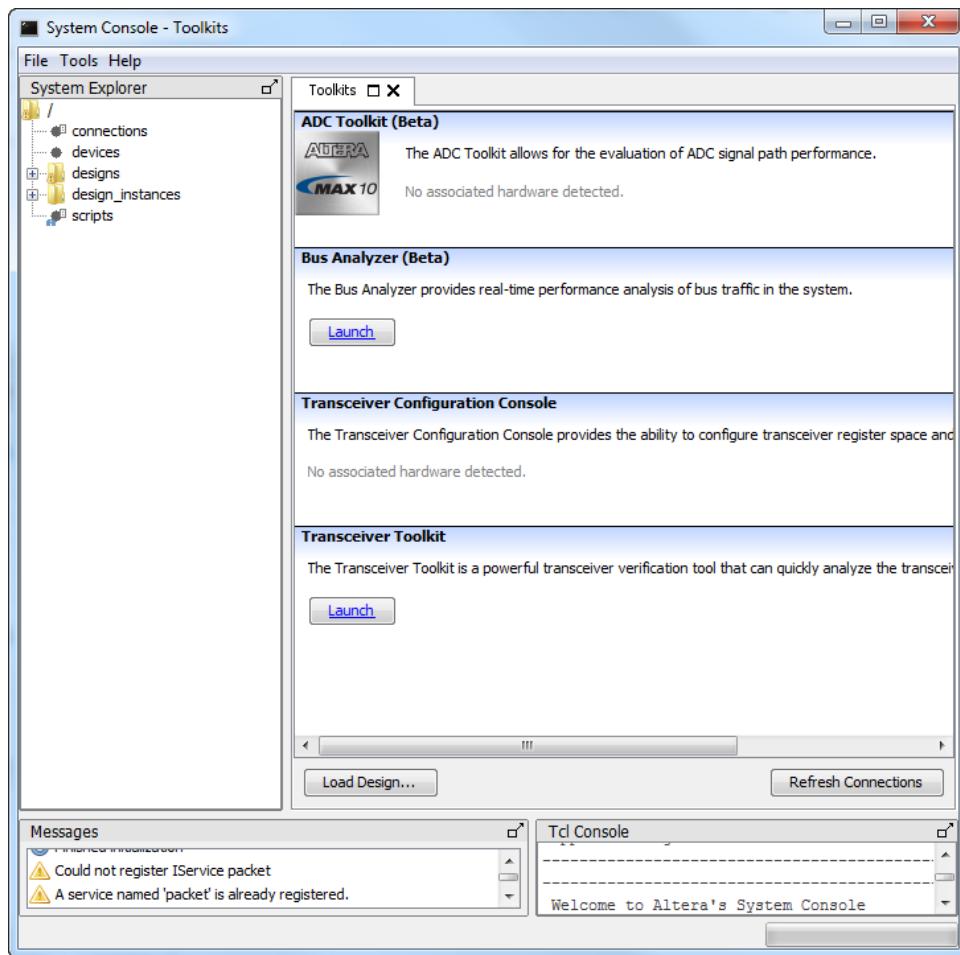
- Add commands to the `system_console_rc` configuration file located at:
 - `<$HOME>/system_console/system_console_rc.tcl`The file in this location is the user configuration file, which only affects the owner of the home directory.
- Specify your own design startup configuration file with the command-line argument `--rc_script=<path_to_script>`, when you launch System Console from the Nios II command shell.
- Use the `system_console_rc.tcl` file in combination with your custom `rc_script.tcl` file. In this case, the `system_console_rc.tcl` file performs System Console actions, and the `rc_script.tcl` file performs your debugging actions.

On startup, System Console automatically runs the Tcl commands in these files. The commands in the `system_console_rc.tcl` file run first, followed by the commands in the `rc_script.tcl` file.

2.5. System Console GUI

The System Console GUI consists of a main window with multiple panes, and allows you to interact with the design currently running on the host computer.

- **System Explorer**—Displays the hierarchy of the System Console virtual file system in your design, including board connections, devices, designs, and scripts.
- **Workspace**—Displays available toolkits including the ADC Toolkit, Transceiver Toolkit, Toolkits, GDB Server Control Panel, and Bus Analyzer. Click the **Tools** menu to launch applications.
- **Tcl Console**—A window that allows you to interact with your design using Tcl scripts, for example, sourcing scripts, writing procedures, and using System Console API.
- **Messages**—Displays status, warning, and error messages related to connections and debug actions.

Figure 5. System Console GUI

2.5.1. System Explorer Pane

The **System Explorer** pane displays the virtual file system for all connected debugging IP cores, and contains the following information:

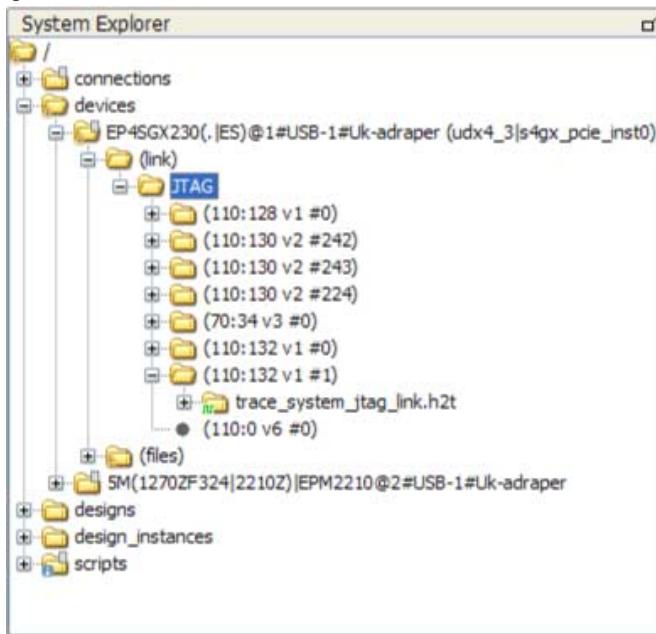
- **Devices** folder—Displays information about all devices connected to the System Console.
- **Scripts** folder—Stores scripts for easy execution.
- **Connections** folder—Displays information about the board connections visible to the System Console, such as Intel FPGA Download Cable. Multiple connections are possible.
- **Designs** folder—Displays information about Intel Quartus Prime designs connected to the System Console. Each design represents a loaded .sof file.



The **Devices** folder contains a sub-folder for each device connected to the System Console. Each device sub-folder contains a **(link)** folder, and may contain a **(files)** folder. The **(link)** folder shows debug agents (and other hardware) that System Console can access. The **(files)** folder contains information about the design files loaded from the Intel Quartus Prime project for the device.

Figure 6. System Explorer Pane

The figure shows the **EP4SGX230** folder under the **Device** folder, which contains a **(link)** folder. The **(link)** folder contains a **JTAG** folder, which describes the active debug connections to this device, for example, JTAG, USB, Ethernet, and agents connected to the EP4SGX230 device via a JTAG connection.



- Folders with a context menu display a context menu icon. Right-click these folders to view the context menu. For example, the **Connections** folder above shows a context menu icon.
- Folders that have messages display a message icon. Mouse-over these folders to view the messages. For example, the **Scripts** folder in the example has a message icon.
- Debug agents that sense the clock and reset state of the target show an information or error message with a clock status icon. The icon indicates whether the clock is running (information, green), stopped (error, red), or running but in reset (error, red). For example, the **trace_system_jtag_link.h2t** folder in the figure has a running clock.

2.6. System Console Commands

The console commands enable testing. Use console commands to identify a service by its path, and to open and close the connection. The path that identifies a service is the first argument to most System Console commands.

To initiate a service connection, do the following:



1. Identify a service by specifying its path with the `get_service_paths` command.
2. Open a connection to the service with the `claim_service` command.
3. Use Tcl and System Console commands to test the connected device.
4. Close a connection to the service with the `close_service` command

Note: For all Tcl commands, the `<format>` argument must come first.

Table 5. System Console Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| <code>get_service_types</code> | N/A | Returns a list of service types that System Console manages. Examples of service types include master, bytestream, processor, sld, jtag_debug, device, and design. |
| <code>get_service_paths</code> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><service-type></code>• <code><device></code>—Returns services in the same specified device. The argument can be a device or another service in the device.• <code><hpath></code>—Returns services whose hpath starts with the specified prefix.• <code><type></code>—Returns services whose debug type matches this value. Particularly useful when opening slave services.• <code><type></code>—Returns services on the same development boards as the argument. Specify a board service, or any other service on the same board. | Allows you to filter the services which are returned. |
| <code>claim_service</code> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><service-type></code>• <code><service-path></code>• <code><claim-group></code>• <code><claims></code> | Provides finer control of the portion of a service you want to use. <code>claim_service</code> returns a new path which represents a use of that service. Each use is independent. Calling <code>claim_service</code> multiple times returns different values each time, but each allows access to the service until closed. |
| <code>close_service</code> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><service-type></code>• <code><service-path></code> | Closes the specified service type at the specified path. |
| <code>is_service_open</code> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><service-type></code>• <code><service-type></code> | Returns 1 if the service type provided by the path is open, 0 if the service type is closed. |
| <code>get_services_to_add</code> | N/A | Returns a list of all services that are instantiable with the <code>add_service</code> command. |
| <code>add_service</code> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><service-type></code>• <code><instance-name></code>• <code>optional-parameters</code> | Adds a service of the specified service type with the given instance name. Run <code>get_services_to_add</code> to retrieve a list of instantiable services. This command returns the path where the service was added. |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | | Run help add_service <service-type> to get specific help about that service type, including any parameters that might be required for that service. |
| add_service gdbserver | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <Processor Service> • <port number> | Instantiates a gdbserver. |
| add_service tcp | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <instance name> • <ip_addr> • <port_number> | Allows you to connect to a TCP/IP port that provides a debug link over ethernet. See AN693 (<i>Remote Hardware Debugging over TCP/IP for Intel FPGA SoC</i>) for more information. |
| add_service transceiver_channel_rx | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <data_pattern_checker> • <path> • <transceiver path> • <transceiver channel address> • <reconfig path> • <reconfig channel address> | Instantiates a Transceiver Toolkit receiver channel. |
| add_service transceiver_channel_tx | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <data_pattern_generator> • <path> • <transceiver path> • <transceiver channel address> • <reconfig path> • <reconfig channel address> | Instantiates a Transceiver Toolkit transmitter channel. |
| add_service transceiver_debug_link | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <transceiver_channel_tx path> • <transceiver_channel_rx path> | Instantiates a Transceiver Toolkit debug link. |
| get_version | N/A | Returns the current System Console version and build number. |
| get_claimed_services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <claim> | For the given claim group, returns a list of services claimed. The returned list consists of pairs of paths and service types. Each pair is one claimed service. |
| refresh_connections | N/A | Scans for available hardware and updates the available service paths if there have been any changes. |
| send_message | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <level> • <message> | Sends a message of the given level to the message window. Available levels are info, warning, error, and debug. |

Related Information

[Remote Hardware Debugging over TCP/IP for SoC Devices](#)

2.7. Running System Console in Command-Line Mode

You can run System Console in command line mode and either work interactively or run a Tcl script. System Console prints the output in the console window.



- `--cli`—Runs System Console in command-line mode.
- `--project_dir=<project dir>`—Directs System Console to the location of your hardware project. Also works in GUI mode.
- `--script=<your script>.tcl`—Directs System Console to run your Tcl script.
- `--help`— Lists all available commands. Typing `--help <command name>` provides the syntax and arguments of the command.

System Console provides command completion if you type the beginning letters of a command and then press the **Tab** key.

2.8. System Console Services

Intel's System Console services provide access to hardware modules instantiated in your FPGA. Services vary in the type of debug access they provide.

2.8.1. Locating Available Services

System Console uses a virtual file system to organize the available services, which is similar to the `/dev` location on Linux systems. Board connection, device type, and IP names are all part of a service path. Instances of services are referred to by their unique service path in the file system. To retrieve service paths for a particular service, use the command `get_service_paths <service-type>`.

Example 1. Locating a Service Path

```
#We are interested in master services.  
set service_type "master"  
  
#Get all the paths as a list.  
set master_service_paths [get_service_paths $service_type]  
  
#We are interested in the first service in the list.  
set master_index 0  
  
#The path of the first master.  
set master_path [lindex $master_service_paths $master_index]  
  
#Or condense the above statements into one statement:  
set master_path [lindex [get_service_paths master] 0]
```

System Console commands require service paths to identify the service instance you want to access. The paths for different components can change between runs of System Console and between versions. Use the `get_service_paths` command to obtain service paths.

The string values of service paths change with different releases of the tool. Use the `marker_node_info` command to get information from the path.

System Console automatically discovers most services at startup. System Console automatically scans for all JTAG and USB-based service instances and retrieves their service paths. System Console does not automatically discover some services, such as TCP/IP. Use `add_service` to inform System Console about those services.



Example 2. Marker_node_info

Use the `marker_node_info` command to get information about the discovered services.

```
set slave_path [get_service_paths -type altera_avalon_uart.slave slave]
array set uart_info [marker_node_info $slave_path]
echo $uart_info(full_hpath)
```

2.8.2. Opening and Closing Services

After you have a service path to a particular service instance, you can access the service for use.

The `claim_service` command directs System Console to start using a particular service instance, and with no additional arguments, claims a service instance for exclusive use.

Example 3. Opening a Service

```
set service_type "master"
set claim_path [claim_service $service_type $master_path mylib];#Claims service.
```

You can pass additional arguments to the `claim_service` command to direct System Console to start accessing a particular portion of a service instance. For example, if you use the master service to access memory, then use `claim_service` to only access the address space between 0x0 and 0x1000. System Console then allows other users to access other memory ranges, and denies access to the claimed memory range. The `claim_service` command returns a newly created service path that you can use to access your claimed resources.

You can access a service after you open it. When you finish accessing a service instance, use the `close_service` command to direct System Console to make this resource available to other users.

Example 4. Closing a Service

```
close_service master $claim_path; #Closes the service.
```

2.8.3. SLD Service

The SLD Service shifts values into the instruction and data registers of SLD nodes and captures the previous value. When interacting with a SLD node, start by acquiring exclusive access to the node on an opened service.

Example 5. SLD Service

```
set timeout_in_ms 1000
set lock_failed [sld_lock $sld_service_path $timeout_in_ms]
```

This code attempts to lock the selected SLD node. If it is already locked, `sld_lock` waits for the specified timeout. Confirm the procedure returns non-zero before proceeding. Set the instruction register and capture the previous one:

```
if {$lock_failed} {
    return
}
```



```
set instr 7
set delay_us 1000
set capture [sld_access_ir $sld_service_path $instr $delay_us]
```

The 1000 microsecond delay guarantees that the following SLD command executes least 1000 microseconds later. Data register access works the same way.

```
set data_bit_length 32
set delay_us 1000
set data_bytes [list 0xEF 0xBE 0xAD 0xDE]
set capture [sld_access_dr $sld_service_path $data_bit_length $delay_us \
$data_bytes]
```

Shift count is specified in bits, but the data content is specified as a list of bytes. The capture return value is also a list of bytes. Always unlock the SLD node once finished with the SLD service.

```
sld_unlock $sld_service_path
```

Related Information

[Virtual JTAG IP Core User Guide](#)

2.8.3.1. SLD Commands

Table 6. SLD Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---------------|---|--|
| sld_access_ir | <claim-path> <ir-value> <delay> (in μ s) | Shifts the instruction value into the instruction register of the specified node. Returns the previous value of the instruction. If the <delay> parameter is non-zero, then the JTAG clock is paused for this length of time after the access. |
| sld_access_dr | <service-path> <size_in_bits> <delay-in- μ s>, <list_of_byte_values> | Shifts the byte values into the data register of the SLD node up to the size in bits specified. If the <delay> parameter is non-zero, then the JTAG clock is paused for at least this length of time after the access. Returns the previous contents of the data register. |
| sld_lock | <service-path> <timeout-in-milliseconds> | Locks the SLD chain to guarantee exclusive access. Returns 0 if successful. If the SLD chain is already locked by another user, tries for <timeout>ms before throwing a Tcl error. You can use the catch command if you want to handle the error. |
| sld_unlock | <service-path> | Unlocks the SLD chain. |

2.8.4. In-System Sources and Probes Service

The In-System Sources and Probes (ISSP) service provides scriptable access to the altsource_probe IP core in a similar manner to using the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** in the Intel Quartus Prime software.

Example 6. ISSP Service

Before you use the ISSP service, ensure your design works in the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor**. In System Console, open the service for an ISSP instance.

```
set issp_index 0
set issp [lindex [get_service_paths issp] 0]
set claimed_issp [claim_service issp $issp mylib]
```



View information about this particular ISSP instance.

```
array set instance_info [issp_get_instance_info $claimed_issp]
set source_width $instance_info(source_width)
set probe_width $instance_info(probe_width)
```

The Intel Quartus Prime software reads probe data as a single bitstring of length equal to the probe width.

```
set all_probe_data [issp_read_probe_data $claimed_issp]
```

As an example, you can define the following procedure to extract an individual probe line's data.

```
proc get_probe_line_data {all_probe_data index} {
    set line_data [expr { ($all_probe_data >> $index) & 1 }]
    return $line_data
}
set initial_all_probe_data [issp_read_probe_data $claimed_issp]
set initial_line_0 [get_probe_line_data $initial_all_probe_data 0]
set initial_line_5 [get_probe_line_data $initial_all_probe_data 5]
# ...
set final_all_probe_data [issp_read_probe_data $claimed_issp]
set final_line_0 [get_probe_line_data $final_all_probe_data 0]
```

Similarly, the Intel Quartus Prime software writes source data as a single bitstring of length equal to the source width.

```
set source_data 0xDEADBEEF
issp_write_source_data $claimed_issp $source_data
```

The currently set source data can also be retrieved.

```
set current_source_data [issp_read_source_data $claimed_issp]
```

As an example, you can invert the data for a 32-bit wide source by doing the following:

```
set current_source_data [issp_read_source_data $claimed_issp]
set inverted_source_data [expr { $current_source_data ^ 0xFFFFFFFF }]
issp_write_source_data $claimed_issp $inverted_source_data
```

2.8.4.1. In-System Sources and Probes Commands

Note: The valid values for ISSP claims include `read_only`, `normal`, and `exclusive`.

Table 7. In-System Sources and Probes Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <code>issp_get_instance_info</code> | <code><service-path></code> | Returns a list of the configurations of the In-System Sources and Probes instance, including: <code>instance_index</code> <code>instance_name</code> <code>source_width</code> |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| | | probe_width |
| issp_read_probe_data | <service-path> | Retrieves the current value of the probe input. A hex string is returned representing the probe port value. |
| issp_read_source_data | <service-path> | Retrieves the current value of the source output port. A hex string is returned representing the source port value. |
| issp_write_source_data | <service-path> <source-value> | Sets values for the source output port. The value can be either a hex string or a decimal value supported by the System Console Tcl interpreter. |

2.8.5. Monitor Service

The monitor service builds on top of the master service to allow reads of Avalon-MM slaves at a regular interval. The service is fully software-based. The monitor service requires no extra soft-logic. This service streamlines the logic to do interval reads, and it offers better performance than exercising the master service manually for the reads.

Example 7. Monitor Service

1. Determine the master and the memory address range that you want to poll:

```
set master_index      0
set master [lindex [get_service_paths master] $master_index]
set address          0x2000
set bytes_to_read    100
set read_interval_ms 100
```

With the first master, read 100 bytes starting at address 0x2000 every 100 milliseconds.

2. Open the monitor service:

```
set monitor [lindex [get_service_paths monitor] 0]
set claimed_monitor [claim_service monitor $monitor mylib]
```

The monitor service opens the master service automatically.

3. With the monitor service, register the address range and time interval:

```
monitor_add_range $claimed_monitor $master $address $bytes_to_read
monitor_set_interval $claimed_monitor $read_interval_ms
```

4. Add more ranges, defining the result at each interval:

```
global monitor_data_buffer
set monitor_data_buffer [list]
```

5. Gather the data and append it with a global variable.

```
proc store_data {monitor master address bytes_to_read} {
    global monitor_data_buffer
    # monitor_read_data returns the range of data polled from the running
    # design as a list
    #(in this example, a 100-element list).
    set data [monitor_read_data $claimed_monitor $master $address
    $bytes_to_read]
    # Append the list as a single element in the monitor_data_buffer global
    # list.
    lappend monitor_data_buffer $data
}
```



Note: If this procedure takes longer than the interval period, the monitor service may have to skip the next one or more calls to the procedure. In this case, `monitor_read_data` returns the latest polled data.

6. Register this callback with the opened monitor service:

```
set callback [list store_data $claimed_monitor $master $address
$bytes_to_read]
monitor_set_callback $claimed_monitor $callback
```

7. Use the callback variable to call when the monitor finishes an interval. Start monitoring:

```
monitor_set_enabled $claimed_monitor 1
```

Immediately, the monitor reads the specified ranges from the device and invokes the callback at the specified interval. Check the contents of `monitor_data_buffer` to verify this. To turn off the monitor, use 0 instead of 1 in the above command.

2.8.5.1. Monitor Commands

You can use the Monitor commands to read many Avalon-MM slave memory locations at a regular interval.

Under normal load, the monitor service reads the data after each interval and then calls the callback. If the value you read is timing sensitive, you can use the `monitor_get_read_interval` command to read the exact time between the intervals at which the data was read.

Under heavy load, or with a callback that takes a long time to execute, the monitor service skips some callbacks. If the registers you read do not have side effects (for example, they read the total number of events since reset), skipping callbacks has no effect on your code. The `monitor_read_data` command and `monitor_get_read_interval` command are adequate for this scenario.

If the registers you read have side effects (for example, they return the number of events since the last read), you must have access to the data that was read, but for which the callback was skipped. The `monitor_read_all_data` and `monitor_get_all_read_intervals` commands provide access to this data.

Table 8. Monitoring Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <code>monitor_add_range</code> | <code><service-path></code> <code><target-path></code> <code><address></code> <code><size></code> | Adds a contiguous memory address into the monitored memory list. <code><service path></code> is the value returned when you opened the service. <code><target-path></code> argument is the name of a master service to read. The address is within the address space of this service. <code><target-path></code> is returned from <code>[lindex [get_service_paths master] n]</code> where <code>n</code> is the number of the master service. |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | | <address> and <size> are relative to the master service. |
| monitor_get_all_read_intervals | <service-path> <target-path> <address> <size> | Returns a list of intervals in milliseconds between two reads within the data returned by monitor_read_all_data. |
| monitor_get_interval | <service-path> | Returns the current interval set which specifies the frequency of the polling action. |
| monitor_get_missing_event_count | <service-path> | Returns the number of callback events missed during the evaluation of last Tcl callback expression. |
| monitor_get_read_interval | <service-path> <target-path> <address> <size> | Returns the milliseconds elapsed between last two data reads returned by monitor_read_data. |
| monitor_read_all_data | <service-path> <target-path> <address> <size> | Returns a list of 8-bit values read from all recent values read from device since last Tcl callback. You must specify a memory range within the range in monitor_add_range. |
| monitor_read_data | <service-path> <target-path> <address> <size> | Returns a list of 8-bit values read from the most recent values read from device. You must specify a memory range within the range in monitor_add_range. |
| monitor_set_callback | <service-path> <Tcl-expression> | Specifies a Tcl expression that the System Console must evaluate after reading all the memories that this service monitors. Typically, you specify this expression as a single string Tcl procedure call with necessary argument passed in. |
| monitor_set_enabled | <service-path> <enable(1)/disable(0)> | Enables and disables monitoring. Memory read starts after this command, and Tcl callback evaluates after data is read. |
| monitor_set_interval | <service-path> <interval> | Defines the target frequency of the polling action by specifying the interval between two memory reads. The actual polling frequency varies depending on the system activity. |

2.8.6. Device Service

The device service supports device-level actions.

Example 8. Programming

You can use the device service with Tcl scripting to perform device programming.

```
set device_index 0 ; #Device index for target
set device [lindex [get_service_paths device] $device_index]
set sof_path [file join project_path output_files project_name.sof]
device_download_sof $device $sof_path
```



To program, all you need are the device service path and the file system path to a .sof. Ensure that no other service (e.g. master service) is open on the target device or else the command fails. Afterwards, you may do the following to check that the design linked to the device is the same one programmed:

```
device_get_design $device
```

2.8.6.1. Device Commands

The device commands provide access to programmable logic devices on your board. Before you use these commands, identify the path to the programmable logic device on your board using the `get_service_paths`.

Table 9. Device Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <code>device_download_sof</code> | <code><service_path></code> <code><sof-file-path></code> | Loads the specified .sof to the device specified by the path. |
| <code>device_get_connections</code> | <code><service_path></code> | Returns all connections which go to the device at the specified path. |
| <code>device_get_design</code> | <code><device_path></code> | Returns the design this device is currently linked to. |

2.8.7. Design Service

You can use design service commands to work with Intel Quartus Prime design information.

Example 9. Load

When you open System Console from the Intel Quartus Prime software or Platform Designer (Standard), the current project's debug information is sourced automatically if the .sof has been built. In other situations, you can load manually.

```
set sof_path [file join project_dir output_files project_name.sof]
set design [design_load $sof_path]
```

System Console is now aware that this particular .sof has been loaded.

Example 10. Linking

Once a .sof is loaded, System Console automatically links design information to the connected device. The resultant link persists and you can choose to unlink or reuse the link on an equivalent device with the same .sof.

You can perform manual linking.

```
set device_index 0; # Device index for our target
set device [lindex [get_service_paths device] $device_index]
design_link $design $device
```

Manually linking fails if the target device does not match the design service.

Linking fails even if the .sof programmed to the target is not the same as the design .sof.



2.8.7.1. Design Service Commands

Design service commands load and work with your design at a system level.

Table 10. Design Service Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| design_load | <quartus-project-path>, <sof-file-path>, or <qpf-file-path> | Loads a model of a Intel Quartus Prime design into System Console. Returns the design path. For example, if your Intel Quartus Prime Project File (.qpf) is in c:/projects/loopback, type the following command: design_load {c:\projects\loopback\} |
| design_link | <design-path> <device-service-path> | Links a Intel Quartus Prime logical design with a physical device. For example, you can link a Intel Quartus Prime design called 2c35_quartus_design to a 2c35 device. After you create this link, System Console creates the appropriate correspondences between the logical and physical submodules of the Intel Quartus Prime project. |
| design_extract_debug_files | <design-path> <zip-file-name> | Extracts debug files from a .sof to a zip file which can be emailed to <i>Intel FPGA Support</i> for analysis. You can specify a design path of {} to unlink a device and to disable auto linking for that device. |
| design_get_warnings | <design-path> | Gets the list of warnings for this design. If the design loads correctly, then an empty list returns. |

2.8.8. Bytestream Service

The bytestream service provides access to modules that produce or consume a stream of bytes. Use the bytestream service to communicate directly to the IP core that provides bytestream interfaces, such as the JTAG UART or the Avalon-ST JTAG interface.

Example 11. Bytestream Service

The following code finds the bytestream service for your interface and opens it.

```
set bytestream_index 0
set bytestream [lindex [get_service_paths bytestream] $bytestream_index]
set claimed_bytestream [claim_service bytestream $bytestream mylib]
```

To specify the outgoing data as a list of bytes and send it through the opened service:

```
set payload [list 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8]
bytestream_send $claimed_bytestream $payload
```

Incoming data also comes as a list of bytes.

```
set incoming_data [list]
while {[llength $incoming_data] ==0} {
    set incoming_data [bytestream_receive $claimed_bytestream 8]
}
```

Close the service when done.

```
close_service bytestream $claimed_bytestream
```



2.8.8.1. Bytestream Commands

Table 11. Bytestream Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--------------------|----------------------------|--|
| bytestream_send | <service-path> <values> | Sends the list of bytes to the specified bytestream service. Values argument is the list of bytes to send. |
| bytestream_receive | <service-path> <length> | Returns a list of bytes currently available in the specified services receive queue, up to the specified limit. Length argument is the maximum number of bytes to receive. |

2.8.9. JTAG Debug Service

The JTAG Debug service allows you to check the state of clocks and resets within your design.

The following is a JTAG Debug design flow example.

1. To identify available JTAG Debug paths:

```
get_service_paths jtag_debug
```

2. To select a JTAG Debug path:

```
set jtag_debug_path [lindex [get_service_paths jtag_debug] 0]
```

3. To claim a JTAG Debug service path:

```
set claim_jtag_path [claim_service jtag_debug$jtag_debug_path mylib]
```

4. Running the JTAG Debug service:

```
jtag_debug_reset_system $claim_jtag_path
jtag_debug_loop $claim_jtag_path [list 1 2 3 4 5]
```

2.8.9.1. JTAG Debug Commands

JTAG Debug commands help debug the JTAG Chain connected to a device.

Table 12. JTAG Debug Commands

| Command | Argument | Function |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| jtag_debug_loop | <service-path> <list_of_byte_values> | Loops the specified list of bytes through a loopback of tdi and tdo of a system-level debug (SLD) node. Returns the list of byte values in the order that they were received. This command blocks until all bytes are received. Byte values have the 0x (hexadecimal) prefix and are delineated by spaces. |
| jtag_debug_sample_clock | <service-path> | Returns the clock signal of the system clock that drives the module's system interface. The clock value is sampled asynchronously; consequently, you must sample the clock several times to guarantee that it is switching. |

continued...



| Command | Argument | Function |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|
| jtag_debug_sample_reset | <service-path> | Returns the value of the <code>reset_n</code> signal of the Avalon-ST JTAG Interface core. If <code>reset_n</code> is low (asserted), the value is 0 and if <code>reset_n</code> is high (deasserted), the value is 1. |
| jtag_debug_sense_clock | <service-path> | Returns a sticky bit that monitors system clock activity. If the clock switched at least once since the last execution of this command, returns 1. Otherwise, returns 0.. The sticky bit is reset to 0 on read. |
| jtag_debug_reset_system | <service-path> | Issues a reset request to the specified service. Connectivity within your device determines which part of the system is reset. |

2.9. Working with Toolkits

The Toolkit API allows you to create custom tools to visualize and interact with your design debug data. The Toolkit API provides graphical widgets in the form of buttons and text fields, which can leverage user input to interact with debug logic. You can use Toolkit API with the Intel Quartus Prime software versions 14.1 and later. The Toolkit API is the successor to the Dashboard service.

Toolkits you create with the Toolkit API require the following files:

- XML file that describes the toolkit (.toolkit file).
- Tcl file that implements the toolkit GUI.

2.9.1. Convert your Dashboard Scripts to Toolkit API

Convert your Dashboard scripts to work with the Toolkit API by following these steps:

1. Create a .toolkit file.
2. Modify your dashboard script:
 - a. Remove the `add_service dashboard <name of service>` command.
 - b. Change `dashboard_<command>` to `toolkit_<command>`.
 - c. Change `open_service` to `claim_service`

For example:

```
open_service slave $path  
master_read_memory $path address count  
becomes
```

```
set c [claim_service slave $path lib {}]  
master_read_memory $c address count
```

2.9.2. Creating a Toolkit Description File

A toolkit description file (.toolkit) is a XML file which provides the registration data for a toolkit.

Include the following attributes in your toolkit description file:

**Table 13. Attributes in Toolkit Description File**

| Attribute name | Purpose |
|----------------|--|
| name | Internal toolkit file name. |
| displayName | Toolkit display name to appear in the GUI. |
| addMenuItem | Whether the System Console Tools > Toolkits menu displays the toolkit. |

Table 14. Toolkit child elements

| Attribute name | Purpose |
|----------------|--|
| description | Description of the purpose of the toolkit. |
| file | Path to .tcl file containing the toolkit implementation. |
| icon | Path to icon to display as the toolkit launcher button in System Console <i>Note:</i> The .png 64x64 format is preferred. If the icon does not take up the whole space, ensure that the background is transparent. |
| requirement | If the toolkit works with a particular type of hardware, this attribute specifies the debug type name of the hardware. This attribute enables automatic discovery of the toolkit. The syntax of a toolkit's debug type name is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name of the hw.tcl component.• dot.• Name of the interface within that component which the toolkit uses. For example: <hw.tcl name>.<interface name>. |

Example 12. .toolkit Description File

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
    <toolkit name="toolkit_example" displayName="Toolkit Example"
addMenuItem="true">
        <file> toolkit_example.tcl </file>
    </toolkit>
```

Related Information

[Matching Toolkits with IP Cores](#) on page 38

2.9.3. Registering a Toolkit

Use the `toolkit_register` command in the System Console to make your toolkit available. Remember to specify the path to the .toolkit file. Registering a toolkit does not create an instance of the toolkit GUI.

```
toolkit_register <toolkit_file>
```

2.9.4. Launching a Toolkit

With the System Console, you can launch pre-registered toolkits in a number of ways:



- Click **Tools > Toolkits**.
- Use the **Toolkits** tab. Each toolkit has a description, a detected hardware list, and a launch button.
- Use following command:

```
toolkit_open <.toolkit_file_name>
```

You can launch a toolkit in the context of a hardware resource associated with a toolkit type. If you use the command:

```
toolkit_open <toolkit_name> <context>
```

the toolkit Tcl can retrieve the context by typing

```
set context [toolkit_get_context]
```

Related Information

[toolkit_get_context](#) on page 49

2.9.5. Matching Toolkits with IP Cores

You can match your toolkit with any IP core:

- When searching for IP, the toolkit looks for debug markers and matches IP cores to the toolkit requirements. In the toolkit file, use the requirement attribute to specify a debug type, as follows:

```
<requirement><type>debug.type-name</type></requirement
```
- Create debug assignments in the hw.tcl for an IP core. hw.tcl files are available when you load the design in System Console.
- System Console discovers debug markers from identifiers in the hardware and associates with IP, without direct knowledge of the design.

2.9.6. Toolkit API

The Toolkit API service enables you to construct GUIs for visualizing and interacting with debug data. The Toolkit API is a graphical pane for the layout of your graphical widgets, which include buttons and text fields. Widgets pull data from other System Console services. Similarly, widgets use services to leverage user input to act on debug logic in your design.

Properties

Widget properties can push and pull information to the user interface. Widgets have properties specific to their type. For example, when you click a button, the button property `onClick` performs an action. A label widget does not have the same property, because the widget does not perform an action on click operation. However, both the button and label widgets have the `text` property to display text strings.

Layout

The Toolkit API service creates a widget hierarchy where the toolkit is at the top-level. The service implements group-type widgets that contain child widgets. Layout properties dictate layout actions that a parent performs on its children. For example,



the expandableX property when set as True, expands the widget horizontally to encompass all of the available space. The visible property when set as True allows a widget to display in the GUI.

User Input

Some widgets allow user interaction. For example, the `textField` widget is a text box that allows user entries. Access the contents of the box with the `text` property. A Tcl script can either get or set the contents of the `textField` widget with the `text` property.

Callbacks

Some widgets perform user-specified actions, referred to as callbacks. The `textField` widget has the `onChange` property, which is called when text contents change. The `button` widget has the `onClick` property, which is called when you click a button. Callbacks update widgets or interact with services based on the contents of a text field, or the state of any other widget.

2.9.6.1. Customizing Toolkit API Widgets

Use the `toolkit_set_property` command to interact with the widgets that you instantiate. The `toolkit_set_property` command is most useful when you change part of the execution of a callback.

2.9.6.2. Toolkit API Script Examples

Example 13. Making the Toolkit Visible in System Console

Use the `toolkit_set_property` command to modify the `visible` property of the root toolkit. Use the word `self` if a property is applied to the entire toolkit. In other cases, refer to the root toolkit using `all`.

```
toolkit_set_property self visible true
```

Example 14. Adding Widgets

Use the `toolkit_add` command to add widgets.

```
toolkit_add my_button button all
```

The following commands add a label widget `my_label` to the root toolkit. In the GUI, the label appears as **Widget Label**.

```
set name "my_label"
set content "Widget Label"
toolkit_add $name label all
toolkit_set_property $name text $content
```

In the GUI, the displayed text changes to the new value. Add one more label:

```
toolkit_add my_label_2 label all
toolkit_set_property my_label_2 text "Another label"
```

The new label appears to the right of the first label.



To place the new label under the first, use the following command:

```
toolkit_set_property self itemsPerRow 1
```

Example 15. Gathering Input

To incorporate user input into your Toolkit API,

1. Create a text field using the following commands:

```
set name "my_text_field"
set widget_type "textField"
set parent "all"
toolkit_add $name $widget_type $parent
```

2. The widget size is very small. To make the widget fill the horizontal space, use the following command:

```
toolkit_set_property my_text_field expandableX true
```

3. Now, the text field is fully visible. You can type text into the field, on clicking. To retrieve the contents of the field, use the following command:

```
set content [toolkit_get_property my_text_field text]
puts $content
```

This command prints the contents into the console.

Example 16. Updating Widgets Upon User Events

When you use callbacks, the Toolkit API can also perform actions without interactive typing:

1. Start by defining a procedure that updates the first label with the text field contents:

```
proc update_my_label_with_my_text_field{
    set content [toolkit_get_property my_text_field text]
    toolkit_set_property my_label text $content
}
```

2. Run the `update_my_label_with_my_text_field` command in the Tcl Console. The first label now matches the text field contents.

3. Use the `update_my_label_with_my_text_field` command whenever the text field changes:

```
toolkit_set_property my_text_field onChange
update_my_label_with_my_text_field
```

The Toolkit executes the `onChange` property each time the text field changes. The execution of this property changes the first field to match what you type.

Example 17. Buttons

Use buttons to trigger actions.

1. To create a button that changes the second label:

```
proc append_to_my_label_2 {suffix} {
    set old_text [toolkit_get_property my_label_2 text]
    set new_text "${old_text}${suffix}"
    toolkit_set_property my_label_2 text $new_text
}
```



```
        set text_to_append ", and more"
        toolkit_add my_button button all
        toolkit_set_property my_button onClick
[append_to_my_label_2 $text_to_append]
```

2. Click the button to append some text to the second label.

Example 18. Groups

The property `itemsPerRow` dictates the laying out of widgets in a group. For more complicated layouts where the number of widgets per row is different, use nested groups. To add a new group with more widgets per row:

```
toolkit_add my_inner_group group all
toolkit_set_property my_inner_group itemsPerRow 2
toolkit_add inner_button_1 button my_inner_group
toolkit_add inner_button_2 button my_inner_group
```

These commands create a row with a group of two buttons. To make the nested group more seamless, remove the border with the group name using the following commands:

```
toolkit_set_property my_inner_group title ""
```

You can set the `title` property to any other string to ensure the display of the border and title text.

Example 19. Tabs

Use tabs to manage widget visibility:

```
toolkit_add my_tabs tabbedGroup all
toolkit_set_property my_tabs expandableX true
toolkit_add my_tab_1 group my_tabs
toolkit_add my_tab_2 group my_tabs
toolkit_add tabbed_label_1 label my_tab_1
toolkit_add tabbed_label_2 label my_tab_2
toolkit_set_property tabbed_label_1 text "in the first tab"
toolkit_set_property tabbed_label_2 text "in the second tab"
```

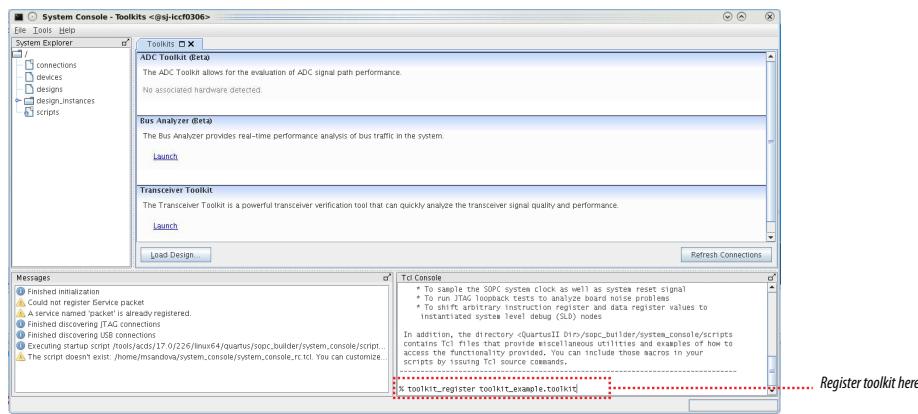
These commands add a set of two tabs, each with a group containing a label. Clicking on the tabs changes the displayed group/label.

2.9.6.3. Toolkit API GUI Example

This example shows how to register and launch a toolkit containing an interactive GUI window:

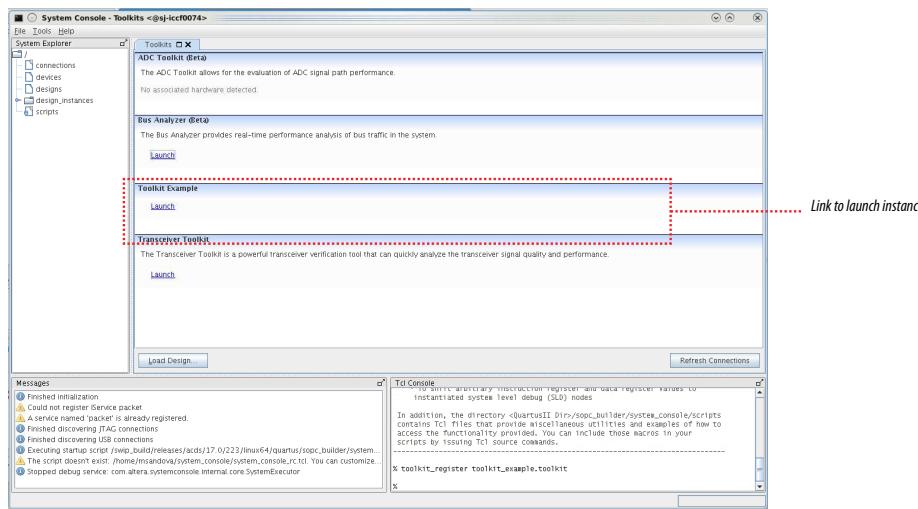
1. Write a toolkit description file. For a working example, refer to *Creating a Toolkit Description File*.
2. Generate a `.tcl` file using the text on *Toolkit API GUI Example .tcl File*.
3. Open the System Console.
4. Register your toolkit in the **Tcl Console** pane. Include the relative path to your file's location.

Figure 7. Registering Your Toolkit



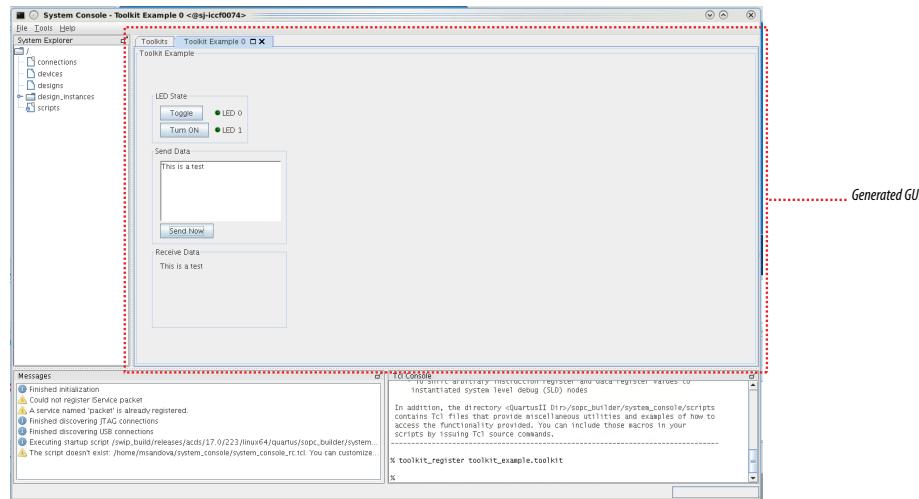
The Toolkit appears in the **Toolkits** tab

Figure 8. Toolkits Tab After Toolkit Example Registration



5. Click the Launch link.

A new tab appears, containing the widgets you specified in the TCL file.

**Figure 9. Toolkit Example GUI**

When you insert text in the **Send Data** field and click **Launch**, the text appears in the **Receive Data** field.

Related Information

[Creating a Toolkit Description File](#) on page 36

2.9.6.3.1. Toolkit API GUI Example .tcl File

The following Toolkit API .tcl file creates a GUI window that provides debug interaction with your design.

```
namespace eval Test {
    variable ledValue 0
    variable dashboardActive 0
    variable Switch_off 1

    proc toggle { position } {
        set ::Test::ledValue ${position}
        ::Test::updateDashboard
    }

    proc sendText {} {
        set sendText [toolkit_get_property sendTextText text]
        toolkit_set_property receiveTextText text $sendText
    }

    proc dashBoard {} {
        if { ${::Test::dashboardActive} == 1 } {
            return -code ok "dashboard already active"
        }

        set ::Test::dashboardActive 1
        #
        # top group widget
        #
        toolkit_add topGroup group self
        toolkit_set_property topGroup expandableX false
        toolkit_set_property topGroup expandableY false
        toolkit_set_property topGroup itemsPerRow 1
        toolkit_set_property topGroup title ""
    }
}
```



```
#  
# leds group widget  
#  
toolkit_add ledsGroup group topGroup  
toolkit_set_property ledsGroup expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property ledsGroup expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property ledsGroup itemsPerRow 2  
toolkit_set_property ledsGroup title "LED State"  
  
#  
# leds widgets  
#  
toolkit_add led0Button button ledsGroup  
toolkit_set_property led0Button enabled true  
toolkit_set_property led0Button expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property led0Button expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property led0Button text "Toggle"  
toolkit_set_property led0Button onClick {::Test::toggle 1}  
  
toolkit_add led0LED led ledsGroup  
toolkit_set_property led0LED expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property led0LED expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property led0LED text "LED 0"  
toolkit_set_property led0LED color "green_off"  
  
toolkit_add led1Button button ledsGroup  
toolkit_set_property led1Button enabled true  
toolkit_set_property led1Button expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property led1Button expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property led1Button text "Turn ON"  
toolkit_set_property led1Button onClick {::Test::toggle 2}  
  
toolkit_add led1LED led ledsGroup  
toolkit_set_property led1LED expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property led1LED expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property led1LED text "LED 1"  
toolkit_set_property led1LED color "green_off"  
  
#  
# sendText widgets  
#  
toolkit_add sendTextGroup group topGroup  
toolkit_set_property sendTextGroup expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextGroup expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextGroup itemsPerRow 1  
toolkit_set_property sendTextGroup title "Send Data"  
  
toolkit_add sendTextText text sendTextGroup  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText preferredWidth 200  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText preferredHeight 100  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText editable true  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText htmlCapable false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextText text ""  
  
toolkit_add sendTextButton button sendTextGroup  
toolkit_set_property sendTextButton enabled true  
toolkit_set_property sendTextButton expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextButton expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property sendTextButton text "Send Now"  
toolkit_set_property sendTextButton onClick {::Test::sendText}  
  
#  
# receiveText widgets  
#  
toolkit_add receiveTextGroup group topGroup  
toolkit_set_property receiveTextGroup expandableX false  
toolkit_set_property receiveTextGroup expandableY false  
toolkit_set_property receiveTextGroup itemsPerRow 1
```



```
toolkit_set_property receiveTextGroup title "Receive Data"
toolkit_add receiveTextText text receiveTextGroup
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText expandableX false
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText expandableY false
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText preferredWidth 200
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText preferredHeight 100
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText editable false
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText htmlCapable false
toolkit_set_property receiveTextText text ""

return -code ok
}

proc updateDashboard {} {
    if { ${::Test::dashboardActive} > 0 } {
        toolkit_set_property ledsGroup title "LED State"
        if { [ expr ${::Test::ledValue} & 0x01 & \
               ${::Test::Switch_off} ] } {
            toolkit_set_property led0LED color "green"
            set ::Test::Switch_off 0
        } else {
            toolkit_set_property led0LED color "green_off"
            set ::Test::Switch_off 1
        }
        if { [ expr ${::Test::ledValue} & 0x02 ] } {
            toolkit_set_property led1LED color "green"
        } else {
            toolkit_set_property led1LED color "green_off"
        }
    }
}
::Test::dashBoard
```

2.9.6.4. Toolkit API Commands

Toolkit API commands run in the context of a unique toolkit instance.

[toolkit_register](#) on page 46

[toolkit_open](#) on page 47

[get_quartus_ini](#) on page 48

[toolkit_get_context](#) on page 49

[toolkit_get_types](#) on page 50

[toolkit_get_properties](#) on page 51

[toolkit_add](#) on page 52

[toolkit_get_property](#) on page 53

[toolkit_set_property](#) on page 54

[toolkit_remove](#) on page 55

[toolkit_get_widget_dimensions](#) on page 56



2.9.6.4.1. toolkit_register

Description

Point to the XML file that describes the plugin (.toolkit file).

Usage

```
toolkit_register <toolkit_file>
```

Returns

No return value.

Arguments

<toolkit_file> Path to the toolkit definition file.

Example

```
toolkit_register /path/to/toolkit_example.toolkit
```



2.9.6.4.2. toolkit_open

Description

Opens an instance of a toolkit in System Console.

Usage

```
toolkit_open <toolkit_id> [<context>]
```

Returns

No return value.

Arguments

<toolkit_id> Name of the toolkit type to open.

<context> An optional context, such as a service path for a hardware resource that is associated with the toolkit that opens.

Example

```
toolkit_open my_toolkit_id
```



2.9.6.4.3. get_quartus_ini

Description

Returns the value of an `ini` setting from the Intel Quartus Prime software `.ini` file.

Usage

```
get_quartus_ini <ini> <type>
```

Returns

Value of `ini` setting.

Arguments

`<ini>` Name of the Intel Quartus Prime software `.ini` setting.

`<type>` (Optional) Type of `.ini` setting. The known types are `string` and `enabled`. If the type is `enabled`, the value of the `.ini` setting returns 1, or 0 if not enabled.

Example

```
set my_ini_enabled [get_quartus_ini my_ini enabled]  
  
set my_ini_raw_value [get_quartus_ini my_ini]
```



2.9.6.4.4. toolkit_get_context

Description

Returns the context that was specified when the toolkit was opened. If no context was specified, returns an empty string.

Usage

```
toolkit_get_context
```

Returns

Context.

Arguments

No arguments.

Example

```
set context [toolkit_get_context]
```



2.9.6.4.5. toolkit_get_types

Description

Returns a list of widget types.

Usage

```
toolkit_get_types
```

Returns

List of widget types.

Arguments

No arguments.

Example

```
set widget_names [toolkit_get_types]
```



2.9.6.4.6. toolkit_get_properties

Description

Returns a list of toolkit properties for a type of widget.

Usage

```
toolkit_get_properties <widgetType>
```

Returns

List of toolkit properties.

Arguments

<widgetType> Type of widget.

Example

```
set widget_properties [toolkit_get_properties xyChart]
```



2.9.6.4.7. toolkit_add

Description

Adds a widget to the current toolkit.

Usage

```
toolkit_add <id> <type><groupid>
```

Returns

No return value.

Arguments

<id> A unique ID for the widget being added.

<type> The type of widget that is being added.

<groupid> The ID for the parent group that contains the new widget. Use `self` for the toolkit base group.

Example

```
toolkit_add my_button button parentGroup
```



2.9.6.4.8. toolkit_get_property

Description

Returns the property value for a specific widget.

Usage

```
toolkit_get_property <id> <propertyName>
```

Returns

The property value.

Arguments

<*id*> A unique ID for the widget being queried.

<*propertyName*> The name of the widget property.

Example

```
set enabled [toolkit_get_property my_button enabled]
```



2.9.6.4.9. toolkit_set_property

Description

Sets the property value for a specific widget.

Usage

```
toolkit_set_property <id><propertyName> <value>
```

Returns

No return value.

Arguments

<*id*> A unique ID for the widget being modified.

<*propertyName*> The name of the widget property being set.

<*value*> The new value for the widget property.

Example

```
toolkit_set_property my_button enabled 0
```



2.9.6.4.10. toolkit_remove

Description

Removes a widget from the specified toolkit.

Usage

```
toolkit_remove <id>
```

Returns

No return value.

Arguments

<id> A unique ID for the widget being removed.

Example

```
toolkit_remove my_button
```



2.9.6.4.11. toolkit_get_widget_dimensions

Description

Returns the width and height of the specified widget.

Usage

```
toolkit_get_widget_dimensions <id>
```

Returns

Width and height of specified widget.

Arguments

<*id*> A unique ID for the widget being added.

Example

```
set dimensions [toolkit_get_widget_dimensions my_button]
```



2.9.6.5. Toolkit API Properties

The following are the Toolkit API widget properties:

[Widget Types and Properties](#) on page 58

[barChart Properties](#) on page 59

[button Properties](#) on page 60

[checkBox Properties](#) on page 61

[comboBox Properties](#) on page 62

[dial Properties](#) on page 63

[fileChooserButton Properties](#) on page 64

[group Properties](#) on page 65

[label Properties](#) on page 66

[led Properties](#) on page 67

[lineChart Properties](#) on page 68

[list Properties](#) on page 69

[pieChart Properties](#) on page 70

[table Properties](#) on page 71

[text Properties](#) on page 72

[textField Properties](#) on page 73

[timeChart Properties](#) on page 74

[xyChart Properties](#) on page 75



2.9.6.5.1. Widget Types and Properties

Table 15. Toolkit API Widget Types and Properties

| Name | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| enabled | Enables or disables the widget. |
| expandable | Controls whether the widget is expandable. |
| expandableX | Allows the widget to resize horizontally if there is space available in the cell where it resides. |
| expandableY | Allows the widget to resize vertically if there is space available in the cell where it resides. |
| foregroundColor | Sets the foreground color. |
| maxHeight | If the widget's expandableY is set, this is the maximum height in pixels that the widget can take. |
| minHeight | If the widget's expandableY is set, this is the minimum height in pixels that the widget can take. |
| maxWidth | If the widget's expandableX is set, this is the maximum width in pixels that the widget can take. |
| minWidth | If the widget's expandableX is set, this is the minimum width in pixels that the widget can take. |
| preferredHeight | The height of the widget if expandableY is not set. |
| preferredWidth | The width of the widget if expandableX is not set. |
| toolTip | Implements a mouse-over tooltip. |
| visible | Displays the widget. |



2.9.6.5.2. barChart Properties

Table 16. Toolkit API barChart Properties

| Name | Description |
|-----------|---|
| title | Chart title. |
| labelX | X-axis label text. |
| label | X-axis label text. |
| range | Y-axis value range. By default, it is auto range. Specify the range using a Tcl list, for example: [list lower_numerical_value upper_numerical_value]. |
| itemValue | Specify the value using a Tcl list, for example: [list bar_category_str numerical_value]. |



2.9.6.5.3. button Properties

Table 17. Toolkit API button Properties

| Name | Description |
|---------|--|
| onClick | Specifies the Tcl command to run every time you click the button. Usually the command is a proc. |
| text | The text on the button. |



2.9.6.5.4. checkBox Properties

Table 18. Toolkit API checkBox Properties

| Name | Description |
|---------|--|
| checked | Specifies the state of the checkbox. |
| onClick | Specifies the Tcl command to run every time you click the checkbox. The command is usually a proc. |
| text | The text on the checkbox. |



2.9.6.5.5. comboBox Properties

Table 19. Toolkit API comboBox Properties

| Name | Description |
|--------------|--|
| onChange | A Tcl callback to run when the value of the combo box changes. |
| options | A list of items to display in the combo box. |
| selectedItem | The selected item in the combo box. |



2.9.6.5.6. dial Properties

Table 20. Toolkit API dial Properties

| Name | Description |
|----------|---|
| max | The maximum value that the dial can show. |
| min | The minimum value that the dial can show. |
| ticksize | The space between the different tick marks of the dial. |
| title | The title of the dial. |
| value | The value that the dial's needle marks. It must be between min and max. |



2.9.6.5.7. fileChooserButton Properties

Table 21. Toolkit API fileChooserButton Properties

| Name | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| text | The text on the button. |
| onChoose | A Tcl command that runs every time you click the button. The command is usually a proc. |
| title | The title of the dialog box. |
| chooserButtonText | The text of the dialog box approval button. Default value is Open. |
| filter | The file filter, based on extension. The filter supports only one extension. By default, the filter allows all file names. Specify the filter using the syntax [list filter_description file_extension], for example: [list "Text Document (.txt)" "txt"]. |
| mode | Specifies what kind of files or directories you can select. The default is files_only. Possible options are files_only and directories_only. |
| multiSelectionEnabled | Controls whether you can select multiple files. Default value is false. |
| paths | This property is read-only. Returns a list of file paths selected in the file chooser dialog box. The property is most useful when you use it within the onClick script, or inside a procedure that updates the result after the dialog box closes. |



2.9.6.5.8. group Properties

Table 22. Toolkit API group Properties

| Name | Description |
|-------------|---|
| itemsPerRow | The number of widgets the group can position in one row, from left to right, before moving to the next row. |
| title | The title of the group. Groups with a title can have a border around them, and setting an empty title removes the border. |



2.9.6.5.9. label Properties

Table 23. Toolkit API label Properties

| Name | Description |
|------|--------------------------------|
| text | The text to show in the label. |



2.9.6.5.10. led Properties

Table 24. Toolkit API led Properties

| Name | Description |
|-------|---|
| color | The color of the LED. The options are: red_off, red, yellow_off, yellow, green_off, green, blue_off, blue, and black. |
| text | The text to show next to the LED. |



2.9.6.5.11. lineChart Properties

Table 25. Toolkit API lineChart Properties

| Name | Description |
|-----------|---|
| title | Chart title. |
| labelX | X-axis label text. |
| labelY | Y-axis label text. |
| range | Y-axis value range. By default, it is auto range. Specify the range using a Tcl list, for example: [list lower_numerical_value upper_numerical_value]. |
| itemValue | Item value. Specify the value using a Tcl list, for example: [list bar_category_str numerical_value]. |



2.9.6.5.12. list Properties

Table 26. Toolkit API list Properties

| Name | Description |
|----------|---|
| selected | Index of the selected item in the combo box. |
| options | List of options to display. |
| onChange | A Tcl callback to run when the selected item in the list changes. |



2.9.6.5.13. pieChart Properties

Table 27. Toolkit API pieChart Properties

| Name | Description |
|-----------|--|
| title | Chart title. |
| itemValue | Item value. Specified using a Tcl list, for example: [list bar_category_str numerical_value]. |



2.9.6.5.14. table Properties

Table 28. Toolkit API table Properties

| Name | Description |
|---------------------------|---|
| columnCount | The number of columns (Mandatory) (0, by default). |
| rowCount | The number of rows (Mandatory) (0, by default). |
| headerReorderingAllowed | Controls whether you can drag the columns (false, by default). |
| headerResizingAllowed | Controls whether you can resize all column widths. (false, by default). <i>Note:</i> You can resize each column individually with the columnWidthResizable property. |
| rowSorterEnabled | Controls whether you can sort the cell values in a column (false, by default). |
| showGrid | Controls whether to draw both horizontal and vertical lines (true, by default). |
| showHorizontalLines | Controls whether to draw horizontal line (true, by default). |
| rowIndex | Current row index. Zero-based. This value affects some properties below (0, by default). |
| columnIndex | Current column index. Zero-based. This value affects all column specific properties below (0, by default). |
| cellText | Specifies the text inside the cell given by the current rowIndex and columnIndex (Empty, by default). |
| selectedRows | Control or retrieve row selection. |
| columnHeader | The text in the column header. |
| columnHeaders | A list of names to define the columns for the table. |
| columnHorizontalAlignment | The cell text alignment in the specified column. Supported types are leading (default), left, center, right, trailing. |
| columnRowSorterType | The type of sorting method. This is applicable only if rowSorterEnabled is true. Each column has its own sorting type. Possible types are string (default), int, and float. |
| columnWidth | The number of pixels in the column width. |
| columnWidthResizable | Controls whether the column width is resizable by you (false, by default). |
| contents | The contents of the table as a list. For a table with columns A, B, and C, the format of the list is {A1 B1 C1 A2 B2 C2 etc} . |



2.9.6.5.15. text Properties

Table 29. Toolkit API text Properties

| Name | Description |
|-------------|--|
| editable | Controls whether the text box is editable. |
| htmlCapable | Controls whether the text box can format HTML. |
| text | The text to show in the text box. |



2.9.6.5.16. textField Properties

Table 30. Toolkit API textField Properties

| Name | Description |
|----------|--|
| editable | Controls whether the text box is editable. |
| onChange | A Tcl callback to run when you change the content of the text box. |
| text | The text in the text box. |



2.9.6.5.17. timeChart Properties

Table 31. Toolkit API timeChart Properties

| Name | Description |
|------------------|--|
| labelX | The label for the X-axis. |
| labelY | The label for the Y-axis. |
| latest | The latest value in the series. |
| maximumItemCount | The number of sample points to display in the historic record. |
| title | The title of the chart. |
| range | Sets the range for the chart. The range has the form {low, high}. The low/high values are doubles. |
| showLegend | Specifies whether a legend for the series is shown in the graph. |



2.9.6.5.18. xyChart Properties

Table 32. Toolkit API xyChart Properties

| Name | Properties |
|------------------|---|
| title | Chart title. |
| labelX | X-Axis label text. |
| labelY | Y-Axis label text. |
| range | Sets the range for the chart. The range is of the form {low, high}. The low/high values are doubles. |
| maximumItemCount | Specifies the maximum number of data values to keep in a data series. This setting only affects new data in the chart. If you add more data values than the maximumItemCount, only the last maximumItemCount number of entries are kept. |
| series | Adds a series of data to the chart. The first value in the spec is the identifier for the series. If the same identifier is set twice, the Toolkit API selects the most recent series. If the identifier does not contain series data, that series is removed from the chart. Specify the series in a Tcl list: {identifier, x-1 y-1, x-2 y-2}. |
| showLegend | Sets whether a legend for the series appears in the graph. |

2.10. ADC Toolkit

The ADC Toolkit is designed to work with Intel MAX 10 devices and helps you understand the performance of the analog signal chain as seen by the on-board ADC hardware. The GUI displays the performance of the ADC using industry standard metrics. You can export the collected data to a .csv file and process this raw data yourself. The ADC Toolkit is built on the System Console framework and can only be operated using the GUI. There is no Tcl support for the tool.

Prerequisites for Using the ADC Toolkit

- Modular ADC IP core
 - **External Reference Voltage** if you select **External** in the Modular ADC IP parameters
- Reference signal

The ADC Toolkit needs a sine wave signal to be fed to the analog inputs. You need the capability to precisely set the level and frequency of the reference signal. A high-precision sine wave is needed for accurate test results; however, there are useful things that can be read in **Scope** mode with any input signal.

To achieve the best testing results, ensure that the reference signal has less distortion than the device ADC is able to resolve. Otherwise, you are adding distortions from the source into the resulting ADC distortion measurements. The limiting factor is based on hardware precision.

Note: When applying a sine wave, the ADC should sample at 2x the fundamental sine wave frequency. There should be a low-pass filter, 3dB point set to the fundamental frequency.

Configuring the Modular ADC IP Core

The Modular ADC IP core needs to be included in the design. You can instantiate this IP core from the **IP Catalog**. When you configure this IP core in the **Parameter Editor**, you need to enable the **Debug Path** option located under **Core Configuration**.

There are two limitations in the Intel Quartus Prime software v14.1 for the Modular ADC IP core. The ADC Toolkit does not support the **ADC control core only** option under **Core Configuration**. You must select a core variant that uses the standard sequencer in order for the Modular ADC IP core to work with ADC Toolkit. Also, if an Avalon Master is not connected to the sequencer, you must manually start the sequencer before the ADC Toolkit.

Starting the ADC Toolkit

You can launch the ADC Toolkit from System Console. Before starting the ADC toolkit, you need to verify that the board is programmed. You can then load the .sof by clicking **File > Load Design**. If System Console was started with an active project, the design is auto-loaded when you start System Console.

There are two methods to start the ADC Toolkit. Both methods require you to have a Intel MAX 10 device connected, programmed with a project, and linked to this project. However, the **Launch** command only shows up if these requirements are met. You can always start the ADC Toolkit from the **Tools** menu, but a successful connection still depends on meeting the above requirements.

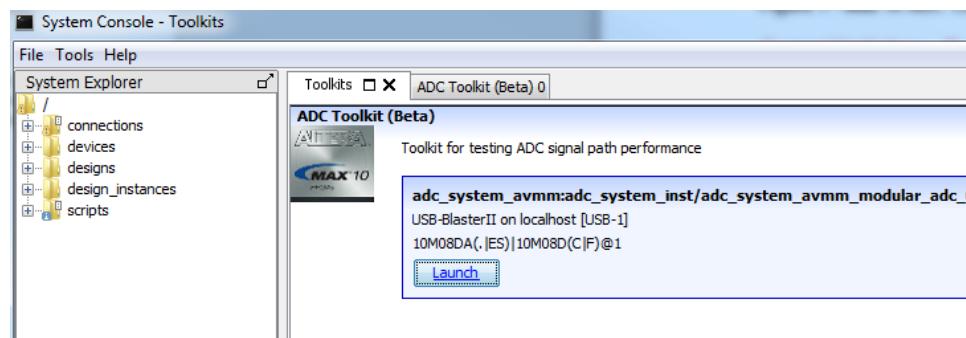
- Click **Tools > ADC Toolkit**
- Alternatively, click **Launch** from the **Toolkits** tab. The path for the device is displayed above the **Launch** button.

Note:

Only one ADC Toolkit enabled device can be connected at a time.

Upon starting the ADC Toolkit, an identifier path on the ADC Toolkit tab shows you which ADC on the device is being used for this instance of the ADC Toolkit.

Figure 10. Launching ADC Toolkit



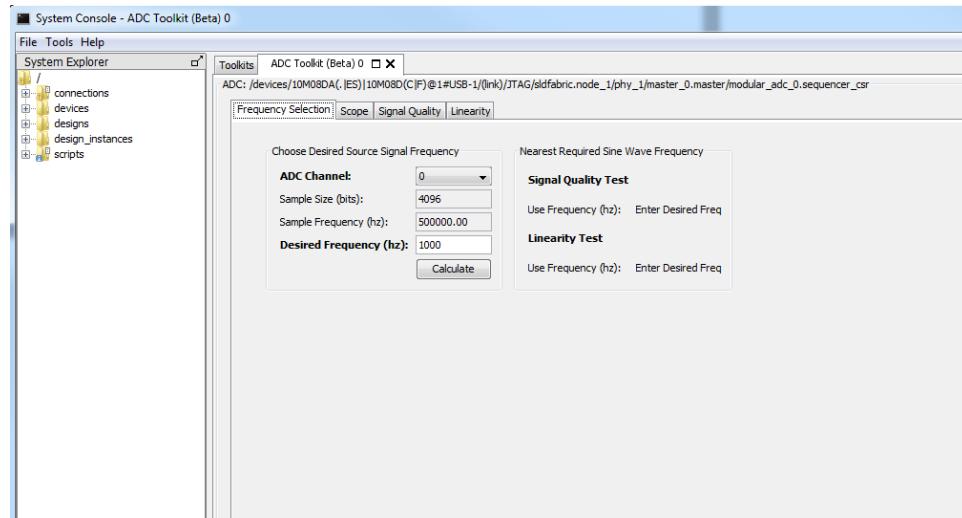


ADC Toolkit Flow

The ADC Toolkit GUI consists of four panels: **Frequency Selection**, **Scope**, **Signal Quality**, and **Linearity**.

1. Use the **Frequency Selection** panel to calculate the required sine wave frequency for proper signal quality testing. The ADC Toolkit provides the nearest ideal frequency based on the desired reference signal frequency.
2. Use the **Scope** panel to tune the signal generator or inspect input signal characteristics.
3. Use the **Signal Quality** panel to test the performance of the ADC using industry standard metrics.
4. Use the **Linearity** panel to test the linearity performance of the ADC and display differential and integral non-linearity results.

Figure 11. ADC Toolkit GUI



Related Information

- [Using the ADC Toolkit in Intel MAX 10 Devices online training](#)
- [Intel MAX 10 FPGA Device Overview](#)
- [Intel MAX 10 FPGA Device Datasheet](#)
- [Intel MAX 10 FPGA Design Guidelines](#)
- [Intel MAX 10 Analog to Digital Converter User Guide](#)
- [Additional information about sampling frequency](#)
Nyquist sampling theorem and how it relates to the nominal sampling interval required to avoid aliasing.

2.10.1. ADC Toolkit Terms

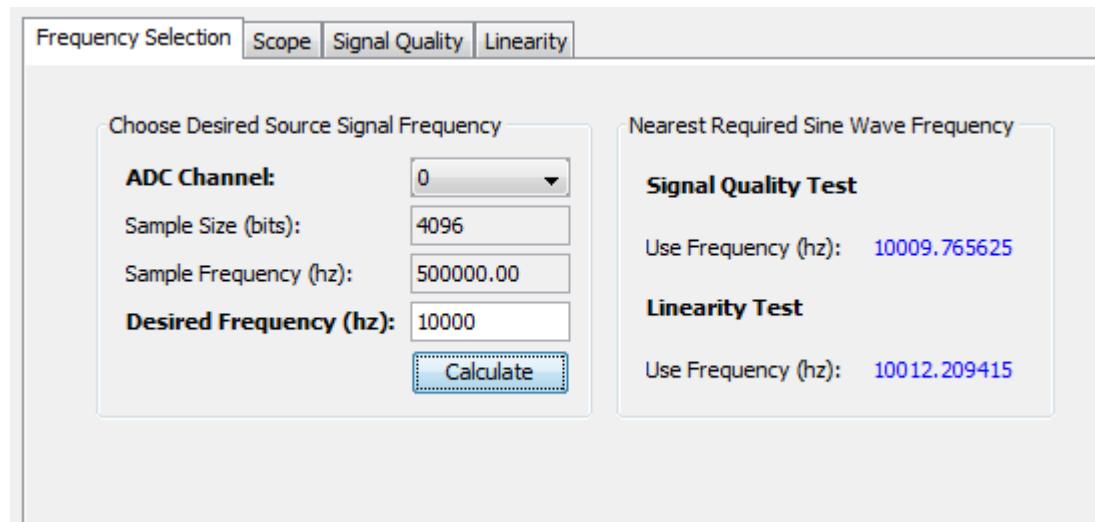
Table 33. ADC Toolkit Terms

| Term | Description |
|-------|---|
| SNR | The ratio of the output signal voltage level to the output noise level. |
| THD | The ratio of the sum of powers of the harmonic frequency components to the power of the fundamental/original frequency component. |
| SFDR | Characterizes the ratio between the fundamental signal and the highest spurious in the spectrum. |
| SINAD | The ratio of the RMS value of the signal amplitude to the RMS value of all other spectral components, including harmonics, but excluding DC. |
| ENOB | The number of bits with which the ADC behaves. |
| DNL | The maximum and minimum difference in the step width between actual transfer function and the perfect transfer function |
| INL | The maximum vertical difference between the actual and the ideal curve. It indicates the amount of deviation of the actual curve from the ideal transfer curve. |

2.10.2. Setting the Frequency of the Reference Signal

The **Frequency Selection** panel allows you to compute the reference signal frequency that ADC performance tests require. This frequency is critical and affects the validity of your test results. The computed frequency varies depending on the type of test you want to do with the ADC Toolkit.

Figure 12. Frequency Selection Panel



To set the frequency of the reference signal:

1. On **ADC Channel**, select the ADC channel that you plan to test.



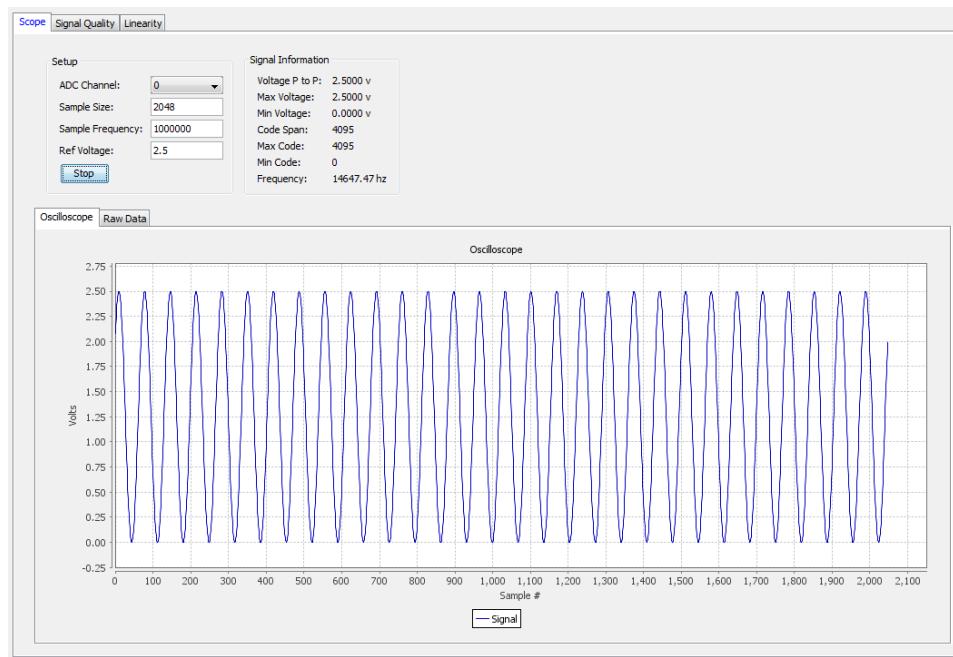
The tool populates the **Sample Size** and **Sample Frequency** fields.

2. In **Desired Frequency**, enter the target frequency for testing.
3. Click **Calculate**.
 - The closest frequency for valid testing near your desired frequency appears under both **Signal Quality Test** and **Linearity Test**.
 - The nearest required sine wave frequencies are different for the signal quality test and linearity test.
4. Set your signal generator to the precise frequency given by the tool based on the type of test you want to run.

2.10.3. Tuning the Signal Generator

The **Scope** panel allows you to tune the signal generator in order to achieve the best possible performance from the ADC.

Figure 13. Scope Mode Panel



To tune the signal generator:

1. On **ADC Channel**, select the ADC channel that you plan to test.
2. Enter the reference **Sample Frequency** (unless the tool can extract this value from the IP).
3. Enter the **Ref Voltage** (unless the tool can extract this value from the IP).
4. Click **Run**.
The tool repeatedly captures a buffer worth of data and displays the data as a waveform, besides additional information under **Signal Information**.
5. Tune the signal generator to use the maximum dynamic range of the ADC without clipping.

Note: Avoid hitting 0 or 4095 because of signal clipping.

6. Ensure that the sine wave under **Oscilloscope** shows evenly balanced top and bottom peaks. This indicates optimum value.
 - For Intel MAX 10 devices, you want to get as close to **Min Code = 0** and **Max Code = 4095** without actually hitting those values.
 - To observe coherent sampling in the test window, you must set the frequency precisely to the value needed for testing. Before moving forward, follow the suggested value for signal quality testing or linearity testing that appears next to the detected frequency.
7. From the **Raw Data** tab, export the data as a .csv file.

Related Information

Additional information about coherent sampling vs window sampling

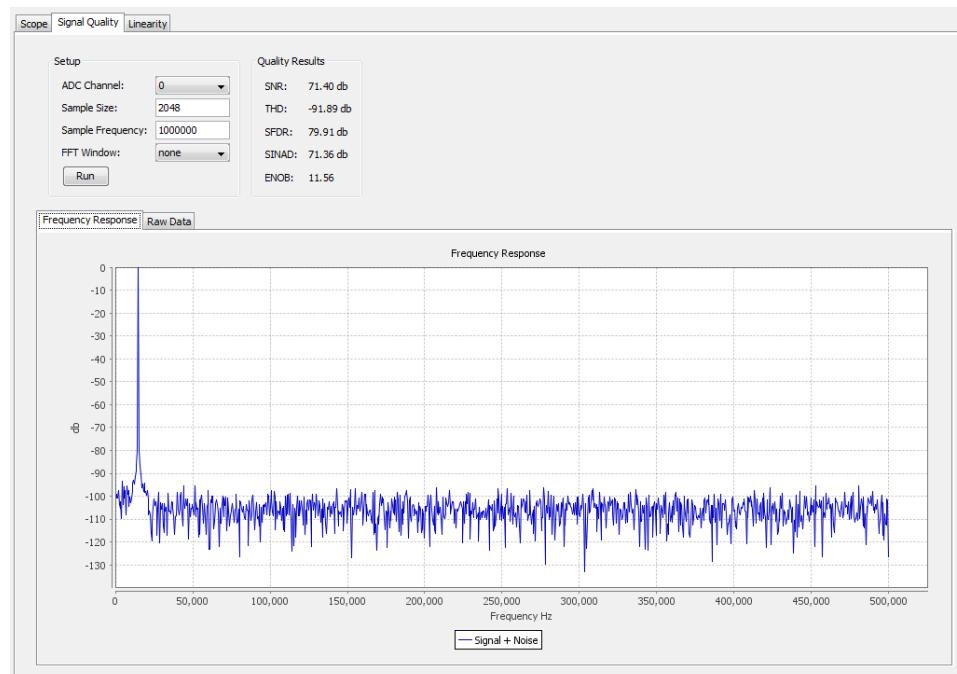
2.10.4. Running a Signal Quality Test

The available performance metrics in signal quality test mode are the following: signal to noise ratio (SNR), total harmonic distortion (THD), spurious free dynamic range (SFDR), signal to noise and distortion ratio (SINAD), effective number of bits (ENOB), and a frequency response graph. The frequency response graph shows the signal, noise floor, and any spurs or harmonics.

The signal quality parameters are measurements relative to the carrier signal and not the full scale of the ADC.

Before running a signal quality test, ensure that you have set up the frequency of the reference signal using **Scope** mode.

Figure 14. Signal Quality Panel





To run a signal quality test:

1. On **ADC Channel**, select the ADC channel that you plan to test.
2. Click **Run**.

From the **Raw Data** tab, you can export your data as a .csv file.

For signal quality tests, the signal must be coherently sampled. Based on the sampling rate and number of samples to test, specific input frequencies are required for coherent sampling. The sample frequency for each channel is calculated based on the ADC sequencer configuration.

Related Information

Additional information about dynamic parameters such as SNR, THD, etc

2.10.5. Running a Linearity Test

The linearity test determines the linearity of the step sizes of each ADC code. It uses a histogram testing method which requires sinusoidal inputs which are easier to source from signal generators and DACs than other test methods.

When using **Linearity** test mode, the reference signal must meet specific requirements:

- The signal source covers the full code range of the ADC. Results improve if the time spent at code end is equivalent, by tuning the reference signal in **Scope** mode.
- If you use code ends, ensure that you are not clipping the signal. Look at the signal in **Scope** mode to see that it does not look flat at the top or bottom. A good practice is to back away from code ends and test a smaller range within the desired operating range of the ADC input signal.
- Choosing a frequency that is not an integer multiple of the sample rate and buffer size helps to ensure all code bins are filled relatively evenly to the probability density function of a sine wave. If an integer multiple is selected, some bins may be skipped entirely while others are over populated. This makes the tests results invalid. Use the frequency calculator feature to determine a good signal frequency near your desired frequency.

To run a linearity test:

1. On **ADC Channel**, select the ADC channel that you plan to test.
2. Enter the test sample size in **Burst Size**. Larger samples increase the confidence in the test results.
3. Click **Run**.
 - You can stop the test at anytime, as well as click **Run** again to continue adding to the aggregate data. To start fresh, click **Reset** after you stop a test. Anytime you change the input signal or channel, you should click **Reset** so your results are correct for a particular input.
 - There are three graphical views of the data: **Histogram** view, **DNL** view, and **INL** view.
 - From the **Raw Data** tab, you can export your data as a .csv file.

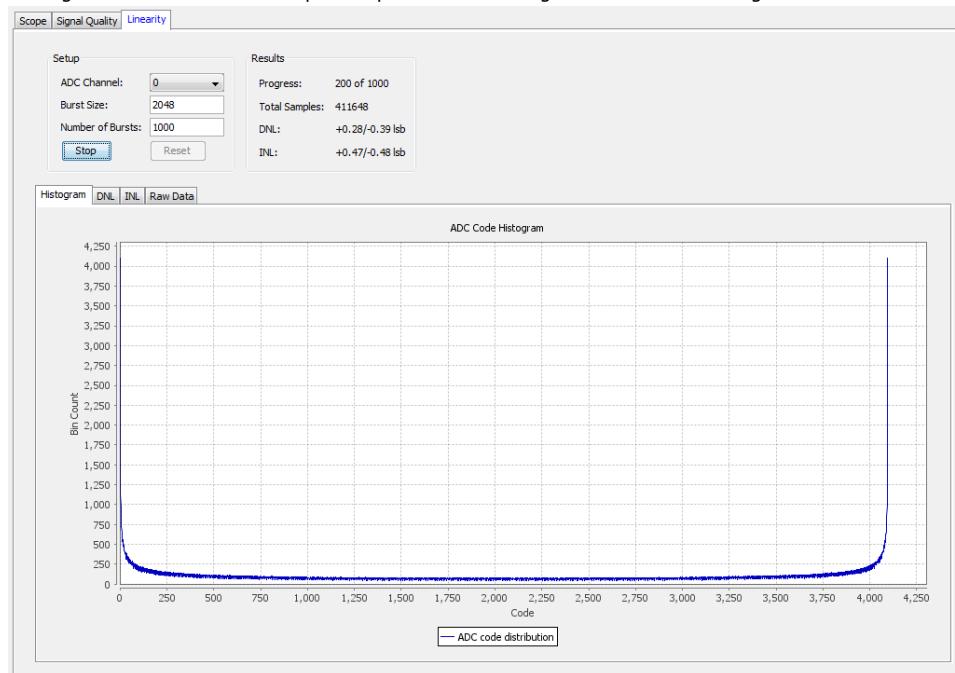
2.10.6. ADC Toolkit Data Views

Histogram View

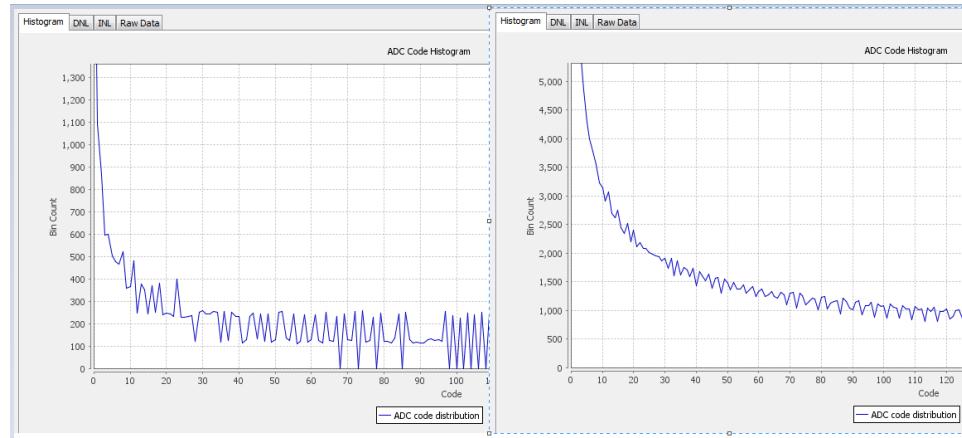
The **Histogram** view shows how often each code appears. The graph updates every few seconds as it collects data. You can use the **Histogram** view to quickly check if your test signal is set up appropriately.

Figure 15. Example of Pure Sine Wave Histogram

The figure below shows the shape of a pure sine wave signal. Your reference signal should look similar.

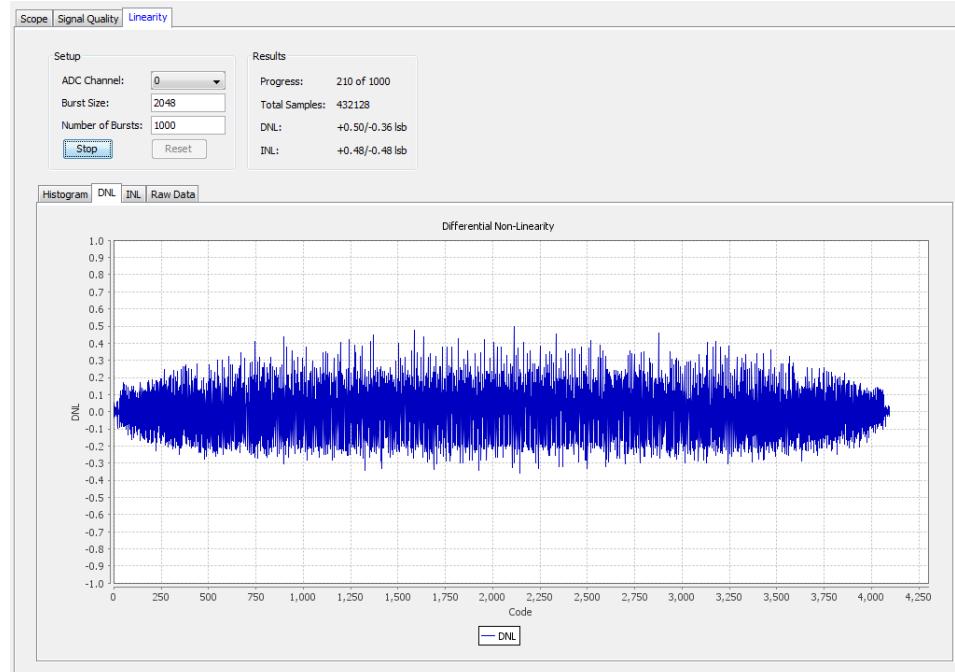


If your reference signal is not a relatively smooth line, but has jagged edges with some bins having a value of 0, and adjacent bins with a much higher value, then the test signal frequency is not adequate. Use **Scope** mode to help choose a good frequency for linearity testing.

**Figure 16. Examples of (Left) Poor Frequency Choice vs (Right) Good Frequency Choice****Differential Non-linearity View****Figure 17. Example of Good Differential Non-linearity**

The **DNL** view shows the currently collected data. Ideally, you want your data to look like a straight line through the 0 on the x-axis. When there are not enough samples of data, the line appears rough. The line improves as more data is collected and averaged.

Each point in the graph represents how many LSB values a particular code differs from the ideal step size of 1 LSB. The **Results** box shows the highest positive and negative DNL values.

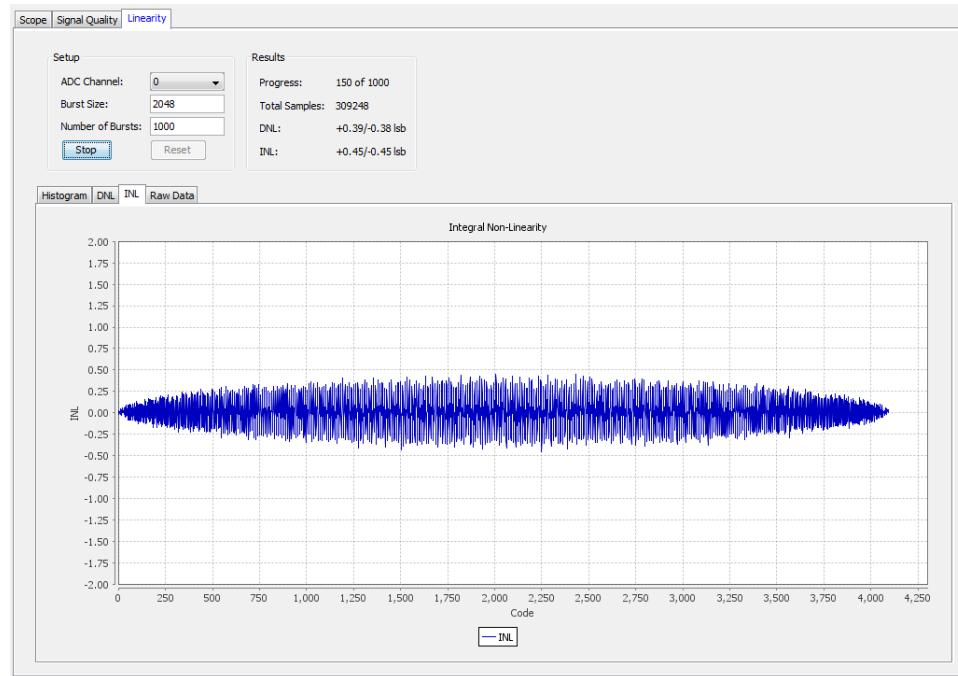


Integral Non-linearity View

Figure 18. Example of Good Integral Non-linearity

The **INL** view shows currently collected data. Ideally, with a perfect ADC and enough samples, the graph appears as a straight line through 0 on the x-axis.

Each point in the graph represents how many LSB values a particular code differs from its expected point in the voltage slope. The **Results** box shows the highest positive and negative INL values.



2.11. System Console Examples and Tutorials

Intel provides examples for performing board bring-up, creating a simple dashboard, and programming a Nios II processor. The `System_Console.zip` file contains design files for the board bring-up example. The Nios II Ethernet Standard `.zip` files contain the design files for the Nios II processor example.

Note: The instructions for these examples assume that you are familiar with the Intel Quartus Prime software, Tcl commands, and Platform Designer (Standard).

Related Information

[On-Chip Debugging Design Examples Website](#)

Contains the design files for the example designs that you can download.

2.11.1. Nios II Processor Example

This example programs the Nios II processor on your board to run the count binary software example included in the Nios II installation. This is a simple program that uses an 8-bit variable to repeatedly count from 0x00 to 0xFF. The output of this



variable is displayed on the LEDs on your board. After programming the Nios II processor, you use System Console processor commands to start and stop the processor.

To run this example, perform the following steps:

1. Download the Nios II Ethernet Standard Design Example for your board from the Intel website.
2. Create a folder to extract the design. For this example, use C:\Count_binary.
3. Unzip the Nios II Ethernet Standard Design Example into C:\Count_binary.
4. In a Nios II command shell, change to the directory of your new project.
5. Program your board. In a Nios II command shell, type the following:

```
nios2-configure-sof niosii_ethernet_standard_<board_version>.sof
```
6. Using Nios II Software Build Tools for Eclipse, create a new Nios II Application and BSP from Template using the **Count Binary** template and targeting the Nios II Ethernet Standard Design Example.
7. To build the executable and linkable format (ELF) file (.elf) for this application, right-click the **Count Binary** project and select **Build Project**.
8. Download the .elf file to your board by right-clicking **Count Binary** project and selecting **Run As, Nios II Hardware**.
 - The LEDs on your board provide a new light show.
9. Type the following:

```
system-console; #Start System Console.  
  
#Set the processor service path to the Nios II processor.  
set niosii_proc [lindex [get_service_paths processor] 0]  
  
set claimed_proc [claim_service processor $niosii_proc mylib]; #Open the  
service.  
  
processor_stop $claimed_proc; #Stop the processor.  
#The LEDs on your board freeze.  
  
processor_run $claimed_proc; #Start the processor.  
#The LEDs on your board resume their previous activity.  
  
processor_stop $claimed_proc; #Stop the processor.  
  
close_service processor $claimed_proc; #Close the service.
```

- The `processor_step`, `processor_set_register`, and `processor_get_register` commands provide additional control over the Nios II processor.

Related Information

- [Nios II Ethernet Standard Design Example](#)
- [Nios II Gen2 Software Developer's Handbook](#)



2.11.1.1. Processor Commands

Table 34. Processor Commands

| Command ⁽¹⁾ | Arguments | Function |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| processor_download_elf | <service-path> <elf-file-path> | Downloads the given Executable and Linking Format File (.elf) to memory using the master service associated with the processor. Sets the processor's program counter to the .elf entry point. |
| processor_in_debug_mode | <service-path> | Returns a non-zero value if the processor is in debug mode. |
| processor_reset | <service-path> | Resets the processor and places it in debug mode. |
| processor_run | <service-path> | Puts the processor into run mode. |
| processor_stop | <service-path> | Puts the processor into debug mode. |
| processor_step | <service-path> | Executes one assembly instruction. |
| processor_get_register_names | <service-path> | Returns a list with the names of all of the processor's accessible registers. |
| processor_get_register | <service-path> <register_name> | Returns the value of the specified register. |
| processor_set_register | <service-path> <register_name> <value> | Sets the value of the specified register. |

Related Information

[Nios II Processor Example](#) on page 84

2.12. On-Board Intel FPGA Download Cable II Support

System Console supports an On-Board Intel FPGA Download Cable II circuit via the USB Debug Master IP component. This IP core supports the master service.

Not all Stratix® V boards support the On-Board Intel FPGA Download Cable II. For example, the transceiver signal integrity board does not support the On-Board Intel FPGA Download Cable II.

2.13. MATLAB and Simulink* in a System Verification Flow

You can test system development in System Console using MATLAB and Simulink*, and set up a system verification flow using the Intel FPGA Hardware in the Loop (HIL) tools. In this approach, you deploy the design hardware to run in real time, and simulate the system's surrounding components in a software environment. The HIL approach allows you to use the flexibility of software tools with the real-world accuracy and speed of hardware. You can gradually introduce more hardware components to the system verification testbench. This technique gives you more

⁽¹⁾ If your system includes a Nios II/f core with a data cache, it may complicate the debugging process. If you suspect the Nios II/f core writes to memory from the data cache at nondeterministic intervals; thereby, overwriting data written by the System Console, you can disable the cache of the Nios II/f core while debugging.



control over the integration process as you tune and validate the system. When the full system is integrated, the HIL approach allows you to provide stimuli via software to test the system under a variety of scenarios.

Advantages of HIL Approach

- Avoid long computational delays for algorithms with high processing rates
- API helps to control, debug, visualize, and verify FPGA designs all within the MATLAB environment
- FPGA results are read back by the MATLAB software for further analysis and display

Required Tools and Components

- MATLAB software
- DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs software
- Intel Quartus Prime software
- Intel FPGA

Note: The DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs installation bundle includes the System Console MATLAB API.

Figure 19. Hardware in the Loop Host-Target Setup



Related Information

[Hardware in the Loop from the MATLAB Simulink Environment white paper](#)



2.13.1. Supported MATLAB API Commands

You can perform the work from the MATLAB environment, and read and write to masters and slaves through the System Console. The supported MATLAB API commands spare you from launching the System Console software. The supported commands are:

- `SystemConsole.refreshMasters;`
- `M = SystemConsole.openMaster(1);`
- `M.write (type, byte address, data);`
- `M.read (type, byte address, number of words);`
- `M.close`

Example 20. MATLAB API Script Example

```
SystemConsole.refreshMasters; %Investigate available targets
M = SystemConsole.openMaster(1); %Creates connection with FPGA target
%%%%%% User Application %%%%%%
....
M.write('uint32',write_address,data); %Send data to FPGA target
....
data = M.read('uint32',read_address,size); %Read data from FPGA target
....
%%%%%%%
M.close; %Terminates connection to FPGA target
```

2.13.2. High Level Flow

1. Install the DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs software, so you have the necessary libraries to enable this flow
2. Build the design using Simulink and the DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs libraries. DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs helps to convert the Simulink design to HDL
3. Include Avalon-MM components in the design (DSP Builder for Intel FPGAs can port non-Avalon-MM components)
4. Include Signals and Control blocks in the design
5. Separate synthesizable and non-synthesizable logic with boundary blocks.
6. Integrate the DSP system in Platform Designer (Standard)
7. Program the Intel FPGA
8. Interact with the Intel FPGA through the supported MATLAB API commands.

2.14. Deprecated Commands

The table lists commands that have been deprecated. These commands are currently supported, but are targeted for removal from System Console.

Note: All `dashboard_<name>` commands are deprecated and replaced with `toolkit_<name>` commands for Intel Quartus Prime software15.1, and later.

**Table 35. Deprecated Commands**

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--------------|----------------------------------|---|
| open_service | <service_type> <service_path> | Opens the specified service type at the specified path. Calls to open_service may be replaced with calls to claim_service providing that the return value from claim_service is stored and used to access and close the service. |

2.15. Analyzing and Debugging Designs with the System Console Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2019.06.11 | 18.1.0 | Rebranded Altera Modular ADC IP core to Modular ADC IP core. |
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.05.07 | 18.0.0 | Removed obsolete section: <i>Board Bring-Up with System Console Tutorial</i> . |
| 2017.05.08 | 17.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created topic <i>Convert your Dashboard Scripts to Toolkit API</i>. Removed <i>Registering the Service Example</i> from <i>Toolkit API Script Examples</i>, and added corresponding code snippet to <i>Registering a Toolkit</i>. Moved <i>.toolkit Description File Example</i> under <i>Creating a Toolkit Description File</i>. Renamed <i>Toolkit API GUI Example .toolkit File</i> to <i>.toolkit Description File Example</i>. Updated examples on Toolkit API to reflect current supported syntax. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edits to Toolkit API content and command format. Added Toolkit API design example. Added graphic to <i>Introduction to System Console</i>. Deprecated Dashboard. Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i>. |
| October 2015 | 15.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added content for Toolkit API <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required .toolkit and Tcl files Registering and launching the toolkit Toolkit discovery and matching toolkits to IP Toolkit API commands table |
| May 2015 | 15.0.0 | Added information about how to download and start System Console stand-alone. |
| December 2014 | 14.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added overview and procedures for using ADC Toolkit on MAX 10 devices. Added overview for using MATLAB/Simulink Environment with System Console for system verification. |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | Updated design examples for the following: board bring-up, dashboard service, Nios II processor, design service, device service, monitor service, bytestream service, SLD service, and ISSP service. |
| November 2013 | 13.1.0 | Re-organization of sections. Added high-level information with block diagram, workflow, SLD overview, use cases, and example Tcl scripts. |
| June 2013 | 13.0.0 | Updated Tcl command tables. Added board bring-up design example. Removed SOPC Builder content. |
| November 2012 | 12.1.0 | Re-organization of content. |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| August 2012 | 12.0.1 | Moved Transceiver Toolkit commands to Transceiver Toolkit chapter. |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Maintenance release. This chapter adds new System Console features. |
| November 2011 | 11.1.0 | Maintenance release. This chapter adds new System Console features. |
| May 2011 | 11.0.0 | Maintenance release. This chapter adds new System Console features. |
| December 2010 | 10.1.0 | Maintenance release. This chapter adds new commands and references for Qsys. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | Initial release. Previously released as the System Console User Guide, which is being obsoleted. This new chapter adds new commands. |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.



3. Debugging Transceiver Links

The Transceiver Toolkit helps you optimize high-speed serial links in your board design by providing real-time control, monitoring, and debugging of the transceiver links running on your board.

The Transceiver Toolkit allows you to:

- Control the transmitter or receiver channels to optimize transceiver settings and hardware features.
- Test bit-error rate (BER) while running multiple links at the target data rate.
- Control internal pattern generators and checkers, as well as enabling loopback modes.
- Run auto sweep tests to identify the best physical media attachment (PMA) settings for each link.
- For Stratix V devices, view the receiver horizontal and vertical eye margin during testing.
- Test multiple devices across multiple boards simultaneously.

Note:

The Transceiver Toolkit runs from the System Console framework.

To launch the toolkit, click **Tools > System Debugging Tools > Transceiver Toolkit**. Alternatively, you can run Tcl scripts from the command-line:

```
system-console --script=<name of script>
```

For an online demonstration using the Transceiver Toolkit to run a high-speed link test with one of the design examples, refer to the Transceiver Toolkit Online Demo on the Intel website.

Related Information

- [On-Chip Debugging Design Examples](#)
- [Transceiver Toolkit Online Demo](#)
- [Transceiver Toolkit for Intel Arria® 10 Devices \(OTCVRKITA10\)](#)
26 Minutes Online Course
- [Transceiver Toolkit for 28-nm Devices \(OTCVR1100\)](#)
39 Minutes Online Course

3.1. Channel Manager

The Channel Manager is the graphical component of the Transceiver Toolkit. The Channel Manager allows you to configure and control transceiver channels and links, and adjust programmable analog settings to improve the signal integrity of the link. The Channel Manager is in the Workspace area of the System Console.

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The Channel Manager consists of three tabs that display components in a spreadsheet format:

- **Transmitter Channels**
- **Receiver Channels**
- **Transceiver Links**

The columns on each tab depend on the parameters of each device.

Figure 20. Example: Transceiver Links Tab of the Channel Manager

| Link Alias | Status | BER | Test pattern | Loopback mode | V _{op} | Pre-emphasis | DC gain | Equalization | DFE | EyeQ |
|------------------------------|---------|------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|--------------|-----|------|
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_0 | Running | 0 | PRBS7 | Serial loopback | 48 | 2/2/0 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_1 | Running | 0 | PRBS7 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/2/2 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_2 | Running | 0 | PRBS7 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/2/0 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_3 | Running | 0 | PRBS7 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/1/-1 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_4 | Running | 1.0991E-12 | PRBS15 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/2 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_5 | Running | 0 | PRBS15 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/0 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_6 | Running | 0 | PRBS15 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/1/1 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_7 | Running | 0 | PRBS15 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/2 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_8 | Running | 0 | PRBS15 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-1/0 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_9 | Stopped | 0 | PRBS23 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/0 | 0 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_10 | Running | 0 | PRBS23 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-1/2 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_11 | Running | 0 | PRBS23 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-1/0 | 0 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_12 | Running | 0 | PRBS31 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/0 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_13 | Running | 0 | PRBS31 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/0 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_14 | Running | 1.1141E-12 | PRBS31 | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/-1 | 0 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_15 | Running | 0 | HighFrequency | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/0/-2 | 3 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_16 | Running | 0 | HighFrequency | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/1 | 2 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_17 | Running | 0 | HighFrequency | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/0 | 3 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_18 | Running | 0 | LowFrequency | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/2 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |
| Loopbad_Link_xcvr_address_19 | Running | 0 | LowFrequency | Serial loopback | 48 | 1/-2/0 | 1 | 0 | Off | Off |

Channel Manager Functions

The Channel Manager simplifies actions such as:

- Copying and pasting settings—Copy, paste, import, and export PMA settings to and from channels.
- Importing and exporting settings— To export PMA settings to a text file, select a row in the Channel Manager. To apply the PMA settings from a text file, select one or more rows in the Channel Manager. The PMA settings in the text file apply to a single channel. When you import the PMA settings from a text file, you are duplicating one set of PMA settings for all the channels you select.
- Starting and stopping tests—The Channel Manager allows you to start and stop tests by right-clicking the channels. You can select two or more rows in the Channel Manager to start or stop test for multiple channels.

Related Information

- [System Explorer Pane on page 22](#)
- [System Console GUI on page 21](#)
- [User Interface Settings Reference on page 118](#)



3.1.1. Channel Display Modes

The three channel display modes are:

- **Current** (default)—shows the current values from the device. Blue text indicates that the settings are live.
- **Min/Max**—shows the minimum and maximum values to be used in the auto sweep.
- **Best**—shows the best tested values from the last completed auto sweep run.

Note: The **Transmitter Channels** tab only shows the **Current** display mode. The Transceiver Toolkit requires a receiver channel to perform auto sweep tests.

3.2. Transceiver Debugging Flow Walkthrough

These steps describe the high-level process of debugging transceivers with the Transceiver Toolkit.

1. [Modify the design to enable transceiver debug.](#)
2. [Load the modified design to the FPGA.](#)
3. [Load the design to the Transceiver Toolkit.](#)
4. [Link hardware resources.](#)
5. [Verify hardware connections.](#)
6. [Identify transceiver channels.](#)
7. [Run link tests or control PMA analog settings.](#)

3.3. Modifying the Design to Enable Transceiver Debug

The configuration of the debugging system varies by device family.

3.3.1. Adapting an Intel FPGA Design Example

Design examples allow you to quickly test the functionality of the receiver and transmitter channels in your design. You can modify and customize the design examples to match your intended transceiver design and signal integrity development board.

1. Download a design example from the On-Chip Debugging Design Examples page of the Intel FPGA website.
2. Open the Intel Quartus Prime and click **Project > Restore Archived Project** to restore the design example project archive.
3. Compare the development board and device specified in the `readme.txt` file with your board and device:

| Option | Description |
|---|--|
| <i>Same development board and same device</i> | Directly program the device with the programming file included in the example. |
| <i>Same board, different device</i> | Choose the appropriate device and recompile the design. |



| Option | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| Different board | Edit the necessary pin assignments and recompile the design example. |

4. To recompile the design, you must make your modifications to the system configuration in Platform Designer (Standard), regenerate in Platform Designer (Standard), and recompile the design in the Intel Quartus Prime software to generate a new programming file.

Once you recompile your design, you can:

- Change the transceiver settings in the design examples and observe the effects on transceiver link performance
- Isolate and verify the high-speed serial links without debugging other logic in your design.

Refer to the `readme.txt` of each design example for more information.

3.3.1.1. Modifying Stratix V Design Examples

You can adapt Intel FPGA design examples to experiment with configurations that match your own design. For example, you can change data rate, number of lanes, PCS-PMA width, FPGA-fabric interface width, or input reference clock frequency. To modify the design examples, change the IP core parameters and regenerate the system in Platform Designer (Standard). Next, update the top-level design file, and re-assign device I/O pins as necessary.

To modify a Stratix V design example PHY block to match your design, follow these steps:

1. Determine the number of channels your design requires.
2. Open the `<project name>.qpf` for the design example in the Intel Quartus Prime software.
3. Click **Tools > Platform Designer (Standard)**.
4. On the **System Contents** tab, right-click the PHY block and click **Edit**. Specify options for the PHY block to match your design requirement for number of lanes, data rate, PCS-PMA width, FPGA-fabric interface width, and input reference clock frequency.
5. Specify a multiple of the FPGA-fabric interface data width for **Avalon Data Symbol Size**. The available values are **8** or **10**. Click **Finish**.
6. Delete any timing adapter from the design. The timing adaptors are not required.
7. From the IP Catalog, add one **Data Pattern Generator** and **Data Pattern Checker** for each transmitter and receiver lane.
8. Right-click **Data Pattern Generator** and click **Edit**. Specify a value for **ST_DATA_W** that matches the FPGA-fabric interface width.
9. Right-click **Data Pattern Checker** and click **Edit**. Specify a value for **ST_DATA_W** that matches the FPGA-fabric interface width.
10. From the IP Catalog, add a **Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller**.
11. Right-click **Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller** and click **Edit**. Specify 2* number of lanes for the number of reconfigurations interfaces. Click **finish**.



12. Create connections for the data pattern generator and data pattern checker components. Right-click the net name in the **System Contents** tab and specify the following connections.

| From | | To | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Block Name | Net Name | Block Name | Net Name |
| clk_100 | clk | data_pattern_generator | csr_clk |
| clk_100 | clk_reset | data_pattern_generator | csr_clk_reset |
| master_0 | master | data_pattern_generator | csr_slave |
| xcvr_*_phy_0 | tx_clk_out0 | data_pattern_generator | pattern_out_clk |
| xcvr_*_phy_0 | tx_parallel_data0 | data_pattern_generator | pattern_out |
| clk_100 | clk | data_pattern_checker | csr_clk |
| clk_100 | clk_reset | data_pattern_checker | csr_clk_reset |
| master_0 | master | data_pattern_checker | csr_slave |
| xcvr_*_phy_0 | rx_clk_out0 | data_pattern_checker | pattern_in_clk |
| xcvr_*_phy_0 | rx_parallel_data0 | data_pattern_checker | pattern_in |

13. Click **System > Assign Base Addresses**.
14. Connect the reset port of timing adapters to clk_reset of clk_100.
15. To implement the changes to the system, click **Generate > Generate HDL**.
16. If you modify the number of lanes in the PHY, you must update the top-level file accordingly. The following example shows Verilog HDL code for a two-channel design that declares input and output ports in the top-level design. The example design includes the low latency PHY IP core. If you modify the PHY parameters, you must modify the top-level design with the correct port names. Platform Designer (Standard) displays an example of the PHY, click **Generate > HDL Example**.

```
module low_latency_10g_1ch DUT (
    input wire GXB_RXL11,
    input wire GXB_RXL12,
    output wire GXB_TXL11,
    output wire GXB_TXL12
);
    .....
    low_latency_10g_1ch DUT (
        .....
        .xcvr_low_latency_phy_0_tx_serial_data_export
        ({GXB_TXL11, GXB_TXL12}),
        .xcvr_low_latency_phy_0_rx_serial_data_export
        ({GXB_RXL11, GXB_RXL12}),
        .....
    );

```

17. From the Intel Quartus Prime software, click **Assignments > Pin Planner** and update pin assignments to match your board.
18. Edit the design's Synopsys Design Constraints (.sdc) to reflect the reference clock change. Ignore the reset warning messages.
19. Click **Start > Start Compilation** to recompile the design.



3.3.1.1.1. Generating reconfig_clk from an Internal PLL

You can use an internal PLL to generate the `reconfig_clk`, by changing the Platform Designer (Standard) connections to delay offset cancellation until the generated clock is stable.

- If there is no free running clock within the required frequency range of the reconfiguration clock, add a PLL to the top-level of the design example. The frequency range varies depending on the device family. Refer to the device family data sheet for your device.
- When using an internal PLL, hold off offset cancellation until the generated clock is stable. You do this by connecting the `pll_locked` signal of the internal PLL to the `.clk_clk_in_reset_n` port of the Platform Designer (Standard) system, instead of the `system_reset` signal.
- Implement the filter logic, inverter, and synchronization to the `reconfig_clk` outside of the Platform Designer (Standard) system with your own logic.

You can find the [support solution](#) in the Intel FPGA Knowledge Base. The solution applies to only Arria® V, Cyclone® V, Stratix IV GX/GT, and Stratix V devices.

3.3.2. Stratix V Debug System Configuration

For Stratix V designs, the Transceiver Toolkit configuration requires instantiation of the JTAG to Avalon Bridge and Reconfiguration Controller IP cores. Click **Tools > IP Catalog** to parameterize, generate, and instantiate the following debugging components for Stratix V designs.

Table 36. Stratix V / 28nm Transceiver Toolkit IP Core Configuration

| Component | Debugging Functions | Parameterization Notes | Connect To |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
| Transceiver Native PHY | Supports all debugging functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If Enable 10G PCS is enabled, 10G PCS protocol mode must be set to basic on the 10G PCS tab. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Checker• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Generator• JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge• Reconfiguration controller |
| Custom PHY | Test all possible transceiver parallel data widths | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set lanes, group size, serialization factor, data rate, and input clock frequency to match your application.• Turn on Avalon data interfaces.• Disable 8B/10B.• Set Word alignment mode to manual.• Disable rate match FIFO.• Disable byte ordering block. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Checker• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Generator• JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge• Reconfiguration controller |
| Low Latency PHY | Test at more than 8.5 Gbps in GT devices or use of PMA direct mode (such as when using six channels in one quad) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set Phase compensation FIFO mode to EMBEDDED above certain data rates and set to NONE for PMA direct mode.• Turn on Avalon data interfaces.• Set serial loopback mode to enable serial loopback controls in the toolkit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Checker• Avalon-ST Data Pattern Generator• JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge• Reconfiguration controller |

continued...



| Component | Debugging Functions | Parameterization Notes | Connect To |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Intel-Avalon Data Pattern Generator | Generates standard data test patterns at Avalon-ST source ports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select PRBS7, PRBS15, PRBS23, PRBS31, high frequency, or low frequency patterns. Turn on Enable Bypass interface for connection to design logic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHY input port JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge Your design logic |
| Intel-Avalon Data Pattern Checker | Validates incoming data stream against test patterns accepted on Avalon streaming sink ports | Specify a value for ST_DATA_W that matches the FPGA-fabric interface width. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHY output port JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge |
| Reconfiguration Controller | Supports PMA control and other transceiver settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect the reconfiguration controller to reconfig_from_xcvr to reconfig_to_xcvr. Enable Analog controls. Turn on Enable Eye Viewerblock to enable signal eye analysis (Stratix V only) Turn on Enable Bit Error Rate Block for BER testing Turn on Enable decision feedback equalizer (DFE) block for link optimization Enable DFE block | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHY input port JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Accepts encoded streams of bytes with transaction data and initiates Avalon-MM transactions | N/A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHY input port Avalon-ST Data Pattern Checker Avalon-ST Data Pattern Generator Reconfiguration Controller |

3.3.2.1. Bit Error Rate Test Configuration (Stratix V)

Use the following configuration to perform bit rate error testing in Stratix V designs.

Figure 21. Bit Error Rate Test Configuration (Stratix V)

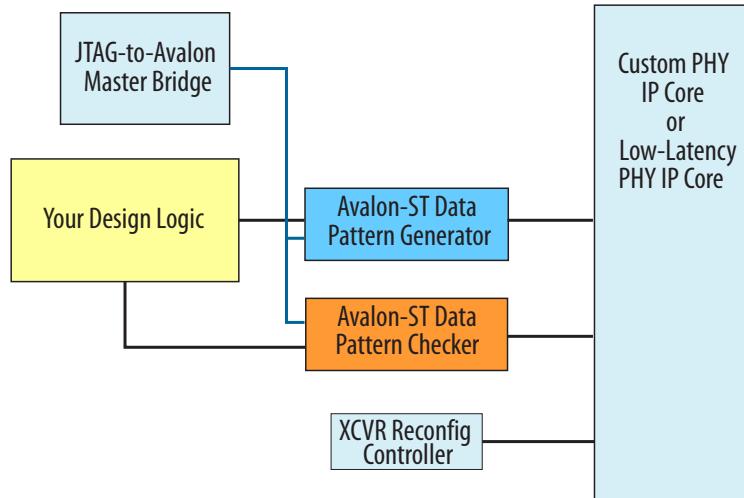


Table 37. System Connections: Bit Error Rate Tests

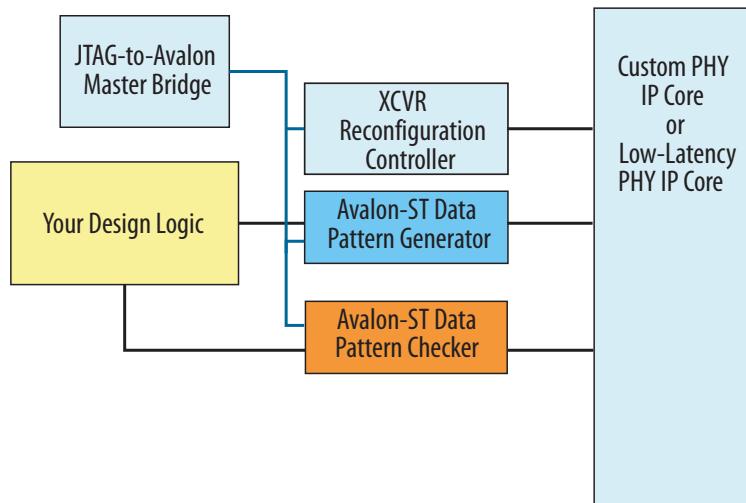
| From | To |
|--|--|
| Your Design Logic | Data Pattern Generator bypass port |
| Data Pattern Generator | PHY input port |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Intel FPGA Avalon Data Pattern Generator |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Intel FPGA Avalon Data Pattern Checker |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | PHY input port |
| Data Pattern Checker | PHY output port |
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | PHY input port |

Related Information

[Running BER Tests](#) on page 110

3.3.2.2. PRBS Signal Eye Test Configuration (Stratix V)

Use the following configuration to perform PRBS signal eye testing in Stratix V designs.

Figure 22. PRBS Signal Eye Test Configuration (Stratix V)

Table 38. System Connections: PRBS Signal Eye Tests (Stratix V)

| From | To |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Your Design Logic | Data Pattern Generator bypass port |
| Data Pattern Generator | PHY input port |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Intel Avalon Data Pattern Generator |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Intel Avalon Data Pattern Checker |
| Data Pattern Checker | PHY output port |

continued...



| From | To |
|--|--|
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | PHY input port |
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | PHY input port |

Related Information

[Running PRBS Signal Eye Tests \(Stratix V only\)](#) on page 111

3.3.2.2.1. Enabling Serial Bit Comparator Mode (Stratix V)

Serial bit comparator mode allows you to run Eye Viewer diagnostic features with any PRBS patterns or user-design data, without disrupting the data path. For Stratix V devices, you must enable **Serial bit comparator** mode.

To enable this mode for Stratix V devices, you must enable the following debugging component options when configuring the debugging system:

Table 39. Component Settings for Serial Bit Comparator Mode

| Debugging Component | Setting for Serial Bit Mode ⁽²⁾ |
|--|---|
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | Turn on Enable Eye Viewer block and Enable Bit Error Rate Block |
| Data Pattern Generator ⁽³⁾ | Turn on Enable Bypass interface |

Serial bit comparator mode is less accurate than **Data pattern checker** mode for single bit error checking. Do not use **Serial bit comparator** mode if you require an exact error rate. Use the **Serial bit comparator** mode for checking a large window of error. The toolkit does not read the bit error counter in real-time because it reads through the memory-mapped interface. Serial bit comparator mode has the following hardware limitations for Stratix V devices:

- Toolkit uses serial bit checker only on a single channel per reconfiguration controller at a time.
- When the serial bit checker is running on channel n , you can change only the V_{OD} , pre-emphasis, DC gain, and Eye Viewer settings on that channel. Changing or enabling DFE or CTLE can cause corruption of the serial bit checker results.
- When the serial bit checker is running on a channel, you cannot change settings on any other channel on the same reconfiguration controller.
- When the serial bit checker is running on a channel, you cannot open any other channel in the Transceiver Toolkit.
- When the serial bit checker is running on a channel, you cannot copy PMA settings from any channel on the same reconfiguration controller.

3.3.2.3. Custom Traffic Signal Eye Test Configuration (Stratix V)

Use the following configuration to perform custom traffic signal eye testing in Stratix V designs.

⁽²⁾ Settings in [Table 39](#) on page 99 are supported in Stratix V devices only.

⁽³⁾ Limited support for Data Pattern Generator or data pattern in Serial Bit Mode.

Figure 23. System Configuration: Custom Traffic Signal Eye Tests (Stratix V)

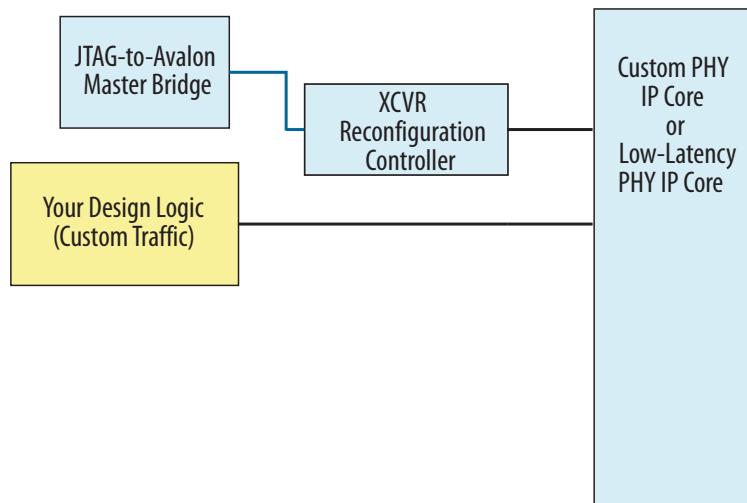


Table 40. System Connections: Custom Traffic Signal Eye Tests (Stratix V)

| From | To |
|--|--|
| Your design logic with custom traffic | PHY input port |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | PHY input port |
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | PHY input port |

Related Information

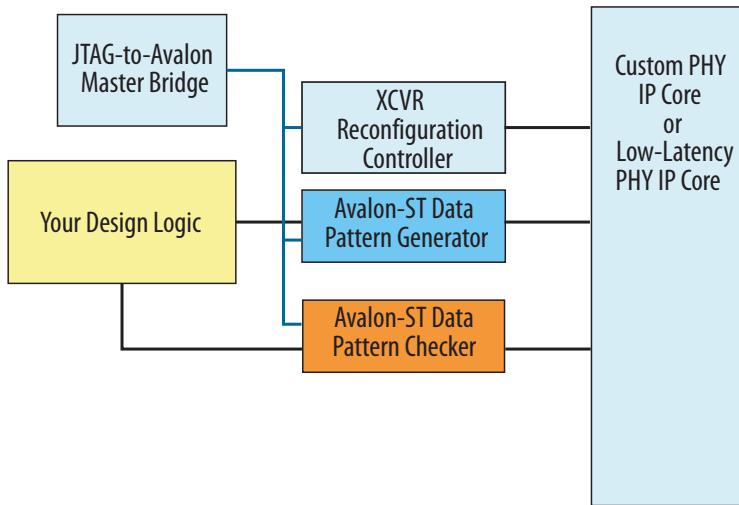
[Running Custom Traffic Tests \(Stratix V only\) on page 112](#)

3.3.2.4. Link Optimization Test Configuration (Stratix V)

Use the following configuration for link optimization tests in Stratix V devices.



Figure 24. System Configuration: Link Optimization Tests (Stratix V)



| From | To |
|--|--|
| Your Design Logic | Data Pattern Generator bypass port |
| Data Pattern Generator | PHY input port |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Avalon Data Pattern Generator |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Avalon Data Pattern Checker |
| Data Pattern Checker | PHY output port |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | PHY input port |
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | PHY input port |

Related Information

[Running the Auto Sweep Test](#) on page 113

3.3.2.5. PMA Analog Setting Control Configuration (Stratix V)

Use the following configuration to control PMA Analog settings in Stratix V designs.

Figure 25. System Configuration: PMA Analog Setting Control (Stratix V)

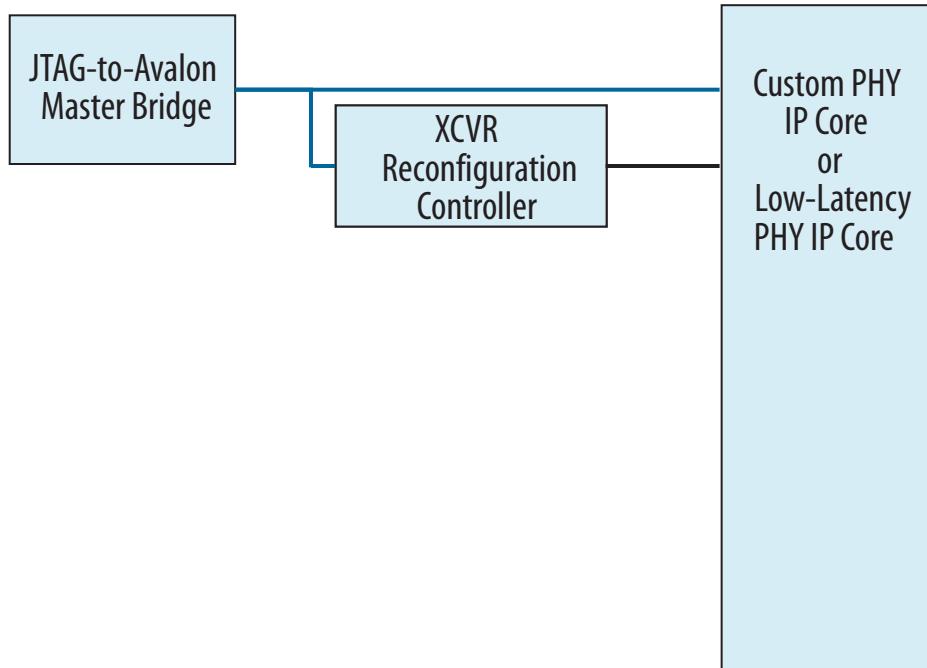


Table 41. System Connections: PMA Analog Setting Control (Stratix V)

| From | To |
|--|--|
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller |
| JTAG to Avalon Master Bridge | PHY input port |
| Transceiver Reconfiguration Controller | PHY input port |

Related Information

[Controlling PMA Analog Settings](#) on page 114

3.3.3. Instantiating and Parameterizing Intel Arria 10 Debug IP cores

To debug Intel Arria 10 designs with the Transceiver Toolkit, you must enable debugging settings in Transceiver Intel FPGA IP cores. You can either activate these settings when you first instantiate these components, or modify your instance after preliminary compilation.

The IP cores that you modify are:

- Transceiver Native PHY
- Transceiver ATX PLL
- CMU PLL
- fPLL



The parameters that you enable in the debug IP cores are:

Table 42. IP Cores and Debug Settings

For more information about these parameters, refer to *Debug Settings for Transceiver IP Cores*.

| IP Core | Enable dynamic reconfiguration | Enable Native PHY Debug Master Endpoint | Enable capability registers | Enable control and status registers | Enable PRBS Soft accumulators |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Transceiver Native PHY | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Transceiver ATX PLL | Yes | Yes | | | |
| CMU PLL | Yes | Yes | | | |
| fPLL | Yes | Yes | | | |

For each transceiver IP core:

1. In the **IP Components** tab of the Project Navigator, right-click the IP instance, and click **Edit in Parameter Editor**.
2. Turn on debug settings as they appear in the *IP Cores and Debug Settings* table above.

Figure 26. Intel Arria 10 Transceiver Native PHY IP Core in the Parameter Editor

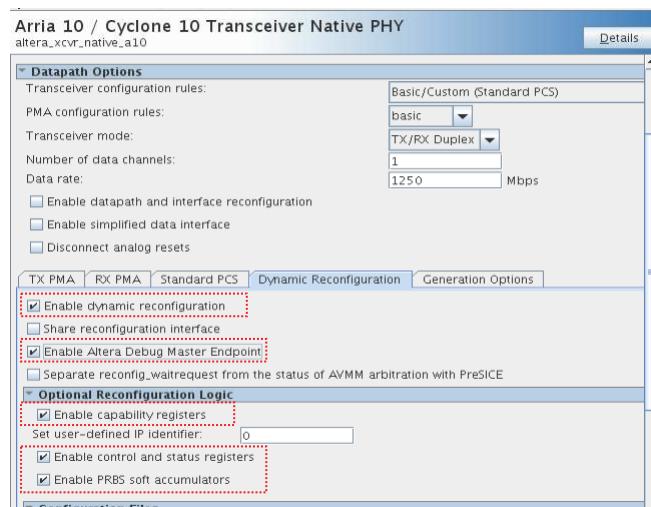
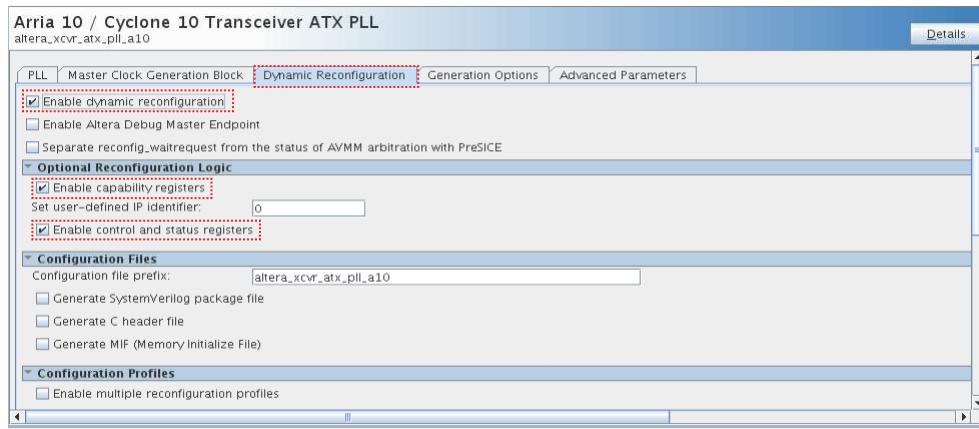


Figure 27. Intel Arria 10 Transceiver ATX PLL Core in the Parameter Editor



3. Click **Generate HDL**.

After enabling parameters for all IPs in the design, recompile your project.

3.3.3.1. Debug Settings for Transceiver IP Cores

The table describes the settings that you turn on when preparing your transceiver for debug:

Table 43. Intel FPGA IP Settings for Transceiver Debug

| Setting | Description |
|--|--|
| Enable Dynamic Reconfiguration | Allows you to change the behavior of the transceiver channels and PLLs without powering down the device |
| Enable Native PHY Debug Master Endpoint | Allows you to access the transceiver and PLL registers through System Console. When you recompile your design, Intel Quartus Prime software inserts the ADME, debug fabric, and embedded logic during synthesis. |
| Enable capability registers | Capability registers provide high level information about the configuration of the transceiver channel |
| Enable control and status registers | Enables soft registers to read status signals and write control signals on the PHY interface through the embedded debug. |
| Enable PRBS Soft Accumulators | Enables soft logic for performing PRBS bit and error accumulation when you use the hard PRBS generator and checker. |

For more information about dynamic reconfiguration parameters on Intel Arria 10 devices, refer to the *Intel Arria 10 Transceiver PHY User Guide*.

Related Information

[Dynamic Reconfiguration Parameters](#)

3.4. Programming the Design into an Intel FPGA

After you include debug components in the design, compile, and generate programming files, you can program the design in the Intel FPGA.

Related Information

[Programming Intel FPGA Devices](#)



3.5. Loading the Design in the Transceiver Toolkit

If the FPGA is already programmed with the project when loading, the Transceiver Toolkit automatically links the design to the target hardware in the toolkit. The toolkit automatically discovers links between transmitter and receiver of the same channel.

Before loading the device, ensure that you connect the hardware. The device and JTAG connections appear in the **Device** and **Connections** folders of the **System Explorer** pane.

To load the design into the Transceiver Toolkit:

1. In the System Console, click **File > Load Design**.
2. Select the .sof programming file for the transceiver design.

After loading the project, the **designs** and **design instances** folders in the **System Explorer** pane display information about the design, such as the design name and the blocks in the design that can communicate to the System Console.

Related Information

[System Explorer Pane](#) on page 22

3.6. Linking Hardware Resources

Linking the hardware resources maps the project you load to the target FPGA. When you load multiple design projects for multiple FPGAs, linking indicates which of the projects is in each of the FPGAs. The toolkit automatically discovers hardware and designs that you connect. You can also manually link a design to connected hardware resources in the **System Explorer**.

If you are using more than one Intel FPGA board, you can set up a test with multiple devices linked to the same design. This setup is useful if you want to perform a link test between a transmitter and receiver on two separate devices. You can also load multiple Intel Quartus Prime projects and link between different systems. You can perform tests on separate and unrelated systems in a single Intel Quartus Prime instance.

Figure 28. One Channel Loopback Mode for Stratix V (28nm)

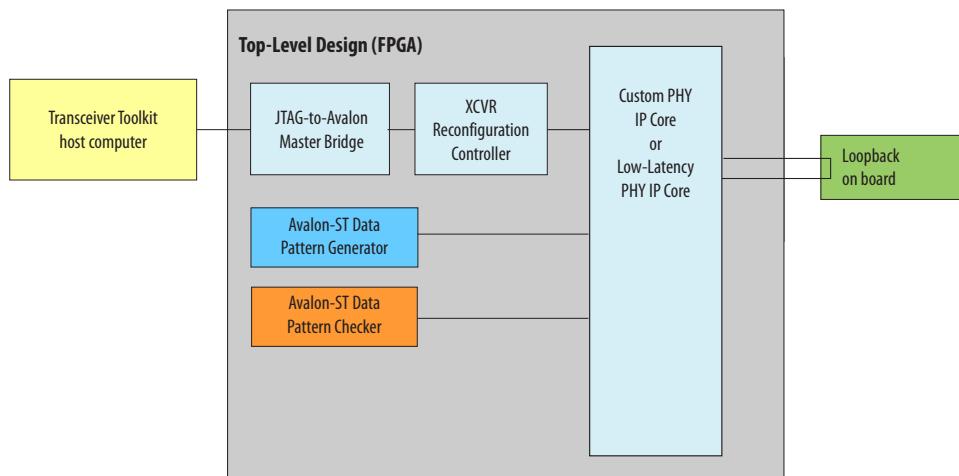


Figure 29. One Channel Loopback Mode for Intel Arria 10 devices

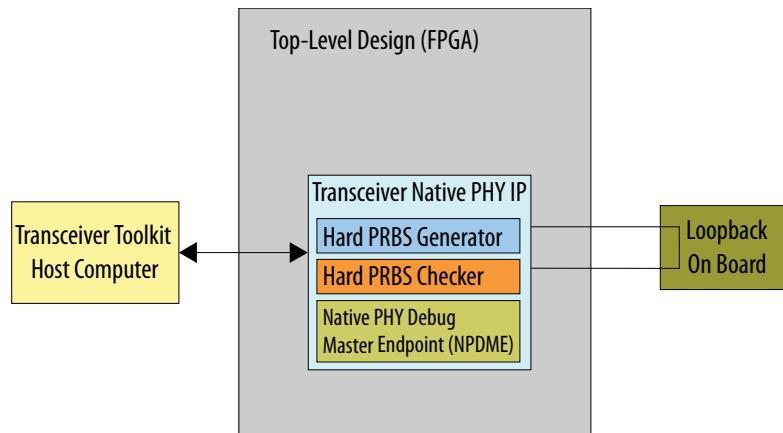


Figure 30. Four Channel Loopback Mode for Stratix V / 28nm

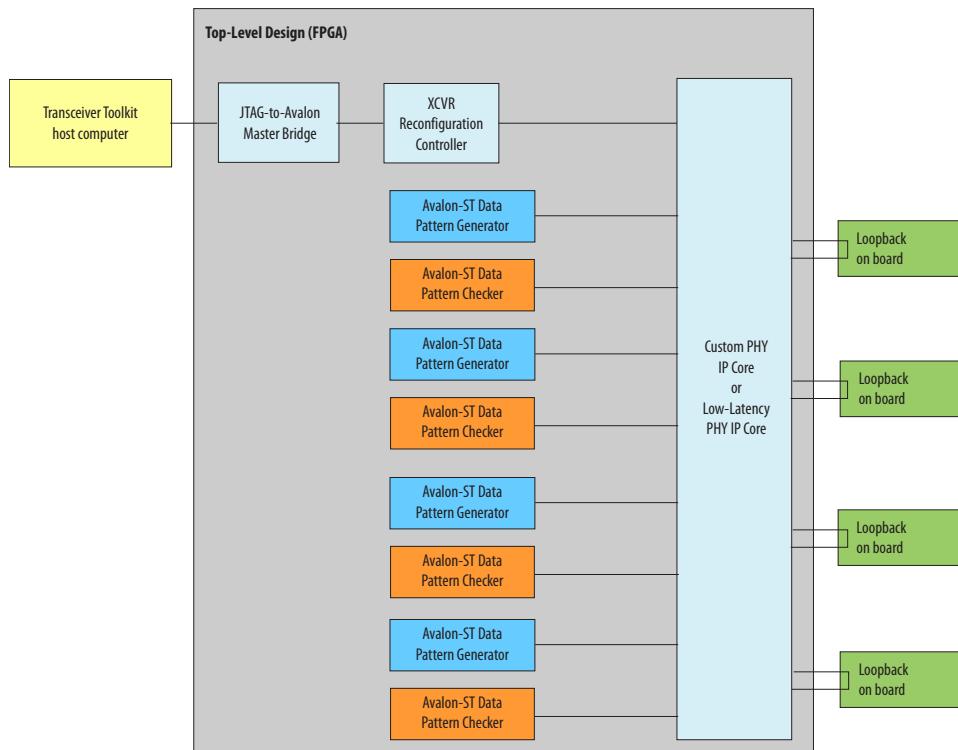
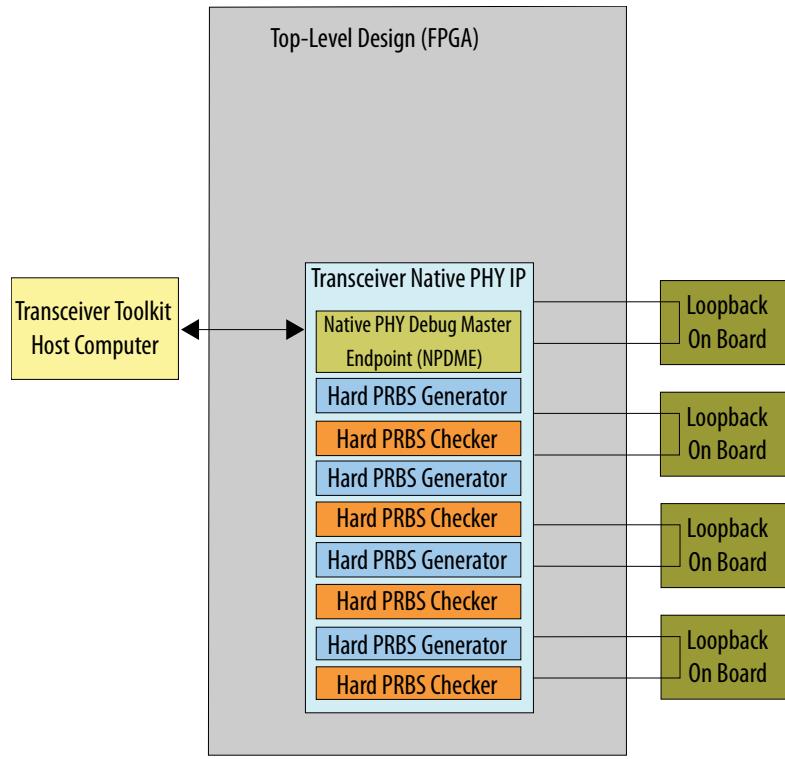




Figure 31. Four Channel Loopback Mode for Intel Arria 10 devices



3.6.1. Linking One Design to One Device

To link one design to one device by one Intel FPGA Download Cable:

1. Load the design for your Intel Quartus Prime project.
2. If the design is not auto-linked, link each device to an appropriate design.
3. Create the link between channels on the device to test.

3.6.2. Linking Two Designs to Two Devices

To link two designs to two separate devices on the same board, connected by one Intel FPGA Download Cable download cable:

1. Load the design for all the Intel Quartus Prime project files you need.
2. If the design does not auto-link, link each device to an appropriate design
3. Open the project for the second device.
4. Link the second device on the JTAG chain to the second design (unless the design auto-links).
5. Create a link between the channels on the devices you want to test.

3.6.3. Linking One Design on Two Devices

To link the same design on two separate devices, follow these steps:

1. In the Transceiver Toolkit, open the .sof you are using on both devices.
2. Link the first device to this design instance.
3. Link the second device to the design.
4. Create a link between the channels on the devices you want to test.

3.6.4. Linking Designs and Devices on Separate Boards

To link two designs to two separate devices on separate boards that connect to separate Intel FPGA Download Cables:

1. Load the design for all the Intel Quartus Prime project files you need.
2. If the design does not auto-link, link each device to an appropriate design.
3. Create the link between channels on the device to test.
4. Link the device connected to the second Intel FPGA Download Cable to the second design.
5. Create a link between the channels on the devices you want to test.

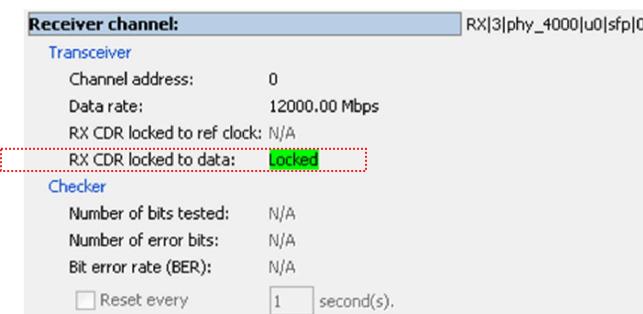
3.6.5. Verifying Hardware Connections

After creating links, verify that the channels connect correctly and loop back properly on the hardware. This precaution saves time in the workflow.

Use the toolkit to send data patterns and receive them correctly:

1. In the **Receiver** tab, verify that **RX CDR locked to Data** is set to **Locked**.

Figure 32. RX CDR Locked to Data



2. Start the generator on the Transmitter Channel.
3. Start the checker on the Receiver Channel.
4. Verify you have Lock to Data, and the Bit Error Rate between the two is very low or zero.

After you verify communication between transmitter and receiver, you can create a link between the two transceivers and perform Auto Sweep and Eye Viewer⁽⁴⁾ tests with the pair.

⁽⁴⁾ Eye Viewer available only for Stratix V devices.



3.7. Identifying Transceiver Channels

Verify whether the Transceiver Toolkit detects the channels correctly. If a receiver and transmitter share a transceiver channel, the toolkit identifies the channel.

The Transceiver Toolkit identifies and displays transmitter and receiver channels on the **Transmitter Channels** and **Receiver Channels** tabs of the Channel Manager. You can also manually identify the transmitter and receiver in a transceiver channel, and then create a link between the two for testing.

3.7.1. Controlling Transceiver Channels

To adjust or monitor transmitter or receiver settings while the channels are running:

- In the **Transmitter Channels** tab, click **Control Transmitter Channel**.
- In the **Receiver Channels** tab, click **Control Receiver Channel**.
- In the **Transceiver Links** tab, click **Control Receiver Channel**.

For example, you can transmit a data pattern across the transceiver link, and then report the signal quality of the data you receive.

3.8. Creating Transceiver Links

Creating a link designates which Transmitter and Receiver channels connect physically. The toolkit automatically creates links when a receiver and transmitter share a transceiver channel. You can also manually create and delete links between transmitter and receiver channels.

To create a transceiver link:

1. In the Channel Manager, click **Setup**.
2. Select the generator and checker you want to control.
3. Select the transmitter and receiver pair you want to control.
4. Click **Create Transceiver Link**.
5. Click **Close**.

The Transceiver Toolkit generates an automatic name for the link, but you can use a shorter, more meaningful name by typing in the **Link Alias** cell.

3.9. Running Link Tests

Once you identify the transceiver channels for debugging, you can run link tests. Use the **Transceiver Links** tab to control link tests.

When you run link tests, channel color highlights indicate the test status:

Table 44. Channel Color Highlights

| Color | Transmitter Channel | Receiver Channel |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Red | Channel is closed or generator clock is not running. | Channel is closed or checker clock is not running. |
| Green | Generator is sending a pattern. | Checker is checking and data pattern is locked. |
| Neutral (same color as background) | Channel is open, generator clock is running, and generator is not sending a pattern. | Channel is open, checker clock is running, and checker is not checking. |
| Yellow | N/A | Checker is checking and data pattern is not locked. |

3.9.1. Running BER Tests

BER tests help you assess signal integrity. Follow these steps to run BER tests across a transceiver link:

1. In the Channel Manager, click **Control Transceiver Link**.
2. Specify a PRBS **Test pattern**
3. If your device supports setting a **Checker mode**, set to **Data pattern checker**.
4. Try different values of **Reconfiguration**, **Generator**, or **Checker** settings, if available.
5. Click **Start** to run the pattern with your settings.
6. If your device supports error injection, you can click **Inject Error** to inject error bits.
7. You can also **Reset** the counter, or **Stop** the test.

Note: Intel Arria 10 devices do not support **Inject Error** if you use the hard PRBS Pattern Generator and Checker in the system configuration.

Related Information

- Bit Error Rate Test Configuration (Stratix V) on page 97
- User Interface Settings Reference on page 118

3.9.2. Signal Eye Margin Testing (Stratix V only)

Stratix V includes Eye Viewer circuitry, that allows visualization of the horizontal and vertical eye margin at the receiver. For supported devices, use signal eye tests to tune the PMA settings of your transceiver. This results in the best eye margin and BER at high data rates. The toolkit disables signal eye testing for unsupported devices.

The Eye Viewer graph can display a bathtub curve, eye diagram representing eye margin, or heat map display. The run list displays the statistics of each Eye Viewer test. When PMA settings are suitable, the bathtub curve is wide, with sharp slopes near the edges. The curve is up to 30 units wide. If the bathtub is narrow, then the signal quality is poor. The wider the bathtub curve, the wider the eye. The smaller the bathtub curve, the smaller the eye. The eye contour shows the estimated horizontal and vertical eye opening at the receiver.



You can right-click any of the test runs in the list, and then click **Apply Settings to Device** to quickly apply that PMA setting to your device. You can also click **Export**, **Import**, or **Create Report**.

Figure 33. Eye Viewer Settings and Status Showing Results of Two Test Runs

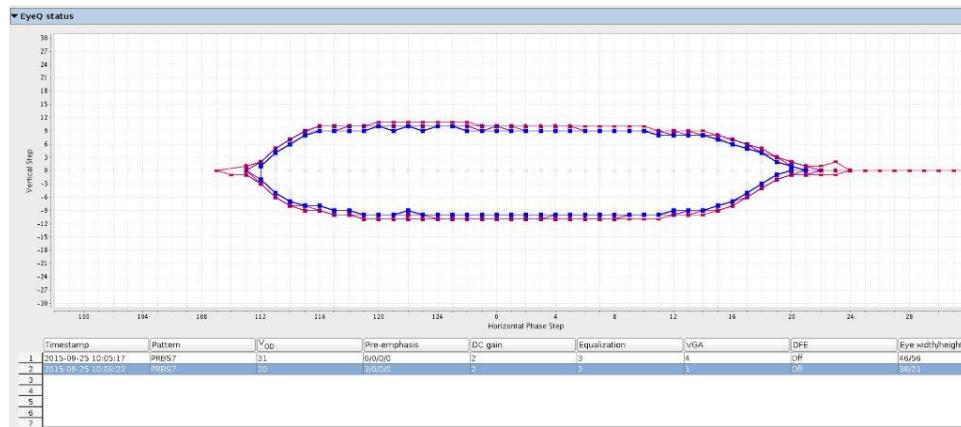
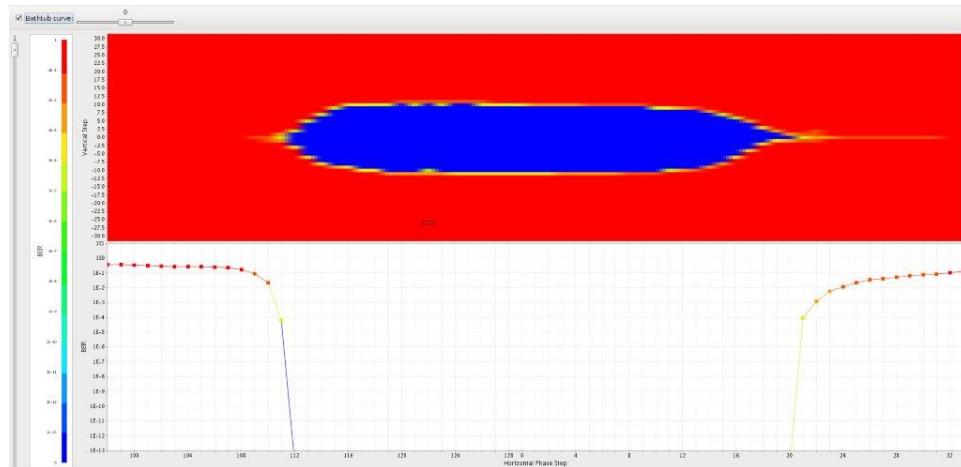


Figure 34. Heat Map Display and Bathtub Curve Through Eye



3.9.2.1. Running PRBS Signal Eye Tests (Stratix V only)

Run PRBS signal eye tests to visualize the estimated horizontal and vertical eye opening at the receiver. After programming the FPGA with your debugging design, loading the design in the toolkit, and linking hardware, follow these steps to run PRBS signal eye tests:

1. Click **Setup**.
 - a. Select the generator and checker you want to control.
 - b. Select the transmitter and receiver pair you want to control.

- c. Click **Create Transceiver Link** and click **Close**.
2. Click **Link Eye Viewer**, and select **Eye Viewer** as the **Test mode**. The **Eye Viewer** mode displays test results as a bathtub curve, heat map, or eye contour representing bit error and phase offset data.
3. Specify the PRBS **Test pattern** and the **Checker mode**. Use **Serial bit comparator** checker mode only for checking a large window of error with custom traffic.

The checker mode option is only available after you turn on **Enable Eye Viewer block** and **Enable Bit Error Rate Block** in the Reconfiguration Controller component. (Stratix V designs only)
4. Specify **Run length** and **Eye Viewer settings** to control the test coverage and type of Eye Viewer results displayed, respectively.
5. Click **Start** to run the pattern with your settings. Eye Viewer uses the current channel settings to start a phase sweep of the channel. The phase sweep runs 32 iterations. As the run progresses, view the status under **Eye Viewer status**. Use this diagram to compare PMA settings for the same channel and to choose the best combination of PMA settings for a particular channel.
6. When the run completes, the chart displays the characteristics of each run. Click **Stop** to halt the test, change the PMA settings, and re-start the test. Click **Create Report** to export data to a table format for further viewing.

Related Information

- [PRBS Signal Eye Test Configuration \(Stratix V\)](#) on page 98
- [AN 678: High-Speed Link Tuning Using Signal Conditioning Circuitry](#)

3.9.3. Running Custom Traffic Tests (Stratix V only)

After programming the FPGA with your debugging design, loading the design in the toolkit, and linking hardware, follow these steps to run custom traffic tests:

1. In the Channel Manager, click **Setup**.
2. Select the associated reconfiguration controller.
3. Click **Create Transceiver Link** and click **Close**.
4. Click the **Receiver Eye Viewer** tab.
5. Select **Eye Viewer** as the **Test mode**. The **Eye Viewer** mode displays test results as a bathtub curve, heat map, or eye contour representing bit error and phase offset data.
6. Specify the PRBS **Test pattern**.
7. For **Checker mode**, select **Serial bit comparator**.

The checker mode option is only available after you turn on **Enable Eye Viewer block** and **Enable Bit Error Rate Block** for the Reconfiguration Controller component.



8. Specify **Run length** and **Eye Viewer settings** to control the test coverage and type of Eye Viewer results displayed, respectively.
9. Click **Start** to run the pattern with your settings. Eye Viewer uses the current channel settings to start a phase sweep of the channel. The phase sweep runs 32 iterations. As the run progresses, view the status under **Eye Viewer status**.
10. When the run completes, the chart displays the characteristics of each run. Click **Stop** to halt the test, change the PMA settings, and re-start the test. Click **Create Report** to export data to a table format for further viewing.

Related Information

[Custom Traffic Signal Eye Test Configuration \(Stratix V\)](#) on page 99

3.9.4. Link Optimization Tests

The Transceiver Toolkit auto sweep test automatically sweeps PMA ranges to determine the transceiver settings that provide the best signal integrity. The toolkit allows you to store a history of the test runs, and keep a record of the best PMA settings.

3.9.4.1. Running the Auto Sweep Test

to run link optimization tests:

1. In the **Transceiver Links** tab, select the channel you want to control.
2. Click **Link Auto Sweep**.
The **Advanced** tab appears with **Auto sweep** as **Test mode**.
3. Specify the PRBS **Test pattern**.
4. Specify **Run length** experiment with the **Transmitter settings**, and **Receiver settings** to control the test coverage and PMA settings, respectively.
5. Click **Start** to run all combinations of tests meeting the PMA parameter limits. When the run completes the chart is displayed and the characteristics of each run are listed in the run list.
6. You can click **Stop** to halt the test, change the PMA settings, and re-start the test. Click **Create Report** to export data to a table format for further viewing.
7. If you want to determine the best tap settings using decision feedback equalization (DFE):
 - a. Set the **DFE mode** to **Off**.
 - b. Use Auto Sweep to find optimal PMA settings.
 - c. If $\text{BER} = 0$, use the best PMA settings achieved.
 - d. If $\text{BER} > 0$, use this PMA setting, and set the minimum and maximum values obtained from Auto Sweep to match this setting. Set the maximum DFE range to limits for each of the three DFE settings.
 - e. Run **Create Report** to view the results and determine which DFE setting has the best BER. Use these settings in conjunction with the PMA settings for the best results.

Related Information

- [Link Optimization Test Configuration \(Stratix V\)](#) on page 100



- Instantiating and Parameterizing Intel Arria 10 Debug IP cores on page 102

3.9.4.2. Determining the Best Tap Settings

To determine the best tap settings using decision feedback equalization (DFE):

1. Use Auto Sweep to find optimal PMA settings, while leaving the **DFE mode** set to **Off**.

| Option | Description |
|--------|-------------|
|--------|-------------|

If BER = 0 Use the best PMA settings achieved.

If BER > 0 Use this PMA setting, and set the minimum and maximum values auto sweep reports to match this setting. Set the maximum DFE range to limits for each of the three DFE settings.

2. Click **Create Report** to view the results and determine which DFE setting has the best BER. Use these settings in conjunction with the PMA settings for the best results.

3.10. Controlling PMA Analog Settings

The Transceiver Toolkit allows you to directly control PMA analog settings while the link is running. For a detailed description of each parameter, refer to the PHY user guide of the corresponding device.

To control PMA analog settings, follow these steps:

1. In the Channel Manager, click **Setup**.
2. In the **Transmitter Channels** tab, define a transmitter without a generator, and click **Create Transmitter Channel**.
3. In the **Receiver Channels** tab, define a receiver without a generator, and click **Create Receiver Channel**.
4. In the **Transceiver Links** tab, select the transmitter and receivers you want to control, and click **Create Transceiver Link**.
5. Click **Close**.
6. Click **Control Receiver Channel**, **Control Transmitter Channel**, or **Control Transceiver Link** to directly control the PMA settings while running.

3.10.1. Intel Arria 10 and Intel Cyclone 10 GX PMA Settings

The following figures show the PMA analog settings.



Figure 35. Transmitter Channel PMA Settings

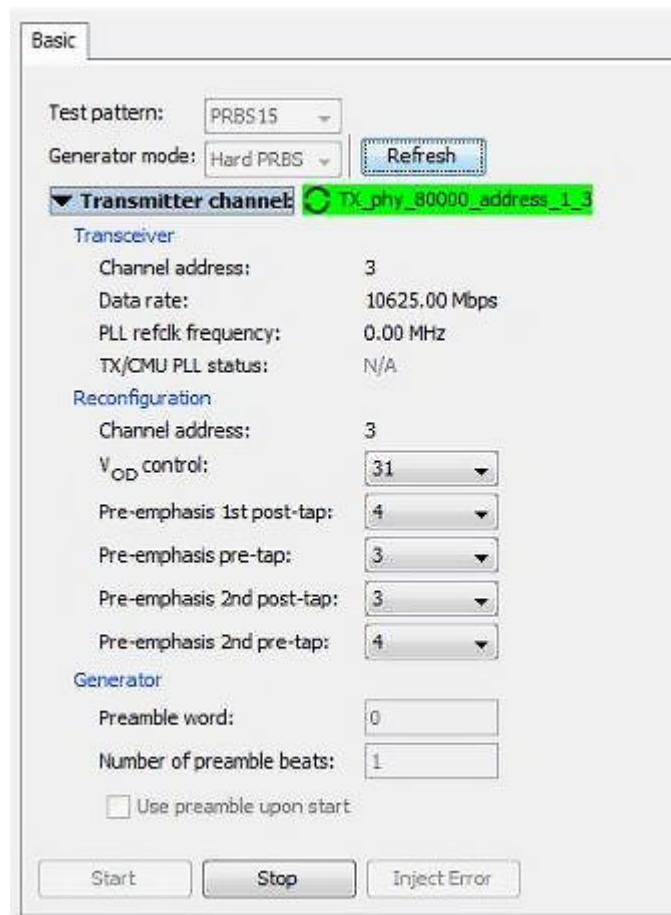


Figure 36. Receiver Channel PMA Settings

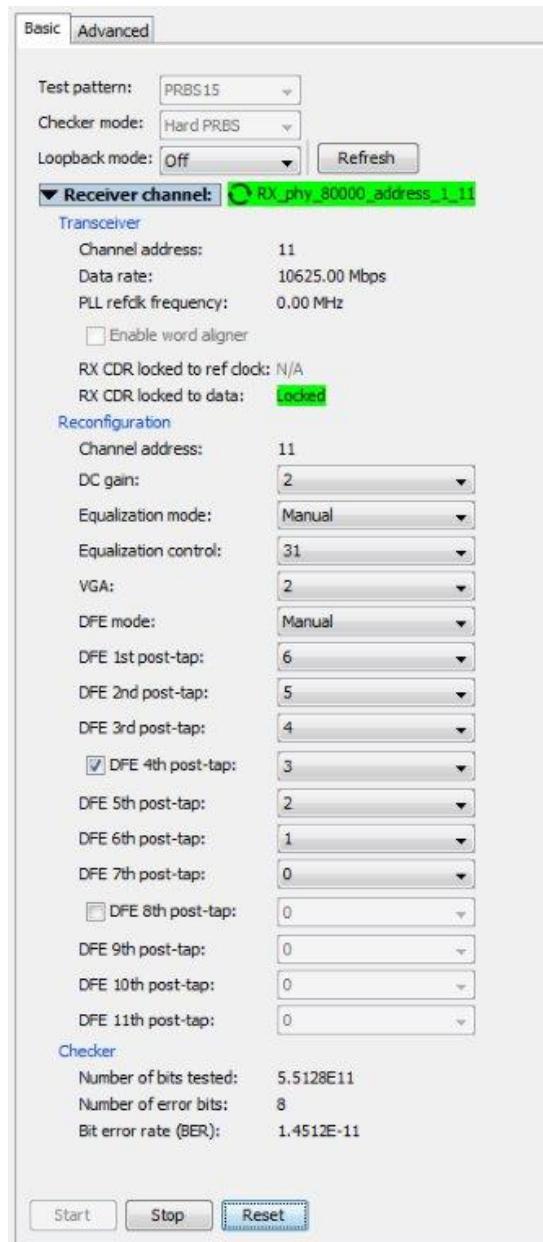




Figure 37. Transceiver Link PMA Settings

Basic Advanced

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Test pattern: | PRBS15 |
| Generator/checker mode: | Hard PRBS |
| Loopback mode: | Off |
| <input type="button" value="Refresh"/> | |
| Transmitter channel: TX_phy_80000_address_1_12 | |
| Transceiver Channel address: 12 Data rate: 10625.00 Mbps PLL refclk frequency: 0.00 MHz TX/CMU PLL status: N/A | |
| Reconfiguration Channel address: 12 V _{OD} control: 31 Pre-emphasis 1st post-tap: 0 Pre-emphasis pre-tap: 0 Pre-emphasis 2nd post-tap: 0 Pre-emphasis 2nd pre-tap: 0 | |
| Generator Preamble word: 0 Number of preamble beats: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Use preamble upon start | |
| Receiver channel: RX_phy_80000_address_1_12 | |
| Transceiver Channel address: 12 Data rate: 10625.00 Mbps PLL refclk frequency: 0.00 MHz <input type="checkbox"/> Enable word aligner RX CDR locked to ref clock: N/A RX CDR locked to data: Locked | |
| Reconfiguration Channel address: 12 DC gain: 2 Equalization mode: Manual Equalization control: 1 VGA: 2 DFE mode: Off DFE 1st post-tap: 0 DFE 2nd post-tap: 0 DFE 3rd post-tap: 0 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DFE 4th post-tap: 0 DFE 5th post-tap: 0 DFE 6th post-tap: 0 DFE 7th post-tap: 0 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DFE 8th post-tap: 0 DFE 9th post-tap: 0 DFE 10th post-tap: 0 DFE 11th post-tap: 0 | |
| Checker Number of bits tested: 2.8382E11 Number of error bits: 0 Bit error rate (BER): 0 | |
| <input type="button" value="Start"/> <input type="button" value="Stop"/> <input type="button" value="Inject Error"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/> | |

Related Information

- Instantiating and Parameterizing Intel Arria 10 Debug IP cores on page 102
- PMA Analog Setting Control Configuration (Stratix V) on page 101
- PMA Parameters
In *Intel Arria 10 Transceiver PHY User Guide*



3.11. User Interface Settings Reference

The Transceiver Toolkit user interface contains the following settings:

Table 45. Transceiver Toolkit Control Pane Settings

Settings in alphabetical order. All the settings appear in the **Transceiver Link** control pane.

| Setting | Description | Device Families | Control Pane | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----|----------------|------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Alias | Name you choose for the channel. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Auto Sweep status | Reports the current and best tested bits, errors, bit error rate, and case count for the current Auto Sweep test. | All supported device families | Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Bit error rate (BER) | Reports the number of errors divided by bits tested since the last reset of the checker. | All supported device families | Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Channel address | Logical address number of the transceiver channel. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Data rate | Data rate of the channel that appears in the project file, or data rate the frequency detector measures. To use the frequency detector, turn on Enable Frequency Counter in the Data Pattern Checker IP core or Data Pattern Generator IP core, regenerate the IP cores, and recompile the design. The measured data rate depends on the Avalon management clock frequency that appears in the project file. If you make changes to your settings and want to sample the data rate again, click the Refresh button next to the Data rate | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| DC gain | Provides an equal boost to the incoming signal across the frequency spectrum. | All supported device families | Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| DFE mode | Decision feedback equalization (DFE) for improving signal quality. <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Device</th><th>Value</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Stratix V</td><td>1-5</td></tr><tr><td>Intel Arria 10</td><td>1-11</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>In Stratix V devices DFE modes are Off, Manual, One-time adaptive mode and Adaptation Enabled. Adaptation Enabled mode DFE automatically tries to find the best tap values. In Intel Arria 10 devices, DFE modes are Off, Manual and Adaptation Enabled. DFE in Adaptation Enabled mode automatically tries to find the best tap values.</p> | Device | Value | Stratix V | 1-5 | Intel Arria 10 | 1-11 | Stratix V Intel Arria 10 | Receiver pane |
| Device | Value | | | | | | | | |
| Stratix V | 1-5 | | | | | | | | |
| Intel Arria 10 | 1-11 | | | | | | | | |
| Enable word aligner | Forces the transceiver channel to align to the word you specify. | Stratix V | Receiver pane | | | | | | |

continued...



| Setting | Description | Device Families | Control Pane |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Equalization control | Boosts the high-frequency gain of the incoming signal to compensate for the low-pass filter effects of the physical medium. When you use this option with DFE, use DFE in Manual or Adaptation Enabled mode. In Stratix V devices, auto sweep supports AEQ one-time adaptation. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Equalization mode | For Intel Arria 10 devices, you can set Equalization Mode to Manual or Triggered . In Stratix V devices, Adaptive equalization (AEQ) automatically evaluates and selects the best combination of equalizer settings, and turns off Equalization Control . The one-time selection determines the best setting and stops searching. You can use AEQ for multiple, independently controlled receiver channels. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Error rate limit | Turns on or off error rate limits. Start checking after specifies the number of bits the toolkit waits before looking at the bit error rate (BER) for the next two checks. Bit error rate achieves below sets upper bit error rate limits. If the error rate is better than the set error rate, the test ends. Bit error rate exceeds sets lower bit error rate limits. If the error rate is worse than the set error rate, the test ends. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Generator/Checker mode | Specifies Data pattern checker or Serial bit comparator for BER tests. If you enable Serial bit comparator the Data Pattern Generator sends the PRBS pattern, but the serial bit comparator checks the pattern. In Bypass mode , clicking Start begins counting on the Serial bit comparator. For BER testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intel Arria 10 devices support the Data Pattern Checker and the Hard PRBS.• Stratix V devices support the Data Pattern Checker and the Serial Bit Checker. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane |
| Horizontal phase step interval | Specifies the number of horizontal steps to increment when performing a sweep. Increasing the value increases the speed of the test but at a lower resolution. This option only applies to eye contour. | Stratix V | Transmitter pane Receiver pane |
| Increase test range | For the selected set of controls, increases the span of tests by one unit down for the minimum, and one unit up for the maximum. You can span either PMA Analog controls (non-DFE controls), or the DFE controls. You can quickly set up a test to check if any PMA setting combinations near your current best yields better results. To use, right-click the Advanced panel | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Inject Error | Flips one bit to the output of the data pattern generator to introduce an artificial error. | Stratix V | Transmitter pane |
| Maximum tested bits | Sets the maximum number of bits tested for each test iteration. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Number of bits tested | Specifies the number of bits tested since the last reset of the checker. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |

continued...

| Setting | Description | Device Families | Control Pane |
|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Number of error bits | Specifies the number of error bits encountered since the last reset of the checker. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Number of preamble beats | Number of clock cycles to which the preamble word is sent before the test pattern begins. | Stratix V | Transmitter pane |
| PLL refclk freq | Channel reference clock frequency that appears in the project file, or reference clock frequency calculated from the measured data rate. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane |
| Populate with | Right-click the Advanced panel to load current values on the device as a starting point, or initially load the best settings auto sweep determines. The Intel Quartus Prime software automatically applies the values you specify in the drop-down lists for the Transmitter settings and Receiver settings. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Preamble word | Word to send out if you use the preamble mode (only if you use soft PRBS Data Pattern Generator and Checker). | All supported device families | Transmitter pane |
| Pre-emphasis | This programmable module boosts high frequencies in the transmit data for each transmit buffer signal. This action counteracts possible attenuation in the transmission media. (Stratix V only) Using pre-emphasis can maximize the data eye opening at the far-end receiver. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane |
| Receiver channel | Specifies the name of the selected receiver channel. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Refresh Button | After loading the .pof file, loads fresh settings from the registers after running dynamic reconfiguration. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane |
| Reset | Resets the current test. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Rules Based Configuration (RBC) validity checking | Displays in red any invalid combination of settings for each list under Transmitter settings and Receiver settings , based on previous settings. When you enable this option, the settings appear in red to indicate the current combination is invalid. This action avoids manually testing invalid settings that you cannot compile for your design, and prevents setting the device into an invalid mode for extended periods of time and potentially damaging the circuits. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |
| Run length | Sets coverage parameters for test runs. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane |
| RX CDR PLL status⁽⁵⁾ | Shows the receiver in lock-to-reference (LTR) mode. When in auto-mode, if data cannot be locked, this signal alternates in LTD mode if the CDR is locked to data. | All supported device families | Receiver pane |

continued...

⁽⁵⁾ For Stratix V devices, the Phase Frequency Detector (PFD) is inactive in LTD mode. The rx_is_lockedtoref status signal turns on and off randomly, and is not significant in LTD mode.



| Setting | Description | Device Families | Control Pane | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|---|----------------|---|--|--|
| RX CDR data status | Shows the receiver in lock-to-data (LTD) mode. When in auto-mode, if data cannot be locked, the signal stays high when locked to data and never switches. | All supported device families | Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Serial loopback enabled | Inserts a serial loopback before the buffers, allowing you to form a link on a transmitter and receiver pair on the same physical channel of the device. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Start | Starts the pattern generator or checker on the channel to verify incoming data. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Stop | Stops generating patterns and testing the channel. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Target bit error rate | Finds the contour edge of the bit error rate that you select. This option only applies to eye contour mode. | Stratix V | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| Test pattern | Test pattern sent by the transmitter channel. The Data Pattern Checker self-aligns both high and low frequency patterns. Use Bypass mode to send user-design data. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Device Family</th> <th>Test Patterns Available</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Stratix V</td> <td>PRBS7, PRBS15, PRBS23, PRBS31, LowFrequency, HighFrequency, and Bypass mode.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Intel Arria 10</td> <td>PRBS9, PRBS15, PRBS23, and PRBS31.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Device Family | Test Patterns Available | Stratix V | PRBS7, PRBS15, PRBS23, PRBS31, LowFrequency, HighFrequency, and Bypass mode. | Intel Arria 10 | PRBS9, PRBS15, PRBS23, and PRBS31. | | |
| Device Family | Test Patterns Available | | | | | | | | |
| Stratix V | PRBS7, PRBS15, PRBS23, PRBS31, LowFrequency, HighFrequency, and Bypass mode. | | | | | | | | |
| Intel Arria 10 | PRBS9, PRBS15, PRBS23, and PRBS31. | | | | | | | | |
| Time limit | Specifies the time limit unit and value to have a maximum bounds time limit for each test iteration. | All supported device families | Receiver | | | | | | |
| Transmitter channel | Specifies the name of the selected transmitter channel. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane | | | | | | |
| TX/CMU PLL status | Specifies whether the transmitter channel PLL is locked to the reference clock. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane | | | | | | |
| Use preamble upon start | If turned on, sends the preamble word before the test pattern. If turned off, starts sending the test pattern immediately. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane | | | | | | |
| Vertical phase step interval | Specify the number of vertical steps to increment when performing a sweep. Increasing the value increases the speed of the test but at a lower resolution. This option only applies to the eye contour. | Stratix V | Transmitter pane Receiver pane | | | | | | |
| V_{OD} control | Programmable transmitter differential output voltage. | All supported device families | Transmitter pane | | | | | | |

Related Information

[Channel Manager](#) on page 91



3.12. Troubleshooting Common Errors

Missing high-speed link pin connections

Check the pin connections to identify high-speed links (tx_p/n and rx_p/n) are missing. When porting an older design to the latest version of the Intel Quartus Prime software, make sure that these connections exist after porting.

Reset Issues:

Ensure that the reset input to the Transceiver Native PHY, Transceiver Reset Controller, and ATX PLL Intel FPGA IPs is not held active (1'b1). The Transceiver Toolkit highlights in red all the Transceiver Native PHY channels that you are setting up.

Unconnected reconfig_clk

You must connect and drive the reconfig_clk input to the Transceiver Native PHY and ATX PLL Intel FPGA IPs. Otherwise, the toolkit does not display the transceiver link channel.

3.13. Scripting API Reference

The Intel Quartus Prime software provides an API to access Transceiver Toolkit functions using Tcl commands, and script tasks such as linking device resources and identifying high-speed serial links.

To save the project setup in a Tcl script for use in subsequent testing sessions:

1. Set up and define links that describe the entire physical system.
2. Click **Save Tcl Script** to save the setup for future use.

You can also build a custom test routine script.

To run the scripts, double-click the script name in the System Explorer scripts folder.

To view a list of the available Tcl command descriptions from the Tcl Console window, including example usage:

1. In the Tcl console, type `help help`. The Console displays all Transceiver Toolkit Tcl commands.
2. Type `help <command name>`. The Console displays the command description.

3.13.1. Transceiver Toolkit Commands

The following tables list the available Transceiver Toolkit scripting commands.

**Table 46.** Transceiver Toolkit channel_rx Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------|-------------|---|-----|---|----------|---|-------------------|
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_data | <service-path> | Returns a list of the current checker data. The results are in the order of number of bits, number of errors, and bit error rate. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_dcgain | <service-path> | Gets the DC gain value on the receiver channel. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_dfe_tap_value | <service-path> <tap position> | Gets the current tap value of the channel you specify at the tap position you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_eqctrl | <service-path> | Gets the equalization control value on the receiver channel. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns the current data checker pattern by name. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_has_dfe | <service-path> | Reports whether the channel you specify has the DFE feature available. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_has_eye_viewer | <service-path> | (Stratix V only) Reports whether the Eye Viewer feature is available for the channel you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_checking | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the checker is running. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_dfe_enabled | <service-path> | Reports whether the DFE feature is enabled on the channel you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_locked | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the checker is locked onto the incoming data. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_reset_counters | <service-path> | Resets the bit and error counters inside the checker. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_reset | <service-path> | Resets the channel you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_dcgain | <service-path> <value> | Sets the DC gain value on the receiver channel. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_dfe_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the DFE feature on the channel you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_dfe_tap_value | <service-path> <tap position> <tap value> | Sets the current tap value of the channel you specify at the tap position you specify to the value you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_dfe_adaptive | <service-path> <adaptive-mode> | Sets DFE adaptation mode of the channel you specify. | | | | | | | | |
| | | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th><th>Description</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td><td>off</td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>adaptive</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>one-time adaptive</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Value | Description | 0 | off | 1 | adaptive | 2 | one-time adaptive |
| Value | Description | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | off | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | adaptive | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | one-time adaptive | | | | | | | | | |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_eqctrl | <service-path> <value> | Sets the equalization control value on the receiver channel. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_start_checking | <service-path> | Starts the checker. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_stop_checking | <service-path> | Stops the checker. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_eye_viewer_phase_step | <service-path> | (Stratix V only) Gets the current phase step of the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_pattern | <service-path> <pattern-name> | Sets the expected pattern to the one specified by the pattern name. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_eye_viewer_enabled | <service-path> | (Stratix V only) Reports whether the Eye Viewer feature is enabled on the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_eye_viewer_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | (Stratix V only) Enables or disables the Eye Viewer feature on the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_eye_viewer_phase_step | <service-path> <phase step> | (Stratix V only) Sets the phase step of the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_word_aligner_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the word aligner of the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_word_aligner_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Reports whether the word aligner feature is enabled on the channel you specify. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_locked | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the checker is locked onto the incoming signal. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_rx_locked_to_data | <service-path> | Returns 1 if transceiver is in lock to data (LTD) mode. Otherwise 0. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_is_rx_locked_to_ref | <service-path> | Returns 1 if transceiver is in lock to reference (LTR) mode. Otherwise 0. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_has_eye_viewer_1d | <service-path> | (Stratix V only) Detects whether the eye viewer in <service-path> supports 1D-Eye Viewer mode. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_set_1deye_mode | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | (Stratix V only) Enables or disables 1D-Eye Viewer mode. |
| transceiver_channel_rx_get_1deye_mode | <service-path> | (Stratix V only) Returns whether 1D-Eye Viewer mode is on or off. |

Table 47. Transceiver Toolkit channel_tx Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---|----------------|--|
| transceiver_channel_tx_disable_preamble | <service-path> | Disables the preamble mode at the beginning of generation. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_enable_preamble | <service-path> | Enables the preamble mode at the beginning of generation. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_number_of_preamble_beats | <service-path> | Returns the number of beats to send out the preamble word. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns the pattern. |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---|---|---|
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_preamble_word | <service-path> | Returns the preamble word. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_preemph0t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis first pre-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_preemph1t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis first post-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_preemph2t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis second post-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_preemph3t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis second pre-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_get_vodctrl | <service-path> | Gets the V_{OD} control value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_inject_error | <service-path> | Injects a 1-bit error into the generator's output. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_is_generating | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the generator is running. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_is_preamble_enabled | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if preamble mode is enabled. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_number_of_preamble_beats | <service-path> <number-of-preamble-beats> | Sets the number of beats to send out the preamble word. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_pattern | <service-path> <pattern-name> | Sets the output pattern to the one specified by the pattern name. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_preamble_word | <service-path> <preamble-word> | Sets the preamble word to be sent out. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_preemph0t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis first pre-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_preemph1t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis first post-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_preemph2t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis second post-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_preemph3t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis second pre-tap value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_set_vodctrl | <service-path> <vodctrl value> | Sets the V_{OD} control value on the transmitter channel. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_start_generation | <service-path> | Starts the generator. |
| transceiver_channel_tx_stop_generation | <service-path> | Stops the generator. |

**Table 48. Transceiver Toolkit Transceiver Toolkit debug_link Commands**

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| transceiver_debug_link_get_pattern | <service-path> | Gets the pattern the link uses to run the test. |
| transceiver_debug_link_is_running | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the test is running on the link. |
| transceiver_debug_link_set_pattern | <service-path> <data pattern> | Sets the pattern the link uses to run the test. |
| transceiver_debug_link_start_running | <service-path> | Starts running a test with the currently selected test pattern. |
| transceiver_debug_link_stop_running | <service-path> | Stops running the test. |

Table 49. Transceiver Toolkit reconfig_analog Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--|--|--|
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_logic al_channel_address | <service-path> | Gets the transceiver logic channel address currently set. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_rx_dc gain | <service-path> | Gets the DC gain value on the receiver channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_rx_eq ctrl | <service-path> | Gets the equalization control value on the receiver channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_tx_pr eemph0t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis first pre-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_tx_pr eemph1t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis first post-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_tx_pr eemph2t | <service-path> | Gets the pre-emphasis second post-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_get_tx_vo dctrl | <service-path> | Gets the V _{OP} control value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_logic al_channel_address | <service-path> <logic channel address> | Sets the transceiver logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_rx_dc gain | <service-path> <dc_gain value> | Sets the DC gain value on the receiver channel specified by the current logic channel address |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_rx_eq ctrl | <service-path> <eqctrl value> | Sets the equalization control value on the receiver channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_tx_pr eemph0t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis first pre-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_tx_preamph1t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis first post-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_tx_preamph2t | <service-path> <value> | Sets the pre-emphasis second post-tap value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |
| transceiver_reconfig_analog_set_tx_vodctrl | <service-path> <vodctrl value> | Sets the V _{OD} control value on the transmitter channel specified by the current logic channel address. |

Table 50. Transceiver Toolkit Decision Feedback Equalization (DFE) Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---|---|---|
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe_get_logical_channel_address | <service-path> | Gets the logic channel address that other alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe commands use to apply. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe_is_enabled | <service-path> | Reports whether the DFE feature is enabled on the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe_set_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the DFE feature on the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe_set_logical_channel_address | <service-path> <logic channel address> | (Stratix V only) Sets the logic channel address that other alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer commands use. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_dfe_set_tap_value | <service-path> <tap position> <tap value> | Sets the tap value at the previously channel you specify at specified tap position and value. |

Table 51. Transceiver Toolkit Eye Monitor Commands (Stratix V only)

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| alt_xcvr_custom_is_word_aligner_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Reports whether the word aligner feature is enabled on the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_custom_set_word_aligner_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the word aligner of the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_custom_is_rx_locked_to_data | <service-path> | Returns whether the receiver CDR is locked to data. |
| alt_xcvr_custom_is_rx_locked_to_ref | <service-path> | Returns whether the receiver CDR PLL is locked to the reference clock. |
| alt_xcvr_custom_is_serial_loopback_enabled | <service-path> | Returns whether the serial loopback mode of the previously channel you specify is enabled. |
| alt_xcvr_custom_set_serial_loopback_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the serial loopback mode of the previously channel you specify. |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--|--|--|
| alt_xcvr_custom_is_tx_pll_locked | <service-path> | Returns whether the transmitter PLL is locked to the reference clock. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_get_logical_channel_address | <service-path> | Gets the logic channel address on which other alt_reconfig_eye_viewer commands use. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_get_phase_step | <service-path> | Gets the current phase step of the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_is_enabled | <service-path> | Reports whether the Eye Viewer feature is enabled on the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_set_enabled | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables the Eye Viewer feature on the previously channel you specify. Setting a value of 2 enables both Eye Viewer and the Serial Bit Comparator. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_set_logical_channel_address | <service-path> <logic channel address> | Sets the logic channel address that other alt_reconfig_eye_viewer commands use. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_set_phase_step | <service-path> <phase step> | Sets the phase step of the previously channel you specify. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_has_ber_checker | <service-path> | Detects whether the eye viewer pointed to by <service-path> supports the Serial Bit Comparator. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_is_enabled | <service-path> | Detects whether the Serial Bit Comparator is enabled. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_start | <service-path> | Starts the Serial Bit Comparator counters. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_stop | <service-path> | Stops the Serial Bit Comparator counters. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_reset_counters | <service-path> | Resets the Serial Bit Comparator counters. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_is_running | <service-path> | Reports whether the Serial Bit Comparator counters are currently running or not. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_ber_checker_get_data | <service-path> | Gets the current total bit, error bit, and exception counts for the Serial Bit Comparator. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_has_1deye | <service-path> | Detects whether the eye viewer pointed to by <service-path> supports 1D-Eye Viewer mode. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_set_1deye_mode | <service-path> <disable(0)/enable(1)> | Enables or disables 1D-Eye Viewer mode. |
| alt_xcvr_reconfig_eye_viewer_get_1deye_mode | <service-path> | Gets the enable or disabled state of 1D-Eye Viewer mode. |

**Table 52. Channel Type Commands**

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|------------------|---|--|
| get_channel_type | <service-path> <logical-channel-num> | Reports the detected type (GX/GT) of channel <logical-channel-num> for the reconfiguration block located at <service-path>. |
| set_channel_type | <service-path> <logical-channel-num> <channel-type> | Overrides the detected channel type of channel <logical-channel-num> for the reconfiguration block located at <service-path> to the type specified (0:GX, 1:GT). |

Table 53. Loopback Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| loopback_get | <service-path> | Returns the value of a setting or result on the loopback channel. Available results include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status—running or stopped. Bytes—number of bytes sent through the loopback channel. Errors—number of errors reported by the loopback channel. Seconds—number of seconds since the loopback channel was started. |
| loopback_set | <service-path> | Sets the value of a setting controlling the loopback channel. Some settings are only supported by particular channel types. Available settings include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timer—number of seconds for the test run. Size—size of the test data. Mode—mode of the test. |
| loopback_start | <service-path> | Starts sending data through the loopback channel. |
| loopback_stop | <service-path> | Stops sending data through the loopback channel. |

3.13.2. Data Pattern Generator Commands

You can use Data Pattern Generator commands to control data patterns for debugging transceiver channels. You must instantiate the Data Pattern Generator component to support these commands.

Table 54. Soft Data Pattern Generator Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | |
|---|---|--|-------|-------------|---|---|
| data_pattern_generator_start | <service-path> | Starts the data pattern generator. | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_stop | <service-path> | Stops the data pattern generator. | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_is_generating | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the generator is running. | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_inject_error | <service-path> | Injects a 1-bit error into the generator output. | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_set_pattern | <service-path> <pattern-name> | Sets the output pattern that <pattern-name> specifies. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRBS7 PRBS15 PRBS23 PRBS31 </td> <td>Pseudo-random binary sequences. PRBS files are clear text, and you can modify the PRBS files.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Value | Description | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRBS7 PRBS15 PRBS23 PRBS31 | Pseudo-random binary sequences. PRBS files are clear text, and you can modify the PRBS files. |
| Value | Description | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRBS7 PRBS15 PRBS23 PRBS31 | Pseudo-random binary sequences. PRBS files are clear text, and you can modify the PRBS files. | | | | | |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------|-------------|----|---|----|--|---|--------|---|------------|---|--------------|
| | | <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Value</th><th>Description</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>HF</td><td>Outputs high frequency, constant pattern of alternating 0s and 1s</td></tr><tr><td>LF</td><td>Outputs low frequency, constant pattern of 10b'1111100000 for 10-bit symbols and 8b'11110000 for 8-bit symbols</td></tr></tbody></table> | Value | Description | HF | Outputs high frequency, constant pattern of alternating 0s and 1s | LF | Outputs low frequency, constant pattern of 10b'1111100000 for 10-bit symbols and 8b'11110000 for 8-bit symbols | | | | | | |
| Value | Description | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HF | Outputs high frequency, constant pattern of alternating 0s and 1s | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LF | Outputs low frequency, constant pattern of 10b'1111100000 for 10-bit symbols and 8b'11110000 for 8-bit symbols | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns currently selected output pattern. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_get_available_patterns | <service-path> | Returns a list of available data patterns by name. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_enable_preamble | <service-path> | Enables the preamble mode at the beginning of generation. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_disable_preamble | <service-path> | Disables the preamble mode at the beginning of generation. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_is_preamble_enabled | <service-path> | Returns a non-zero value if preamble mode is enabled. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_set_preamble_word | <preamble-word> | Sets the preamble word (could be 32-bit or 40-bit). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_get_preamble_word | <service-path> | Gets the preamble word. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_set_preamble_beats | <service-path><number-of-preamble-beats> | Sets the number of beats to send out in the preamble word. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_get_preamble_beats | <service-path> | Returns the currently set number of beats to send out in the preamble word. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_fcnter_start | <service-path><max-cycles> | Sets the max cycle count and starts the frequency counter. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_check_status | <service-path> | Queries the data pattern generator for current status. Returns a bitmap indicating the status, with bits defined as follows: <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Value</th><th>Description</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>0</td><td>Enabled</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Bypass enabled</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Avalon</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Sink ready</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Source valid</td></tr></tbody></table> | Value | Description | 0 | Enabled | 1 | Bypass enabled | 2 | Avalon | 3 | Sink ready | 4 | Source valid |
| Value | Description | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | Enabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Bypass enabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Avalon | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Sink ready | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Source valid | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

continued...



| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-------|-------------|---|---------------------------|
| | | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th><th>Description</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5</td><td>Frequency counter enabled</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Value | Description | 5 | Frequency counter enabled |
| Value | Description | | | | | |
| 5 | Frequency counter enabled | | | | | |
| data_pattern_generator_fcnter_report | <service-path><force-stop> | Reports the current measured clock ratio, stopping the counting first depending on <force-stop>. | | | | |

Table 55. Hard Data Pattern Generator Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------|-------------|---|------------|---|-----------|
| hard_prbs_generator_start | <service-path> | Starts the generator that you specify. | | | | | | |
| hard_prbs_generator_stop | <service-path> | Stops the generator that you specify. | | | | | | |
| hard_prbs_generator_is_generating | <service-path> | Checks the generation status. Returns: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th><th>Description</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td><td>Generating</td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Otherwise</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Value | Description | 0 | Generating | 1 | Otherwise |
| Value | Description | | | | | | | |
| 0 | Generating | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Otherwise | | | | | | | |
| hard_prbs_generator_set_pattern | <service-path><pattern> | Sets the pattern of the hard PRBS generator you specify to pattern. | | | | | | |
| hard_prbs_generator_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns the current pattern for a given hard PRBS generator. | | | | | | |
| hard_prbs_generator_get_available_patterns | <service-path> | Returns the available patterns for a given hard PRBS generator. | | | | | | |

3.13.3. Data Pattern Checker Commands

You can use Data Pattern Checker commands to verify your generated data patterns. You must instantiate the Data Pattern Checker component to support these commands.

Table 56. Soft Data Pattern Checker Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| data_pattern_checker_start | <service-path> | Starts the data pattern checker. |
| data_pattern_checker_stop | <service-path> | Stops the data pattern checker. |
| data_pattern_checker_is_checking | <service-path> | Returns a non-zero value if the checker is running. |
| data_pattern_checker_is_locked | <service-path> | Returns non-zero if the checker is locked onto the incoming data. |
| data_pattern_checker_set_pattern | <service-path><pattern-name> | Sets the expected pattern to <pattern-name>. |
| data_pattern_checker_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns the currently selected expected pattern by name. |
| data_pattern_checker_get_available_patterns | <service-path> | Returns a list of available data patterns by name. |

continued...

| Command | Arguments | Function | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------|---------------|---|---------|---|--------|---|----------------|---|--------|---|------------|---|--------------|---|---------------------------|
| data_pattern_checker_get_data | <service-path> | Returns a list of the current checker data. The results are in the following order: number of bits, number of errors, and bit error rate. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_checker_reset_counters | <service-path> | Resets the bit and error counters inside the checker. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_checker_fcnter_start | <service-path><max-cycles> | Sets the max cycle count and starts the frequency counter. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_checker_check_status | <service-path> <service-path> | Queries the data pattern checker for current status. Returns a bitmap indicating status: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>Enabled</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Locked</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Bypass enabled</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Avalon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Sink ready</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Source valid</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>Frequency counter enabled</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Value | Status | 0 | Enabled | 1 | Locked | 2 | Bypass enabled | 3 | Avalon | 4 | Sink ready | 5 | Source valid | 6 | Frequency counter enabled |
| Value | Status | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | Enabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Locked | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Bypass enabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Avalon | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Sink ready | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Source valid | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Frequency counter enabled | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| data_pattern_checker_fcnter_report | <service-path><force-stop> | Reports the current measured clock ratio, stopping the counting first depending on <force-stop>. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 57. Hard Data Pattern Checker Commands

| Command | Arguments | Function |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| hard_prbs_checker_start | <service-path> | Starts the specified hard PRBS checker. |
| hard_prbs_checker_stop | <service-path> | Stops the specified hard PRBS checker. |
| hard_prbs_checker_is_checking | <service-path> | Checks the running status of the specified hard PRBS checker. Returns a non-zero value if the checker is running. |
| hard_prbs_checker_set_pattern | <service-path> <pattern> | Sets the pattern of the specified hard PRBS checker to parameter <pattern>. |
| hard_prbs_checker_get_pattern | <service-path> | Returns the current pattern for a given hard PRBS checker. |
| hard_prbs_checker_get_available_patterns | <service-path> | Returns the available patterns for a given hard PRBS checker. |
| hard_prbs_checker_get_data | <service-path> | Returns the current bit and error count data from the specified hard PRBS checker. |
| hard_prbs_checker_reset_counters | <service-path> | Resets the bit and error counts of the specified hard PRBS checker. |



3.14. Debugging Transceiver Links Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2019.06.11 | 18.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebranded Altera Debug Master Endpoint (ADME) to Native PHY Debug Master Endpoint (NPDME). Rebranded Altera Avalon Data Pattern Generator to Avalon Data Pattern Generator. Rebranded Altera Avalon Data Pattern Checker to Avalon Data Pattern Checker. |
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.07.03 | 18.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added Device Family column to table: <i>Transceiver Toolkit Control Pane Settings</i> |
| 2017.11.06 | 17.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renamed <i>EyeQ</i> to <i>Eye Viewer</i>. Updated topic "Transceiver Debugging Flow" and renamed to "Transceiver Debugging Flow Walkthrough". Updated instructions for instantiating and parameterizing Debug IP cores. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed figure: "Altera Debug Master Endpoint Block Diagram". Added step on programming designs as a part of the debugging flow. Updated information about debugging transceiver links for Intel Arria 10 devices. |
| 2016.10.31 | 16.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed EyeQ support for Intel Arria 10. Renamed "<i>Continuous Adaptation</i>" to "<i>Adaptation Enabled</i>". |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | <p>Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added description of new Refresh button. Added description of VGA dialog box. Added two tables in Transceiver Toolkit Commands section. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard Data Pattern Generator Commands Hard Data Pattern Checker Commands Separated Arria 10 and Stratix V system configuration steps. |
| May 2015 | 15.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added section about Implementation Differences Between Stratix V and Arria 10. Added section about Recommended Flow for Arria 10 Transceiver Toolkit Design with the Quartus II Software. Added section about Transceiver Toolkit Troubleshooting Updated the following sections with information about using the Transceiver Toolkit with Arria 10 devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serial Bit Comparator Mode Arria 10 Support and Limitations Configuring BER Tests Configuring PRBS Signal Eye Tests Adapting Altera Design Examples Modifying Design Examples Configuring Custom Traffic Signal Eye Tests Configuring Link Optimization Tests Configuring PMA Analog Setting Control Running BER Tests Toolkit GUI Setting Reference Reworked Table: Transceiver Toolkit IP Core Configuration Replaced Figure: EyeQ Settings and Status Showing Results of Two Test Runs with Figure: EyeQ Settings and Status Showing Results of Three Test Runs. |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added Figure: Arria 10 Altera Debug Master Endpoint Block Diagram.Added Figure: BER Test Configuration (Arria10/ Gen 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram.Added Figure: PRBS Signal Test Configuration (Arria 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram.Added Figure: Custom Traffic Signal Eye Test Configuration (Arria 10/ Gen 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram.Added Figure: PMA Analog Setting Control Configuration (Arria 10/ Gen 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram.Added Figure: One Channel Loopback Mode (Arria 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram.Added Figure: Four Channel Loopback Mode (Arria 10/ Gen 10/ 20nm) Block Diagram. <p>Software Version 15.0 Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Transceiver Toolkit supports EyeQ for Arria 10 designs.Supports optional hard acceleration for EyeQ. This allows for much faster EyeQ data collection. Enable this in the Arria 10 Transceiver Native PHY IP core under the Dynamic Configuration tab. Turn on Enable ODI acceleration logic. |
| December, 2014 | 14.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added section about Arria 10 support and limitations. |
| June, 2014 | 14.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated GUI changes for Channel Manager with popup menus, IP Catalog, Quartus II, and Qsys.Added ADME and JTAG debug link info for Arria 10.Added instructions to run Tcl script from command line.Added heat map display option.Added procedure to use internal PLL to generate reconfig_clk.Added note stating RX CDR PLL status can toggle in LTD mode. |
| November, 2013 | 13.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reorganization and conversion to DITA. |
| May, 2013 | 13.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added Conduit Mode Support, Serial Bit Comparator, Required Files and Tcl command tables. |
| November, 2012 | 12.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor editorial updates. Added Tcl help information and removed Tcl command tables. Added 28-Gbps Transceiver support section. |
| August, 2012 | 12.0.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">General reorganization and revised steps in modifying Altera example designs. |
| June, 2012 | 12.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintenance release for update of Transceiver Toolkit features. |
| November, 2011 | 11.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintenance release for update of Transceiver Toolkit features. |
| May, 2011 | 11.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added new Tcl scenario. |
| December, 2010 | 10.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Changed to new document template. Added new 10.1 release features. |
| August, 2010 | 10.0.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Corrected links. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Initial release. |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.

4. Quick Design Debugging Using Signal Probe

The Signal Probe incremental routing feature helps reduce the hardware verification process and time-to-market for system-on-a-programmable-chip (SOPC) designs. Easy access to internal device signals is important in the design or debugging process. The Signal Probe feature makes design verification more efficient by routing internal signals to I/O pins quickly without affecting the design. When you start with a fully routed design, you can select and route signals for debugging to either previously reserved or currently unused I/O pins.

The Signal Probe feature supports the Arria series, Cyclone series, MAX II, and Stratix series device families.

Related Information

[System Debugging Tools Overview](#) on page 7

4.1. Design Flow Using Signal Probe

The Signal Probe feature allows you to reserve available pins and route internal signals to those reserved pins, while preserving the behavior of your design. Signal Probe is an effective debugging tool that provides visibility into your FPGA.

You can reserve pins for Signal Probe and assign I/O standards after a full compilation. Each Signal Probe-source to Signal Probe-pin connection is implemented as an engineering change order (ECO) that is applied to your netlist after a full compilation.

To route the internal signals to the device's reserved pins for Signal Probe, perform the following tasks:

1. Perform a full compilation.
2. Reserve Signal Probe Pins.
3. Assign Signal Probe sources.
4. Add registers between pipeline paths and Signal Probe pins.
5. Perform a Signal Probe compilation.
6. Analyze the results of a Signal Probe compilation.

4.1.1. Perform a Full Compilation

You must complete a full compilation to generate an internal netlist containing a list of internal nodes to probe.

To perform a full compilation, on the Processing menu, click **Start Compilation**.



4.1.2. Reserve Signal Probe Pins

Signal Probe pins can only be reserved after a full compilation. You can also probe any unused I/Os of the device. Assigning sources is a simple process after reserving Signal Probe pins. The sources for Signal Probe pins are the internal nodes and registers in the post-compilation netlist that you want to probe.

Note: Although you can reserve Signal Probe pins using many features within the Intel Quartus Prime software, including the Pin Planner and the Tcl interface, you should use the **Signal Probe Pins** dialog box to create and edit your Signal Probe pins.

4.1.3. Assign Signal Probe Sources

A Signal Probe source can be any combinational node, register, or pin in your post-compilation netlist. To find a Signal Probe source, in the Node Finder, use the Signal Probe filter to remove all sources that cannot be probed. You might not be able to find a particular internal node because the node can be optimized away during synthesis, or the node cannot be routed to the Signal Probe pin. For example, you cannot probe nodes and registers within Gigabit transceivers in Stratix IV devices because there are no physical routes available to the pins.

Note: To probe virtual I/O pins generated in low-level partitions in an incremental compilation flow, select the source of the logic that feeds the virtual pin as your Signal Probe source pin.

Because Signal Probe pins are implemented and routed as ECOs, turning the **Signal Probe enable** option on or off is the same as selecting **Apply Selected Change** or **Restore Selected Change** in the Change Manager window. If the Change Manager window is not visible at the bottom of your screen, on the View menu, point to **Utility Windows** and click **Change Manager**.

4.1.4. Add Registers Between Pipeline Paths and Signal Probe Pins

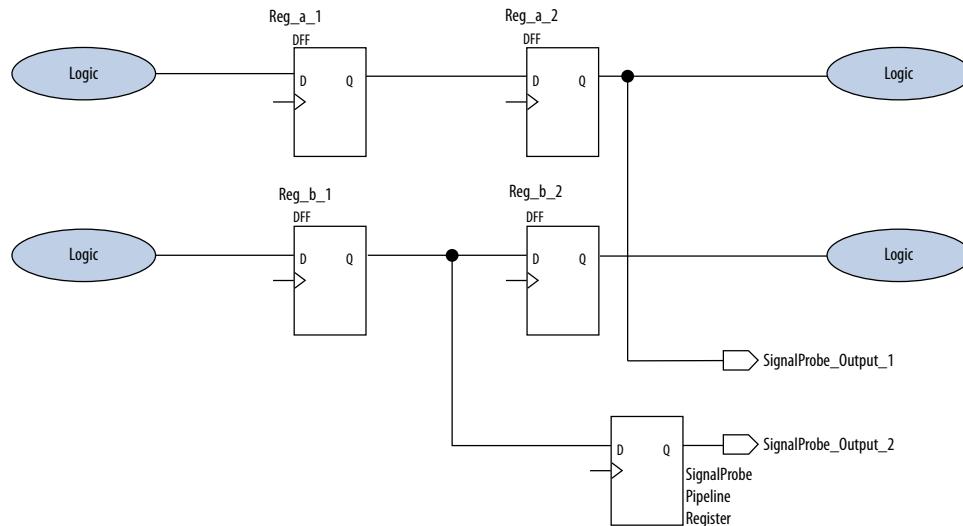
You can specify the number of registers placed between a Signal Probe source and a Signal Probe pin. The registers synchronize data to a clock and control the latency of the Signal Probe outputs. The Signal Probe feature automatically inserts the number of registers specified into the Signal Probe path.

The figure shows a single register between the Signal Probe source Reg_b_1 and Signal Probe Signal_Probe_Output_2 output pin added to synchronize the data between the two Signal Probe output pins.

**Note:**

When you add a register to a Signal Probe pin, the Signal Probe compilation attempts to place the register to best meet timing requirements. You can place Signal Probe registers either near the Signal Probe source to meet f_{MAX} requirements, or near the I/O to meet t_{CO} requirements.

Figure 38. Synchronizing Signal Probe Outputs with a Signal Probe Register



In addition to clock input for pipeline registers, you can also specify a reset signal pin for pipeline registers. To specify a reset pin for pipeline registers, use the Tcl command `make_sp`.

4.1.5. Perform a Signal Probe Compilation

Perform a Signal Probe compilation to route your Signal Probe pins. A Signal Probe compilation saves and checks all netlist changes without recompiling the other parts of the design. A Signal Probe compilation takes a fraction of the time of a full compilation to finish. The design's current placement and routing are preserved.

To perform a Signal Probe compilation, on the Processing menu, point to **Start** and click **Start Signal Probe Compilation**.

4.1.6. Analyze the Results of a Signal Probe Compilation

After a Signal Probe compilation, the results are available in the compilation report file. Each Signal Probe pin is displayed in the **Signal Probe Fitting Result** page in the **Fitter** section of the Compilation Report. To view the status of each Signal Probe pin in the **Signal Probe Pins** dialog box, on the Tools menu, click **Signal Probe Pins**.

The status of each Signal Probe pin appears in the Change Manager window. If the Change Manager window is not visible at the bottom of your GUI, from the View menu, point to **Utility Windows** and click **Change Manager**.

Figure 39. Change Manager Window with Signal Probe Pins

| Change Manager | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Index | Node Name | Change Type | Old Value | Target Value | Current Value | Disk Value |
| 1 | signalprobe_1 | SignalProbe | Disconnected | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.idle | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.idle | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.idle |
| 2 | signalprobe_2 | SignalProbe | Disconnected | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap1 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap1 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap1 |
| 3 | signalprobe_3 | SignalProbe | Disconnected | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap2 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap2 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap2 |
| 4 | signalprobe_4 | SignalProbe | Disconnected | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap3 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap3 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap3 |
| 5 | signalprobe_5 | SignalProbe | Disconnected | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap4 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap4 | lfilterstate_m_inst1 filter.tap4 |

To view the timing results of each successfully routed Signal Probe pin, on the Processing menu, point to **Start** and click **Start Timing Analysis**.

Related Information

[Engineering Change Management with the Chip Planner](#)

In Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Optimization

4.1.7. What a Signal Probe Compilation Does

After a full compilation, you can start a Signal Probe compilation either manually or automatically. A Signal Probe compilation performs the following functions:

- Validates Signal Probe pins
- Validates your specified Signal Probe sources
- Adds registers into Signal Probe paths, if applicable
- Attempts to route from Signal Probe sources through registers to Signal Probe pins

To run the Signal Probe compilation immediately after a full compilation, on the Tools menu, click **Signal Probe Pins**. In the **Signal Probe Pins** dialog box, click **Start Check & Save All Netlist Changes**.

To run a Signal Probe compilation manually after a full compilation, on the Processing menu, point to **Start** and click **Start Signal Probe Compilation**.

Note: You must run the Fitter before a Signal Probe compilation. The Fitter generates a list of all internal nodes that can serve as Signal Probe sources.

Turn the **Signal Probe enable** option on or off in the **Signal Probe Pins** dialog box to enable or disable each Signal Probe pin.

4.1.8. Understanding the Results of a Signal Probe Compilation

After a Signal Probe compilation, the results appear in two sections of the compilation report file. The fitting results and status of each Signal Probe pin appears in the **Signal Probe Fitting Result** screen in the Fitter section of the Compilation Report.

**Table 58. Status Values**

| Status | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| Routed | Connected and routed successfully |
| Not Routed | Not enabled |
| Failed to Route | Failed routing during last Signal Probe compilation |
| Need to Compile | Assignment changed since last Signal Probe compilation |

Figure 40. Signal Probe Fitting Results Page in the Compilation Report Window

The screenshot shows the 'Compilation Report - Filter SignalPro...' window. The left pane is a tree view of report sections, and the right pane displays the 'Fitter SignalProbe Fitting Results' table. The table has columns for Target, Source, Location, Pipeline Registers, Clock Name, and IO Standard. One row is shown with the values: Target = Signal_probe_5[d0], Source = PIN_D4, Location = 0, Pipeline Registers = 1, Clock Name = 3.3V LVTTL, and IO Standard = 3.3V LVTTL.

| Target | Source | Location | Pipeline Registers | Clock Name | IO Standard |
|--------------------|--------|----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Signal_probe_5[d0] | PIN_D4 | 0 | 1 | 3.3V LVTTL | 3.3V LVTTL |

The **Signal Probe source to output delays** screen in the Timing Analysis section of the Compilation Report displays the timing results of each successfully routed Signal Probe pin.

Figure 41. Signal Probe Source to Output Delays Page in the Compilation Report Window

The screenshot shows the 'Compilation Report' window with the 'Timing Analyzer' section expanded. The right pane displays the 'SignalProbe Source to Output Delays' table. The table has columns for Source Name, Pin Location, Pin Name, Enable, Status, Delay (ns), and a blank column. Three rows are listed: 1. inst5[2] Pin_H17 probe1 On Routed 5.135 ns; 2. inst5[3] Pin_H20 probe2 On Routed 4.939 ns; 3. inst5[4] Pin_G22 probe3 On Routed 4.475 ns.

| Source Name | Pin Location | Pin Name | Enable | Status | Delay (ns) | |
|-------------|--------------|----------|--------|--------|------------|--|
| inst5[2] | Pin_H17 | probe1 | On | Routed | 5.135 ns | |
| inst5[3] | Pin_H20 | probe2 | On | Routed | 4.939 ns | |
| inst5[4] | Pin_G22 | probe3 | On | Routed | 4.475 ns | |

Note: After a Signal Probe compilation, the processing screen of the Messages window also provides the results for each Signal Probe pin and displays slack information for each successfully routed Signal Probe pin.

4.1.8.1. Analyzing Signal Probe Routing Failures

A Signal Probe compilation can fail for any of the following reasons:



- **Route unavailable**—the Signal Probe compilation failed to find a route from the Signal Probe source to the Signal Probe pin because of routing congestion.
- **Invalid or nonexistent Signal Probe source**—you entered a Signal Probe source that does not exist or is invalid.
- **Unusable output pin**—the output pin selected is found to be unusable.

Routing failures can occur if the Signal Probe pin's I/O standard conflicts with other I/O standards in the same I/O bank.

If routing congestion prevents a successful Signal Probe compilation, you can allow the compiler to modify routing to the specified Signal Probe source. On the Tools menu, click **Signal Probe Pins** and turn on **Modify latest fitting results during Signal Probe compilation**. This setting allows the Fitter to modify existing routing channels used by your design.

Note: Turning on **Modify latest fitting results during Signal Probe compilation** can change the performance of your design.

4.2. Scripting Support

You can also run some procedures at a command prompt. For detailed information about scripting command options, refer to the Intel Quartus Prime command-line and Tcl API Help browser. To run the Help browser, type the following command at the command prompt:

```
quartus_sh --qhelp
```

Note: The Tcl commands in this section are part of the ::quartus::chip_planner Intel Quartus Prime Tcl API. Source or include the ::quartus::chip_planner Tcl package in your scripts to make these commands available.

Related Information

- [Tcl Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Scripting*
- [Command Line Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Scripting*

4.2.1. Making a Signal Probe Pin

To make a Signal Probe pin, type the following command:

```
make_sp [-h | -help] [-long_help] [-clk <clk>] [-io_std <io_std>] \
-loc <loc> -pin_name <pin name> [-regs <regs>] [-reset <reset>] \
-src_name <source name>
```

4.2.2. Deleting a Signal Probe Pin

To delete a Signal Probe pin, type the following Tcl command:

```
delete_sp [-h | -help] [-long_help] -pin_name <pin name>
```



4.2.3. Enabling a Signal Probe Pin

To enable a Signal Probe pin, type the following Tcl command:

```
enable_sp [-h | -help] [-long_help] -pin_name <pin name>
```

4.2.4. Disabling a Signal Probe Pin

To disable a Signal Probe pin, type the following Tcl command:

```
disable_sp [-h | -help] [-long_help] -pin_name <pin name>
```

4.2.5. Performing a Signal Probe Compilation

To perform a Signal Probe compilation, type the following command:

```
quartus_sh --flow signalprobe <project name>
```

4.2.5.1. Script Example

The example shows a script that creates a Signal Probe pin called `sp1` and connects the `sp1` pin to source node `reg1` in a project that was already compiled.

Creating a Signal Probe Pin Called `sp1`

```
package require ::quartus::chip_planner
project_open project
read_netlist
make_sp -pin_name sp1 -src_name reg1
check_netlist_and_save
project_close
```

4.2.6. Reserving Signal Probe Pins

To reserve a Signal Probe pin, add the commands shown in the example to the Intel Quartus Prime Settings File (`.qsf`) for your project.

Reserving a Signal Probe Pin

```
set_location_assignment <location> -to <Signal Probe pin name>
set_instance_assignment -name RESERVE_PIN \
"AS SIGNALPROBE OUTPUT" -to <Signal Probe pin name>
```

Valid locations are pin location names, such as `Pin_A3`.

4.2.6.1. Common Problems When Reserving a Signal Probe Pin

If you cannot reserve a Signal Probe pin in the Intel Quartus Prime software, it is likely that one of the following is true:



- You have selected multiple pins.
- A compilation is running in the background. Wait until the compilation is complete before reserving the pin.
- You have the Intel Quartus Prime Lite Edition software, in which the Signal Probe feature is not enabled by default.
- You have not set the pin reserve type to **As Signal Probe Output**. To reserve a pin, on the Assignments menu, in the **Assign Pins** dialog box, select **As Signal Probe Output**.
- The pin is reserved from a previous compilation. During a compilation, the Intel Quartus Prime software reserves each pin on the targeted device. If you end the Intel Quartus Prime process during a compilation, for example, with the **Windows Task Manager End Process** command or the UNIX kill command, perform a full recompilation before reserving pins as Signal Probe outputs.
- The pin does not support the Signal Probe feature. Select another pin.
- The current device family does not support the Signal Probe feature.

4.2.7. Adding Signal Probe Sources

- To assign the node name to a Signal Probe pin, type the following Tcl command:

```
set_instance_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_SOURCE <node name> \
                      -to <signalprobe pin name>
```

- To turn off individual Signal Probe pins, specify OFF instead of ON with the following command:

```
set_instance_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_ENABLE ON \
                      -to <Signal Probe pin name>
```

4.2.8. Assigning I/O Standards

- To assign an I/O standard to a pin, type the following Tcl command:

```
set_instance_assignment -name IO_STANDARD <I/O standard> -to <Signal Probe
pin name>
```

Related Information

[I/O Standards Definition](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Help*

4.2.9. Adding Registers for Pipelining

To add registers for pipelining, type the following Tcl command:

```
set_instance_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_CLOCK <clock name> \
                      -to <Signal Probe pin name>

set_instance_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_NUM_REGISTERS <number of registers> \
                      -to <Signal Probe pin name>
```



4.2.10. Running Signal Probe Immediately After a Full Compilation

To run Signal Probe immediately after a full compilation, type the following Tcl command:

```
set_global_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_DURING_NORMAL_COMPILATION ON
```

4.2.11. Running Signal Probe Manually

To run Signal Probe as part of a scripted flow using Tcl, use the following in your script:

```
execute_flow -signalprobe
```

To perform a Signal Probe compilation interactively at a command prompt, type the following command:

```
quartus_sh_fit --flow signalprobe <project name>
```

4.2.12. Enabling or Disabling All Signal Probe Routing

Use the Tcl command in the example to turn on or turn off Signal Probe routing. When using this command, to turn Signal Probe routing on, specify ON. To turn Signal Probe routing off, specify OFF.

Turning Signal Probe On or Off with Tcl Commands

```
set spe [get_all_assignments -name SIGNALPROBE_ENABLE] \
foreach_in_collection asgn $spe {
    set signalprobe_pin_name [lindex $asgn 2]
    set_instance_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_ENABLE \
    -to $signalprobe_pin_name <ON/OFF> }
```

4.2.13. Allowing Signal Probe to Modify Fitting Results

To turn on **Modify latest fitting results**, type the following Tcl command:

```
set_global_assignment -name SIGNALPROBE_ALLOW_OVERUSE ON
```

4.3. Quick Design Debugging Using Signal Probe Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | Dita conversion. |
| May 2013 | 13.0.0 | Changed sequence of flow to clarify that you need to perform a full compilation before reserving Signal Probe pins. Affected sections are "Debugging Using the Signal Probe Feature" on page 12-1 and "Reserving Signal Probe Pins" on page 12-2. Moved "Performing a Full Compilation" on page 12-2 before "Reserving Signal Probe Pins" on page 12-2. |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Removed survey link. |
| November 2011 | 10.0.2 | Template update. |
| December 2010 | 10.0.1 | Changed to new document template. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised for new UI.• Removed section Signal Probe ECO flows• Removed support for Signal Probe pin preservation when recompiling with incremental compilation turned on.• Removed outdated FAQ section.• Added links to Quartus II Help for procedural content. |
| November 2009 | 9.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removed all references and procedures for APEX devices.• Style changes. |
| March 2009 | 9.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removed the "Generate the Programming File" section• Removed unnecessary screenshots• Minor editorial updates |
| November 2008 | 8.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modified description for preserving Signal Probe connections when using Incremental Compilation• Added plausible scenarios where Signal Probe connections are not reserved in the design |
| May 2008 | 8.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added "Arria GX" to the list of supported devices• Removed the "On-Chip Debugging Tool Comparison" and replaced with a reference to the Section V Overview on page 13-1• Added hyperlinks to referenced documents throughout the chapter• Minor editorial updates |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.

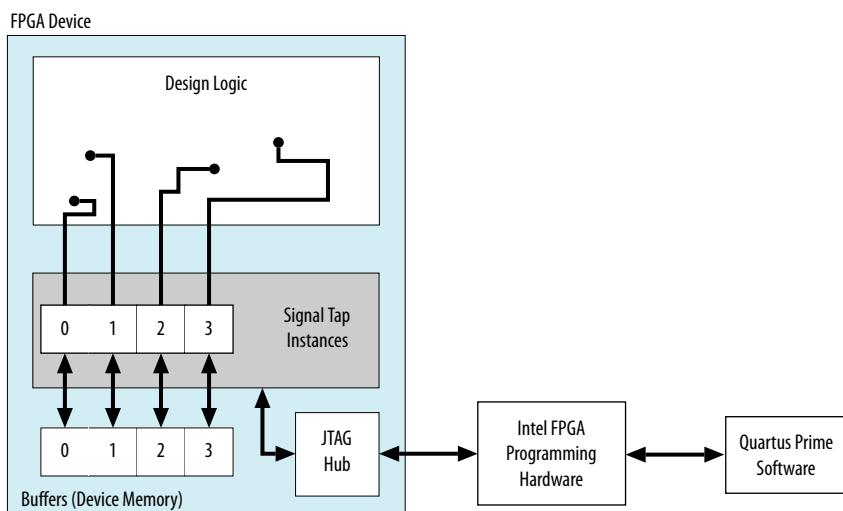
5. Design Debugging with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

5.1. The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The Signal Tap logic analyzer captures and displays real-time signal behavior in an FPGA design, allowing to examine the behavior of internal signals during normal device operation without the need for extra I/O pins or external lab equipment.

To facilitate the debugging process, you can save the captured data in device memory for later analysis. You can also filter data that is not relevant for debug by defining custom trigger-condition logic. The Signal Tap logic analyzer supports the highest number of channels, largest sample depth, and fastest clock speeds of any logic analyzer in the programmable logic market.

Figure 42. Signal Tap logic analyzer Block Diagram



Note to figure:

1. This diagram assumes that you compiled the Signal Tap logic analyzer with the design as a separate design partition using the Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation feature. If you do not use incremental compilation, the Compiler integrates the Signal Tap logic with the design.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer is available as a stand-alone package or with a software subscription.

To take advantage of faster compile times when making changes to the Signal Tap logic analyzer, knowledge of the Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation feature is helpful.



5.1.1. Hardware and Software Requirements

You need the following hardware and software to perform logic analysis with the Signal Tap logic analyzer:

- Signal Tap logic analyzer

The following software includes the Signal Tap logic analyzer:

- Intel Quartus Prime Design Software
- Intel Quartus Prime Lite Edition

Alternatively, use the Signal Tap logic analyzer standalone software and standalone Programmer software.

- Download/upload cable
- Intel development kit or your design board with JTAG connection to device under test

Note: The Intel Quartus Prime Lite Edition software does not support incremental compilation integration with the Signal Tap logic analyzer.

During data acquisition, the memory blocks in the device store the captured data, and then transfer the data to the logic analyzer over a JTAG communication cable, such as Intel FPGA Ethernet Cable or Intel FPGA Download Cable.

5.1.1.1. Opening the Standalone Signal Tap Logic Analyzer GUI

1. To open a new Signal Tap through the command-line, type:

```
quartus_stpw <stp_file.stp>
```

5.1.2. Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Features and Benefits

| Feature | Benefit |
|---|---|
| Quick access toolbar | Provides single-click operation of commonly-used menu items. You can hover over the icons to see tool tips. |
| Multiple logic analyzers in a single device | Allows you to capture data from multiple clock domains in a design at the same time. |
| Multiple logic analyzers in multiple devices in a single JTAG chain | Allows you to capture data simultaneously from multiple devices in a JTAG chain. |
| Nios II plug-in support | Allows you to specify nodes, triggers, and signal mnemonics for IP, such as the Nios II processor. |
| Up to 10 basic, comparison, or advanced trigger conditions for each analyzer instance | Allows you to send complex data capture commands to the logic analyzer, providing greater accuracy and problem isolation. |
| Power-up trigger | Captures signal data for triggers that occur after device programming, but before manually starting the logic analyzer. |
| Custom trigger HDL object | You can code your own trigger in Verilog HDL or VHDL and tap specific instances of modules located anywhere in the hierarchy of your design, without needing to manually route all the necessary connections. This simplifies the process of tapping nodes spread out across your design. |
| State-based triggering flow | Enables you to organize your triggering conditions to precisely define what your logic analyzer captures. |

continued...



| Feature | Benefit |
|--|--|
| Incremental compilation | Allows you to modify the signals and triggers that the Signal Tap logic analyzer monitors without performing a full compilation, saving time. |
| Incremental route with rapid recompile | Allows you to manually allocate trigger input, data input, storage qualifier input, and node count, and perform a full compilation to include the Signal Tap logic analyzer in your design. Then, you can selectively connect, disconnect, and swap to different nodes in your design. Use Rapid Recompile to perform incremental routing and gain a 2-4x speedup over the initial full compilation. |
| Flexible buffer acquisition modes | The buffer acquisition control allows you to precisely control the data that is written into the acquisition buffer. Both segmented buffers and non-segmented buffers with storage qualification allow you to discard data samples that are not relevant to the debugging of your design. |
| MATLAB integration with included MEX function | Collects the data the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures into a MATLAB integer matrix. |
| Up to 2,048 channels per logic analyzer instance | Samples many signals and wide bus structures. |
| Up to 128K samples per instance | Captures a large sample set for each channel. |
| Fast clock frequencies | Synchronous sampling of data nodes using the same clock tree driving the logic under test. |
| Resource usage estimator | Provides an estimate of logic and memory device resources that the Signal Tap logic analyzer configurations use. |
| No additional cost | Intel Quartus Prime subscription and the Intel Quartus Prime Lite Edition include the Signal Tap logic analyzer. |
| Compatibility with other on-chip debugging utilities | You can use the Signal Tap logic analyzer in tandem with any JTAG-based on-chip debugging tool, such as an In-System Memory Content editor, allowing you to change signal values in real-time while you are running an analysis with the Signal Tap logic analyzer. |
| Floating-Point Display Format | To enable, click Edit > Bus Display Format > Floating-point . Supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single-precision floating-point format IEEE754 Single (32-bit).• Double-precision floating-point format IEEE754 Double (64-bit). |

Related Information

[System Debugging Tools Overview](#) on page 7

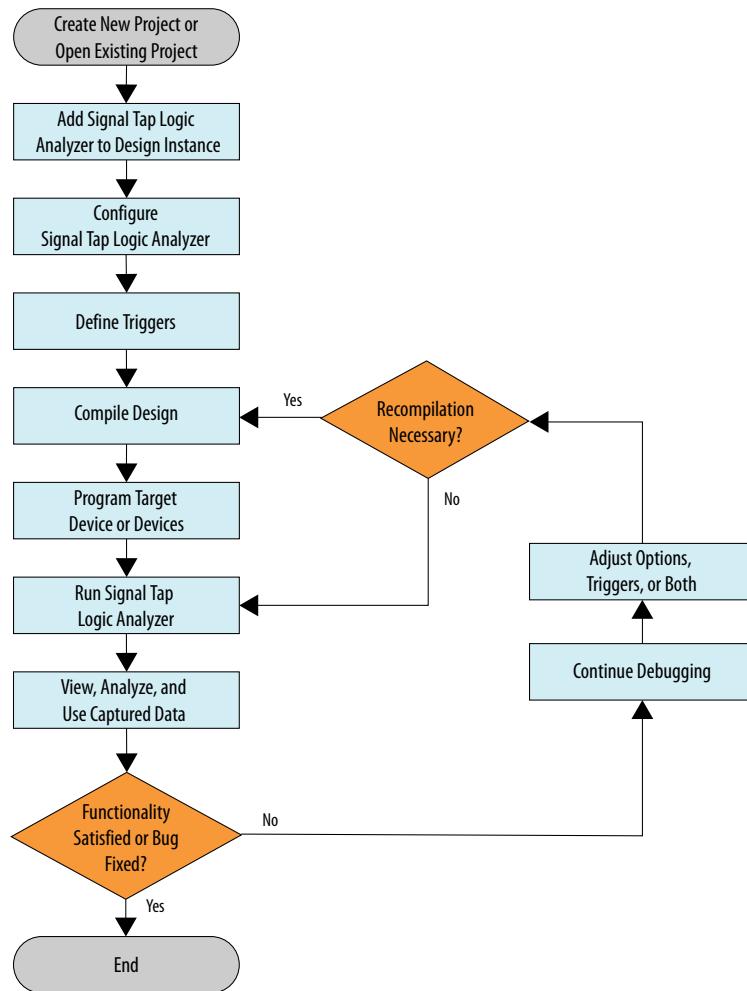
5.1.3. Backward Compatibility with Previous Versions of Intel Quartus Prime Software

When you open an .stp file created in a previous version of Intel Quartus Prime software in a newer version of the software, the .stp file cannot be opened in a previous version of the Intel Quartus Prime software.

If you have a Intel Quartus Prime project file from a previous version of the software, you may have to update the .stp configuration file to recompile the project. You can update the configuration file by opening the Signal Tap logic analyzer. If you need to update your configuration, a prompt appears asking if you want to update the .stp to match the current version of the Intel Quartus Prime software.

5.2. Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Task Flow Overview

To use the Signal Tap logic analyzer to debug your design, you perform a number of tasks to add, configure, and run the logic analyzer.

Figure 43. Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Task Flow


5.2.1. Add the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to Your Design

Create an .stp or create a parameterized HDL instance representation of the logic analyzer using the IP Catalog and parameter editor. If you want to monitor multiple clock domains simultaneously, add additional instances of the logic analyzer to your design, limited only by the available resources in your device.

5.2.2. Configure the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

After you add the Signal Tap logic analyzer to your design, configure the logic analyzer to monitor the signals you want.

You can add signals manually or use a plug-in, such as the Nios II processor plug-in, to add entire sets of associated signals for a particular IP.

Specify settings for the data capture buffer, such as its size, the method in which the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures and stores the data. If your device supports memory type selection, you can specify the memory type to use for the buffer.



Related Information

[Configuring the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer](#) on page 150

5.2.3. Define Trigger Conditions

By default, the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures data continuously while the logic analyzer is running. To capture and store specific signal data you can set up triggers that specify conditions to start or stop capturing data.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer allows you to define trigger conditions that range from very simple, such as the rising edge of a single signal, to very complex, involving groups of signals, extra logic, and multiple conditions. Power-Up Triggers allow you to capture data from trigger events occurring immediately after the device enters user-mode after configuration.

Related Information

[Defining Triggers](#) on page 169

5.2.4. Compile the Design

Once you configure the .stp file and define trigger conditions, compile your project including the logic analyzer in your design.

Note:

Because you may need to change monitored signal nodes or adjust trigger settings frequently during debugging, Intel FPGA recommends that you use the incremental compilation feature built into the Signal Tap logic analyzer, along with Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation, to reduce recompile times. You can also use Incremental Route with Rapid Recompile to reduce recompile times.

Related Information

[Compiling the Design](#) on page 194

5.2.5. Program the Target Device or Devices

When you debug a design with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, you can program a target device directly from the .stp without using the Intel Quartus Prime Programmer. You can also program multiple devices with different designs and simultaneously debug them.

Related Information

- [Program the Target Device or Devices](#) on page 199
- [Manage Multiple Signal Tap Files and Configurations](#) on page 167

5.2.6. Run the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

In normal device operation, you control the logic analyzer through the JTAG connection, specifying when to start looking for trigger conditions to begin capturing data. With Runtime or Power-Up Triggers, read and transfer the captured data from the on-chip buffer to the .stp for analysis.

Related Information

[Running the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer](#) on page 200

5.2.7. View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data

The data you capture and read into the .stp file is available for analysis and debugging. You can save the data for later analysis, or convert the data to other formats for sharing and further study.

- To simplify reading and interpreting the signal data you capture, set up mnemonic tables, either manually or with a plug-in.
- To speed up debugging, use the **Locate** feature in the **Signal Tap node** list to find the locations of problem nodes in other tools in the Intel Quartus Prime software.

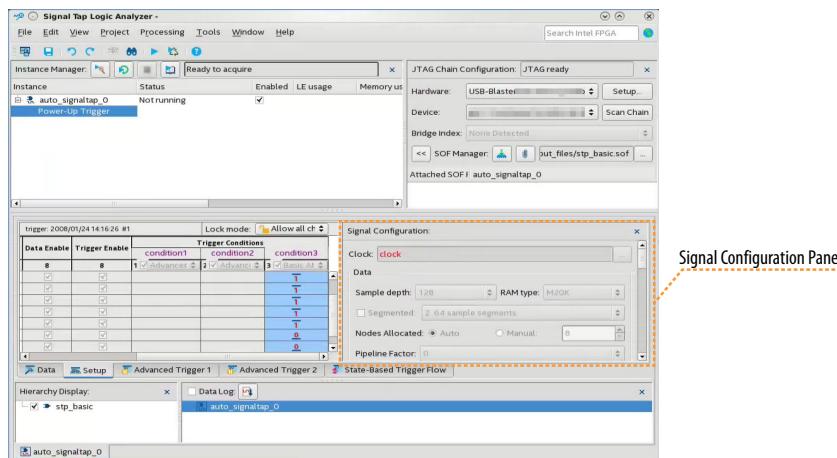
Related Information

[View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data](#) on page 204

5.3. Configuring the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

You configure instances of the Signal Tap logic analyzer in the **Signal Configuration** pane of the **Signal Tap logic analyzer** window.

Figure 44. Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Signal Configuration Pane



5.3.1. Assigning an Acquisition Clock

To control how the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer acquires data you must assign a clock signal. The logic analyzer samples data on every positive (rising) edge of the acquisition clock. The logic analyzer does not support sampling on the negative (falling) edge of the acquisition clock.

You can use any signal in your design as the acquisition clock. However, for best results in data acquisition, use a global, non-gated clock that is synchronous to the signals under test. Using a gated clock as your acquisition clock can result in unexpected data that does not accurately reflect the behavior of your design. The Intel Quartus Prime static timing analysis tools show the maximum acquisition clock frequency at which you can run your design. To find the maximum frequency of the logic analyzer clock, refer to the Timing Analysis section of the Compilation Report.



Caution: Be careful when using a recovered clock from a transceiver as an acquisition clock for the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. A recovered clock can cause incorrect or unexpected behavior, particularly when the transceiver recovered clock is the acquisition clock with the power-up trigger feature.

If you do not assign an acquisition clock in the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Editor, Intel Quartus Prime software automatically creates a clock pin called auto_stp_external_clk. You must make a pin assignment to this pin, and make sure that a clock signal in your design drives the acquisition clock.

Related Information

- [Adding Signals with a Plug-In](#) on page 154
- [Managing Device I/O Pins](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 2*

5.3.2. Adding Signals to the Signal Tap File

Add the signals that you want to monitor to the .stp node list. You can also select signals to define triggers. You can assign the following two signal types:

- **Pre-synthesis**—These signals exist after design elaboration, but before any synthesis optimizations are done. This set of signals must reflect your Register Transfer Level (RTL) signals.
- **Post-fitting**—These signals exist after physical synthesis optimizations and place-and-route.

Note: If you are not using incremental compilation, add only pre-synthesis signals to the .stp. Using pre-synthesis helps when you want to add a new node after you change a design. After you perform Analysis and Elaboration, the source file changes appear in the Node Finder.

Intel Quartus Prime software does not limit the number of signals available for monitoring in the Signal Tap window waveform display. However, the number of channels available is directly proportional to the number of logic elements (LEs) or adaptive logic modules (ALMs) in the device. Therefore, there is a physical restriction on the number of channels that are available for monitoring. Signals shown in blue text are post-fit node names. Signals shown in black text are pre-synthesis node names.

After successful Analysis and Elaboration, invalid signals appear in red. Unless you are certain that these signals are valid, remove them from the .stp file for correct operation. The Signal Tap Status Indicator also indicates if an invalid node name exists in the .stp file.

You can tap signals if a routing resource (row or column interconnects) exists to route the connection to the Signal Tap instance. For example, you cannot tap signals that exist in the I/O element (IOE), because there are no direct routing resources from the signal in an IOE to a core logic element. For input pins, you can tap the signal that is driving a logic array block (LAB) from an IOE, or, for output pins, you can tap the signal from the LAB that is driving an IOE.

Related Information

- [Faster Compilations with Intel Quartus Prime Incremental Compilation](#) on page 194



- [Setup Tab \(Signal Tap Logic Analyzer\)](#)
In Intel Quartus Prime Help

5.3.2.1. Pre-Synthesis Signals

When you add pre-synthesis signals, make all connections to the Signal Tap logic analyzer before synthesis. The Compiler allocates logic and routing resources to make the connection as if you changed your design files. For signals driving to and from IOEs, pre-synthesis signal names coincide with the pin's signal names.

5.3.2.2. Post-Fit Signals

When you tap post-fit signals, you are connecting to actual atoms in the post-fit netlist. You can only tap signals that exist in the post-fit netlist, and existing routing resources must be available.

In the case of post-fit output signals, tap the COMBOUT or REGOUT signal that drives the IOE block. For post-fit input signals, signals driving into the core logic coincide with the pin's signal name.

Note: Because NOT-gate push back applies to any register that you tap, the signal from the atom may be inverted. You can check this by locating the signal in either the Resource Property Editor or the Technology Map Viewer. You can also use the Technology Map viewer and the Resource Property Editor to find post-fit node names.

Related Information

[Design Flow with the Netlist Viewers](#)

In Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 1

5.3.2.2.1. Assigning Data Signals with the Technology Map Viewer

The Technology Map Viewer allows you to add post-fit signal.

1. After compilation, launch the Technology Map Viewer from the **Intel Quartus Prime** software, by clicking **Tools > Netlist Viewers > Technology Map Viewer (Post-Fitting)**.
2. Find the node that you want to tap.
3. Copy the node to either the active .stp for the design or a new .stp.

5.3.2.3. Signal Preservation

The Intel Quartus Prime software provides synthesis attributes that prevent the Compiler from performing optimizations on specific signals, allowing them to persist into the post-fit netlist.

The Intel Quartus Prime software optimizes the RTL signals during synthesis and place-and-route. RTL signal names may not appear in the post-fit netlist after optimizations.

The optimization attributes are:

- **keep**—Prevents removal of combinational signals during optimization.
- **preserve**—Prevents removal of registers during optimization.



However, preserving attributes can increase device resource utilization or decrease timing performance.

Note: These processing results can cause problems with the incremental compilation flow in Signal Tap logic analyzer. Because you can only add post-fitting signals to the Signal Tap logic analyzer in partitions of type **post-fit**, RTL signals that you want to monitor may not be available, preventing their use. To avoid this issue, add synthesis attributes that preserve signals during synthesis and place-and-route.

Preserving nodes is often necessary when you add groups of signals for an IP with a plug-in. If you are debugging an encrypted IP core, such as the Nios II CPU, you might need to preserve nodes from the core to keep available for debugging with the Signal Tap logic analyzer.

In incremental compilation flows, pre-synthesis nodes may not be connected to the Signal Tap logic analyzer for post-fit partitions. Signal Tap issues a critical warning for all pre-synthesis node names that do not exist in the post-fit netlist.

5.3.2.4. Node List Signal Use Options

When you add a signal to the node list, you can select options that specify how the logic analyzer uses the signal.

To prevent a signal from triggering the analysis, disable the signal's **Trigger Enable** option in the .stp file. This option is useful when you only want to see the signal's captured data.

You can turn off the ability to view data for a signal by disabling the **Data Enable** column in the .stp file. This option is useful when you want to trigger on a signal, but have no interest in viewing that signal's data.

Related Information

[Defining Triggers](#) on page 169

5.3.2.4.1. Disabling and Enabling a Signal Tap Instance

Disable and enable Signal Tap instances in the **Instance Manager** pane. Physically adding or removing instances requires recompilation after disabling and enabling a Signal Tap instance.

5.3.2.5. Signals Unavailable for Signal Tap Debugging

Not all the post-fitting signals in your design are available in the **Signal Tap: post-fitting filter** in the **Node Finder** dialog box.

You cannot tap any of the following signal types:

- **Post-fit output pins**—You cannot tap a post-fit output pin directly. To make an output signal visible, tap the register or buffer that drives the output pin. This includes pins defined as bidirectional.
- **Signals that are part of a carry chain**—You cannot tap the carry out (cout0 or cout1) signal of a logic element. Due to architectural restrictions, the carry out signal can only feed the carry in of another LE.
- **JTAG Signals**—You cannot tap the JTAG control (TCK, TDI, TDO, and TMS) signals.



- **ALTGXBX IP core**—You cannot directly tap any ports of an ALTGXBX instantiation.
- **LVDS**—You cannot tap the data output from a serializer/deserializer (SERDES) block.
- **DQ, DQS Signals**—You cannot directly tap the DQ or DQS signals in a DDR/DDRII design.

5.3.3. Adding Signals with a Plug-In

Instead of adding individual or grouped signals through the **Node Finder**, you can use a plug-in to add groups of relevant signals of a particular type of IP. Besides easy signal addition, plug-ins provide features such as pre-designed mnemonic tables, useful for trigger creation and data viewing, as well as the ability to disassemble code in captured data. The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer comes with one plug-in for the Nios II processor.

The Nios II plug-in, for example, creates one mnemonic table in the **Setup** tab and two tables in the **Data** tab:

- **Nios II Instruction (Setup tab)**—Capture all the required signals for triggering on a selected instruction address.
- **Nios II Instance Address (Data tab)**—Display address of executed instructions in hexadecimal format or as a programming symbol name if defined in an optional Executable and Linking Format (.elf) file.
- **Nios II Disassembly (Data tab)**—Display disassembled code from the corresponding address.

To add signals to the .stp file using a plug-in, perform the following steps after running Analysis and Elaboration on your design:

1. To ensure that all the required signals are available, in the Intel Quartus Prime software, click **Assignments > Settings > Compiler Settings > Advanced Settings (Synthesis)**. Turn on **Create debugging nodes for IP cores**. All the signals included in the plug-in are added to the node list.
2. Right-click the node list. On the **Add Nodes with Plug-In** submenu, select the plug-in you want to use, such as the included plug-in named **Nios II**. The **Select Hierarchy Level** dialog box appears showing the IP hierarchy of your design. If the IP for the selected plug-in does not exist in your design, a message informs you that you cannot use the selected plug-in.
3. Select the IP that contains the signals you want to monitor with the plug-in, and click **OK**.
 - If all the signals in the plug-in are available, a dialog box might appear, depending on the plug-in, where you can specify options for the plug-in.
4. With the Nios II plug-in, you can optionally select an .elf containing program symbols from your Nios II Integrated Development Environment (IDE) software design. Specify options for the selected plug-in, and click **OK**.

Related Information

- [Defining Triggers](#) on page 169
- [View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data](#) on page 150



5.3.4. Adding Finite State Machine State Encoding Registers

Finding the signals to debug finite state machines (FSM) can be challenging. Finding nodes from the post-fit netlist may be impossible, since the Compiler may change or optimize away FSM encoding signals. To find and map FSM signal values to the state names that you specified in your HDL, you must perform an additional step.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer can detect FSMs in your compiled design. The configuration automatically tracks the FSM state signals as well as state encoding through the compilation process.

To add all the FSM state signals to your logic analyzer with a single command Shortcut menu commands allow you .

For each FSM added to your Signal Tap configuration, the FSM debugging feature adds a mnemonic table to map the signal values to the state enumeration that you provided in your source code. The mnemonic tables enable you to visualize state machine transitions in the waveform viewer. The FSM debugging feature supports adding FSM signals from both the pre-synthesis and post-fit netlists.

Figure 45. Decoded FSM Mnemonics

The waveform viewer with decoded signal values from a state machine added with the FSM debugging feature.

| Type | Alias | Name | -16 | -8 | 0 | 8 | 16 | 24 | 32 | 40 | . |
|------|-------|-------|-----|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|---|
| | | state | s1 | | X | | | | s2 | | |

Related Information

State Machine HDL Guidelines

In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 1*

5.3.4.1. Modify and Restore Mnemonic Tables for State Machines

Edit any mnemonic table using the **Mnemonic Table Setup** dialog box. When you add FSM state signals via the FSM debugging feature, the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer GUI creates a mnemonic table using the format <StateSignalName>_table, where **StateSignalName** is the name of the state signals that you have declared in your RTL.

If you want to restore a mnemonic table that was modified, right-click anywhere in the node list window and select **Recreate State Machine Mnemonics**. By default, restoring a mnemonic table overwrites the existing mnemonic table that you modified. To restore a FSM mnemonic table to a new record, turn off **Overwrite existing mnemonic table** in the **Recreate State Machine Mnemonics** dialog box.

Note: If you have added or deleted a signal from the FSM state signal group from within the setup tab, delete the modified register group and add the FSM signals back again.

Related Information

[Creating Mnemonics for Bit Patterns](#) on page 207



5.3.4.2. Additional Considerations for State Machines in Signal Tap

- The Signal Tap configuration GUI recognizes state machines from your design only if you use Intel Quartus Prime Integrated Synthesis. Conversely, the state machine debugging feature is not able to track the FSM signals or state encoding if you use other EDA synthesis tools.
- If you add post-fit FSM signals, the Signal Tap logic analyzer FSM debug feature may not track all optimization changes that are a part of the compilation process.
- If the following two specific optimizations are enabled, the Signal Tap FSM debug feature may not list mnemonic tables for state machines in the design:
 - If you enabled the **Physical Synthesis** optimization, state registers may be resource balanced (register retiming) to improve f_{MAX} . The FSM debug feature does not list post-fit FSM state registers if register retiming occurs.
 - The FSM debugging feature does not list state signals that the Compiler packed into RAM and DSP blocks during synthesis or Fitter optimizations.
- You can still use the FSM debugging feature to add pre-synthesis state signals.

Related Information

[Enabling Physical Synthesis Optimization](#)

In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 1*

5.3.5. Specifying Sample Depth

The **Sample depth** setting specifies the number of samples the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures and stores, for each signal in the captured data buffer.

To specify the sample depth:

1. Select the desired number in the **Sample Depth** drop-down menu.
The sample depth ranges from 0 to 128K.

In cases with limited device memory resources, the design may not be able to compile due to the selected sample buffer size. Try reducing the sample depth to reduce resource usage.

Related Information

[Signal Configuration Pane \(View Menu\) \(Signal Tap Logic Analyzer\)](#)

In *Intel Quartus Prime Help*

5.3.6. Capture Data to a Specific RAM Type

You have the option to select the RAM type where the Signal Tap logic analyzer stores acquisition data. Once you allocate the Signal Tap logic analyzer buffer to a particular RAM block, the entire RAM block becomes a dedicated resource for the logic analyzer.

RAM selection allows you to preserve a specific memory block for your design, and allocate another portion of memory for Signal Tap logic analyzer data acquisition.

For example, if your design has an application that requires a large block of memory resources, such as a large instruction or data cache, you can use MLAB, M512, or M4k blocks for data acquisition and leave M9k blocks for the rest of your design.



To specify the RAM type to use for the Signal Tap logic analyzer buffer, go to the **Signal Configuration** pane in the **Signal Tap** window, and select one **Ram type** from the drop-down menu.

Use this feature only when the acquired data is smaller than the available memory of the RAM type that you selected. The amount of data appears in the Signal Tap resource estimator.

Related Information

[Signal Configuration Pane \(View Menu\) \(Signal Tap Logic Analyzer\)](#)
In Intel Quartus Prime Help

5.3.7. Select the Buffer Acquisition Mode

When you specify how the logic analyzer organizes the captured data buffer, you can potentially reduce the amount of memory that Signal Tap requires for data acquisition.

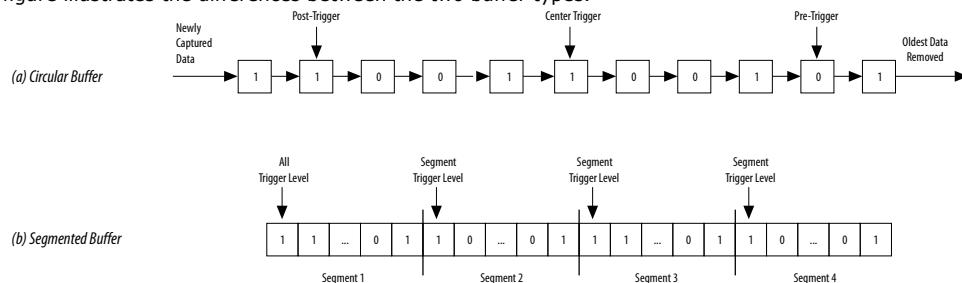
There are two types of acquisition buffer within the Signal Tap logic analyzer—a non-segmented (or circular) buffer and a segmented buffer.

- With a non-segmented buffer, the Signal Tap logic analyzer treats entire memory space as a single FIFO, continuously filling the buffer until the logic analyzer reaches a defined set of trigger conditions.
- With a segmented buffer, the memory space is split into separate buffers. Each buffer acts as a separate FIFO with its own set of trigger conditions, and behaves as a non-segmented buffer. Only a single buffer is active during an acquisition. The Signal Tap logic analyzer advances to the next segment after the trigger condition or conditions for the active segment has been reached.

When using a non-segmented buffer, you can use the storage qualification feature to determine which samples are written into the acquisition buffer. Both the segmented buffers and the non-segmented buffer with the storage qualification feature help you maximize the use of the available memory space.

Figure 46. Buffer Type Comparison in the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The figure illustrates the differences between the two buffer types.



Both non-segmented and segmented buffers can use a preset trigger position (Pre-Trigger, Center Trigger, Post-Trigger). Alternatively, you can define a custom trigger position using the **State-Based Triggering** tab. Refer to *Specify Trigger Position* for more details.

Related Information

- [Specify Trigger Position](#) on page 190
- [Filtering Relevant Samples](#) on page 159

5.3.7.1. Non-Segmented Buffer

The non-segmented buffer is the default buffer type in the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer.

At runtime, the logic analyzer stores data in the buffer until the buffer fills up. From that point on, new data overwrites the oldest data, until a specific trigger event occurs. The amount of data the buffer captures after the trigger event depends on the **Trigger position** setting:

- To capture most data before the trigger occurs, select **Post trigger position** from the list
- To capture most data after the trigger, select **Pre trigger position**.
- To center the trigger position in the data, select **Center trigger position**.

Alternatively, use the custom State-based triggering flow to define a custom trigger position within the capture buffer.

Related Information

[Specify Trigger Position](#) on page 190

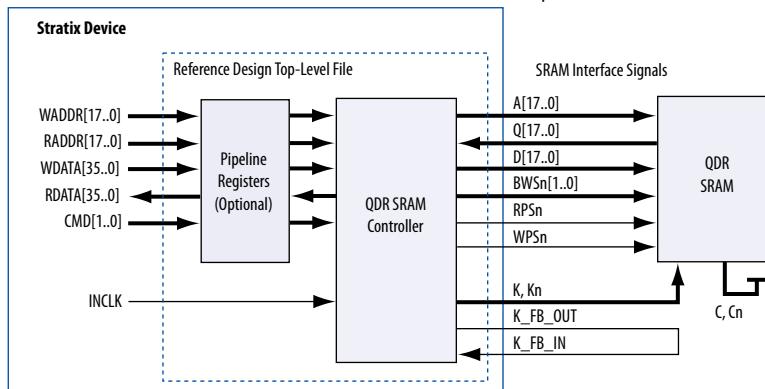
5.3.7.2. Segmented Buffer

In a segmented buffer, the acquisition memory is split into segments of even size, and you define a set of trigger conditions for each segment. Each segment acts as a non-segmented buffer. A segmented buffer allows you to debug systems that contain relatively infrequent recurring events.

If you want to have separate trigger conditions for each of the segmented buffers, you must use the state-based trigger flow. The figure shows an example of a segmented buffer system.

Figure 47. System that Generates Recurring Events

In this design, you want to ensure that the correct data is written to the SRAM controller by monitoring the RDATA port whenever the address H'0F0F0F0F is sent into the RADDR port.



With the buffer acquisition feature, you can monitor multiple read transactions from the SRAM device without running the Signal Tap logic analyzer again, because you split the memory to capture the same event multiple times, without wasting allocated memory. The buffer captures as many cycles as the number of segments you define under the **Data** settings in the **Signal Configuration** pane.



To enable and configure buffer acquisition, select **Segmented** in the Signal Tap logic analyzer Editor and determine the number of segments to use. In the example in the figure, selecting sixty-four 64-sample segments allows you to capture 64 read cycles.

Related Information

[Capturing Data Using Segmented Buffers](#) on page 204

5.3.8. Specifying Pipeline Settings

The **Pipeline factor** setting indicates the number of pipeline registers that the Intel Quartus Prime software can add to boost the f_{MAX} of the Signal Tap logic analyzer.

To specify the pipeline factor from the Signal Tap GUI:

- In the **Signal Configuration** pane, specify a **pipeline factor** ranging from 0 to 5. The default value is 0.

Note: Setting the pipeline factor does not guarantee an increase in f_{MAX} , as the pipeline registers may not be in the critical paths.

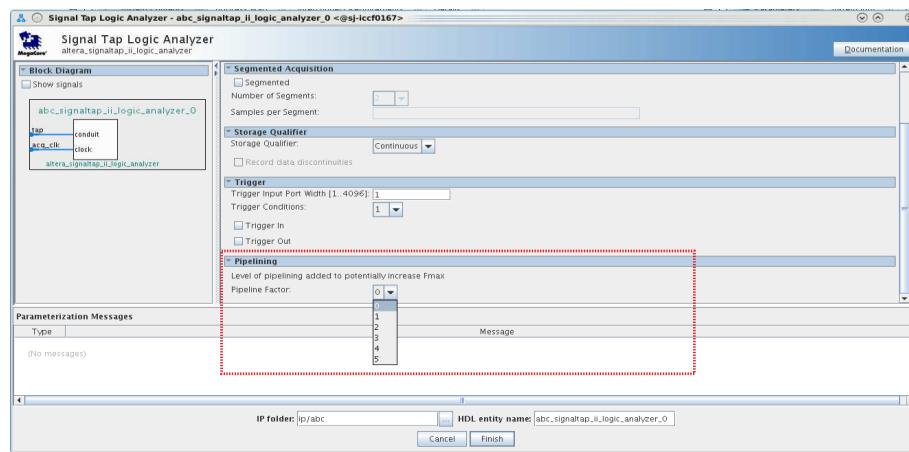
5.3.8.1. Specifying Pipeline Settings from Platform Designer (Standard)

The **Pipeline factor** setting indicates the number of pipeline registers that you can add to boost the f_{MAX} of the Signal Tap logic analyzer. You can specify the pipeline factor in the **Signal Configuration** pane. The pipeline factor ranges from 0 to 5, with a default value of 0.

To specify the pipeline factor when you instantiate the Signal Tap logic analyzer component from the Platform Designer (Standard) system:

- Double-click **Signal Tap Logic Analyzer** component in the IP Catalog.
- Specify the **Pipeline Factor**, along with other parameter values

Figure 48. Specifying the Pipeline Factor from Platform Designer (Standard)



5.3.9. Filtering Relevant Samples

The Storage Qualifier feature allows you to filter out individual samples not relevant to debugging the design.



The Signal Tap logic analyzer offers a snapshot in time of the data stored in the acquisition buffers. By default, the Signal Tap logic analyzer writes into acquisition memory with data samples on every clock cycle. With a non-segmented buffer, there is one data window that represents a comprehensive snapshot of the data stream. Conversely, segmented buffers use several smaller sampling windows spread out over more time, with each sampling window representing a contiguous data set.

With analysis using acquisition buffers you can capture most functional errors in a chosen signal set, provided adequate trigger conditions and a generous sample depth for the acquisition. However, each data window can have a considerable amount of unnecessary data; for example, long periods of idle signals between data bursts. The default behavior in the Signal Tap logic analyzer doesn't discard the redundant sample bits.

The Storage Qualifier feature allows you to establish a condition that acts as a write enable to the buffer during each clock cycle of data acquisition, thus allowing a more efficient use of acquisition memory over a longer period of analysis.

Because you can create a discontinuity between any two samples in the buffer, the Storage Qualifier feature is equivalent to creating a custom segmented buffer in which the number and size of segment boundaries are adjustable.

Note:

You can only use the Storage Qualifier feature with a non-segmented buffer. The IP Catalog flow only supports the Input Port mode for the Storage Qualifier feature.



Figure 49. Data Acquisition Using Different Modes of Controlling the Acquisition Buffer

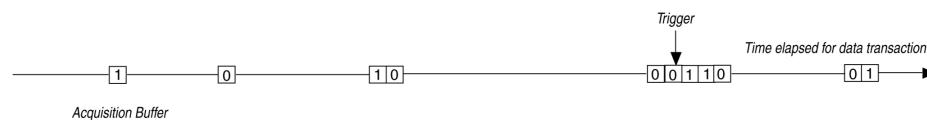
Non-segmented Buffer (1)



Segmented Buffer (2)



Non-segmented Buffer with Storage Qualifier (3)

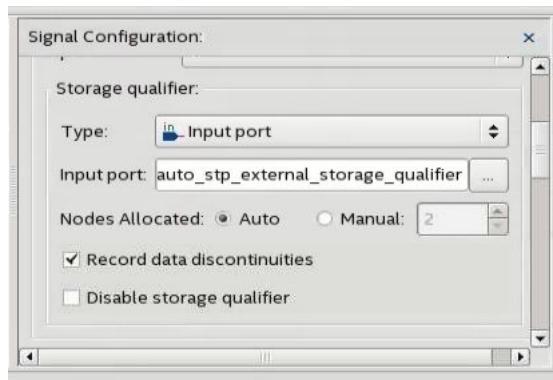


Notes to figure:

1. Non-segmented buffers capture a fixed sample window of contiguous data.
2. Segmented buffers divide the buffer into fixed sized segments, with each segment having an equal sample depth.
3. Storage Qualifier allows you to define a custom sampling window for each segment you create with a qualifying condition, thus potentially allowing a larger time scale of coverage.

There are six storage qualifier types available under the Storage Qualifier feature:

- **Continuous** (default) Turns the Storage Qualifier off.
- **Input port**
- **Transitional**
- **Conditional**
- **Start/Stop**
- **State-based**

Figure 50. Storage Qualifier Settings

Upon the start of an acquisition, the Signal Tap logic analyzer examines each clock cycle and writes the data into the buffer based upon the storage qualifier type and condition. Acquisition stops when a defined set of trigger conditions occur.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer evaluates trigger conditions independently of storage qualifier conditions.

Related Information

[Define Trigger Conditions on page 149](#)

5.3.9.1. Input Port Mode

When using the Input port mode, the Signal Tap logic analyzer takes any signal from your design as an input. During acquisition, if the signal is high on the clock edge, the Signal Tap logic analyzer stores the data in the buffer. If the signal is low on the clock edge, the logic analyzer ignores the data sample. If you don't specify an internal node, the logic analyzer creates and connects a pin to this input port.

If you are creating a Signal Tap logic analyzer instance through an .stp file, specify the storage qualifier signal using the input port field located on the **Setup** tab. You must specify this port for your project to compile.

If you use the IP parameter editor, the storage qualification input port, if specified, appears in the generated instantiation template. You can then connect this port to a signal in your RTL. If you enable the input port storage qualifier, it accepts a signal and predicates when signals are recorded into the acquisition buffer before or after the specified trigger condition has occurred. That is, the trigger you specify is responsible for triggering and moving the logic analyzer into the post-fill state. The input port storage qualifier signal you select controls the recording of samples.

The following example compares and contrasts two waveforms of the same data, one without storage qualifier enabled (*Continuous* means always record samples, effectively no storage qualifier), and the other with *Input Port* mode. The bottom signal in the waveform `data_out[7]` is used as the input port storage qualifier signal. The continuous mode waveform shows 01h, 07h, 0Ah, 0Bh, 0Ch, 0Dh, 0Eh, 0Fh, 10h as the sequence of `data_out[7]` bus values where the storage qualifier signal is asserted. The lower waveform for input port storage qualifier shows how this same traffic pattern of the `data_out` bus is recorded when you enable the input port storage qualifier. Values recorded are a repeating sequence of the 01h, 07h, 0Ah, 0Bh, 0Ch, 0Dh, 0Eh, 0Fh, 10h (same as continuous mode).

Figure 51. Comparing Continuous and Input Port Capture Mode in Data Acquisition of a Recurring Data Pattern

- Continuous Mode:

- Input Port Storage Qualifier:

| click to insert time bar | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | (1) | |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Node | | | 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 26 |
| Type | Alias | Name | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 |
| | data_out | [0..0x10]@0x07h[0Ah]@0Ch[0Ch]@0Ch[0Eh]@0Fh[0Dh]@01h[07h]@0Ah[0Bh]@0Ch[0Ch]@0Eh[0Eh]@0Fh[0Dh]@01h[07h]@0Ah[0Bh]@0Ch[0Ch]@0Eh[0Eh]@0Fh[0Dh] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | data_out[7] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

(1) Markers display samples when the logic analyzer paused a write into acquisition memory. These markers are enabled with the option "Record data discontinuities."

5.3.9.2. Transitional Mode

In Transitional mode, the logic analyzer monitors changes in a set of signals, and writes new data in the acquisition buffer only after detecting a change. You select the signals for monitoring using the check boxes in the **Storage Qualifier** column.

Figure 52. Transitional Storage Qualifier Setup

Figure 53. Comparing Continuous and Transitional Capture Mode in Data Acquisition of a Recurring Data Pattern

- Continuous:

- Transitional mode:

| Node | | click to insert time bar | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Type | Alias | Name | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| LED | | data_out | Idle | 0.0h | 0.1h | 0.2h | 0.3h | 0.4h | 0.5h | 0.6h | 0.7h | 0.8h | 0.9h | 0.0Ah | Idle | 0.0h | 0.1h | 0.2h | 0.3h | 0.4h | 0.5h | 0.6h | 0.7h | 0.8h |

Redundant idle samples discarded



5.3.9.3. Conditional Mode

In Conditional mode, the Signal Tap logic analyzer determines whether to store a sample by evaluating a combinational function of predefined signals within the node list. The Signal Tap logic analyzer writes into the buffer during the clock cycles in which the condition you specify evaluates TRUE.

You can select either **Basic AND**, **Basic OR**, **Comparison**, or **Advanced** storage qualifier conditions. A **Basic AND** or **Basic OR** condition matches each signal to one of the following:

- **Don't Care**
- **Low**
- **High**
- **Falling Edge**
- **Rising Edge**
- **Either Edge**

If you specify a **Basic AND** storage qualifier condition for more than one signal, the Signal Tap logic analyzer evaluates the logical AND of the conditions.

You can specify any other combinational or relational operators with the enabled signal set for storage qualification through advanced storage conditions.

You can define storage qualification conditions similar to the manner in which you define trigger conditions.

Figure 54. Conditional Storage Qualifier Setup

The figure details the conditional storage qualifier setup in the .stp file.

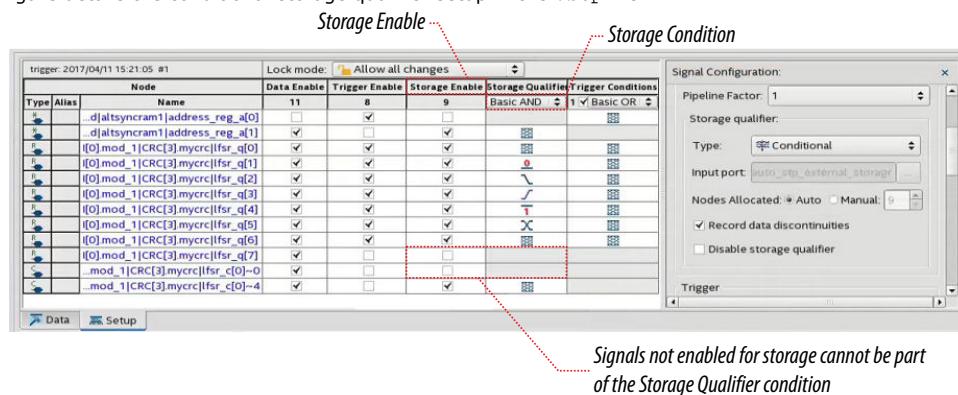
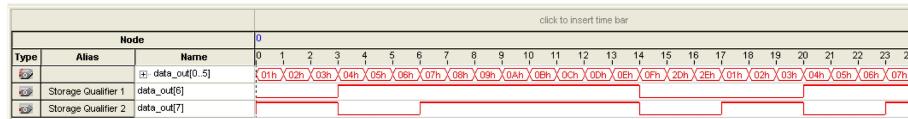




Figure 55. Comparing Continuous and Conditional Capture Mode in Data Acquisition of a Recurring Data Pattern

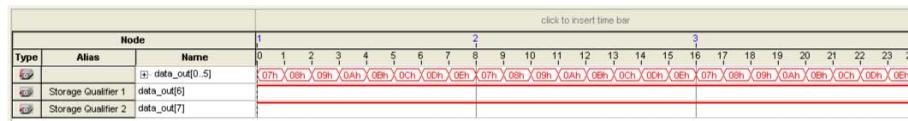
The data pattern is the same in both cases.

- Continuous sampling capture mode:



(1) Storage Qualifier condition is set up to evaluate data_out[6] AND data_out[7].

- Conditional sampling capture mode:



Related Information

- [Basic Trigger Conditions](#) on page 169
- [Comparison Trigger Conditions](#) on page 170
- [Advanced Trigger Conditions](#) on page 172

5.3.9.4. Start/Stop Mode

The Start/Stop mode uses two sets of conditions, one to start data capture and one to stop data capture. If the start condition evaluates to TRUE, Signal Tap Logic Analyzer stores the buffer data every clock cycle until the stop condition evaluates to TRUE, which then pauses the data capture. The Logic Analyzer ignores additional start signals received after the data capture starts. If both start and stop evaluate to TRUE at the same time, the Logic Analyzer captures a single cycle.

Note: You can force a trigger by pressing the **Stop** button if the buffer fails to fill to completion due to a stop condition.

Figure 56. Start/Stop Mode Storage Qualifier Setup

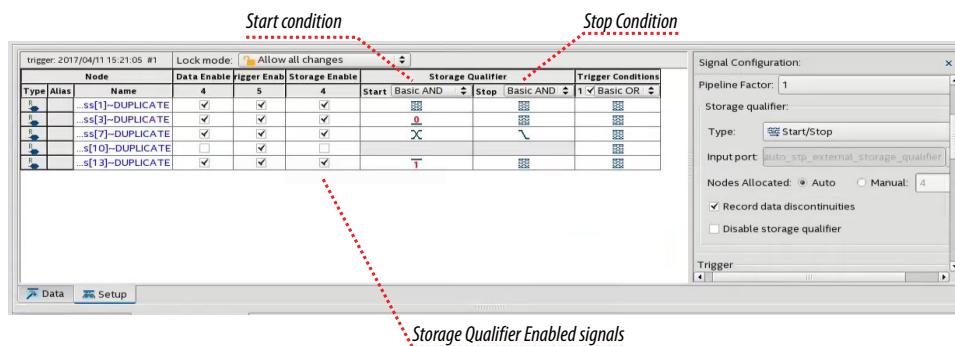
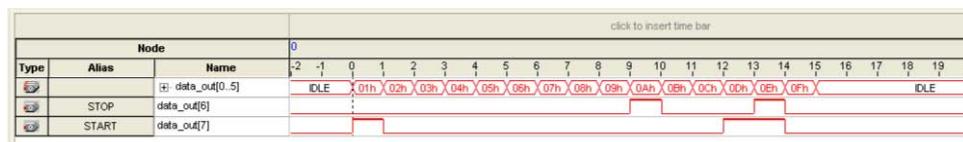
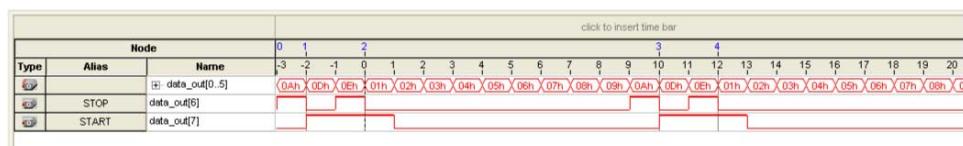


Figure 57. Comparing Continuous and Start/Stop Acquisition Modes for a Recurring Data Pattern

- Continuous Mode:



- Start/Stop Storage Qualifier:



5.3.9.5. State-Based

The State-based storage qualification mode is part of the State-based triggering flow. The state based triggering flow evaluates a conditional language to define how the Signal Tap logic analyzer writes data into the buffer. With the State-based trigger flow, you have command over boolean and relational operators to guide the execution flow for the target acquisition buffer.

When you enable the storage qualifier feature for the State-based flow, two additional commands become available: `start_store` and `stop_store`. These commands are similar to the Start/Stop capture conditions. Upon the start of acquisition, the Signal Tap logic analyzer doesn't write data into the buffer until a `start_store` action is performed. The `stop_store` command pauses the acquisition. If both `start_store` and `stop_store` actions occur within the same clock cycle, the logic analyzer stores a single sample into the acquisition buffer.

Related Information

[State-Based Triggering](#) on page 183

5.3.9.6. Showing Data Discontinuities

When you turn on **Record data discontinuities**, the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer marks the samples during which the acquisition paused from a storage qualifier. This marker is displayed in the waveform viewer after acquisition completes.

5.3.9.7. Disable Storage Qualifier

You can quickly turn off the storage qualifier with the **Disable Storage Qualifier** option, and perform a continuous capture. This option is run-time reconfigurable. Changing storage qualifier mode from the **Type** field requires a recompilation of the project.



Related Information

[Runtime Reconfigurable Options](#) on page 201

5.3.10. Manage Multiple Signal Tap Files and Configurations

You can debug different blocks in your design by grouping related monitoring signals. Likewise, you can use a group of signals to define multiple trigger conditions. Each combination of signals, capture settings, and trigger conditions determines a debug configuration, and one configuration can have zero or more associated data logs.

Signal Tap logic analyzer allows you to save debug configurations in more than one .stp file. Alternatively, you can embed multiple configurations within the same .stp file, and use the Data Log as a managing tool.

Note: Each .stp file is associated with a programming (.sof) file. To function correctly, the settings in the .stp file you use at runtime must match Signal Tap settings in the .sof file you use to program the device.

Related Information

[Ensure Setting Compatibility Between .stp and .sof Files](#) on page 200

5.3.10.1. Data Log Pane

The Data Log pane displays all Signal Tap configurations and data capture results stored within a single .stp file.

- To save the current configuration or capture in the Data Log—and .stp file, click **Edit > Save to Data Log**.
- To generate a log entry after every data capture, click **Edit > Enable Data Log**. Alternatively, check the box at the top of the Data Log pane.

The Data Log displays its contents in a tree hierarchy. The active items display a different icon.

Table 59. Data Log Items

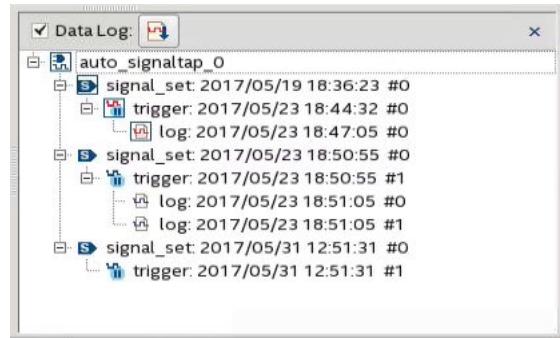
| Item | Icon | | Contains one or more | Comments |
|-------------|------------|----------|----------------------|--|
| | Unselected | Selected | | |
| Instance | | | Signal Set | |
| Signal Set | | | Trigger | The Signal Set changes whenever you add a new signal to Signal Tap. After a change in the Signal Set, you need to recompile. |
| Trigger | | | Capture Log | A trigger changes when you change any trigger condition. These changes do not require recompilation. |
| Capture Log | | | | |

The name on each entry displays the wall-clock time when Signal Tap logic analyzer triggered, and the time elapsed from start acquisition to trigger activation. You can rename entries so they make sense to you.

To switch between configurations, double-click an entry in the Data Log. As a result, the **Setup** tab updates to display the active signal list and trigger conditions.

Example 21. Simple Data Log

On this example, the Data Log displays one instance with three signal set configurations.

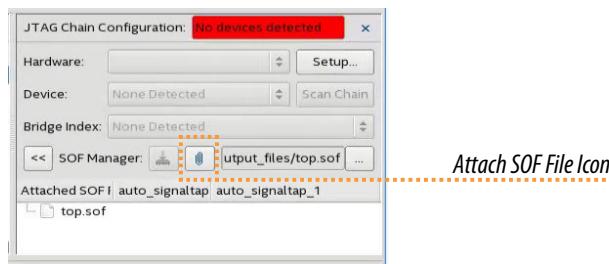


5.3.10.2. SOF Manager

The SOF Manager is in the **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane.

With the SOF Manager you can embed multiple SOFs into one .stp file. This action lets you move the .stp file to a different location, either on the same computer or across a network, without including the associated .sof separately. To embed a new SOF in the .stp file, click the **Attach SOF File** icon  .

Figure 58. SOF Manager



As you switch between configurations in the Data Log, you can extract the SOF that is compatible with that configuration.

To download the new SOF to the FPGA, click the Program Device icon  in the SOF Manager, after ensuring that the configuration of your .stp matches the design programmed into the target device.

Related Information

[Data Log Pane](#) on page 167



5.4. Defining Triggers

At runtime the Signal Tap logic analyzer continuously samples activity from the monitored signals. A trigger activates—that is, the logic analyzer stops and displays the data—when the monitored signals reach the condition or set of conditions that you specify. You specify trigger conditions in the Signal Tap logic analyzer **Signal Configuration** pane.

5.4.1. Basic Trigger Conditions

If you select the **Basic AND** or **Basic OR** trigger type, you must specify the trigger pattern for each signal you added in the .stp. To specify the trigger pattern, right-click the **Trigger Conditions** column and click the desired pattern. Set the trigger pattern to any of the following conditions:

- **Don't Care**
- **Low**
- **High**
- **Falling Edge**
- **Rising Edge**
- **Either Edge**

For buses, type a pattern in binary, or right-click and select **Insert Value** to enter the pattern in other number formats. Note that you can enter X to specify a set of “don’t care” values in either your hexadecimal or your binary string. For signals in the .stp file that have an associated mnemonic table, you can right-click and select an entry from the table to specify pre-defined conditions for the trigger.

When you add signals through plug-ins, you can create basic triggers using predefined mnemonic table entries. For example, with the Nios II plug-in, if you specify an .elf file from your Nios II IDE design, you can type the name of a function from your Nios II code. The logic analyzer triggers when the Nios II instruction address matches the address of the code function name that you specify.

Data capture stops and the Logic Analyzer stores the data in the buffer when the logical **AND** of all the signals for a given trigger condition evaluates to TRUE.

Related Information

[View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data](#) on page 204

5.4.1.1. Using the Basic OR Trigger Condition with Nested Groups

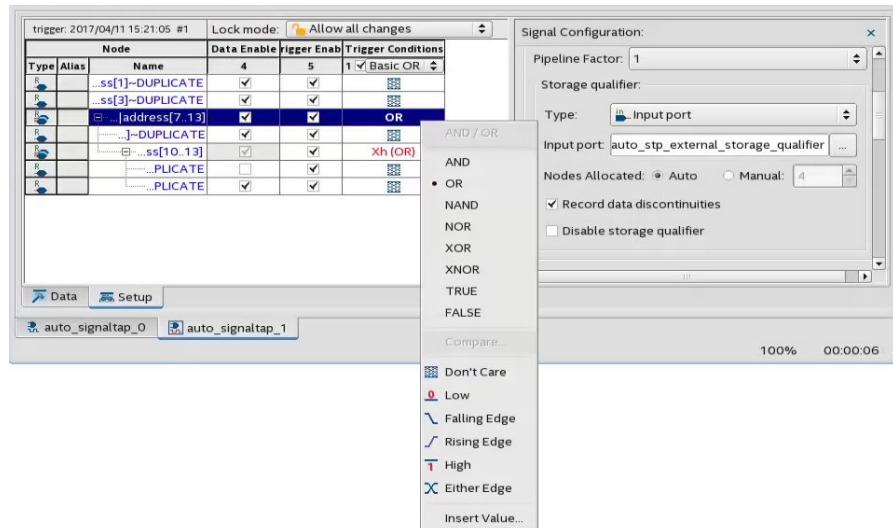
When you specify a set of signals as a nested group (group of groups) with the **Basic OR** trigger type, Signal Tap Logic Analyzer generates an advanced trigger condition. This condition sorts signals within groups to minimize the need to recompile your design. As long as the parent-child relationships of nodes are kept constant, the advanced trigger condition does not change. You can modify the sibling relationships of nodes and not need to recompile your design.

The evaluation precedence of a nested trigger condition starts at the bottom-level with the leaf-groups. The Logic Analyzer uses the resulting logic value to compute the parent group's logic value. If you manually set the value of a group, the logic value of the group's members doesn't influence the result of the group trigger. To create a nested trigger condition:

1. Select **Basic OR** under **Trigger Conditions**.
2. In the **Setup** tab, select several nodes. Include groups in your selection.
3. Right-click the **Setup** tab and select **Group**.
4. Select the nested group and right-click to set a group trigger condition that applies the reduction **AND**, **OR**, **NAND**, **NOR**, **XOR**, **XNOR**, or logical **TRUE** or **FALSE**.

Note: You can only select OR and AND group trigger conditions for bottom-level groups (groups with no groups as children).

Figure 59. Applying Trigger Condition to Nested Group



5.4.2. Comparison Trigger Conditions

The **Comparison** trigger allows you to compare multiple grouped bits of a bus to an expected integer value by specifying simple comparison conditions on the bus node. The **Comparison** trigger preserves all the trigger conditions that the **Basic OR** trigger includes. You can use the **Comparison** trigger in combination with other triggers. You can also switch between **Basic OR** trigger and **Comparison** trigger at run-time, without the need for recompilation.

Signal Tap Logic Analyzer supports the following types of **Comparison** trigger conditions:

- **Single-value comparison**—compares a bus node's value to a numeric value that you specify. Use one of these operands for comparison: $>$, \geq , $=$, \leq , $<$. Returns 1 when the bus node matches the specified numeric value.
- **Interval check**—verifies whether a bus node's value confines to an interval that you define. Returns 1 when the bus node's value lies within the specified bounded interval.



Follow these rules when using the **Comparison** trigger condition:

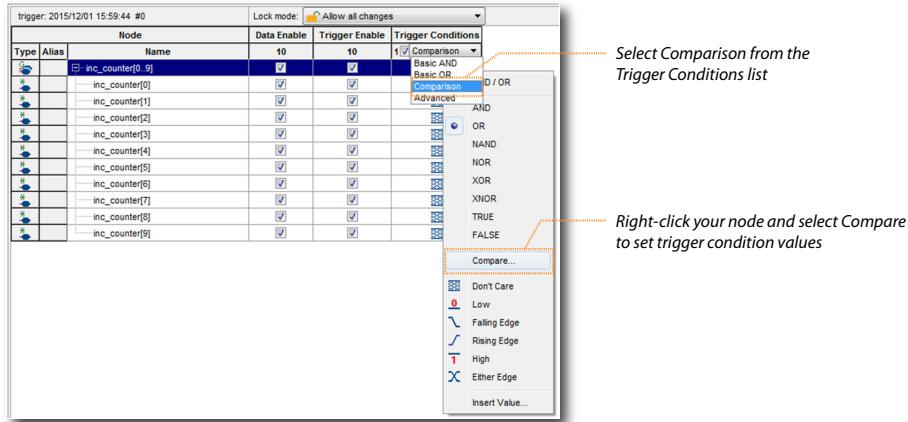
- Apply the **Comparison** trigger only to bus nodes consisting of leaf nodes.
- Do not form sub-groups within a bus node.
- Do not enable or disable individual trigger nodes within a bus node.
- Do not specify comparison values (in case of single-value comparison) or boundary values (in case of interval check) exceeding the selected node's bus-width.

5.4.2.1. Specifying the Comparison Trigger Conditions

Follow these steps to specify the **Comparison** trigger conditions:

1. From the **Setup** tab, select **Comparison** under **Trigger Conditions**.
2. Right-click the node in the trigger editor, and select **Compare**.

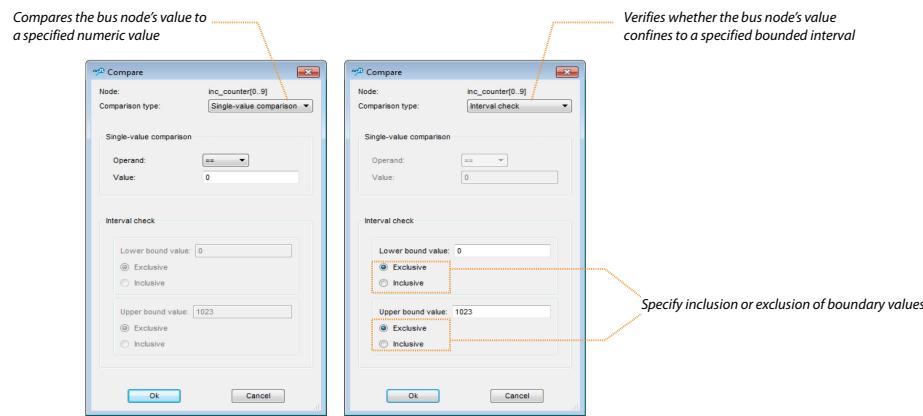
Figure 60. Selecting the Comparison Trigger Condition



3. Select the **Comparison type** from the Compare window.
 - If you choose **Single-value comparison** as your comparison type, specify the operand and value.
 - If you choose **Interval check** as your comparison type, provide the lower and upper bound values for the interval.

You can also specify if you want to include or exclude the boundary values.

Figure 61. Specifying the Comparison Values



- Click **OK**. The trigger editor displays the resulting comparison expression in the group node condition text box.

Note: You can modify the comparison condition in the text box with a valid expression.

Figure 62. Resulting Comparison Condition in Text Box

| Type | Alias | Name | Data Enable | Trigger Enable | Trigger Conditions |
|------|-------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| | | inc_counter[0..9] | 10 | 10 | 1 Comparison == 0 |
| | | inc_counter[0] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[1] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[2] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[3] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[4] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[5] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[6] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[7] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[8] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[9] | ✓ | ✓ | |

| Type | Alias | Name | Data Enable | Trigger Enable | Trigger Conditions |
|------|-------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | | inc_counter[0..9] | 10 | 10 | 1 Comparison (100, 200) |
| | | inc_counter[0] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[1] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[2] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[3] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[4] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[5] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[6] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[7] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[8] | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | inc_counter[9] | ✓ | ✓ | |

5.4.3. Advanced Trigger Conditions

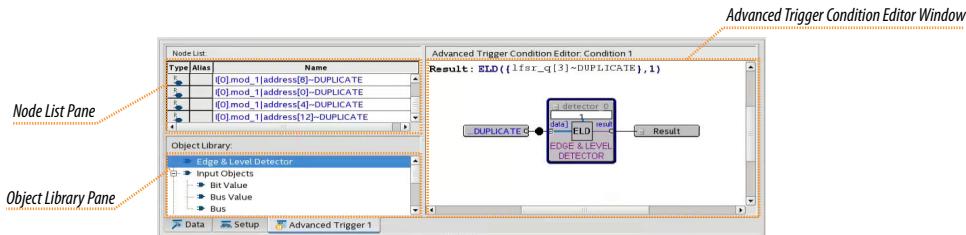
To capture data for a given combination of conditions, build an advanced trigger. The Signal Tap logic analyzer provides the **Advanced Trigger** tab, which helps you build a complex trigger expression using a GUI.

Open the **Advanced Trigger** tab by selecting **Advanced** in the **Trigger Conditions** drop-down menu.

**Figure 63.** Accessing the Advanced Trigger Condition Tab

| Type | Alias | Name | Data Enable | Trigger Enable | Trigger Conditions |
|------|-------|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| S | | in[21]-input | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1 ✓ Basic AND |
| S | | in[12]-input | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Basic OR |
| S | | in[2]-input | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Comparison Advanced |

Select Advanced from the Trigger Conditions List

Figure 64. Advanced Trigger Condition Tab

To build a complex trigger condition in an expression tree, drag-and-drop operators from the **Object Library** pane and the **Node List** pane into the **Advanced Trigger Configuration Editor** window.

To configure the operators' settings, double-click or right-click the operators that you placed and click **Properties**.

Table 60. Advanced Triggering Operators

| Category | Name |
|------------------|--|
| Signal Detection | Edge and Level Detector |
| Input Objects | Bit Bit Value Bus Bus Value |
| Comparison | Less Than Less Than or Equal To Equality Inequality Greater Than or Equal To Greater Than |
| Bitwise | Bitwise Complement Bitwise AND Bitwise OR Bitwise XOR |
| Logical | Logical NOT Logical AND Logical OR Logical XOR |
| Reduction | Reduction AND Reduction OR Reduction XOR |
| Shift | Left Shift |

continued...

| Category | Name |
|--------------------|-------------|
| | Right Shift |
| Custom Trigger HDL | |

Adding many objects to the Advanced Trigger Condition Editor can make the work space cluttered and difficult to read. To keep objects organized while you build your advanced trigger condition, use the shortcut menu and select **Arrange All Objects**. Alternatively, use the **Zoom-Out** command to fit more objects into the **Advanced Trigger Condition Editor** window.

5.4.3.1. Examples of Advanced Triggering Expressions

The following examples show how to use Advanced Triggering:

Figure 65. Bus outa Is Greater Than or Equal to Bus outb

Trigger when bus outa is greater than or equal to outb.

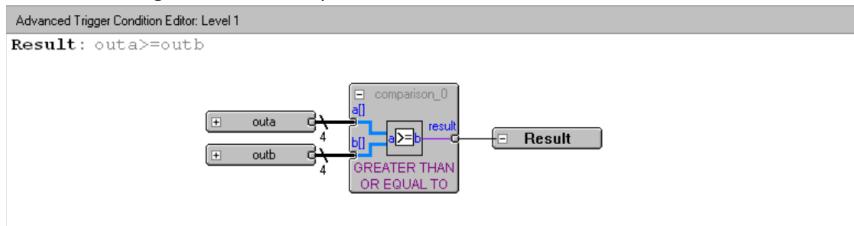
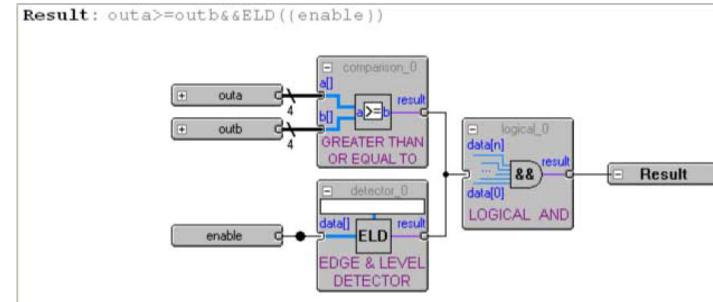


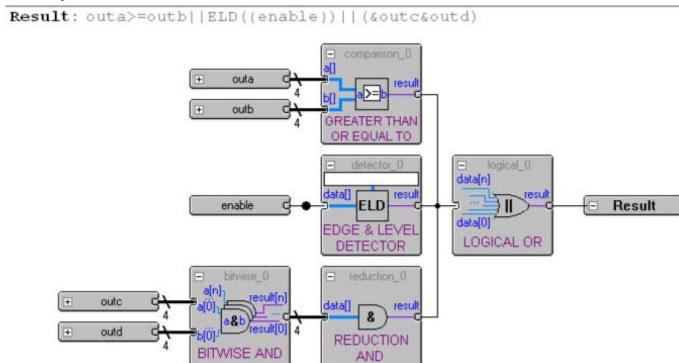
Figure 66. Enable Signal Has a Rising Edge

Trigger when bus outa is greater than or equal to bus outb, and when the enable signal has a rising edge.



**Figure 67. Bitwise AND Operation**

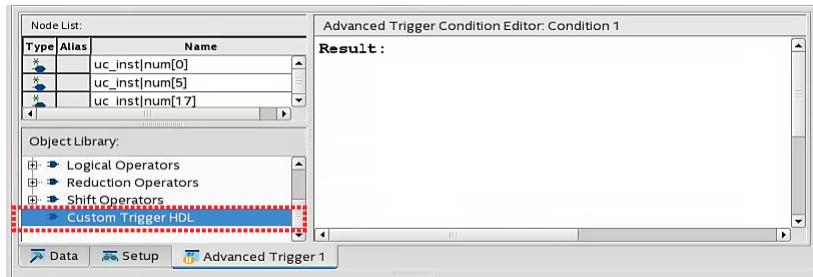
Trigger when bus outa is greater than or equal to bus outb, or when the enable signal has a rising edge. Or, when a bitwise AND operation has been performed between bus outc and bus outd, and all bits of the result of that operation are equal to 1.



5.4.4. Custom Trigger HDL Object

Signal Tap logic analyzer allows you to use your own HDL module to create a custom trigger condition. You can use the Custom Trigger HDL object to simulate your triggering logic and ensure that the logic itself is not faulty. Additionally, you can tap instances of modules anywhere in the hierarchy of your design, without having to manually route all the necessary connections.

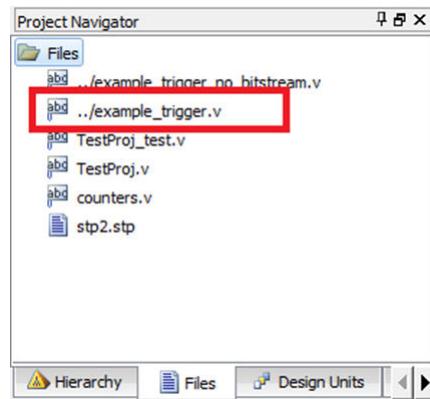
The Custom Trigger HDL object appears in the **Object Library** pane of the **Advanced Trigger** editor.

Figure 68. Object Library

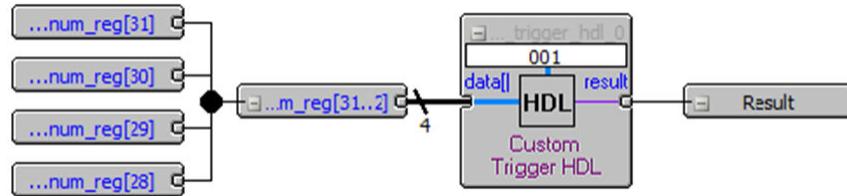
5.4.4.1. Using the Custom Trigger HDL Object

To define a custom trigger flow:

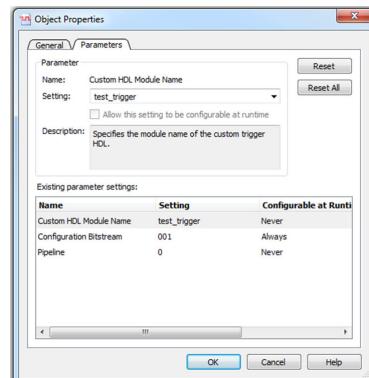
1. Select the trigger you want to edit.
2. Open the **Advanced Trigger** tab by selecting **Advanced** in the **Trigger Conditions** drop-down menu.
3. Add to your project the HDL source file that contains the trigger module using the **Project Navigator**.
 - Alternatively, append the HDL for your trigger module to a source file already included in the project.

Figure 69. HDL Trigger in the Project Navigator


4. Implement the inputs and outputs that your Custom Trigger HDL module requires.
5. Drag in your Custom Trigger HDL object and connect the object's data input bus and result output bit to the final trigger result.

Figure 70. Custom Trigger HDL Object


6. Right-click your Custom Trigger HDL object and configure the object's properties.

Figure 71. Configure Object Properties


7. Compile your design.
8. Acquire data with Signal Tap using your custom Trigger HDL object.



Example 22. Verilog HDL Triggers

The following trigger uses configuration bitstream:

```
module test_trigger
(
    input acq_clk, reset,
    input[3:0] data_in,
    input[1:0] pattern_in,
    output reg trigger_out
);
    always @(pattern_in) begin
        case (pattern_in)
            2'b00:
                trigger_out = &data_in;
            2'b01:
                trigger_out = |data_in;
            2'b10:
                trigger_out = 1'b0;
            2'b11:
                trigger_out = 1'b1;
        endcase
    end
endmodule
```

This trigger does not have configuration bitstream:

```
module test_trigger_no_bs
(
    input acq_clk, reset,
    input[3:0] data_in,
    output reg trigger_out
);
    assign trigger_out = &data_in;
endmodule
```

5.4.4.2. Required Inputs and Outputs of Custom Trigger HDL Module

Table 61. Custom Trigger HDL Module Required Inputs and Outputs

| Name | Description | Input/Output | Required/ Optional |
|-------------|--|--------------|--------------------|
| acq_clk | Acquisition clock that Signal Tap uses | Input | Required |
| reset | Reset that Signal Tap uses when restarting a capture. | Input | Required |
| data_in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data input you connect in the Advanced Trigger editor. Data your module uses to trigger. | Input | Required |
| pattern_in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module's input for the configuration bitstream property. Runtime configurable property that you can set from Signal Tap GUI to change the behavior of your trigger logic. | Input | Optional |
| trigger_out | Output signal of your module that asserts when trigger conditions met. | Output | Required |

5.4.4.3. Custom Trigger HDL Module Properties

Table 62. Custom Trigger HDL Module Properties

| Property | Description |
|-------------------------|---|
| Custom HDL Module Name | Module name of the triggering logic. |
| Configuration Bitstream | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Allows to create trigger logic that you can configure at runtime, based upon the value of the configuration bitstream.The Signal Tap logic analyzer reads the configuration bitstream property as binary, therefore the bitstream must contain only the characters 1 and 0.The bit-width (number of 1s and 0s) must match the pattern_in bit width.A blank configuration bitstream implies that the module does not have a pattern_in input. |
| Pipeline | Specifies the number of pipeline stages in the triggering logic. For example, if after receiving a triggering input the LA needs three clock cycles to assert the trigger output, you can denote a pipeline value of three. |

5.4.5. Trigger Condition Flow Control

The Trigger Condition Flow allows you to define the relationship between a set of triggering conditions. Signal Tap Logic Analyzer **Signal Configuration** pane offers two flow control mechanisms for organizing trigger conditions:

- **Sequential Triggering**—default triggering flow. Sequential triggering allows you to define up to 10 triggering levels that must be satisfied before the acquisition buffer finishes capturing.
- **State-Based Triggering**—gives the greatest control over your acquisition buffer. Custom-based triggering allows you to organize trigger conditions into states based on a conditional flow that you define.

You can use sequential or state based triggering with either a segmented or a non-segmented buffer.

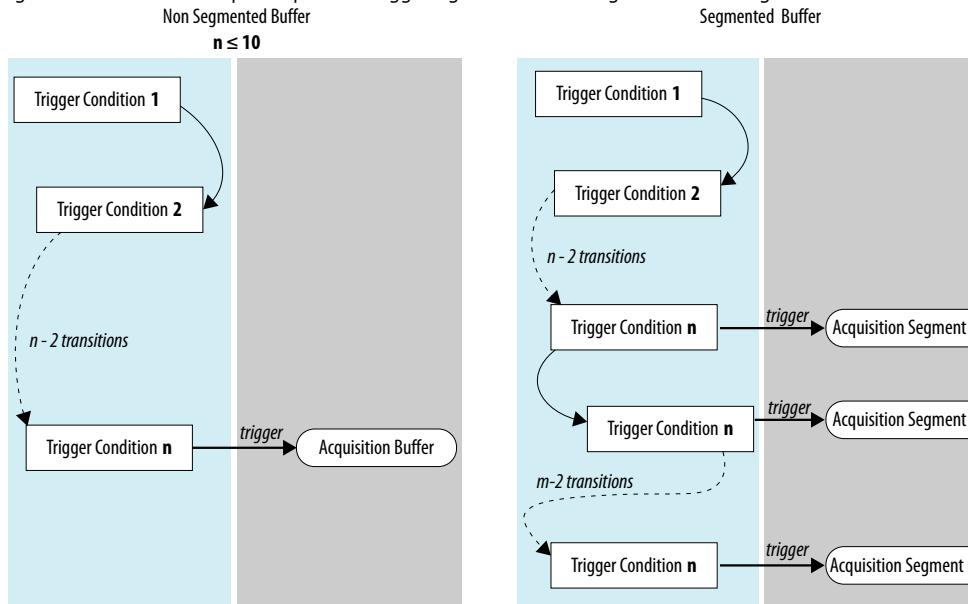
5.4.5.1. Sequential Triggering

When you specify a sequential trigger the Signal Tap logic analyzer sequentially evaluates each the conditions. The sequential triggering flow allows you to cascade up to 10 levels of triggering conditions.

When the last triggering condition evaluates to TRUE, the Signal Tap logic analyzer starts the data acquisition. For segmented buffers, every acquisition segment after the first starts on the last condition that you specified. The Simple Sequential Triggering feature allows you to specify basic triggers, comparison triggers, advanced triggers, or a mix of all three.

**Figure 72. Sequential Triggering Flow**

The figure illustrates the simple sequential triggering flow for non-segmented and segmented buffers.



Notes to figure:

1. The acquisition buffer starts capture when all n triggering levels are satisfied, where $n \leq 10$.

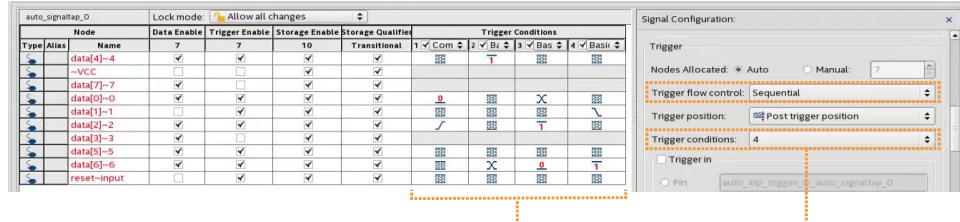
The Signal Tap logic analyzer considers external triggers as level 0, evaluating external triggers before any other trigger condition.

5.4.5.1.1. Configuring the Sequential Triggering Flow

To configure Signal Tap Logic Analyzer for sequential triggering:

1. On **Trigger Flow Control**, select **Sequential**
2. On **Trigger Conditions**, select the number of trigger conditions from the drop-down list.
The **Node List** pane now displays the same number of trigger condition columns.
3. Configure each trigger condition in the **Node List** pane.

You can enable/disable any trigger condition from the column header.

Figure 73. Sequential Triggering Flow Configuration

5.4.5.1.2. Trigger that Skips Clock Cycles after Hitting Condition

Example 23. Trigger flow description that skips three clock cycles of samples after hitting condition 1

Code:

```

State 1: ST1
    start_store
    if ( condition1 )
    begin
        stop_store;
        goto ST2;
    end
State 2: ST2
    if (c1 < 3)
        increment c1; //skip three clock cycles; c1 initialized to 0
    else if (c1 == 3)
    begin
        start_store;//start_store necessary to enable writing to finish
                    //acquisition
        trigger;
    end

```

The figures show the data transaction on a continuous capture and the data capture when you apply the Trigger flow description.

Figure 74. Continuous Capture of Data Transaction

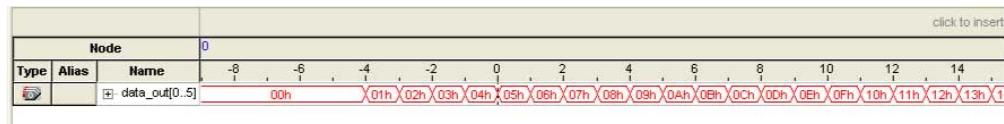
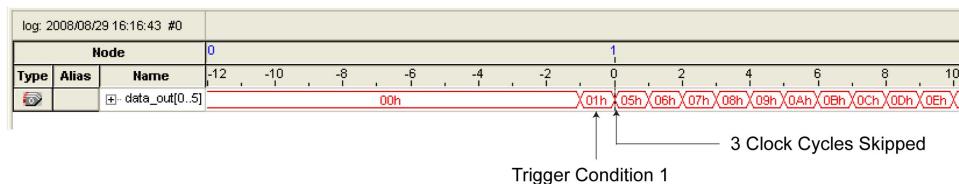


Figure 75. Capture of Data Transaction with Trigger Flow Description Applied



5.4.5.1.3. Storage Qualification with Post-Fill Count Value Less than m

Example 24. Real data acquisition of the previous scenario

Figure 76. Storage Qualification with Post-Fill Count Value Less than m (Acquisition Successfully Completes)

The data capture finishes successfully. It uses a buffer with a sample depth of 64, $m = n = 10$, and post-fill count = 5.

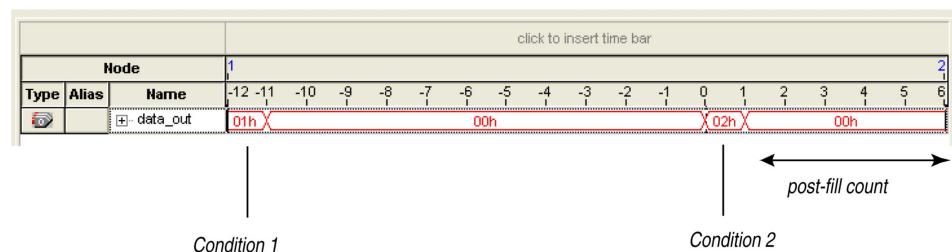


Figure 77. Storage Qualification with Post-Fill Count Value Greater than m (Acquisition Indefinitely Paused)

The logic analyzer pauses indefinitely, even after a trigger condition occurs due to a stop_store condition. This scenario uses a sample depth of 64, with $m = n = 10$ and post-fill count = 15.

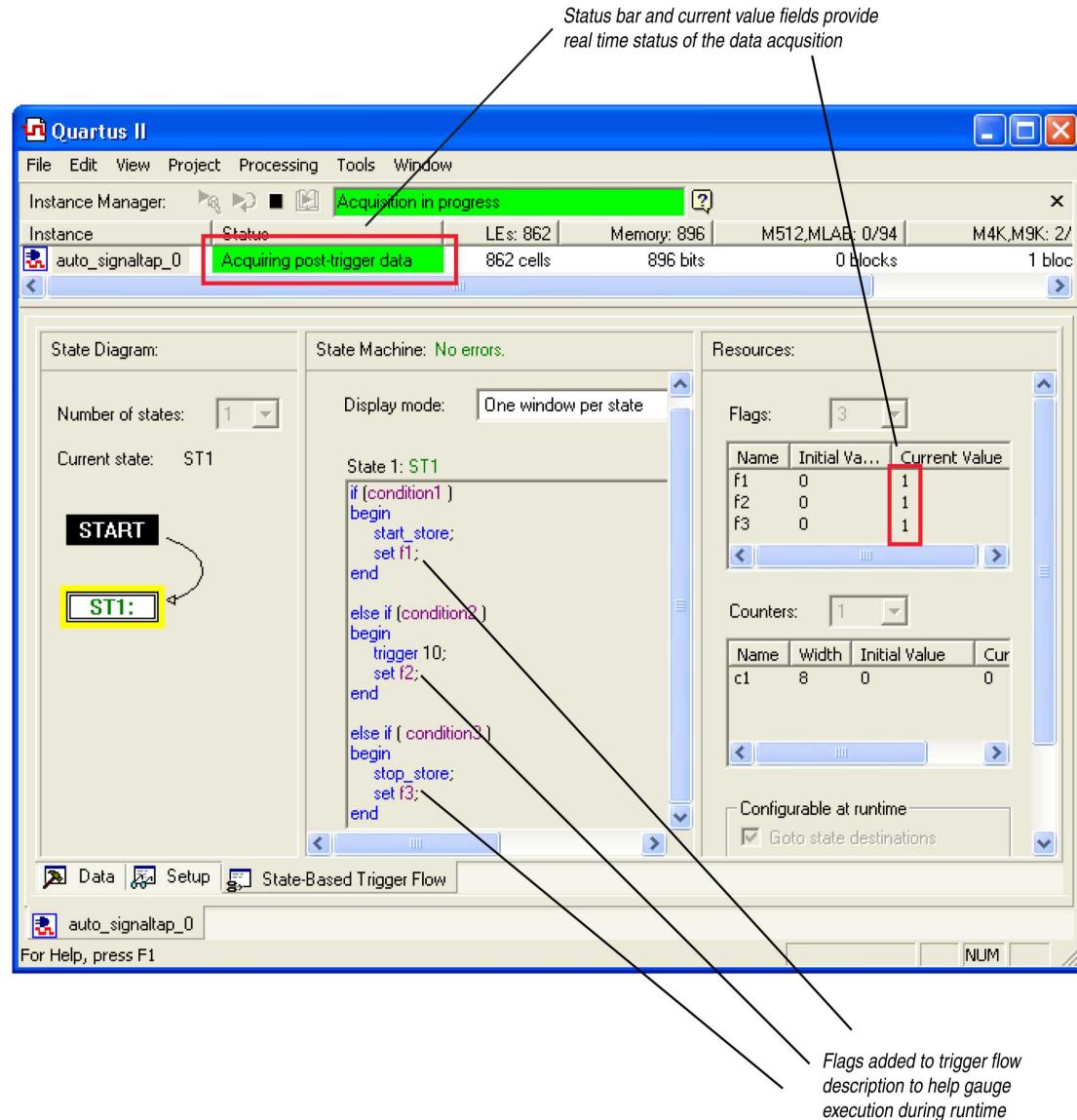
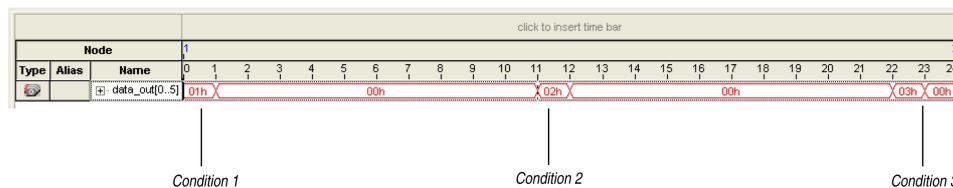


Figure 78. Waveform After Forcing the Analysis to Stop



The combination of using counters, Boolean and relational operators in conjunction with the `start_store` and `stop_store` commands can give a clock-cycle level of resolution to controlling the samples that are written into the acquisition buffer.

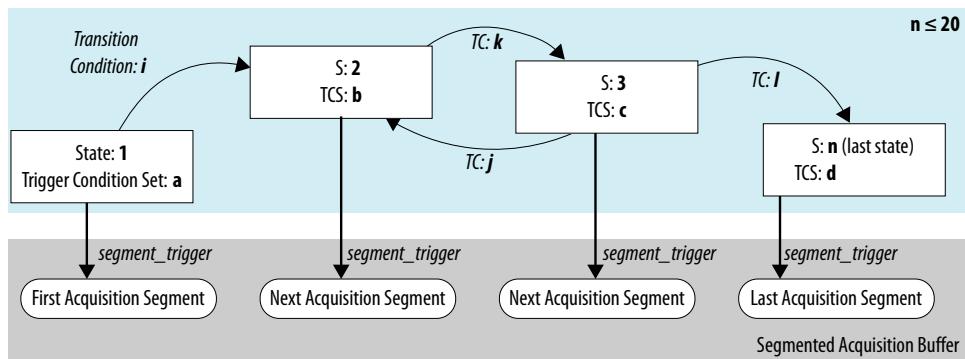
5.4.5.2. State-Based Triggering

With state-based triggering, a state diagram organizes the events that trigger the acquisition buffer. The states capture all actions that the acquisition buffer performs, and each state contains conditional expressions that define transition conditions.

Custom state-based triggering grants control over triggering condition arrangement. Because the logic analyzer only captures samples of interest, custom state-based triggering allows for more efficient use of the space available in the acquisition buffer.

To help you describe the relationship between triggering conditions, the state-based triggering flow provides tooltips within the flow GUI. Additionally, you can use the Signal Tap Trigger Flow Description Language, which is based upon conditional expressions.

Figure 79. State-Based Triggering Flow



Notes to figure:

1. You can define up to 20 different states.
2. The logic analyzer evaluates external trigger inputs that you define before any conditions in the custom state-based triggering flow.

Each state allows you to define a set of conditional expressions. Conditional expressions are Boolean expressions that depend on a combination of triggering conditions, counters, and status flags. You configure the triggering conditions within the **Setup** tab. The Signal Tap logic analyzer custom-based triggering flow provides counters and status flags.

Within each conditional expression you define a set of actions. Actions include triggering the acquisition buffer to stop capture, a modification to either a counter or status flag, or a state transition.

Trigger actions can apply to either a single segment of a segmented acquisition buffer or to the entire non-segmented acquisition buffer. Each trigger action provides an optional count that specifies the number of samples the buffer captures before the logic analyzer stops acquisition of the current segment. The count argument allows you to control the amount of data the buffer captures before and after a triggering event occurs.

Resource manipulation actions allow you to increment and decrement counters or set and clear status flags. The logic analyzer uses counter and status flag resources as optional inputs in conditional expressions. Counters and status flags are useful for counting the number of occurrences of certain events and for aiding in triggering flow control.

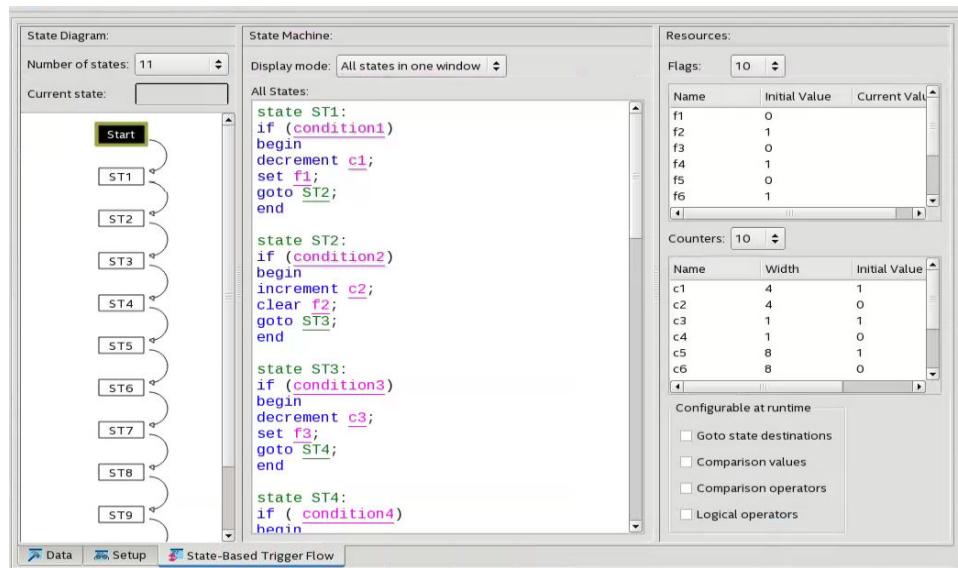
The state-based triggering flow allows you to capture a sequence of events that may not necessarily be contiguous in time. For example, a communication transaction between two devices that includes a hand shaking protocol containing a sequence of acknowledgments.

5.4.5.2.1. State-Based Triggering Flow Tab

The **State-Based Trigger Flow** tab is the control interface for the custom state-based triggering flow.

This tab is only available when you select **State-Based** on the **Trigger Flow Control** list. If you specify **Trigger Flow Control** as **Sequential**, the **State-Based Trigger Flow** tab is not visible.

Figure 80. State-Based Triggering Flow Tab



The **State-Based Trigger Flow** tab contains three panes:

State Diagram Pane

The **State Diagram** pane provides a graphical overview of your triggering flow. This pane displays the number of available states and the state transitions. To adjust the number of available states, use the menu above the graphical overview.



State Machine Pane

The **State Machine** pane contains the text entry boxes where you define the triggering flow and actions associated with each state.

- You can define the triggering flow using the Signal Tap Trigger Flow Description Language, a simple language based on “if-else” conditional statements.
- Tooltips appear when you move the mouse over the cursor, to guide command entry into the state boxes.
- The GUI provides a syntax check on your flow description in real-time and highlights any errors in the text flow.

The State Machine description text boxes default to show one text box per state. You can also have the entire flow description shown in a single text field. This option can be useful when copying and pasting a flow description from a template or an external text editor. To toggle between one window per state, or all states in one window, select the appropriate option under **State Display mode**.

Related Information

[Signal Tap Trigger Flow Description Language](#) on page 186

Resources Pane

The **Resources** pane allows you to declare status flags and counters for your Custom Triggering Flow's conditional expressions.

- You can increment/decrement counters or set/clear status flags within your triggering flow.
- You can specify up to 20 counters and 20 status flags.
- To initialize counter and status flags, right-click the row in the table and select **Set Initial Value**.
- To specify a counter width, right-click the counter in the table and select **Set Width**.
- To assist in debugging your trigger flow specification, the logic analyzer dynamically updates counters and flag values after acquisition starts.

The **Configurable at runtime** settings allow you to control which options can change at runtime without requiring a recompilation.

Table 63. Runtime Reconfigurable Settings, State-Based Triggering Flow

| Setting | Description |
|----------------------------|---|
| Destination of goto action | Allows you to modify the destination of the state transition at runtime. |
| Comparison values | Allows you to modify comparison values in Boolean expressions at runtime. In addition, you can modify the <code>segment_trigger</code> and <code>trigger action post-fill count</code> argument at runtime. |
| Comparison operators | Allows you to modify the operators in Boolean expressions at runtime. |
| Logical operators | Allows you to modify the logical operators in Boolean expressions at runtime. |

Related Information

- [Performance and Resource Considerations](#) on page 198
- [Runtime Reconfigurable Options](#) on page 201

5.4.5.2.2. Trigger Lock Mode

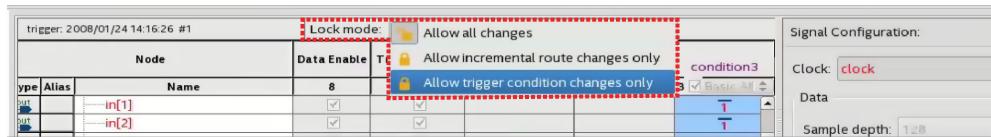
Trigger lock mode restricts changes to only the configuration settings that you specify as **Configurable at runtime**. The runtime configurable settings for the Custom Trigger Flow tab are on by default.

Note: You may get some performance advantages by disabling some of the runtime configurable options.

You can restrict changes to your Signal Tap configuration to include only the options that do not require a recompilation. Trigger lock-mode allows you to make changes that reflect immediately in the device.

1. On the **Setup** tab, point to **Lock Mode** and select **Allow trigger condition changes only**.

Figure 81. Allow Trigger Conditions Change Only



2. Modify the Trigger Flow conditions.

Incremental Route lock-mode restricts the GUI to only allow changes that require an Incremental Route compilation using Rapid Recompile. Use Rapid Recompile to perform incremental routing and gain a 2-4x speedup over the initial full compilation.

5.4.5.3. Signal Tap Trigger Flow Description Language

The Trigger Flow Description Language is based on a list of conditional expressions per state to define a set of actions.

To describe the actions the Logic Analyzer evaluates when a state is reached, you follow this syntax:

Syntax of Trigger Flow Description Language

```
state <state_label>:
    <action_list>
    if (<boolean_expression>)
        <action_list>
    [else if (<boolean_expression>)
        <action_list>]
    [else
        <action_list>]
```

- Non-terminals are delimited by "<>".
- Optional arguments are delimited by "[]"
- The priority for evaluation of conditional statements is from top to bottom.
- The Trigger Flow Description Language allows multiple `else if` conditions.

[<state_label> on page 187](#)

[<boolean_expression> on page 187](#)

[<action_list> on page 188](#)



Related Information

[Custom Triggering Flow Application Examples](#) on page 215

5.4.5.3.1. <state_label>

Identifies a given state. You use the state label to start describing the actions the Logic Analyzer evaluates once said state is reached. You can also use the state label with the goto command.

The state description header syntax is:

`state <state_label>`

The description of a state ends with the beginning of another state or the end of the whole trigger flow description.

5.4.5.3.2. <boolean_expression>

Collection of operators and operands that evaluate into a Boolean result. The operators can be logical or relational. Depending on the operator, the operand can reference a trigger condition, a counter and a register, or a numeric value. To group a set of operands within an expression, you use parentheses.

Table 64. Logical Operators

Logical operators accept any boolean expression as an operand.

| Operator | Description | Syntax |
|----------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| ! | NOT operator | <code>! expr1</code> |
| && | AND operator | <code>expr1 && expr2</code> |
| | OR operator | <code>expr1 expr2</code> |

Table 65. Relational Operators

You use relational operators on counters or status flags.

| Operator | Description | Syntax |
|----------|--------------------------|---|
| > | Greater than | <code><identifier> > <numerical_value></code> |
| >= | Greater than or Equal to | <code><identifier> >= <numerical_value></code> |
| == | Equals | <code><identifier> == <numerical_value></code> |
| != | Does not equal | <code><identifier> != <numerical_value></code> |
| <= | Less than or equal to | <code><identifier> <= <numerical_value></code> |
| < | Less than | <code><identifier> < <numerical_value></code> |

Notes to table:

1. <identifier> indicates a counter or status flag.
2. <numerical_value> indicates an integer.

**Note:**

- The `<boolean_expression>` in an `if` statement can contain a single event or multiple event conditions.
- When the boolean expression evaluates TRUE, the logic analyzer evaluates all the commands in the `<action_list>` concurrently.

5.4.5.3.3. `<action_list>`

List of actions that the Logic Analyzer performs within a state once a condition is satisfied.

- Each action must end with a semicolon (`;`).
- If you specify more than one action within an `if` or an `else if` clause, you must delimit the `action_list` with `begin` and `end` tokens.

Possible actions include:

Resource Manipulation Action

The resources the trigger flow description uses can be either counters or status flags.

Table 66. Resource Manipulation Actions

| Action | Description | Syntax |
|-----------|--|--|
| increment | Increments a counter resource by 1 | <code>increment <counter_identifier>;</code> |
| decrement | Decrements a counter resource by 1 | <code>decrement <counter_identifier>;</code> |
| reset | Resets counter resource to initial value | <code>reset <counter_identifier>;</code> |
| set | Sets a status flag to 1 | <code>set <register_flag_identifier>;</code> |
| clear | Sets a status flag to 0 | <code>clear <register_flag_identifier>;</code> |

Buffer Control Actions

Actions that control the acquisition buffer.

Table 67. Buffer Control Actions

| Action | Description | Syntax |
|-----------------|---|---|
| trigger | Stops the acquisition for the current buffer and ends analysis. This command is required in every flow definition. | <code>trigger <post-fill_count>;</code> |
| segment_trigger | Available only in segmented acquisition mode. Ends acquisition of the current segment. After evaluating this command, the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer starts acquiring from the next segment. If all segments are written, the Logic Analyzer overwrites the oldest segment with the latest sample. When a trigger action is evaluated the acquisition stops. | <code>segment_trigger <post-fill_count>;</code> |
| start_store | Active only in state-based storage qualifier mode. Asserts the <code>write_enable</code> to the Signal Tap acquisition buffer. | <code>start_store</code> |

continued...



| Action | Description | Syntax |
|------------|---|------------|
| stop_store | Active only in state-based storage qualifier mode. De-asserts the write_enable signal to the Signal Tap acquisition buffer. | stop_store |

Both trigger and segment_trigger actions accept an optional post_fill_count argument.

Related Information

[Post-fill Count on page 191](#)

State Transition Action

Specifies the next state in the custom state control flow. The syntax is:
goto <state_label>;

5.4.5.4. State-Based Storage Qualifier Feature

Selecting a state-based storage qualifier type enables the start_store and stop_store actions. When you use these actions in conjunction with the expressions of the State-based trigger flow, you get maximum flexibility to control data written into the acquisition buffer.

Note: You can only apply the start_store and stop_store commands to a non-segmented buffer.

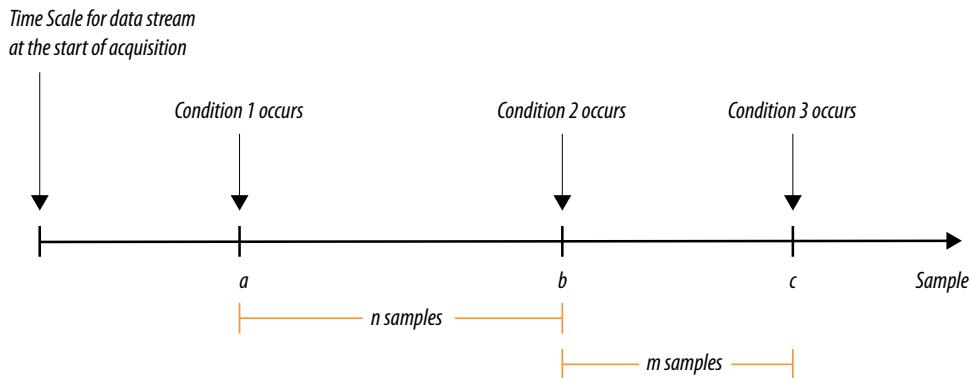
The start_store and stop_store commands are similar to the start and stop conditions of the **start/stop** storage qualifier mode. If you enable storage qualification, Signal Tap logic analyzer doesn't write data into the acquisition buffer until the start_store command occurs. However, in the state-based storage qualifier type you must include a trigger command as part of the trigger flow description. This trigger command is necessary to complete the acquisition and display the results on the waveform display.

5.4.5.4.1. Storage Qualification Feature for the State-Based Trigger Flow.

This trigger flow description contains three trigger conditions that happen at different times after you click **Start Analysis**:

```
State 1: ST1:
    if ( condition1 )
        start_store;
    else if ( condition2 )
        trigger value;
    else if ( condition3 )
        stop_store;
```

Figure 82. Capture Scenario for Storage Qualification with the State-Based Trigger Flow



When you apply the trigger flow to the scenario in the figure:

1. The Signal Tap logic analyzer does not write into the acquisition buffer until **Condition 1** occurs (sample **a**).
2. When **Condition 2** occurs (sample **b**), the logic analyzer evaluates the trigger value command, and continues to write into the buffer to finish the acquisition.
3. The trigger flow specifies a `stop_store` command at sample **c**, which occurs m samples after the trigger point.
4. If the data acquisition finishes the post-fill acquisition samples before **Condition 3** occurs, the logic analyzer finishes the acquisition and displays the contents of the waveform. In this case, the capture ends if the post-fill count value is $< m$.
5. If the post-fill count value in the Trigger Flow description 1 is $> m$ samples, the buffer pauses acquisition indefinitely, provided there is no recurrence of Condition 1 to trigger the logic analyzer to start capturing data again.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer continues to evaluate the `stop_store` and `start_store` commands even after evaluating the trigger. If the acquisition paused, click **Stop Analysis** to manually stop and force the acquisition to trigger. You can use counter values, flags, and the State diagram to help you perform the trigger flow. The counter values, flags, and the current state update in real-time during a data acquisition.

5.4.6. Specify Trigger Position

You can specify the amount of data the Logic Analyzer acquires before and after a trigger event. Positions for Runtime and Power-Up triggers are separate.

Signal Tap Logic Analyzer offers three pre-defined ratios of pre-trigger data to post-trigger data:

- **Pre**—Saves signal activity that occurred after the trigger (12% pre-trigger, 88% post-trigger).
- **Center**—Saves 50% pre-trigger and 50% post-trigger data.
- **Post**—Saves signal activity that occurred before the trigger (88% pre-trigger, 12% post-trigger).

These pre-defined ratios apply to both non-segmented buffers and segmented buffers.



Related Information

[State-Based Triggering](#) on page 183

5.4.6.1. Post-fill Count

In a custom state-based triggering flow with the `segment_trigger` and `trigger` buffer control actions, you can use the `post-fill_count` argument to specify a custom trigger position.

- If you do not use the `post-fill_count` argument, the trigger position for the affected buffer defaults to the trigger position you specified in the **Setup** tab.
- In the `trigger` buffer control action (for non-segmented buffers), `post-fill_count` specifies the number of samples to capture before stopping data acquisition.
- In the `segment_trigger` buffer control action (for segmented buffer), `post-fill_count` specifies a data segment.

Note: In the case of `segment_trigger`, acquisition of the current buffer stops immediately if a subsequent triggering action is issued in the next state, regardless of the current buffer's post-fill count. The logic analyzer discards the remaining unfilled post-count acquisitions in the current buffer, and displays them as grayed-out samples in the data window.

When the Signal Tap data window displays the captured data, the trigger position appears as the number of post-count samples from the end of the acquisition segment or buffer.

Sample Number of Trigger Position = $(N - \text{Post-Fill Count})$

In this case, N is the sample depth of either the acquisition segment or non-segmented buffer.

Related Information

[Buffer Control Actions](#) on page 188

5.4.7. Power-Up Triggers

Power-up triggers capture events that occur during device initialization, immediately after you power or reset the FPGA.

The typical use of Signal Tap logic analyzer is triggering events that occur during normal device operation. You start an analysis manually once the target device is fully powered on and the JTAG connection for the device is available. With Signal Tap Power-Up Trigger feature, the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures data immediately after device initialization.

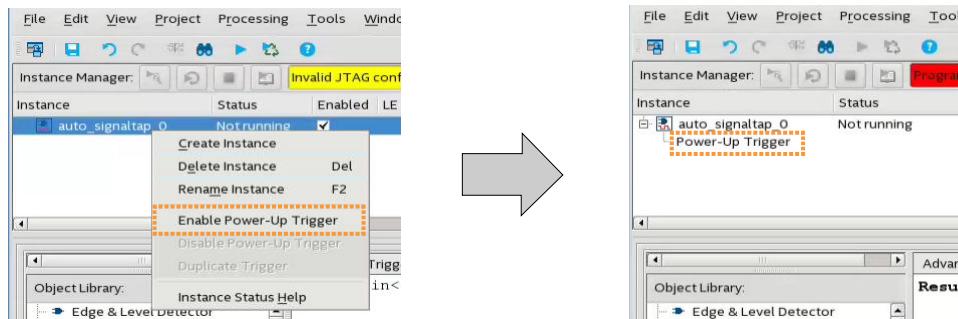
You can add a different Power-Up Trigger to each logic analyzer instance in the **Signal Tap Instance Manager** pane.

5.4.7.1. Enabling a Power-Up Trigger

To enable the Power-Up Trigger for a logic analyzer instance:

- Right-click the instance and click **Enable Power-Up Trigger**.

Figure 83. Enabling Power-Up Trigger in Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Editor



Power-Up Trigger appears as a child instance below the name of the selected instance. The node list displays the default trigger conditions.

To disable a Power-Up Trigger, right-click the instance and click **Disable Power-Up Trigger**.

5.4.7.2. Configuring Power-Up Trigger Conditions

- Any change that you make to a Power-Up Trigger conditions requires that you recompile the Signal Tap logic analyzer instance, even if a similar change to the Runtime Trigger conditions does not require a recompilation.
- You can also force trigger conditions with the In-System Sources and Probes in conjunction with the Signal Tap logic analyzer. The In-System Sources and Probes feature allows you to drive and sample values on to selected nets over the JTAG chain.

Related Information

[Design Debugging Using In-System Sources and Probes](#) on page 233

5.4.7.3. Managing Signal Tap Instances with Run-Time and Power-Up Trigger Conditions

On instances that have two both types of trigger conditions, Power-Up Trigger conditions are color coded light blue, while Run-Time Trigger conditions remain white.

- To switch between the trigger conditions of the Power-Up Trigger and the Run-Time Trigger, double-click the instance name or the Power-Up Trigger name in the **Instance Manager**.
- To copy trigger conditions from a Run-Time Trigger to a Power-Up Trigger or vice versa, right-click the trigger name in the **Instance Manager** and click **Duplicate Trigger**. Alternatively, select the trigger name and click **Edit > Duplicate Trigger**.

Note: Run-time trigger conditions allow fewer adjustments than power-up trigger conditions.



5.4.8. External Triggers

External trigger inputs allow you to trigger the Signal Tap logic analyzer from an external source.

The external trigger input behaves like trigger condition 0, in that the condition must evaluate to TRUE before the logic analyzer evaluates any other trigger conditions.

The Signal Tap logic analyzer supplies a signal to trigger external devices or other logic analyzer instances. These features allow you to synchronize external logic analysis equipment with the internal logic analyzer. Power-Up Triggers can use the external triggers feature, but they must use the same source or target signal as their associated Run-Time Trigger.

You can use external triggers to perform cross-triggering on a hard processor system (HPS):

- The processor debugger allows you to configure the HPS to obey or disregard cross-trigger request from the FPGA, and to issue or not issue cross-trigger requests to the FPGA.
- The processor debugger in combination with the Signal Tap external trigger feature allow you to develop a dynamic combination of cross-trigger behaviors.
- You can implement a system-level debugging solution for an Intel FPGA SoC by using the cross-triggering feature with the ARM Development Studio 5 (DS-5) software.

Related Information

- [FPGA-Adaptive Software Debug and Performance Analysis white paper](#)
- [Signal Configuration Pane](#)
In Intel Quartus Prime Help

5.4.8.1. Using the Trigger Out of One Analyzer as the Trigger In of Another Analyzer

An advanced feature of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is the ability to use the **Trigger out** of one analyzer as the **Trigger in** to another analyzer. This feature allows you to synchronize and debug events that occur across multiple clock domains.

To perform this operation, first turn on **Trigger out** for the source logic analyzer instance. On the **Instance** list of the **Trigger out** trigger, select the targeted logic analyzer instance. For example, if the instance named `auto_signaltap_0` should trigger `auto_signaltap_1`, select `auto_signaltap_1|trigger_in`.

Turning on **Trigger out** automatically enables the **Trigger in** of the targeted logic analyzer instance and fills in the **Instance** field of the **Trigger in** trigger with the **Trigger out** signal from the source logic analyzer instance. In this example, `auto_signaltap_0` is targeting `auto_signaltap_1`. The Trigger In **Instance** field of `auto_signaltap_1` is automatically filled in with `auto_signaltap_0|trigger_out`.



5.5. Compiling the Design

To incorporate the Signal Tap logic in your design and enable the JTAG connection, you must compile your project. When you add a .stp file to your project, the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer becomes part of your design. When you debug your design with a traditional external logic analyzer, you must often make changes to the signals you want to monitor as well as the trigger conditions.

Note: Because these adjustments require that you recompile your design when using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, use the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer feature along with incremental compilation in the Intel Quartus Prime software to reduce recompilation time.

5.5.1. Faster Compilations with Intel Quartus Prime Incremental Compilation

You can add a Signal Tap Logic Analyzer instance to your design without recompiling your original source code. Incremental compilation enables you to preserve the synthesis and fitting results of your original design.

When you compile your design including a .stp file, Intel Quartus Prime software automatically adds the sld_signaltap and sld_hub entities to the compilation hierarchy. These two entities are the main components of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, providing the trigger logic and JTAG interface required for operation.

Incremental compilation is also useful when you want to modify the configuration of the .stp file. For example, you can change the buffer sample depth or memory type without performing a full compilation. Instead, you only recompile the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, configured as its own design partition.

5.5.1.1. Enabling Incremental Compilation for Your Design

When enabled for your design, the Signal Tap logic analyzer is always a separate partition. After the first compilation, you can use the Signal Tap logic analyzer to analyze signals from the post-fit netlist. If your partitions are designed correctly, subsequent compilations due to Signal Tap logic analyzer settings take less time.

The netlist type for the top-level partition defaults to **source**. To take advantage of incremental compilation, specify the Netlist types for the partitions you want to tap as **Post-fit**.

Related Information

[Intel Quartus Prime Incremental Compilation for Hierarchical and Team-Based Design documentation](#)



5.5.1.2. Using Incremental Compilation with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The Signal Tap logic analyzer uses the incremental compilation flow by default. For all signals that you want to connect to the Signal Tap logic analyzer from the post-fit netlist:

1. In the Design Partitions window, set the netlist type of the partition that contains the signals to **Post-Fit**, with a Fitter Preservation Level of **Placement and Routing**.
2. In the **Node Finder**, use the **Signal Tap: post-fitting filter** to add the signals of interest to your Signal Tap configuration file.
3. If you want to add signals from the pre-synthesis netlist, set the netlist type to **Source File** and use the **Signal Tap: pre-synthesis filter** in the **Node Finder**. Do not use the netlist type **Post-Synthesis** with the Signal Tap logic analyzer.

Caution: When using post-fit and pre-synthesis nodes:

- Read all incremental compilation guidelines to ensure the proper partitioning of a project.
- To speed up compile time, use only post-fit nodes for partitions specified as preservation-level post-fit.
- Do not mix pre-synthesis and post-fit nodes in any partition. If you must tap pre-synthesis nodes for a particular partition, make all tapped nodes in that partition pre-synthesis nodes and change the netlist type to **source** in the design partitions window.

Node names can differ between a pre-synthesis netlist and a post-fit netlist. In general, registers and user input signals share common names between the two netlists. During compilation, certain optimizations change the names of combinational signals in your RTL. If the type of node name chosen does not match the netlist type, the compiler may not be able to find the signal to connect to your Signal Tap logic analyzer instance for analysis. The compiler issues a critical warning to alert you of this scenario. The signal that is not connected is tied to ground in the **Signal Tap data** tab.

If you do use incremental compilation flow with the Signal Tap logic analyzer and source file changes are necessary, be aware that you may have to remove compiler-generated post-fit net names. Source code changes force the affected partition to go through resynthesis. During synthesis, the compiler cannot find compiler-generated net names from a previous compilation.

Note: Intel FPGA recommends using only registered and user-input signals as debugging taps in your .stp whenever possible.

Both registered and user-supplied input signals share common node names in the pre-synthesis and post-fit netlist. As a result, using only registered and user-supplied input signals in your .stp limits the changes you need to make to your Signal Tap logic analyzer configuration.

You can check the nodes that are connected to each Signal Tap instance using the In-System Debugging compilation reports. These reports list each node name you selected to connect to a Signal Tap instance, the netlist type used for the particular connection, and the actual node name used after compilation. If the incremental

compilation flow is not used, the In-System Debugging reports are located in the Analysis & Synthesis folder. If the incremental compilation flow is used, this report is located in the Partition Merge folder.

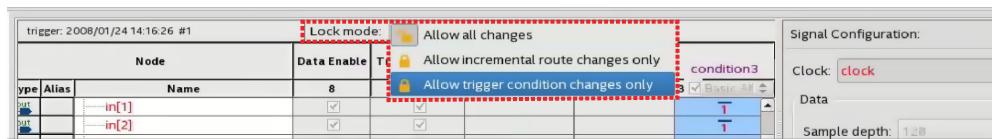
To verify that your original design was not modified, examine the messages in the **Partition Merge** section of the Compilation Report.

Unless you make changes to your design partitions that require recompilation, only the Signal Tap design partition is recompiled. If you make subsequent changes to only the .stp, only the Signal Tap design partition must be recompiled, reducing your recompilation time.

5.5.2. Prevent Changes Requiring Recompilation

Configure the .stp to prevent changes that normally require recompilation. To do this, select a **Lock mode** from above the node list in the **Setup** tab. To lock your configuration, choose **Allow trigger condition changes only**.

Figure 84. Allow Trigger Conditions Change Only



Related Information

[Verify Whether You Need to Recompile Your Project](#) on page 196

5.5.3. Verify Whether You Need to Recompile Your Project

Before starting a debugging session, do not make any changes to the .stp settings that require recompiling the project.

To verify whether a change you made requires recompiling the project, check the Signal Tap status display at the top of the **Instance Manager** pane. This feature allows you to undo the change, so that you do not need to recompile your project.

Related Information

[Prevent Changes Requiring Recompilation](#) on page 196

5.5.4. Incremental Route with Rapid Recompile

You can use Incremental Route with Rapid Recompile to decrease compilation times. After performing a full compilation on your design, you can use the Incremental Route flow to achieve a 2-4x speedup over a flat compile. The Incremental Route flow is not compatible with Partial Reconfiguration.

Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software supports Incremental Route with Rapid Recompile for Arria V, Cyclone V, and Stratix V devices.

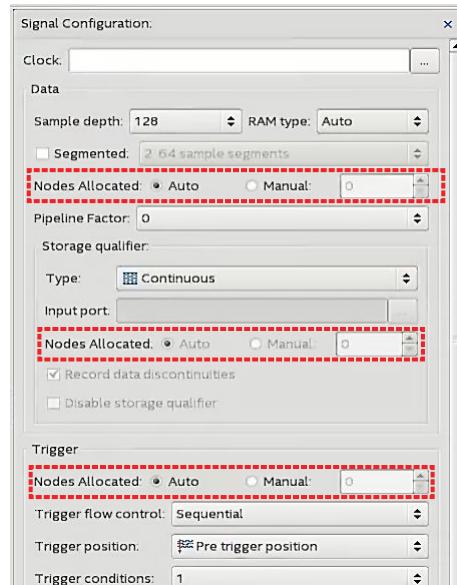
5.5.4.1. Using the Incremental Route Flow

To use the Incremental Route flow:



1. Open your design and run **Analysis & Elaboration** (or a full compilation) to give node visibility in Signal Tap.
2. Add Signal Tap to your design.
3. In the Signal Tap **Signal Configuration** pane, specify **Manual** in the **Nodes Allocated** field for Trigger and Data nodes (and Storage Qualifier, if used).

Figure 85. Manually Allocate Nodes

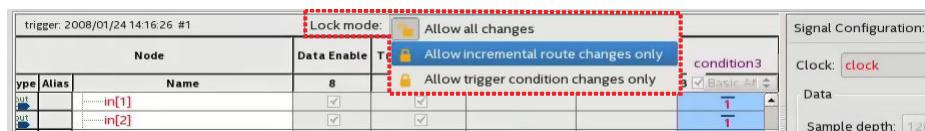


Manual node allocation allows you to control the number of nodes compiled into the design, which is critical for the Incremental Route flow.

When you select **Auto** allocation, the number of nodes compiled into the design matches the number of nodes in the **Setup** tab. If you add a node later, you create a mismatch between the amount of nodes the device requires and the amount of compiled nodes, and you must perform a full compilation.

4. Specify the number of nodes that you estimate necessary for the debugging process. You can increase the number of nodes later, but this requires more compilation time.
5. Add the nodes that you want to tap.
6. If you have not fully compiled your project, run a full compilation. Otherwise, start incremental compile using Rapid Recompile.
7. Debug and determine additional signals of interest.
8. (Optional) Select **Allow incremental route changes only** lock-mode.

Figure 86. Incremental Route Lock-Mode



9. Add additional nodes in the Signal Tap **Setup** tab.
 - Do not exceed the number of manually allocated nodes you specified.

- Avoid making changes to non-runtime configurable settings.
10. Click the Rapid Recompile icon  from the toolbar. Alternatively, click **Processing** ➤ **Start Rapid Recompile**.

Note: The previous steps set up your design for Incremental Route, but the actual Incremental Route process begins when you perform a Rapid Recompile.

5.5.4.2. Tips to Achieve Maximum Speedup

- Basic AND (which applies to Storage Qualifier as well as trigger input) is the fastest for the Incremental Route flow.
- Basic OR is slower for the Incremental Route flow, but if you avoid changing the parent-child relationship of nodes within groups, you can minimize the impact on compile time. You can change the sibling relationships of nodes.
 - Basic OR and advanced triggers require re-synthesis when you change the number/names of tapped nodes.
- Use the Incremental Route lock-mode to avoid inadvertent changes requiring a full compilation.

5.5.5. Timing Preservation with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

In addition to verifying functionality, timing closure is one of the most crucial processes in successful operation of a design.

Note: When you compile a project with a Signal Tap logic analyzer without the use of incremental compilation, you must add IP to the existing design. This addition often impacts the existing placement, routing, and timing of the design. To minimize the effect that the Signal Tap logic analyzer has on the design, use incremental compilation for the project. Incremental compilation is the default setting in new designs. You can easily enable incremental compilation in existing designs. When the Signal Tap logic analyzer is in a design partition, it has little to no affect on the design.

For Intel Arria 10 devices, the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software does not support timing preservation for post-fit taps with Rapid Recompile.

The following techniques can help you maintain timing:

- Avoid adding critical path signals to the .stp file.
- Minimize the number of combinational signals you add to the .stp file, and add registers whenever possible.
- Specify an f_{MAX} constraint for each clock in the design.

Related Information

Timing Closure and Optimization

>In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Optimization*

5.5.6. Performance and Resource Considerations

When you perform logic analysis of your design, you can see the necessary trade-off between runtime flexibility, timing performance, and resource usage.



The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer allows you to select runtime configurable parameters to balance the need for runtime flexibility, speed, and area.

The default values of the runtime configurable parameters provide maximum flexibility, so you can complete debugging as quickly as possible; however, you can adjust these settings to determine whether there is a more appropriate configuration for your design. Because performance results are design-dependent, try these options in different combinations until you achieve the desired balance between functionality, performance, and utilization.

5.5.6.1. Signal Tap Logic in Critical Path

If Signal Tap logic is part of your critical path, follow these tips to speed up the performance of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer:

- **Disable runtime configurable options**—Certain resources are allocated to accommodate for runtime flexibility. If you use either advanced triggers or State-based triggering flow, disable runtime configurable parameters for a boost in f_{MAX} of the Signal Tap logic.
 - If you are using State-based triggering flow, try disabling the **Goto state destination** option and performing a recompilation before disabling the other runtime configurable options. The **Goto state destination** option has the greatest impact on f_{MAX} , as compared to the other runtime configurable options.
- **Minimize the number of signals that have Trigger Enable selected**—By default, Signal Tap Logic Analyzer enable the **Trigger Enable** option for all signals that you add to the .stp file. For signals that you do not plan to use as triggers, turn this option off.
- **Turn on Physical Synthesis for register retiming**—If many (more than the number of inputs that fit in a LAB) enabled triggering signals fan-in logic to a gate-based triggering condition (basic trigger condition or a logical reduction operator in the advanced trigger tab), turn on **Perform register retiming**. This can help balance combinational logic across LABs.

5.5.6.2. Signal Tap Logic Using Critical Resources

If your design is resource constrained, follow these tips to reduce the logic or memory the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer uses:

- **Disable runtime configurable options**—Disabling runtime configurability for advanced trigger conditions or runtime configurable options in the State-based triggering flow results in fewer LEs.
- **Minimize the number of segments in the acquisition buffer**—You can reduce the logic resources that the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer uses if you limit the segments in your sampling buffer
- **Disable the Data Enable for signals that you use only for triggering**—By default, Signal Tap Logic Analyzer enables **data enable** options for all signals. Turning off the **data enable** option for signals you use only as trigger inputs saves on memory resources.

5.6. Program the Target Device or Devices

After you add the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to your project and re-compile, you can configure the FPGA target device.



If you want to debug multiple designs simultaneously, configure the device from the .stp instead of the Intel Quartus Prime Programmer. This allows you to open more than one .stp file and program multiple devices.

5.6.1. Ensure Setting Compatibility Between .stp and .sof Files

A .stp file is compatible with a .sof file when the settings for the logic analyzer, such as the size of the capture buffer and the monitoring and triggering signals match the programming settings of the target device. If the files are not compatible you can still program the device, but you cannot run or control the logic analyzer from the Signal Tap logic analyzer Editor.

- To ensure programming compatibility, program the device with the .sof file generated in the most recent compilation.
- To check whether a particular .sof is compatible with the current Signal Tap configuration, attach the .sof to the SOF manager.

Note: When the Signal Tap logic analyzer detects incompatibility after the analysis starts, the Intel Quartus Prime software generates a system error message containing two CRC values: the expected value and the value retrieved from the .stp instance on the device. The CRC value comes from all Signal Tap settings that affect the compilation.

As a best practice, use the .stp file with a Intel Quartus Prime project. The project database contains information about the integrity of the current Signal Tap logic analyzer session. Without the project database, there is no way to verify that the current .stp file matches the .sof file in the device. If you have an .stp file that does not match the .sof file, the Signal Tap logic analyzer can capture incorrect data.

Related Information

[Manage Multiple Signal Tap Files and Configurations](#) on page 167

5.7. Running the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

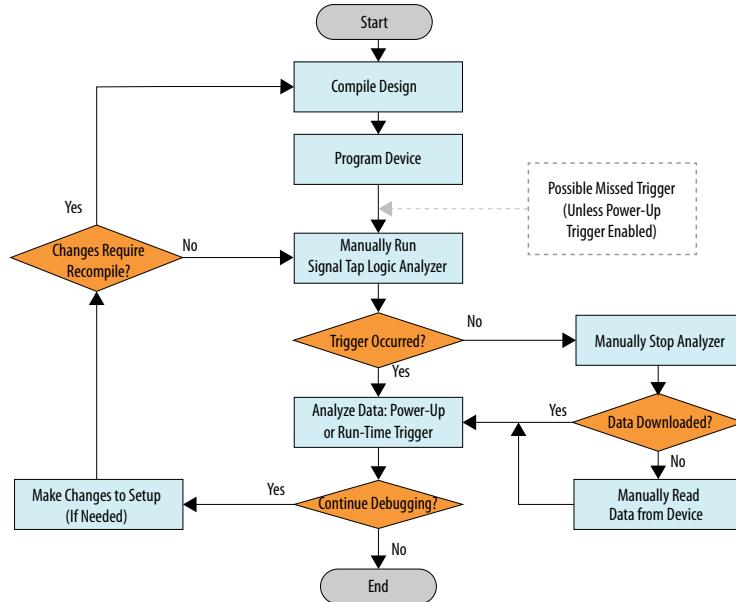
Debugging Signal Tap logic analyzer is similar using an external logic analyzer. You initialize the logic analyzer by starting an analysis. When your trigger event occurs, the logic analyzer stores the captured data in the device's memory buffer, and then transfers this data to the .stp file with the JTAG connection.

You can also perform the equivalent of a force trigger instruction that lets you view the captured data currently in the buffer without a trigger event occurring.

The flowchart shows how you operate the Signal Tap logic analyzer. Indicates where Power-Up and Runtime Trigger events occur and when captured data from these events is available for analysis.



Figure 87. Power-Up and Runtime Trigger Events Flowchart



You can also use In-System Sources and Probes in conjunction with the Signal Tap logic analyzer to force trigger conditions. The In-System Sources and Probes feature allows you to drive and sample values on to selected signals over the JTAG chain.

Related Information

[Design Debugging Using In-System Sources and Probes](#) on page 233

5.7.1. Runtime Reconfigurable Options

When you use Runtime Trigger mode, you can change certain settings in the .stp without recompiling your design.

Table 68. Runtime Reconfigurable Features

| Runtime Reconfigurable Setting | Description |
|---|---|
| Basic Trigger Conditions and Basic Storage Qualifier Conditions | You can change without recompiling all signals that have the Trigger condition turned on to any basic trigger condition value |
| Comparison Trigger Conditions and Comparison Storage Qualifier Conditions | All the comparison operands, the comparison numeric values, and the interval bound values are runtime-configurable. You can also switch from Comparison to Basic OR trigger at runtime without recompiling. |
| Advanced Trigger Conditions and Advanced Storage Qualifier Conditions | Many operators include runtime configurable settings. For example, all comparison operators are runtime-configurable. Configurable settings appear with a white background in the block representation. This runtime reconfigurable option is turned on in the Object Properties dialog box. |
| Switching between a storage-qualified and a continuous acquisition | Within any storage-qualified mode, you can switch to continuous capture mode without recompiling the design. To enable this feature, turn on disable storage qualifier . |
| State-based trigger flow parameters | Refer to <i>Runtime Reconfigurable Settings, State-Based Triggering Flow</i> |

Runtime Reconfigurable options can save time during the debugging cycle by allowing you to cover a wider possible scenario of events without the need to recompile the design. You may experience a slight impact to the performance and logic utilization. You can turn off runtime re-configurability for advanced trigger conditions and the state-based trigger flow parameters, boosting performance and decreasing area utilization.

To configure the .stp file to prevent changes that normally require recompilation in the **Setup** tab, select **Allow Trigger Condition changes only** above the node list.

In Incremental Route lock mode, **Allow incremental route changes only**, limits to changes that only require an Incremental Route compilation, and not a full compile.

This example illustrates a potential use case for Runtime Reconfigurable features, by providing a storage qualified enabled State-based trigger flow description, and showing how to modify the size of a capture window at runtime without a recompile. This example gives you equivalent functionality to a segmented buffer with a single trigger condition where the segment sizes are runtime reconfigurable.

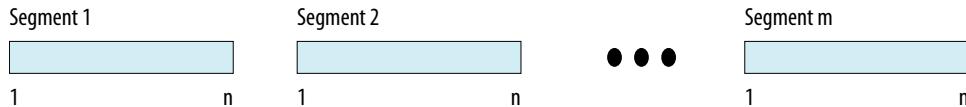
```
state ST1:  
if ( condition1 && (c1 <= m) )// each "segment" triggers on condition  
begin  
    start_store;  
    increment c1;  
    goto ST2:  
End  
  
else (c1 > m) // This else condition handles the last  
begin  
    start_store  
    Trigger (n-1)  
end  
  
state ST2:  
if ( c2 >= n )  
begin  
    reset c2;  
    stop_store;  
    goto ST1;  
end  
  
else (c2 < n)  
begin  
    increment c2;  
    goto ST2;  
end
```

Note: $m \times n$ must equal the sample depth to efficiently use the space in the sample buffer.

The next figure shows the segmented buffer that the trigger flow example describes.

Figure 88. Segmented Buffer Created with Storage Qualifier and State-Based Trigger

Total sample depth is fixed, where $m \times n$ must equal sample depth.





During runtime, you can modify the values m and n . Changing the m and n values in the trigger flow description adjust the segment boundaries without recompiling.

You can add states into the trigger flow description and selectively mask out specific states and enable other ones at runtime with status flags.

This example is like the previous example with an additional state inserted. You use this extra state to specify a different trigger condition that does not use the storage qualifier feature. You insert status flags into the conditional statements to control the execution of the trigger flow.

```

state ST1 :
    if (condition2 && f1)                                // additional state added for a non-
    segmented                                               // acquisition set f1 to enable state
        begin
            start_store;
            trigger
        end
    else if (! f1)
        goto ST2;
state ST2:
    if ( (condition1 && (c1 <= m) && f2) // f2 status flag used to mask state.
Set f2
        begin
            start_store;
            increment c1;
            goto ST3:
        end
    else (c1 > m )
        start_store
        Trigger (n-1)
    end
state ST3:
    if ( c2 >= n)
        begin
            reset c2;
            stop_store;
            goto ST1;
        end
    else (c2 < n)
        begin
            increment c2;
            goto ST2;
        end

```

5.7.2. Signal Tap Status Messages

The following table describes the text messages that might appear in the Signal Tap Status Indicator in the **Instance Manager** pane before, during, or after data acquisition. These messages allow you to monitor the state of the logic analyzer and identify the operation that the logic analyzer is performing.

Table 69. Messages in the Signal Tap Status Indicator

| Message | Message Description |
|---|---|
| Not running | The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is not running. This message appears when there is no connection to a device, or the device is not configured. |
| (Power-Up Trigger) Waiting for clock (1) | The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is performing a Runtime or Power-Up Trigger acquisition and is waiting for the clock signal to transition. |

continued...

| Message | Message Description |
|---|--|
| Acquiring (Power-Up) pre-trigger data (1) | The trigger condition has not been evaluated yet. If the acquisition mode is non-segmented buffer and the storage qualifier type is continuous, the Signal Tap logic analyzer collects a full buffer of data. |
| Trigger In conditions met | Trigger In condition has occurred. The Signal Tap logic analyzer is waiting for the first trigger condition to occur. This message only appears when a Trigger In condition exists. |
| Waiting for (Power-up) trigger (1) | The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is waiting for the trigger event to occur. |
| Trigger level <x> met | Trigger condition x occurred. The Signal Tap logic analyzer is waiting for condition x + 1 to occur. |
| Acquiring (power-up) post-trigger data (1) | The entire trigger event occurred. The Signal Tap logic analyzer is acquiring the post-trigger data. You define the amount of post-trigger data to collect (between 12%, 50%, and 88%) when you select the non-segmented buffer acquisition mode. |
| Offload acquired (Power-Up) data (1) | The JTAG chain is transmitting data to the Intel Quartus Prime software. |
| Ready to acquire | The Signal Tap logic analyzer is waiting for you to initialize the analyzer. |
| 1. This message can appear for both Runtime and Power-Up Trigger events. When referring to a Power-Up Trigger, the text in parentheses appears. | |

Note: In segmented acquisition mode, pre-trigger and post-trigger do not apply.

5.8. View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data

The Signal Tap logic analyzer interface allows you to examine the data captured manually or with a trigger. When in the Data view, you isolate the data of interest with the drag-to-zoom feature, enabled with a left-click.

5.8.1. Capturing Data Using Segmented Buffers

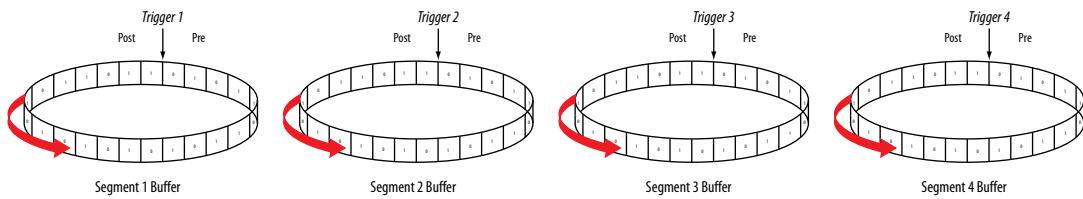
Segmented Acquisition buffers can perform captures with separate trigger conditions for each acquisition segment. These buffers allow you to capture recurring events or sequences of events that span over a long period.

Each acquisition segment acts as a non-segmented buffer, continuously capturing data after activation. When you run analyses with segmented buffers, the Signal Tap logic analyzer captures back-to-back data for each acquisition segment within the data buffer. You define the trigger flow, or the type and order in which the trigger conditions evaluate for each buffer, either in the Sequential trigger flow control or in the Custom State-based trigger flow control.

The following figure shows a segmented acquisition buffer with four segments represented as four separate non-segmented buffers.



Figure 89. Segmented Acquisition Buffer



When the Signal Tap logic analyzer finishes an acquisition with a segment and advances to the next segment to start a new acquisition. The data capture that appears in the waveform viewer depends on when a trigger condition occurs. The figure illustrates the data capture method. The Trigger markers—Trigger 1, Trigger 2, Trigger 3 and Trigger 4—refer to the evaluation of the segment_trigger and trigger commands in the Custom State-based trigger flow. In sequential flows, the Trigger markers refer to trigger conditions that you specify within the **Setup** tab.

If the Segment 1 Buffer is the active segment and Trigger 1 occurs, the Signal Tap logic analyzer starts evaluating Trigger 2 immediately. Data Acquisition for Segment 2 buffer starts when either Segment Buffer 1 finishes its post-fill count, or when Trigger 2 evaluates as TRUE, whichever condition occurs first. Thus, trigger conditions associated with the next buffer in the data capture sequence can preempt the post-fill count of the current active buffer. This allows the Signal Tap logic analyzer to accurately capture all the trigger conditions that occurred. Unused samples appear as a blank space in the waveform viewer.

Figure 90. Segmented Capture with Preemption of Acquisition Segments

The figure shows a capture using sequential flow control with the trigger condition for each segment specified as **Don't Care**.

| Node | | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|------|-------|---------|----|----|---|----|
| Type | Alias | Name | -2 | 14 | 0 | 16 |
| | | + state | 1h | | | |
| | | | | | | 1h |

Each segment before the last captures only one sample, because the next trigger condition immediately preempts capture of the current buffer. The trigger position for all segments is specified as pre-trigger (10% of the data is before the trigger condition and 90% of the data is after the trigger position). Because the last segment starts immediately with the trigger condition, the segment contains only post-trigger data. The three empty samples in the last segment are left over from the pre-trigger samples that the Signal Tap logic analyzer allocated to the buffer.

For the sequential trigger flow, the **Trigger Position** option applies to every segment in the buffer. A custom state-based trigger flow provides maximum flexibility defining the trigger position. By adjusting the trigger position specific to the debugging requirements, you can help maximize the use of the allocated buffer space.

Related Information

[Segmented Buffer](#) on page 158

5.8.2. Differences in Pre-Fill Write Behavior Between Different Acquisition Modes

Different acquisition modes capture different amounts of data immediately after running the Signal Tap logic analyzer and before any trigger conditions occur.

Non-Segmented Buffers in Continuous Mode

In configurations with non-segmented buffers running in continuous mode, the buffer must be full with sampled data before evaluating any trigger condition. Only after the buffer is full, the Signal Tap logic analyzer starts retrieving data through the JTAG connection and evaluates the trigger condition.

If you perform a **Stop Analysis**, Signal Tap prevents the buffer from being dumped during the first acquisition prior to a trigger condition.

Buffers with Storage Qualification

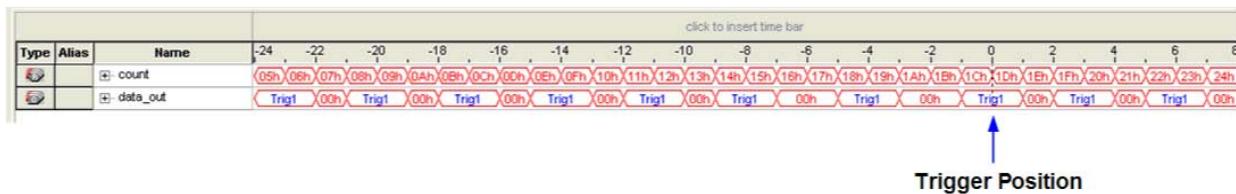
For buffers using a storage qualification mode, the Signal Tap logic analyzer immediately evaluates all trigger conditions while writing samples into the acquisition memory. This evaluation is especially important when using any storage qualification on the data set. The logic analyzer may miss a trigger condition if it waits to capture a full buffer's worth of data before evaluating any trigger conditions.

If a trigger activates before the specified amount of pre-trigger data has occurred, the Signal Tap logic analyzer begins filling memory with post-trigger data, regardless of the amount of pre-trigger data you specify. For example, if you set the trigger position to 50% and set the logic analyzer to trigger on a processor reset, start the logic analyzer, and then power on the target system, the trigger activates. However, the logic analyzer memory contains only post-trigger data, and not any pre-trigger data, because the trigger event has higher precedence than the capture of pre-trigger data.

5.8.2.1. Example

The figures for continuous data capture and conditional data capture show the difference between a non-segmented buffer in continuous mode and a non-segmented buffer using a storage qualifier. The configuration of the logic analyzer waveforms is a base trigger condition, sample depth of 64 bits, and **Post trigger position**.

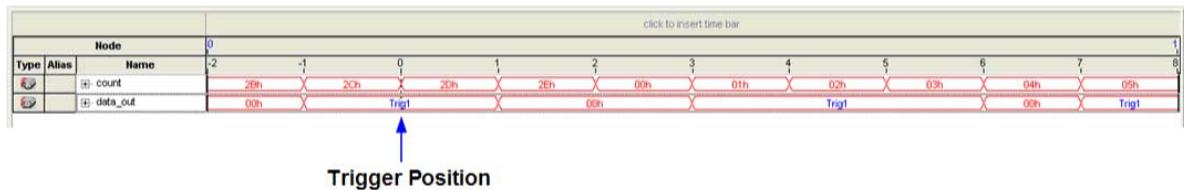
Figure 91. Signal Tap logic analyzer Continuous Data Capture



In the continuous data capture, Trig1 occurs several times in the data buffer before the Signal Tap logic analyzer trigger activates. The buffer needs to be full before the logic analyzer evaluates any trigger condition. After the trigger condition occurs, the logic analyzer continues acquisition for eight additional samples (12% of the buffer, as defined by the "post-trigger" position).



Figure 92. Signal Tap logic analyzer Conditional Data Capture



Note to figure:

1. Conditional capture, storage always enabled, post-fill count.
2. Signal Tap logic analyzer capture of a recurring pattern using a non-segmented buffer in conditional mode. The configuration of the logic analyzer is a basic trigger condition "Trig1" and sample depth of 64 bits. The **Trigger in** condition is **Don't care**, so the buffer captures all samples.

In conditional capture the logic analyzer triggers immediately. As in continuous capture, the logic analyzer completes the acquisition with eight samples, or 12% of 64, the sample capacity of the acquisition buffer.

5.8.3. Creating Mnemonics for Bit Patterns

A mnemonic table allows you to assign a meaningful name to a set of bit patterns, such as a bus. To create a mnemonic table:

1. Right-click the **Setup** or **Data** tab of a Signal Tap instance, and click **Mnemonic Table Setup**.
2. Create a mnemonic table by entering sets of bit patterns and specifying a label to represent each pattern.
3. Assign the table to a group of signals by right-clicking the group, clicking **Bus Display Format**, and selecting the mnemonic table.
4. On the **Setup** tab, you can create basic triggers with meaningful names by right-clicking an entry in the **Trigger Conditions** column and selecting a label from the table you assigned to the signal group.

On the **Data** tab, if data captured matches a bit pattern contained in an assigned mnemonic table, the Signal Tap GUI replaces the signal group data with the appropriate label, simplifying the visual inspection of expected data patterns.

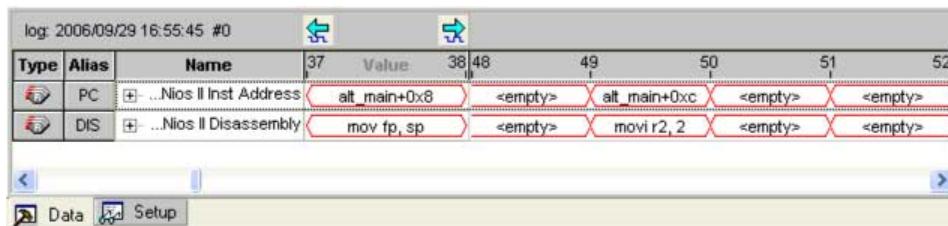
5.8.4. Automatic Mnemonics with a Plug-In

When you use a plug-in to add signals to an .stp, mnemonic tables for the added signals are automatically created and assigned to the signals defined in the plug-in. To enable these mnemonic tables manually, right-click the name of the signal or signal group. On the **Bus Display Format** shortcut menu, then click the name of the mnemonic table that matches the plug-in.

As an example, the Nios II plug-in helps you to monitor signal activity for your design as the code is executed. If you set up the logic analyzer to trigger on a function name in your Nios II code based on data from an .elf, you can see the function name in the **Instance Address** signal group at the trigger sample, along with the

corresponding disassembled code in the **Disassembly** signal group, as shown in [Figure 13-52](#). Captured data samples around the trigger are referenced as offset addresses from the trigger function name.

Figure 93. Data Tab when the Nios II Plug-In is Used



5.8.5. Locating a Node in the Design

When you find the source of an error in your design using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, you can use the node locate feature to locate that signal in many of the tools found in the Intel Quartus Prime software, as well as in your design files. This lets you find the source of the problem quickly so you can modify your design to correct the flaw. To locate a signal from the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer in one of the Intel Quartus Prime software tools or your design files, right-click the signal in the .stp, and click **Locate in <tool name>**.

You can locate a signal from the node list with the following tools:

- Assignment Editor
- Pin Planner
- Timing Closure Floorplan
- Chip Planner
- Resource Property Editor
- Technology Map Viewer
- RTL Viewer
- Design File

5.8.6. Saving Captured Data

When you save a data capture, Signal Tap logic analyzer stores this data in the active .stp file, and the Data Log adds the capture as a log entry under the current configuration.

When analysis is set to **Auto-run mode**, the logic analyzer creates a separate entry in the Data Log to store the data captured each time the trigger occurred. This allows you to review the captured data for each trigger event.

The default name for a log is based time stamp when the logic analyzer acquired the data. As a best practice, rename the data log with a more meaningful name.

The organization of logs is hierarchical; the logic analyzer groups similar logs of captured data in trigger sets.



Related Information

[Data Log Pane on page 167](#)

5.8.7. Exporting Captured Data to Other File Formats

You can export captured data to the following file formats, for use with other EDA simulation tools:

- Comma Separated Values File (.csv)
- Table File (.tbl)
- Value Change Dump File (.vcd)
- Vector Waveform File (.vwf)
- Graphics format files (.jpg, .bmp)

To export the captured data from Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, on the File menu, click **Export** and specify the **File Name**, **Export Format**, and **Clock Period**.

5.8.8. Creating a Signal Tap List File

A .stp list file contains all the data the logic analyzer captures for a trigger event, in text format.

Each row of the list file corresponds to one captured sample in the buffer. Columns correspond to the value of each of the captured signals or signal groups for that sample. If you defined a mnemonic table for the captured data, a matching entry from the table replaces the numerical values in the list.

The .stp list file is especially useful when combined with a plug-in that includes instruction code disassembly. You can view the order of instruction code execution during the same time period of the trigger event.

To create a .stp list file in the Intel Quartus Prime software, click **File > Create/Update > Create Signal Tap List File**.

Related Information

[Adding Signals with a Plug-In on page 154](#)

5.9. Other Features

The Signal Tap logic analyzer provides optional features not specific to a task flow. The following techniques can offer advantages in specific scenarios.

5.9.1. Creating Signal Tap File from Design Instances

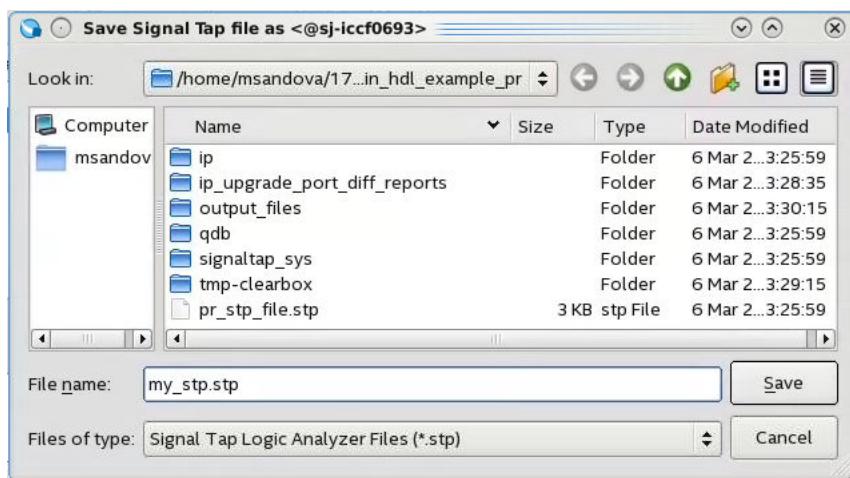
In addition to providing GUI support for generation of .stp files, the Intel Quartus Prime software supports generation of a Signal Tap instance from logic defined in HDL source files. This technique is helpful to modify runtime configurable trigger conditions, acquire data, and view acquired data on the data log via Signal Tap utilities.

5.9.1.1. Creating a .stp File from a Design Instance

To generate a .stp file from parameterized HDL instances within your design:

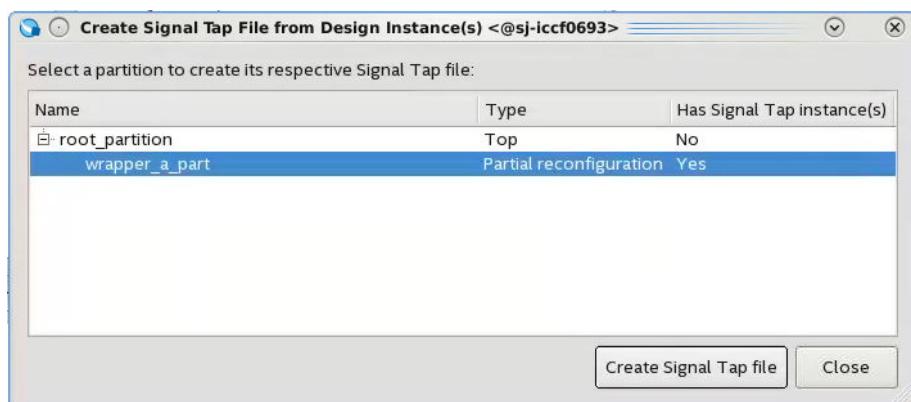
1. Open or create an Intel Quartus Prime project that includes one or more HDL instances of the Signal Tap logic analyzer.
2. Click **Processing > Start > Start Analysis & Synthesis**.
3. Click **File > Create/Update > Create Signal Tap File from Design Instance(s)**.
4. Specify a location for the .stp file that generates, and click **Save**.

Figure 94. Create Signal Tap File from Design Instances Dialog Box



Note: If your project contains partial reconfiguration partitions, the **Create Signal Tap File from Design Instance(s)** dialog box displays a tree view of the PR partitions in the project. Select a partition from the view, and click **Create Signal Tap file**. The resultant .stp file that generates contains all HDL instances in the corresponding PR partition. The resultant .stp file does not include the instances in any nested partial reconfiguration partition.

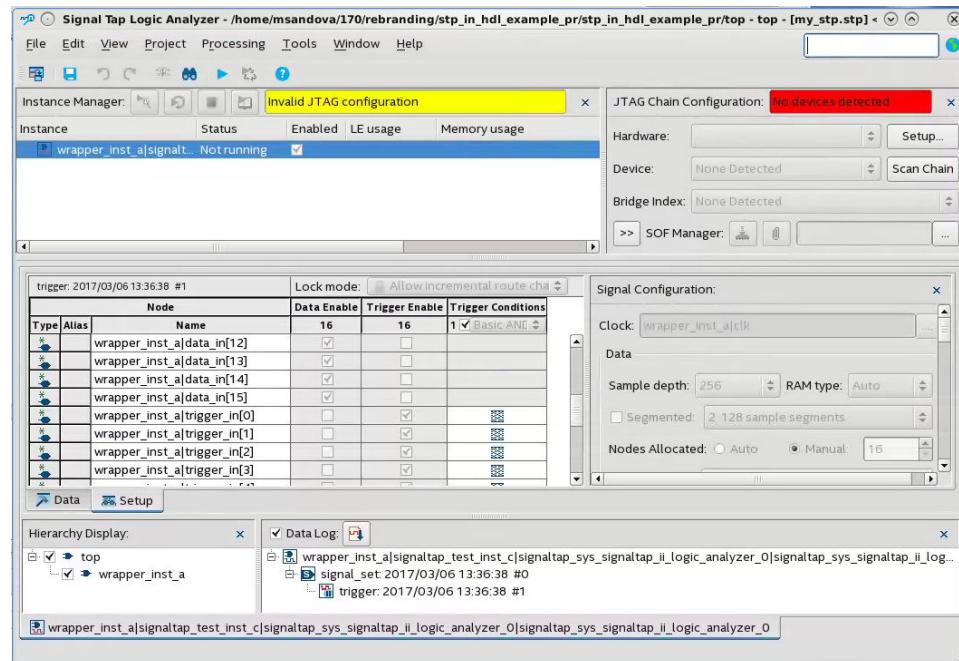
Figure 95. Selecting Partition for .stp File Generation





After successful .stp file creation, the **Signal Tap Logic Analyzer** appears. All the fields are read-only, except runtime-configurable trigger conditions.

Figure 96. Generated .stp File



Related Information

- [Create Signal Tap File from Design Instances](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Help*
- [Custom Trigger HDL Object](#) on page 175

5.9.2. Using the Signal Tap MATLAB MEX Function to Capture Data

When you use MATLAB for DSP design, you can acquire data from the Signal Tap logic analyzer directly into a matrix in the MATLAB environment by calling the MATLAB MEX function `alt_signaltap_run`, built into the Intel Quartus Prime software. If you use the MATLAB MEX function in a loop, you can perform as many acquisitions in the same amount of time as you can when using Signal Tap in the Intel Quartus Prime software environment.

Note:

The Signal Tap MATLAB MEX function is available in the Windows* version and Linux version of the Intel Quartus Prime software. This function is compatible with MATLAB Release 14 Original Release Version 7 and later.

To set up the Intel Quartus Prime software and the MATLAB environment to perform Signal Tap acquisitions:

1. In the Intel Quartus Prime software, create an .stp file.
2. In the node list in the **Data** tab of the Signal Tap logic analyzer Editor, organize the signals and groups of signals into the order in which you want them to appear in the MATLAB matrix.



Each column of the imported matrix represents a single Signal Tap acquisition sample, while each row represents a signal or group of signals in the order you defined in the **Data** tab.

Note: Signal groups that the Signal Tap logic analyzer acquires and transfers into the MATLAB MEX function have a width limit of 32 signals. To use the MATLAB MEX function with a bus or signal group that contains more than 32 signals, split the group into smaller groups that do not exceed the limit.

3. Save the .stp file and compile your design. Program your device and run the Signal Tap logic analyzer to ensure your trigger conditions and signal acquisition work correctly.
4. In the MATLAB environment, add the Intel Quartus Prime binary directory to your path with the following command:

```
addpath <Quartus install directory>\win
```

You can view the help file for the MEX function by entering the following command in MATLAB without any operators:

```
alt_signaltap_run
```

5. Use the MATLAB MEX function to open the JTAG connection to the device and run the Signal Tap logic analyzer to acquire data. When you finish acquiring data, close the JTAG connection.

To open the JTAG connection and begin acquiring captured data directly into a MATLAB matrix called `stp`, use the following command:

```
stp = alt_signaltap_run \  
(['<stp filename>'][,('signed'|'unsigned')[], '<instance names>'][, \  
'<signalset name>'[, '<trigger name>']]));
```

When capturing data, you must assign a filename, for example, `<stp filename>` as a requirement of the MATLAB MEX function. Other MATLAB MEX function options are described in the table:

Table 70. Signal Tap MATLAB MEX Function Options

| Option | Usage | Description |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| signed unsigned | 'signed' 'unsigned' | The signed option turns signal group data into 32-bit two's-complement signed integers. The MSB of the group as defined in the Signal Tap Data tab is the sign bit. The unsigned option keeps the data as an unsigned integer. The default is signed . |
| <instance name> | 'auto_signaltap_0' | Specify a Signal Tap instance if more than one instance is defined. The default is the first instance in the .stp, auto_signaltap_0. |
| <signal set name> <trigger name> | 'my_signalset' 'my_trigger' | Specify the signal set and trigger from the Signal Tap data log if multiple configurations are present in the .stp. The default is the active signal set and trigger in the file. |

During data acquisition, you can enable or disable verbose mode to see the status of the logic analyzer. To enable or disable verbose mode, use the following commands:

```
alt_signaltap_run('VERBOSE_ON'); -alt_signaltap_run('VERBOSE_OFF');
```



When you finish acquiring data, close the JTAG connection with the following command:

```
alt_signaltap_run('END_CONNECTION');
```

For more information about the use of MATLAB MEX functions in MATLAB, refer to the MATLAB Help.

5.9.3. Using Signal Tap in a Lab Environment

You can install a stand-alone version of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. This version is particularly useful in a lab environment in which you do not have a workstation that meets the requirements for a complete Intel Quartus Prime installation, or if you do not have a license for a full installation of the Intel Quartus Prime software. The standalone version of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is included with and requires the Intel Quartus Prime stand-alone Programmer which is available from the Downloads page of the [Intel website](#).

5.9.4. Remote Debugging Using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

5.9.4.1. Debugging Using a Local PC and an SoC

You can use the System Console with Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to remote debug your Intel FPGA SoC. This method requires one local PC, an existing TCP/IP connection, a programming device at the remote location, and an Intel FPGA SoC.

Related Information

[Remote Hardware Debugging over TCP/IP](#)

5.9.4.2. Debugging Using a Local PC and a Remote PC

You can use the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to debug a design that is running on a device attached to a PC in a remote location.

To perform a remote debugging session, you must have the following setup:

- The Intel Quartus Prime software installed on the local PC
- Stand-alone Signal Tap Logic Analyzer or the full version of the Intel Quartus Prime software installed on the remote PC
- Programming hardware connected to the device on the PCB at the remote location
- TCP/IP protocol connection

5.9.4.2.1. Equipment Setup

1. On the PC in the remote location, install the standalone version of the Signal Tap logic analyzer, included in the Intel Quartus Prime stand-alone Programmer, or the full version of the Intel Quartus Prime software.
2. Connect the remote computer to Intel programming hardware, such as the Intel FPGA Ethernet Cable or Intel FPGA Download Cable.
3. On the local PC, install the full version of the Intel Quartus Prime software.
4. Connect the local PC to the remote PC across a LAN with the TCP/IP protocol.



5.9.5. Using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer in Devices with Configuration Bitstream Security

Certain device families support bitstream decryption during configuration using an on-device AES decryption engine. You can still use the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to analyze functional data within the FPGA. However, note that JTAG configuration is not possible after the security key has been programmed into the device.

Intel FPGA recommends that you use an unencrypted bitstream during the prototype and debugging phases of the design. Using an unencrypted bitstream allows you to generate new programming files and reconfigure the device over the JTAG connection during the debugging cycle.

If you must use the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer with an encrypted bitstream, first configure the device with an encrypted configuration file using Passive Serial (PS), Fast Passive Parallel (FPP), or Active Serial (AS) configuration modes. The design must contain at least one instance of the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. After the FPGA is configured with a Signal Tap Logic Analyzer instance in the design, when you open the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer in the Intel Quartus Prime software, you then scan the chain and are ready to acquire data with the JTAG connection.

5.9.6. Monitor FPGA Resources Used by the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The Signal Tap logic analyzer has a built-in resource estimator that calculates the logic resources and amount of memory that each logic analyzer instance uses. Furthermore, because the most demanding on-chip resource for the logic analyzer is memory usage, the resource estimator reports the ratio of total RAM usage in your design to the total amount of RAM available, given the results of the last compilation. The resource estimator provides a warning if a potential for a “no-fit” occurs.

You can see resource usage (by instance and total) in the columns of the **Instance Manager** pane of the Signal Tap logic analyzer Editor. Use this feature when you know that your design is running low on resources.

The logic element value that the resource usage estimator reports may vary by as much as 10% from the actual resource usage.

5.10. Design Example: Using Signal Tap Logic Analyzers

The system in this example contains many components, including a Nios processor, a direct memory access (DMA) controller, on-chip memory, and an interface to external SDRAM memory. After you press a button, the processor initiates a DMA transfer, which you analyze using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. In this example, the Nios processor executes a simple C program from on-chip memory and waits for you to press a button.

Related Information

[AN 446: Debugging Nios II Systems with the Signal Tap Embedded Logic Analyzer](#)
application note



5.11. Custom Triggering Flow Application Examples

The custom triggering flow in the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer is most useful for organizing a number of triggering conditions and for precise control over the acquisition buffer. This section provides two application examples for defining a custom triggering flow within the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. Both examples can be easily copied and pasted directly into the state machine description box by using the state display mode **All states in one window**.

Related Information

[On-chip Debugging Design Examples website](#)

5.11.1. Design Example 1: Specifying a Custom Trigger Position

Actions to the acquisition buffer can accept an optional post-count argument. This post-count argument enables you to define a custom triggering position for each segment in the acquisition buffer.

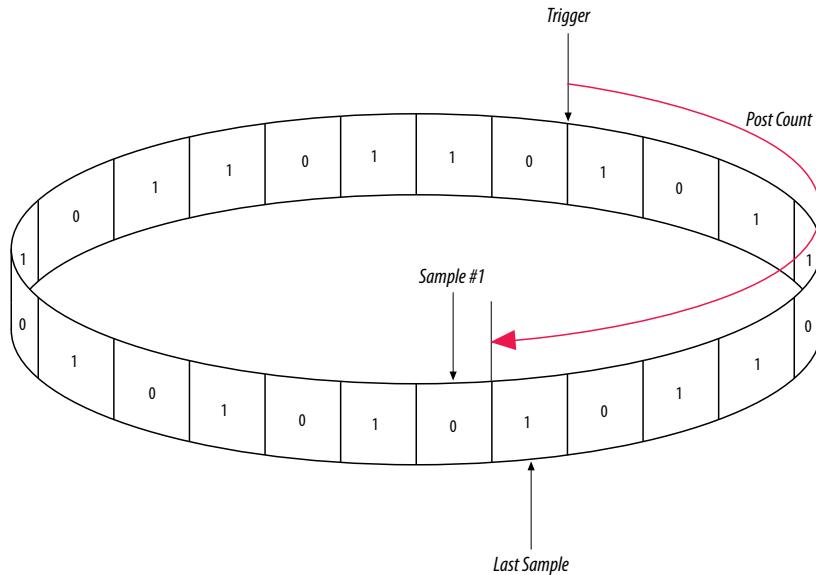
The example shows how to apply a trigger position to all segments in the acquisition buffer. The example describes a triggering flow for an acquisition buffer split into four segments. If each acquisition segment is 64 samples in depth, the trigger position for each buffer is at sample #34. The acquisition stops after all segments are filled once.

```
if (c1 == 3 && condition1)
    trigger 30;
else if ( condition1 )
begin
    segment_trigger 30;
    increment c1;
end
```

Each segment acts as a non-segmented buffer that continuously updates the memory contents with the signal values.

The **Data** tab displays the last acquisition before stopping the buffer as the last sample number in the affected segment. The trigger position in the affected segment is then defined by $N - \text{post count fill}$, where N is the number of samples per segment.

Figure 97. Specifying a Custom Trigger Position



5.11.2. Design Example 2: Trigger When triggercond1 Occurs Ten Times between triggercond2 and triggercond3

The custom trigger flow description is often useful to count a sequence of events before triggering the acquisition buffer. The example shows such a sample flow. This example uses three basic triggering conditions configured in the Signal Tap **Setup** tab.

This example triggers the acquisition buffer when condition1 occurs after condition3 and occurs ten times prior to condition3. If condition3 occurs prior to ten repetitions of condition1, the state machine transitions to a permanent wait state.

```

state ST1:
if ( condition2  )
begin
    reset c1;
    goto ST2;
end
State ST2 :
if ( condition1 )
    increment c1;
else if (condition3 && c1 < 10)
    goto ST3;
else if ( condition3 && c1 >= 10)
    trigger;
ST3:
goto ST3;
  
```

5.12. Signal Tap Scripting Support

The Intel Quartus Prime supports automating Signal Tap procedures in a scripting environment, as Tcl scripts or through the `quartus_stp` executable. For detailed information about scripting command options, refer to the Intel Quartus Prime Command-Line and Tcl API Help browser. To run the Help browser, type `quartus_sh --qhelp` at the command prompt.



Related Information

- [Tcl Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Scripting*
- [Command Line Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Scripting*

5.12.1. Signal Tap Command-Line Options

You can use the following options with the quartus_stp executable:

Table 71. quartus_stp Command-Line Options

| Option | Usage | Description |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|
| --stp_file <stp_filename> | Required | Specifies the name of the .stp file. |
| --enable | Optional | Sets the ENABLE_SIGNALTAP option to ON in the project's .qsf file, so the Signal Tap logic analyzer runs in the next compilation. If you omit this option, the Intel Quartus Prime software uses the current value of ENABLE_SIGNALTAP in the .qsf file. Writes subsequent Signal Tap assignments to the .stp that appears in the .qsf file. If the .qsf file does not specify a .stp file, you must use the --stp_file option. |
| --disable | Optional | Sets the ENABLE_SIGNALTAP option to OFF in the project's .qsf file, so the Signal Tap logic analyzer does not run in the next compilation. If you omit the --disable option, the Intel Quartus Prime software uses the current value of ENABLE_SIGNALTAP in the .qsf file. |
| --create_signaltap_hdl_file | Optional | Creates an .stp file representing the Signal Tap instance. You must use the --stp_file option to create an .stp. Equivalent to the Create Signal Tap File from Design Instances command in the Intel Quartus Prime software. |

Examples

The first example illustrates how to compile a design with the Signal Tap logic analyzer at the command line.

```
quartus_stp filtref --stp_file stp1.stp --enable
quartus_map filtref --source=filtref.bdf --family=CYCLONE
quartus_fit filtref --part=EP1C12Q240C6 --fmax=80MHz --tsu=8ns
quartus_asm filtref
```

The quartus_stp --stp_file stp1.stp --enable command creates the QSF variable and instructs the Intel Quartus Prime software to compile the stp1.stp file with your design. The --enable option must be applied for the Signal Tap logic analyzer to compile into your design.

The following example creates a new .stp after building the Signal Tap logic analyzer instance with the IP Catalog.

```
quartus_stp filtref --create_signaltap_hdl_file --stp_file stp1.stp
```

5.12.2. Data Capture from the Command Line

The quartus_stp executable supports a Tcl interface that allows you to capture data without running the Intel Quartus Prime GUI.



Note: You cannot execute Signal Tap Tcl commands from within the Tcl console in the Intel Quartus Prime software.

To execute a Tcl script containing Signal Tap logic analyzer Tcl commands, use:

```
quartus_stp -t <Tcl file>
```

Example 25. Continuously Capturing Data

This excerpt shows commands you can use to continuously capture data. Once the capture meets trigger condition **e**, the Signal Tap logic analyzer starts the capture and stores the data in the data log.

```
# Open Signal Tap session
open_session -name stpl.stp

### Start acquisition of instances auto_signtap_0 and
### auto_signtap_1 at the same time

# Calling run_multiple_end starts all instances
run_multiple_start

run -instance auto_signtap_0 -signal_set signal_set_1 -trigger \
trigger_1 -data_log log_1 -timeout 5
run -instance auto_signtap_1 -signal_set signal_set_1 -trigger \
trigger_1 -data_log log_1 -timeout 5

run_multiple_end

# Close Signal Tap session
close_session
```

Related Information

::quartus::stp
In *Intel Quartus Prime Help*

5.13. Design Debugging with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2019.06.11 | 18.1.0 | Added more explanation to Figure 51 on page 163 about continuous and input mode. |
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide.Renamed topic: <i>Untappable Signals to Signals Unavailable for Signal Tap Debugging</i>. |
| 2017.11.06 | 17.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Clarified information about the Data Log Pane.Updated Figure: Data Log and renamed to Simple Data Log.Added Figure: Accessing the Advanced Trigger Condition Tab. |
| 2017.05.08 | 17.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added: Open Standalone Signal Tap Logic Analyzer GUI.Updated figures on Create Signal Tap File from Design Instance(s). |
| 2016.10.31 | 16.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added: Create SignalTap II File from Design Instance(s).Removed reference to unsupported Talkback feature. |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2016.05.03 | 16.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added: Specifying the Pipeline Factor Added: Comparison Trigger Conditions |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| 2015.05.04 | 15.0.0 | Added content for Floating Point Display Format in table: SignalTap II Logic Analyzer Features and Benefits. |
| 2014.12.15 | 14.1.0 | Updated location of Fitter Settings, Analysis & Synthesis Settings, and Physical Synthesis Optimizations to Compiler Settings. |
| December 2014 | 14.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added MAX 10 as supported device. Removed Full Incremental Compilation setting and Post-Fit (Strict) netlist type setting information. Removed outdated GUI images from "Using Incremental Compilation with the SignalTap II Logic Analyzer" section. |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DITA conversion. Replaced MegaWizard Plug-In Manager and Megafunction content with IP Catalog and parameter editor content. Added flows for custom trigger HDL object, Incremental Route with Rapid Recompile, and nested groups with Basic OR. GUI changes: toolbar, drag to zoom, disable/enable instance, trigger log time-stamping. |
| November 2013 | 13.1.0 | Removed HardCopy material. Added section on using cross-triggering with DS-5 tool and added link to white paper 01198. Added section on remote debugging an Altera SoC and added link to application note 693. Updated support for MEX function. |
| May 2013 | 13.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added recommendation to use the state-based flow for segmented buffers with separate trigger conditions, information about Basic OR trigger condition, and hard processor system (HPS) external triggers. Updated "Segmented Buffer" on page 13-17, Conditional Mode on page 13-21, Creating Basic Trigger Conditions on page 13-16, and Using External Triggers on page 13-48. |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Updated Figure 13-5 on page 13-16 and "Adding Signals to the SignalTap II File" on page 13-10. |
| November 2011 | 11.0.1 | Template update. Minor editorial updates. |
| May 2011 | 11.0.0 | Updated the requirement for the standalone SignalTap II software. |
| December 2010 | 10.0.1 | Changed to new document template. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add new acquisition buffer content to the "View, Analyze, and Use Captured Data" section. Added script sample for generating hexadecimal CRC values in programmed devices. Created cross references to Quartus II Help for duplicated procedural content. |
| November 2009 | 9.1.0 | No change to content. |
| March 2009 | 9.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Table 13-1 Updated "Using Incremental Compilation with the SignalTap II Logic Analyzer" on page 13-45 Added new Figure 13-33 Made minor editorial updates |
| November 2008 | 8.1.0 | Updated for the Quartus II software version 8.1 release: |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added new section "Using the Storage Qualifier Feature" on page 14-25Added description of <code>start_store</code> and <code>stop_store</code> commands in section "Trigger Condition Flow Control" on page 14-36Added new section "Runtime Reconfigurable Options" on page 14-63 |
| May 2008 | 8.0.0 | <p>Updated for the Quartus II software version 8.0:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added "Debugging Finite State machines" on page 14-24Documented various GUI usability enhancements, including improvements to the resource estimator, the bus find feature, and the dynamic display updates to the counter and flag resources in the State-based trigger flow control tabAdded "Capturing Data Using Segmented Buffers" on page 14-16Added hyperlinks to referenced documents throughout the chapterMinor editorial updates |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.



6. In-System Debugging Using External Logic Analyzers

6.1. About the Intel Quartus Prime Logic Analyzer Interface

The Intel Quartus Prime Logic Analyzer Interface (LAI) allows you to use an external logic analyzer and a minimal number of Intel-supported device I/O pins to examine the behavior of internal signals while your design is running at full speed on your Intel-supported device.

The LAI connects a large set of internal device signals to a small number of output pins. You can connect these output pins to an external logic analyzer for debugging purposes. In the Intel Quartus Prime LAI, the internal signals are grouped together, distributed to a user-configurable multiplexer, and then output to available I/O pins on your Intel-supported device. Instead of having a one-to-one relationship between internal signals and output pins, the Intel Quartus Prime LAI enables you to map many internal signals to a smaller number of output pins. The exact number of internal signals that you can map to an output pin varies based on the multiplexer settings in the Intel Quartus Prime LAI.

Note: The term “logic analyzer” when used in this document includes both logic analyzers and oscilloscopes equipped with digital channels, commonly referred to as mixed signal analyzers or MSOs.

The LAI does not support Hard Processor System (HPS) I/Os.

Related Information

[Device Support Center](#)

6.2. Choosing a Logic Analyzer

The Intel Quartus Prime software offers the following two general purpose on-chip debugging tools for debugging a large set of RTL signals from your design:

- The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer
- An external logic analyzer, which connects to internal signals in your Intel-supported device by using the Intel Quartus Prime LAI

Table 72. Comparing the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer with the Logic Analyzer Interface

| Feature | Description | Recommended Logic Analyzer |
|--------------|---|----------------------------|
| Sample Depth | You have access to a wider sample depth with an external logic analyzer. In the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, the maximum sample depth is set to | LAI |

continued...

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| Feature | Description | Recommended Logic Analyzer |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| | 128 Kb, which is a device constraint. However, with an external logic analyzer, there are no device constraints, providing you a wider sample depth. | |
| Debugging Timing Issues | Using an external logic analyzer provides you with access to a "timing" mode, which enables you to debug combined streams of data. | LAI |
| Performance | You frequently have limited routing resources available to place and route when you use the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer with your design. An external logic analyzer adds minimal logic, which removes resource limits on place-and-route. | LAI |
| Triggering Capability | The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer offers triggering capabilities that are comparable to external logic analyzers. | LAI or Signal Tap |
| Use of Output Pins | Using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, no additional output pins are required. Using an external logic analyzer requires the use of additional output pins. | Signal Tap |
| Acquisition Speed | With the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, you can acquire data at speeds of over 200 MHz. You can achieve the same acquisition speeds with an external logic analyzer; however, you must consider signal integrity issues. | Signal Tap |

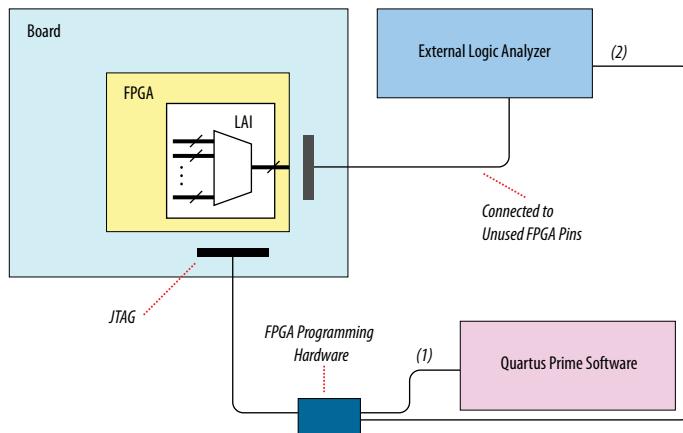
Related Information

[System Debugging Tools Overview](#) on page 7

6.2.1. Required Components

To perform analysis using the LAI you need the following components:

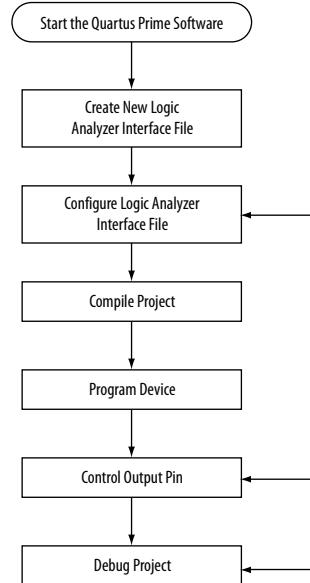
- Intel Quartus Prime software version 15.1 or later
- The device under test
- An external logic analyzer
- An Intel FPGA communications cable
- A cable to connect the Intel-supported device to the external logic analyzer

**Figure 98. LAI and Hardware Setup**

Notes to figure:

1. Configuration and control of the LAI using a computer loaded with the Intel Quartus Prime software via the JTAG port.
2. Configuration and control of the LAI using a third-party vendor logic analyzer via the JTAG port. Support varies by vendor.

6.3. Flow for Using the LAI

Figure 99. LAI Workflow

Notes to figure:

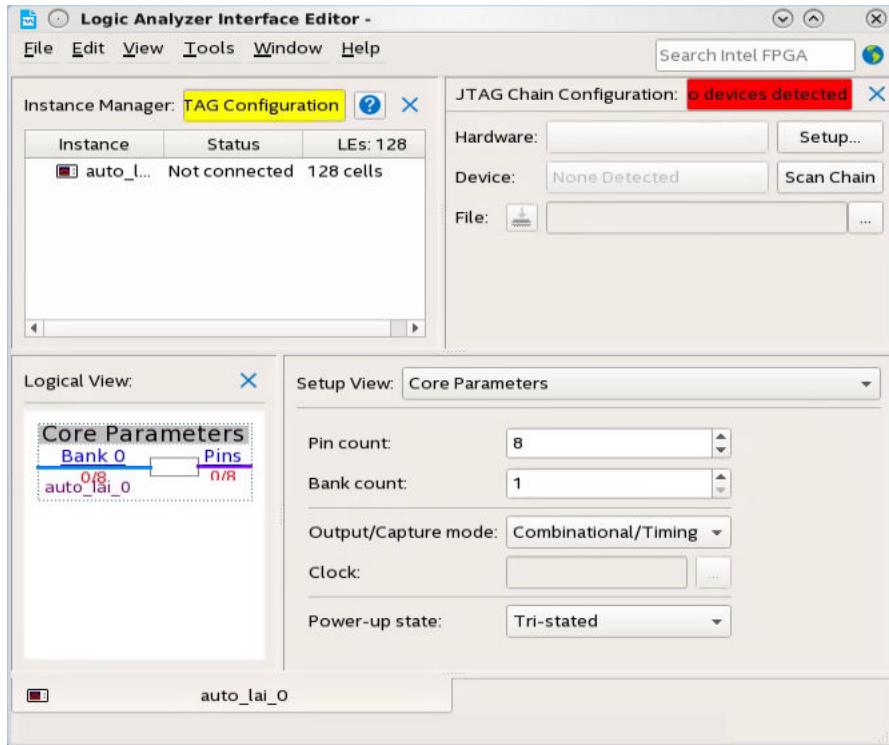
1. Configuration and control of the LAI using a computer loaded with the Intel Quartus Prime software via the JTAG port.
2. Configuration and control of the LAI using a third-party vendor logic analyzer via the JTAG port. Support varies by vendor.

6.3.1. Defining Parameters for the Logic Analyzer Interface

The **Logic Analyzer Interface Editor** allows you to define the parameters of the LAI.

- Click **Tools > Logic Analyzer Interface Editor**.

Figure 100. Logic Analyzer Interface Editor



- In the **Setup View** list, select **Core Parameters**.
- Specify the parameters of the LAI instance.

Related Information

[LAI Core Parameters](#) on page 227

6.3.2. Mapping the LAI File Pins to Available I/O Pins

To assign pin locations for the LAI:

- Select **Pins** in the **Setup View** list

**Figure 101.** Mapping LAI file Pins

Setup View: Pins

| Type | Index | Name | Location | I/O Standard |
|------|-------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| 0 | altera_reserved_lai_0_0 | | | 1.8 V |
| 1 | altera_reserved_lai_0_1 | PIN_AB30 | | 1.8 V |
| 2 | altera_reserved_lai_0_2 | PIN_AC28 | | 1.8 V |
| 3 | altera_reserved_lai_0_3 | PIN_AC2 | | 1.8 V |
| 4 | altera_reserved_lai_0_4 | PIN_AC13 | | 1.8 V |
| 5 | altera_reserved_lai_0_5 | PIN_A4 | | 1.8 V |

2. Double-click the **Location** column next to the reserved pins in the **Name** column, and select a pin from the list.
3. Right-click the selected pin and locate in the Pin Planner.

Related Information

[Managing Device I/O Pins](#)

In Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 2

6.3.3. Mapping Internal Signals to the LAI Banks

After specifying the number of banks to use in the **Core Parameters** settings page, you must assign internal signals for each bank in the LAI.

1. Click the **Setup View** arrow and select **Bank n** or **All Banks**.
2. To view all the bank connections, click **Setup View** and then select **All Banks**.
3. Before making bank assignments, right click the Node list and select **Add Nodes** to open the **Node Finder**.
4. Find the signals that you want to acquire.
5. Drag the signals from the **Node Finder** dialog box into the bank **Setup View**.
When adding signals, use **Signal Tap: pre-synthesis** for non-incrementally routed instances and **Signal Tap: post-fitting** for incrementally routed instances
As you continue to make assignments in the bank **Setup View**, the schematic of the LAI in the **Logical View** pane begins to reflect the changes.
6. Continue making assignments for each bank in the **Setup View** until you add all the internal signals that you want to acquire.

Related Information

[Node Finder Command](#)

In Intel Quartus Prime Help

6.3.4. Compiling Your Intel Quartus Prime Project

After you save your .lai file, a dialog box prompts you to enable the Logic Analyzer Interface instance for the active project. Alternatively, you can define the .lai file your project uses in the **Global Project Settings** dialog box. After specifying the name of your .lai file, compile your project.

To verify the Logic Analyzer Interface is properly compiled with your project, expand the entity hierarchy in the Project Navigator. If the LAI is compiled with your design, the `sld_hub` and `sld_multitap` entities are shown in the Project Navigator.

Figure 102. Project Navigator

| Entity | Logic Cells | LC Registers |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Stratix EP1S10B672C7 | | |
| └ test | 136 (1) | 81 |
| └ sld_multitap:auto_lai_0 | 35 (11) | 15 |
| └ sld_hub:sld_hub_inst | 100 (25) | 65 |

6.3.5. Programming Your Intel-Supported Device Using the LAI

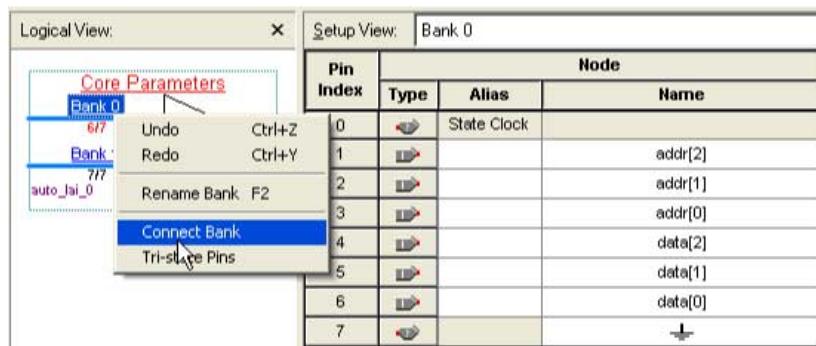
After compilation completes, you must configure your Intel-supported device before using the LAI.

You can use the LAI with multiple devices in your JTAG chain. Your JTAG chain can also consist of devices that do not support the LAI or non-Intel, JTAG-compliant devices. To use the LAI in more than one Intel-supported device, create an `.lai` file and configure an `.lai` file for each Intel-supported device that you want to analyze.

6.4. Controlling the Active Bank During Runtime

When you have programmed your Intel-supported device, you can control which bank you map to the reserved `.lai` file output pins. To control which bank you map, in the schematic in the Logical View, right-click the bank and click **Connect Bank**.

Figure 103. Configuring Banks



6.4.1. Acquiring Data on Your Logic Analyzer

To acquire data on your logic analyzer, you must establish a connection between your device and the external logic analyzer. For more information about this process and for guidelines about how to establish connections between debugging headers and logic analyzers, refer to the documentation for your logic analyzer.



6.5. Using the LAI with Incremental Compilation

The Incremental Compilation feature in the Intel Quartus Prime software allows you to preserve the synthesis and fitting results of your design. In cases where you only modify a portion of a design, or you wish to preserve the optimization results from a previous compilation, this ability allows reducing compilation times.

Because LAI consists of only a small portion of your design, incremental compilation helps minimizing compilation time. Incremental compilation works best when you are only changing a small portion of your design. Incremental compilation yields an accurate representation of your design behavior when changing the .lai file through multiple compilations.

6.6. LAI Core Parameters

The table lists the LAI file core parameters:

Table 73. LAI File Core Parameters

| Parameter | Range Value | Description |
|----------------------------|-------------|---|
| Pin Count | 1 - 255 | Number of pins dedicated to the LAI. You must connect the pins to a debug header on the board. Within the device, The Compiler maps each pin to a user-configurable number of internal signals. |
| Bank Count | 1 - 255 | Number of internal signals that you want to map to each pin. For example, a Bank Count of 8 implies that you connect eight internal signals to each pin. |
| Output/Capture Mode | | Specifies the acquisition mode. The two options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combinational/Timing—This acquisition mode uses the external logic analyzer's internal clock to determine when to sample data. This acquisition mode requires you to manually determine the sample frequency to debug and verify the system, because the data sampling is asynchronous to the Intel-supported device. This mode is effective if you want to measure timing information such as channel-to-channel skew. For more information about the sampling frequency and the speeds at which it can run, refer to the external logic analyzer's data sheet.• Registered/State—This acquisition mode determines when to sample from a signal on the system under test. Consequently, the data samples are synchronous with the Intel-supported device. The Registered/State mode provides a functional view of the Intel-supported device while it is running. This mode is effective when you verify the functionality of the design. |
| Clock | | Specifies the sample clock. You can use any signal in the design as a sample clock. However, for best results, use a clock with an operating frequency fast enough to sample the data that you want to acquire. <i>Note:</i> The Clock parameter is available only when Output/Capture Mode is set to Registered State . |
| Power-Up State | | Specifies the power-up state of the pins designated for use with the LAI. You can select tri-stated for all pins, or selecting a particular bank that you enable. |

Related Information

[Defining Parameters for the Logic Analyzer Interface](#) on page 224



6.7. In-System Debugging Using External Logic Analyzers Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.05.07 | 18.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Moved list of LAI File Core Parameters from <i>Configuring the File Core Parameters</i> to its own topic, and added links. |
| 2017.05.08 | 17.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated figure: LAI Instance in Compilation Report. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dita conversionAdded limitation about HPS I/O support |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Removed survey link |
| November 2011 | 10.1.1 | Changed to new document template |
| December 2010 | 10.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor editorial updatesChanged to new document template |
| August 2010 | 10.0.1 | Corrected links |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Created links to the Intel Quartus Prime HelpEditorial updatesRemoved Referenced Documents section |
| November 2009 | 9.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Removed references to APEX devicesEditorial updates |
| March 2009 | 9.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor editorial updatesRemoved Figures 15–4, 15–5, and 15–11 from 8.1 version |
| November 2008 | 8.1.0 | Changed to 8-1/2 x 11 page size. No change to content |
| May 2008 | 8.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated device support list on page 15–3Added links to referenced documents throughout the chapterAdded “Referenced Documents”Added reference to <i>Section V. In-System Debugging</i>Minor editorial updates |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.



7. In-System Modification of Memory and Constants

The Intel Quartus Prime In-System Memory Content Editor (ISMCE) allows to view and update memories and constants at runtime through the JTAG interface. By testing changes to memory contents in the FPGA while the design is running, you can identify, test, and resolve issues.

The ability to read data from memories and constants can help you identify the source of problems, and the write capability allows you to bypass functional issues by writing expected data.

When you use the In-System Memory Content Editor in conjunction with the Signal Tap logic analyzer, you can view and debug your design in the hardware lab.

Related Information

- [System Debugging Tools Overview](#) on page 7
- [Design Debugging with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer](#) on page 145
- [Megafunctions/LPM](#)
List of the types of memories and constants currently supported by the Intel Quartus Prime software

7.1. Setting Up In-System Modifiable Memories and Constants

When you specify that a memory or constant is run-time modifiable, the Intel Quartus Prime software changes the default implementation. A single-port RAM is converted to a dual-port RAM, and a constant is implemented in registers instead of look-up tables (LUTs). These changes enable run-time modification without changing the functionality of your design.

If you instantiate a memory or constant IP core directly with ports and parameters in VHDL or Verilog HDL, add or modify the `lpm_hint` parameter as follows:

In VHDL code, add the following:

```
lpm_hint => "ENABLE_RUNTIME_MOD = YES,
              INSTANCE_NAME = <instantiation name>";
```

In Verilog HDL code, add the following:

```
defparam <megafunction instance name>.lpm_hint =
    "ENABLE_RUNTIME_MOD = YES,
      INSTANCE_NAME = <instantiation name>";
```



7.2. Running the In-System Memory Content Editor

The In-System Memory Content Editor has three separate panes: the **Instance Manager**, the **JTAG Chain Configuration**, and the **Hex Editor**.

The **Instance Manager** pane displays all available run-time modifiable memories and constants in your FPGA device. The **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane allows you to program your FPGA and select the Intel FPGA device in the chain to update.

Using the In-System Memory Content Editor does not require that you open a project. The In-System Memory Content Editor retrieves all instances of run-time configurable memories and constants by scanning the JTAG chain and sending a query to the specific device selected in the **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane.

If you have more than one device with in-system configurable memories or constants in a JTAG chain, you can launch multiple In-System Memory Content Editors within the Intel Quartus Prime software to access the memories and constants in each of the devices. Each In-System Memory Content Editor can access the in-system memories and constants in a single device.

7.2.1. Instance Manager

You can read and write to in-system memory with the **Instance Manager** pane. When you scan the JTAG chain to update the **Instance Manager** pane, you can view a list of all run-time modifiable memories and constants in the design. The **Instance Manager** pane displays the Index, Instance, Status, Width, Depth, Type, and Mode of each element in the list.

Note: In addition to the buttons available in the **Instance Manager** pane, you can read and write data by selecting commands from the **Processing** menu, or the right-click menu in the **Instance Manager** pane or **Hex Editor** pane.

The status of each instance is also displayed beside each entry in the **Instance Manager** pane. The status indicates if the instance is **Not running**, **Offloading data**, or **Updating data**. The health monitor provides information about the status of the editor.

The Intel Quartus Prime software assigns a different index number to each in-system memory and constant to distinguish between multiple instances of the same memory or constant function. View the **In-System Memory Content Editor Settings** section of the Compilation Report to match an index number with the corresponding instance ID.

Related Information

[Instance Manager Pane](#)
In Intel Quartus Prime Help

7.2.2. Editing Data Displayed in the Hex Editor Pane

You can edit data read from your in-system memories and constants displayed in the **Hex Editor** pane by typing values directly into the editor or by importing memory files.



7.2.3. Importing and Exporting Memory Files

The In-System Memory Content Editor allows you to import and export data values for memories that have the In-System Updating feature enabled. Importing from a data file enables you to quickly load an entire memory image. Exporting to a data file enables you to save the contents of the memory for future use.

7.2.4. Scripting Support

The Intel Quartus Prime software allows you to perform runtime modification of memories and constants in scripted flows.

You can enable memory and constant instances to be runtime modifiable from the HDL code. Additionally, the In-System Memory Content Editor supports reading and writing of memory contents via Tcl commands from the `insystem_memory_edit` package.

Related Information

- [Tcl Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 2*
- [Command Line Scripting](#)
In *Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Handbook Volume 2*
- [API Functions for Tcl](#)
In Intel Quartus Prime Help

7.2.5. Programming the Device with the In-System Memory Content Editor

After compilation, you must program the design in the FPGA. You can use the JTAG Chain Configuration Pane to program the device from within the In-System Memory Content Editor.

7.2.6. Example: Using the In-System Memory Content Editor with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer

The following scenario describes how you can use the In-System Updating of Memory and Constants feature with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to efficiently debug your design. You can use the In-System Memory Content Editor and the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer simultaneously with the JTAG interface.

Scenario: After completing your FPGA design, you find that the characteristics of your FIR filter design are not as expected.

1. To locate the source of the problem, change all your FIR filter coefficients to be in-system modifiable and instantiate the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer.
2. Using the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer to tap and trigger on internal design nodes, you find the FIR filter to be functioning outside of the expected cutoff frequency.
3. Using the **In-System Memory Content Editor**, you check the correctness of the FIR filter coefficients. Upon reading each coefficient, you discover that one of the coefficients is incorrect.
4. Because your coefficients are in-system modifiable, you update the coefficients with the correct data with the **In-System Memory Content Editor**.



In this scenario, you can quickly locate the source of the problem using both the In-System Memory Content Editor and the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer. You can also verify the functionality of your device by changing the coefficient values before modifying the design source files.

You can also modify the coefficients with the In-System Memory Content Editor to vary the characteristics of the FIR filter, for example, filter attenuation, transition bandwidth, cut-off frequency, and windowing function.

7.3. In-System Modification of Memory and Constants Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.05.07 | 18.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Removed obsolete example. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dita conversion.Removed references to megafunction and replaced with IP core. |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Removed survey link. |
| November 2011 | 10.0.3 | Template update. |
| December 2010 | 10.0.2 | Changed to new document template. No change to content. |
| August 2010 | 10.0.1 | Corrected links |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Inserted links to Intel Quartus Prime HelpRemoved Reference Documents section |
| November 2009 | 9.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Delete references to APEX devicesStyle changes |
| March 2009 | 9.0.0 | No change to content |
| November 2008 | 8.1.0 | Changed to 8-1/2 x 11 page size. No change to content. |
| May 2008 | 8.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added reference to Section V. In-System Debugging in volume 3 of the Intel Quartus Prime Handbook on page 16-1Removed references to the Mercury device, as it is now considered to be a "Mature" deviceAdded links to referenced documents throughout documentMinor editorial updates |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.

8. Design Debugging Using In-System Sources and Probes

The Signal Tap Logic Analyzer and Signal Probe allow you to read or “tap” internal logic signals during run time as a way to debug your logic design.

Traditional debugging techniques often involve using an external pattern generator to exercise the logic and a logic analyzer to study the output waveforms during run time.

You can make the debugging cycle more efficient when you can drive any internal signal manually within your design, which allows you to perform the following actions:

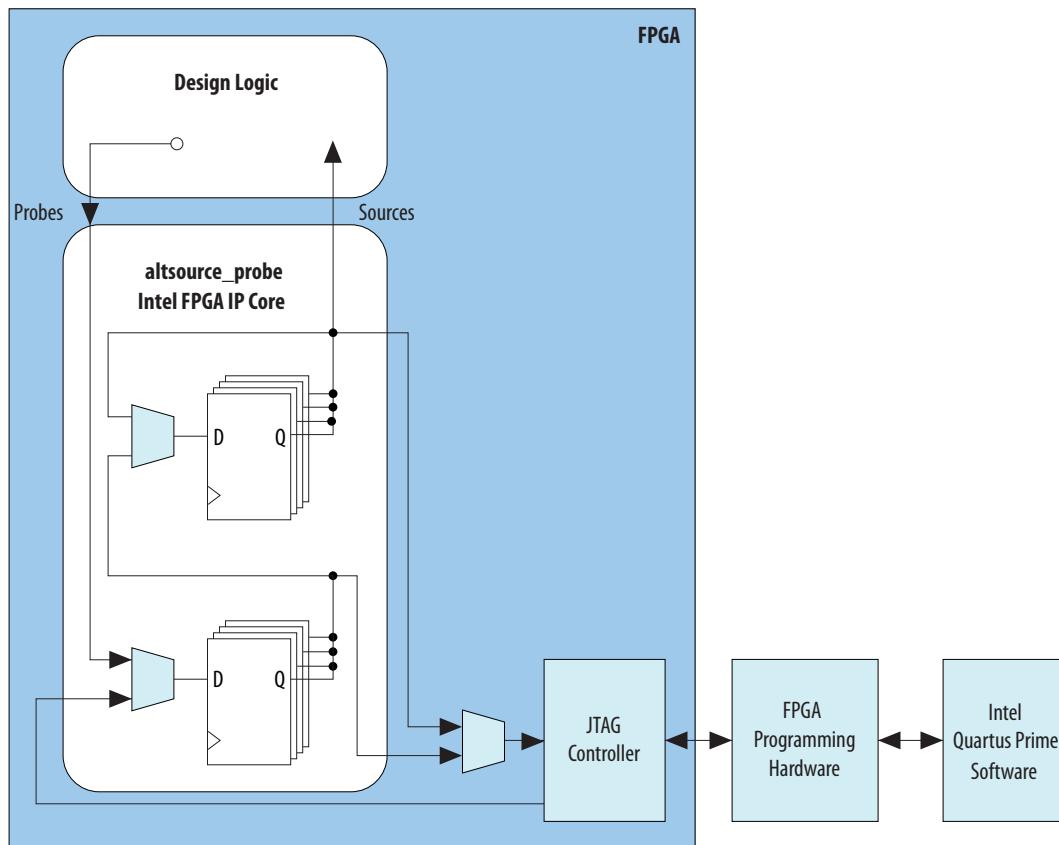
- Force the occurrence of trigger conditions set up in the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer
- Create simple test vectors to exercise your design without using external test equipment
- Dynamically control run time control signals with the JTAG chain

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor in the Intel Quartus Prime software extends the portfolio of verification tools, and allows you to easily control any internal signal and provides you with a completely dynamic debugging environment. Coupled with either the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer or Signal Probe, the In-System Sources and Probes Editor gives you a powerful debugging environment in which to generate stimuli and solicit responses from your logic design.

The Virtual JTAG IP core and the In-System Memory Content Editor also give you the capability to drive virtual inputs into your design. The Intel Quartus Prime software offers a variety of on-chip debugging tools.

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor consists of the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core and an interface to control the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instances during run time. Each ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instance provides you with source output ports and probe input ports, where source ports drive selected signals and probe ports sample selected signals. When you compile your design, the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core sets up a register chain to either drive or sample the selected nodes in your logic design. During run time, the In-System Sources and Probes Editor uses a JTAG connection to shift data to and from the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instances. The figure shows a block diagram of the components that make up the In-System Sources and Probes Editor.

Figure 104. In-System Sources and Probes Editor Block Diagram



The ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core hides the detailed transactions between the JTAG controller and the registers instrumented in your design to give you a basic building block for stimulating and probing your design. Additionally, the In-System Sources and Probes Editor provides single-cycle samples and single-cycle writes to selected logic nodes. You can use this feature to input simple virtual stimuli and to capture the current value on instrumented nodes. Because the In-System Sources and Probes Editor gives you access to logic nodes in your design, you can toggle the inputs of low-level components during the debugging process. If used in conjunction with the Signal Tap Logic Analyzer, you can force trigger conditions to help isolate your problem and shorten your debugging process.

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor allows you to easily implement control signals in your design as virtual stimuli. This feature can be especially helpful for prototyping your design, such as in the following operations:

- Creating virtual push buttons
- Creating a virtual front panel to interface with your design
- Emulating external sensor data
- Monitoring and changing run time constants on the fly

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor supports Tcl commands that interface with all your ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instances to increase the level of automation.



Related Information

System Debugging Tools

For an overview and comparison of all the tools available in the Intel Quartus Prime software on-chip debugging tool suite

8.1. Hardware and Software Requirements

The following components are required to use the In-System Sources and Probes Editor:

- Intel Quartus Prime software
- or
- Intel Quartus Prime Lite Edition
- Download Cable (USB-Blaster™ download cable or ByteBlaster™ cable)
- Intel FPGA development kit or user design board with a JTAG connection to device under test

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor supports the following device families:

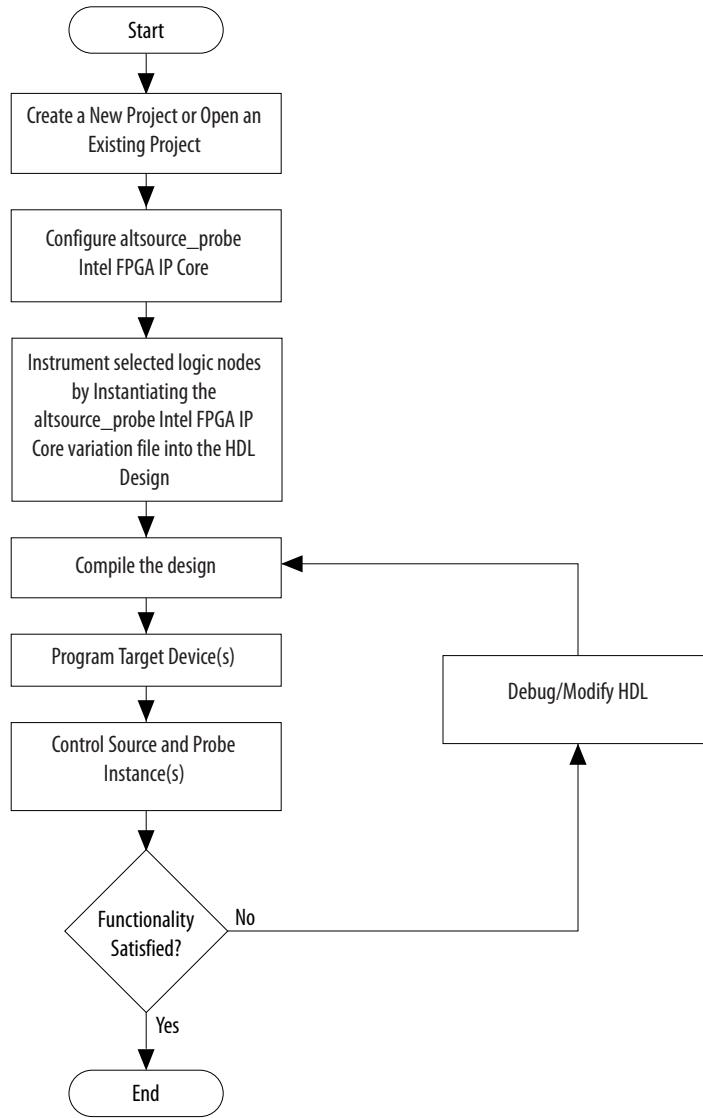
- Arria® series
- Stratix® series
- Cyclone® series
- MAX® series

8.2. Design Flow Using the In-System Sources and Probes Editor

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor supports an RTL flow. Signals that you want to view in the In-System Sources and Probes editor are connected to an instance of the In-System Sources and Probes IP core.

After you compile the design, you can control each instance via the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane or via a Tcl interface.

Figure 105. FPGA Design Flow Using the In-System Sources and Probes Editor



8.2.1. Instantiating the In-System Sources and Probes IP Core

To instantiate the In-System Sources and Probes IP core in a design:

1. In the IP Catalog (**Tools > IP Catalog**), type In-System Sources and Probes.
2. Double-click **In-System Sources and Probes** to open the parameter editor.
3. Specify a name for the IP variation.
4. Specify the parameters for the IP variation.



The IP core supports up to 512 bits for each source, and design can include up to 128 instances of this IP core.

5. Click **Generate** or **Finish** to generate IP core synthesis and simulation files matching your specifications.
6. Using the generated template, instantiate the In-System Sources and Probes IP core in your design.

Note: The In-System Sources and Probes Editor does not support simulation. Remove the In-System Sources and Probes IP core before you create a simulation netlist.

8.2.2. In-System Sources and Probes IP Core Parameters

Use the template to instantiate the variation file in your design.

Table 74. In-System Sources and Probes IP Port Information

| Port Name | Required? | Direction | Comments |
|------------|-----------|-----------|---|
| probe[] | No | Input | The outputs from your design. |
| source_clk | No | Input | Source Data is written synchronously to this clock. This input is required if you turn on Source Clock in the Advanced Options box in the parameter editor. |
| source_ena | No | Input | Clock enable signal for source_clk. This input is required if specified in the Advanced Options box in the parameter editor. |
| source[] | No | Output | Used to drive inputs to user design. |

You can include up to 128 instances of the in-system sources and probes IP core in your design, if your device has available resources. Each instance of the IP core uses a pair of registers per signal for the width of the widest port in the IP core. Additionally, there is some fixed overhead logic to accommodate communication between the IP core instances and the JTAG controller. You can also specify an additional pair of registers per source port for synchronization.

You can use the Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation feature to reduce compilation time. Incremental compilation allows you to organize your design into logical partitions. During recompilation of a design, incremental compilation preserves the compilation results and performance of unchanged partitions and reduces design iteration time by compiling only modified design partitions.

8.3. Compiling the Design

When you compile your design that includes the In-System Sources and Probes IP core, the In-System Sources and Probes and SLD Hub Controller IP core are added to your compilation hierarchy automatically. These IP cores provide communication between the JTAG controller and your instrumented logic.

You can modify the number of connections to your design by editing the In-System Sources and Probes IP core. To open the design instance you want to modify in the parameter editor, double-click the instance in the Project Navigator. You can then modify the connections in the HDL source file. You must recompile your design after you make changes.



You can use the Intel Quartus Prime incremental compilation feature to reduce compilation design into logical partitions. During recompilation of a design, incremental compilation preserves the compilation results and performance of unchanged partitions and reduces design iteration time by compiling only modified design partitions.

8.4. Running the In-System Sources and Probes Editor

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor gives you control over all ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instances within your design. The editor allows you to view all available run time controllable instances of the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core in your design, provides a push-button interface to drive all your source nodes, and provides a logging feature to store your probe and source data.

To run the In-System Sources and Probes Editor:

- On the **Tools** menu, click **In-System Sources and Probes Editor**.

8.4.1. In-System Sources and Probes Editor GUI

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor contains three panes:

- **JTAG Chain Configuration**—Allows you to specify programming hardware, device, and file settings that the In-System Sources and Probes Editor uses to program and acquire data from a device.
- **Instance Manager**—Displays information about the instances generated when you compile a design, and allows you to control data that the In-System Sources and Probes Editor acquires.
- **In-System Sources and Probes Editor**—Logs all data read from the selected instance and allows you to modify source data that is written to your device.

When you use the In-System Sources and Probes Editor, you do not need to open a Intel Quartus Prime software project. The In-System Sources and Probes Editor retrieves all instances of the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core by scanning the JTAG chain and sending a query to the device selected in the **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane. You can also use a previously saved configuration to run the In-System Sources and Probes Editor.

Each **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane can access the ALTSOURCE_PROBE IP core instances in a single device. If you have more than one device containing IP core instances in a JTAG chain, you can launch multiple **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** panes to access the IP core instances in each device.

8.4.2. Programming Your Device With JTAG Chain Configuration

After you compile your project, you must configure your FPGA before you use the In-System Sources and Probes Editor.



To configure a device to use with the In-System Sources and Probes Editor, perform the following steps:

1. Open the In-System Sources and Probes Editor.
2. In the **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane, point to **Hardware**, and then select the hardware communications device. You may be prompted to configure your hardware; in this case, click **Setup**.
3. From the **Device** list, select the FPGA device to which you want to download the design (the device may be automatically detected). You may need to click **Scan Chain** to detect your target device.
4. In the **JTAG Chain Configuration** pane, click to browse for the SRAM Object File (**.sof**) that includes the In-System Sources and Probes instance or instances. (The **.sof** may be automatically detected).
5. Click **Program Device** to program the target device.

8.4.3. Instance Manager

The **Instance Manager** pane provides a list of all ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances in the design, and allows you to configure data acquisition.

The **Instance Manager** pane contains the following buttons and sub-panes:

- **Read Probe Data**—Samples the probe data in the selected instance and displays the probe data in the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane.
- **Continuously Read Probe Data**—Continuously samples the probe data of the selected instance and displays the probe data in the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane; you can modify the sample rate via the **Probe read interval** setting.
- **Stop Continuously Reading Probe Data**—Cancels continuous sampling of the probe of the selected instance.
- **Read Source Data**—Reads the data of the sources in the selected instances.
- **Probe Read Interval**—Displays the sample interval of all the In-System Sources and Probe instances in your design; you can modify the sample interval by clicking **Manual**.
- **Event Log**—Controls the event log that appears in the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane.
- **Write Source Data**—Allows you to manually or continuously write data to the system.

Beside each entry, the **Instance Manager** pane displays the instance status. The possible instance statuses are **Not running**, **Offloading data**, **Updating data**, and **Unexpected JTAG communication error**.

8.4.4. In-System Sources and Probes Editor Pane

The **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane allows you to view data from all sources and probes in your design.

The data is organized according to the index number of the instance. The editor provides an easy way to manage your signals, and allows you to rename signals or group them into buses. All data collected from in-system source and probe nodes is recorded in the event log and you can view the data as a timing diagram.



8.4.4.1. Reading Probe Data

You can read data by selecting the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance in the **Instance Manager** pane and clicking **Read Probe Data**.

This action produces a single sample of the probe data and updates the data column of the selected index in the **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane. You can save the data to an event log by turning on the **Save data to event log** option in the **Instance Manager** pane.

If you want to sample data from your probe instance continuously, in the **Instance Manager** pane, click the instance you want to read, and then click **Continuously read probe data**. While reading, the status of the active instance shows **Unloading**. You can read continuously from multiple instances.

You can access read data with the shortcut menus in the **Instance Manager** pane.

To adjust the probe read interval, in the **Instance Manager** pane, turn on the **Manual** option in the **Probe read interval** sub-pane, and specify the sample rate in the text field next to the **Manual** option. The maximum sample rate depends on your computer setup. The actual sample rate is shown in the **Current interval** box. You can adjust the event log window buffer size in the **Maximum Size** box.

8.4.4.2. Writing Data

To modify the source data you want to write into the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance, click the name field of the signal you want to change. For buses of signals, you can double-click the data field and type the value you want to drive out to the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance. The In-System Sources and Probes Editor stores the modified source data values in a temporary buffer.

Modified values that are not written out to the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances appear in red. To update the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance, highlight the instance in the **Instance Manager** pane and click **Write source data**. The **Write source data** function is also available via the shortcut menus in the **Instance Manager** pane.

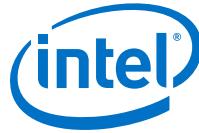
The In-System Sources and Probes Editor provides the option to continuously update each ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance. Continuous updating allows any modifications you make to the source data buffer to also write immediately to the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances. To continuously update the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances, change the **Write source data** field from **Manually** to **Continuously**.

8.4.4.3. Organizing Data

The **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane allows you to group signals into buses, and also allows you to modify the display options of the data buffer.

To create a group of signals, select the node names you want to group, right-click and select **Group**. You can modify the display format in the Bus Display Format and the Bus Bit order shortcut menus.

The **In-System Sources and Probes Editor** pane allows you to rename any signal. To rename a signal, double-click the name of the signal and type the new name.



The event log contains a record of the most recent samples. The buffer size is adjustable up to 128k samples. The time stamp for each sample is logged and is displayed above the event log of the active instance as you move your pointer over the data samples.

You can save the changes that you make and the recorded data to a Sources and Probes File (.spf). To save changes, on the File menu, click **Save**. The file contains all the modifications you made to the signal groups, as well as the current data event log.

8.5. Tcl interface for the In-System Sources and Probes Editor

To support automation, the In-System Sources and Probes Editor supports the procedures described in this chapter in the form of Tcl commands. The Tcl package for the In-System Sources and Probes Editor is included by default when you run **quartus_stp**.

The Tcl interface for the In-System Sources and Probes Editor provides a powerful platform to help you debug your design. The Tcl interface is especially helpful for debugging designs that require toggling multiple sets of control inputs. You can combine multiple commands with a Tcl script to define a custom command set.

Table 75. In-System Sources and Probes Tcl Commands

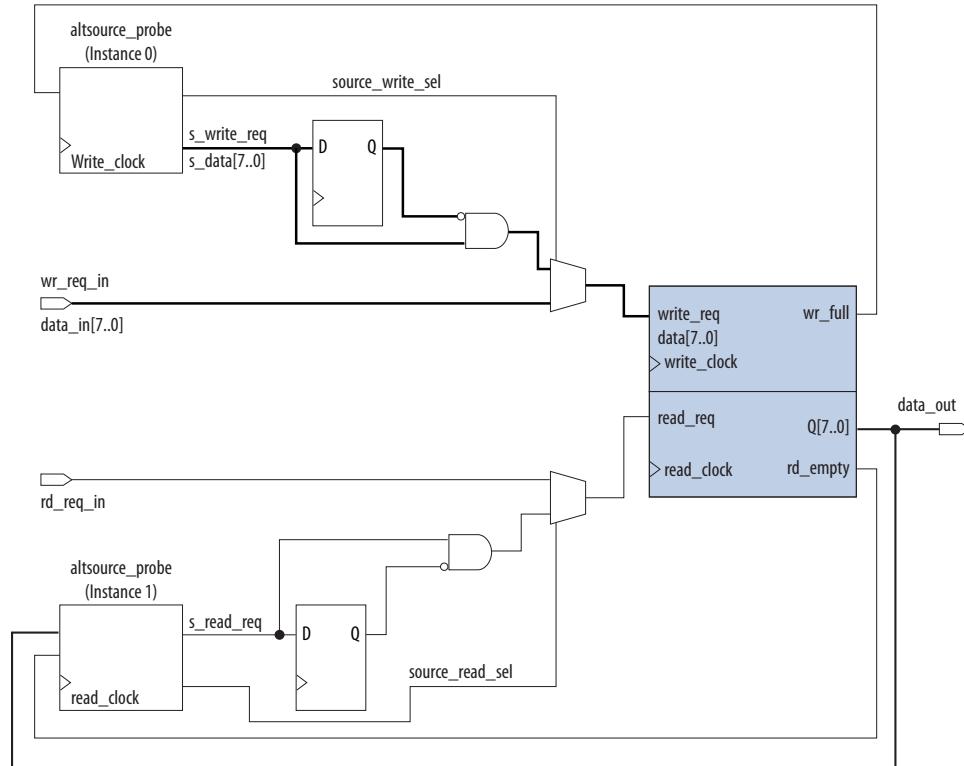
| Command | Argument | Description |
|---|--|--|
| start_insystem_source_probe | -device_name <device name> -hardware_name <hardware name> | Opens a handle to a device with the specified hardware. Call this command before starting any transactions. |
| get_insystem_source_probe_instance_info | -device_name <device name> -hardware_name <hardware name> | Returns a list of all ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances in your design. Each record returned is in the following format: {<instance Index>, <source width>, <probe width>, <instance name>} |
| read_probe_data | -instance_index <instance_index> -value_in_hex (optional) | Retrieves the current value of the probe. A string is returned that specifies the status of each probe, with the MSB as the left-most bit. |
| read_source_data | -instance_index <instance_index> -value_in_hex (optional) | Retrieves the current value of the sources. A string is returned that specifies the status of each source, with the MSB as the left-most bit. |
| write_source_data | -instance_index <instance_index> -value <value> -value_in_hex (optional) | Sets the value of the sources. A binary string is sent to the source ports, with the MSB as the left-most bit. |
| end_insystem_source_probe | None | Releases the JTAG chain. Issue this command when all transactions are finished. |

The example shows an excerpt from a Tcl script with procedures that control the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances of the design as shown in the figure below. The example design contains a DCIFIFO with ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances to read from and write to the DCIFIFO. A set of control muxes are added to the design to control the flow of data to the DCIFIFO between the input pins and the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances. A pulse generator is added to the read request and write request control

lines to guarantee a single sample read or write. The ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances, when used with the script in the example below, provide visibility into the contents of the FIFO by performing single sample write and read operations and reporting the state of the full and empty status flags.

Use the Tcl script in debugging situations to either empty or preload the FIFO in your design. For example, you can use this feature to preload the FIFO to match a trigger condition you have set up within the Signal Tap logic analyzer.

Figure 106. DCFIFO Example Design Controlled by Tcl Script



```
## Setup USB hardware - assumes only USB Blaster is installed and
## an FPGA is the only device in the JTAG chain
set usb [lindex [get_hardware_names] 0]
set device_name [lindex [get_device_names -hardware_name $usb] 0]
## write procedure : argument value is integer
proc write {value} {
    global device_name usb
    variable full
    start_insystem_source_probe -device_name $device_name -hardware_name $usb
    #read full flag
    set full [read_probe_data -instance_index 0]
    if {$full == 1} {end_insystem_source_probe
    return "Write Buffer Full"
}
##toggle select line, drive value onto port, toggle enable
##bits 7:0 of instance 0 is S_data[7:0]; bit 8 = S_write_req;
##bit 9 = Source_write_sel
##int2bits is custom procedure that returns a bitstring from an integer
## argument
write_source_data -instance_index 0 -value /[int2bits [expr 0x200 | $value]]
write_source_data -instance_index 0 -value [int2bits [expr 0x300 | $value]]
##clear transaction
write_source_data -instance_index 0 -value 0
```



```
end_insystem_source_probe
}
proc read {} {
global device_name usb
variable empty
start_insystem_source_probe -device_name $device_name -hardware_name $usb
##read empty flag : probe port[7:0] reads FIFO output; bit 8 reads empty_flag
set empty [read_probe_data -instance_index 1]
if {[regexp {1.....} $empty]} { end_insystem_source_probe
return "FIFO empty"
}
## toggle select line for read transaction
## Source_read_sel = bit 0; s_read_reg = bit 1
## pulse read enable on DC FIFO
write_source_data -instance_index 1 -value 0x1 -value_in_hex
write_source_data -instance_index 1 -value 0x3 -value_in_hex
set x [read_probe_data -instance_index 1 ]
end_insystem_source_probe
return $x
}
```

Related Information

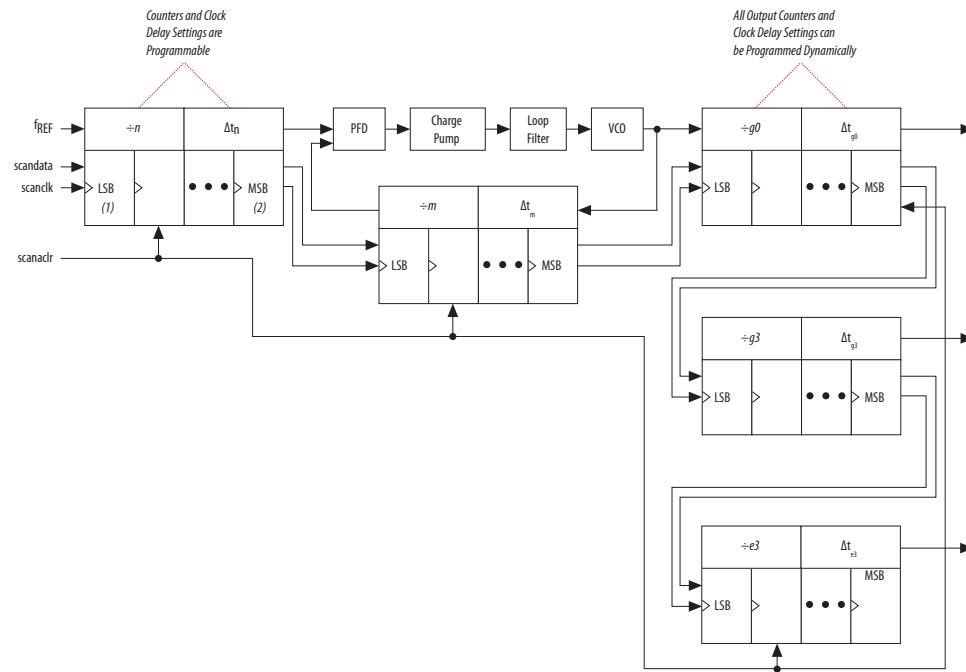
- [Tcl Scripting](#)
- [Intel Quartus Prime Settings File Manual](#)
- [Command Line Scripting](#)

8.6. Design Example: Dynamic PLL Reconfiguration

The In-System Sources and Probes Editor can help you create a virtual front panel during the prototyping phase of your design. You can create relatively simple, high functioning designs of in a short amount of time. The following PLL reconfiguration example demonstrates how to use the In-System Sources and Probes Editor to provide a GUI to dynamically reconfigure a Stratix PLL.

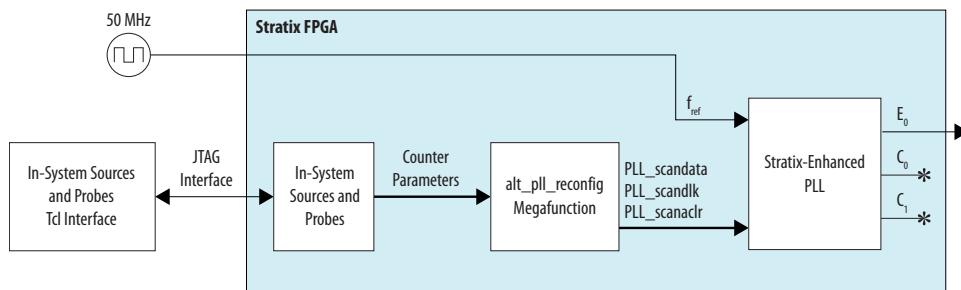
Stratix PLLs allow you to dynamically update PLL coefficients during run time. Each enhanced PLL within the Stratix device contains a register chain that allows you to modify the pre-scale counters (m and n values), output divide counters, and delay counters. In addition, the ALTPLL_RECONFIG IP core provides an easy interface to access the register chain counters. The ALTPLL_RECONFIG IP core provides a cache that contains all modifiable PLL parameters. After you update all the PLL parameters in the cache, the ALTPLL_RECONFIG IP core drives the PLL register chain to update the PLL with the updated parameters. The figure shows a Stratix-enhanced PLL with reconfigurable coefficients.

Figure 107. Stratix-Enhanced PLL with Reconfigurable Coefficients



The following design example uses an ALTSOURCE_PROBE instance to update the PLL parameters in the ALTPPLL_RECONFIG IP core cache. The ALTPPLL_RECONFIG IP core connects to an enhanced PLL in a Stratix FPGA to drive the register chain containing the PLL reconfigurable coefficients. This design example uses a Tcl/Tk script to generate a GUI where you can enter in new m and n values for the enhanced PLL. The Tcl script extracts the m and n values from the GUI, shifts the values out to the ALTSOURCE_PROBE instances to update the values in the ALTPPLL_RECONFIG IP core cache, and asserts the reconfiguration signal on the ALTPPLL_RECONFIG IP core. The reconfiguration signal on the ALTPPLL_RECONFIG IP core starts the register chain transaction to update all PLL reconfigurable coefficients.

Figure 108. Block Diagram of Dynamic PLL Reconfiguration Design Example

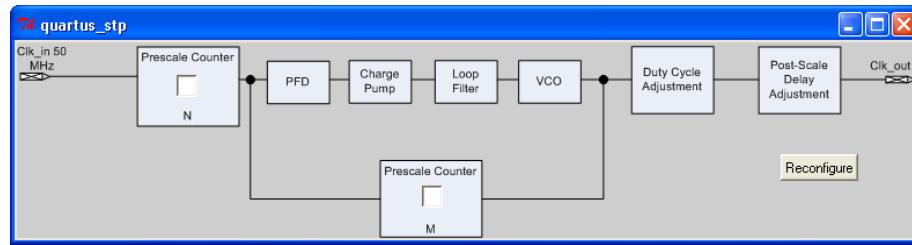




This design example was created using a Nios II Development Kit, Stratix Edition. The file `sourceprobe_DE_dynamic_pll.zip` contains all the necessary files for running this design example, including the following:

- `Readme.txt`—A text file that describes the files contained in the design example and provides instructions about running the Tk GUI shown in the figure below.
- `Interactive_Reconfig.qar`—The archived Intel Quartus Prime project for this design example.

Figure 109. Interactive PLL Reconfiguration GUI Created with Tk and In-System Sources and Probes Tcl Package



Related Information

[On-chip Debugging Design Examples](#)
to download the In-System Sources and Probes Example

8.7. Design Debugging Using In-System Sources and Probes

Revision History

The following revision history applies to this chapter:

| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2019.06.11 | 18.1.0 | Rebranded megafunction to Intel FPGA IP core |
| 2018.09.24 | 18.1.0 | Initial release in Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide. |
| 2018.05.07 | 18.0.0 | Added details on finding the In-System Sources and Probes in the IP Catalog. |
| 2015.11.02 | 15.1.0 | Changed instances of <i>Quartus II</i> to <i>Intel Quartus Prime</i> . |
| June 2014 | 14.0.0 | Updated formatting. |
| June 2012 | 12.0.0 | Removed survey link. |
| November 2011 | 10.1.1 | Template update. |
| December 2010 | 10.1.0 | Minor corrections. Changed to new document template. |
| July 2010 | 10.0.0 | Minor corrections. |
| November 2009 | 9.1.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Removed references to obsolete devices.Style changes. |

continued...



| Document Version | Intel Quartus Prime Version | Changes |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| March 2009 | 9.0.0 | No change to content. |
| November 2008 | 8.1.0 | Changed to 8-1/2 x 11 page size. No change to content. |
| May 2008 | 8.0.0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documented that this feature does not support simulation on page 17-5• Updated Figure 17-8 for Interactive PLL reconfiguration manager• Added hyperlinks to referenced documents throughout the chapter• Minor editorial updates |

Related Information

Documentation Archive

For previous versions of the *Intel Quartus Prime Handbook*, search the documentation archives.



A. Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guides

Refer to the following user guides for comprehensive information on all phases of the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition FPGA design flow.

Related Information

- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Getting Started](#)
Introduces the basic features, files, and design flow of the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software, including managing Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition projects and IP, initial design planning considerations, and project migration from previous software versions.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Platform Designer](#)
Describes creating and optimizing systems using Platform Designer (Standard), a system integration tool that simplifies integrating customized IP cores in your project. Platform Designer (Standard) automatically generates interconnect logic to connect intellectual property (IP) functions and subsystems.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Recommendations](#)
Describes best design practices for designing FPGAs with the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software. HDL coding styles and synchronous design practices can significantly impact design performance. Following recommended HDL coding styles ensures that Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition synthesis optimally implements your design in hardware.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Compilation](#)
Describes set up, running, and optimization for all stages of the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Compiler. The Compiler synthesizes, places, and routes your design before generating a device programming file.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Optimization](#)
Describes Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition settings, tools, and techniques that you can use to achieve the highest design performance in Intel FPGAs. Techniques include optimizing the design netlist, addressing critical chains that limit retiming and timing closure, and optimization of device resource usage.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Programmer](#)
Describes operation of the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Programmer, which allows you to configure Intel FPGA devices, and program CPLD and configuration devices, via connection with an Intel FPGA download cable.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Partial Reconfiguration](#)
Describes Partial Reconfiguration, an advanced design flow that allows you to reconfigure a portion of the FPGA dynamically, while the remaining FPGA design continues to function. Define multiple personas for a particular design region, without impacting operation in other areas.



- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Third-party Simulation](#)
Describes RTL- and gate-level design simulation support for third-party simulation tools by Aldec*, Cadence*, Mentor Graphics*, and Synopsys* that allow you to verify design behavior before device programming. Includes simulator support, simulation flows, and simulating Intel FPGA IP.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Third-party Synthesis](#)
Describes support for optional synthesis of your design in third-party synthesis tools by Mentor Graphics*, and Synopsys*. Includes design flow steps, generated file descriptions, and synthesis guidelines.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Debug Tools](#)
Describes a portfolio of Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition in-system design debugging tools for real-time verification of your design. These tools provide visibility by routing (or “tapping”) signals in your design to debugging logic. These tools include System Console, Signal Tap logic analyzer, Transceiver Toolkit, In-System Memory Content Editor, and In-System Sources and Probes Editor.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Timing Analyzer](#)
Explains basic static timing analysis principals and use of the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Timing Analyzer, a powerful ASIC-style timing analysis tool that validates the timing performance of all logic in your design using an industry-standard constraint, analysis, and reporting methodology.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Power Analysis and Optimization](#)
Describes the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition Power Analysis tools that allow accurate estimation of device power consumption. Estimate the power consumption of a device to develop power budgets and design power supplies, voltage regulators, heat sink, and cooling systems.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Design Constraints](#)
Describes timing and logic constraints that influence how the Compiler implements your design, such as pin assignments, device options, logic options, and timing constraints. Use the Pin Planner to visualize, modify, and validate all I/O assignments in a graphical representation of the target device.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: PCB Design Tools](#)
Describes support for optional third-party PCB design tools by Mentor Graphics* and Cadence*. Also includes information about signal integrity analysis and simulations with HSPICE and IBIS Models.
- [Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition User Guide: Scripting](#)
Describes use of Tcl and command line scripts to control the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software and to perform a wide range of functions, such as managing projects, specifying constraints, running compilation or timing analysis, or generating reports.