A Single Inductor Dual Output Synchronous High Speed DC-DC Boost Converter using Type-III Compensation for Low Power Applications

Abbas Syed Hayder, Hyun-Gu Park, Hongin Kim, Dong-Soo Lee, Hamed Abbasizadeh, and Kang-Yoon Lee

College of Information and Communications Engineering, Sungkyunkwan University / Suwon, South Korea
{hayder,blacklds,squarejj,cbmass85, hamed, klee}@skku.edu

*Corresponding Author: Kang-Yoon Lee

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Abstract: This paper presents a high speed synchronous single inductor dual output boost converter using Type-III compensation for power management in smart devices. Maintaining multiple outputs from a single inductor is becoming very important because of inductor the sizes. The uses of high switching frequency, inductor and capacitor sizes are reduced. Owing to synchronous rectification this kind of converter is suitable for SoC. The phase is controlled in time sharing manner for each output. The controller used here is Type-III, which ensures quick settling time and high stability. The outputs are stable within 58µs. The simulation results show that the proposed scheme achieves a better overall performance. The input voltage is 1.8V, switching frequency is 5MHz, and the inductor used is 600nH. The output voltages and powers are 2.6V& 3.3V and 147mW&, 230mW respectively.

Keywords: DC converter, Switch mode power supplies, SIMO converters

1. Introduction

As the technology advances, the desire for small area devices is increasing. Power management is the heart of all electronic devices, which makes the other blocks alive by supplying proper voltage levels. DC-DC converters provide a regulated supply for the rest of the circuit including the DSP chip in portable devices, with a different output level from the unregulated input supply. Voltage regulation for SoC (System-on-Chip) applications is required to fulfill a variety of functions [2]. These are classified into two categories, linear regulators and switching regulators. Conventional power management techniques consume high power under static conditions, but switching regulators have high efficiency compared to conventional techniques. Linear regulators waste most of their energy in the form of heat, requiring extra heat sinks. On the other hand switching regulators or choppers, dissipate a negligible amount of power during conversion. Chopper circuit requires at least two switches, one switching source, control circuit, one energy storage element. The input voltage is chopped off at a specific frequency. As the switching frequency is increased the charge and discharge region of the inductor shrinks and demands very careful calculations, timing diagrams and circuit design to generate proper signals for gate drives. Power loss at the power stage increases roughly with \( \sqrt{f} \) [4]. These include; conduction losses and switching losses. Switching speed of MOSFET devices is calculated by the time required to charge/discharge the gate capacitor. Therefore, parallel multiple MOSFET’s can be used to achieve a high switching speed. Bootstrap, \( \phi \)-inverters, 3rd generation gate drive techniques [5, 6] are ideal candidates for switching the gate voltage at higher speed. In this paper, a small amount of efficiency is sacrificed to achieve high speed and lower volume. In addition, efficiency is an inverse function of the difference between the input and output voltages. Conventional dc-dc converters suffer power losses due to their bulky nature and require many inductors as outputs. The popular control scheme for
switching converters is pulse-width modulation (PWM). The control uses a constant switching frequency and varies the duty cycle as the load current varies. This scheme achieves good regulation, low noise spectrum, and high efficiency. A DC-DC converter, which is an essential block in PMIC (Power Management IC), provides a regulated output voltage from a linearly discharging battery in portable devices [7]. An LED driver is essentially a current source (or sink) that maintains a constant current required for achieving the desired color and luminous flux from an array of LEDs [8]. In the proposed converter design the inductor and capacitor sizes are reduced to 40% of the lowest average value published thus far. In addition a smooth handover block in the feedback loop was designed to assist the loop at start up and avoid indefinite unpredictable behavior.

2. Classification of Converters

Initially there are only two categories of dc-dc converters before the evolution of SIMO (Single Inductor Multiple Output) converters, linear regulators and switching regulators. Fig. 1 shows the classification of dc-dc converters according to the present times. Topologies in each category of switching regulators are divided into four classes: Buck Converter, Boost Convert, Inverting topology and transformer flyback topology. Inductor is charged at the first phase and energy of inductor with input supply is pushed to output node, just like fill and throw of energy to the output.

The inductor charge phase of a boost converter is shown in Fig. 2. The equivalent circuit for $\Phi_1$ is shown in Fig. 2(b), which is simplified by closing SW1 and opening SW2 for a certain on-time $t$. During $\Phi_1$ the inductor $L$ is...
charged by the voltage source \(U_{in}\), causing the inductor current \(i_L(t)\) to increase from its minimum value \(iL_{\text{min}}\) to its maximum value \(iL_{\text{max}}\). Simultaneously the output capacitor \(C\) is discharged through the load \(R_L\). For the inductor discharge phase \(\Phi_2\), equivalent circuit is shown in Fig. 2(c), which is accomplished by opening SW1 and closing SW2 for a certain off-time \(t_{\text{off}}\). During \(L\) is discharged into \(C\) and \(RL\), causing \(i_L(t)\) to decrease. As a result \(iL(t)\) is divided over \(C\) and \(RL\), thereby charging \(C\) and providing power to \(RL\). Because \(L\) is discharged in series with \(U_{in}\) it can be intuitively seen that the output voltage \(U_{out}\) will always be higher than \(U_{in}\) [9].

### 3. Related Work

The initial work with a single output has already been presented in our previous work [10] and [11]. A 3.7V High speed dc-dc synchronous boost converter with smooth loop handover is discussed. Switching frequency was 5MHz, inductor size was 600nH. Output of 3.7V is regulated from a supply of 1.8V. The three main blocks of dc-dc converter has been discussed. In the feedback loop PWM control is used. On the other hand in [11] we used Type-III compensation for single output converter to achieve quick settling time. In both papers the dual output with Type-III was not addressed.

In the architecture shown in Fig. 3 has three main blocks: Power stage, Control stage, and Gate drive stage. The control stage has further two sub-blocks: PWM generation and SLHO (Smooth Loop Hand Over). The current circulation in the power stage is much higher than the control stage. Output voltage is sensed scaled and compensated using error amplifier. It is compared with carrier signal to generate a PWM signal proportional to the output voltage. PWM signal generated from feedback loop and constant duty cycle signal are fed to Smooth Loop Mux (SLM). In the startup \(K_{HF}\) is engaged, while after the predetermined time which is set in \(DB\) (Delay Block) the PWM loop is engaged for the rest of the operation. Delay Block is triggered just after 20\(\mu\)s from power on of the converter. Simultaneously while depending on the load the \(C_{esl}\) is connected and disconnected at the output using the control signals \(R_c\) and \(R_{cb}\) to reduce the ripples. \(D_1\) and \(D_2\) are two non-overlapped signals generated to reduce or conflict inductor current. This architecture works with CCM (continuous conduction mode) operation. \(S_m\) and \(S_a\) are used with anti parallel diodes, as MOSFET channel has to carry the positive current, e.g., n-channel MOSFET’s drain to source. If the load is an inductive, interval that switch is turned on, current flows in the opposite direction, but this current will flow through the diode. Without a diode, the induced current generates peaks of high voltage, causing current to stop. At heavy loads conduction losses dominate while switching losses dominate at light loads. We used four stages of cascaded inverters as gate drives [10].

### 4. Control Techniques and Efficiency Model

There are many control techniques and compensation methods which are being used in dc/dc converters. Some of them are: Hysteretic, PI, Type-II and Type-III, with combination of voltage mode and current mode sensors. Peak inductor current and average current of inductor is acquired and monitored to make it as input for controllers. But in our case we used PI control technique.

Conventional PWM techniques have already been discussed in our previous work. But due to slow response time we re-designed our converter with Type-III controller. This controller is comparatively fast. Type-III compensation is used to improve the transient response, and to boost the crossover frequency and phase margin. It guarantees the targeted bandwidth and phase margin, as well as an unconditionally stable control loop [12]. Fig. 4 shows the conventional Type III compensation using voltage Op-Amp. Simulation results from discussed work of single inductor single output (SISO) is shown in Fig. 5.
There are two poles ($f_{p1}$ and $f_{p2}$), besides the pole-at-zero $f_{po}$ and two zeros ($f_{z1}$ and $f_{z2}$) provided by this compensation. All passive components involved play a dual role in determining the poles and zeros. So, the calculation can become fairly cumbersome and iterative. But a valid simplifying assumption that can be made is that $C_1$ is much greater than $C_3$ [13]. So the locations of the poles and zeros are finally:

\[
\begin{align*}
 f_{po} &= 1/[2\pi \times (C_1 + C_3)] \approx 1/[2\pi \times R_1C_1], \\
 f_{p1} &= 1/[2\pi \times R_3C_2], \quad f_{p2} = 1/[2\pi \times R_2(\frac{C_2}{C_1} + C_3)] \\
 &= 1/2\pi \times R_2(1/C_1 + 1/C_3) \\
 &\approx 1/(2\pi \times R_2C_3) \\
 f_{z1} &= 1/[2\pi \times (R_1 + R_3)C_2f_{z2} = 1/[2\pi \times R_2C_1]
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
 \eta &= \frac{P_o}{(P_o + P_c + P_s)} = \left[1 + \frac{RyL}{V_0} + \frac{R_s}{V_o} + \frac{\Delta I}{12} \right]^{-1} \\
 &\left[\frac{1}{2} \left(M + \frac{M}{2L}\right) (t_{re} + t_{fl}) + \frac{V_o}{I_o} (C_{GN} + C_{GP} + C_{X}) \right]f_b
\end{align*}
\]

where $R_Y$ and $R_Z$ are obtained using (7) and (8)

\[
\begin{align*}
 R_Y &= R_LM^2 + R_{DSP} + (R_C + R_{DSN})M(M - 1) \\
 R_Z &= R_L + R_{DSN} \frac{M - 1}{M} + \frac{R_{DSP} + R_C}{M}
\end{align*}
\]

$P_o$ : Output power

$P_c, P_s$ : Conduction and Switching losses

$t_{re}$ : Rise time

$t_{fl}$ : Fall time

$C_{GN}$ : NMOS gate capacitance

$C_{GP}$ : PMOS gate capacitance

Transfer function with the feedback block is

Fig. 5. Simulations Results of SISO.

Fig. 6. Block diagram of proposed SIDO converter.
5. Proposed Dual Output Architecture

In our design of proposed dual output converter as shown in Fig. 6, the inductor energy is shared between the two outputs. Dual output with phase control is presented in paper [1] with lower switching frequency, current sensors and high inductor value. In contrast we designed with high switching frequency, Type-III controller, lower inductor value, low load capacitor and without current sensors. Because current sensors occupy extra areas. Type-III controllers show a rapid response. To comply with higher switching frequency improved controllers are necessary. During phase 1 output vo1 is maintained with coordination of Sm and Sa. In the meantime controller enables sp1 thus by selecting Ref1. On the other hand output vo2 is maintained with coordination of Sm and Sb. Charging time of Sm is decided by the controller depending upon the present output voltage at vo2. In this phase Ref2 is selected. Rate of charging inductor is same for both outputs with Vg/L, while discharge slope for phase1 is (Vg-Vo1)/L and for phase2 is (Vg-Vo2)/L. Filtering capacitors Coa and Cob smoothes the output glitches.

The overall controller output is shown in Fig. 7(c). Comparison with other works is summarizes in Table 1. For the time duration when sp1 is on, MOSFET Sm duty ratio is calculated to generate output required for the Vo1, similarly, when sp2 is on MOSFET S_m duty ratio is calculated to stable the output Vo2. At a time one sensor value is selected using sp1 and sp2. When sp1 is selected, reference voltage Ref1 becomes input to Type-III controller. In contrast when sp2 is selected Ref2 becomes the input for the controller. Each output is scaled and becomes input to Type-III controller where error signal is generated after subtracted from reference signals. This error signal becomes input to comparator and

![Fig. 7. Phase Control Signals and Type-III output.](image)

![Fig. 8. Simulation Results of proposed Converter.](image)
from dead time control non overlapped signals are generated. Gate driver is used to generate high current and to turn on and off the Power MOSFETs. We used existing clock for switching frequency using clock divider 2.5MHz is achieved through feedback of D-Flip-Flop to drive sp1 and sp2. The simulation results are shown in Figs. 8(a)-(h).

NMOS signal Sm generated is shown in Fig. 8(a), Signal Sa, Sb are fed to high side PMOS switches located near the output Vo1 and Vo2 respectively. Boosted Output voltages are presented in Figs. 8(d) and (e), where output voltage level stables within 58µs. Comparator input is given in Fig. 8(f). Carrier signal and inductor current are illustrated in Figs. 8(g) and (h). Zoomed output voltages and load currents are shown in Fig. 9 for the same load resistors connected in both outputs. Average load current taken by Vo1 and Vo2 was 56mA and 70mA respectively.

6. Conclusion

This paper proposed a single inductor dual output dc-dc converter design using a Type-III compensation. In the beginning the existing single output and dual output architectures were discussed. The design was then formulated towards a dual output dc-dc converter with an improved control scheme, which is essential for high speed converters, ultimately reducing inductor and capacitor sizes. Settling time is 58µs. The Output voltage was scaled and fed to the controller in phase control mode. In each phase, the two phase control signals keeps track for adjusting the duty ratios to achieve the desired output.

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Abbas Syed Hayder received his Master’s degree from Hanyang University in Electrical Electronics Control and Instrumentation Engineering in 2010. He is now pursuing his PhD degree from Sungkyunkwan University, in Analog Integrated Circuits. His research interests include high speed SIMO (Single Inductor Multiple Output) dc-dc Converters, PLL, VGA (Variable Gain Amplifier), Digital circuit design, BGR (Band Gap References), and Control techniques for dc-dc converters.

Hyung-Gu Park was born in Seoul, Korea. He received his B.S. degree from the Department of Electronic Engineering at Konkuk University, Seoul, Korea, in 2010, where he is currently working toward a Ph.D. degree in School of Information and Communication Engineering, Sungkyunkwan University. His research interests include high-speed interface IC and CMOS RF transceiver.

HongJin Kim was born in Seoul, Korea, in 1985. He received his B.S. degree from the Department of Electronic Engineering at Chungju University, Chungju, Korea, in 2010, where he is currently working toward a M.S& Ph.D. degree in electronic engineering at SungKyunKwan University, Suwon, Korea. His research interests include on CMOS RF IC and analog/mixed-mode IC design for low-power application and Power Management IC.

Dong-Soo Lee received his B.S., and M.S. degree from the Department of Electronic Engineering at Konkuk University, Seoul, Korea, in 2012, and the electronic engineering at Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Korea, in 2014, respectively. He is currently working toward a Ph.D. degree in electronic engineering at Sungkyunkwan University. His research interests include CMOS RF IC and Phase Locked Loop, Silicon Oscillator and Sensor Interfaces design.

Hamed Abbasizadeh was born in Susq, Iran, in 1984. He received his B.S. degree in Electronic Engineering from Bushehr Azad University, Bushehr, Iran in 2008 and M.S. degree in Electronic Engineering from Qazvin Azad University, Qazvin, Iran in 2012, where he is currently working toward the Ph.D. degree in School of Information and Communication Engineering, Sungkyunkwan University. His research interests include design of high-performance data converters, bandgap reference voltage, low-dropout regulators and ultra-low power CMOS RF transceiver.

Kang-Yoon Lee received the B.S. M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in the School of Electrical Engineering from Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea, in 1996, 1998, and 2003, respectively. From 2003 to 2005, he was with GCT Semiconductor Inc., San Jose, CA, where he was a Manager of the Analog Division and worked on the design of CMOS frequency synthesizer for CDMA/PCS/PDC and single-chip CMOS RF chip sets for W-CDMA, WLAN, and PHS. From 2005 to 2011, he was with the Department of Electronics Engineering, Konkuk University as an Associate Professor. Since 2012, he has been with the School of Information and Communication Engineering, Sungkyunkwan University, where he is currently an Associate Professor. His research interests include implementation of power integrated circuits, CMOS RF transceiver, analog integrated circuits, and analog/digital mixed-mode VLSI system design.