Title: Start-up circuit for low-power indoor light energy harvesting applications

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Source: Electronics Letters **Volume:** 49 **Issue:** 10 **Pages:** 669-670 **DOI:** 10.1049/el.2012.3418 **Published:** May 9 2013

Document Type: Article

Language: English

Abstract: A start-up circuit, used in a micro-power indoor light energy harvesting system, is described. This start-up circuit achieves two goals: first, to produce a reset signal, power-on-reset (POR), for the energy harvesting system, and secondly, to temporarily shunt the output of the photovoltaic (PV) cells, to the output node of the system, which is connected to a capacitor. This capacitor is charged to a suitable value, so that a voltage step-up converter starts operating, thus increasing the output voltage to a larger value than the one provided by the PV cells. A prototype of the circuit was manufactured in a 130 nm CMOS technology, occupying an area of only 0.019 mm(2). Experimental results demonstrate the correct operation of the circuit, being able to correctly start-up the system, even when having an input as low as 390 mV using, in this case, an estimated energy of only 5.3 pJ to produce the start-up.

KeyWords Plus: Start-up circuit; Low-power indoor

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Funding:

Funding Agency	Grant Number
FCT - Fundacao para a Ciencia e a Tecnologia	PEst-OE/EEI/UI0066/2011
IPL-Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa	
	SFRH/PROTEC/67683/2010

Publisher: Inst Engineering Technology-IET

Publisher Address: Michael Faraday House Six Hills Way Stevenage, Hertford SG1 2AY, England ISSN: 0013-5194

Citation: CARVALHO, C.; PAULINO, N. - Start-up circuit for low-power indoor light energy harvesting applications. <u>Electronics Letters</u>. ISSN 0013-5194. Vol. 49, nr. 10 (2013), p. 669-670.