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Supercapacitor power management module

Michael Brooks
Santa Clara University

Anderson Fu
Santa Clara University

Brett Kehoe
Santa Clara University

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SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
Department of Electrical Engineering

Date: June 2014

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BY

Michael Brooks, Anderson Fu, and Brett Kehoe

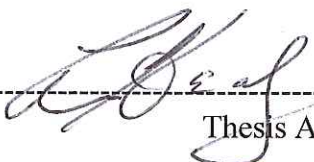
ENTITLED

Supercapacitor Power Management Module


BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE

OF

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING



Thesis Advisor



Chairman of Department

Supercapacitor Power Management Module

BY

Michael Brooks, Anderson Fu, and Brett Kehoe

DESIGN PROJECT REPORT

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Bachelor of Science
in Electrical Engineering
in the School of Engineering of
Santa Clara University, 2014
Santa Clara, California

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Abstract

The purpose of this senior design project is to create a charge management and output converting power module incorporating an array of supercapacitors as the energy storage medium. Conventional energy storage components, such as lithium-ion batteries, use electrochemical reactions to store and release electrons into a system. These batteries are slow to charge, highly toxic to the environment and delicate compared to many of the systems they are used in. Supercapacitors are noticeably more rugged and last hundreds to thousands of times longer than the average chemical reaction-based batteries we are used to using while capable of charging in less than half the time. Creating a power module that properly handles the use of supercapacitors is the main focus of this project. The power circuitry included in this design compensates for the design complications inherent to using supercapacitors, allowing future designers to more easily integrate supercapacitors as an energy storage solution into their designs. The power module is capable of charging three supercapacitors in series to 8.1 volts in one hour.

Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction

1.1 Core Statement

The focus of this design project is to create a supercapacitor module that has integrated charge control and output conversion. This module will be easy for future designers to integrate into their designs while remaining relatively inexpensive, giving supercapacitors a leap forward in terms of usability in today's design market.

1.2 Supercapacitors and Energy Storage

Capacitors use the electric field created by the movement of charge to store energy. Due to the absence of chemicals, capacitors can charge and discharge faster and without degradation caused by discharging too much or charging too fast. In addition, they can withstand temperature changes, shocks, and vibrations better than most batteries. The carbon materials used in supercapacitors are less damaging to the environment when disposed of and require little maintenance. The equivalent series resistance (ESR) of supercapacitors is extremely low compared to current battery technology (0.29 m Ω vs. 200 m Ω), reducing the design complication of self-discharging. Supercapacitors do have drawbacks when compared to batteries such as their low energy density. The Maxwell supercapacitors used in this module have an energy density of six Wh/kg and a power density of 5,900 W/kg.

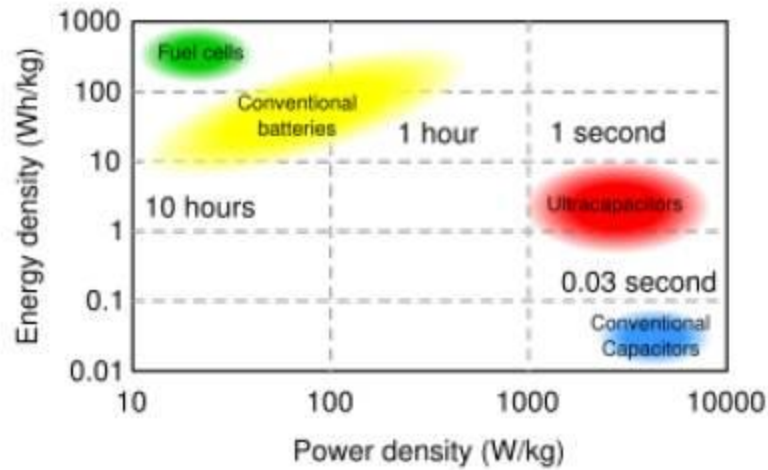


Figure 1: Energy density vs. power density of energy storage devices

Figure 1 compares multiple energy storage devices showing both their energy density and power density. Low energy density causes the source to discharge fully more quickly while low power density limits the instantaneous output of the device. Their discharge pattern is different than chemical battery technology, requiring output power controlling circuitry to fully harness the stored energy. Figure 2 illustrates the differences between supercapacitor and chemical battery charge and discharge.

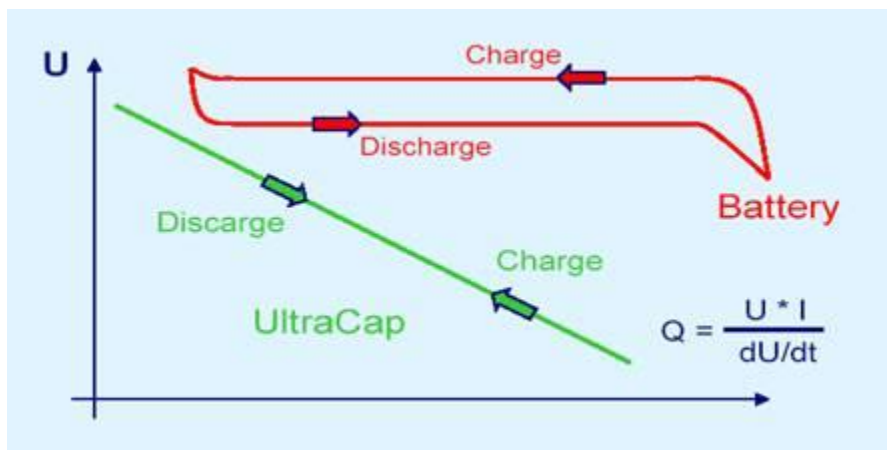


Figure 2: Charge and discharge patterns for supercapacitors and batteries

Current electronic technology requires remote sources of power to last long periods of time away from charging stations. The typical choice of chemical reaction-based batteries lacks the charge cycle life and charging speeds desired while negatively impacting the environment as a large contributor to electronic waste. Supercapacitors have the potential to replace chemical reaction-based energy storage with a quicker charging, longer living, and more sustainable solution.

Figure 1 explains the benefits and drawbacks of batteries: their energy and power densities. Having energy densities over 100 Wh/kg allows the cells to provide power for longer times to a load. The low power density, under 1000 W/kg, imposes restrictions on the charge and discharge rates of the cell. Batteries have high sensitivity to temperature and physical disturbance, requiring designers to compensate properly in order to prevent damage or malfunction if the load is subject to disturbances. In addition, batteries have large ESR ratings, around 200 mΩ, which further contribute to challenges in charge and discharge levels as well as self-discharging. As power needs increase, battery size, weight, and charging rate become critical factors in new designs. All batteries are plagued with low charge cycle life and slow charging times, requiring more design consideration and replacements to ensure proper functionality of the load.

1.3 Design Goal

The goal of our team is to design power circuitry that can safely and efficiently charge a supercapacitor stack and provide output conversion from the supercapacitors to a modern smartphone through a USB plug. This application of supercapacitors is designed to show their versatility as a power source for any system. Providing the equations used and steps taken allows for our supercapacitor system to be applied to any design that needs a power source.

1.4 Design Considerations

As the project began, three foreseeable obstacles became apparent:

- Difficulty creating simulations
- Physical construction
- Circuit construction
- Virtual short circuit

In electrical engineering computer simulations are an invaluable asset for the design and testing of electronic circuits. Early into this project it became clear that we would not be able to create computer simulations for the charging circuit due to the complexity of the BQ33100 controller IC chip. Hence, the charging circuit had to be constructed and manually tested for functionality and performance. The LT3959 used for output conversion had a computer simulation model readily available online which was used to test external component choices for the SEPIC.

Schematics generally take space for granted and place components in ways that look nice on paper but may not be feasible on a circuit board, particularly when footprint is an important constraint. Manipulating the schematic so the connections on the circuit board are in appropriate places takes a complete knowledge of functionality within the circuit being constructed to ensure nothing is placed in a position that will create new issues. This was particularly relevant to the active balancing MOSFETs and resistors, as they had many wires that had to connect to them.

Creating an enclosure for the whole project was an immediately established goal. The supercapacitors used in the stack are connected by cables between the terminals and are not meant to be touched by other conducting materials. This meant creating a safe and portable

enclosure around the supercapacitors and power circuitry had to account for physical dimensions as well as electrical characteristics. A smaller enclosure for only the supercapacitors was made and placed inside a larger case that housed the supercapacitor stack in its enclosure as well as the power circuitry.

When attempting to charge the supercapacitors from a typical voltage-fed DC power supply, the short circuit protection circuitry would shut off the power supply. This was caused by a phenomenon known as a virtual short circuit. Voltage-fed power supplies measure the voltages at the positive and negative terminals of the supply and compare them, looking for differences in potential. If no difference is measured the power supply does not provide current to the load. Uncharged supercapacitors appear as a virtual short to voltage-fed power supplies, not allowing us to directly charge the supercapacitors by connecting them to voltage-fed power supplies.

As the project progressed there were two unanticipated challenges that impeded progress towards completion:

- Difficulty locating BQ33100 manufacturer unseal code
- Moving from breadboard to prototype

In order to have control over the full functionality of the BQ33100 chip a special manufacturer unseal code had to be sent to the chip. Obtaining this code involved numerous communication attempts with Texas Instruments but in the end we did not receive it in time for our presentation. Having prepared for this possibility as soon as we discovered we needed the

unseal code, we were able to use our backup plan involving only three supercapacitors, the default setting of the BQ33100.

Moving from the circuit from the breadboard to the prototyping board required condensing the circuit and soldering all the pieces on. For the small SMD devices small circuit boards with the proper pad layout and leads connected to each pad were used to make the assembly process easier. The challenges of circuit design and construction were amplified on the prototyping board because they require more precision while errors are more difficult to fix.

1.5 Module Overview

Separating different aspects of the module design into sections allowed better distribution of work and efficient use of time. Figure 3 below shows the block diagram of the supercapacitor module demonstrating the main systems, indicated by the color coded arrows:

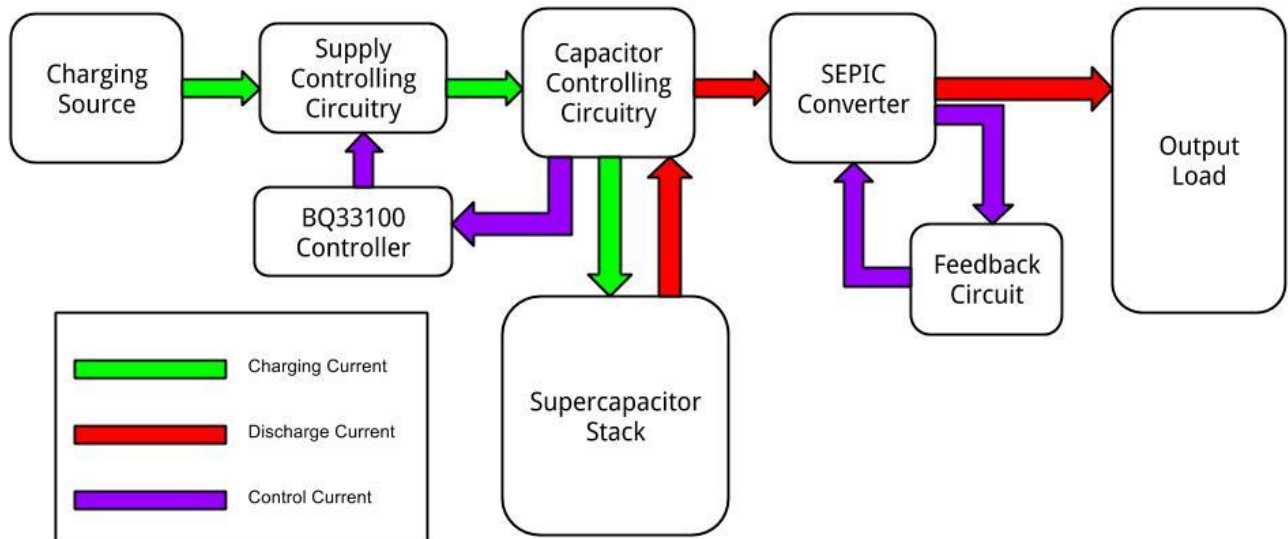


Figure 3: Supercapacitor power module block diagram

The functions of the supercapacitor module are more understandable when divided into the primary groups of charge control and discharge control. Both groups contain secondary sections involved with the either controller or feedback circuitry; functions that monitor and alter the outputs of their respective stages.

2 Charge Management

2.1 Choosing a Supercapacitor

Choosing the proper supercapacitor for this project required taking into consideration the low cell voltage and energy density inherent in supercapacitors. Typical industry load voltages are 3.3, 5, and 12 volts while the largest supercapacitors have cell voltages of 2.7 volts. Reaching industry voltage levels would require multiple supercapacitors in series. However, supercapacitors, like conventional capacitors, lose capacitance when connected in series. Combined with an already low energy density, the total energy a series supercapacitor stack can deliver is relatively low, especially considering the size of the supercapacitors. Choosing supercapacitors with a large capacitance individually was our first method of mitigating these issues.

The supercapacitors we chose for this design are the Maxwell K2 Series BCAP3000 Supercapacitors. Each supercapacitor has a cell voltage of 2.7 volts and capacitance of 3000 farads. Having the stack voltage exceed the highest of our standard voltage options will benefit our output converter's efficiency but lower the effective capacitance. Comparing different series voltages and capacitances was necessary to determine the best stack voltage to effective capacitance ratio.

Supercapacitors in Series	Stack Voltage [Volts]	Effective Capacitance [Farads]	Total Energy [Wh]
1	2.7	3000	3.0375
2	5.4	1500	6.075
3	8.1	1000	9.1125
4	10.8	750	12.15
5	13.5	600	15.1875
6	16.2	500	18.225

Figure 4: Table of supercapacitor voltage, capacitance, and total energy in series

We chose five supercapacitors as the optimal number of cells for charging a 5 volt 2000 milliampere-hour smartphone battery with a total energy of 10 watt-hours.

2.2 Safely Charging Supercapacitors

Supercapacitors in series require voltage balancing during charging to prevent internal degradation. This degradation is caused by the voltage across a capacitor exceeding the rated voltage of the cell. An imbalance of the voltage distribution can be caused by differences in the tolerances of each supercapacitor's capacitance. This imbalance can result in an overvoltage on

one or more cells, starting with the cell with the lowest capacitance. Texas Instruments offers a supercapacitor manager IC called the BQ33100. Our team chose this chip for our project because it can monitor up to five supercapacitors in series during charging and discharging while providing measurements related to the supercapacitors and the energy entering or leaving them. The supercapacitors can be monitored in two different modes, normal mode and stack mode. Normal mode measures each supercapacitor's voltage individually while stack mode measures the total stack voltage.

2.3 Voltage Balancing Circuit

In normal operation mode the Texas Instruments BQ33100 monitors the cell voltage across each supercapacitor in a series stack and compares each measurement to a preset value. When a measurement exceeds the preset value, the BQ33100 controls the gate voltage of the appropriate MOSFET to discharge the supercapacitor until the supercapacitor cell voltage is at an appropriate level. Figure 5 shows the section of the application reference schematic that contains the active voltage balancing MOSFETs and resistors. This is the most robust voltage balancing solution our team could find through our research short of having a microcontroller for each supercapacitor in the stack.

We had to select power Metal Oxide Semiconductor Field Effect Transistors (MOSFETs), capacitors, and resistors that could handle the charge current being supplied. Initially all the components listed in the application reference schematic located on page 50 of the BQ33100 datasheet were used to test functionality of the charge circuit and supercapacitor stack. After multiple successful tests, the components along the charge path, designated by the

bold wire line, had to be replaced by components capable of higher power levels to increase the charge current reaching the supercapacitor stack.

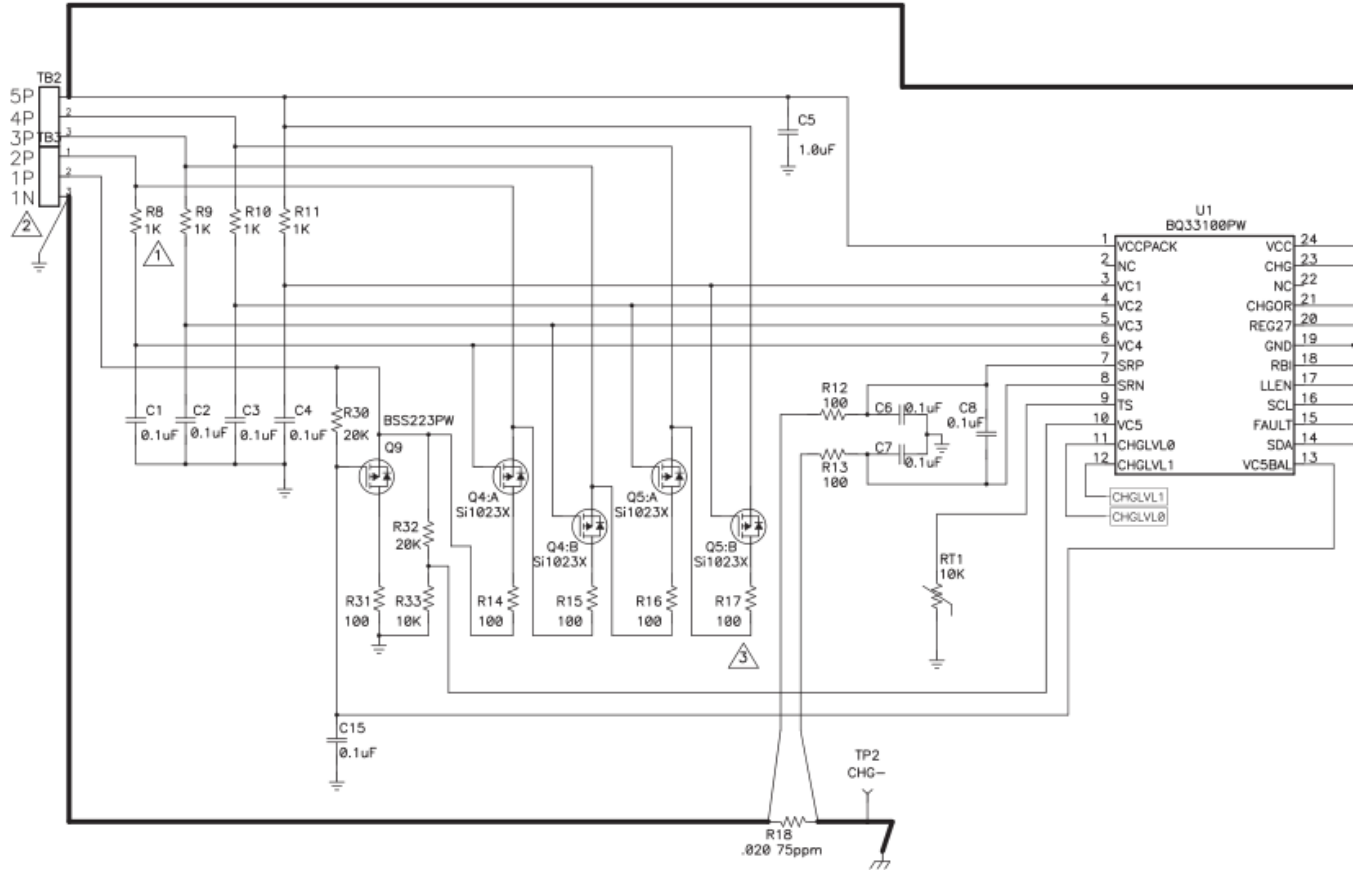


Figure 5: BQ33100 Active Charge Control Circuit

2.4 Charge Sources

Using the BQ33100 to manage the charging of the supercapacitor stack allowed

With the BQ33100 we are able to select any variety of ways to charge the supercapacitor module. On our test bench we used a DC Power supply to create the charge current. When the capacitor bank is connected and balanced with the aid of the circuit we

constructed around the BQ33100, it is a simple connection to supply the module with the necessary power to charge the supercapacitors.

Another option that we considered, but did not find time to investigate, was an AC110 Pigtail wire connected to an ACDC Power converter which could produce a satisfactory voltage and current for the supercapacitor module. With proper research, we believe an ACDC could be found that could act as a satisfactory source of power. We also preferred to use a DC Power supply for a power source as this was much easier to regulate and carefully ratchet up the allowed voltages and currents we let the module experience. This is however, something to be considered as an area of future design and testing.

3 Output Utilization

3.1 Single-Ended Primary-Inductor Converter

A Single-Ended Primary-Inductor Converter, or SEPIC, is the best converter to properly deliver power from the supercapacitor stack to an output load. The SEPIC can accept a wide range of input voltages that can be higher than, lower than, or equal to the desired output voltage. This converter is ideal to combat the linear decrease of voltage as the supercapacitor stack is discharged. In a SEPIC there is no DC path between the input and output. This feature is beneficial for applications that require the output to be disconnected from the input source when the circuit is in shutdown mode, such as the output power stage for a supercapacitor stack. The Linear Technology LT 3959 was chosen for the SEPIC feedback control loop due to its low input voltage once turned on.

3.2 LT3959: Compensated SEPIC Feedback Controller

The LT3959 is a wide input range, current mode, DC/DC controller chip capable of regulating either positive or negative output voltages from a single feedback pin. Its input range of 1.6V to 40V with 2.5V start-up voltage is what made the chip an ideal candidate for our application. These parameters refer to only what the LT3959 chip can handle; not to be confused with the parameters for which the converter circuit will operate under. Depending on which topology it is set up in the LT3959 can work as an inverting, boost or SEPIC converter.

3.3 SEPIC Topology

Figure 6 shows the LT3959 chip controlling a general SEPIC design topology. The SEPIC uses two inductors, L1A and L1B, which allow for step-up and step-down performance.

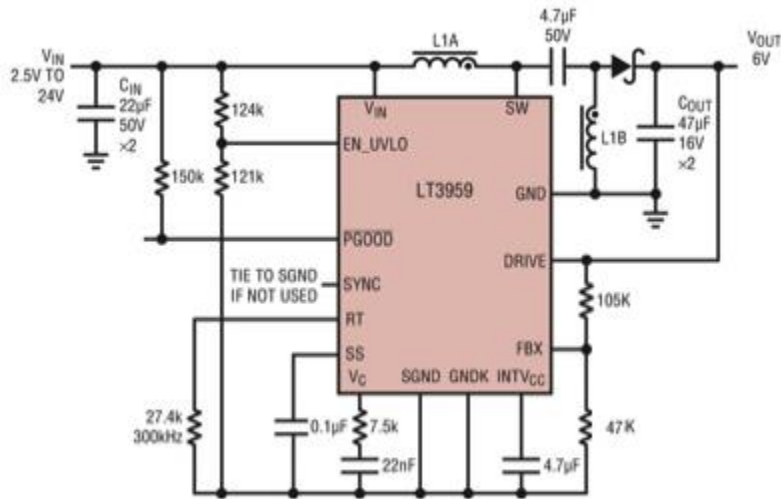


Figure 6: Single-ended primary-inductor converter with LT3959 feedback control

3.4 Calculations for SEPIC Design

Choosing the proper external components for a SEPIC requires understanding the equations explaining the converter's operation.

- Output voltage selection: The voltage divider created by resistors R1 and R2 in figure 4 is used to determine the output voltage provided from the converter.

$$V_{out} = 1 + \frac{R2}{R1}$$

$$V_{out} = 5V \quad R2 = 105k\Omega \quad R1 = 47k\Omega$$

- Conversion Ratio for Duty cycle: As the supercapacitor power module is used, its voltage will decrease. To compensate for this loss of input voltage the SEPIC will adjust its duty cycle to main a constant output voltage.

$$\frac{V_{out} + V_{diode}}{V_{in}} = \frac{D}{1 - D}$$

$$V_{out} = 5V \quad V_{diode} = 0.55V$$

- Maximum Duty Cycle: The minimum input voltage chosen for the SEPIC determines the maximum duty cycle achievable. The LT3959 compensated SEPIC designed for this project has a minimum input voltage of 2.5 volts, resulting in a maximum duty cycle of 69%.

$$D(max) = \frac{V_{out} + V_{diode}}{V_{in(min)} + V_{out} + V_{diode}} = \frac{5.1V + 0.55V}{2.5V + 5.1V + 0.55V} = 0.69$$

- Maximum Output Current Capability and Inductor Selection: As shown in the topology figure, the SEPIC converter contains two inductors which we call L1 and L2. The inductors can be independent but can also be on the same core since the voltages applied to L1 and L2 are identical throughout the switching cycle.

$$L1 = L2 = V_{in(min)} * 0.5 * \Delta I_{sw} * f_{sw} = 2.5V * 5A * 110kHz = 9 \mu H$$

- The current through L1 is the same as the input current. Considering that our proof of concept was to charge a phone through a micro-USB port, the value of one ampere was chosen for the output current. Ideally, the output power is equal to the input power which yields the following equation for maximum inductor currents:

$$I_{l1(max)} = I_{in(max)} = I_{out(max)} * \frac{D(max)}{1 - D(max)} = 1A * \frac{0.69}{1 - .69} = 226mA$$

$$I_{l2(max)} = I_{out(max)} = 1A$$

3.5 LTSPICE SEPIC Simulation

Before building the SEPIC the design was simulated using LTSPICE. The simulation schematic is shown in figure 7. A DC sweep from 2.5 volts to 8.1 volts resulted in a constant output voltage of 5.1 volts, resulting in a maximum efficiency of 63%. Having more supercapacitors in series would allow for higher stack voltages and greater maximum efficiencies due to the SEPIC stepping down the voltage for a longer period of time. The module in this project is capable of quickly switching between charging and discharging, allowing for high stack voltages to be maintained through frequent burst charging. Further modifications of the charge management circuit will allow for larger charging currents and shorter overall charge times.

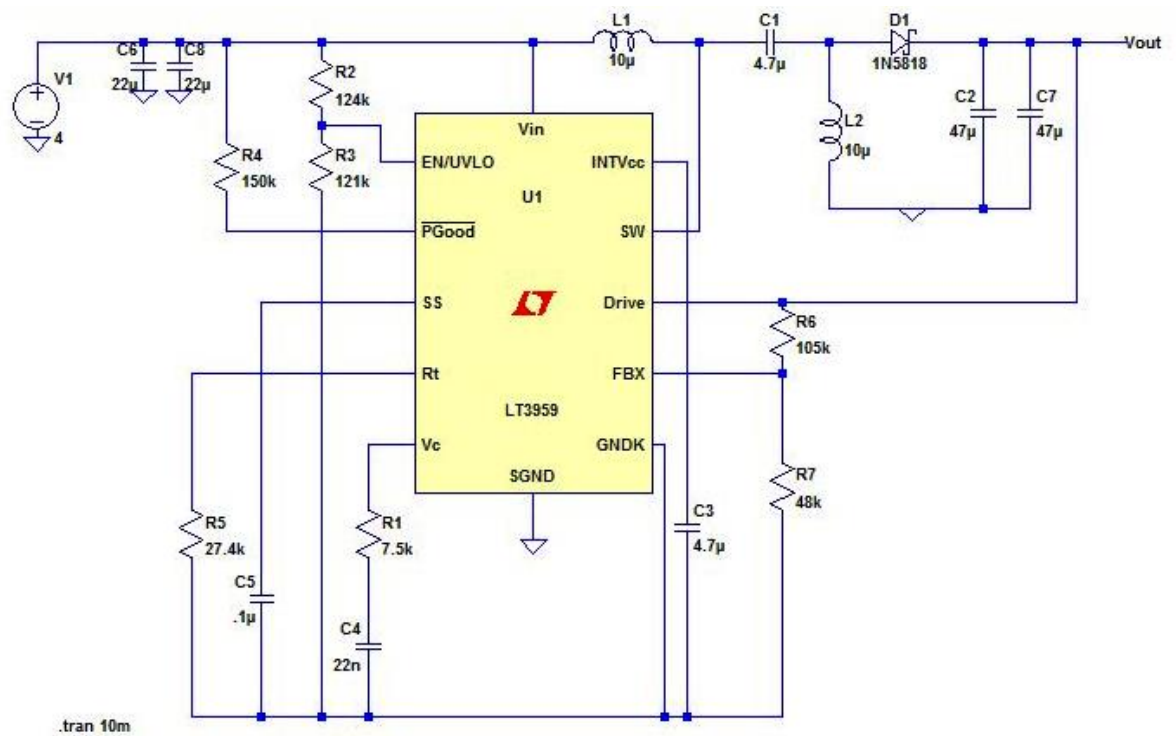


Figure 7: Schematic of SEPIC built on LTSPICE

3.6 Applications

This output converter is designed to output the appropriate voltage and current to charge a modern Micro-USB smartphone to demonstrate one way the power of our supercapacitor stack could be harnessed. Using the equations shown under “Calculation for SEPIC” the user can change the values to choose the proper components for specific applications. For example, by changing the values of R2 and R1, the user can change the output voltage as long as it remains within the limits of the SEPIC topology and L3959.

3.7 SEPIC Results

The physical design of the SEPIC circuit did not function properly when connected to the supercapacitor stack. Testing the converter with a wall-powered DC power source resulted in lower output voltages than expected with no output current. The construction of the circuit provided more soldering challenges than the charge management circuit. Multiple surface mount components had to be soldered to boards with leads attached, creating multiple fault points in the circuit if soldered improperly.

3.8 Boost Converter Topology

For the senior design presentation a boost converter was used to charge a cellphone battery because of the challenges faced with the SEPIC design. We choose to use the Linear Technology DC1853A; an evaluation board that uses the LT3959 chip to compensate a boost converter. Originally, the DC1853A had a 2 volt to 10 volt input voltage range and a predetermined 12 volt output. The output voltage of the DC1853A follows the equation:

$$V_{out} = 1 + \frac{R3}{R4}$$

$$V_{out} = 5V \quad R3 = 105k\Omega \quad R4 = 47k\Omega$$

Changing the values of R3 and R4 allows the output voltage to be changed to the designer's preference. Due to the challenges restricting the supercapacitor stack to three units, the total efficiency of the system is lower than the maximum theoretical efficiency noted in the LT3959 datasheet.

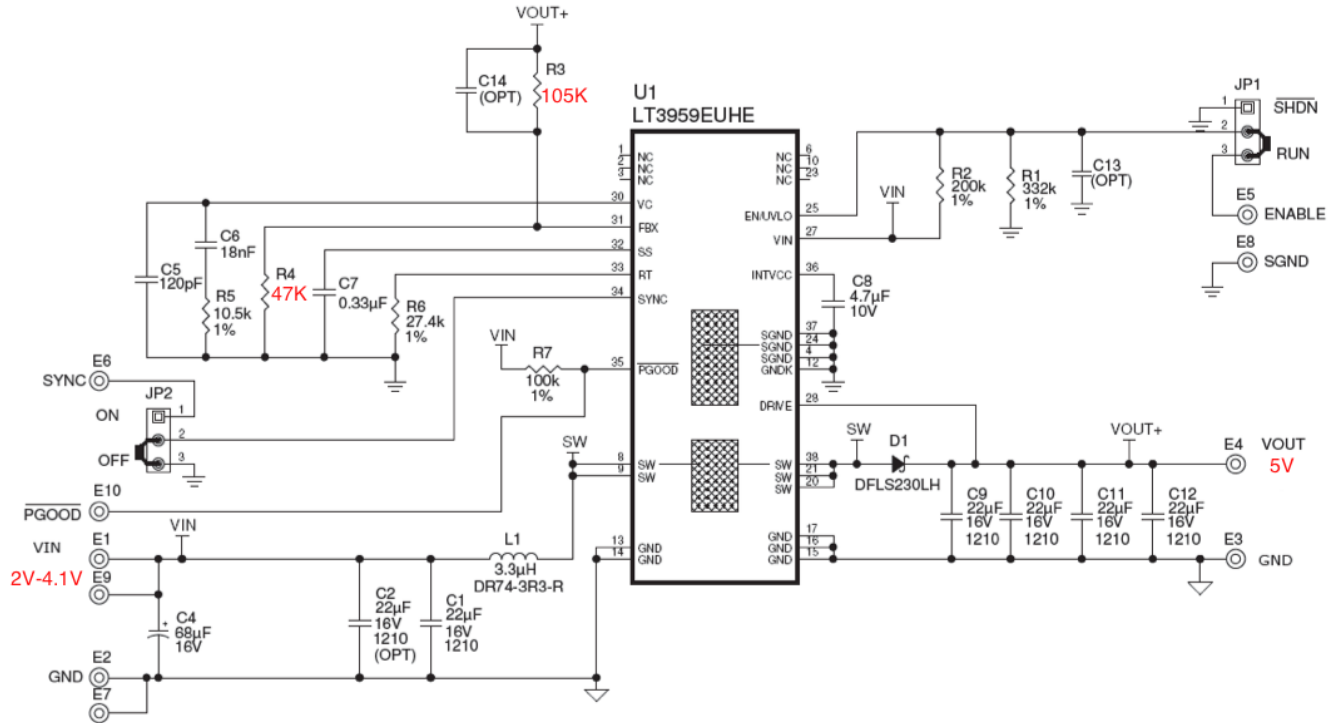


Figure 8: Schematic of altered boost converter (modifications labeled in red)

4 Supercapacitor Module Control

4.1 BQ33100 control abilities

The supercapacitor control chip we used allowed us to do a number of things. In turn it also created challenges and we had to prepare circuits and communicate with IC chips in ways we hadn't experienced before.

4.1.1 Communicating

The BQ33100 charge management has control lines that can communicate using an I²C protocol called SMBus. Using this, we have the ability to read various measurements from the IC chip and program our various specifications using the commands listed in the chip's datasheet.

4.1.2 Charging

Even though the supercapacitors were more regulated when being charged with the BQ33100 control circuit, we still charged our prototype circuit up slowly at first. This proved to be worthwhile when we found loose solder joints that were not allowing our circuit to function initially. It was a quick fix, but if full power had been put on the charging path there would have been a much higher chance that many of the components could have burned out.

4.1.3 Balancing

The MOSFET and resistor array connected to the stack is controlled directly by the BQ33100 chip, allowing active voltage balancing and leakage current monitoring. Active voltage balancing allows the supercapacitor stack to be charged safely and quickly, replacing the tedious task of manually monitoring each supercapacitor's cell voltage.

4.2 Output Regulation Options

Regulating the output voltage and current from the supercapacitor stack depends on the application. For testing and to prove the concepts of the supercapacitor module, a simple USB port was chosen to be the power output, and a test phone was charged using its standard charge cable connected to the module through the USB.

This required a voltage regulator to ensure that the USB terminal was consistently supplied with the voltage required to charge the phone and the appropriate amount of current for the battery to safely charge.

4.3 External Circuitry

4.3.1 Layout

Most of the layouts were derived from the datasheets of the main chips used in our designs. Many of these datasheets contained example diagrams that allowed the team to design circuits that would achieve our initial goals. The layout of various components dictated the performance and abilities of the supercapacitor module.

4.3.2 Considerations

Multiple PCBs to create a module allows for a number of advantages but also created challenges. We would have to house the module in a larger case to accommodate the control circuitry. We also intended to keep the supercapacitors isolated from the circuitry in order to prevent either from damaging the other.

5 Testing and Analysis

5.1 Charge Management Testing

Initial charge testing began before the BQ33100 circuit was completed. First we attempted connecting the stack directly to a 12 volt voltage driven power supply. This power supply would not charge the supercapacitors if they were fully discharged as they appear as a virtual short to the power supply's short circuit protection monitor, causing no current to flow and no charge to accumulate inside the supercapacitors. Initially overcoming this problem involved attaching a charged battery pack to the supercapacitor stack, draining the batteries into the stack to provide enough voltage to overcome the virtual short. This workaround was acceptable for a short time until multiple battery cells ruptured from the resulting high currents when the supercapacitor stack was connected directly to the battery pack.

Once the BQ33100 charging circuit was laid out on the breadboard, proper charging of the supercapacitor stack was possible. Because we were unable to unseal the factory settings of the chip we were unable to utilize the capacitors in a stack of our desired amount. The factory settings were for a stack of three supercapacitors. As Texas Instruments thus far has been resistant to share these private codes with us, we have been unable to run all of the tests we wanted.

5.2 Communicating with the BQ33100

Communicating with the BQ33100 was the first stage in charging our supercapacitor stack. The BQ33100 requires an I²C device to connect as a master to the BQ33100. An Arduino Uno microcontroller board allowed us to send and receive messages with the BQ33100. The

standard Arduino Wire.h library offers I²C functionality and the Arduino Cookbook offered basic instructions for that library. We found this method to be inefficient and challenging, especially considering the long commands needed to be given to the BQ33100. Further research located a custom library developed by a member of the Arduino community designed specifically for I²C communication. This library offered more succinct commands, shortening instructions from multiple lines of code down to a single line.

5.3 Charging a mobile phone

For our proof of concept we chose to test our supercapacitor stack using it to charge a mobile phone. By charging the phone through SEPIC in the output of the stack we can maximize the charge of the supercapacitors to our advantage. The phone we decided to use was called the “Samsung Smiley” and we decided to charge it with 5.1 Volts and 1 Ampere.

We chose to use a USB port, as opposed to the micro USB adapter that plugs directly to the phone, to increase the universality of our charger. With a USB port, you can charge any phone as long as you have its USB cable and the voltage and current values are compatible. A type A USB port usually has four pins: voltage high, info 1, info 2, and voltage low. For our purposes we are only using the first and last pins since we only need to charge the battery and are not transferring any data from the phone. We connect the voltage high pin to the output voltage of the SEPIC and the voltage low pin is connected to the ground of the SEPIC. After doing this, one is ready to charge their mobile device. However, we were not able to get the physical design of the SEPIC to work properly.

We tested the SEPIC using a DC power source our results showed output voltages and essentially no output current. We believe that this malfunction was caused by possible fault points while soldering our components—multiple surface mount components that required the use of soldered to boards with leads attached proved to be bigger challenge than building the charge management circuit.

Due to lack of time we were not able to fix this problem. In hindsight, we were warned by one of our advisors of the many challenges of building our own converter.

For our presentation we used a Boost converter called the DC1853A mainly because it used the same LT3959 controller chip. As mentioned earlier the DC1853A had a 2-10V input range with a 12V output initially but was modified to a 5.1V output. This was a very inefficient model because we could only use our supercapacitor stack at a minimum charge given that it is a “step up” converter leaving an small allowed input voltage between 2V - 5.1 V. When we plugged our cellphone into the USB cable we were able to charge the phone with no interference. This test, though not efficient, served to prove that we could charge a phone using the power module without damaging it. Due to the failed attempts with the SEPIC we were not able to maximize the usage of the supercapacitors and to test how long the module could charge the phone for. We are positive that this problem is by no mean unsolvable and that will not be an obstacle for our future work.

6 Prototyping

We wanted to create a working prototype to validate the simplicity and effectiveness of our designs. This was some of the most challenging work, but also some of the most enjoyable. Our work and results are below.

6.1 Containment and Support

At the beginning, we had planned on having a container to encase the supercapacitors in order to protect them. As we realized the amount of circuitry we were going to surround the module it became clear that much of this should also be encased to ensure the durability of our module. We also had to keep in mind heat considerations of the various components of our module and how any device they are in must allow sufficient airflow to avoid overheating any components.

We had a temporary box in the beginning of the year, but we ordered a TAP plastics box to our specifications to hold the capacitors. This allowed us to stop spending time ensuring that the box was working. The TAP plastics box is clear and is sized to be nearly the same size at the supercapacitors connected in series. We have wires leading out of it to allow our control circuitry to access the necessary nodes of our capacitor stack.

To contain the entirety of our supercapacitor module we used a Pelican Case. Using assorted pieces of breakout foam, we were able to successfully secure the TAP plastics box and the prototype circuit boards inside the case. If one were to take out some of the foam, there would be plenty of space for more components to be added in order to expand the capabilities of our supercapacitor module.

We did some research and brainstorming into 3D printing support materials to secure the supercapacitors and the various boards we want to include within our module. Due to our limited ability to design 3D parts in mechanical CAD programs, a sleek and ideal case was not viable for our project. This has potential for future development and designs could be created to fit a container of any desired size.

6.2 Wiring and Connecting Components

Securely connecting the capacitors was a major consideration from the beginning. We used ring terminals on the screw posts at the ends of the capacitors to connect them to the charge circuitry.

6.3 Prototyping Boards

Prototyping boards have the components soldered on and are much slimmer than breadboards when a circuit is completed. These allow for much more convenient transportation of the module, but proved to be a considerable challenge to manufacture without any mistakes. Part of the issue here was the unreliability of certain IC chips when soldered onto breakout boards.

6.3.1 Wire Routing

In order to correctly map out our prototyping boards we had to keep a lot of important reference materials nearby. We had to keep the BQ33100 datasheet printout with the control circuit to ensure we included all necessary components and paths. Before soldering critical

components, we would focus on the jump wires. This allowed us to validate our physical representation of the circuits we designed without exposing our more expensive components to undue risk. In figure 9 the complexity of the BQ33100 charge management circuit is evident.

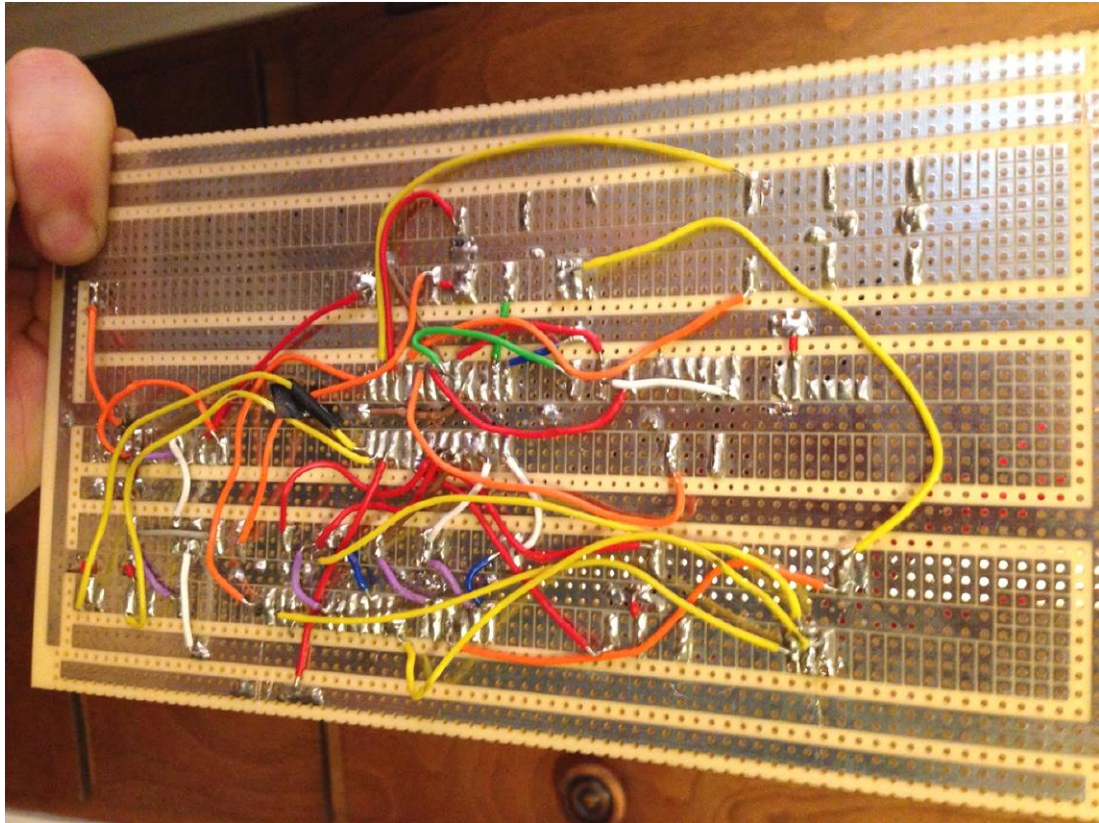


Figure 9: Underside of BQ33100-based charge management circuit

6.3.2 Soldering

Soldering is challenging when creating a prototype board of this complexity. When testing the circuit we quickly found which solder joints were broken based on where the circuit was failing. Only once did this problem burnout a board and we were able to catch it before any other components could be damaged.

Eventually, we found a method that worked effectively for ensuring secure solder joints on our boards. We would apply flux to the lead first, and then use the iron to lay solder down on the lead. This allowed us to prevent dry solder sockets from forming and enabled us to create solder joints more quickly once the components were inserted in the board.

6.3.3 IC chips and Breakout boards

Many of the sample chips used were intended for use in automated PCB assembly. This created a hurdle when testing the circuitry of the supercapacitor module. We had no way to insert these components into a breadboard or solder them to one of our protoboards. This required a number of breakout boards to complete the supercapacitor module board. Figure 10 shows the LT3959 soldered to a breakout board before attaching leads to the pin holes.

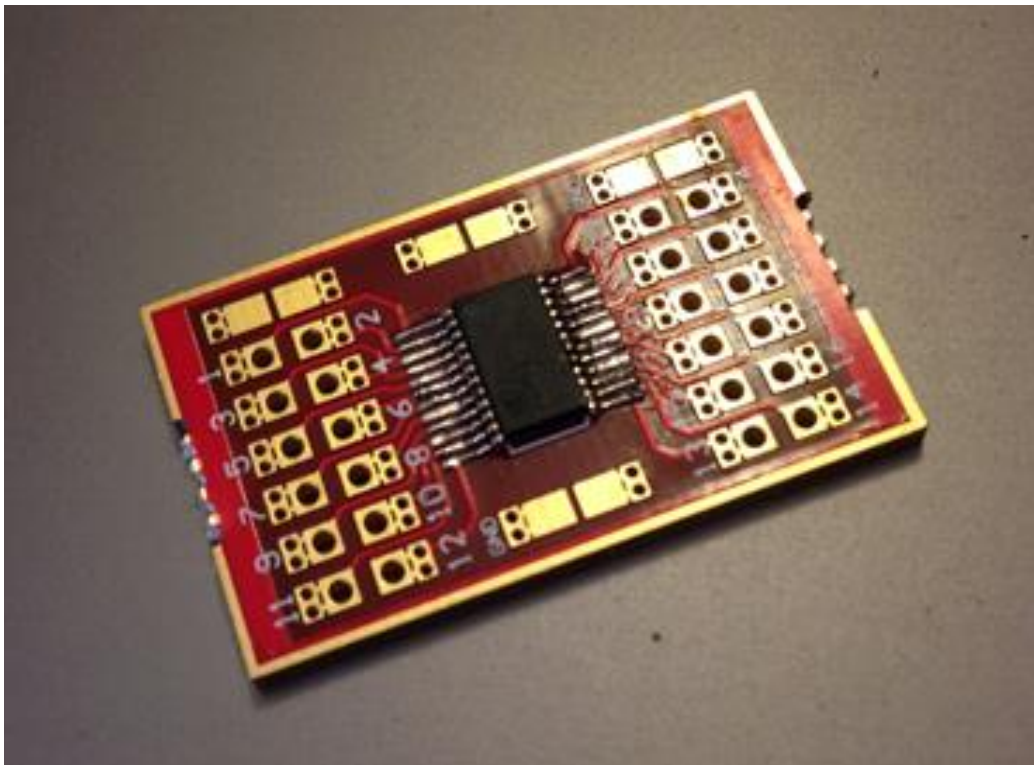


Figure 10: Breakout board for LT3959 Controller

6.4 Cost

In its entirety, the cost of this design project accumulates to approximately 635 dollars. For a more a detailed account of our spending can be seen in the bill of materials located in Appendix A. when considering mass production, we expect that the cost of fabrication will drop to 350 dollars. The major expenses of our project include the Maxwell Capacitors, MOSFETS, IC chip Sockets, and the containers of our module. Upon mass production we would not use the expensive pelican case and custom made plastic box from Tap plastics. Even if we did use a custom made container from TAP plastics again, a plastic box would cost fewer than 10 dollars when bought in bulk. As for the rest of the major components, Mouser Electronics's website shows a decrease of at least 30 percent in cost in each of the components with the purchase of 200. As a group we are content with 350 cost of fabrication because it is still competitive with Maxwell current power module with six supercapacitors priced at 595 dollars.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Summary

This project has given our team insight into power circuitry design as well as general project management skills. Brainstorming together and having different pairs of eyes able to analyze issues showed us how to play off of each other's strengths to benefit the team. Whenever a new obstacle appeared, our team was able to overcome it through determination and research. Working in a team designing electronics is perfect practice for industry work in a design position, and has taught us skills that will make us better engineers in the real world.

7.2 Ethical Analysis

7.2.1 Analysis Introduction

An inexpensive and efficient supercapacitor energy management system could bring supercapacitors to the front of the energy storage market. Understanding how this device will impact different demographics of people is important to the research and development of an effective, functional, and safe product. This report will analyze team, design, and social aspects of the project and explain how to take the ethical concerns of the stakeholders involved in each aspect into account.

7.2.2 Energy Storage Ethical Issues and Stakeholders

The overarching ethical issue lies in the proper control of the energy being stored to ensure safe operation both for users and devices. Our project has two main ethical

stakeholders: the design engineers creating products with our module and the end users of those products.

The design engineers will need technical information regarding our module to effectively and safely integrate it into a product. Our interaction with end users is minimal since our module will be used to power numerous applications designed by others. This limits our ability to give important safety information to the end users, making easily comprehensible safety diagrams a necessity.

Specific ethical situations in the categories of team and organization, project design, and social interaction are cited below in figures 11 through 13, respectively:

Concern	Stakeholders Directly Involved	Strategy
-Ensure team members are contribute equally	-Senior Design team members	-Create and follow Gantt Chart to divide up responsibilities and set project goals
-Enforce documentation of research and resources used	-Senior Design team members	-Document resources explaining their origin and purpose
-Monitor external information to prevent copyright breaches	-Senior Design team members -Owners of external work	-Cite used documents (app notes, design tips, etc.) clearly explaining what was used
-Cultivate an understanding of all the processes incorporated in the project	-Senior Design team members	-Document specific tasks each member performs -Meet and ensure all members are at the same level of comprehension
-Meet Santa Clara University requirements for the Senior Design Project	-Senior Design team members -SCU advisor	-Schedule team meetings with the advisor to keep all parties informed and the project on track

Figure 11: Team and organizational issues

Concern	Stakeholders Directly Involved	Strategy
-Ensure the safety of those interacting with the capacitors and module	-Design engineers -Senior Design team members	-Research and incorporate proper grounding technics for high power devices into the module
-Controlling input and output current to allow for a wide range of use	-Design engineers	-Research DC-DC conversion for output -Utilize microcontrollers (MSP430, Arduino) to control charging current
-Properly balance array cells during charging and discharging	-Design engineers	-Design parallel passive balancing circuitry -Research active balancing using transistor technology
-Prevent electrical issues due to improper component choice	-Design engineers -Senior Design team members	-Certify all parts are capable of handling the high power and currents being used

Figure 12: Project design issues

Concern	Stakeholders Directly Involved	Strategy
-Protect the health of anyone interacting with the module and capacitors	-Design engineers -End users -Senior Design team members	-Warn users with diagrams -Integrate emergency shutoff -Ensure designers are trained to handle high power devices
- Shield attached electronics from electrical mishaps	-Design engineers -End users	-Implement electrical safety features into the module (current monitoring, etc.)
-Prevent improper use of the module in applications	-Design engineers -End users	-Clearly present device specifications and limitations

Figure 13: Social issues

7.3 Future Work

The work we completed this year has nearly infinite options for more experimentation. With this final report we prepared the research and designs we used to create our supercapacitor module in the hopes that other electrical engineering students can continue the research and design experimentation we have started with this project. This would allow others to expand on the research we've done, and cultivate more opportunities for this alternative energy module that we designed.

Enabling our power module to discharge in different ways is as simple as creating a new output converter. The numerous options available and different purposes the module could be modified to work with are enough to create numerous other projects, further expanding the tested possibilities for supercapacitors as an energy storage medium.

The reason we went to Dr. Healy as an advisor was due to his experience in photovoltaic systems. Although we did not have the opportunity to use photovoltaics as our charging source there is huge potential for supercapacitors and photovoltaic systems working in conjunction.

7.4 Lessons Learned

We all learned an incredible amount this year. All of us who came into the project and quickly found different strengths developed in past classes and work experience. We learned enough to become mini experts in regards to supercapacitors, but the most meaningful lessons came through team management, and finding a way to get things done despite the distractions of work, classes and life as college seniors.

As a team of three we found it difficult to be able to meet all together due to school and outside obligations. Overcoming this challenge required the use of technology; email and shared documents were essential to the continuation of work between team members. This solution

introduced the problem of keeping team members in sync with the proper files to be worked on. Downloading files to a computer removes the ability to share updates automatically, requiring constant communication to ensure team members are not left behind.

We also all developed our ability to teach our peers throughout the project. With each of our expertise and a number of tasks we all had to do on the project, we were able to teach each other and all achieve the same level of competence and comprehension. Some of us have had previous experience with tutoring or coaching, but helping a peer with aspects of electrical engineering can often be a very different endeavor. In addition to sharing our knowledge within the team we were able to assist other senior design teams with questions pertaining to energy storage and supercapacitors.

Our advisors and the administration did a very effective job to the best of their abilities. Picking a newer technology made it tricky for many of the professors in the electrical engineering department to give us much support in regards to making our circuitry work at times. As the project progressed, the authors realized this wasn't much of an issue, as the advisors were there more for administrative support and sending students in the right direction to solve problems on their own.

The presentation itself offered countless lessons when viewing the audience. Certain judges and viewers were extremely uninterested until going over circuit diagrams, while others reacted when component and boards were being demonstrated. Even in the short time we were speaking we improved in our ability to engage the audience. Once comfortable, and beginning to discuss the more exciting aspects of our project, it became much easier to engage all of the audience members and spread our enthusiasm for supercapacitors and power circuitry. This was a lasting lesson when considering future presentations that will take place in our future careers.

References

- Tecate Group website - Supercapacitor frequently asked questions
- Arduino Cookbook by Michael Margolis ISBN-13: **978-1449313876**
- FC Library website: <http://www.dsscircuits.com/index.php/articles/66-arduino-i2c-master-library#comment-612>
- BQ33100 Data sheet: <http://www.ti.com/lit/ds/symlink/bq33100.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A: Bill of Materials

Product	Company	Price(USD)	Quantity	Total Price
Rectifiers 50V 1A	Mouser	0.194	10	1.94
MOSFET N CHANNEL	Mouser	0.66	4	2.64
Voltage Reference Adj Shunt	Mouser	0.39	4	1.56
MOSFET 180 A 150V 0.01 Ohms Rds	Mouser	10.77	4	43.08
RECTIFIER 200 VOLT 150 A	Mouser	6.74	4	26.96
MOSFET N-CH 30V .1A SOT416	Mouser	0.259	10	2.59
BJT NPN 32V 2A	Mouser	0.7	4	2.8
MOSFET Duap P-CH 20 V 1.2 Ohms @ 4.5V	Mouser	0.34	25	8.5
Thermistors NTC 10K Ohm 1%	Mouser	2.25	4	9
MOSFET	Mouser	0.252	10	2.52
Metal Film Resistors(M.F.R)-Through hole 1/4@ 20K	Mouser	0.06	4	0.24
MFR-TH 1/4 WATT 100 Ohm	Mouser	0.06	20	1.2
M.F.R -Through Hole 1/4 200 ohm 1% 201 Ohm1%	Mouser	0.06	6	0.36
M.F.R -Through Hole 8.2 ohm 1% 100 PPM	Mouser	0.06	4	0.24
M.F.R -Through Hole 1/4W 7.5 ohm 1%	Mouser	0.06	2	0.12
Carbon Film Resistors-Thorough Hole 3Mohms 0.05	Mouser	0.1	2	0.2
Metal Film Resistors-Through Hole 30K 1% 100 PPM	Mouser	0.06	2	0.12
M.F.R -Through Hole 1/4@ 9.31K ohm 1%	Mouser	0.06	2	0.12
M.F.R -Through hole 125KOhms 1% 50 PPM	Mouser	0.11	2	0.22
Aluminum Electrolytic Capacitors-Leaded 1.0 UF 50V	Mouser	0.1	16	1.6
Aluminum Organic Polymer Cap 20 V 100uF 20%	Mouser	1.09	4	4.36
Aluminum Electrolytic Capcitors-Leaded 1.0UF 450V	Mouser	0.42	4	1.68
Carbon Film Resistors-Through Hole 1.5 A 0Ohms	Mouser	0.06	4	0.24
M.F.R-Thorough Hole 57.6Kohms 1% 50 PPM	Mouser	0.14	3	0.42
Wirewound Resistors-Through Hole 10ohms 5% Tol	Mouser	1.09	4	4.36
IC & Component Sockets 24P SSOP IC to Dip Adapter	Mouser	16.1	1	16.1
BQ33100	Texas Instruments	4.05	4	16.2
BCAP3000	Maxwell	65.89	5	329.45
LT3959IUHE#PBF chip	Linear Technology	5.03	1	5.03
DC1853A LT3539 Demoboard	Linear Technology	150	1	150
Total		633.85		

Appendix B: List of Figures

Figure 1: Energy vs. power density of energy storage devices (www.maxwell.com)

Figure 2: Charge and discharge patterns for supercapacitors and batteries

Image taken from:

www.tecategroup.com

Figure 3: Supercapacitor power module block diagram

Figure 4: Table of supercapacitor voltage, capacitance, and total energy in series

Figure 5: BQ33100 Active Charge Control Circuit

Image taken from:

<http://www.ti.com/lit/ds/symlink/bq33100.pdf>

Figure 6: Single-ended primary-inductor converter with LT3959 feedback control

Taken from:

www.linear.com

<http://cds.linear.com/docs/en/datasheet/3959fa.pdf>

Figure 7: Schematic of SEPIC built on LTSPICE

Figure 8: Schematic of altered boost converter

Unmodified image taken from:

www.linear.com

<http://cds.linear.com/docs/en/demo-board-manual/dc1853af.pdf>

Figure 9: Bottom of a prototype board demonstrating the wire mapping

Figure 10: Breakout board for LT3959 Controller

Figure 11: Team and organizational issues

Figure 12: Project design issues

Figure 13: Social issues

Appendix C: List of Abbreviations and Technical terms

CAD: Computer Aided Design software. Often used in engineering purposes to create components and parts

ECAD: Engineering Computer Aided Design software tailored to electrical purposes

SEPIC: Single-Ended Primary-Inductor Converter. A converter topology similar to buck-boost but with a non-inverting output.

ACDC (Converter): Alternating Current to Direct Current Converter. Useful for

Pigtail: A three prong standard electrical plug that often has a few feet of standard power cord which ends in three wires. Typically used as a replacement cord, but useful for project purposes as well

IC (Chip): Integrated Circuit chip. A small chip intended for assembly on a PCB board.

Appendix D - Data Sheets Excerpts: K2 Series Ultra/Supercapacitors made by Maxwell

DATASHEET		K2 SERIES ULTRACAPACITORS	
FEATURES AND BENEFITS*		TYPICAL APPLICATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Up to 1,000,000 duty cycles or 10 year DC life > High power density > 650F to 3,000F capacitance range > Threaded terminals or laser-weldable posts 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Automotive subsystems > Wind turbine pitch control > Hybrid vehicles > Rail > Heavy industrial equipment > UPS & telecom systems 	
			

Part Description	Dimensions (mm)		
	L (±0.3mm)	D1 (±0.2mm)	D2 (±0.7mm)
BCAP3000 P270 K04/05	138	60.4	60.7

POWER & ENERGY	BCAP3000
Usable Specific Power, P_d^4	5,900 W/kg
Impedance Match Specific Power, P_{max}^5	12,000 W/kg
Specific Energy, E_{max}^6	6.0 Wh/kg
Stored Energy, $E_{stored}^{7,11}$	3.04 Wh
SAFETY	
Short Circuit Current, typical (Current possible with short circuit from rated voltage. Do not use as an operating current.)	9,300 A
Certifications	UL810a, RoHS

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

ELECTRICAL	BCAP3000
Rated Capacitance ¹	3,000 F
Minimum Capacitance, initial ¹	3,000 F
Maximum Capacitance, initial ¹	3,600 F
Maximum ESR _{DC} , initial ¹	0.29 mΩ
Test Current for Capacitance and ESR _{DC} ¹	100 A
Rated Voltage	2.70 V
Absolute Maximum Voltage ²	2.85 V
Absolute Maximum Current	1900 A
Leakage Current at 25°C, maximum ³	5.2 mA
TEMPERATURE	
Operating temperature (Cell case temperature)	
Minimum	-40°C
Maximum	65°C
Storage temperature (Stored uncharged)	
Minimum	-40°C
Maximum	70°C
PHYSICAL	
Mass, typical	510 g
Terminals	Threaded or Weldable
Maximum Terminal Torque (K04)	14 Nm
Vibration Specification	ISO 16750, Table 14
Shock Specification	SAE J2464

TYPICAL CHARACTERISTIC

THERMAL CHARACTERISTICS	
Thermal Resistance ($R_{\theta j-c}$, Case to Ambient), typical ⁸	3.2°C/W
Thermal Capacitance (C_{th}), typical ⁸	600 J/°C
Maximum Continuous Current ($\Delta T = 15^\circ C$) ⁸	130 A _{RMS}
Maximum Continuous Current ($\Delta T = 40^\circ C$) ⁸	210 A _{RMS}
LIFE	
DC Life at High Temperature ¹ (held continuously at Rated Voltage and Maximum Operating Temperature)	1,500 hours
Capacitance Change (% decrease from minimum initial value)	20%
ESR Change (% increase from maximum initial value)	100%
Projected DC Life at 25°C ¹ (held continuously at Rated Voltage)	10 years
Capacitance Change (% decrease from minimum initial value)	20%
ESR Change (% increase from maximum initial value)	100%
Projected Cycle Life at 25°C ^{1, 9, 10}	1,000,000 cycles
Capacitance Change (% decrease from minimum initial value)	20%

Appendix D Continued - Data Sheets Excerpts: BQ33100 Capacitor Manager made by TI

DESCRIPTION

The Texas Instruments bq33100 Super Capacitor Manager is a fully integrated, single-chip, solution that provides a rich array of features for managing, charge control, monitoring, and protection, for either 2, 3, 4 or 5 series Super Capacitors with individual capacitor monitoring and balancing or up to 9 series capacitors with only the stack voltage being measured. With a small footprint of 7.8 x 6.4 mm in a compact 24-pin TSSOP package, the bq33100 maximizes functionality and safety while dramatically increasing ease of use and cutting the solution cost and size for Super Capacitor applications.

Using its integrated high-performance analog peripherals, the bq33100 measures and maintains an accurate record of available capacitance, state-of-health, voltage, current, temperature, and other critical parameters in Super Capacitors, and reports the information to the system host controller over a 2-wire SMBus 1.1 compatible interface.

The bq33100 provides firmware controlled protection on overvoltage, overtemperature, and overcharge along with hardware controlled protection for overcurrent in discharge and short circuit protection during charge and discharge.

FEATURES

- **Fully Integrated 2, 3, 4 and 5 Series Super Capacitor Manager**
- **Can Be Used With Up To 9 Series Capacitors Without Individual Integrated Capacitor Monitoring & Balancing**
- **Active Capacitor Voltage Balancing**
 - **Prevents Super Capacitor Overvoltage during Charging**
- **and Capacitor Health Monitoring**
 - **Capacitance Learning**
 - **ESR Measurement**
 - **Operation Status**
 - **State of Charge**
 - **State of Health**
 - **Charging Voltage and Current Reports**
 - **Safety Alerts with Optional Pin Indication**
- **Integrated Protection Monitoring and Control**
 - **Over Voltage**
 - **Short Circuit**
 - **Excessive Temperature**
 - **Excessive Capacitor Leakage**
- **2 Wire SMBus Serial Communications**
- **High-Accuracy 16-Bit Delta-Sigma ADC With a 16-Channel Multiplexer for Measurement**
 - **Used for Voltage, Current and Temperature**
- **Low Power Consumption**
 - **<450uA in Normal Operating Mode**
 - **<1uA in Shutdown Mode**
- **Wide Operating Temperature: -40°C to +85°C**

<http://www.ti.com/lit/ds/symlink/bq33100.pdf>



LT3959

Wide Input Voltage Range
Boost/SEPIC/Inverting Converter
with 6A, 40V Switch

FEATURES

- Wide V_{IN} Range: 1.6V (2.5V Start-Up) to 40V
- Positive or Negative Output Voltage Programming with a Single Feedback Pin
- \overline{PGOOD} Output Voltage Status Report
- Internal 6A/40V Power Switch
- Programmable Soft-Start
- Programmable Operating Frequency (100kHz to 1MHz) with One External Resistor
- Synchronizable to an External Clock
- Low Shutdown Current $< 1\mu A$
- $INTV_{CC}$ Regulator Supplied from V_{IN} or DRIVE
- Programmable Input Undervoltage Lockout with Hysteresis
- Thermally Enhanced QFN (5mm \times 6mm) and TSSOP Packages

APPLICATIONS

- Automotive
- Telecom
- Industrial

DESCRIPTION

The LT[®]3959 is a wide input range, current mode, DC/DC controller which is capable of regulating either positive or negative output voltages from a single feedback pin. It can be configured as a boost, SEPIC or inverting converter.

It features an internal low side N-channel MOSFET rated for 6A at 40V and driven from an internal regulated supply provided from V_{IN} or DRIVE. The fixed frequency, current-mode architecture results in stable operation over a wide range of supply and output voltages. The operating frequency of LT3959 can be set over a 100kHz to 1MHz range with an external resistor, or can be synchronized to an external clock using the SYNC pin.

The LT3959 features soft-start and frequency foldback functions to limit inductor current during start-up and output short-circuit. A window comparator on the FBX pin reports via the \overline{PGOOD} pin, providing output voltage status indication.

LT, LT, LTC, LTM, Linear Technology and the Linear logo are registered trademarks and ThinSOT are trademarks of Linear Technology Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Protected by U.S. Patents, including 7825665.

ABSOLUTE MAXIMUM RATINGS (Note 1)

V_{IN}	40V	V_C, SS	3V
EN/UVLO (Note 2)	40V	RT	1.5V
DRIVE	40V	GND, GNDK to SGND	$\pm 0.3V$
\overline{PGOOD}	40V	FBX	-3V to 3V
SW	40V	Operating Junction Temperature Range (Note 3)	
$INTV_{CC}$	8V	LT3959E/LT3959I	-40°C to 125°C
SYNC	8V	Storage Temperature Range	-65°C to 125°C