Application Report
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Multi-Frequency Range and Tunable DCO on MSP432P4xx Microcontrollers

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ABSTRACT

Many families of the ultra-low-power MSP microcontrollers use a DCO-based system to generate an internal high-frequency source for the Clock System.

In the implementations found on some earlier MSP430 families, the DCO is calibrated for only a few common clock frequencies over the full operating frequency range. This might not provide sufficient clock flexibility for certain applications with nonstandard but stringent clock requirements.

Some more flexible DCO variants such as on MSP430F2xx families offer some calibration capability to tune to a frequency different from the preset ones. But it is a big challenge to meet this requirement without losing the DCO clock accuracy, and the calibration procedure needs to be done at production which can be costly both in resources and test time.

Inability to easily tune to any desirable frequency is the main drawback of the traditional DCO approach when compared to an FLL-based approach. Taking the best of both worlds to combine the benefits of traditional DCO and FLL, the DCO on MSP432P4xx family of devices offers features like multiple frequency ranges and frequency tuning that meet the diverse clocking requirements of application without losing clock accuracy.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

1 Comparison Between DCO and FLL

The DCO used on the MSP430 family of devices is factory calibrated to only a few common frequencies that may not match the diverse clock frequency requirements of an application. Also it could be challenging to get the desired clock accuracy even when the DCO is calibrated to the target frequency by the application. The DCO clock frequency drifts significantly with change in temperature and supply voltage, but the DCO clock has low clock jitter.

The FLL used on MSP430 family of devices on the other hand offers flexibility to achieve any desired frequency over the full operating frequency range but has significant clock cycle-to-cycle period jitter. Because the FLL is a self-regulating frequency loop based on an accurate reference clock, its output is stable and tolerant to any change in temperature or supply voltage.

The DCO available on MSP432P4xx family of devices combines the best of both worlds and offers accurate clock through tuning the DCO to any desired frequency over the entire operating frequency range of 1 to 48 MHz. This DCO also shows very low clock jitter and very low clock frequency drift upon varying temperature or supply voltage conditions in the application.

2 Overview of DCO on MSP432P4xx Microcontrollers

The digitally controlled oscillator (DCO) is an R-C type internal oscillator that can operate with an internal or external resistor. The maximum operating frequency of MSP432P4xx family of devices is 48 MHz. The DCO on MSP432P4xx family of devices can generate clock frequencies in the range of 0.98 MHz to 52 MHz. This full range is divided into six individual frequency ranges, and the DCO is factory calibrated to the center value of each of these frequency ranges. It is possible to tune the DCO to achieve a frequency that is different than the center frequency in any of the frequency ranges. Figure 1 shows the high-level functional block diagram of the DCO, and the following sections explain the different features of the DCO.

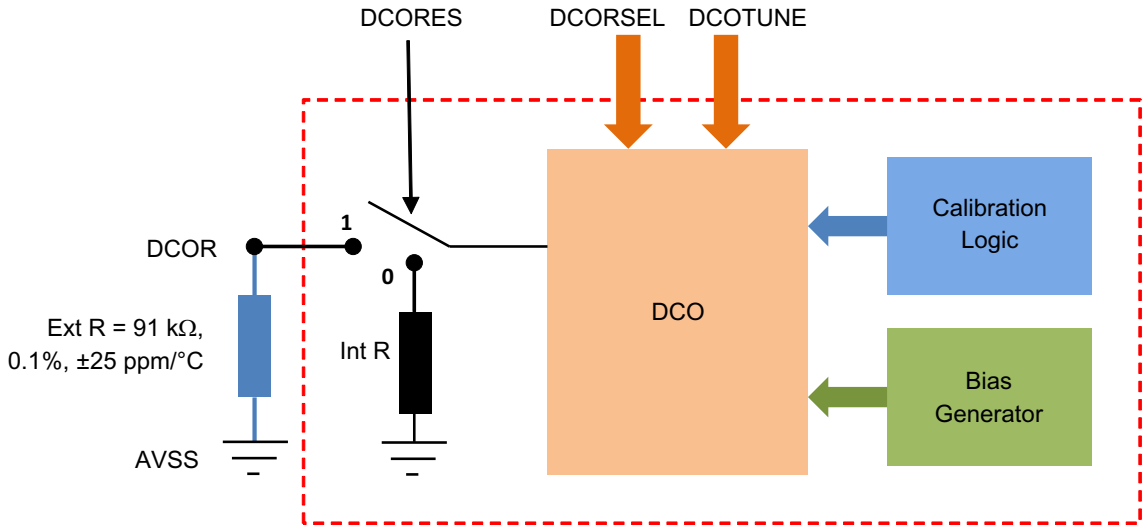

Figure 1. DCO High-Level Functional Block Diagram

3 DCO Operating Modes

The DCO can be configured to operate either in internal resistor mode or in external resistor mode. This configuration is selected through the DCORES bit in the CSCTL0 register of the Clock System. After power up or any hard reset, the DCO is configured by default in internal resistor mode. In internal resistor mode, the DCO operates based on a resistor that is implemented internal to the microcontroller. No external components are required to operate the DCO in internal resistor mode.

The DCO can be configured in external resistor mode by programming DCORES bit to 1. The application must change the DCO configuration between internal resistor and external resistor modes only when the DCO is in the default frequency range (DCORSEL = 1). Connect a 91-kΩ 0.1% ±25-ppm/°C resistor at the DCOR pin to AVSS of the microcontroller to operate the DCO in external resistor mode.

The DCO clock stability is high during temperature variations when the DCO operates in external resistor mode as compared to internal resistor mode. The maximum DCO clock frequency drift with temperature in external resistor mode is ±40 ppm/°C and for internal resistor mode is ±250 ppm/°C. Therefore, TI recommends using the DCO in external resistor mode for embedded applications that operate under varying temperature conditions. Refer to the DCO electrical specification in the device-specific data sheet for all DCO performance parameters.

4 DCO Faults in External Resistor Mode

There can be certain types of faults when DCO operates in the external resistor mode. An open-circuit fault can occur if the external resistor is detached from the DCOR pin of the device and the DCOR pin is left open. A short-circuit fault can occur if the DCOR pin comes in contact with or is shorted to the ground supply. A static fault means that the DCO encounters and open-circuit or short-circuit fault at the time of switching into external resistor mode. A dynamic fault means that the DCO encounters an open-circuit or short-circuit fault while already operating in the external resistor mode.

When there is any static or dynamic open-circuit or short-circuit fault detected by the DCO, it switches to internal resistor mode as a fail-safe mechanism to keep the system operations alive. The DCO clock frequency settings are retained during the fail-safe mode of operation. This means that the DCO clock frequency with internal resistor mode during fail-safe operation is same as the DCO clock frequency in external resistor mode before fault detection.

5 DCO Frequency Ranges

The DCO can generate clock frequencies in the range of 0.98 MHz to 52 MHz. This full frequency range is divided into six individual frequency ranges represented by DCORSEL setting in CSCTL0 register of the Clock System (CS). DCORSEL0 implies that DCO is configured in frequency range 0 and DCORSEL5 implies that DCO is configured in frequency range 5. Each frequency range overlaps with its adjacent frequency ranges, thereby providing one continuous range of frequencies from 1 MHz to 48 MHz available for use in the application.

Table 1 lists the minimum and maximum frequencies attainable in each of the DCO frequency ranges at 3.0 V and 25°C.

Table 1. DCO Frequency Ranges

PARAMETER		TEST CONDITIONS	MIN	MAX	UNIT
f_{RSEL0}	DCO frequency range 0	DCORSEL = 0	0.98	2.26	MHz
f_{RSEL1}	DCO frequency range 1	DCORSEL = 1	1.96	4.51	MHz
f_{RSEL2}	DCO frequency range 2	DCORSEL = 2	3.92	9.02	MHz
f_{RSEL3}	DCO frequency range 3	DCORSEL = 3	7.84	18.04	MHz
f_{RSEL4}	DCO frequency range 4	DCORSEL = 4	15.68	36.07	MHz
f_{RSEL5}	DCO frequency range 5	DCORSEL = 5	31.36	52	MHz

From the values in Table 1, the maximum frequency for each frequency range has 15% overlap with the minimum frequency in the next higher frequency range. For example, the maximum frequency of 2.26 MHz in DCORSEL0 has 15% overlap with the minimum frequency of 1.96 MHz in DCORSEL1.

6 DCO Calibrated Frequencies

The DCO is factory calibrated to the center value of each of the frequency ranges when DCOTUNE is 0. Table 2 lists the calibrated frequency tolerance over full voltage and temperature range for each of the DCO frequency ranges in internal and external resistor modes.

Table 2. DCO Calibrated Frequency Tolerance

PARAMETER		TEST CONDITIONS	MIN	TYP	MAX	UNIT
f_{RSEL0_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 0 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 0, DCOTUNE = 0	1.443	1.5	1.557	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 0, DCOTUNE = 0	1.482	1.5	1.518	
f_{RSEL1_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 1 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 1, DCOTUNE = 0	2.885	3	3.115	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 1, DCOTUNE = 0	2.964	3	3.036	
f_{RSEL2_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 2 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 2, DCOTUNE = 0	5.77	6	6.23	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 2, DCOTUNE = 0	5.928	6	6.072	
f_{RSEL3_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 3 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 3, DCOTUNE = 0	11.541	12	12.459	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 3, DCOTUNE = 0	11.856	12	12.144	
f_{RSEL4_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 4 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 4, DCOTUNE = 0	23.082	24	24.918	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 4, DCOTUNE = 0	23.712	24	24.288	
f_{RSEL5_CTR}	DCO center frequency accuracy for range 5 with calibrated factory settings	Internal resistor mode, DCORSEL = 5, DCOTUNE = 0	46.164	48	49.836	MHz
		External resistor mode, DCORSEL = 5, DCOTUNE = 0	47.424	48	48.576	

7 Tuning the DCO

The DCO can be adjusted or tuned to any specific frequency in a given frequency range through the use of DCOTUNE bits in CSCTL0 register of Clock System. DCOTUNE is a 10-bit register field and it is represented in two's complement form. DCOTUNE value is 0 after device power up or any hard reset.

When the DCOTUNE value is 0 the DCO frequency is at the center value of the selected frequency range. When DCOTUNE value is changed the DCO frequency moves up or down from the center frequency based on the sign of the DCOTUNE value. When DCOTUNE is a positive value the DCO frequency moves upward from the center frequency. When the DCOTUNE is a negative value, the DCO frequency moves downward from the center frequency. The DCO clock period change for DCOTUNE variation by one step is 0.2% typical.

However, instead of tuning by varying the step count, see Section 7.1 for the recommended and much easier method to tune the DCO to any desirable frequency.

7.1 Changing DCO Frequency

The DCO frequency characteristic is given in Equation 1.

$$F_{DCO,nom} = \frac{F_{RSELx\_CTR,nom}}{1 - \frac{K_{DCOCONST} \times N_{DCOTUNE}}{\left(1 + K_{DCOCONST} \times \left(768 - F_{CALCSDCOxRCAL}\right)\right)}} \quad (1)$$

The same equation can be represented for DCO tune value as Equation 2.

$$N_{DCOTUNE} = \frac{\left(F_{DCO,nom} - F_{RSELx\_CTR,nom}\right) \times \left(1 + K_{DCOCONST} \times \left(768 - FCAL_{CSDCOxRCAL}\right)\right)}{F_{DCO,nom} \times K_{DCOCONST}} \quad (2)$$

where

- $F_{DCO,nom}$ = Target Nominal Frequency
- $F_{RSELx\_CTR,nom}$ = Calibrated Nominal Center Frequency for DCO Frequency Range x
- $K_{DCOCONST}$ = DCO Constant (Floating-point value)
- $N_{DCOTUNE}$ = DCO Tune value in decimal
- $FCAL_{CSDCOxRCAL}$ = DCO Frequency Calibration value for Range x for Internal or external resistor modes

The DCO frequency calibration value (FCAL) is available in TLV individually for DCO Internal and external resistor modes. The DCO constant K is also available in TLV individually for frequency ranges DCORSEL 0 to 4 and DCORSEL 5 for Internal and external resistor modes. Refer to TLV section in the device-specific data sheet for complete details.

To change the DCO nominal frequency to a target value $F_{DCO,nom}$, the DCO tune value N needs to be obtained from the above equation and rounded off to the nearest integer value. This value must be programmed into DCOTUNE field in the CSCTL0 register in twos-compliment form. The error in the DCO target nominal frequency after applying the DCO tune value obtained from the equation will always be less than one DCO tune step. This means the frequency error will be less than the change in frequency caused by varying the DCOTUNE value by one step.

The Driver Library offers intelligent API functions that can be used to calculate the DCO tune value and to set the DCO for the desired target frequency. When using the precalibrated frequencies (DCOTUNE = 0), the DriverLib API CS_setCenteredFrequency(value) can be used. On the other hand, to simply tune the DCO as close as possible to any frequency within the range of 1 to 48 MHz, the DriverLib API CS_setFrequency(value) can be used. The floating math required to determine the DCO frequency range and the DCOTUNE values leverages the built-in floating point engine of the MSP432 MCU to efficiently calculate the values for the tuning procedure.

7.2 Example Use Case

The following example descrives how to change the DCO frequency to 2 MHz from the calibrated center frequency of 1.5 MHz in the DCO frequency range 0 when the DCO operates in the internal resistor mode.

The following values are obtained from the device TLV.

DCO constant K for DCORSEL0-4 in internal resistor mode: 0x3BA2_0147 or 0.004944.

DCO frequency calibration value in internal resistor mode: 0x0000_0188 or 392.

DCO maximum allowed positive tune for DCORSEL0-4 in internal resistor mode: 0x0000_0600 or 1536

Applying the above values in the DCO tune equation:

$N_{DCOTUNE}$ = [(2 – 1.5) × (1 + 0.004944 × (768 – 392)) × 8] / (2 × 0.004944)

$N_{DCOTUNE}$ = 1156.53, which is rounded off to 1157 or 0x485

The calculated DCO tune value N is 0x485, which is smaller than the maximum allowed positive tune value of 0x600. This value needs to be programmed into the DCOTUNE field in CSCTL0 register to realize the desired target frequency of 2 MHz. Alternatively, one simple DriverLib API call, CS_setFrequency(2000000) would also accomplish every step of the procedure described in the example.

8 Summary

The DCO on MSP432P4xx family of devices offer several useful features like operation with internal or external resistor, multiple frequency ranges, and frequency tuning. Especially the frequency tuning feature of the DCO can be useful in embedded applications where nonstandard frequencies or frequencies different than preset calibration frequencies are necessary. The intelligent Driver Library API functions can be used for easy calculation of the DCO tune value to achieve the desired DCO target frequency.

9 References

1. *MSP432P4xx Technical Reference Manual*
2. *MSP432P401xx Mixed-Signal Microcontrollers*
3. *MSP432P401xx Driver Library*

Revision History

NOTE: Page numbers for previous revisions may differ from page numbers in the current version.

Changes from March 20, 2015 to June 7, 2016 **Page**

- Changed "over the full supply voltage and temperature range" to "at 3.0 V and 25°C" for Table 1, *DCO Frequency Ranges* 3
- Changed "DCOTUNE is a 13-bit..." to "DCOTUNE is a 10-bit..." in the first paragraph of Section 7, *Tuning the DCO* 4
- Removed former Section 7.1, *Maximum Allowed DCO Tune Values* 4
- Changed Equation 1 5
- Changed Equation 2 5

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