AN63

Designing with Shunt Regulators - ZXRE060 low voltage regulator

Peter Abiodun A. Bode, Snr. Applications Engineer, Diodes Zetex Ltd

Introduction

More and more there is a trend towards lower operating voltages for electronic circuits in order to both increase speed and keep power consumption down. This is especially the case with microprocessor applications.

Many applications are now required to operate at voltages as low as 1V and less. Until recently the lowest reference devices with a reference voltage of 1.2V will not do in these applications. The ZXRE060, a 0.6V reference, is designed to fill this gap.

With a normal reference, the power to drive its internal functions is normally derived from the voltage dropped across its cathode (K) and anode (A) terminals. Because the minimum 0.6V terminal voltage at which this device works is too low for this, provision is made for the device to be separately powered via two pins. This makes the 0.6V reference a 5-terminal device as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

![Figure 1 ZXRE060 - 0.6V reference](image_url)

The extra two power pins are shown labelled V_IN and GND respectively. These pins require a minimum supply of 2.2V for the ZXRE060 to function correctly.

An interesting point is that V_IN can be connected to the OUT pin and GND connect to the PGND pin. This effectively turns the ZXRE060 into a 3-terminal device. The FB pins still controls at 0.6 but the regulated voltage across the device can not be less than 2.2V.

In its 3-terminal configuration, the ZXRE060 can technically be used in all the example circuits for a standard 3-terminal reference. However, using it for some of the circuits in the 5-terminal mode to take advantage of its 0.6V operation requires modified configurations. Primarily, this device is targeted at applications that need to operate below 1.24V and only this aspect is covered in this document.
Design guides

1. Determine \( I_{\text{OUT}} \) and choose a suitable transistor taking power dissipation into consideration.

2. Determine \( I_B \) from
   \[
   I_B = \frac{I_{\text{OUT}(\text{max})}}{(h_{FE(\text{min})} + 1)}
   \]

3. Determine \( I_{R3} \) from \( I_{R3} \geq I_B + I_{KA(\text{min})} \). The design of the ZXRE060 effectively means there is no \( I_{KA(\text{min})} \) limitation as in conventional references. There is only an output leakage current which is a maximum of 1µA. Nevertheless, it is necessary to determine an \( I_{KA(\text{min})} \) to ensure that the device operates within its linear range at all times. \( I_{KA(\text{min})} \approx 10\mu\text{A} \) should be adequate for this.

4. Determine \( R3 \) from
   \[
   R3 = \frac{V_{IN} - (V_{OUT} + V_{RE})}{I_{R3}}
   \]

5. Although unlikely to be a problem, ensure that \( I_{R3} \leq 20\text{ mA} \).
Refer to the Appendix in AN57 for information on calculating output error.

![Diagram of 1V Current-boosted shunt regulator](image)

**Figure 6**
1V Current-boosted shunt regulator

**Design guides**
1. Determine $I_{OUT}$ and choose a suitable transistor taking power dissipation into consideration.
2. Determine $I_B$ from
   \[ I_B = \frac{I_{OUT\text{ (max)}}}{(h_{FE\text{ (min)}} + 1)} \]
3. Determine $I_{R3}$ from
   \[ I_{R3} = I_{OUT\text{ (max)}} \]
4. Determine $R3$ from
   \[ R3 = \frac{V_{IN} - V_{OUT}}{I_{R3}} \]
5. It is best to let the ZXRE060 supply as much current as it can before bringing Q1 into conduction. Not only does this minimise the strain on Q1, it also guarantees the most stable operation. Choose a nominal value between 15mA and 20mA for this current, $I_{R4}$. Calculate $R4$ from
   \[ R4 = \frac{V_{BE}}{I_{R4}} \]

![Diagram of 1.15V over-voltage indicator](image)

**Figure 7**
1.15V over-voltage indicator

$V_{OUT}$ goes low and LED is lit when monitored supply

\[ V_{OUT} > V_{REF}\left(1 + \frac{R1}{R2}\right) \]

\[ R3 = \frac{V_{IN} - (V_F + 0.2)}{I_{R3}} \]

$I_{F\text{ (max)}} \geq I_{R3} \leq 20mA$

$V_F$ and $I_F$ are forward voltage drop and current of LED1 respectively.
Stability considerations

The physical position of C2 and its value is critical to maintaining good stability. C2 should be located in close physical proximity to the ZXRE060 and connected to its pins with the shortest and widest possible copper track. The value of C2 required to ensure stability generally ranges from about 0.1\textmu F up to 10 \textmu F depending on application and environment with higher gain applications generally requiring smaller values.

Conclusion

The above circuits are only representative of what could be done with the ZXRE060 and are by no means exhaustive. They provide examples of basic considerations and calculations that are needed by the designer. These calculations can either be applied to, or be adapted for, use in similar designs.

Recommended further reading

AN58 - Designing with Shunt Regulators - *Shunt Regulation*

AN59- Designing with Shunt Regulators - *Series Regulation*

AN60 - Designing with Shunt Regulators - *Fixed Regulators and Opto-Isolation*

AN61- Designing with Shunt Regulators - *Extending the operating voltage range*

AN62 - Designing with Shunt Regulators - *Other Applications*
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Diodes Zetex sales offices

Europe
Diodes Zetex GmbH
Kustermann-park
Balanstraße 59
D-81541 München
Germany
Telephone: (49) 89 45 49 49 0
Fax: (49) 89 45 49 49 49
Europe.sales@zetex.com

Americas
Zetex Inc
700 Veterans Memorial Highway
Hauppauge, NY 11788
USA
Telephone: (1) 631 360 2222
Fax: (1) 631 360 8222
usa.sales@zetex.com

Asia Pacific
Diodes Zetex (Asia) Ltd
3701-04 Metroplaza Tower 1
Hing Fong Road, Kwai Fong
Hong Kong
Telephone: (852) 26100 611
Fax: (852) 24250 494
asia.sales@zetex.com

Corporate Headquarters
Diodes Incorporated
15660 N Dallas Parkway
Suite 850, Dallas
TX75248, USA
Telephone: (1) 972 385 2810

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