

Drivers for GaAs FET Switches and Digital Attenuators

Rev. V5

M/A-COM's dual control, negative bias switches and attenuators have intrinsic switching speeds as low as ~ 5 ns. A disadvantage of level shifting by floating the FET's is that the time constants of the bypass and blocking capacitors charging through the internal FET gate resistors will introduce some switching delays. As shown in the appendix, switches that incorporate level shifting on-chip typically have switching speeds ranging from several tens of nanoseconds to microseconds.

Figure 3 shows a dual control GaAs FET switch driven by the Texas Instruments CD54HCT04 high speed CMOS logic hex inverter, a CERDIP packaged device that can operate with CMOS logic input levels (0 V, 2.7 V) and drive TTL loads. Driving a dual control switch stage requires using two gates of the CD54HCT04, one to generate a buffered output, one to generate its complement. Each gate in the CD54HCT04 introduces a switching propagation delay of 20 ns. The DC current consumption of the entire hex device is less than 1 mA at + 5 VDC.

When designing with the CD54HCT04 as a driver, choose the DC blocking capacitors C1, C4, and C5, to give minimum insertion loss at the lowest desired operating frequency. Choose the bypass capacitors C2 and C3 to give maximum isolation at the highest desired operating frequency. Bypass capacitor C6, which has the same value as C2 and C3, shunts any RF signal leakage on the DC bias line at the hex inverter to ground. Use low series resistance, high Q capacitors, such as the American Technical Ceramic ATC100A series, for the lowest possible insertion loss.

The resistors R1 and R3 that connect the DC bias to the switch should have a value in the range of 10 to 50 kilohms to keep RF crosstalk as low as possible. Place the resistors, capacitors and ground vias as close to the body of the switch as possible to reduce inductance for the best RF performance.

Other popular logic IC's work well as drivers, depending upon your requirements for switching speed, DC power consumption, and RF linearity. Other hex inverters related to the CD54HCT04 that work well include the SOIC or plastic DIP packaged CD74HC04 and CD74HCT04, the slower CD54HC04, and the Fairchild DM74LS04.

With a 5 VDC supply voltage, the DM74LS04 provides output logic voltages of 0.25 V (logic low) and 3.4 V (logic high). To substitute the pin-compatible DM74SL04 for the CD54HCT04, you will have to add additional pull-up circuitry connected between the driver and the switch to raise the logic high to 5 VDC.

This will result in slower switching speed and higher current consumption compared to the CD54HCT04.

The Texas Instruments SN54HC139 two to 4 line decoder also works well, as does the CD4041UB quad / true complement buffer. The CD4041UB provides four pairs of complementary outputs, and can provide a range of logic output voltages depending upon the supply voltage that you choose. With the CD4041UB supplying a bias of 8 VDC for the logic high, many GaAs FET switches will operate with a higher P1dB power level, higher by perhaps 5 or 6 dB.

For driver switching speeds less than 10 ns at the expense of higher current consumption, consider using an ECL driver such as the Motorola MC10H350 ECL to TTL translator, as shown in **Figure 4**. This circuit can drive the switch directly without the need for level shifting capacitors and resistors.

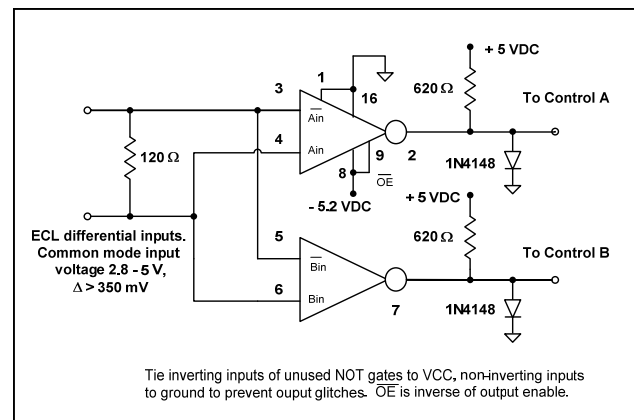


Figure 4: MC10H350 for Driving Dual Control Switches

Conclusion

This application note has explained how to control M/A-COM's GaAs FET switches and digital attenuators using drivers provided by M/A-COM, or using commercially available digital logic IC's. The appendix summarizes M/A-COM's most popular switches and classifies them by drive requirements. Careful choice of the switch or digital attenuator and the driver can provide optimum RF linearity, fast switching speed, low power consumption and small board footprint.

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Additional Notes:

Application Note M537, *GaAs MMIC Based Control Components with Integral Drivers* defines performance parameters for switches and attenuators.

1. See Application Note M517, *MASW6010 GaAs SPDT Switch Performance and Driver Circuit Techniques* for additional information on designing with the SWD-109 and SWD-119 drivers.
2. For pin assignments and supply voltages for the SWD-109 and SWD-119 single/quad drivers, see the SWD-109/119 data sheet, available on the M/A-COM web site at www.macom.com.
3. See Application Note M521, *Positive Voltage Control of GaAs MMIC Control Devices* for more information on floating attenuators above ground potential.
4. See Application Note M539, *Drivers for GaAs MMIC Switches and Digital Attenuators* for more information on compression and intermodulation distortion and the operation of the SW-109 and SWD-119 drivers.
5. See manufacturers' data sheets and application notes for additional information on digital logic IC's.
6. Please contact your M/A-COM sales representative for information on the latest switches and attenuators.

Dual Control Negative Bias

Part No.	Type	Package	Switching Speed
SW-212	SPST	FP-13	6 ns
SW-214	SPST terminated	FP-13	6 ns
SW-226	SPDT terminated	CR-2	6 ns
SW-227	SPDT	CR-2	6 ns
SW-239	SPDT	SOIC-8	4 ns
SW-259	SPST terminated	SOIC-8	8 ns
SW-276	SPDT	CR-2	35 ns
SW-279	SPDT	SOIC-8	35 ns
SW-289	SP4T	SOIC-14	6 ns
SW-337, 338	SPDT terminated	SOIC-8	10 ns
SW-391 ¹	SPDT	SOT-26	42 ns
SW-392 ¹	SPDT	SOT-26	20 ns
SW-395 ¹	SPDT	SOT-26	8 ns
SW-419	SP4T	SOIC-24	16 ns
SW-425 ¹	SPDT	SOT-26	~ 20 ns
SW-437	SPDT	SOT-363	~ 8 ns
SW-439*	SPDT	MSOP-10	~ 34 ns

1. Contains no shunt FET's, hence can operate with positive control voltages without ground pull-up components if provided with DC blocking capacitors on all RF lines.

Appendix

Popular M/A-COM GaAs FET switches

In the following tables, switching speed is the time from the 50 percent point of the control voltage rise or fall to the occurrence of 90 percent (on) or 10 percent (off) of the switched RF level.

Dual Positive Control, Requires Positive Supply (Includes pull-up components on-chip)

Part Number	Type	Package	Switching Speed
SW-277	SPDT	SOIC-8	35 ns
SW-349	SPST terminated	SOIC-8	2 μ s
SW-394	SPDT	SOIC-8	36 μ s
SW-399	SPST	SOT-26	110 μ s

Single Control, Integral Driver, Requires Positive And Negative Supplies

Part Number	Type	Package	Switching Speed
SW05-0311	SPST, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	150 ns
SW10-0312	SPDT, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	150 ns
SW10-0313	SPDT, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	150 ns
SW65-0014	SPST, TTL/CMOS in	SOIC-24	50 ns
SW65-0114	SPST, TTL/CMOS in	SOIC-24	50 ns
SW65-0214	SP3T, TTL/CMOS in	SOIC-24	50 ns
SW65-0313	SP2T, TTL/CMOS in	SOIC-16	50ns
SW65-0314	SP4T, TTL/CMOS in	SOIC-24	50 ns
SW65-0440	SP4T, absorptive, TTL/CMOS in	QSOP-24	50 ns
SW-110	SPDT, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	35 ns
SW-311	SPST, TTL.CMOS in	CR-9	12 ns
SW-312	SPDT, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	7 ns
SW-313	SPD, TTL/CMOS in	CR-9	18 ns
SW-335	SPDT, TTL /CMOS in	SOIC-8	200 ns
SW-224	SPDT, TTL in	TO-5-4	150 ns
SW- 225	SPDT, TTL in	FP-13	150 ns

Single Control, Integral Driver, Positive Supply

Part Number	Type	Package	Switching Speed
SW-205	SPDT, TTL in	DI-1	20 ns
SW-206	SPDT, CMOS in	DI-1	40 ns
SW-215	SPST, TTL in	DI-1	20 ns
SW-216	SPDT, CMOS in	DI-1	40 ns
SW-217	SPDT, TTL in	DI-1	20 ns
SW-233	SPDT, TTL in	FP-16	20 ns
SW-236	SPDT, CMOS in	FP-16	40 ns