

Analog IP Reuse – Don’t Ignore the Fear

Almost every organization has an analog IP reuse strategy in place today. The level of sophistication and success of IP reuse varies across organizations; while the desire to increase adoption of reusable IP is a certainty in any design group. In practice today, most organizations are unhappy with their level of analog reuse. Why isn’t this process working? If an IP re-users potential fear of reusing a block is not addressed, the most basic requirement for a successful strategy has not been considered.

Chandler, AZ (PRWEB) July 8, 2005 -- When it comes to analog reuse, an uncomfortable roadblock to success must be considered. The fear and uneasiness of a designer who is contemplating the use someone else’s work can be created from many sources. These may include: lack of understanding the tradeoffs that were made during design, what detailed validation strategy was completed and why, what the original designer was concerned about during their design implementation and, what limitations the original designer assumed for their design. Typical block (IP) level documentation does not normally cover these “touchy feely” attributes, leaving the end user to guess and/or recreate them for his or her own comfort. This lack of abstract information creates the “reuse fear”.

“Left unchecked, this fear creates a subtle wall to reuse that will present itself in many different forms”, says Jeff Jorvig, president of Jorvig Consulting. In many cases the reasons for not reusing will be based on a technical foundation that is justified by a lack of solid background information about the block. The pressure to reuse is driven by management resulting in designer’s fear of penalization for potential design errors due to block reuse. This scenario sets up a system where the design team will do whatever it takes to justify not using someone else’s work. Without providing what’s necessary to create confidence for reuse, the default decision will invariably be to develop the block from known previous work within the team.

“Getting a handle on the role of the IP reuse fear factor should be a top priority of any sharing initiative that is underway”, Jorvig continues. Without addressing this upfront, the usage of IP is sure come in at a disappointing level, despite how sophisticated the repository may be. The first priority must be what goes into the repository, not the repository itself.

What should be in a repository library to diminish reuse apprehension? Initially, an electrical spec is an obvious requirement, although this is only the beginning. It is vital to avoid a common belief that the electrical requirements are all that is necessary to enable the desired level of reuse. Original designer concerns, as well as other emotional attributes must be captured and become part of the reuse package to ensure security for the end user.

Achieving a winning IP reuse initiative requires an emphasis on minimizing reuse fear. Brainstorming with a team of potential end IP users with the intention of generating a documentation template to cover their needs is an essential step to fear elimination. In addition, listen to the re-users and strive to give them what they want. The extra effort will mean the difference between an IP library with quality designs that sits idle, or one that gets used.

About Jorvig Consulting, Inc.

Jorvig Consulting provides services to enhance product design team processes. The key result from their support is a design team that begins to experience freedom from surprises during project execution.

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