Integrated Circuits for Digital Data Transmission

National Semiconductor
Application Note 22
April 1986

INTRODUCTION

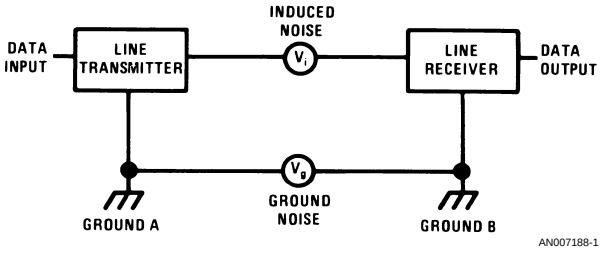
It is frequently necessary to transmit digital data in a high-noise environment where ordinary integrated logic circuits cannot be used because they do not have sufficient noise immunity. One solution to this problem, of course, is to use high-noise-immunity logic. In many cases, this approach would require worst case logic swings of 30V, requiring high power-supply voltages. Further, considerable power would be needed to transmit these voltage levels at high speed. This is especially true if the lines must be terminated to eliminate reflections, since practical transmission lines have a low characteristic impedance.

A much better solution is to convert the ground referred digital data at the transmission end into a differential signal and transmit this down a balanced, twisted-pair line. At the receiving end, any induced noise, or voltage due to ground-loop currents, appears equally on both ends of the twisted-pair line. Hence, a receiver which responds only to the differential signal from the line will reject the undesired signals even with moderate voltage swings from the transmitter.

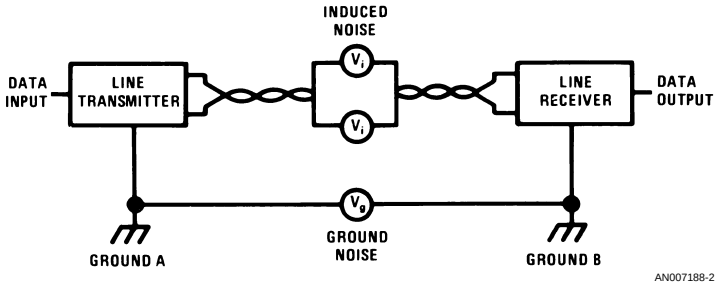
Figure 1 illustrates this situation more clearly. When ground is used as a signal return as in *Figure 1*, the voltage seen at the receiving end will be the output voltage of the transmitter plus any noise voltage induced in the signal line. Hence, the noise immunity of the transmitter-receiver combination must be equal to the maximum expected noise from both sources.

The differential transmission scheme diagrammed in *Figure 1* solves this problem. Any ground noise or voltage induced on the transmission lines will appear equally on both inputs of the receiver. The receiver responds only to the differential signal coming out of the twisted-pair line and delivers a single-ended output signal referred to the ground at the receiving end. Therefore, extremely high noise immunities are not needed; and the transmitter and receiver can be operated from the same supplies as standard integrated logic circuits.

This article describes the operation and use of a line driver and line receiver for transmission systems using twisted-pair lines. The transmitter provides a buffered differential output from a DTL or TTL input signal. A four-input gate is included on the input so that the circuit can also perform logic. The receiver detects a zero crossing in the differential input voltage and can directly drive DTL or TTL integrated circuits at the receiving end. It also has strobe capability to blank out unwanted input signals. Both the transmitter and the receiver incorporate two independent units on a single silicon chip.



a. Single-Ended System



b. Difference System

FIGURE 1. Comparing Differential and Single-Ended Data Transmission

LINE DRIVER

Figure 2 shows a schematic diagram of the line transmitter. The circuit has a marked resemblance to a standard TTL buffer. In fact, it is possible to use a standard dual buffer as a transmitter. However, the DS7830 incorporates additional features. For one, the output is current limited to protect the driver from accidental shorts in the transmission lines. Secondly, diodes on the output clamp sever voltage transients

that may be induced into the transmission lines. Finally, the circuit has internal inversion to produce a differential output signal, reducing the skew between the outputs and making the output state independent of loading.

As can be seen from the upper half of *Figure 2*, a quadruple-emitter input transistor, Q9, provides four logic inputs to the transmitter. This transistor drives the inverter stage formed by Q10 and Q11 to give a NAND output. A low state logic input on any of the emitters of Q9 will cause the base drive to be removed from Q10, since Q9 will be saturated by current from R8, holding the base of Q10 near ground. Hence, Q10 and Q11 will be turned off; and the output will be in a high state. When all the emitters of Q9 are at a one logic level, Q10 receives base drive from R8 through the forward biased collector-base junction of Q9. This saturates Q10 and also Q11, giving a low output state. The input voltage at which the transition occurs is equal to the sum of the emitter-base turn on voltages of Q10 and Q11 minus the saturation voltage of Q9. This is about 1.4V at 25˚C.

A standard “totem-pole” arrangement is used on the output stage. When the output is switched to the high state, with Q10 and Q11 cut off, current is supplied to the load by Q13 and Q14 which are connected in a modified Darlington configuration. Because of the high compound current gain of these transistors, the output resistance is quite low and a large load current can be supplied. R10 is included across the emitter-base junction of Q13 both to drain off any collector-base leakage current in Q13 and to discharge the collector-base capacitance of Q13 when the output is switched to the low state. In the high state, the output level is approximately two diode drops below the positive supply, or roughly 3.6V at 25˚C with a 5.0V supply.

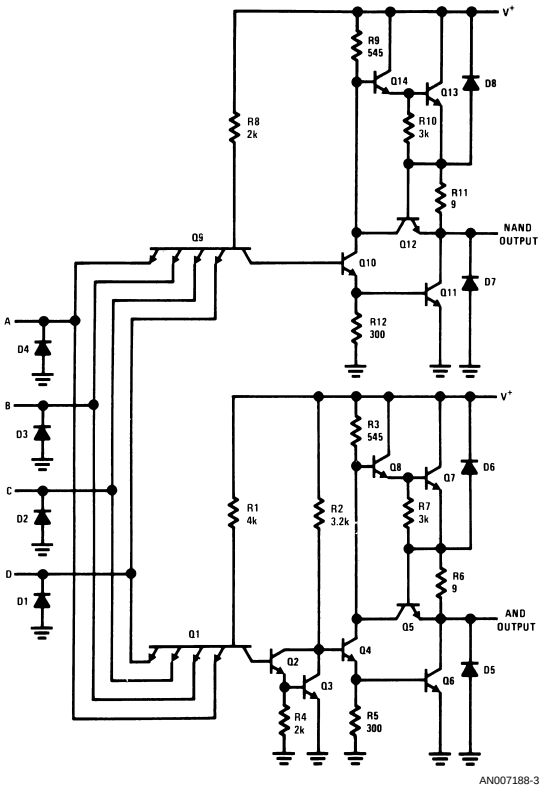


FIGURE 2. Schematic Diagram of the DS7830 Line Driver

With the output switched into the low state, Q10 saturates, holding the base of Q14 about one diode drop above ground. This cuts off Q13. Further, both the base current and the collector current of Q10 are driven into the base of Q11 saturating it and giving a low-state output of about 0.1V. The circuit is designed so that the base of Q11 is supplied 6 mA, so the collector can drive considerable load current before it is pulled out of saturation.

The primary purpose of R12 is to provide current to remove the stored charge in Q11 and charge its collector-base capacitance when the circuit is switched to the high state. Its value is also made less than R9 to prevent supply current transients which might otherwise occur (Note 1) when the power supply is coming up to voltage.

The lower half of the transmitter in *Figure 2* is identical to the upper, except that an inverter stage has been added. This is needed so that an input signal which drives the output of the upper half positive will drive the lower half negative, and vice versa, producing a differential output signal. Transistors Q2 and Q3 produce the inversion. Even though the current gain is not necessarily needed, the modified Darlington connection is used to produce the proper logic transition voltage on

the input of the transmitter. Because of the low load capacitance that the inverter sees when it is completely within the integrated circuit, it is extremely fast, with a typical delay of 3 ns. This minimizes the skew between the outputs.

One of the schemes used when dual buffers are employed as a differential line driver is to obtain the NAND output in the normal fashion and provide the AND output by connecting the input of the second buffer to the NAND output. Using an internal inverter has some distinct advantages over this: for one, capacitive loads which slow down the response of the NAND output will not introduce a time skew between the two outputs; secondly, line transients on the NAND output will not cause an unwanted change of state on the AND output.

Clamp diodes, D1 through D4, are added on all inputs to clamp undershoot. This undershoot and ringing can occur in TTL systems because the rise and fall times are extremely short.

Output-current limiting is provided by adding a resistor and transistor to each of the complementary outputs. Referring again to *Figure 2*, when the current on the NAND output increases to a value where the voltage drop across R11 is sufficient to turn on Q12, the short circuit protection comes into effect. This happens because further increases in output current flow into the base of Q12 causing it to remove base drive from Q14 and, therefore, Q13. Any substantial increase in output current will then cause the output voltage to collapse to zero. Since the magnitude of the short circuit depends on the emitter base turn-on voltage of Q12, this current has a negative temperature coefficient. As the chip temperature increases from power dissipation, the available short circuit current is reduced. The current limiting also serves to control the current transient that occurs when the output is going through a transition with both Q11 and Q13 turned on.

Note 1: Kalb, "Design Considerations for a TTL Gate", National Semiconductor TP-6, May, 1968.

The AND output is similarly protected by R6 and Q5, which limits the maximum output current to about 100 mA, preventing damage to the circuit from shorts between the outputs and ground.

The current limiting transistors also serve to increase the low state output current capability under severe transient conditions. For example, when the current into the NAND output becomes so high as to pull Q11 out of saturation, the output voltage will rise to two diode drops above ground. At this voltage, the collector-base junction of Q12 becomes forward biased and supplies additional base drive to Q11 through Q10 which is saturated. This minimizes any further increase in output voltage.

When either of the outputs are in the high state, they can drive a large current towards ground without a significant change in output voltage. However, noise induced on the transmission line which tries to drive the output positive will cut it off since it cannot sink current in this state. For this reason, D6 and D8 are included to clamp the output and keep it from being driven much above the supply voltage, as this could damage the circuit.

When the output is in a low state, it can sink a lot of current to clamp positive-going induced voltages on the transmission line. However, it cannot source enough current to eliminate negative-going transients so D5 and D7 are included to clamp those voltages to ground.

It is interesting to note that the voltage swing produced on one of the outputs when the clamp diodes go into conduction actually increases the differential noise immunity. For example with no induced common mode current, the low-state output will be a saturation voltage above ground while the high output will be two diode drops below the positive supply voltage. With positive-going common mode noise on the line, the low output remains in saturation; and the high output is clamped at a diode drop above the positive supply. Hence, in this case, the common mode noise increases the differential swing by three diode drops.

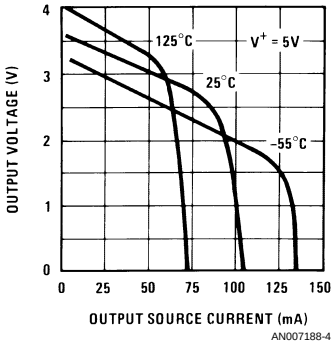


FIGURE 3. High State Output Voltage as a Function of Output Current

Having explained the operation of the line driver, it is appropriate to look at the performance in more detail. *Figure 3* shows the high-state output characteristics under load. Over the normal range of output currents, the output resistance is about 10Ω. With higher output currents, the short circuit protection is activated, causing the output voltage to drop to zero. As can be seen from the figure, the short-circuit current decreases at higher temperatures to minimize the possibility of over-heating the integrated circuit.

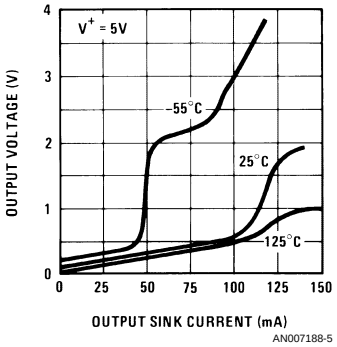


FIGURE 4. Low-State Output Current as a Function of Output Current

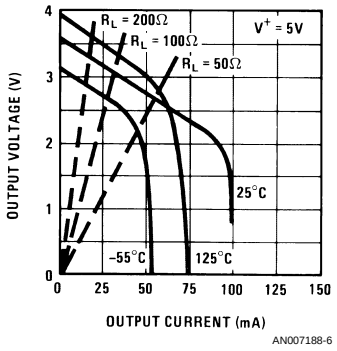


FIGURE 5. Differential Output Voltage as a Function of Differential Output Current

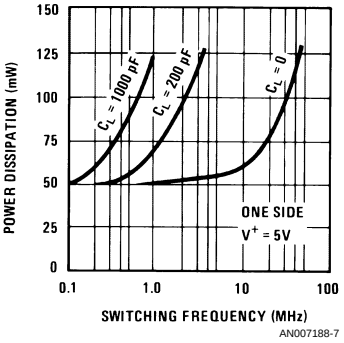


FIGURE 6. Power Dissipation as a Function of Switching Frequency

Figure 4 is a similar graph of the low-state output characteristics. Here, the output resistance is about 5Ω with normal values of output current. With larger currents, the output transistor is pulled out of saturation; and the output voltage increases. This is more pronounced at −55˚C where the transistor current gain is the lowest. However, when the output voltage rises about two diode drops above ground, the collector-base junction of the current-limit transistor becomes forward biased, providing additional base drive for the output transistor. This roughly doubles the current available for clamping positive common-mode transients on the twisted-pair line. It is interesting to note that even though the output level increases to about 2V under this condition, the differential noise immunity does not suffer because the high-state output also increases by about 3V with positive going common-mode transients.

It is clear from the figure that the low state output current is not effectively limited. Therefore, the device can be damaged by shorts between the output and the 5V supply. However, protection against shorts between outputs or from the outputs to ground is provided by limiting the high-state current.

The curves in *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* demonstrate the performance of the line driver with large, capacitively-coupled common-mode transients, or under gross overload conditions. *Figure 5* shows the ability of the circuit to drive a differential load: that is, the transmission line. It can be seen that for output currents less than 35 mA, the output resistance is approximately 15Ω. At both temperature extremes, the output falls off at high currents. At high temperatures, this is caused by current limiting of the high output state. At low temperatures, the fall off of current gain in the low-state output transistor produces this result.

Load lines have been included on the figure to show the differential output with various load resistances. The output swing can be read off from the intersection of the output characteristic with the load line. The figure shows that the driver can easily handle load resistances greater than 100Ω.

This is more than adequate for practical, twisted-pair lines.

Figure 6 shows the no load power dissipation, for one-half of the dual line driver, as a function of frequency. This information is important for two reasons. First, the increase in power dissipation at high frequencies must be added to the excess power dissipation caused by the load to determine the total package dissipation. Second, and more important, it is a measure of the “glitch” current which flows from the positive supply to ground through the output transistors when the circuit is going through a transition. If the output stage is not properly designed, the current spikes in the power supplies can become quite large; and the power dissipation can increase by as much as a factor of five between 100 kHz and 10 MHz. The figure shows that, with no capacitive loading, the power increases with frequencies as high as 10 MHz is almost negligible. However, with large capacitive loads, more power is required.

The line receiver is designed to detect a zero crossing in the differential output of the line driver. Therefore, the propagation time of the driver is measured as the time difference between the application of a step input and the point where the differential output voltage crosses zero. A plot of the propagation time over temperature is shown in *Figure 7* . This delay is added directly to the propagation time of the transmission line and the delay of the line receiver to determine the

total data-propagation time. However, in most cases, the delay of the driver is small, even by comparison to the uncertainties in the other delays.

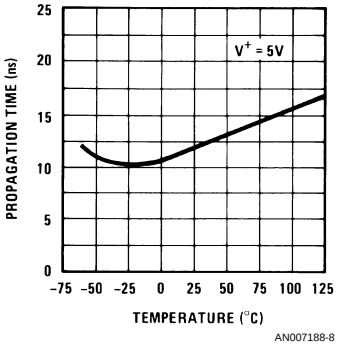


FIGURE 7. Propagation Time as a Function of Temperature

To summarize the characteristics of the DS7830 line driver, the input interfaces directly with standard TTL circuits. It presents a load which is equivalent to a fan out of 3 to the circuit driving it, and it operates from the 5.0V, ±10% logic supplies. The output can drive low impedance lines down to 50Ω and capacitive loads up to 5000 pF. The time skew between the outputs is minimized to reduce radiation from the twisted-pair lines, and the circuit is designed to clamp common mode transients coupled into the line. Short circuit protection is also provided. The integrated circuit consists of two independent drivers fabricated on a 41 x 53 mil-square die using the standard TTL process. A photomicrograph of the chip is shown in *Figure 8* .

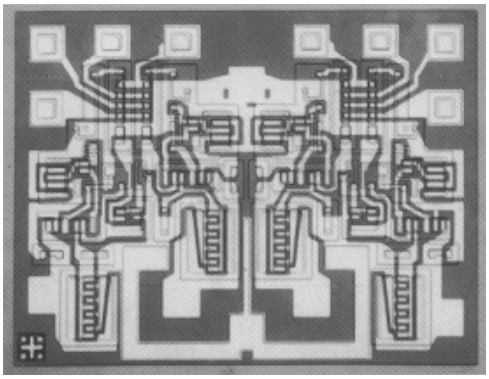


FIGURE 8. Photomicrograph of the DS7830 Dual Line Driver

LINE RECEIVER

As mentioned previously, the function of the line receiver is to convert the differential output signal of the line driver into a single ended, ground-referred signal to drive standard digital circuits on the receiving end. At the same time it must reject the common mode and induced noise on the transmission line.

Normally this would not be too difficult a task because of the large signal swings involved. However, it was considered important that the receiver operate from the +5V logic supply without requiring additional supply voltages, as do most other line receiver designs. This complicates the situation because the receiver must operate with ±15V input signals which are considerably greater than the operating supply voltage.

The large common mode range over which the circuit must work can be reduced with an attenuator on the input of the receiver. In this design, the input signal is attenuated by a factor of 30. Hence, the ±15V common mode voltage is reduced to ±0.5V, which can be handed easily by circuitry operating from a 5V supply. However, the differential input signal, which can go down as low as ±2.4V in the worst case, is also reduced to ±80 mV. Hence, it is necessary to employ a fairly accurate zero crossing detector in the receiver.

System requirements dictated that the threshold inaccuracy introduced by the zero crossing detector be less than 17 mV. In principle, this accuracy requirement should not pose insurmountable problems because it is a simple matter to make well matched parts in an integrated circuit.

Figure 9 shows a simplified schematic diagram of the circuit configuration used for the line receiver. The input signal is attenuated by the resistive dividers R1-R2 and R8-R3. This attenuated signal is fed into a balanced DC amplifier, operating in the common base configuration. This input amplifier, consisting of Q1 and Q2, removes the common mode component of the input signal. Further, it delivers an output signal at the collector of Q2, which is nearly equal in amplitude to the original differential input signal. this output signal is buffered by Q6 and drives an output amplifier, Q8. The output stage drives the logic load directly.

An understanding of the circuit can be obtained by first considering the input stage. Assuming high current gains and neglecting the voltage drop across R3, the collector current of Q1 will be:

$$I_{C1} = \frac{V^+ - V_{BE1} - V_{BE3} - V_{BE4}}{R11} \quad (1)$$

With equal emitter-base voltages for all transistors, this becomes:

$$I_{C1} = \frac{V^+ - 3V_{BE}}{R11} \quad (2)$$

The output voltage at the collector of Q2 will be:

$$V_{C2} = V+ - I_{C2}R12 \quad (3)$$

When the differential input voltage to the receiver is zero, the voltages presented to the emitters of Q1 and Q2 will be equal. If Q1 and Q2 are matched devices, which is easy to arrange when they are fabricated close together on a single silicon chip, their collector currents will be equal with zero input voltage. Hence, the output voltage from Q2 can be determined by substituting (2) into (3):

$$V_{C2} = V^+ - \frac{R12}{R11}(V^+ - 3V_{BE}) \quad (4)$$

For R11 = R12, this becomes:

$$V_{C2} = 3V_{BE}$$

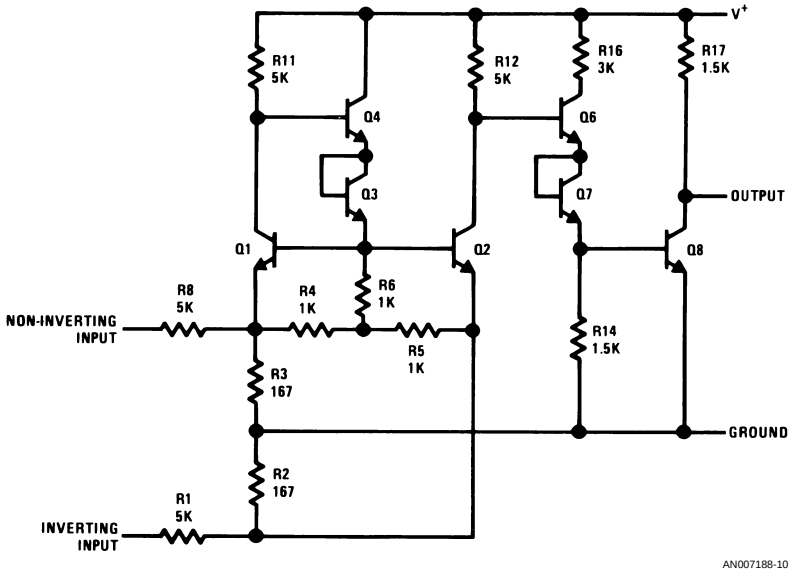


FIGURE 9. Simplified Schematic of the Line Receiver

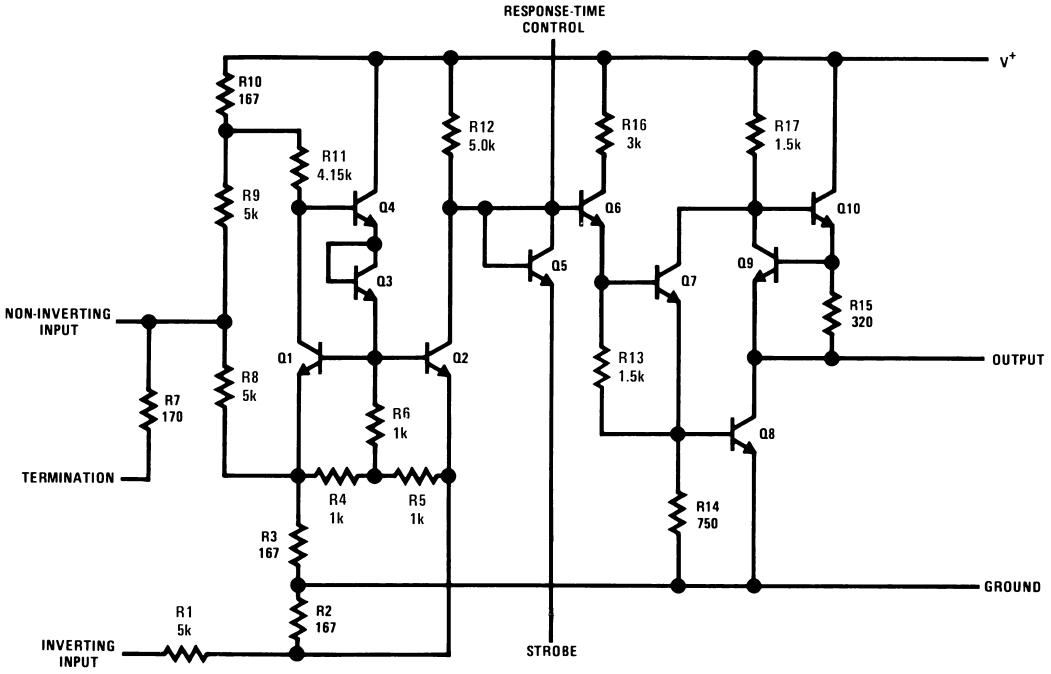
The voltage on the base of Q6 will likewise be $3V_{BE}$ when the output is on the verge of switching from a zero to a one state. A differential input signal which causes Q2 to conduct more heavily will then make the output go high, while an input signal in the opposite direction will cause the output to saturate.

It should be noted that the balance of this circuit is not affected by absolute values of components — only by how well they match. Nor is it affected by variations in the positive supply voltage, so it will perform well with standard logic supply voltages between 4.5V and 5.5V. In addition, component values are chosen so that the collector currents of Q4 and Q6 are equal. As a result, the base currents of Q4 and Q6 do not upset the balance of the input stage. This means that circuit performance is not greatly affected by production or temperature variations in transistor current gain.

A complete schematic of the line receiver, shown in *Figure 10*, shows several refinements of the basic circuit which are needed to secure proper operation under all conditions. For one, the explanation of the simplified circuit ignores the fact that the collector current of Q1 will be affected by common mode voltage developed across R3. This can give a 0.5V threshold error at the extremes of the ±15V common mode range. To compensate for this, a separate divider, R9 and R10, is used to maintain a constant collector current in Q1 with varying common mode signals. With an increasing common mode voltage on the non-inverting input, the voltage on the emitter of Q1 will increase. Normally, this would cause the voltage across R11 to decrease, reducing the collector current of Q1. However, the increasing common mode signal also drives the top end of R11 through R9 and R10 so as to hold the voltage drop across R11 constant.

In addition to improving the common mode rejection, R9 also forces the output of the receiver into the high state when nothing is connected to the input lines. This means that the output will be in a pre-determined state when the transmission cables are disconnected.

A diode connected transistor, Q5, is also added in the complete circuit to provide strobe capability. With a logic zero on the strobe terminal, the output will be high no matter what the input signal is. With the strobe, the receiver can be made immune to any noise signals during intervals where no digital information is expected. The output state with the strobe on is also the same as the output state with the input terminals open.



DM7820 dual line receiver (one side).

FIGURE 10. Complete Schematic of One Half of the DS7820 Line Receiver

The collector of Q2 is brought out so that an external capacitor can be used to slow down the receiver to where it will not respond to fast noise spikes. This capacitor, which is connected between the response-time-control terminal and ground, does not give exactly-symmetrical delays. The delay for input signals which produce a positive-going output will be less than for input signals of opposite polarity. This happens because the impedance on the collector of Q2 drops as Q6 goes into saturation, reducing the effectiveness of the capacitor.

Another difference in the complete circuit is that the output stage is improved both to provide more gain and to reduce the output resistance in the high output state. This was accomplished by adding Q9 and Q10. When the output stage is operating in the linear region, that is, on the verge of switching to either the high or the low state, Q9 and Q10 form sort of an active collector load for Q8. The current through R15 is constant at approximately 2 mA as the output voltage changes through the active region. Hence, the percentage change in the collector current of Q8 due to the voltage change across R17 is made smaller by this pre-bias current; and the effective stage gain is increased.

With the output in the high state (Q8 cut off), the output resistance is equal to R15, as long as the load current is less than 2 mA. When the load current goes above this value, Q9 turns on; and the output resistance increases to 1.5k, the value of R17.

This particular output configuration gives a higher gain than either a standard DTL or TTL output stage. It can also drive enough current in the high state to make it compatible with TTL, yet outputs can be wire OR'ed as with DTL.

Remaining details of the circuit are that Q7 is connected as an emitter follower to make the circuit even less sensitive to transistor current gains. R16 limits the base drive to Q7 with the output saturated, while R17 limits the base drive to the output transistor, Q8. A resistor, R7, which can be used to terminate the twisted-pair line is also included on the chip. It is not connected directly across the inputs. Instead, one end is left open so that a capacitor can be inserted in series with the resistor. The capacitor significantly reduces the power dissipation in both the line transmitter and receiver, especially in low-duty-cycle applications, by terminating the line at high frequencies but blocking steady-state current flow in the terminating resistor.

Since line receivers are generally used repetitively in a system, the DS7820 has been designed with two independent receivers on a single silicon chip. The device is fabricated on a 41 x 49 mil-square die using the standard six mask planar-epitaxial process. The processing employed is identical to that used on TTL circuits, and the design does not impose any unusual demands on the processing. It is only required that various parts within the circuit match well, but this

is easily accomplished in a monolithic integrated circuit without any special effort in manufacturing. A photomicrograph of the integrated circuit chip is shown in *Figure 11*.

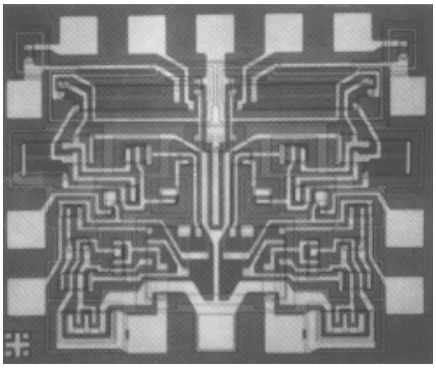


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FIGURE 11. Photomicrograph of the DS7820 Dual Line Receiver

The only components in the circuit which see voltages higher than standard logic circuits are the resistors used to attenuate the input signal. These resistors, R1, R7, R8 and R9, are diffused into a separate, floating, N-type isolation tub, so that the higher voltage is not seen by any of the transistors. For a ±15V input voltage range, the breakdown voltages required for the collector-isolation and collector-base diodes are only 15V and 19V, respectively. These breakdown voltages can be achieved readily with standard digital processing.

The purpose of the foregoing was to provide some insight into circuit operation. A more exact mathematical analysis of the device is developed in Appendix A.

RECEIVER PERFORMANCE

The characteristics of the line receiver are described graphically in *Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. Figure 12* illustrates the effect of supply voltage variations on the threshold accuracy. The upper curve gives the differential input voltage required to hold the output at 2.5V while it is supplying 200 µA to the digital load. The lower curve shows the differential input needed to hold the output at 0.4V while it sinks 3.5 mA from the digital load. This load corresponds to a worst case fanout of 2 with either DTL or TTL integrated circuits. The data shows that the threshold accuracy is only affected by ±60 mV for a ±10% change in supply voltage. Proper operation can be secured over a wider range of supply voltages, although the error becomes excessive at voltages below 4V.

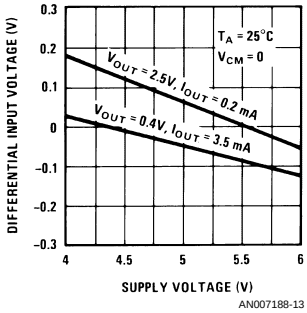

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FIGURE 12. Differential Input Voltage Required for High or Low Output as a Function of Supply Voltage

Figure 13 is a similar plot for varying common mode input voltage. Again the differential input voltages are given for high and low states on the output with a worst case fanout of 2. With precisely matched components within the integrated circuit, the threshold voltage will not change with common mode voltage. The mismatches typically encountered give a threshold voltage change of ±100 mV over a ±20V common mode range. This change can have either a positive slope or a negative slope.

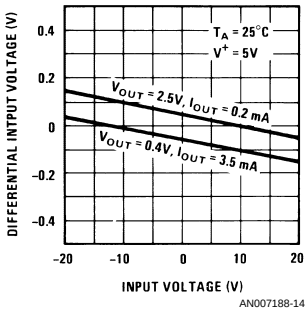

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FIGURE 13. Differential Input Voltage Required for High or Low Output as a Function of Common Mode Voltage

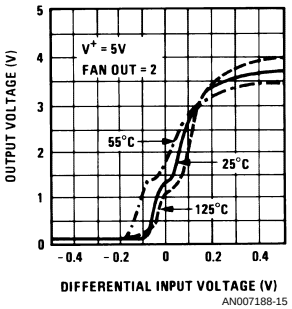


FIGURE 14. Voltage Transfer Function

The transfer function of the circuit is given in *Figure 14*. The loading is for a worst case fanout of 2. The digital load is not linear, and this is reflected as a non-linearity in the transfer function which occurs with the output around 1.5V. These transfer characteristics show that the only significant effect of temperature is a reduction in the positive swing at −55˚C. However, the voltage available remains well above the 2.5V required by digital logic.

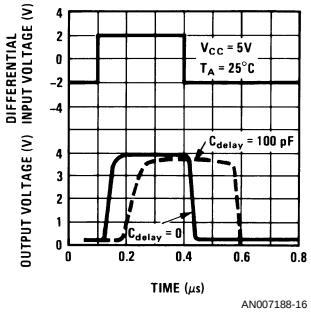


FIGURE 15. Response Time with and without an External Delay Capacitor

Figure 15 gives the response time, or propagation delay, of the receiver. Normally, the delay through the circuit is about 40 ns. As shown, the delay can be increased, by the addition of a capacitor between the response-time terminal and ground, to make the device immune to fast noise spikes on the input. The delay will generally be longer for negative going outputs than for positive going outputs.

Under normal conditions, the power dissipated in the receiver is relatively low. However, with large common mode input voltages, dissipation increases markedly, as shown in *Figure 16*. This is of little consequence with common mode transients, but the increased dissipation must be taken into account when there is a DC difference between the grounds of the transmitter and the receiver. It is important to note that *Figure 16* gives the dissipation for one half the dual receiver. The total package dissipation will be twice the values given when both sides are operated under identical conditions.

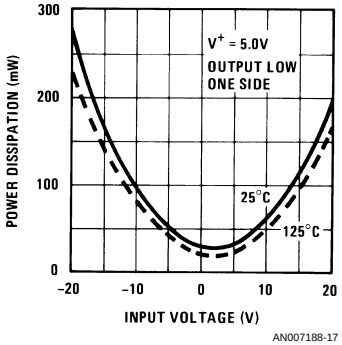


FIGURE 16. Internal Power Dissipation as a Function of Common Mode Input Voltage

Figure 17 shows that the power supply current also changes with common mode input voltage due to the current drawn out of or fed into the supply through R9. The supply current reaches a maximum with negative input voltages and can actually reverse with large positive input voltages. The figure also shows that the supply current with the output switched into the low state is about 3 mA higher than with a high output.

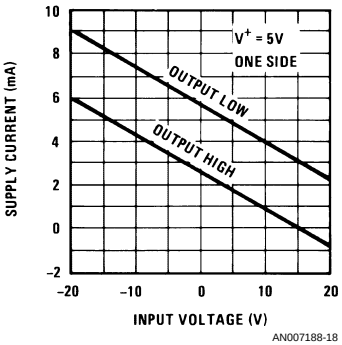


FIGURE 17. Power Supply Current as a Function of Common Mode Input Voltage

The variation of the internal termination resistance with temperature is illustrated in *Figure 18*. Taking into account the initial tolerance as well as the change with temperature, the termination resistance is by no means precise. Fortunately, in most cases, the termination resistance can vary appreciably without greatly affecting the characteristics of the transmission line. If the resistor tolerance is a problem, however, an external resistor can be used in place of the one provided within the integrated circuit.

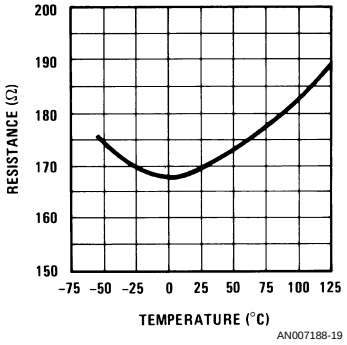
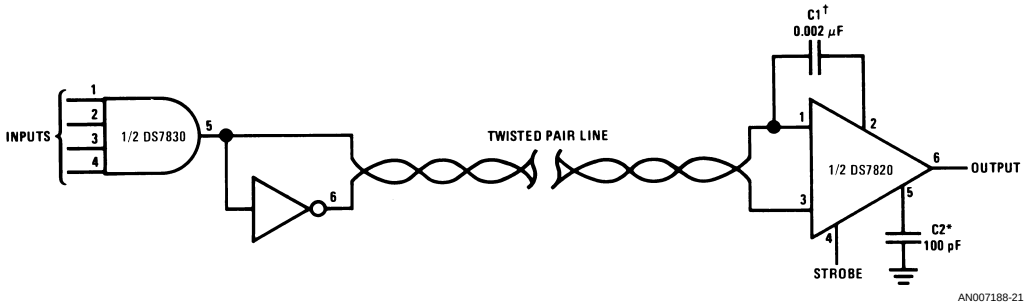


FIGURE 18. Variation of Termination Resistance with Temperature

DATA TRANSMISSION

The interconnection of the DS7830 line driver with the DS7820 line receiver is shown in *Figure 19*. With the exception of the transmission line, the design is rather straightforward. Connections on the input of the driver and the output or strobe of the receiver follow standard design rules for DTL or TTL integrated logic circuits. The load presented by the driver inputs is equal to 3 standard digital loads, while the receiver can drive a worst-case fanout of 2. The load presented by the receiver strobe is equal to one standard load.

The purpose of C1 on the receiver is to provide DC isolation of the termination resistor for the transmission line. This capacitor can both increase the differential noise immunity, by reducing attenuation on the line, and reduce power dissipation in both the transmitter and receiver. In some applications, C1 can be replaced with a short between Pins 1 and 2, which connects the internal termination resistor of the DS7820 directly across the line. C2 may be included, if necessary, to control the response time of the receiver, making it immune to noise spikes that may be coupled differentially into the transmission lines.



LINE DRIVER AND RECEIVER‡

†Exact value depends on line length.

‡V+ is 4.5V to 5.5V for both the DS720 and DS7830.

*Optional to control response time.

FIGURE 19. Interconnection of the Line Driver and Line Receiver

The effect of termination mismatches on the transmission line is shown in *Figure 20*. The line was constructed of a twisted pair of No. 22 copper conductors with a characteristic impedance of approximately 170Ω. The line length was about 150 ns and it was driven directly from a DS7830 line driver. The data shows that termination resistances which are a factor of two off the nominal value do not cause significant reflections on the line. The lower termination resistors do, however, increase the attenuation.

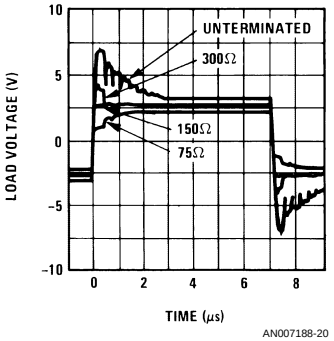


FIGURE 20. Transmission Line Response with Various Termination Resistances

Figure 21 gives the line-transmission characteristics with various termination resistances when a DC isolation capacitor is used. The line is identical to that used in the previous example. It can be seen that the transient reponse is nearly the same as a DC terminated line. The attenuation, on the other hand, is considerably lower, being the same as an unterminated line. An added advantage of using the isolation capacitor is that the DC signal current is blocked from the termination resistor which reduces the average power drain of the driver and the power dissipation in both the driver and receiver.

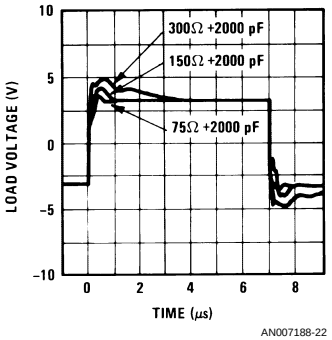


FIGURE 21. Line Response for Various Termination Resistances with a DC Isolation Capacitor

The effect of different values of DC isolation capacitors is illustrated in *Figure 22*. This shows that the RC time constant of the termination resistor/isolation capacitor combination should be 2 to 3 times the line delay. As before, this data was taken for a 150 ns long line.

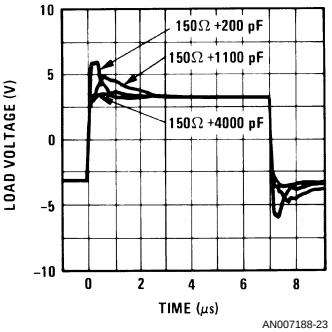
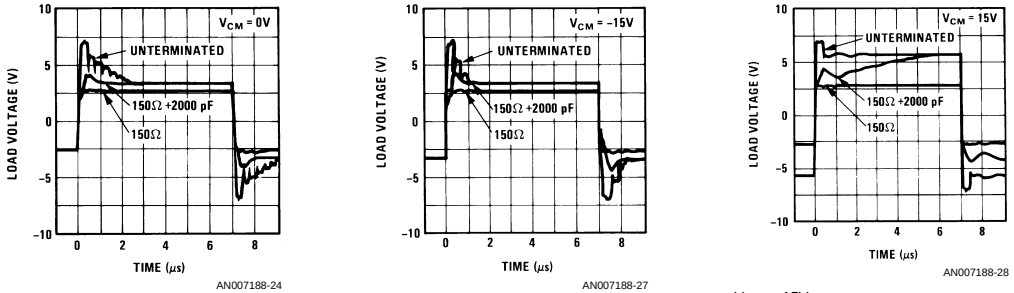


FIGURE 22. Response of Terminated Line with Different DC Isolation Capacitors



a. V_{CM} = 0V b. V_{CM} = −15V c. V_{CM} = 15V

FIGURE 23. Line Response With Different Terminations and Common Mode Input Voltages

In *Figure 23*, the influence of a varying ground voltage between the transmitter and the receiver is shown. The difference in the characteristics arises because the source resistance of the driver is not constant under all conditions. The high output of the transmitter looks like an open circuit to voltages reflected from the receiving end of the transmission line which try to drive it higher than its normal DC state. This condition exists until the voltage at the transmitting end becomes high enough to forward bias the clamp diode on the 5V supply. Much of the phenomena which does not follow simple transmission-line theory is caused by this. For example, with an unterminated line, the overshoot comes from

the reflected signal charging the line capacitance to where the clamp diodes are forward biased. The overshoot then decays at a rate determined by the total line capacitance and the input resistance of the receiver.

When the ground on the receiver is 15V more negative than the ground at the transmitting end, the decay with an unterminated line is faster, as shown in *Figure 23*. This occurs because there is more current from the input resistor of the receiver to discharge the line capacitance. With a terminated line, however, the transmission characteristics are the same as for equal ground voltages because the terminating resistor keeps the line from getting charged.

Figure 23 gives the transmission characteristics when the receiver ground is 15V more positive than the transmitter ground. When the line is not terminated, the differential voltage swing is increased because the high output of the driver will be pulled against the clamp diodes by the common mode input current of the receiver. With a DC isolation capacitor, the differential swing will reach this same value with a time constant determined by the isolation capacitor and the input resistance of the receiver. With a DC coupled termination, the characteristics are unchanged because the differential load current is large by comparison to the common mode current so that the output transistors of the driver are always conducting.

The low output of the driver can also be pulled below ground to where the lower clamp diode conducts, giving effects which are similar to those described for the high output. However, a current of about 9 mA is required to do this, so it does not happen under normal operating conditions.

To summarize, the best termination is an RC combination with a time constant approximately equal to 3 times the transmission-line delay. Even though its value is not precisely determined, the internal termination resistor of the integrated circuit can be used because the line characteristics are not greatly affected by the termination resistor.

The only place that an RC termination can cause problems is when the data transmission rate approaches the line delay and the attenuation down the line (terminated) is greater than 3 dB. This would correspond to more than 1000 ft. of twisted-pair cable with No. 22 copper conductors. Under these conditions, the noise margin can disappear with low-duty-cycle signals. If this is the case, it is best to operate the twisted-pair line without a termination to minimize transmission losses. Reflections should not be a problem as they will be absorbed by the line losses.

CONCLUSION

A method of transmitting digital information in high-noise environments has been described. The technique is a much more attractive solution than high-noise-immunity logic as it has lower power consumption, provides more noise rejection, operates from standard 5V supplies, and is fully compatible with almost all integrated logic circuits. An additional advantage is that the circuits can be fabricated with integrated circuit processes used for standard logic circuits.

APPENDIX A

LINE RECEIVER

Design Analysis

The purpose of this appendix is to derive mathematical expressions describing the operation of the line receiver. It will be shown that the performance of the circuit is not greatly affected by the absolute value of the components within the integrated circuit or by the supply voltage. Instead, it depends mostly on how well the various parts match.

The analysis will assume that all the resistors are well matched in ratio and that the transistors are likewise matched, since this is easily accomplished over a broad temperature range with monolithic construction. However, the effects of component mismatching will be discussed where important. Further, large transistor current gains will be assumed, but it will be pointed out later that this is valid for current gains greater than about 10.

A schematic diagram of the DS7820 line receiver is shown in *Figure 24*. Referring to this circuit, the collector current of the input transistor is given by

$$I_{C1} = \frac{V^+ - V_{BE1} - V_{BE3} - V_{BE4}}{R9//R10 + R11 + R3//R8} - \frac{\frac{R3}{R4 + 2R6 + R3} V_{BE1} - \frac{R3//R11}{R8 + R3//R1} V_{IN}}{R9//R10 + R11 + R3//R8} + \frac{(V_{IN} - V^+) \frac{R10//R11}{R9 + R10//R11}}{R9//R10 + R11 + R3//R8} \quad (5)$$

where V_{IN} is the common mode input voltage and $R_a//R_b$ denotes the parallel connection of the two resistors. In *Equation (5)*, R8 = R9, R3 = R10, R10 ≪ R11, R9 ≫ R10, R3 ≪ R11, R8 ≫ R3 and

$$\frac{R3}{R4 + 2R6 + R3} \ll 3$$

so it can be reduced to

$$I_{C1} = \frac{V^+ - 3V_{BE} - \frac{R10}{R9} V^+}{R10 + R11 + R3} \quad (6)$$

which shows that the collector current of Q1 is not affected by the common mode voltage.

The output voltage on the collector of Q2 is

$$V_{C2} = V+ - I_{C2}R12 \quad (7)$$

For zero differential input voltage, the collector currents of Q1 and Q2 will be equal so *Equation (7)* becomes

$$V_{C2} = V^+ - \frac{R12 \left(V^+ - 3V_{BE} - \frac{R10}{R9} V^+ \right)}{R10 + R11 + R3} \quad (8)$$

It is desired that this voltage be $3V_{BE}$ so that the output stage is just on the verge of switching with zero input. Forcing this condition and solving for R12 yields

$$R12 = (R10 + R11 + R3) \frac{V^+ - 3V_{BE}}{V^+ - 3V_{BE} - \frac{R10}{R9} V^+} \quad (9)$$

This shows that the optimum value of R12 is dependent on supply voltage. For a 5V supply it has a value of 4.7 kΩ. Substituting this and the other component values into (*Equation (8)*),

$$V_{C2} = 2.83V_{BE} + 0.081V+, \quad (10)$$

which shows that the voltage on the collector of Q2 will vary by about 80 mV for a 1V change in supply voltage.

The next step in the analysis is to obtain an expression for the voltage gain of the input stage.

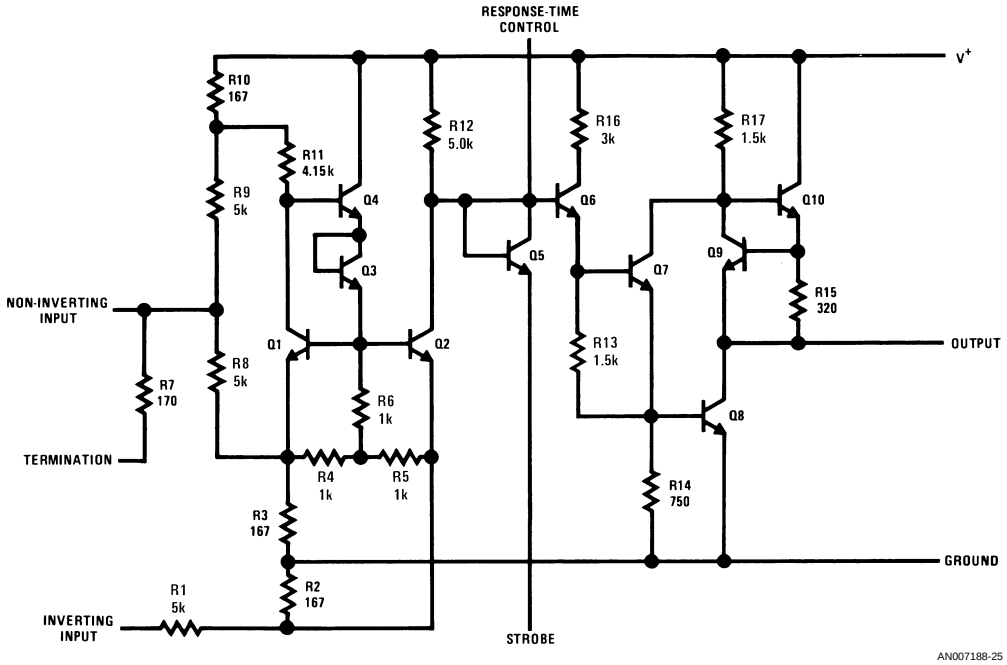


FIGURE 24. Schematic Diagram of One Half of the DS7820 Line Receiver

An equivalent circuit of the input stage is given in *Figure 25.* Noting that R6 = R7 = R8 and R2 ≅ 0.1 (R6 + R7R8), the change in the emitter current of Q1 for a change in input voltage is

$$\Delta I_{E2} = \frac{0.9\ R2}{R1\ (0.9\ R2 + R_{E2})}\ \Delta V_{IN} \tag{11}$$

Hence, the change in output voltage will be

$$\Delta V_{OUT} = \alpha I_{E2} R12 = \frac{0.9\ \alpha\ R2\ R12}{R1\ (0.9\ R2 + R_{E2}}\ \Delta V_{IN} \tag{12}$$

Since $\alpha \cong 1$, the voltage gain is

$$A_{V1} = \frac{0.9\ R2\ R12}{R1\ (0.9\ R2 + R_{E2})} \tag{13}$$

The emitter resistance of Q2 is given by

$$R_{E2} = \frac{kT}{qI_{C2}} \tag{14}$$

$$I_{C2} = \frac{V^+ - 3V_{BE}}{R12} \tag{15}$$

$$R_{E2} = \frac{kT\ R12}{q\ (V^+ - 3V_{BE})} \tag{16}$$

Therefore, at 25˚C where V_{VE} = 670 mV and kT/q = 26 mV, the computed value for gain is 0.745. The gain is not greatly affected by temperature as the gain at −55˚C where V_{BE} = 810 mV and kT/q = 18 mV is 0.774, and the gain at 125˚C where V_{BE} = 480 mV and kT/q = 34 mV is 0.730.

With a voltage gain of 0.75, the results of *Equation (10)* show that the input referred threshold voltage will change by 0.11V for a 1V change in supply voltage. With the standard ±10-percent supplies used for logic circuits, this means that the threshold voltage will change by less than ±60 mV.

Finally, the threshold error due to finite gain in the output stage can be considered. The collector current of Q7 from the bleeder resistor R14, is large by comparison to the base current of Q8, if Q8 has a reasonable current gain. Hence, the collector current of Q7 does not change appreciably when the output switches from a logic one to a logic zero. This is even more true for Q6, an emitter follower which drives Q7. Therefore, it is safe to presume that Q6 does not load the output of the first-stage amplifier, because of the compounded current gain of the three transistors, and that Q8 is driven from a low resistance source.

It follows that the gain of the output stage can be determined from the change in the emitter-base voltage of Q8 required to swing the output from a logic one state to a logic zero state. The expression

$$\Delta V_{BE} = \frac{kT}{q} \log_e \frac{I_{C1}}{I_{C2}} \tag{17}$$

describes the change in emitter-base voltage required to vary the collector current from one value, I_{C1}, to a second, I_{C2}. With the output of the receiver in the low state, the collector current of Q8 is

$$I_{OL} = \frac{V^+ - V_{OL} - V_{BE9} - V_{BE10}}{R17} + \frac{V_{BE9}}{R15} - \frac{V_{BE8}}{R14} + \frac{V_{BE7}}{R13} + I_{SINK}\,, \quad (18)$$

where V_{OL} is the low state output voltage and I_{SINK} is the current load from the logic that the receiver is driving. Noting that R13 = 2R14 and figuring that all the emitter-base voltages are the same, this becomes

$$I_{OL} = \frac{V^+ - V_{OL} - 2V_{BE}}{R17} + \frac{V_{BE}}{R15} - \frac{V_{BE}}{2R14} + I_{SINK} \quad (19)$$

Similarly, with the output in the high state, the collector current of Q8 is

$$I_{OH} = \frac{V^+ - V_{OH} - V_{BE9} - V_{BE10}}{R17} + \frac{V_{BE9}}{R15} - \frac{V_{BE8}}{R14} + \frac{V_{BE7}}{R13} - I_{SOURCE}\,, \quad (20)$$

where V_{OH} is the high-level output voltage and I_{SOURCE} is the current needed to supply the input leakage of the digital circuits loading the comparator.

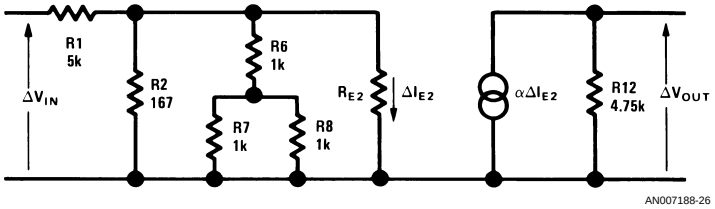


FIGURE 25. Equivalent Circuit Used to Calculate Input Stage Gain

With the same conditions used in arriving at (*Equation (19)*), this becomes

$$I_{OH} = \frac{V^+ - V_{OH} - 2V_{BE}}{R17} + \frac{V_{BE}}{R15} - \frac{V_{BE}}{2R14} - I_{SOURCE} \quad (21)$$

From (*Equation (17)*) the change in the emitter-base voltage of Q8 in going from the high output level to the low output level is

$$\Delta V_{BE} = \frac{kT}{q} \log_e \frac{I_{OL}}{I_{OH}} \quad (22)$$

providing that Q8 is not quite in saturation, although it may be on the verge of saturation.

The change of input threshold voltage is then

$$\Delta V_{TH} = \frac{kT}{qA_{v1}} \log_e \frac{I_{OL}}{I_{OH}} \quad (23)$$

where A_{v1} is the input stage gain. With a worst case fanout of 2, where V_{OH} = 2.5V, V_{OL} = 0.4V, I_{SOURCE} = 40 µA and I_{SINK} = 3.2 mA, the calculated change in threshold is 37 mV at 25˚C, 24 mV at −55˚C and 52 mV at 125˚C.

The measured values of overall gain differ by about a factor of two from the calculated gain. This is not too surprising because a number of assumptions were made which introduce small errors, and all these errors lower the gain. It is also not too important because the gain is high enough where another factor of two reduction would not cause the circuit to stop working.

The main contributors to this discrepancy are the non-ideal behavior of the emitter-base voltage of Q8 due to current crowding under the emitter and the variation in the emitter base voltage of Q7 and Q8 with changes in collector-emitter voltage (h_{RE}).

Although these parameters can vary considerably with different manufacturing methods, they are relatively fixed for a given process. The ΔV_{BE} errors introduced by these quantities, if known, can be added directly into *Equation (22)* to give a more accurate gain expression.

The most stringent matching requirement in the receiver is the matching of the input stage divider resistors: R1 with R8 and R2 with R3. As little as 1% mismatch in one of these pairs can cause a threshold shift of 150 mV at the extremes of the ±15V common mode range. Because of this, it is necessary to make the resistors absolutely identical and locate them close together. In addition, since R1 and R8 do dissipate a reasonable amount of power, they have to be located to minimize the thermal gradient between them. To do this, R9 was located between R1 and R8 so that it would heat both of these resistors equally. There are not serious heating problems with R2 and R3; however, because of their low resistance value, it was necessary even to match the lengths of the aluminum interconnects, as the resistance of the aluminum is high enough to cause intolerable mismatches. Of secondary importance is the matching of Q1 and Q2 and the matching of ratios between R11 and R12. A 1 mV difference in the emitter-base voltages of Q1 and Q2 causes a 30 mV input offset voltage as does a 1% mismatch in the ratio of R11 to R12.

The circuit is indeed insensitive to transistor current gains as long as they are above 10. The collector currents of Q4 and

Q6 are made equal so that their base currents load the collectors of Q1 and Q2 equally. Hence, the input threshold voltage is affected only by how well the current gains match. Low current gain in the output transistor, Q8, can cause a reduction in gain. But even with a current gain of 10, the error produced in the input threshold voltage is less than 50 mV.

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