AN 320: Using Intel® FPGA IP Evaluation Mode

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1. AN 320: Using Intel® FPGA IP Evaluation Mode.............................................................. 3
   1.1. Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Modes............................................................................... 3
   1.2. Viewing IP Core License Status................................................................................ 4
   1.3. Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode Messages............................................................... 6
   1.4. Licensing Intel FPGA IP Cores ............................................................................... 6
   1.5. Evaluation Period Timeout Indicator....................................................................... 7
   1.6. Disable Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode................................................................. 7
   1.8. Using Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode Document Revision History.............................. 9
1. AN 320: Using Intel® FPGA IP Evaluation Mode

Intel and strategic IP partners offer a broad portfolio of configurable IP cores optimized for Intel FPGA devices. You can integrate optimized and verified IP cores into your design to shorten design cycles and maximize performance. The Intel® Quartus® Prime software installation includes the Intel FPGA IP library. This library provides many useful IP cores for your production use without the need for an additional license.

Some Intel FPGA IP cores require purchase of a separate license for production use. The Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode allows you to evaluate these licensed Intel FPGA IP cores in simulation and hardware, before deciding to purchase a full production IP core license. You can evaluate any of the following with the Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode:

- Simulate the behavior of a licensed IP core in your system.
- Verify the functionality, size, and speed of the IP core quickly and easily.
- Generate time-limited device programming files for designs that include IP cores.
- Program a device with your IP core and verify your design in hardware.

1.1. Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Modes

The Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode supports the following two modes:

- Tethered—Allows running the design containing the licensed IP indefinitely with a connection between your board and the host computer. Tethered mode requires a serial joint test action group (JTAG) cable connected between the JTAG port on your board and the host computer, which is running the Intel Quartus Prime Programmer for the duration of the hardware evaluation period. The Programmer only requires a minimum installation of the Intel Quartus Prime software, and requires no Intel Quartus Prime license. The host computer controls the evaluation time by sending a periodic signal to the device via the JTAG port. If all licensed IP cores in the design support tethered mode, the evaluation time runs until any IP core evaluation expires. If all of the IP cores support unlimited evaluation time, the device does not time-out.

- Untethered—Allows running the design containing the licensed IP for a limited time. The IP core reverts to untethered mode if the device disconnects from the host computer running the Intel Quartus Prime software. The IP core also reverts to untethered mode if any other licensed IP core in the design does not support tethered mode.

When the evaluation time expires for any licensed IP in the design, the design stops functioning. All IP cores that use the Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode time out simultaneously when any IP core in the design times out. When the evaluation time expires, you must reprogram the FPGA device before continuing hardware verification. To extend use of the IP core for production, purchase a full production license for the IP core.
Figure 1. Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode Flow

1. Install the Intel Quartus Prime Software with Intel FPGA IP Library
2. Parameterize and Instantiate a Licensed Intel FPGA IP Core
3. Verify the IP in a Supported Simulator
4. Compile the Design in the Intel Quartus Prime Software
5. Generate a Time-Limited Device Programming File
6. Program the Intel FPGA Device and Verify Operation on the Board
7. IP Ready for Production Use?
   - Yes: Purchase a Full Production IP License
   - No: Include Licensed IP in Commercial Products

Note: Refer to each IP core's user guide for parameterization steps and implementation details.

1.2. Viewing IP Core License Status

You can view the license type and expiration date of Intel FPGA IP cores in the Intel Quartus Prime software GUI.
To view IP and software license and expiration information, click Tools ➤ License Setup. The License Setup page displays the name, vendor, version, and license expiration date for the IP cores that you install.

**Figure 2. License Setup Page**

![License Setup Page](image)

To view the license type for IP cores in your project, run Analysis & Synthesis, and then view the Synthesis IP Cores Summary report. This report displays the name, vendor, version, license type, and other data about the IP cores in your project.

**Figure 3. Synthesis IP Cores Summary Report**

![Synthesis IP Cores Summary](image)
1.3. Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode Messages

The Intel Quartus Prime Compiler generates messages about IP cores under Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode. During compilation, the Compiler reports the soonest, untethered expiration time for all licensed Intel FPGA IP cores in the design. The Compiler also reports the tethered mode evaluation time if all licensed Intel FPGA IP cores in the design support tethered mode.

![Figure 4. IP Evaluation Time Limit Messages](image)

**Note:** The precise time of IP core evaluation timeout depends on the target FPGA device family and operating conditions.

1.4. Licensing Intel FPGA IP Cores

You only need to purchase a full production license for licensed Intel FPGA IP cores after you complete hardware testing and are ready to use the IP in production. You must purchase the license and generate a full production license key before you can generate an unrestricted device programming file. During Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode, the Compiler only generates a time-limited device programming file (<project name>_time_limited.sof) that expires at the time limit.

Intel licenses IP cores on a per-seat, perpetual basis. The license fee includes first-year maintenance and support. You must renew the maintenance contract to receive updates, bug fixes, and technical support beyond the first year. You must purchase a full production license for Intel FPGA IP cores that require a production license, before generating programming files that you may use for an unlimited time. To obtain your production license keys, visit the Self-Service Licensing Center or contact your local Intel FPGA representative.

The Intel FPGA Software License Agreements governs the installation and use of licensed Intel FPGA IP cores and the Intel Quartus Prime design software and all separately unlicensed IP cores therein.

1.5. Evaluation Period Timeout Indicator

The Intel Quartus Prime software installation includes the ocp_timeout_indicator IP block in the libraries\others\opercore_plus\ directory. You can instantiate this IP block in your design to alert when the device times out.

Specify either an active_high or active_low polarity of the time-out signal (ip_timeout) with the timeout_indicator parameter.
Example 1. Timeout Indicator VHDL Component Declaration

```vhdl
cOMPONENT ocp_timeout_indicator
  generic
  (TIMEOUT_INDICATOR: string := "ACTIVE_HIGH");
  port
  (ip_timeout: out std_logic);
end component ocp_timeout_indicator;
```

Example 2. Timeout Indicator VHDL Instantiation Prototype

```vhdl
My_Instance : ocp_timeout_indicator
  GENERIC MAP(TIMEOUT_INDICATOR => "ACTIVE_HIGH")
  PORT MAP(ip_timeout => My_Output);
```

Example 3. Timeout Indicator Verilog HDL Instantiation Prototype

```verilog
ocp_timeout_indicator my_instance
  (.ip_timeout(my_output));
defparam my_instance.TIMEOUT_INDICATOR = "ACTIVE_HIGH";
```

1.6. Disable Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode

The Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode is enabled by default. Implementation of the Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode requires the use of some FPGA device resources. This use of device resources can impact design placement, routing, and timing.

If you are not using Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode, and want to avoid using device resources for this feature, disable the feature:

1. In the Intel Quartus Prime software, click Assignments ➤ Settings ➤ Compilation Process Settings.
2. Click the More Settings button.
3. For Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode, select Disable.

The Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition software supports Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode in a team with distributed design tasks. The Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode allows individual designers to simulate and hardware test a design containing licensed IP, without requiring licenses for each designer. However, ultimately you must generate the production-ready FPGA programming file on a machine with an available full production license for all licensed Intel FPGA IP cores in the design.

The most flexible methodology for distributed work flows is for every designer to have a production license for all Intel FPGA IP included in their portion of the design. However, you can use the Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition incremental compilation feature to temporarily avoid the licensing requirement by following these steps on any machine with an Intel Quartus Prime Standard Edition license:

1. Click Assignments ➤ Settings ➤ Compilation Process Settings ➤ More Settings, and disable OpenCore plus hardware evaluation.

   Note: You cannot use incremental compilation to compile a portion of your design that contains licensed Intel FPGA IP in evaluation mode, and then import that design as a pre-compiled module to another machine that has a production license for the IP.

2. To compile the design, click Processing ➤ Start Compilation.

3. To export the compilation results as a design partition, click Project ➤ Export Design Partition. The Intel Quartus Prime software generates an Intel Quartus Prime Exported Partition File (.qxp) in the project directory.

4. To generate a full production, non-time-limited device programming file for the exported partition, you must import the partition to a project with access to a full production license for all licensed Intel FPGA IP cores in the design. Click Project ➤ Import Design Partitions to import a design partition.
1.8. Using Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode Document Revision History

This document has the following revision history:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Version</th>
<th>Intel Quartus Prime Version</th>
<th>Changes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018.10.22</td>
<td>17.1.0</td>
<td>Added Intel Quartus Prime Version column to Revision History Table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.11.06</td>
<td>17.1.0</td>
<td>• Updated for latest Intel branding conventions.</td>
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| 2017.07.15       | 17.0.0                      | • Changed references from OpenCore Plus to Intel FPGA IP Evaluation Mode.  
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007.11.08</td>
<td>Added section on IP evaluation in teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007.09.15</td>
<td>Removed references to unsupported Logic Lock (Standard) flow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007.05.08</td>
<td>Updated steps for disabling evaluation mode.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Initial document release.</td>
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