

Re: Who is your favourite electronics guru?

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- *From:* John Fields <jfields@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 14 Aug 2006 10:41:52 -0500
-

On 14 Aug 2006 03:12:45 -0700, bill.sloman@xxxxxxxx wrote:

John Fields wrote:

On 13 Aug 2006 08:15:44 -0700, bill.sloman@xxxxxxxx wrote:

John Fields wrote:

On 13 Aug 2006 01:45:06 -0700,
bill.sloman@xxxxxxxx wrote:

John Fields wrote:

<snip>

He did more than outline, he did redesign
both the bipolar and the
CMOS 555 and showed the circuits.

Yes, he does show the circuits, but he doesn't show the
aspect ratios
of the resistors and all the other fine detail that makes a
complete
design.

You're an ass. I suppose every time you post a design here you
always include the PCB layout? Oh wait...

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You are the ass.

IKYABWAI?

You are inferring the existence of a complete design from the circuit diagram presented in the book – nothing in the book suggests that the redesign has ever been taken to the point where it might go through a fab.

And nothing I said indicated that's what I believed. Perhaps you misinterpreted: "showed the circuits" as something other than "showing the circuit electrical schematic diagrams."

In that sense we never post complete designs here – we just post circuit diagrams illustrating the central idea or ideas, which is what Hans Camazind did in his book.

Really?

Mostly a reasonably skilled designer can get from there to a practicable design without having to rethink anything or retrace their steps, but that process uses up an appreciable number of hours of skilled labour.

Damn, Bill, I never realized before what an incredible grasp of the obvious you possess!

Moreover,
your hate
for the 555
and your
willingness
to reject it

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for
any purpose
to which it
might be
eminently
suited
speaks
volumes
about your
ignorance.

I don't hate it – I despise it,
which isn't quite the same
thing. And
my experience has been that
for any task for which the
555 has been
"eminently suited" there has
been a better way of
tackling the problem
– usually based on looking
at the system as whole.

"System as a whole", you pathetic
blockhead? Perhaps 90% of the
applications requested here for which a 555
is suited are "systems"
where the only active device is the 555.

Because the dumb newbies who put up the applications have
over-simplified their system requirements to the point where
the 555
looks like a solution – almost always to the wrong problem.

Not dumb newbies, ignorant newbies who know what they want but don't
know exactly how to get it. As the dialogue progresses, we'll zero
in on and finally get them what they need and, in many cases, a 555
will be the perfect solution.

If you happen to be the other partner in the dialogue.

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No. You may have noticed that there are other people here who aren't afraid to voice their opinions, and if a 555 weren't an acceptable choice I'd be willing to bet that they'd have no qualms at all about posting that and suggesting a better alternative.

You, on the other hand, seem to be one of the few posters (perhaps the only one) who despises 555s to the point where rationality eludes you and you suggest, in pique, that a 4047 (or any other cumbersome device or circuit) is an acceptable substitute for a 555.

If it isn't, we'll find out what is and give them that solution.

A typical newbie request goes something like this:

"I need something to flash an LED for half a second or so every ten seconds or so, forever."

I'm pretty sure you'd come up with some harebrained scheme designed for the single purpose of excluding a 555. Probably a 12AX7 astable multivibrator instead of one 7555, one capacitor, and two resistors.

Further, ISTR that your favorite substitute for the 555 is some 14 pin monstrosity with twice the footprint area and a higher price tag than the 555, so you're certainly not choosing parts with any engineering in mind, you're trying to use something... anything... instead of a 555, just because...

We wasted a lomng time argueing about this, and you seem to have forgotten all the arguements.

It wasn't time wasted at all. You got your ass nailed and have chosen to relegate that fact to the dim recesses of your mind so you can pretend it didn't happen.

Nitwit. I've never used a CD4047 in a real design,

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Funny, I thought that you were suggesting it be used instead of a 555 in a design the OP was going to make real. Or do you offer "advice" on the basis that you think it'll never be used? I think that's probably something recipients of your "help" need to keep in mind in the future.

Try and remember the context.

It's not on me to do anything.

If you think I'm wrong, prove it.

and it certainly isn't one of my favourite parts. You are setting up a straw man with even less than your usual subtlety.

I'm not setting up a straw man at all. You were the one who pooh-poohed the 555 and offered up the 4047 as a "better" choice, even in spite of its much larger footprint and higher price, so you must have thought it had something going for it which the 555 didn't.

Complementary inputs and outputs.

Which weren't needed.

Also, since you say you've kept up with all the changes in chips since the stony ages, I would have assumed (since you didn't suggest a different chip) that the 4047 would be your favorite for the application, ergo one of your favorite parts.

It was the first astable that came to mind ...

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Other than the 555 in the circuit, you mean.

I don't have to work at not using the 555 – it simply isn't a part that professional engineers use very often.

How would you know?

I worked as an electronic engineer from 1973 to 2003 for some eight different organisations. In two of the organisations I was the only electronic engineer, and most of the detailed design was handled by sub-contractors whom I had to supervise – 1992–93 and 2000–2003. I've got to meet and work with a great many professional engineers.

So, since most of your work was solo and you despise 555s, what a surprise that your underlings, if they ever detailed a 555 into one of your "designs" were made to understand, in no uncertain terms, "NO 555s ALLOWED"

I've never had a design review where anybody – even the idiot manager – has asked me why I didn't use a 555.

The reason, then, is because you didn't attend many design reviews or because they were idiots.

There have been quite a few design reviews. Some of the managers were idiots when it came to electronics, but most of the engineers were at least good, and some were superb.

The good ones, as well as the superb, would then have been capable of deciding objectively whether a 555 was an acceptable/desirable choice, as opposed to your knee-jerk 555phobic reaction.

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You, however, have a big problem with not being able to choose the most suitable part for a job because of your attitude. Oh, well, you're the one on the dole, not me.

I'm on the dole because I'm too old – the only chances of work that I've seen have arisen from my demonstrable competence, so you've got my situation exactly 180 degrees wrong.

Yeah, demonstrable competence like choosing a big, fat, expensive chip you've never used on the basis that it's "better" than a smaller, less expensive, ubiquitously available one?

Demonstrable competence in designing for low volume production, where the cost of the design is the biggest single item in the total costs for the item over its entire life-cycle.

Hey, I've got news for ya, Bill, design time here is a non-issue because it's free, which lets me and anyone else who wants to, spend as much time as needed to come up with a good design, not some top heavy, cockamamie piece of shit like you're forced into doing because you've painted yourself into a corner where 555s aren't allowed.

You, on the other hand, are a Johnny one-note, who automatically optimises for relatively high volume production, and gets excited over a price difference that represents a few seconds of design time.

Nope. I've done both and my goal in either case is smaller, faster, better, cheaper. Since design time, here, isn't a constraint, (at least for me) it makes coming up with the right solution for the application much less onerous and allows me the luxury of being able to seek out many solutions and choose the best for the application. You, on the other hand, have hog-tied yourself by refusing to use the 555 for any application, so there ya go, just

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another restriction you've set up for yourself.

LOL, Bill, you're on the dole because you're comfortable in your situation and you're happy with the status quo.

I should be so lucky.

You must be, otherwise you'd change it.

Or do you consider yourself to be one of the men Thoreau saw living lives of quiet desperation?

No, it was a silly question to ask, period. I'm well aware of what's out there; I have to be, since I work.

It isn't evident in the comments you post.

Why should it be? This is a newsgroup and most of the requests are for circuits which are mundane and for which expensive new whiz-bang toys aren't needed. The stuff I post is generally pertinent to applications which aren't very demanding in terms of anything new but, if you watch carefully, every now and then when someone asks for something interesting you'll see something new in there, if its use is warranted.

You, on the other hand, merely kibitz.

At a level you don't aspire to.

LOL, the dog-catcher hardly aspires to the level of his canid targets.

The 555 (like the 741) is a hold-over from the

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Stone Age of modern
electronics.

So are you, so I don't see why you don't feel
comfortable with both
of them.

As it happens, I have survived since then, but – unlike you –
I did
keep an eye on the new components as they became
available and adapted
my design style to accommodate them – which is more than
you seem to
have managed.

Hey, I work with new stuff all the time!

But this isn't evident in the stuff you post.

It doesn't have to be. On this newsgroup I mostly post simple
solutions (albeit often ingenious (waves own flag)) for simple
problems.

Last job was building an instrument around a beautiful Freescale
MC68HC908JL8, next one's going to be... well, when it hits the
street I'll let you know. BTW, there won't be any 4047s (or 555s)
in it, so even crusty old _you_ might like it.

On second thought, Nahhh... ;)

Well, the MC68HC908JL8 looks as if it is the world's nicest 8-bit
processor with a built-in 8-bit wide multiplier and 16-bit wide divider
– but (hardware multiply and divide apart) it is pretty much what I was
working with in 1979,

Which would be???

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before British task division pretty much shut me
out of the jobs they reserved for programmers. I've worked with
instruments built around more capable computing hardware., and I can't
say that I'm all that impressed

Of course you can't. You're only impressed with what you and a few
others whom you consider to be in or above your "league" have done.

– but I am deeply envious ...

I'm sorry about that.

John Fields
Professional Circuit Designer
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