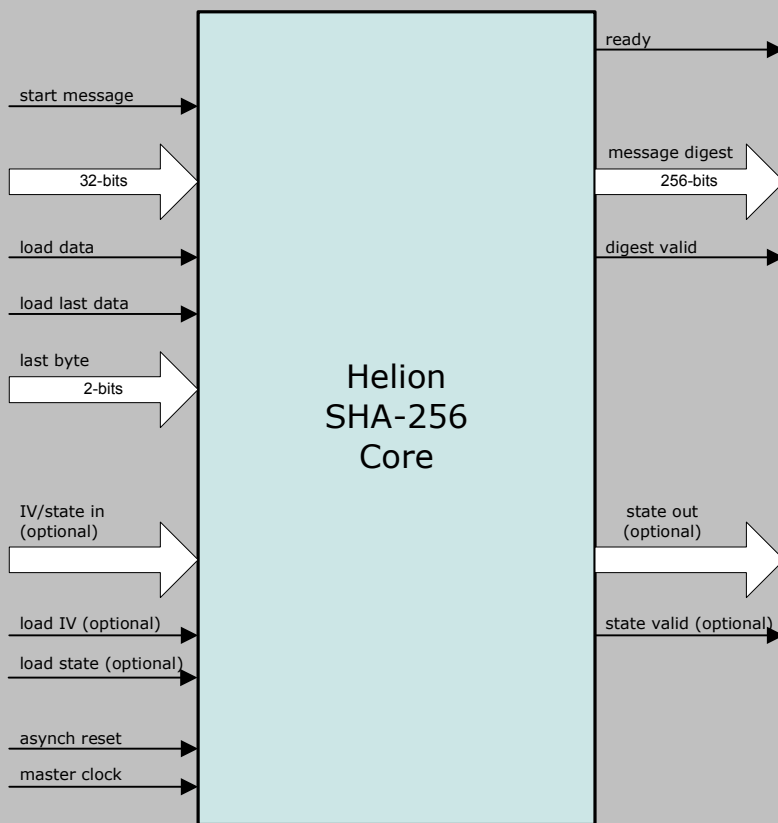


Helion Technology

FULL DATASHEET - Fast SHA-256 Hash Core for FPGA



Features

- Implements SHA-256 secure hash algorithm to NIST FIPS 180-3
- Fast operation – each 512-bit block requires only 66 master clock cycles
- Performs automatic message length calculation and padding insertion
- Optional user initialisation of IVs for efficient HMAC support
- HMAC wrapper available to make implementations quick and easy
- Optional state unload/reload feature for handling fragmented messages
- Simple external interface
- Highly optimised for use in each individual FPGA technology

Deliverables

- Target specific netlist or fully synthesisable RTL VHDL/Verilog
- VHDL/Verilog simulation model and testbench with FIPS test vectors
- Comprehensive user documentation

Overview

The Helion Fast SHA-256 core implements the SHA-256 secure hash algorithm according to FIPS 180-3. The SHA-256 hash algorithm takes as input a message of arbitrary length, processes the message as a series of 512-bit blocks, and produces as output a compressed representation of the message data in the form of a 256-bit message digest.

Applications for the core include implementations of the standard keyed-Hash Message Authentication Code (HMAC) described in FIPS 198. The SHA-256 algorithm has been proposed for use in the IPsec and TLS/SSL protocols, as well as Digital Signature applications, where a hash function is required to ensure both data integrity and origin authentication. It has also been approved by the NSA as part of the Suite B set of cryptographic algorithms for protecting classified US Government information.

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Functional Description

The Helion Fast SHA-256 hash core implements one of the most commonly used secure hash algorithms which is used where data integrity and/or origin authentication is a requirement. The SHA-256 hash processes an arbitrary length message by operating on successive 512-bit blocks of data, producing as output a final 256-bit message digest.

The core contains an internal 512-bit block store which may be loaded with message data under the control of external logic or a microprocessor while the core indicates it is ready. Once the block store is full the core indicates it is busy and executes the hash algorithm; on completion the core indicates it is ready to accept a further message block. The external logic is responsible for informing the core when the last message word is available at the data inputs and the location of the last message byte within the last word. This allows the core to calculate the exact message length and append message padding accordingly. When the last message block has been processed the core outputs the resulting message digest and indicates its validity.

Optionally, whilst loading the first message word, the external logic may also load customised initial values into the core. This allows pre-computed initial values to be used for efficient implementation of a Hash-based Message Authentication Code (HMAC); loading of these incurs no throughput penalty since they have their own dedicated input port. In addition, the internal hash state can be made accessible, so that it may be stored externally and subsequently reloaded; this may be a useful option where fragmented messages are being hashed.

Logic Utilisation and Performance

Helion has a long history in high-end FPGA design, and we therefore take great care when implementing our IP cores. As a result they have been designed from the ground up to be highly optimal for each individual FPGA technology - they are not simply based on a synthesised generic RTL ASIC design. The Helion Fast SHA-256 core makes use of the architectural features available in each FPGA technology to achieve the highest performance combined with the most efficient logic resource utilisation.

The latest logic area, performance figures, and datasheets for the Helion Fast SHA-256 core in a range of different technologies are available at <http://www.heliontech.com/sha256.htm>. Please feel free to contact us should you require further details.

About Helion

Helion is a long established British company based in Cambridge, England, offering a range of product-proven Data Security silicon IP cores backed up by our highly experienced and professional design service capabilities. Although we specialise in providing the highest performance data encryption and authentication IP, our interest does not stop there. Unlike headline IP vendors who try to supply a very diverse range of solutions, being specialists we can offer much more than just the IP core itself.

For instance, we are pleased to be able to supply up-front expert advice on any security applications which might take advantage of our technology. Many of our customers are adding data security into their existing systems for the first time, and are looking for a little assistance with how best to achieve this. We are pleased to help with suitable advice and support where necessary, and pride ourselves in our highly personal approach.

The quality of our IP is however the main reason our customers keep coming back for more. We passionately believe that if you are buying IP, it should have been designed with the ultimate in care, crafted to achieve the ultimate performance in each target technology, and thoroughly tested to ensure compliance with any associated standards. All this comes as standard with IP from Helion.

More Information

For more detailed information on this or any of our other products and services, please contact Helion and we will be pleased to discuss how we can assist with your individual requirements.



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