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Microchip Adds Low-Power-Consumption Transceiver and Agency-Certified Modules to Sub-GHz Wireless Networking Portfolio

Radio and Modules Provide Extremely Low Receive Current for Longer Battery Life in Wireless Sensor Networks and Metering Communications

CHANDLER, Ariz.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Microchip Technology Inc. (NASDAQ: MCHP), a leading provider of microcontroller, analog and Flash-IP solutions, today announced from the Embedded Systems Conference in Chicago the new MRF89XA transceiver with extremely low receive current of 3 mA for longer battery life in 868, 915 and 950 MHz Sub-GHz wireless networks. The 868 MHz MRF89XAM8A and 915 MHz MRF89XAM9A transceiver modules accelerate design cycles by removing the complexity of designing RF circuitry and the cost of obtaining agency certification.

The Sub-GHz frequency bands are sometimes preferred by designers for a broad range of battery-powered wireless sensor networks and metering communications. In addition to the low-power receive current for extending battery life, Microchip's MRF89XA transceiver and modules integrate a 12.5 dBm Power Amplifier for long transmission distances and a Low Noise Amplifier for -113 dBm enhanced receive sensitivity. To ease communication and further prolong battery life, the MRF89XA combines an integrated packet handler with a 64-byte FIFO for transmit and receive buffering.

"The new MRF89XA transceiver and modules are ideal for low-power wireless sensor and metering communication," said Steve Caldwell, director of Microchip's RF Products Division. "The combination of this transceiver with our nanoWatt XLP family of eXtreme Low Power PIC(R) microcontrollers provides an industry-leading platform for Sub-GHz wireless networking."

Example applications for the MRF89XA transceiver and modules include remote meter reading, home/building/industrial automation, remote keyless entry, tire-pressure monitoring, points of sale and toys.

Development Tools

The MRF89XAM8A (part # AC164138-1) and MRF89XAM9A (part # AC164138-2) PICtail(TM)/PICtail Plus Daughter Boards are expected to be available in Calendar Q3 2010, to enable development of 868 and 915 MHz applications, respectively. These daughter boards plug directly into the Explorer 16 and PIC18 Explorer boards for easy, modular development with hundreds of 8-bit PIC18, 16-bit PIC24 and 32-bit PIC32 MCUs, as well as the dsPIC(R) DSCs. These tools are available at http://www.microchip.com/get/9DWX.

Availability & Pricing

The MRF89XA transceiver is available today for samples and volume production in a compact, 5x5 mm 32-pin QFN package, at $1.76 each in 5,000-unit quantities. The MRF89XAM8A and MRF89XAM9A 12-pin, surface-mountable modules are expected to be available in Calendar Q3 2010, for $8.50 in single-unit quantities. Contact any Microchip sales representative or authorized worldwide distributor, or visit Microchip's e-commerce Web site for purchasing options: http://www.microchip.com/get/9DWX.

For additional technical information and design tools, please visit Microchip's online Wireless Design Center at http://www.microchip.com/get/D2C7.

About Microchip Technology

Microchip Technology Inc. (NASDAQ: MCHP) is a leading provider of microcontroller, analog and Flash-IP solutions, providing low-risk product development, lower total system cost and faster time to market for thousands of diverse customer applications worldwide. Headquartered in Chandler, Arizona, Microchip offers outstanding technical support along with dependable delivery and quality. For more information, visit the Microchip website at http://www.microchip.com/get/VBX3.

High-res Photos and Block Diagram Available Through Flickr or Editorial Contact (feel free to publish): http://www.microchip.com/get/X0VL

Tags / Keywords: Low Power, Wireless, RF, Radio Frequency, Radio, Transceiver, Sub-GHz, Microcontroller, MCU, PIC

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