## Typical Applications

- Wireless LANs
- Inventory Tracking
- Wireless Local Loop
- Secure Communication Links
- Wireless Security
- Digital Cordless Telephones


## Product Description

The RF2938 is a monolithic integrated circuit specifically designed for direct-sequence spread-spectrum systems operating in the 2.4 GHz ISM band. The part includes a direct conversion from IF receiver, quadrature demodulator, I/Q baseband amplifiers with gain control and RSSI, on-chip programmable baseband filters, dual data comparators. For the transmit side, a QPSK modulator and upconverter are provided. The design reuses the IF SAW filter for transmit and receive reducing the number of SAW filters required. Two cell or regulated three cell (3.6V maximum) battery applications are supported by the part. The part is also designed to be part of a 2.4 GHz chip set consisting of the RF2444 LNA/Mixer and one of the many RFMD high efficiency GaAs HBT PA's and a dual frequency synthesizer.
Optimum Technology Matching ${ }^{\circledR}$ Applied
$\square$ Si BJT
$\square$ GaAs HBTGaAs MESFET
$\square$ Si Bi-CMOSSiGe HBTSi CMOS



Package Style: TQFP-48 EDF, 9x 9

## Features

- 45MHz to 500 MHz IF Quad Demod
- On-Chip Variable Baseband Filters
- Quadrature Modulator and Upconverter
-2.7V to 3.6V Operation
- 2.4GHz PA Driver


## Ordering Information

RF2938TR13 2.4GHz Spread-Spectrum Transceiver (Tape \& Reel)
RF2938 PCBA Fully Assembled Evaluation Board

| RF Micro Devices, Inc. | Tel (336) 6641233 |
| :--- | ---: |
| 7628 Thorndike Road | Fax (336) 6640454 |
| Greensboro, NC 27409, USA | http://www.rfmd.com |

## RF2938

Absolute Maximum Ratings

| Parameter | Rating | Unit |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Supply Voltage | -0.5 to +3.6 | $\mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{DC}}$ |
| Control Voltages | -0.5 to +3.6 | $\mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{DC}}$ |
| Input RF Level | +12 | dBm |
| LO Input Levels | +5 | dBm |
| Operating Ambient Temperature | -40 to +85 | ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ |
| Storage Temperature | -40 to +150 | ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ |
| Moisture Sensitivity | JEDEC Level $5 @ 220^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ |  |

Refer to "Handling of PSOP and PSSOP Products" on page 16-15 for special handling information.

Refer to "Soldering Specifications" on page 16-13 for special soldering information.

Caution! ESD sensitive device.

RF Micro Devices believes the furnished information is correct and accurate at the time of this printing. However, RF Micro Devices reserves the right to make changes to its products without notice. RF Micro Devices does not assume responsibility for the use of the described product(s).

| Parameter | Specification |  |  | Unit | Condition |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Min. | Typ. | Max. |  |  |
| Overall Receiver <br> RX Frequency Range Cascaded Voltage Gain Cascaded Noise Figure Cascaded Input $\mathrm{IP}_{3}$ Cascaded Input $\mathrm{IP}_{3}$ RSSI Dynamic Range RSSI Output Voltage Compliance <br> IF LO Leakage Quadrature Phase Variation <br> Quadrature Amplitude Offset Quadrature Amplitude Variation | 45 | 8 to 93 5 30 105 60 1.1 to 2.3 -68 $\pm 2$ +0.25 $\pm 0.25$ | 500 <br> $\pm 5$ <br> $\pm 0.5$ | MHz dB dB $\mathrm{dB} \mu \mathrm{V}$ $\mathrm{dB} \mu \mathrm{V}$ dB V dBm 0 dB dB | $\mathrm{T}=25^{\circ} \mathrm{C}, \mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}=3.3 \mathrm{~V}$, Freq $=280 \mathrm{MHz}$, <br> $R_{B W}=10 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ <br> Dependent upon RX VGC <br> At maximum gain. <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}<1.2 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}>2.0 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> At $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}=1.4 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> Maximum RSSI is 2.5 V or $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}-0.3$, which- <br> ever is less. $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}=1.4 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> $\mathrm{f}=280 \mathrm{MHz}$, LO Power $=-10 \mathrm{dBm}$ <br> With expected LO amplitude and harmonic content. R1 $=270 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. <br> Q>1 |
| IF AMP and Quad Demod <br> Gain Control Range <br> Noise Figure <br> IF Input Impedance <br> Input $\mathrm{IP}_{3}$ |  | $\begin{gathered} 43 \\ 5 \\ 230-\mathrm{j} 400 \\ 75-\mathrm{j} 350 \\ -68 \\ -8 \end{gathered}$ |  | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{dB} \\ \mathrm{~dB} \\ \Omega \\ \Omega \\ \Omega \\ \mathrm{dBm} \\ \mathrm{dBm} \end{gathered}$ | VGC <1.2V max gain, VGC>2.0V=min gain <br> Single Sideband <br> Single ended. 280 MHz <br> Single ended. 374 MHz <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}<1.2 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}>2.0 \mathrm{~V}$ |
| RX Baseband Amplifiers THD <br> Gain Control Range <br> Output Voltage DC Output Voltage |  | $\begin{gathered} 3 \\ 3 \\ 30 \\ \\ 500 \\ 1.7 \end{gathered}$ |  | $\begin{gathered} \% \\ \% \\ \mathrm{~dB} \\ \\ \mathrm{mV} \mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{PP}} \\ \mathrm{~V} \end{gathered}$ | At maximum gain setting <br> At minimum gain setting <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}<1.2 \mathrm{~V}=$ max gain, <br> $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}>2.0 \mathrm{~V}=$ min gain <br> $R_{\mathrm{L}} \geq 5 \mathrm{k} \Omega, \mathrm{C}_{\mathrm{L}} \leq 5 \mathrm{pF}$ |
| RX Baseband Filters <br> Baseband Filter 3dB Bandwidth <br> Passband Ripple <br> Baseband Filter 3dB Frequency <br> Accuracy <br> Group Delay <br> Group Delay <br> Baseband Filter Ultimate Rejection <br> Output Impedance | 1 | $\begin{gathered} \pm 10 \\ 15 \\ 400 \\ >80 \\ 20 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 35 \\ 0.1 \\ \pm 30 \end{gathered}$ | MHz <br> dB <br> \% <br> ns <br> ns <br> dB <br> $\Omega$ | 5th order Bessel LPF. Set by BW CTRL <br> At 35 MHz , increasing as bandwidth decreases. <br> At 2 MHz . <br> Designed to drive $>5 \mathrm{k} \Omega, \leq 5 \mathrm{pF}$ load. |


| Parameter | Specification |  |  | Unit | Condition |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Min. | Typ. | Max. |  |  |
| Data Amplifiers <br> Bandwidth <br> Gain (Limiting mode) Rise and Fall Time Logic High Output Logic Low Output Hysteresis | $\begin{gathered} 40 \\ v_{\mathrm{CC}}-0.3 \mathrm{~V} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 60 \\ 2 \\ \mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{CC}} \\ \\ 30 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 0.3 | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{MHz} \\ \mathrm{~dB} \\ \mathrm{~ns} \\ \mathrm{~V} \\ \mathrm{~V} \\ \mathrm{mV} \end{gathered}$ | Open Loop. <br> 5 pF load. <br> Source Current 1 mA <br> Sink Current 1 mA . |
| Transmit Modulator and LPF <br> Filter Gain <br> Baseband Filter 3dB Bandwidth <br> Passband Ripple <br> Group Delay <br> Group Delay Ultimate Rejection Input Impedance Input AC Voltage Input DC Offset Requirement IF Frequency Range Output Impedance I/Q Phase Balance I/Q Gain Balance Conversion Voltage Gain <br> Output P1dB <br> Carrier Output <br> Harmonic Outputs | 1.6 45 | 15 <br> 400 <br> $>80$ $\begin{gathered} 1.7 \\ 2 \\ \pm 2 \\ 0.5 \pm 0.25 \\ 1.1 \\ -6 \\ -30 \\ \\ -30 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 35 <br> 0.1 <br> 200 <br> 1.8 <br> 500 <br> $\pm 5$ <br> 1.0 | dB <br> MHz <br> dB <br> ns <br> ns <br> dB <br> $\mathrm{k} \Omega$ <br> $m V_{p-p}$ <br> V <br> MHz <br> $\mathrm{k} \Omega$ <br> dB <br> V/V <br> dBm <br> dBm <br> dBc | Any setting <br> 5th order Bessel LPF, Set by BW CTRL <br> At 35 MHz , increasing as bandwidth decreases. <br> At 2 MHz . <br> Single ended <br> Linear, Single ended. <br> For correct operation. <br> Open Collector when TX on, hi-Z when off <br> With Current Combination into $50 \Omega$ singleended load <br> With Current Combination into $50 \Omega$ singleended load <br> Without external offset adjustments. <br> 280 MHz |
| Transmit VGA and Upconverter VGA Gain Range VGA Input Voltage Range VGA Gain Sensitivity VGA Input Impedance <br> RF Mixer Output Impedance VGA/Mixer Conversion Gain VGA/Mixer Output Power VGA/Mixer Output Power |  | $\begin{gathered} 17 \\ 1.0 \text { to } 2.0 \\ 17 \\ 230-\mathrm{j} 400 \\ 75-\mathrm{j} 350 \\ 50 \\ +10 \text { to }+27 \\ -9 \\ -4 \end{gathered}$ |  | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{dB} \\ \mathrm{~V} \\ \mathrm{~dB} / \mathrm{V} \\ \Omega \\ \Omega \\ \Omega \\ \Omega \\ \mathrm{~dB} \\ \mathrm{dBm} \\ \\ \\ \mathrm{dBm} \end{gathered}$ | Positive Slope <br> 280 MHz <br> 374 MHz <br> With matching elements. <br> With $50 \Omega$ match on the output. <br> 1 dB compression - Single Side Band, <br> $\mathrm{TX} \mathrm{GC=1.0V}$ <br> 1 dB compression - Single Side Band, <br> TX GC=2.0V |

## RF2938

| Parameter | Specification |  |  | Unit |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :--- |
|  | Min. | Typ. | Max. |  |  |


| Pin | Function | Description | Interface Schematic |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 2 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 3 | PD | This pin is used to power up or down the transmit and receive baseband sections. A logic high powers up the quad demod mixers, TX and RX GmC LPF's, baseband VGA amps, data amps, and IF LO buffer $\mathrm{amp} /$ phase splitter. A logic low powers down the entire IC for sleep mode. Also, see State Decode Table. |  |
| 4 | RX EN | Enable pin for the receiver 15 dB gain IF amp and the RX VGA amp. Powers up all receiver functions when PD is high, turns off the receiver IF circuits when low. Also, see State Decode Table. | See pin 3. |
| 5 | TX EN | This pin is used to enable the transmit upconverter, buffer amps, 15 db IF amp, quad mod mixers, TX LO buffer, TX VGA, and PA driver. TX EN is active low, when $T X E N<1 \mathrm{~V}$, the transmit circuit is active if PD is high. A logic high (TX EN $>2 \mathrm{~V}$ ) disables the transmit IF/RF circuitry and quad mod. Also, see State Decode Table. | See pin 3. |
| 6 | VCC1 | Power supply for RX VGA amplifier, IC logic and RX references. |  |
| 7 | RX IF IN | IF input for receiver section. Must have DC blocking cap. The capacitor value should be appropriate for the IF frequency. External matching to $50 \Omega$ recommended. For half duplex operation, connect RX IF IN and TX IF IN signals together after the DC blocking caps, then run a transmission line from the output of the IF SAW. AC coupling capacitor must be less than 150 pF to prevent delay in switching $R X$ to $T X / T X$ to $R X$. | See pin 8. |
| 8 | TX IF IN | Input for the TX IF signal after SAW filter. External DC blocking cap required. External matching to $50 \Omega$ recommended. For half duplex operation, connect RX IF IN and TX IF IN signals together after the DC blocking caps, then run a transmission line from the output of the IF SAW. AC coupling capacitor must be less than 150 pF to prevent delay in switching RX to TX/TX to RX. |  |
| 9 | VCC9 | Power supply for the TX 15dB gain amp and TX VGA. |  |
| 10 | TX VGC | Gain control setting for the transmit VGA. Positive slope. |  |
| 11 | IF LO | IF LO input. Must have DC blocking cap. The capacitor value should be appropriate for the IF frequency. LO frequency=2xIF. Quad mod/ demod phase accuracy requires low harmonic content from IF LO, so it is recommended to use an $\mathrm{n}=3$ LPF between the IF VCO and IF LO. This is a high impedance input and the recommended matching approach is to simply add a $100 \Omega$ shunt resistor at this input to constrain the mismatch. This pin requires a $6.5 \mu \mathrm{~A} D \mathrm{D}$ bias current. This can be accomplished with a $270 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ resistor to $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$ for 3.3 V operation. |  |
| 12 | VCC8 | Power supply for IF LO buffer and quadrature phase network. |  |
| 13 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 14 | RF OUT | This is the output transistor of the power amp stage. It is an open collector output. The output match is formed by an inductor to $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$, which supplies DC and a series cap. |  |
| 15 | RF OUT | This is the output transistor of the power amp stage. It is an open collector output. The output match is formed by an inductor to $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$, which supplies DC and a series cap. | See pin 14. |
| 16 | VCC6 | Power supply for the PA driver amp. This inductance to ground via decoupling, along with an internal series capacitor, forms the interstage match. | See pin 14. |

## RF2938

| Pin | Function | Description | Interface Schematic |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 17 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 18 | PA IN | Input to the power amplifier stage. This is a $50 \Omega$ input. Requires DC blocking/tuning cap. | See pin 14. |
| 19 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 20 | VCC5 | Supply for the RF LO buffer, RF upconverter and amplifier. |  |
| 21 | RF LO | Single ended LO input for the transmit upconverter. External matching to $50 \Omega$ and a DC block are required. | See pin 20. |
| 22 | RF OUT | Upconverted Transmit signal. This $50 \Omega$ output is intended to drive an RF filter to suppress the undesired sideband, harmonics, and other out-of-band mixer products. | See pin 20. |
| 23 | IF1 OUT- | The inverting open collector output of the quadrature modulator. This pin needs to be externally biased and DC isolated from other parts of the circuit. This output can drive a Balun with IF1 OUT + , to convert to unbalanced to drive a SAW filter. The Balun can be either broadband (transformer) or narrowband (discrete LC matching). Alternatively, just IF1 OUT + can be used to drive a SAW single-ended with an RF choke (high Z at IF) from $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$ to IF1 OUT-. |  |
| 24 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 25 | IF1 OUT+ | The non-inverting open collector output of the quadrature modulator. This pin needs to be externally biased and DC isolated from other parts of the circuit. This output can drive a Balun with IF1 OUT-, to convert to unbalanced to drive a SAW filter. The Balun can be either broadband (transformer) or narrowband (discrete LC matching). Alternatively, just IF1 OUT+ can be used to drive a SAW single-ended with an RF choke (high Z at IF) from $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$ to IF1 OUT+. | See pin 23. |
| 26 | TXI BP | This is the in-phase modulator bypass pin. A 10 nF capacitor to ground is recommended. |  |
| 27 | TXI DATA | I input to the baseband 5 pole Bessel LPF for the transmit modulator. |  |
| 28 | TXQ BP | This is the quadrature modulator bypass pin. A 10 nF capacitor to ground is recommended. |  |
| 29 | TXQ DATA | Q input to the baseband 5 pole Bessel LPF for the transmit modulator. |  |
| 30 | VCC4 | Power supply for quadrature modulator. |  |
| 31 | I OUT | Baseband analog signal output for in-phase channel. 500 mV P-p linear output. |  |
| 32 | RXI DATA | Logic-level data output for the in-phase channel. This is a digital output signal obtained from the output of a Schmitt trigger. <br> 0.3 V to $\mathrm{VCC} 3-0.3 \mathrm{~V}$ swing minimum. |  |
| 33 | Q OUT | Baseband analog signal output for quadrature channel. 500 mV P-p linear output. |  |
| 34 | RXQ DATA | Logic-level data output for the quadrature channel. This is a digital output signal obtained from the output of a Schmitt trigger. <br> 0.3 V to $\mathrm{VCC} 3-0.3 \mathrm{~V}$ swing minimum. |  |
| 35 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |


| Pin | Function | Description | Interface Schematic |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 36 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 37 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 38 | RSSI | Received signal strength indicator. Connect 8.2 pF to ground. Output impedance is $40 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ in parallel with 2 pF . |  |
| 39 | DCFB I | DC feedback capacitor for in-phase channel. Requires decoupling capacitor to ground. ( 22 nF recommended) |  |
| 40 | DCFB Q | DC feedback capacitor for quadrature channel. Requires capacitor to ground. (22nF recommended) |  |
| 41 | VCC3 | Supply for the I and Q data amps. This pin should be bypassed with a 10 nF capacitor connected as direct as possible to GND3. Ground this pin if data amps are not used. |  |
| 42 | VREF 2 | Gain control reference voltage. No current should be drawn from this pin $(<50 \mu \mathrm{~A}) .2 .0 \mathrm{~V}$ nominal. |  |
| 43 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| 44 | BW CTRL | This pin requires a resistor to ground to set the baseband LPF bandwidth of the receiver and transmit GmC filter amps. |  |
| 45 | VCC2 | Supply for the I and Q baseband and GmC filters. This pin should be bypassed with a 10 nF capacitor. |  |
| 46 | VREF 1 | This is a bypass pin for the bias circuits of the GmC filter amps and for I/Q inputs. No current should be drawn from this pin (<10 A ). 1.7V nominal. |  |
| 47 | RX VGC | Receiver IF and baseband amp gain control voltage. Negative slope. |  |
| 48 | NC | No internal connection. May be grounded or connected on adjacent signal or left floating. Connect to ground for best results. |  |
| Pkg <br> Base |  | Ground for all circuitry in the device. A very low inductance from the base to the PCB groundplane is essential for good performance. Use an array of vias immediately underneath the device. |  |
|  | ESD | This diode structure is used to provide electrostatic discharge protection to 3 kV using the Human body model. The following pins are protected: 3-6, 9, 10, 12, 26-34, 38-42, 44-47. |  |

## RF2938

| State Decode Table | Input Pins |  |  | Internally Decoded Signals |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | PD | RX EN | TX EN | BB EN | RXIF EN | TXRF EN |
| Sleep Mode | 0 | $x$ | $x$ | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Baseband Only | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Receive Mode | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Transmit Mode | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Full Duplex | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |


| NOTES |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| BB_EN Enables: |  |
|  | TX_LPF's and buffers |
|  | Quad Demodulator mixers |
|  | Baseband VGA and gm-C LPF's |
|  | Data Amplifiers |
|  | IF LO buffer/phase splitters |
|  |  |
| RXIF_EN Enables: |  |
|  | Front-end IF amplifier (RX) |
|  | RX IF VGA amplifiers |
|  |  |
| TXRF_EN Enables: |  |
|  | Front-end IF amplifier (TX) |
|  | TX VGA |
|  | RF upconverter and buffer |
|  | PA driver |
|  | RF LO buffer |
|  | Quad Modulator mixers |

## RF2938

Detailed Functional Block Diagram


## RF2938

## Theory of Operation

## RECEIVER

## RX IF AGC/Mixer

The front end of the IF AGC starts with a single-ended input and a constant gain amp of 15 dB . This first amp stage sets the noise figure and input impedance of the IF section, and its output is taken differentially. The rest of the signal path is differential until the final baseband output, which is converted back to single-ended. Following the front end amp are multiple stages of variable gain differential amplifiers, giving the IF signal path a gain range of 9 dB to 52 dB . The noise figure (in max gain mode) of the IF amplifiers is 5 dB , which should not degrade the system noise figure.

The IF to BB mixers are double-balanced, differential in, differential out, mixers with 5 dB conversion gain. The LO for each of these mixers is shifted $90^{\circ}$ so that the I and $Q$ signals are separated in the mixers.

## RX Baseband Amps, Filters, Data Slicers, and DC Feedback

At baseband frequency, there are multiple AGC amplifiers offering a gain range of 0 dB to 30 dB . Following these amplifiers are fully integrated gm-C low pass filters to further filter out-of-band signals and spurs that get through the SAW filter, anti-alias the signal prior to the $A / D$ converter, and to band-limit the signal and noise to achieve optimal signal-to-noise ratio. The 3dB cut-off frequency of these low pass filters is programmable with a single external resistor, and continuously variable from 1 MHz to 35 MHz . A five-pole Bessel type filter response was chosen because it is optimal for data systems due to its flat delay response and clean step response. Butterworth and Chebychev type filters ring when given a step input making them less ideal for data systems.

The filter outputs, with +6 dBm gain, drive the linear 500 mV PP signal off-chip, but also connect internally to a data slicer which squares up the signal to CMOS levels, and drives this "data" signal off-chip. This data slicer is a high speed CMOS comparator with 30 mV of hysteresis and self-aligned input DC offset. This data slicer can be independently disabled if only the linear outputs are desired.

DC feedback is built into the baseband amplifier section to correct for input offsets. Large DC offsets can arise when a mixer LO leaks to the mixer input and then mixes with itself. DC offsets can also result from random transistor mismatches. A large external capacitor is needed for the DC feedback to set the high pass
cutoff, and this capacitor is reused to set the DC input level for the self-aligned data slicer.

## RSSI and $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}$ Operation

The receive signal path also has an RSSI output which is the sum of both the I and Q channels. The RSSI has about 60 dBm of dynamic range and the RSSI characteristic is optimized to give best linearity and dynamic range at a VGC setting of 1.4 V . It is recommended that the system sets VGC to 1.4 V to take an RSSI reading to make channel activity and signal level decisions, then adjusts VGC to obtain optimum dynamic range from the $I_{\text {OUT }}$ and $Q_{\text {OUT }}$ outputs.

## LO Input Buffers

## RF LO Buffer

The RF LO input has a limiting amplifier before the mixer on both the RF2444 (RX) and RF2938 (TX). This limiting amplifier design and layout is identical on both ICs, which will make the input impedance the same as well. Having this amplifier between the VCO and mixer minimizes any reverse effect the mixer has on the VCO, expands the range of acceptable LO input levels, and holds the LO input impedance constant when switching between RX and TX. The LO input power range is -18 dBm to +5 dBm , which should make it easy to interface to any VCO and frequency synthesizer.

## IF LO Buffer

The IF LO input has a limiting amplifier before the phase splitting network to amplify the signal and help isolate the VCO from the IC. Also, the LO input signal must be twice the desired intermediate frequency. This simplifies the quadrature network and helps reduce the LO leakage onto the RX_IF input pin (since the LO input is now at a different frequency than the IF). The amplitude of this input needs to be between -15 dBm and 0 dBm . Excessive IF LO harmonic content affects phase balance of the modulator and demodulator so it is recommended that a simple $\mathrm{n}=3$ low pass filter is included between VCO and IF LO input. The IF LO input requires a $D C$ bias current of $+6.5 \mu \mathrm{~A}$. This can be accomplished with a $270 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ resistor to $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}$ for 3.3 V operation. Failing to provide this will cause a phase imbalance in the IF LO quadrature divider of up to $8^{\circ}$, which in turn causes a similar imbalance in the I/Q outputs and the $\mathrm{T}_{\mathrm{X}}$ modulator.

## RF2938

## TRANSMITTER

## TX LPF and Mixers

The transmit section starts with a pair of 5 -pole Bessel filters identical to the filters in the receive section and with the same 3 dB frequency. These filters pre-shape and band-limit the digital or analog input signals prior to the first upconversion to IF. These filters have a high input impedance and expect an input signal of $200 \mathrm{mV}_{\text {PP }}$ typical. Following these low pass filters are the I/Q quadrature upconverter mixers. Each of these mixers is half the size and half the current of the RF to IF downconverter on the RF2444. Recall that this upconverted signal may drive the same SAW filter (in half duplex mode) as the RF2444 and therefore share the same load. Having the sum of the two BB to IF mixers equal in size and DC current to the RF to IF mixer, will minimize the time required to switch between $R X$ and TX, and will facilitate the best impedance match to the filter.

## TX VGA

The AGC after the SAW filter starts with a switch and a constant gain amplifier of 15 dB , which is identical to the circuitry on the receive IF AGC. This was, done, as on the $R X$ signal path, so that the input impedance will remain constant for different TX gain control voltages. Following this 15 dB gain amplifier is a single stage of gain control offering 15 dB gain range. The main purpose of adding this variable gain is to give the system the flexibility to use different SAW filters and image filters with different insertion loss values. This gain could also be adjusted real time, if desired.

## TX Upconverter

The IF to RF upconverter is a double-balanced differential mixer with a differential to single-ended converter on the output to supply 0 dBm peak linear power to the image filter. The upconverted SSB signal should have -6 dBm power at this point, and the image will have the same power, but due to the correlated nature of the signal and image, the output must support 0 dBm of linear power to maintain linearly.

## +6dBm PA Driver

The SSB output of the upconverter is -6 dBm of linear power. The image filter should have at most 4 dB of insertion loss while removing the image, LO, 2LO and any other spurs. The filter output should supply the PA driver input -10 dBm of power.

The PA driver is a two-stage class A amplifier with 10 dB gain per stage and capable of delivering 6 dBm of linear power to a $50 \Omega$ load, and has a 1 dB compression point of 12 dBm . For lower power applications, this PA driver can be used to drive a $50 \Omega$ antenna directly.

## RF2938



Figure 1. Entire Chipset Functional Block Diagram

## Evaluation Board Schematic

(Download Bill of Materials from www.rfmd.com.)


## RF2938

## Evaluation Board Layout <br> Board Size 2.580" x 2.086"

Thickness: Top to Ground Laminate, 0.008"; Ground to Bottom Laminate, 0.023";
Board Material FR-4; Multi-Layer




RF Conversion Gain versus VGC ( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=2.7 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{Tx}$ IF in=280Mhz-50dBm, RF LO=2160MHz@-10dBm)


RF Conversion Gain versus VGC
( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=3.6 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{Tx}$ IF in=280MHz@-50dBm, RF LO=2160MHz@-10dBm)


IF-RF IIP3 versus VGC


RF Conversion Gain versus VGC
( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=3.15 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{Tx}$ IF in=280MHz@-50dBm, RF LO=2160MHz @-10dBm)

0.50 .60 .70 .80 .91 .01 .11 .21 .31 .41 .51 .61 .71 .81 .92 .02 .12 .22 .32 .42 .5 VGC (VDC)

IF-RF IIP3 versus VGC
( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=2.7 \mathrm{~V}$, Tx IF in=12dB Below IP1dB, RF LO=2160MHz@-10dBm)


IF-RF IIP3 versus VGC
( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=3.6 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{Tx}$ IF in=12dB Below IP1dB, RF LO=2160MHz@-10dBm)



## RF2938



Input P1dB versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}$ (Temp=Ambient, $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=3.15 \mathrm{~V}$, RX IFin=280.5MHz, Rew=100k , IF LO=560MHz@-10dBm)


I \& Q Amplitude Balance versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}{ }^{\left(\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{CC}}=3.15 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{RX}\right.} \mathrm{IF}_{\mathrm{IN}_{\mathrm{N}}}=280.5 \mathrm{MHz}$,


RX Gain versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}\left(\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=2.7-3.6 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{RX}\right.$ IFiN $=280.5 \mathrm{MHz}, \mathrm{R}_{\mathrm{Bw}}=100 \mathrm{~K} \Omega, 1$ \& Q


Noise Figure versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{GC}}$ (Temp=Ambient, $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{Cc}}=3.15 \mathrm{~V}$


I \& Q Phase Balance versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{Gc}}\left(\mathrm{v}_{\mathrm{cc}}=2.7-3.6 \mathrm{v}\right.$, RX IFin=280.5MHz, Rew=100k $\Omega$, I \& Q out=500mV ${ }_{\text {p.p, }}$ IF LO $\left.=560 \mathrm{MHz} @-10 \mathrm{dBm}\right)$


## RF2938



RSSI versus Temp ( $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}=3.15 \mathrm{~V}, \mathrm{VGC}=1.4 \mathrm{~V}$, IF LO=-10dBm)


PA IIP3 versus $\mathrm{V}_{\text {cc }}$


RSSI versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{Cc}}\left(\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{Gc}}=\mathbf{1 . 4 V}\right.$, Temp $=\mathbf{2 5}{ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$, IF LO=-10dBm)




## RF2938

PA 2 fO versus $\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{cc}}$


