
A power factor corrector with MDmeshTM II and SiC diode

Introduction

The electrical and thermal performances of switching converters are strongly influenced by the behavior of the switching devices. Modern power devices design requires a trade-off in terms of forward voltage drop, breakdown voltage and switching speed. In AC-DC converters such as PFC circuits, efficiency is strongly related to the switch performances and the diode recovery behavior (please refer to [1](#) in *Bibliography on page 18*). In the past the benefits of the improved MOSFET performances have been generally spoiled by the diode current recovery behavior. In recent years the introduction of the Silicon Carbide (SiC) Schottky diode has led to an effective advantage in the switching transient losses reduction, thanks to the very low reverse recovery current with respect to the traditional fast diode. The impact on the converter of the improved characteristics of both devices leads to an increase in efficiency.

In this application note the new generation of super-junction MOSFET (MDmeshTM II) and SiC diodes has been used to design a 200 W continuous PFC converter. The dynamic characteristics of both super-junction MOSFET and SiC diodes, are investigated in the actual application and compared with the traditional components in order to carry out the qualitative and quantitative improvements in terms of switching performances and converter efficiency. The presented experimental results allow analysis of information for the converter designers focusing on the determination of benefits and effectiveness of the devices utilized in the considered application.

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1 Design consideration

The following PFC design example is referred to as an experimental board, used for demonstration purposes as described in AN628 (please refer to [2](#) in *Bibliography on page 18*). The design target specifications are:

- UNIVERSAL AC input supply voltage $V_{in_{rms}} = 88 \text{ V to } 264 \text{ V}$
- DC output regulated voltage $V_O = 400 \text{ V}$
- Rated output power $P_O = 200 \text{ W}$
- Full-load output ripple $\Delta V_{out-ripple} = \pm 8 \text{ V}$
- Maximum overvoltage value $\Delta V_{out} = 50 \text{ V}$
- Switching frequency $f_{SW} = 100 \text{ kHz}$
- Maximum Inductor current ripple $\Delta I_L = 35\% \text{ of } I_{L_{rms}}$
- Worst-condition efficiency (at minimum input voltage) $\eta = 90\%$

The guidelines for controller design (L4981A) and power component selection can be found in AN628 (please refer to [2](#) in *Bibliography on page 18*). In the next section instead we will discuss the choice of the power MOSFET and boost diode.

2 Power MOSFET

Since the MOSFET device has to sustain a minimum blocking voltage value of 500 V ($V_{DSS} = V_{out} + V_{OUT} - \text{ripple} + V_{out}$), then the most important parameter for the selection is the $R_{DS(on)}$ for its relation with the power dissipation.

The device STP12NM50N with its 500 V BV_{DSS} and the $R_{DS(on)}$ ($R_{DS(on)max} = 0.38$ at $T = 25$ °C), is the best choice for the application. The losses at turn-on depend on the selected boost diode and on the choice of the R_G chosen to reduce the di/dt and therefore the levels of EMI of the converter. As described in AN628 (please refer to 2) a gate resistance of 15 Ω has been selected for turn-on, while a diode is used for a fast turn-off.

- The maximum "on state" power dissipation evaluated at the minimum input mains voltage is:

Equation 1

$$P_{ON-MAX} = I_{Qrmsmax}^2 \cdot R_{on-max} = (2.15)^2 \cdot 0.38 = 1.76 \text{ W}$$

- The switching (on + off) losses can be estimated as:

Equation 2

$$P_{SW} = P_{crossover} + P_{REC} = t_{cr} \cdot V_{out} \cdot f_{sw} \cdot I_{rms} + P_{REC}$$

where, $P_{crossover}$ are the switching losses due to the crossover time of the power MOSFET while P_{REC} is the contribution due to the diode recovery.

In general P_{REC} depends on the di/dt value of the current MOSFET at turn-on (and this depends on the R_G value selected and the intrinsic capacitance of the MOSFET) because this di/dt sets the value of I_{RM} on the boost diode recovery current. To take into account the boost diode recovery effect, for the silicon diode, an easy approach is to compute two times the current value (at turn-on). This means that P_{SW} is 1.5 times the $P_{crossover}$ value, (see AN628), but for the SiC diode we can suppose (thanks to superior switching performances) that the P_{REC} value is negligible.

Equation 3

$$P_{SW} = (15ns \cdot 400V \cdot 100kHz \cdot 2.15A) = 1.3 \text{ W}$$

The capacitive losses at turn-on to be added are:

Equation 4

$$P_{capacitive} \approx \frac{10}{3} \cdot C_{OSS} \cdot V_{out}^{1.5} \cdot f_{sw} = \frac{10}{3} \cdot 230pF \cdot (400)^{1.5} \cdot 100kHz = 0.6 \text{ W}$$

where C_{OSS} is the drain capacitance at $V_{DS} = 25$ V.

To reduce the switching losses at turn-off, a RCD snubber is used and in order to keep the junction temperature at a safe level at worst case condition, low-line input voltage (88 V) and full load (200 W), a small heatsink is used.

3 Booster diode

The booster diode is selected to withstand the output voltage and current. Moreover, it has to be as fast as possible in order to reduce the power switch losses (please refer to [3](#) in [Bibliography on page 18](#)). The STPSC806D (600 V/8 A) SiC diode matches these specifications and is especially suitable for this application. This part offers the best solution for the continuous current mode operation due to its very fast recovery time, 15 ns typical. The diode power losses can be split in two contributions: conduction losses and switching losses.

The conduction losses can be estimated by:

Equation 5

$$P_{\text{Don}} = V_{\text{to}} \cdot I_{\text{out}} + R_{\text{d}} \cdot I_{\text{Drms}}^2$$

with

Equation 6

$$I_{\text{Drms}} = \frac{P_{\text{out}}}{V_{\text{Ipk}}} \sqrt{\frac{16 \cdot V_{\text{Ipk}}}{3 \cdot \pi \cdot V_{\text{out}}}}$$

The switching losses are:

Equation 7

$$P_{\text{sw}} = V_{\text{out}} \cdot Q_{\text{rr}} \cdot f_{\text{SW}}$$

where

- V_{to} = threshold voltage
- R_{d} = differential resistance
- V_{Ipk} = line voltage peak value
- V_{out} = DC output voltage
- I_{Drms} = RMS value of diode current
- Q_{rr} = total inverse recovery charge of diode

At low-line input voltage the conduction losses are bigger with respect to the case of high-line voltage while the switching losses are always negligible due to the small value of Q_{rr} for every value of di/dt of current imposed by the MOSFET (at turn-on). The last instance is not true for the silicon diode, because Q_{rr} is bigger and greatly depends on the di/dt value.

Furthermore the silicon diode performance are temperature-dependent (V_f , recovery current, etc.), while the SiC diode has the same behavior also for high temperature (please refer to [1](#) in [Bibliography on page 18](#)). In the worst case:

Equation 8

$$P_{\text{Don}} = V_{\text{to}} \cdot I_{\text{out}} + R_{\text{d}} \cdot I_{\text{Drms}}^2 = 0.9\text{V} \cdot 0.5\text{A} + 0.065\Omega \cdot 1.28^2\text{A}^2 = 0.55\text{W}$$

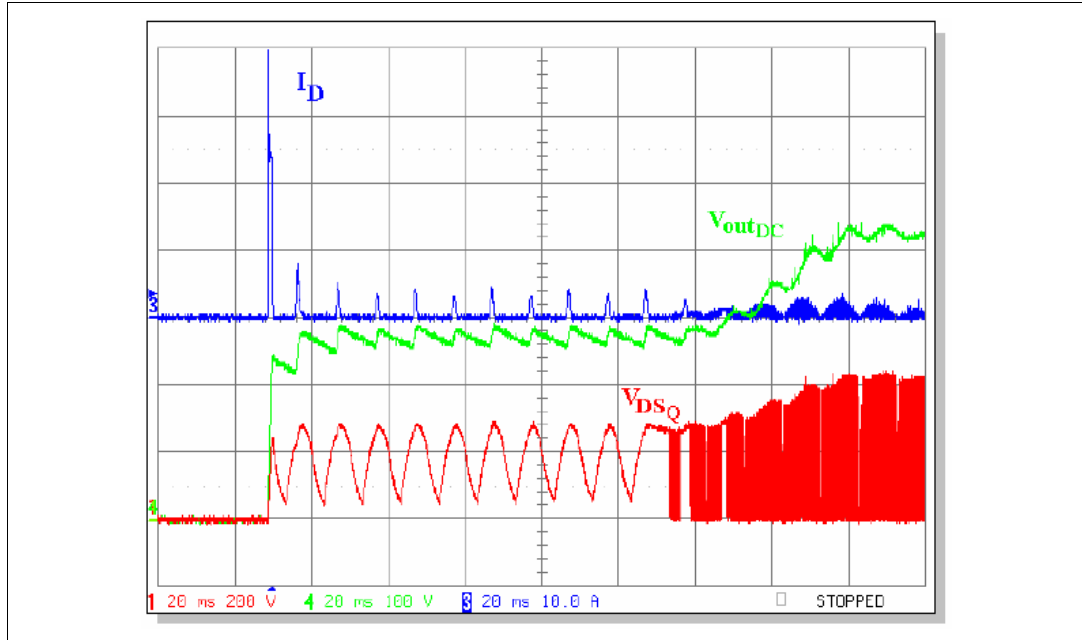
Equation 9

$$P_{\text{sw}} \cong 0\text{W}$$

Another important parameter to take into account for the choice of boost diode is the I_{FSM} value. At startup the output capacitor sinks much current (it is discharged) and the boost

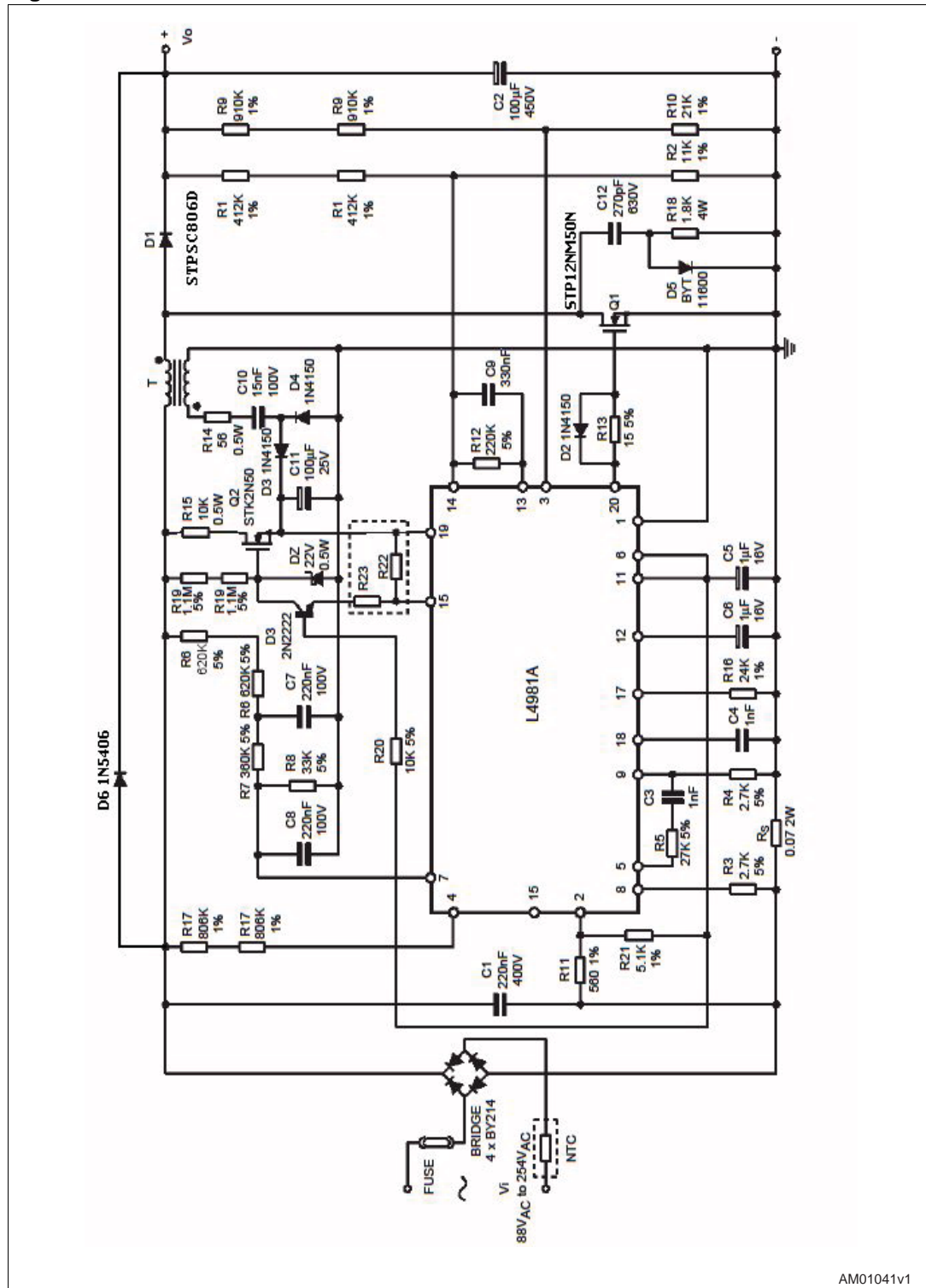
diode must conduct high peak level current. In this application at startup, the max peak current in the diode is about 40 A, therefore, a bypass diode must be used, (1N5406 standard diode low cost), with a high I_{FSM} value, because the SiC's I_{FSM} value guaranteed in the datasheet is 30 A.

Figure 1. Current diode ID at startup



The other components have been designed with the criteria already described in other application notes and their values are given in the schematic ([Figure 2](#)).

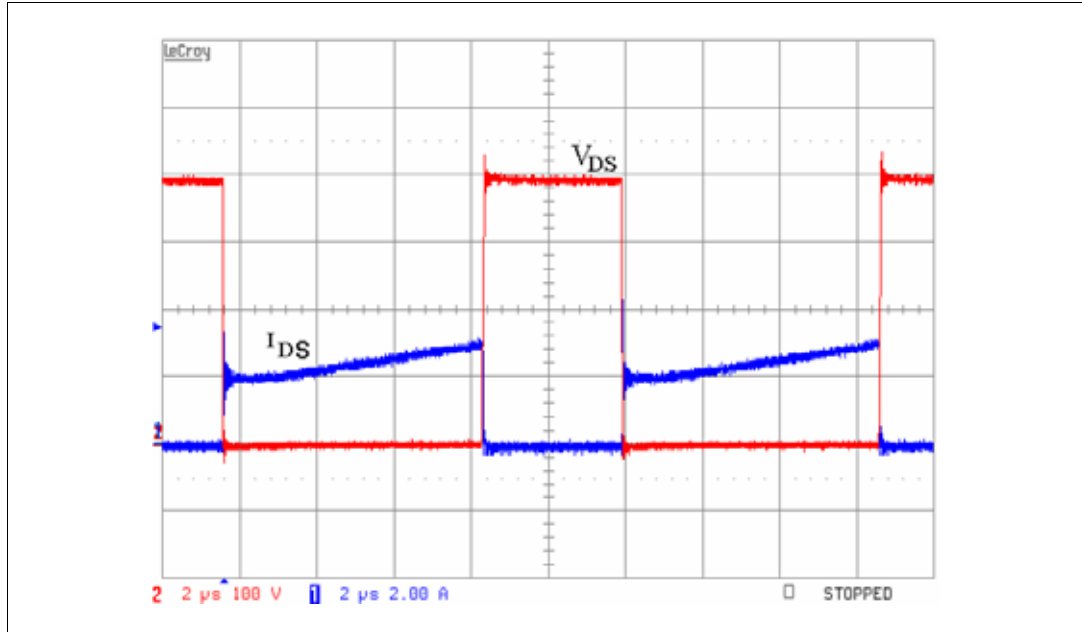
Figure 2. 200 W evaluation board circuit



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In [Figure 3](#) a switching cycle of the MOSFET device is reported, while in [Figure 4, 5, 6, 7](#) and [Figure 8, 9, 10](#) and [11](#) are showed the turn-on and the turn-off MOS waveform for several input voltage and in full load condition (400 V/ 0.5 A).

Figure 3. Switching cycle waveforms for MOSFET



In the [Table 1](#) are reported the energy loss at turn-on and turn-off versus V_{in} .

Table 1. MOSFET energy losses using SiC diode

V_{in} [Vac]	E_{on} [uJ]	E_{off} [uJ]
88	14.1	6.3
110	12	6
220	9	6
264	9	5.9

We observe that the value of switching losses in the worst case ($V_{in}=88$ Vac) is very close with the value estimated in the design procedure equal to the sum of [\(Equation 3\)](#) and [\(Equation 4\)](#):

Equation 10

$$P_{SW} = (E_{on} + E_{off}) \cdot f_{sw} = (14.1 + 6.3) \mu J \cdot 100 \text{ kHz} = 2.04 \text{ W}$$

Figure 4. Turn-on switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 88 Vac

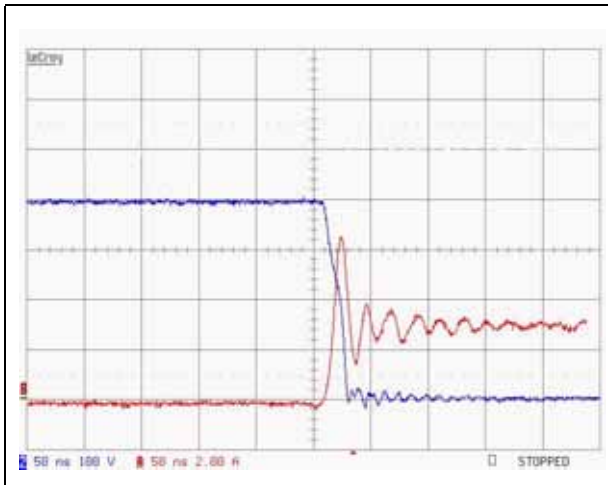


Figure 5. Turn-on switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 110 Vac

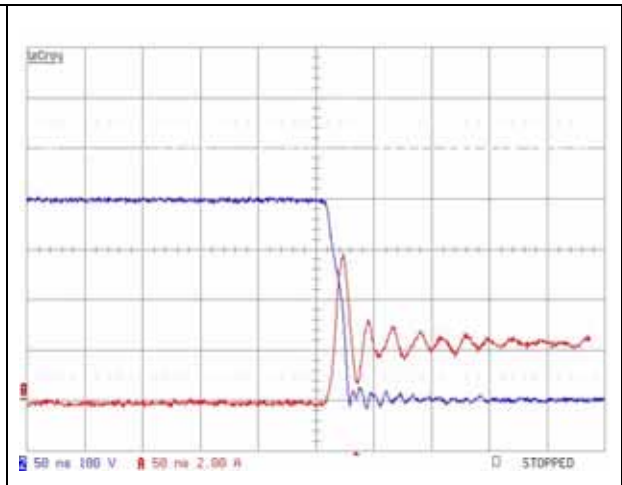


Figure 6. Turn-on switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 220 Vac

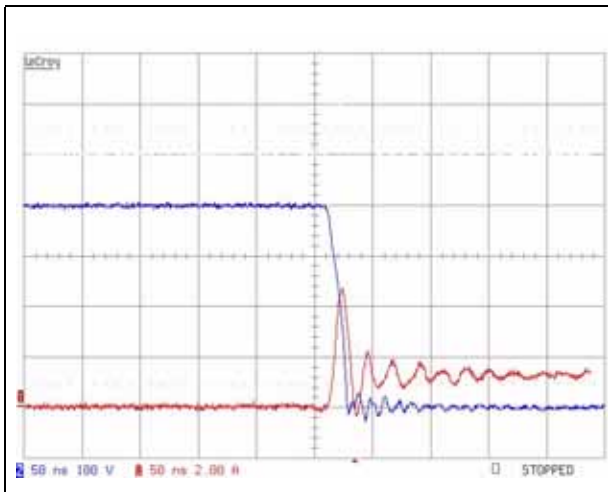
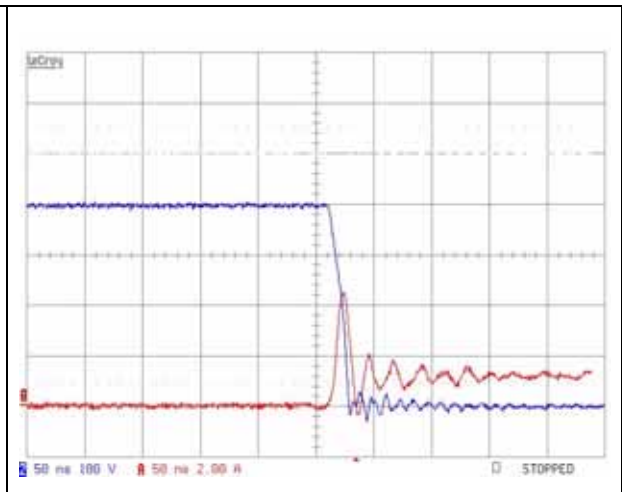


Figure 7. Turn-on switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 264 Vac



The di/dt value at turn-on measured in the application, due to the Rg value selected is 450 A/μs.

Figure 8. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 88 Vac

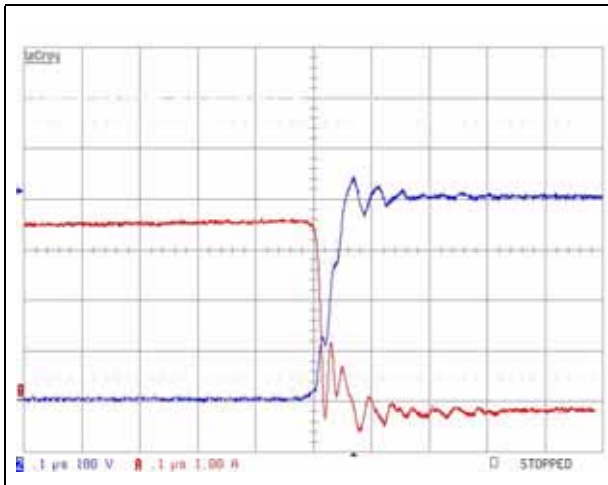


Figure 9. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 110 Vac

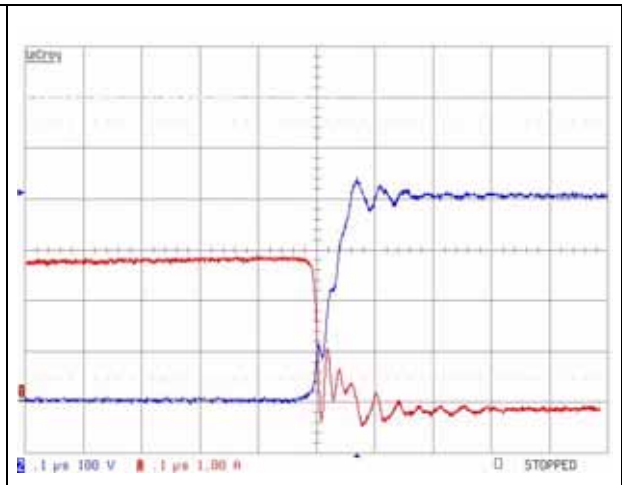


Figure 10. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 220 Vac

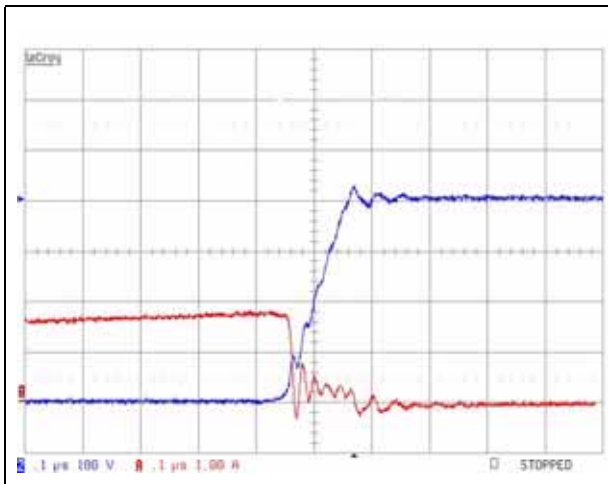
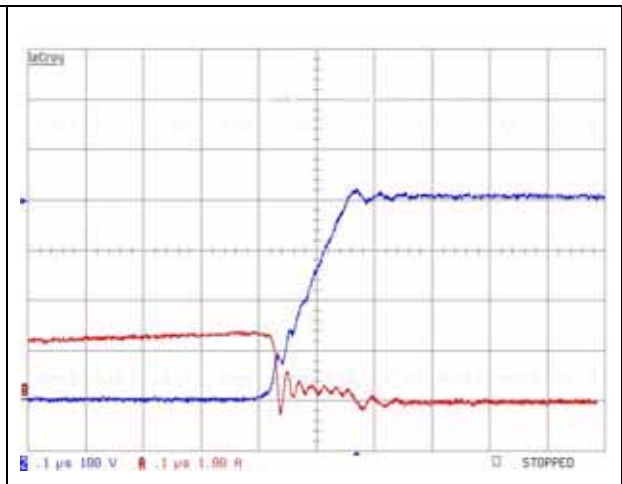


Figure 11. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 264 Vac



For comparison purposes, the same measurements are performed using a fast silicon diode used in this application (STTA506D, as described in AN628) as the boost diode instead of SiC. [Figure 12, 13, 14, 15](#) and [Figure 16, 17, 18, 19](#) show the turn-on and the turn-off MOS waveform for several input voltages and in full-load condition (400 V/0.5 A).

Figure 12. Turn-on switch (with Si diode) -
Vin = 88 Vac

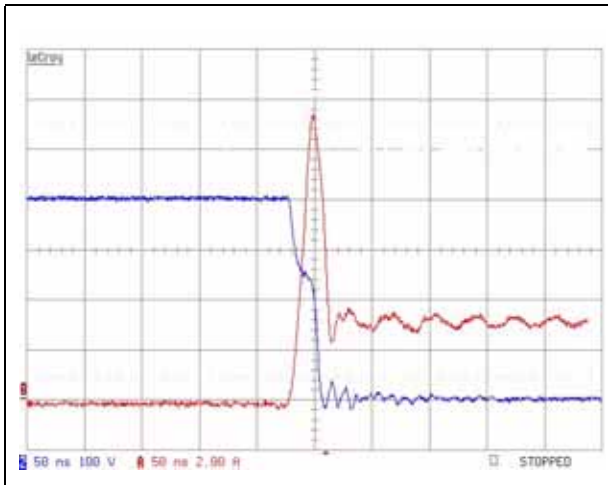


Figure 13. Turn-on switch (with Si diode) -
Vin = 110 Vac

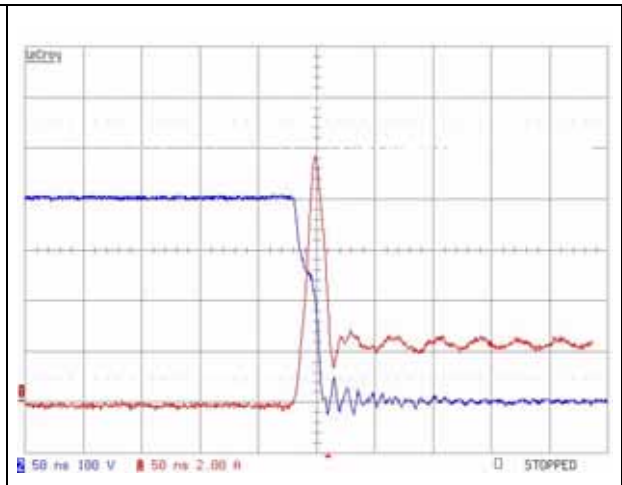


Figure 14. Turn-on switch (with Si diode) -
Vin = 220 Vac

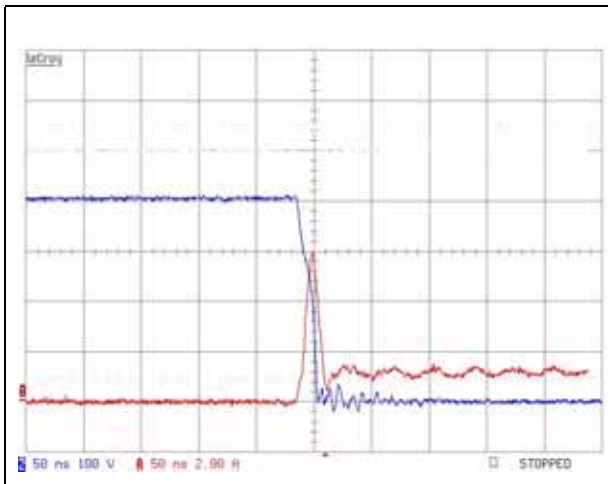


Figure 15. Turn-on switch (with Si diode) -
Vin = 264 Vac

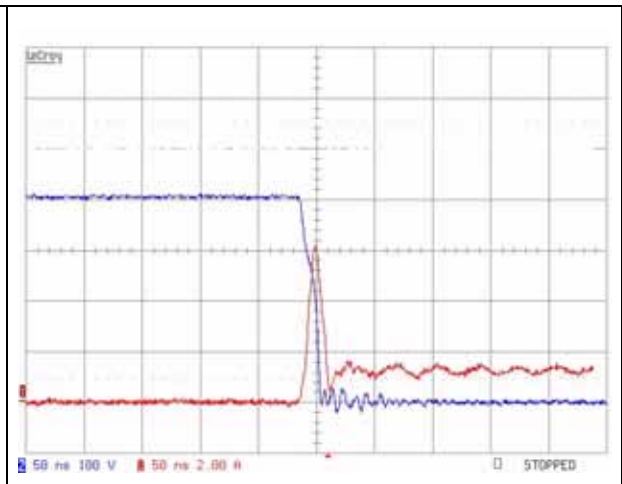


Figure 16. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 88 Vac

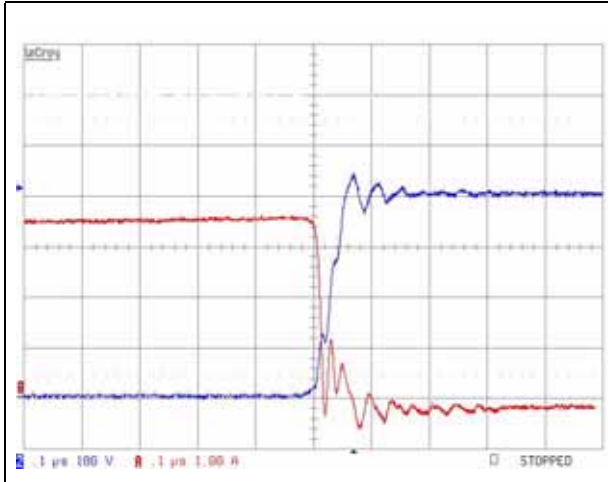


Figure 17. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 110 Vac

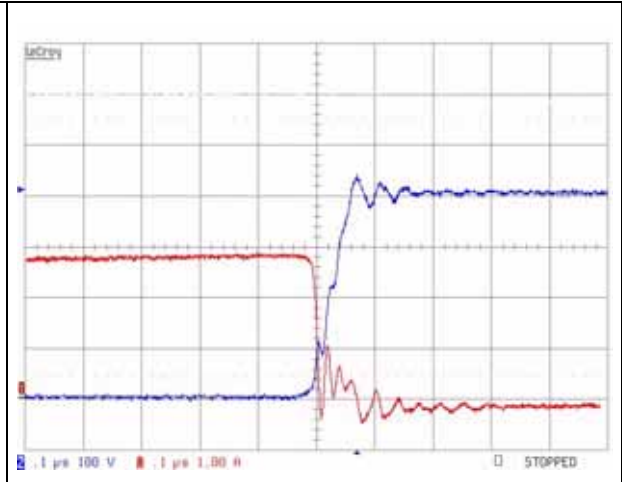


Figure 18. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 220 Vac

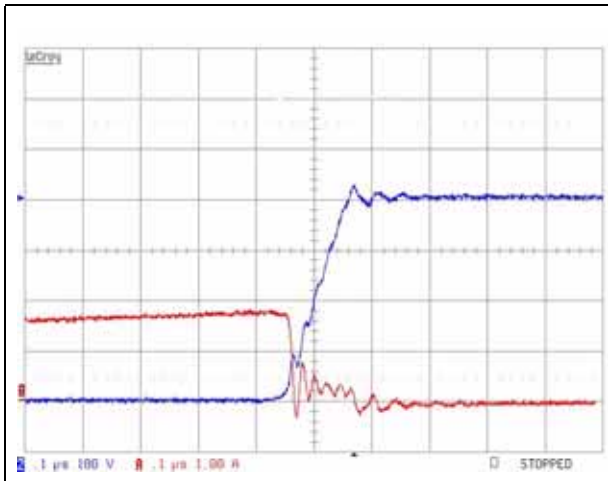


Figure 19. Turn-off switch (with SiC diode) - Vin = 264 Vac

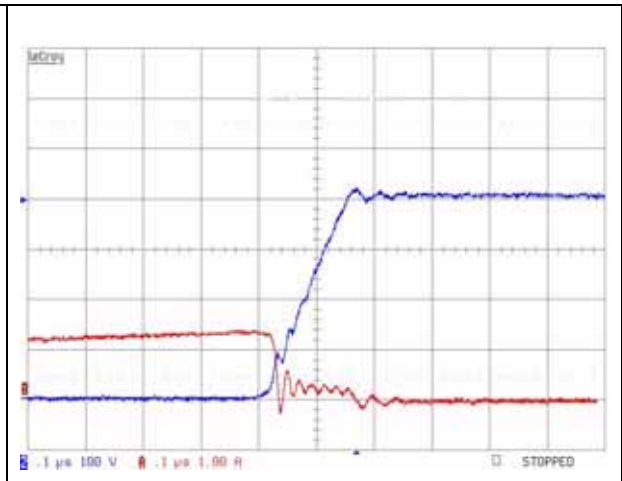


Table 2 gives the energy losses at turn-on and turn-off versus Vin.

Table 2. MOSFET energy losses using Si diode

Vin [Vac]	Eon [uJ]	Eoff [uJ]
88	37.3	4.7
110	26.7	4.6
220	12.82	5.1
264	13.77	5.3

Figure 20. Turn-off switch (with Si diode) - Vin = 88 Vac

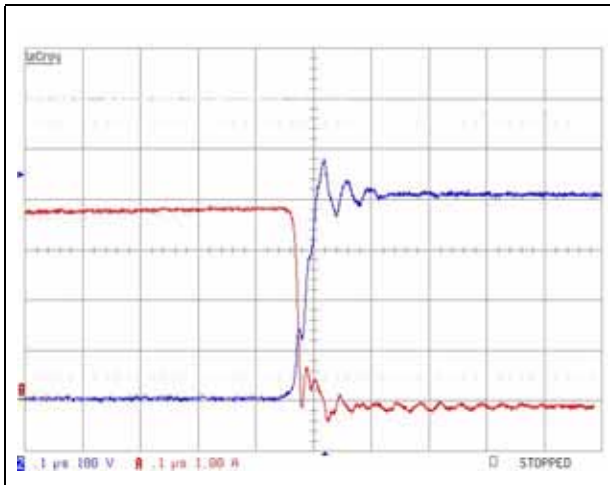


Figure 21. Turn-off switch (with Si diode) - Vin = 110 Vac

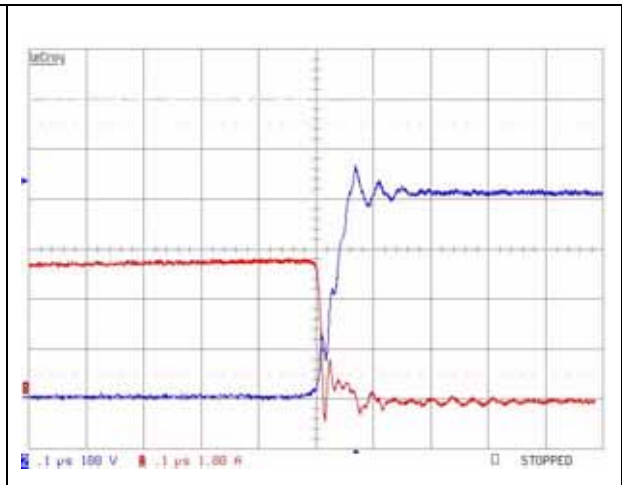


Figure 22. Turn-off switch (with Si diode) - Vin = 220 Vac

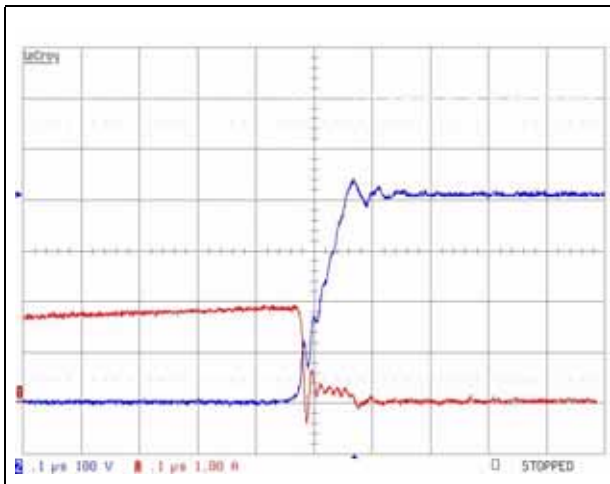
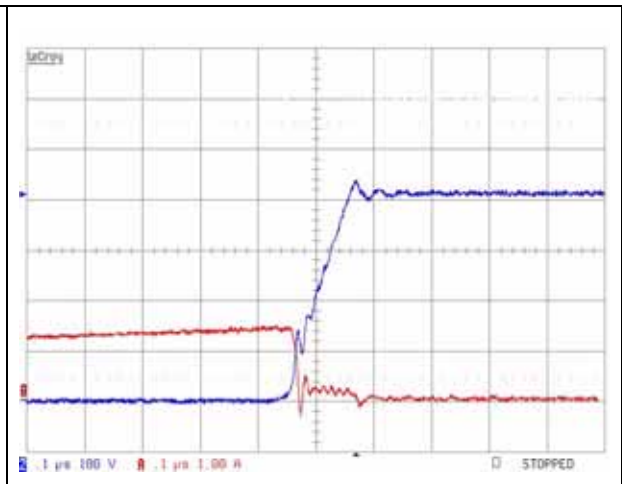


Figure 23. Turn-off switch (with Si diode) - Vin = 264 Vac



The turn-on switching of the MOSFET is strongly influenced by the diode recovery so the SiC diode leads to a reduction of the turn-on losses of the switch. The turn-on switching waveforms for the silicon diode case highlight the current peak at turn-on as shown in [Figure 24](#). In [Figure 25](#) this is evident as the SiC diode allows a strong reduction of the current peak.

Figure 24. Turn-on switch comparison (Vin = 88 Vac) - Si diode

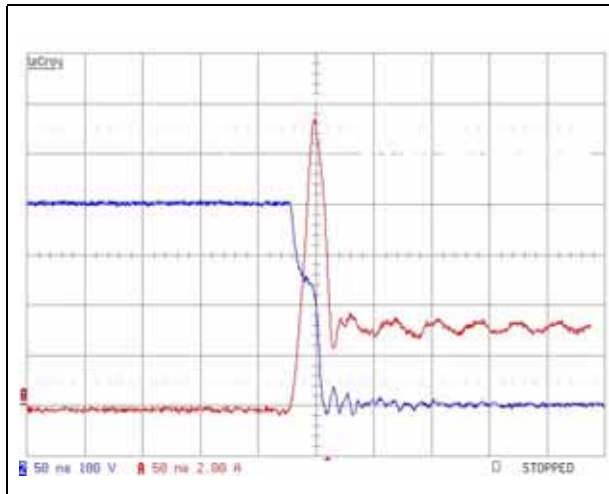
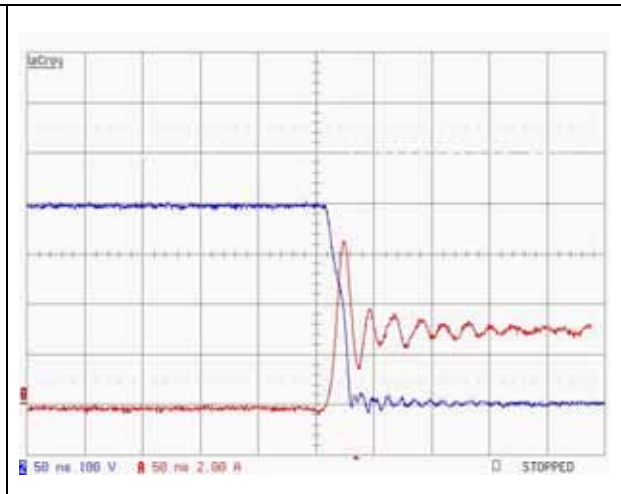


Figure 25. Turn-on switch comparison (Vin = 88 Vac) - SiC diode



The impact of the different device choices in the PFC converter performances has been investigated at different values of the input voltage. The PFC demonstration board performance has been evaluated, testing the following parameters: PF (power factor), THD (percentage of current total harmonic distortion), η efficiency). Furthermore a thermal analysis has been conducted. The experimental results are summarized in [Table 3](#) and [4](#), where it is possible to compare the converter performances of the two cases of study.

Table 3. Experimental measurements results of the PFC converter with SiC diode

MD2 and SiC diode						
V _{in} [V _{AC}]	V _{out} [V]	I _{out} [A]	P _{in} [W]	THD %	PF	η [%]
88	391.81	0.506	215.2	3.4	0.999	92.21
110	392.77	0.508	213.5	1.8	1	93.45
220	394.67	0.510	211.5	3	0.998	95.16
264	394.96	0.510	210.4	4.3	0.997	95.73

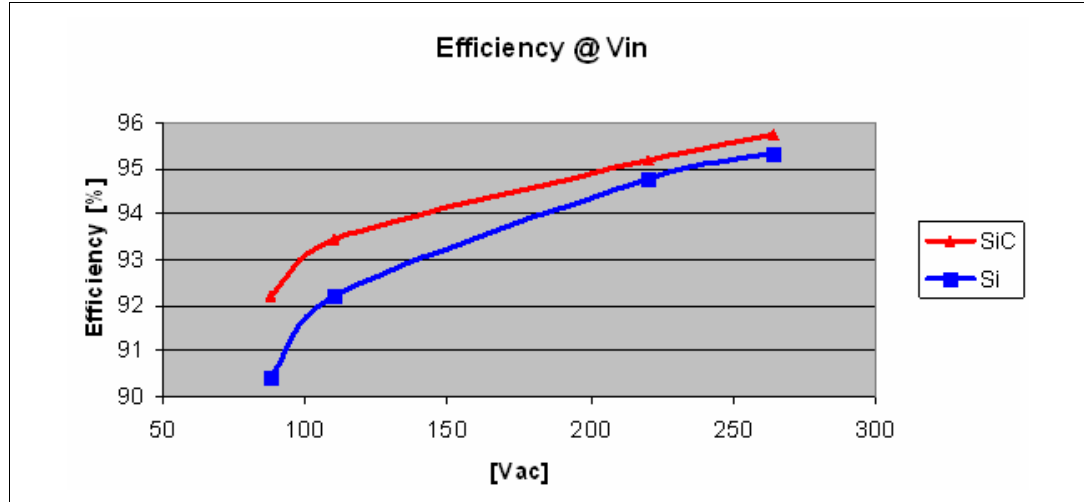
Table 4. Experimental measurements results of the PFC converter with fast silicon diode

MD2 and Si diode						
V _{in} [V _{AC}]	V _{out} [V]	I _{out} [A]	P _{in} [W]	THD %	PF	η [%]
88	396.51	0.512	224.5	3.7	0.999	90.42
110	398.26	0.513	221.8	1.2	1	92.23
220	401.74	0.516	219.1	2.3	0.998	94.76
264	402.21	0.517	218.5	3.9	0.997	95.31

[Figure 26](#) compares the efficiency curve versus V_{in} for the two cases. At high-line input voltage the difference of efficiency is smaller because the switching losses in the silicon

diode decrease (the current in the boost diode decreases) while the switching losses in SiC diode are always negligible. Furthermore as the current diode decreases also, the losses due to the diode in the MOSFET decrease.

Figure 26. Efficiency curve comparison



The difference in terms of efficiency is also evident if we consider the thermal behavior of power devices. In Figure 27 we can observe the thermal maps for the MOSFET and SiC diode compared with the same MOSFET and Silicon diode in the worst case in terms of losses (Vin = 88 Vac). We note that the MOSFET and diode are compared using the same heatsinks.

Figure 27. Thermal maps comparison - Si diode

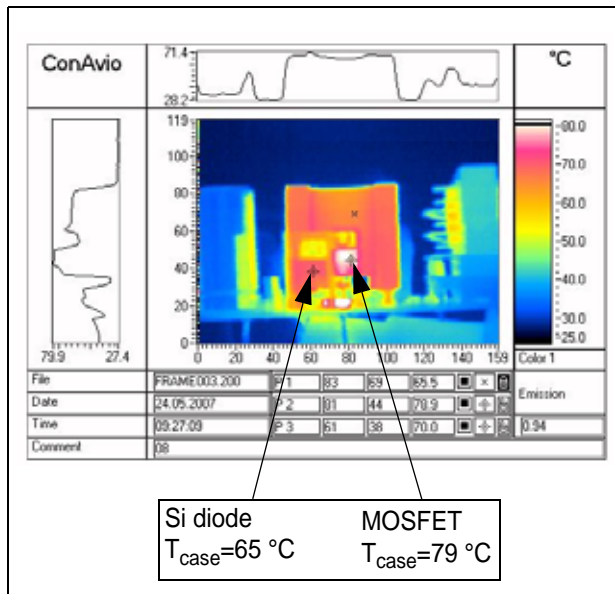
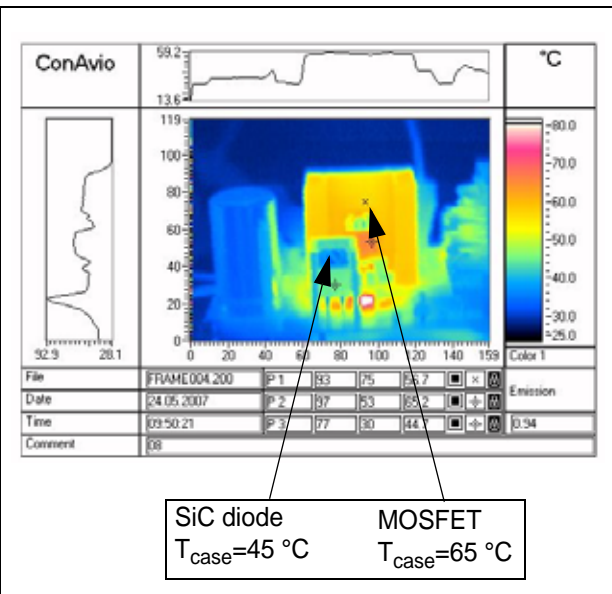


Figure 28. Thermal maps comparison - SiC diode



The difference in terms of temperature is 15 °C for the MOSFET and 20 °C for the diode. This is an important result for reliability as well as in terms of efficiency of the system.

These results allow using a smaller heatsink, saving cost and space.

4 Conclusion

In this application note an experimental investigation of the advantages and drawbacks related to the use of new devices of the last generation has been carried out in a continuous-current-mode PFC converter. In particular, the latest MOSFET MDmesh™ II and a SiC Schottky diode have been used. The experimental results show that the power converter using the new devices gets better switching performances and increased efficiency with respect to the case that uses the same MOSFET and an ultrafast silicon diode. The better performance in terms of efficiency and thermal behavior allow using smaller heatsinks, saving cost and space. The no-reverse recovery for the SiC diode allows using a lower gate resistance (high di/dt) optimizing the MOSFET power losses without introducing high level EMI. In this case we have a high value of di/dt (the recovery current of the SiC diode is smaller for every value of di/dt), but the switching losses are reduced in the MOSFET (turn-on is faster with $R_g = 0 \Omega$) with respect to the case of the silicon diode where large values of I_{RM} (dependent on di/dt) and the EMI problem limits the choice of R_g .

5 Bibliography

1. SiC Diodes and MDmesh™ 2nd generation devices improve efficiency in PFC Applications; CIPS 2006 conference proceedings , pag.195-199
2. Application note 628: designing a high power factor switching preregulator with the L4981 continuous mode.
3. Application note: Turboswitch™ in a PFC boost converter.

6 Revision history

Table 5. Document revision history

Date	Revision	Changes
10-Mar-2008	1	Initial release
12-Sep-2008	2	– STPS8600SIC replaced by STPSC806D – Modified: Figure 2

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