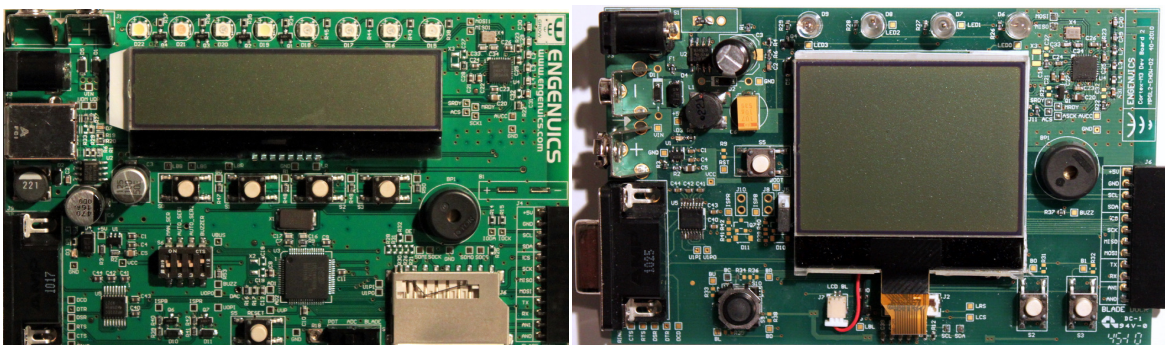


What is MPG?

MPG is the name of an extracurricular **M**icro**P**rocessor **G**roup run through the University of Calgary IEEE Student Branch. It was created by and continues to be run by Jason Long, P. Eng, B.Sc EE U of C 2002. This year is the 11th consecutive year of MPG! Though the official count was abandoned long ago, MPG is what it is today because of over *two thousand* hours of Jason's volunteer time over the last decade.

The current mission of MPG is to deliver quality, hands-on experience with guaranteed value through learning industry-applicable information while giving students the opportunity to grow a strong professional network. MPG has evolved to be a very comprehensive program with material that covers everything including circuit fundamentals, hardware design, soldering, and lots of real-world programming - all of which extends directly from Jason's work in the embedded systems industry in Calgary. There are two levels of the program that each run weekly from September thru April at the U of C. MPG is essentially a unique and practical supplementary curriculum for students in 2nd, 3rd and 4th year Electrical, Computer and Software engineering. The programs are offered using a cost recovery model with no fee for students in the spirit of mutual learning and experience.

Students have the option to purchase their own development boards at cost in each level of MPG. Sample boards are made available to loan to students so anyone can be involved with zero cost, though there has always been a 100% participation rate as students want something real after so much day-to-day theory. Hands-on experience is the essence of MPG and the small investment helps to really engage them! The boards were custom-designed for each level and are under \$50 thanks to industry support. Students solder the boards together during the fall session and then use them in labs throughout the winter.



Completed MPG development boards (Left: Level 1 ARM7; Right: Level 2 Cortex-M3)



The technical side of MPG is definitely beneficial and the networking side is also extremely valuable. With the addition of the second weekly session in 2010, initial participation last year was an astounding 120 students, and just about the same number are attending this year. To date, over 600 students have experienced MPG and new emphasis has been placed on growing an MPG community that students stay involved in throughout their academic and industry careers. MPG is also trialing a “remote” offering of the program this year at other Canadian universities, with schools involved from coast to coast!



2010-2011 MPG Level 1 and Level 2

Ironically, MPG has been run under the radar for worry that it wouldn't be supported by the university if it grew too much! In fact, the 2010 year was the planned finale of MPG. However, the program has grown so successfully in the last few years and interest and support from industry, students and faculty has been overwhelming, that it made a lot more sense to instead turn it up a notch and build on the momentum. It is seeing incredible enthusiasm from industry and some companies are even looking for MPG experience as a deciding factor in selecting candidates! This has been extremely encouraging and motivating, and has inspired the next phase of growth that is accelerating exponentially.

MPG hopes to further expand through promotion and media coverage this year. You are invited to attend an MPG open house where new students will be working diligently on their development boards, and where Jason and some previous students will be circulating around helping out and sharing some great tales of their MPG experience. The event is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2011 in room ICT 215 on the University of Calgary campus (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/map/interactive>).

The story of MPG is hopefully one that people will find interesting and inspiring as it is all about doing something with nothing yet yielding incredible reward through mentoring and investing! Thank you for taking the time to review this information. For details or questions, please contact Jason Long, 403-998-1422, jason.long@engenuics.com. If you would like to learn more about MPG, please visit www.engenuics.com/mpghome.php.