

The Xilinx EDK Toolset: Custom IP Cores

Creating and using custom IP cores

By Jason Agron

What is an IP Core?

- IP = Intellectual Property
- Why is it called this?
 - In our case, IP is “soft”.
 - Not physical.
 - It is merely a (soft) “description” of a device.
 - Usually in VHDL or Verilog.
- Why is this cool?
 - Can be open-source.
 - Can be understood and studied.
 - Can be customized.
 - Portable...
 - It is a model - can be simulated or implemented.
 - FPGA.
 - ASIC.

Where Do IP Cores Come From?

- For those who do not design HW...
 - Many are provided by vendors.
 - Xilinx provides many within it's IP catalog.
- For those that can design HW...
 - You can make your own.
 - From scratch.
 - Using other soft/hard components.

What Is A Typical IP Core?

- Any digital device that you have seen could be implemented as a soft IP core...
 - As long as it can fit “inside” an FPGA.
- Some examples:
 - CPUs
 - Graphics cards
 - Network cards
 - Specialized processors (DSPs, FPU, DataFlow)
 - Memory banks

What Do Soft IP Cores Enable?

- They enable a programmer/designer to combine pieces of IP at will in order to form a custom SoC within an FPGA.
- No soldering!
 - Just connect the inputs and outputs of the respective IP cores.
 - Done within VHDL/Verilog or a scripting language.

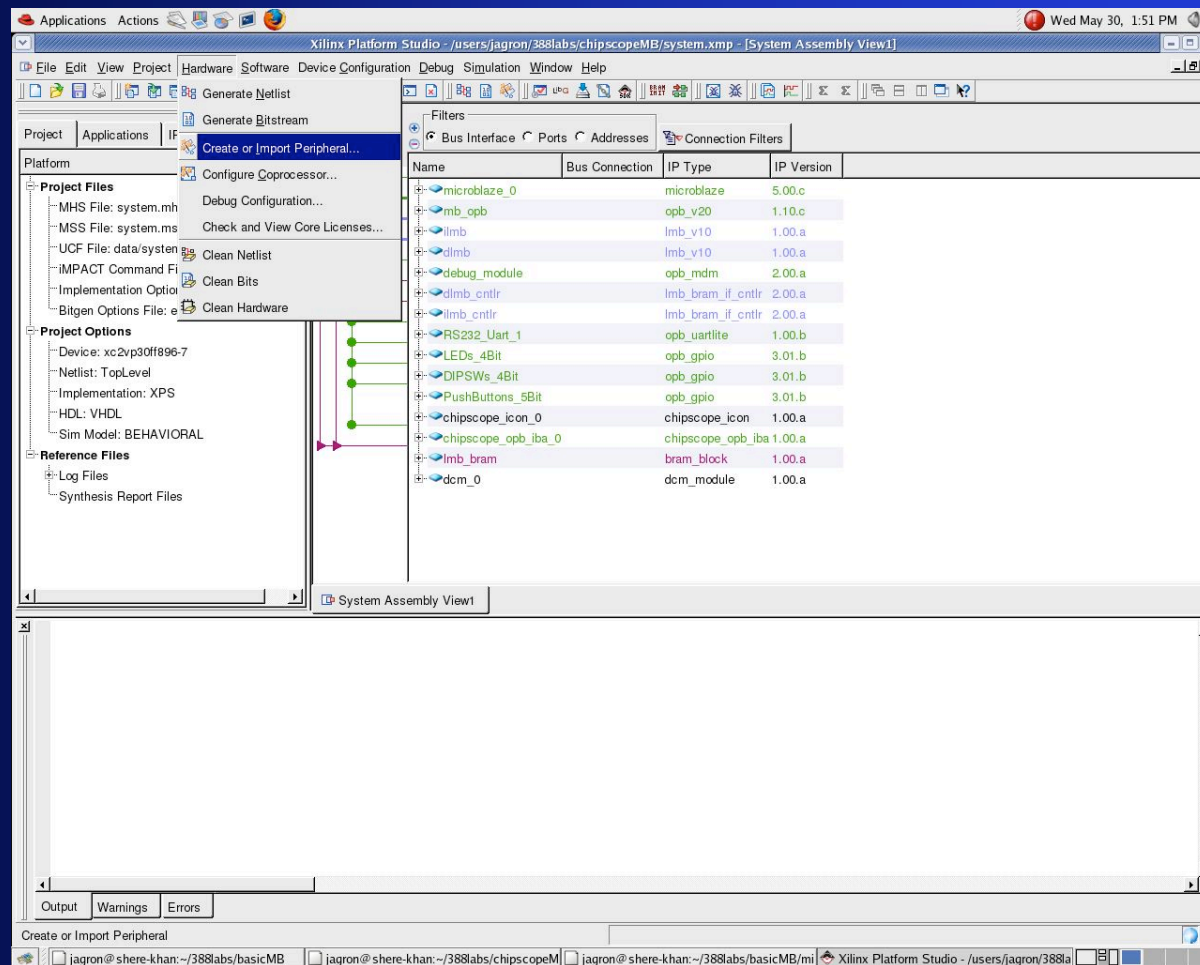
How To Create Custom IP Cores

- XPS has a built-in wizard...
 - Click on “Hardware...”
 - Select “Create or Import Peripheral...”
- The wizard allows one to...
 - Create a new piece of IP.
 - Select it’s interface (PLB, OPB, FSL).
 - Select default features to include.
 - Select it’s generation parameters...
 - VHDL or Verilog, etc.

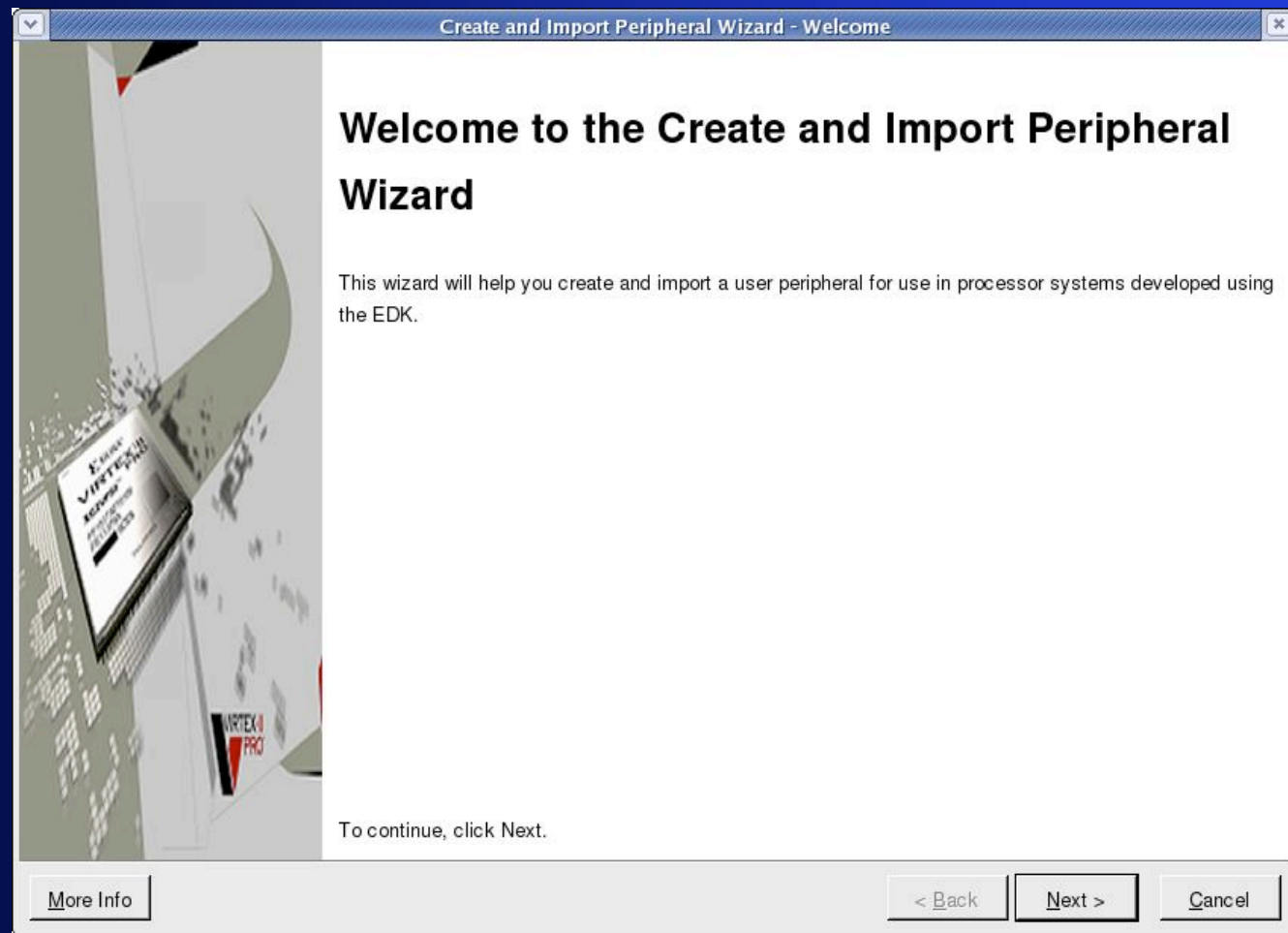
Our Goal

- Create a custom IP core...
 - With an OPB interface.
 - With 4 SW-accessible registers
 - With Reset/MIR support.
 - Implemented in VHDL.
- The result:
 - Very simple IP core.
 - 4 storage locations (readable/writable).

XPS - Creating Custom IP



XPS - Wizard Startup



XPS - Create New Peripheral

Create and Import Peripheral Wizard - Peripheral Flow

Peripheral Flow

Indicate if you want to create a new peripheral or import an existing peripheral.

This tool will help you create templates for a new EDK compliant peripheral, or help you import an existing peripheral into an XPS project or EDK repository. The interface files and directory structures required by EDK will be generated.

Create Templates → **Implement/Verify** → **Import to XPS**

Select flow

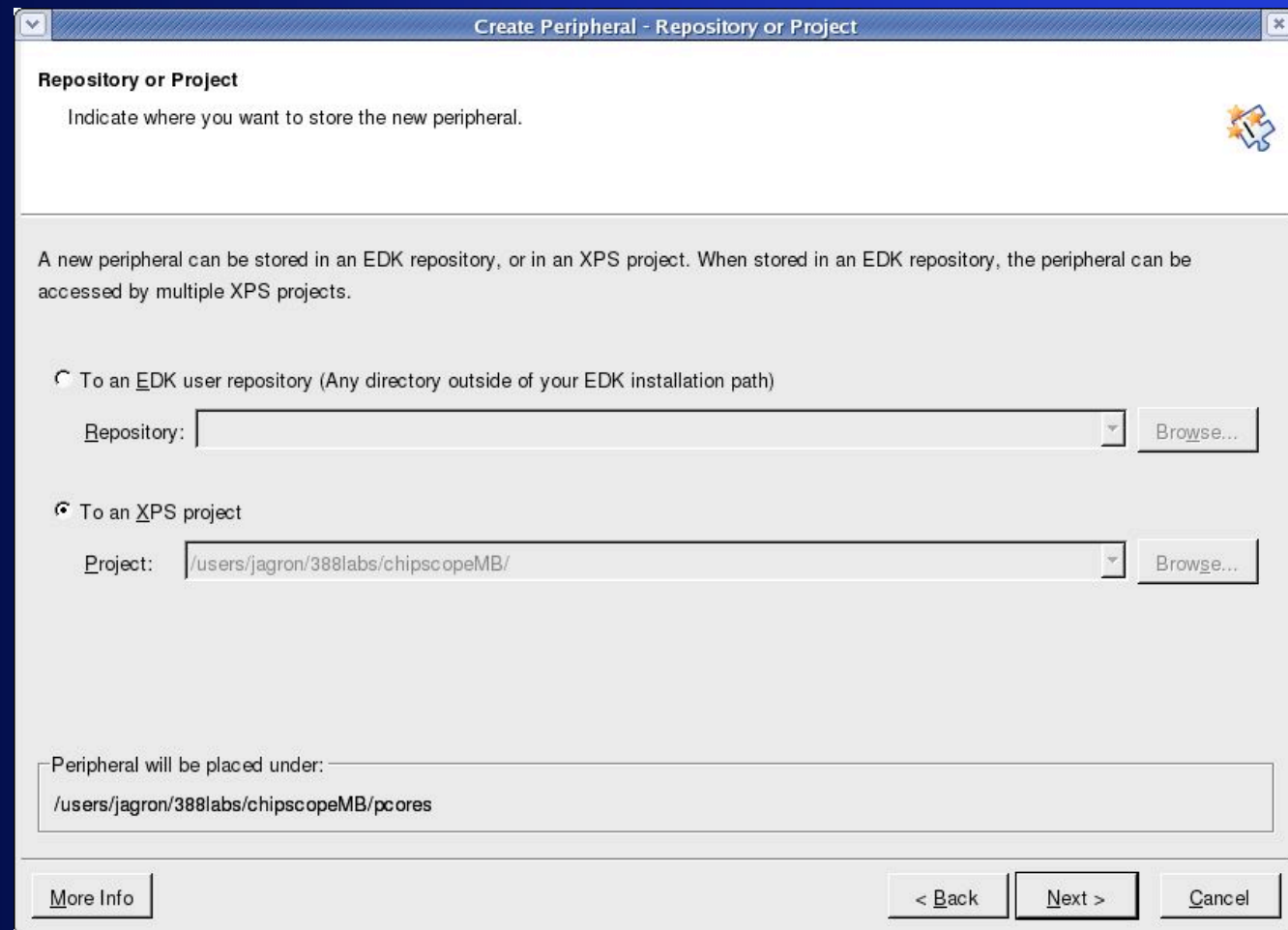
- ☒ Create templates for a new peripheral
- ☐ Import existing peripheral

Flow description

This tool will create HDL templates that have the EDK compliant port/parameter interface. You will need to implement the body of the peripheral.

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

XPS - Select Storage Location



Create Peripheral - Repository or Project

Repository or Project
Indicate where you want to store the new peripheral.

A new peripheral can be stored in an EDK repository, or in an XPS project. When stored in an EDK repository, the peripheral can be accessed by multiple XPS projects.

☐ To an EDK user repository (Any directory outside of your EDK installation path)

Repository:

☒ To an XPS project

Project:

Peripheral will be placed under:

XPS - Select Name & Version

Create Peripheral - Name and Version

Name and Version

Indicate the name and version of your peripheral.

Enter the name of your peripheral. This name will be used as the top HDL design entity.

Name:

Version: 1.00.a

Major revision: Minor revision: Hardware/Software compatibility revision:

Logical library name: opb_customcore_v1_00_a

All HDL files (either created by you or generated by this tool) used to implement this peripheral must be compiled into the logical library named above. Any other logical libraries referred to in your HDL are assumed to be available in the XPS project where this peripheral is used, or in EDK repositories indicated in the XPS project settings.

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

XPS - Interface Selection

Create Peripheral - Bus Interface

Bus Interface

Indicate the bus interface supported by your peripheral.

To which bus will this peripheral be attached?

☒ On-chip Peripheral Bus (OPB)

☐ Processor Local Bus (PLB)

☐ Fast Simplex Link (FSL)

ATTENTION

Refer to the following documents to get a better understanding of how user peripherals connect to the CoreConnect(TM) buses through the IPIF interconnection standards.

[CoreConnect Specification](#)

[OPB IPIF Specification for slave only peripherals](#)

[OPB IPIF Specification for master/slave peripherals](#)

[PLB IPIF Specification for slave only peripherals](#)

[PLB IPIF Specification for master/slave peripherals](#)

[FSL IPIF Specification for master/slave peripherals](#)

NOTE: Other bus interfaces are not supported by the wizard in this release.

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

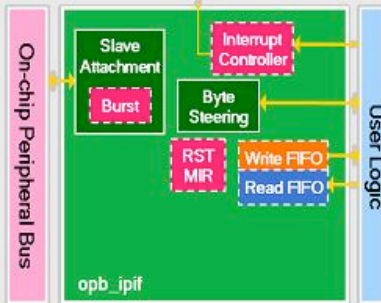
XPS - Feature/Service Selection

Create Peripheral - IPIF Services

IPIF Services

Indicate the IPIF services required by your peripheral.

Your peripheral will be connected to the OPB bus through the OPB IP interface (IPIF) module. Besides standard functions like address decoding, this module also offers other commonly used services. Using these services may significantly simplify the implementation of your peripheral.



Basic slave service and support
Common and typically required by most peripherals for operations like logic control, status report, and etc.

- ☒ S/W reset and MIR
- ☐ User logic interrupt support
- ☒ User logic S/W register support

Advance slave service and support
Typically required by peripherals that need data buffering or multiple memory/address spaces access.

- ☐ Burst transaction support
- ☐ EIFO
- ☐ User logic address range support

Master service and support
Typically required by complex peripherals like Ethernet and PCI for command data transfers between regions.

- ☐ DMA
 - ☐ Simple mode
 - ☐ Packet mode Scatter Gather

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

XPS - S/W Register Selection

Create Peripheral - User S/W Register

User S/W Register

Configure the software accessible registers in your peripheral.

The software accessible registers will be implemented in the user-logic module of your peripheral. These registers are addressable on the byte, half-word or word boundaries. The following fields determine the characteristics of the registers.

Number of software accessible registers: 4

Data width of each register: 32 bit

Write Mode

Instead of the usual *acknowledge write* behavior, an alternative kind of write behavior, *posted write*, is also supported. Under the *posted write* behavior, the IPIF unconditionally acknowledges the write transactions to the OPB on the earliest clock cycle, thus reduces latency and improves performance. When posted writes are enabled, it is assumed that the custom user logic will retire the data immediately to local storage.

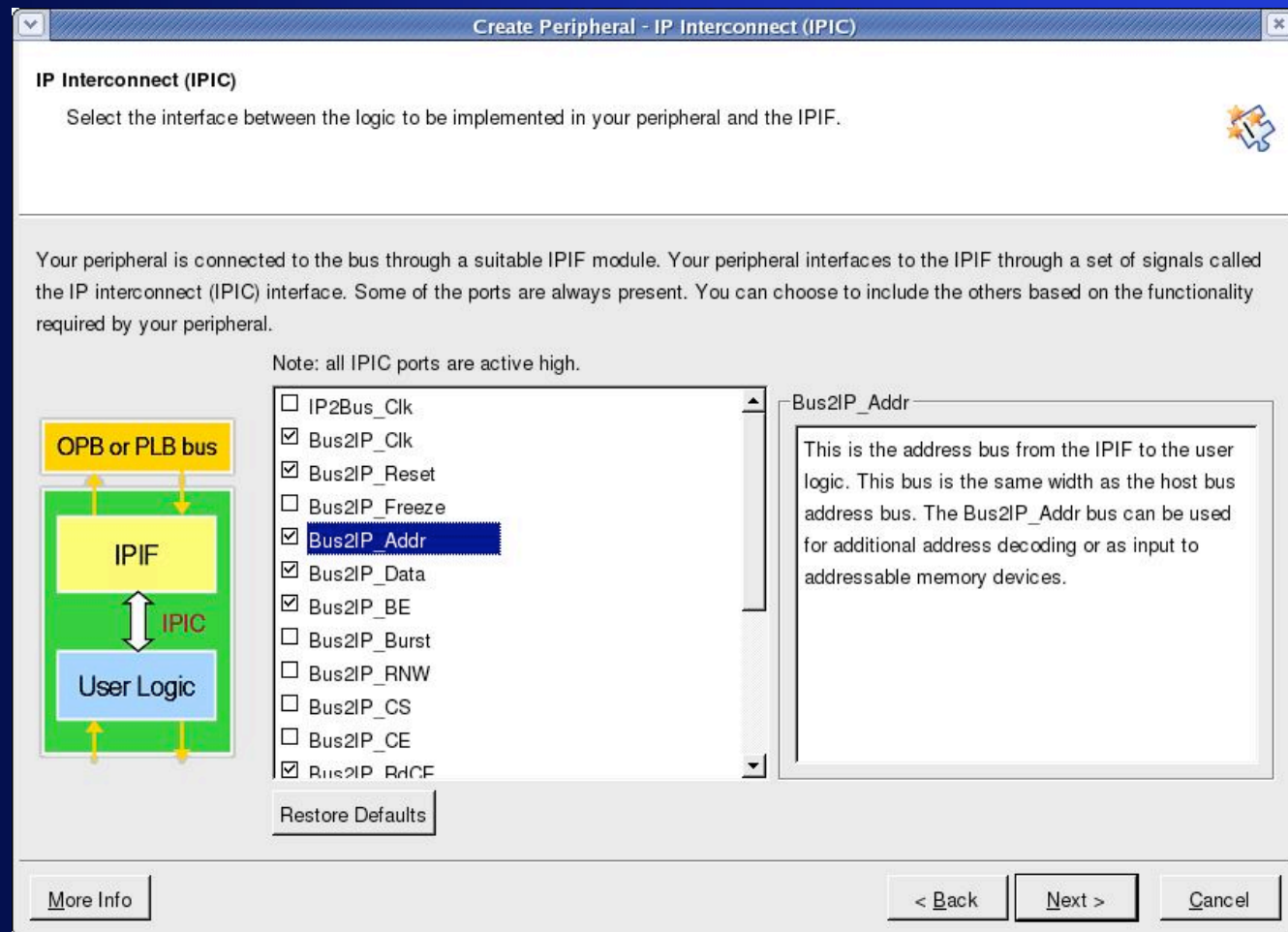
☐ Enable posted write behavior

☒ Disable posted write behavior for normal acknowledged write behavior

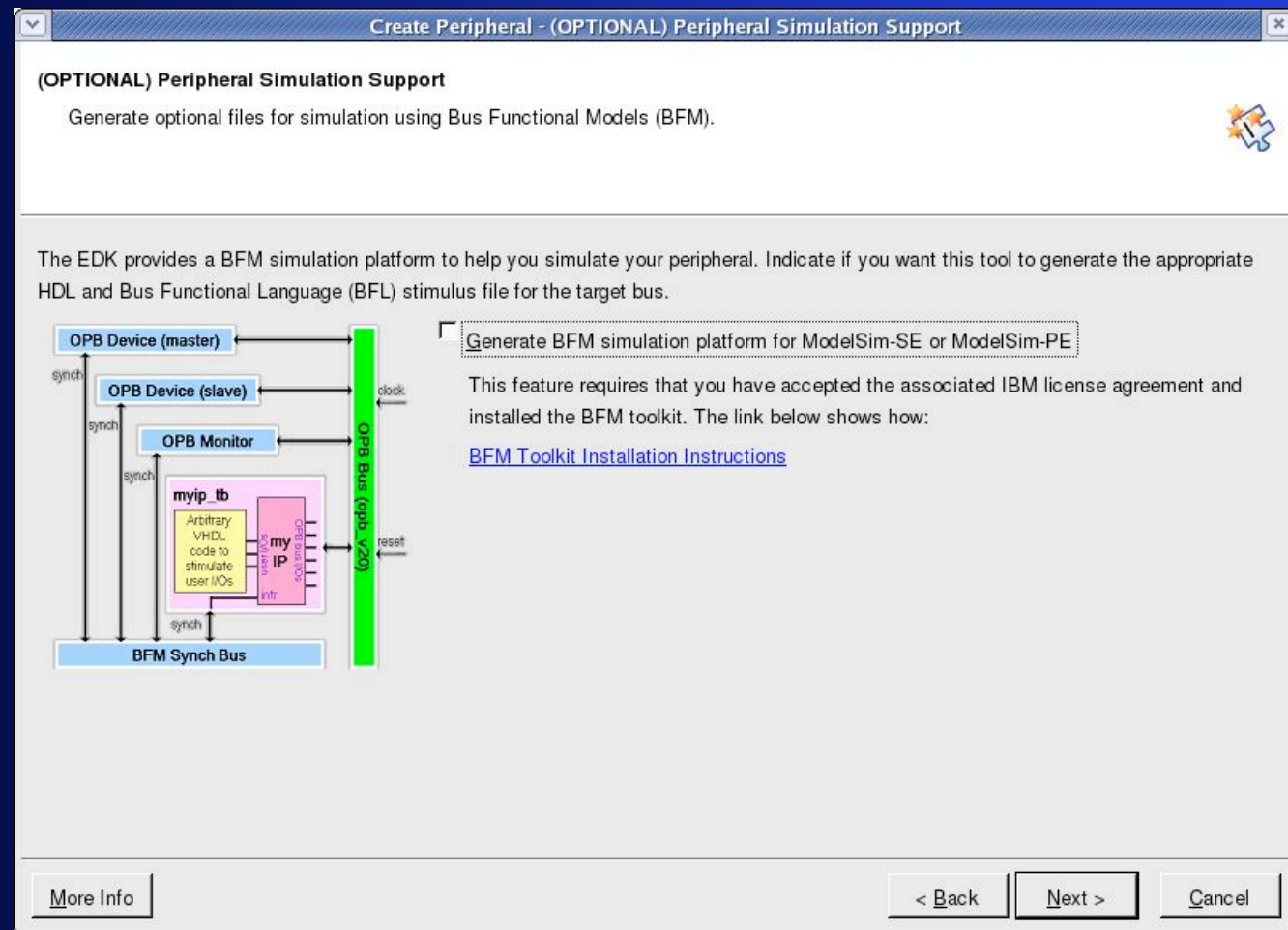
☐ Allow dynamic posted/acknowledged write behavior controlled by user logic (IP2Bus_PostedWrlnh)

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

XPS - IPIC Configuration



XPS - Simulation Support



XPS - Implementation Support

Create Peripheral - (OPTIONAL) Peripheral Implementation Support

(OPTIONAL) Peripheral Implementation Support
Generate optional files for hardware/software implementation

Upon completion, this tool will create synthesizable HDL files that implement the IPIF services you requested. A stub 'user_logic' module will be created. You will need to complete the implementation of this module using standard HDL design flows. The tool will also generate EDK interface files (mpd/pao) for the synthesizable templates, so that you can hook up the generated peripheral to a processor system.

Peripheral (VHDL)

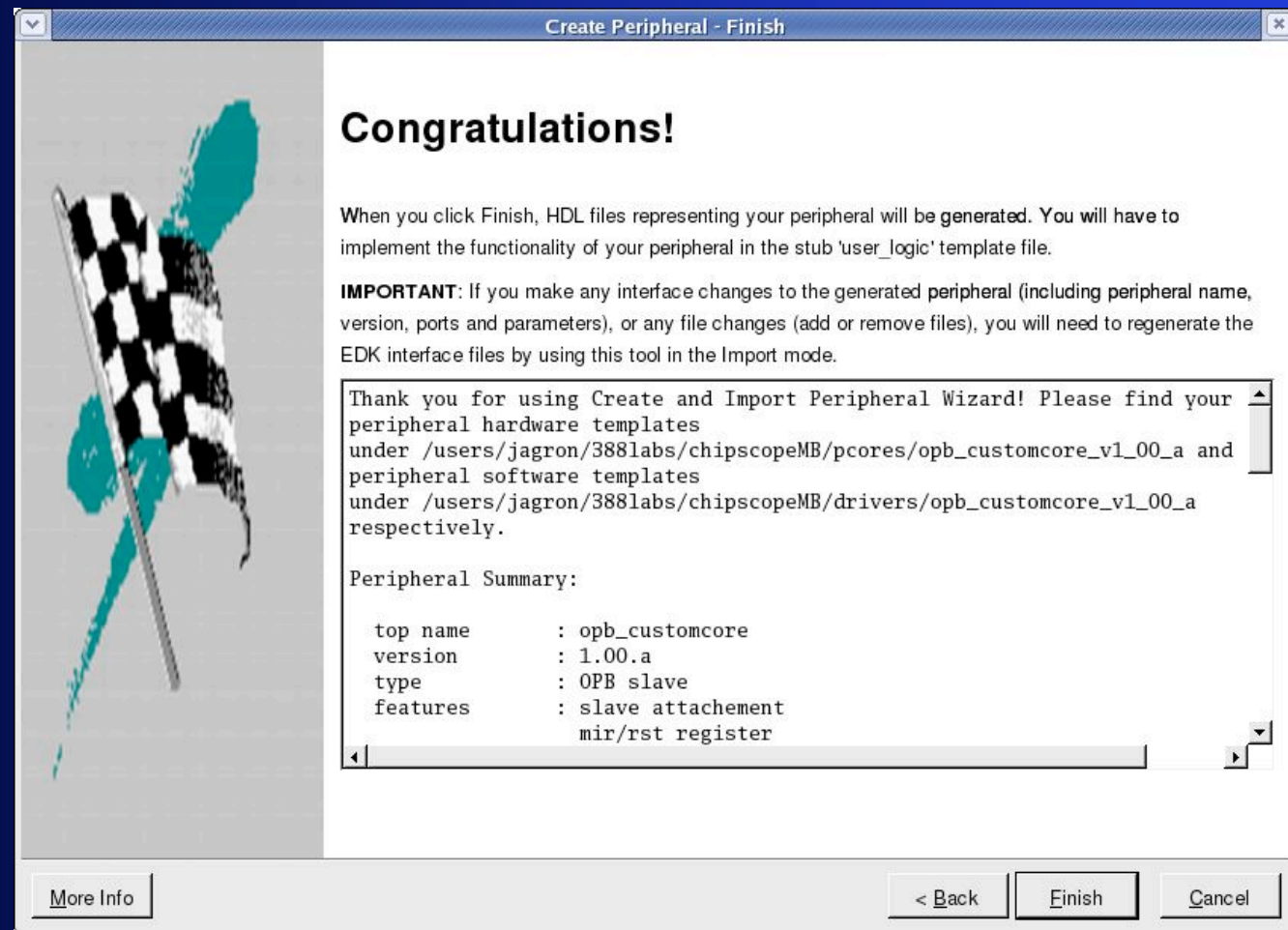
- IPIF (VHDL)
- User Logic (VHDL)

Note
Should the peripheral interface (ports/parameters) or file list change, you will need to regenerate the EDK interface files using the import functionality of this tool.

- ☐ Generate stub 'user_logic' template in Verilog instead of VHDL
- ☒ Generate ISE and XST project files to help you implement the peripheral using XST flow
- ☒ Generate template driver files to help you implement software interface

[More Info](#) [< Back](#) [Next >](#) [Cancel](#)

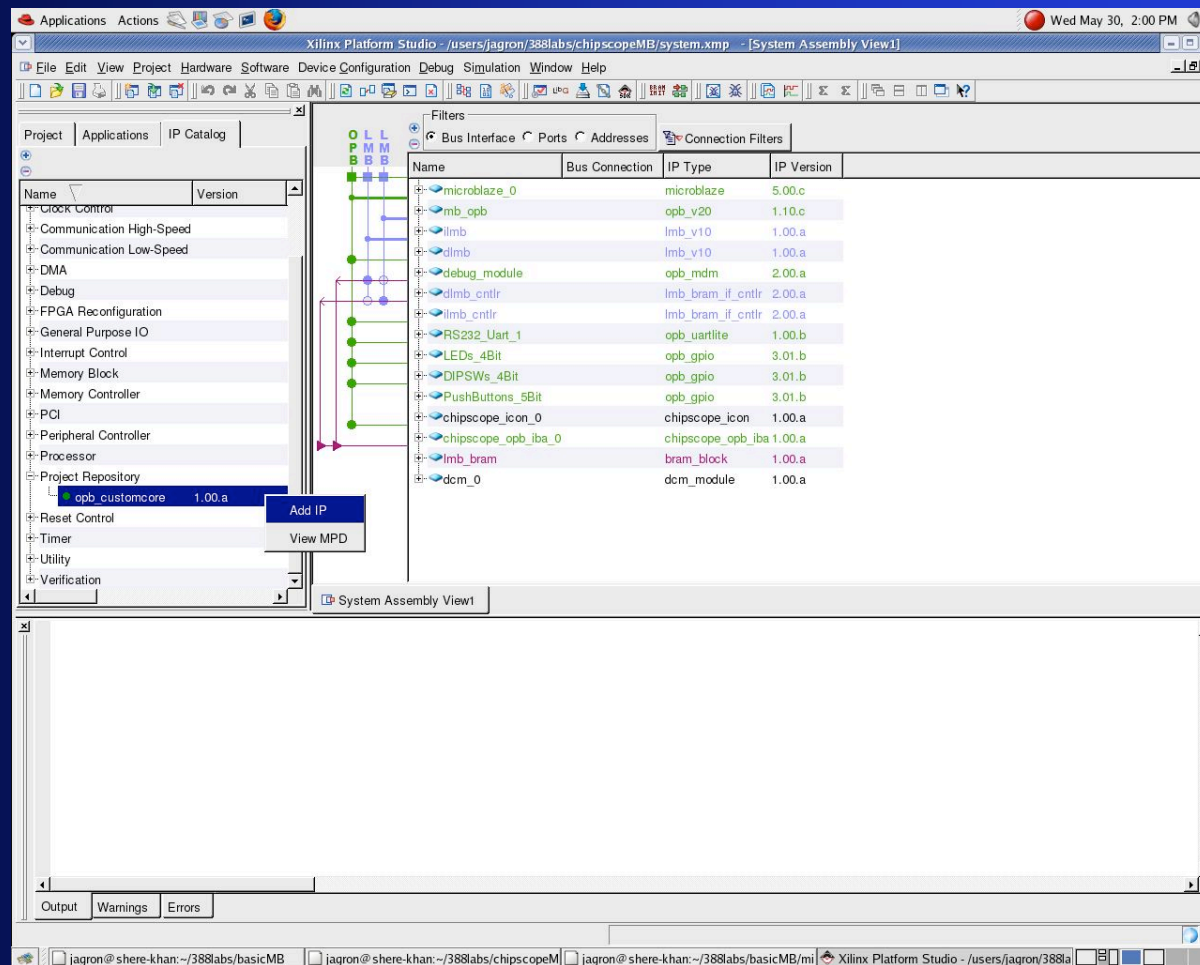
XPS - IP Creation Complete



IP Created, Now What?

- We have just created a piece of IP that is now in the **project repository**.
- How do we use it?
 - It must first be added into the system.
 - Added into the system.
 - Connected to the bus.
 - Configured (address range, ports).
- How do we see it?
 - (HINT) IP Catalog Tab

XPS - Adding IP To The System



XPS - Connecting IP To Bus

The screenshot displays the Xilinx Platform Studio (XPS) interface, specifically the System Assembly View. The left pane shows the Project hierarchy, including the 'Project Repository' and 'opb_customcore 1.00.a'. The central diagram area shows a bus connection diagram with various IP blocks connected to a bus. The right pane displays a table of components and their connections.

Name	Bus Connection	IP Type	IP Version
microblaze_0		microblaze	5.00.c
mb_opb		opb_v20	1.10.c
lmb		lmb_v10	1.00.a
dlmb		lmb_v10	1.00.a
debug_module		opb_mdm	2.00.a
dlmb_cntlr		lmb_bram_if_cntlr	2.00.a
lmb_cntlr		lmb_bram_if_cntlr	2.00.a
RS232_Uart_1		opb_uartlite	1.00.b
LEDs_4Bit		opb_gpio	3.01.b
DIPSWs_4Bit		opb_gpio	3.01.b
PushButtons_5Bit		opb_gpio	3.01.b
chipscope_icon_0		chipscope_icon	1.00.a
chipscope_opb_0		chipscope_opb_0	1.00.a
opb_customcore_0		opb_customcore	1.00.a
SOPB			
lmb_bram		bram_block	1.00.a
dcm_0		dcm_module	1.00.a

Assigned Driver opb_customcore 1.00.a for instance opb_customcore_0.
opb_customcore_0 has been added to the project

XPS - Locking Address Ranges

The screenshot shows the Xilinx Platform Studio interface. The 'Addresses' tab is selected, displaying a table of components and their address ranges. The 'SOPB' component is highlighted in blue.

Name	Address	Base Address	High Address	Size	Lock	Bus Connection	IP Type	IP Version	Instance
SLMB	0x00000000	0x00003fff	16K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	dlmb		mb_opb		dlmb_cntlr
SLMB	0x00000000	0x00003fff	16K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ilmb		mb_opb		ilmb_cntlr
SOPB				U	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb			opb_customcore_0
SOPB	0x40000000	0x4000ffff	64K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb				LEDs_4Bit
SOPB	0x40020000	0x4002ffff	64K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb				DIPSWs_4Bit
SOPB	0x40040000	0x4004ffff	64K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb				PushButtons_5Bit
SOPB	0x40600000	0x4060ffff	64K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb				RS232_Uart_1
SOPB	0x41400000	0x4140ffff	64K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	mb_opb				debug_module

XPS - Generate Address Range For New IP

The screenshot displays the Xilinx Platform Studio interface. The 'Generate Addresses' tab is active, showing a table of components and their assigned address ranges. The table includes columns for Name, Address, Base Address, High Address, Size, Loc, Generate Addresses, IP Type, IP Version, and Instance.

Name	Address	Base Address	High Address	Size	Loc	Generate Addresses	IP Type	IP Version	Instance
U									mb_opb
SLMB	0x00000000	0x00003fff	16K		dmb				dmb_cntlr
SLMB	0x00000000	0x00003fff	16K		ilmb				ilmb_cntlr
SOPB	0x40000000	0x4000ffff	64K		mb_opb				LEDs_4Bit
SOPB	0x40020000	0x4002ffff	64K		mb_opb				DIPSWs_4Bit
SOPB	0x40040000	0x4004ffff	64K		mb_opb				PushButtons_5Bit
SOPB	0x40600000	0x4060ffff	64K		mb_opb				RS232_Uart_1
SOPB	0x41400000	0x4140ffff	64K		mb_opb				debug_module
SOPB	0x77000000	0x7700ffff	64K		mb_opb				opb_customcore_0

The bottom pane shows the output of the address generation process:

```
(0x41400000-0x4140ffff) debug_module mb_opb
INFO:MDT - Trying to assign some memory to MicroBlaze reset address.
INFO:MDT - Address Generator does not set MicroBlaze reset address:0x0 is taken.
INFO:MDT - Standard address map is applied.
Address Map for Processor microblaze_0
(0x00000000-0x00003fff) dmb_cntlr dmb
(0x00000000-0x00003fff) ilmb_cntlr ilmb
(0x40000000-0x4000ffff) LEDs_4Bit mb_opb
(0x40020000-0x4002ffff) DIPSWs_4Bit mb_opb
(0x40040000-0x4004ffff) PushButtons_5Bit mb_opb
(0x40600000-0x4060ffff) RS232_Uart_1 mb_opb
(0x41400000-0x4140ffff) debug_module mb_opb
(0x77000000-0x7700ffff) opb_customcore_0 mb_opb
INFO:MDT - Address map generated successfully.
```


Now What?

- The custom IP core is now...
 - Instantiated within the system
 - Via “Add IP”.
 - Connected to the system.
 - Via bus connection and address generation.
- Now, how do we use it?
 - We must write an application that “talks” to it.
- How do you communicate with IP?
 - You know it’s address (hopefully).
 - How does a CPU communicate with addresses???

Memory-Mapped I/O

- CPUs can read/write to addresses.
- Usually addresses refer to memory locations.
 - This is not always true.
 - Anything can be “mapped” into an address space.
 - It doesn't have to be memory.
- Reads: request information from a specific source.
- Writes: send information to a specific source.
- What programming constructs do we need?

Pointers!!!

- Pointers:
 - A programming construct.
 - Used to “point” to a specific location.
 - Often times memory.
 - Features:
 - A location to point to (address).
 - Something being pointed at (data).

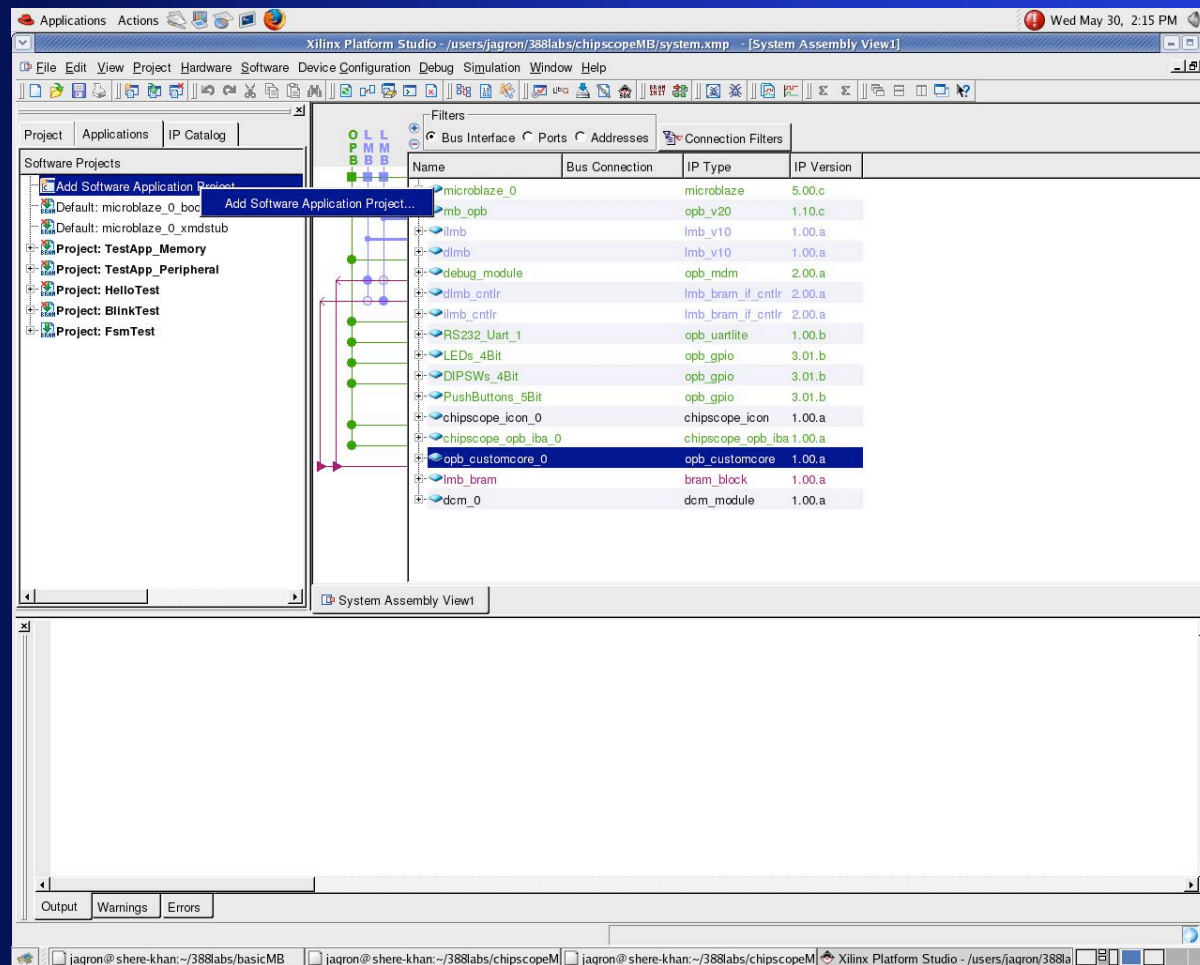
Pointer Example

- A pointer to an integer stored at location 0x5000000.
 - *int *myPtr = (int*)0x5000000;*
- Writing data to the location:
 - **myPtr = <newData>;*
- Reading data from the location:
 - *dataAtLocation = *myPtr;*
- Changing the location being pointed at:
 - *myPtr = <newLocation>;*
- What is the “*” doing????

XPS - Creating An Application

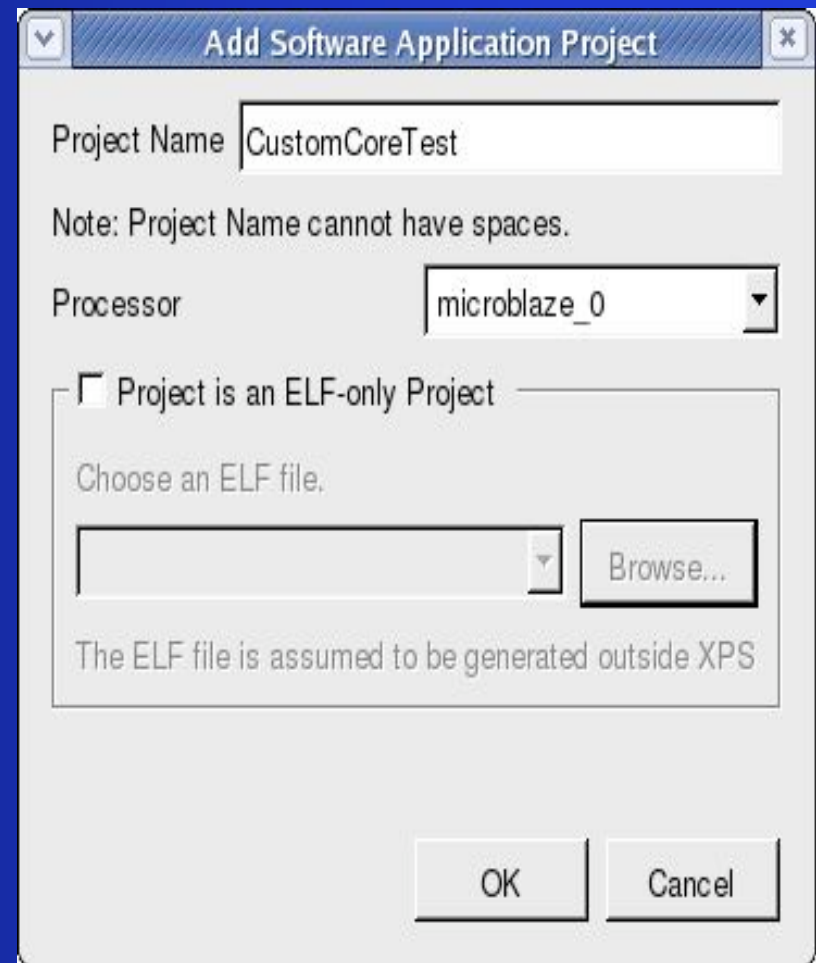
- We now know how to “talk” to IP.
- Now, let’s make an application to prove it.
- This can be done in XPS via the...
 - Applications Tab.
- Steps:
 - Create a new application.
 - Associate it with a CPU.
 - Create and define the source program.
 - Run the program.

XPS - Creating An Application

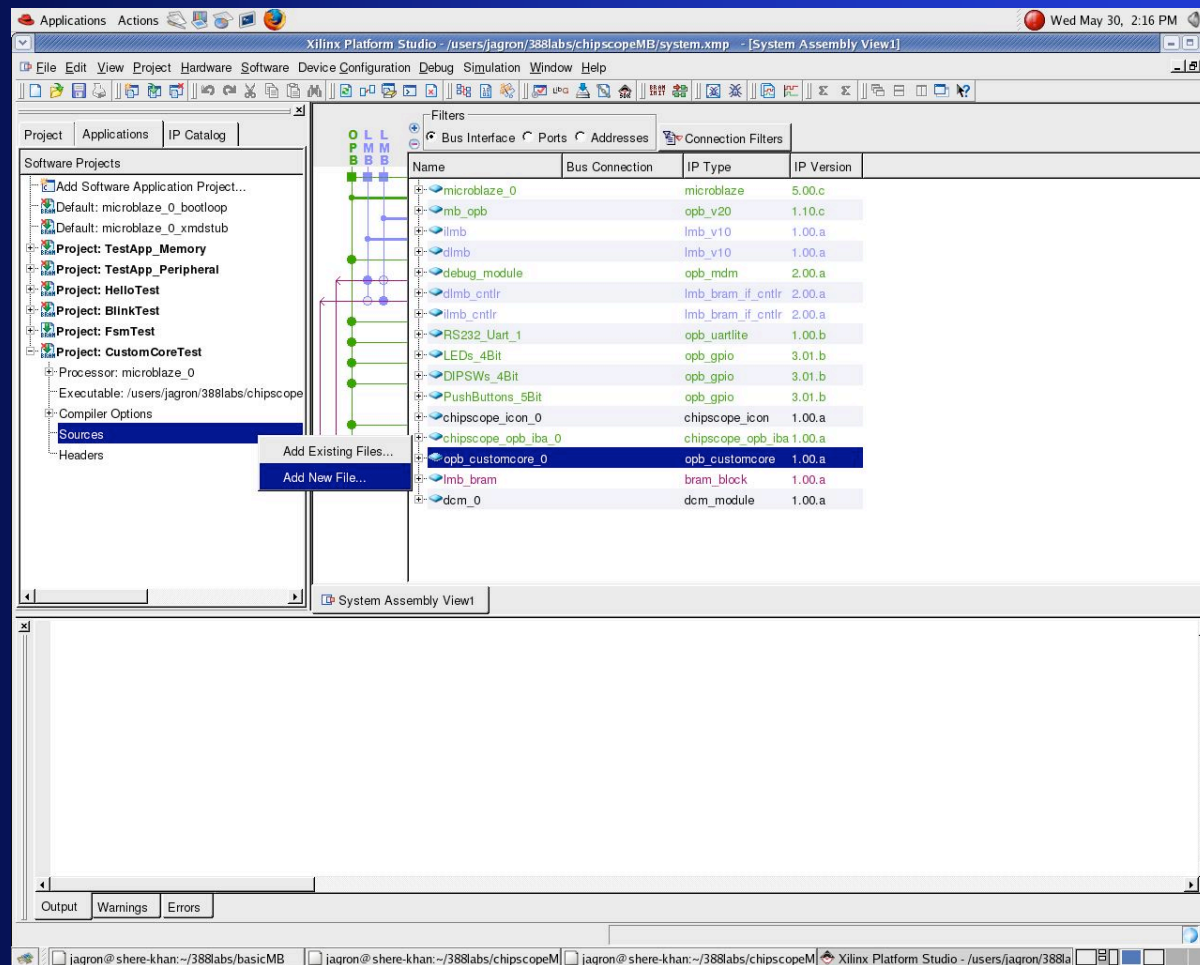


XPS - Application Properties

- We need to give this application project a name.
- We also need to associate it with a processor.
 - Chooses which compiler to use.
- *Why does the compiler matter?*



XPS - New Application Sources



Application Hints

- First, figure out the base address of the custom IP core.
- Important register offsets:
 - $\text{Reg0} = \text{base} + 0x0$.
 - $\text{Reg1} = \text{base} + 0x4$.
 - $\text{Reg2} = \text{base} + 0x8$.
 - $\text{Reg3} = \text{base} + 0xC$.
 - $\text{ResetReg} = \text{base} + 0x100$.
 - Reset command to write is $0x0000000A$.

Application Hints

- First define pointers to all required registers.
- Make sure to use the *volatile* qualifier!!!
 - What does this do?
 - Why is this needed?
- Make a simple program...
 - Reset state of custom IP core.
 - Write to fill in custom IP core's state.
 - Read back state to verify correct operation.
 - Reset state of custom IP core.
 - Read back state to verify correct operation.