



Driving Liquid Crystal Displays with the PIC16F913/914/916/917/946

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INTRODUCTION

The PIC16F913/914/916/917/946 microcontroller family provides an integrated LCD Driver module that directly drives LCD displays. In large scale applications, directly driving a custom LCD display can provide significant cost savings. In addition, low-power applications can benefit from the low operating current of a PIC® microcontroller compared to stand-alone LCD controllers.

This application note will describe all of the steps necessary in configuring and operating LCD displays with the LCD Driver module. The theory of LCD operation will not be discussed here as these details have been thoroughly explained in AN658, *LCD Fundamentals Using PIC16C92X Microcontrollers* (DS00658) available at www.microchip.com.

WHAT DOES THE LCD DRIVER MODULE DO?

The integrated LCD Driver module generates all of the waveforms needed to drive many different LCD configurations. The bias levels, frequency, and drive scheme are all configurable in software on the PIC microcontroller. The only external inputs required by the LCD module are the bias levels provided at the VLCD1, VLCD2 and VLCD3 pins.

The LCD Driver module directly connects to the segment and common lines of an LCD display. Internally within the LCD Driver module, the bias levels are switched onto the segment and common lines to generate the appropriate output on the LCD. By properly mapping each LCD segment in software based on the common and segment pins it is associated with, the LCD can be manipulated very easily for its particular application.

INITIAL SETUP

There are 3 steps that need to be completed before writing software that can manipulate the LCD:

1. Hardware connections: Inputs and outputs of the LCD Driver module must be physically

connected to the LCD.

2. LCD Driver module Initialization: Special Function Registers must be configured to operate with the connected LCD display.
3. LCD Segment Mapping: Each segment of the LCD needs to be mapped in software. The mapping of LCD segments allows for very easy manipulation of the display.

Each of these will be discussed in detail.

1. Hardware Connections

The hardware connections consist of the following inputs:

- LCD Bias Voltage Levels (required)
- External clock (optional)

The LCD bias voltage pins are labeled **VLCD3**, **VLCD2** and **VLCD1**. These are analog voltage inputs to the LCD Driver module which provide the voltage levels that are switched on to the common and segment lines to generate the appropriate drive levels for the LCD display.

There are three bias modes supported by the LCD Driver module: Static, 1/2, or 1/3 Bias. The data sheet for an LCD display will specify the voltage biasing that is required to drive it. Based on this specification, the proper bias voltages need to be provided to the VLCD inputs.

For static operation, an input voltage only needs to be provided at VLCD3. This input voltage is specified in the data sheet for the LCD display. Keep in mind however, that the voltage input providing any of the VLCD inputs cannot be greater than the V_{DD} of the microcontroller because of the clamping diodes on these inputs.

For 1/2 and 1/3 biasing, a voltage divider can be used to provide $+V$ and $+1/2V$ for 1/2 biasing and the $+V$, $+2/3V$, and $+1/3V$ for 1/3 biasing (where V is the drive voltage specified in the LCD data sheet).

Shown below in Figure 1 and Figure 2 are example resistor dividers schematics. The selection of the resistor size, R , is dependent upon many factors beyond the scope of this application note. In short, if R is too large, not enough current will be provided to sufficiently drive the display. The result will be an LCD with poor contrast. If R is too small, excessive current may be drawn by the resistor ladder. Empirical testing (bench testing)

various resistor values is the best way of determining an optimum resistor value that meets the design requirements. Typical resistor values range from $10\text{ k}\Omega$ to $1\text{ M}\Omega$.

FIGURE 1: RESISTOR LADDER FOR 1/2 BIASING

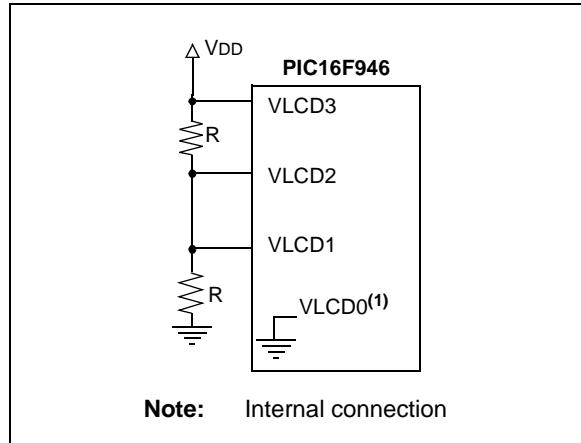
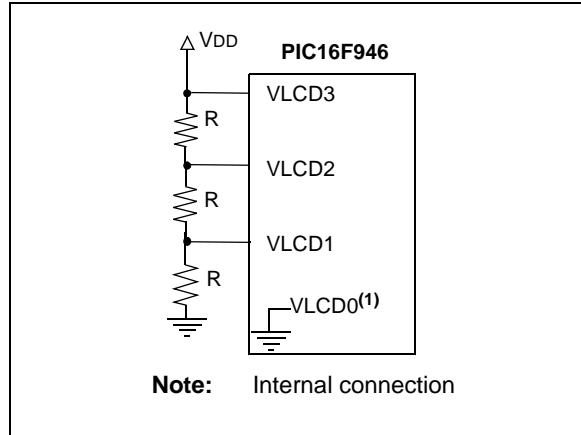


FIGURE 2: RESISTOR LADDER FOR 1/3 BIASING



The LCD Driver module can generate waveform timing from one of three clock sources. The clock inputs to the LCD Drive module are one of the following:

- FOSC/8192
- T1OSC/32
- LFINTOSC/32

An external clock/crystal (32 kHz) can be connected to clock the T1OSC. The choice of which clock source to use depends on the application. One feature of the LCD Driver module is the ability to generate LCD waveforms for the LCD display while in low-power (**Sleep**) mode. To assist in selecting the proper clock source for an LCD application a table is shown below (Table 1) illustrating which clock configurations can utilize this feature.

TABLE 1: CLOCK CONFIGURATIONS

Clock Source	Operate During Sleep?
Timer 1 Oscillator	Yes
Internal RC Oscillator	Yes
Main Oscillator (FOSC)	No

After providing all the inputs to the LCD Driver module, the outputs must be connected. The outputs of the LCD Driver module are the common (COM0, COM1...COM3) and segment (SEG0, SEG1...SEGn) pins. These pins should be connected to the corresponding segment and common pins specific to the LCD display being used.

The LCD display may have 1 to 4 commons depending on its multiplexing specification. The order in which segment pins of the microcontroller are connected to the LCD does not matter because the mapping of each segment on the LCD is made in software. More important is ensuring that the multiplexed functions (comparators, PWM, A/D) on the pins that are needed for other aspects of the application are available.

2. LCD Driver Module Initialization

The following are the 10 steps to initialize and configure the LCD Driver module:

1. Configure TRIS settings

The LCD Driver module, when enabled overrides TRIS settings, but it is important to ensure that the microcontroller TRIS settings are initialized in a known state.

2. Enable LCD Bias Voltage Pins

LCD bias voltage pins (VLCD3, VLCD2, VLCD1) are multipurpose pins. When the LCDCON, VLCDEN bit is set, all TRIS settings are overridden and the pins function as LCD bias voltage inputs.

3. Select Clock Source

Selecting a clock source depends on many factors. One factor discussed earlier is the use of Sleep mode to minimize current. The following bit settings in the LCDCON register select a specific clock source setting:

- CS<1:0> = 00 = FOSC/8192
- CS<1:0> = 01 = T1OSC/32
- CS<1:0> = 1x = LFINTOSC/32

4. Select Multiplex Mode

Multiplexing minimizes the number of pins necessary to drive an LCD display. In the data sheet of the LCD display being used, the multiplexing specification should be indicated as 1/2, 1/3 or 1/4 multiplexing.

The following bit settings in the LCDCON register select the Multiplex mode:

- LMUX<1:0> = 00 = Static
- LMUX<1:0> = 01 = 1/2 Mux
- LMUX<1:0> = 10 = 1/3 Mux
- LMUX<1:0> = 11 = 1/4 Mux

5. Select Waveform Type

The LCD Driver module is capable of generating Type-A or Type-B waveforms. Details on the operation of both waveforms are beyond the scope of the application note. More information can be found in AN658, *LCD Fundamentals Using PIC16C92X Microcontrollers* (DS00658) at www.microchip.com. In short, the main difference between the two is Type-B waveforms contain fewer transitions than Type-A. This is particularly important in dealing with high capacitance LCD glass which are typically physically larger. Fewer transitions allow the display to have better contrast when driving with Type-B waveforms. The trade-off in using Type-B waveforms however is that LCD interrupts must be used to write LCD data registers only when frame transitions have completed.

The LCDPS,WFT bit is set to enable Type-B waveforms and cleared to enable Type-A.

6. Select Bias Mode

The Bias mode should have been selected during the hardware setup. This mode is specified in the data sheet for the LCD display being used. This mode is selected by LCDPS, BIASMD bit.

The configurations are shown below:

- When LMUX<1:0> = 00
0 = Static Bias mode, do not set the bit to 1
- When LMUX<1:0> = 01
0 = 1/2 Bias mode
1 = 1/3 Bias mode
- When LMUX<1:0> = 10
0 = 1/2 Bias mode
1 = 1/3 Bias mode
- When LMUX<1:0> = 11
0 = 1/3 Bias mode, do not set the bit to 0

7. Select Refresh Rate

The refresh rate or frequency of LCD waveforms affects the quality of display. If a frequency less than 30 Hz is selected, there will be visible flicker. Choosing too high of a frequency will not allow the LCD to transition to its full on state, causing contrast problems. Bench testing various refresh rates is a good way of determining the ideal refresh rate.

The refresh rate is selected by writing a 4-bit value to the LP3:LP0 bits of the LCDPS register. This prescaler takes the incoming clock source, scales it, and divides it down to generate the timing of the LCD waveforms.

Shown below in Table 2 are the frame frequency calculations, which are dependent upon the multiplexing of the LCD.

TABLE 2: LCD FRAME FREQUENCY CALCULATIONS

Multiplex	Frame Frequency
Static	Clock source/(4 x 1 x (LP3:LP0 +1))
1/2	Clock source/(2 x 2 x (LP3:LP0 +1))
1/3	Clock source/(1 x 3 x (LP3:LP0 +1))
1/4	Clock source/(1 x 4 x (LP3:LP0 +1))

8. Enable LCD Segment Lines

There are several LCDSE Special Function Registers, depending on the number of segment lines available. Each bit of a LCDSE register is associated with a corresponding segment pin (See PIC16F91X Data Sheet (DS41250) for details). By setting the LCDSE bit high, the corresponding microcontroller pin is configured for use as an LCD segment line. Setting the bit low disables LCD functionality on the pin. These settings override and TRIS settings that have previously been configured. Only enable segment lines for those pins that have been connected to the LCD display.

9. Clear LCDDATA registers

There are several LCDDATA Special Function Registers, depending on the number of segment lines available. Each bit of an LCDDATA register corresponds to a segment AND common line combination as indicated in the PIC16F91X Data Sheet (DS41250). Therefore these bits of the LCDDATA register are mapped to specific pixels/segments of the LCD display. Setting or clearing of these bits turns on or off the specific pixel/segment. Clear all of the LCDDATA registers to initialize the LCD in an off state.

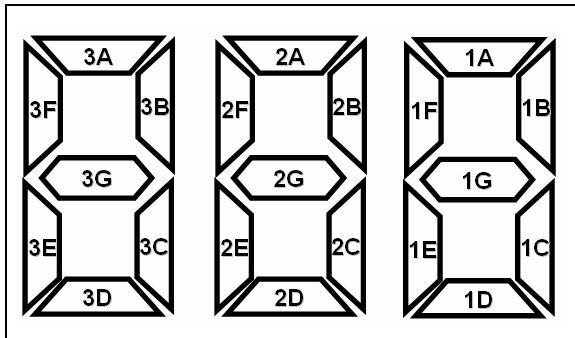
10. Turn on the LCD Driver module

Setting the LCDEN bit of the LCDCON register turns the LCD Driver module on.

3. LCD Segment Mapping

The next step to effectively use the LCD Driver module is to map each LCD segment. An LCD data sheet provides a page that names each segment on the LCD display, an example is shown in Figure 3. The ability to refer to each segment with this naming convention in software makes the use of the LCD Driver module very easy.

FIGURE 3: LCD DATA SHEET SEGMENT NAMES



Using “define” statements in C or Assembly to define each LCDDATA bit (recall: these bits map to one pixel/segment of the LCD), makes the setting and clearing of the bit to enable or disable segments very intuitive. In addition, this can assist in making code that displays a specific digit value less complex and more readable.

Each segment on the LCD is connected to a specific common (COM) and segment (SEG) line. A pinout diagram is typically included in an LCD data sheet that shows the pin and common line associated with each LCD pixel/segment. Shown in Table 3 is an example pinout.

TABLE 3: LCD DATA SHEET PINOUT

PIN	COM1	COM2	COM3	COM4
1	1A	1B	1C	1D
2	1E	1F	1G	2A
3	2B	2C	2D	2E
4	2F	2G	3A	3B
5	3C	3D	3E	3F
6	3G	---	---	---

The data sheet of a PIC16F91X microcontroller provides worksheet called the “LCD Mapping Worksheet.” This worksheet looks very similar to the LCD data sheet pinout shown in Table 3. An example LCD Mapping Worksheet is shown in the Appendix A of this document.

Using the LCD mapping worksheet, determine which LCD pin each microcontroller SEG pin is attached to. Next, fill in the symbol name of each LCD segment/pixel (from the LCD data sheet pinout) in the empty box corresponding to the SEG pin and COM pin of the microcontroller.

You will notice that in the LCD mapping worksheet, next to each LCD segment is an LCDDATAx Address. This is the LCDDATA bit that corresponds to the LCD segment next to it. When the LCD mapping worksheet has been completed, it is much easier to write code that maps the symbol name to the LCDDATA bit.

The final step is to write #define statements that map each LCDDATA register and bit to the corresponding LCD segment name. Once the worksheet is completed, the task of writing an LCD output routine will be much easier. Each LCD segment name is shown next to the LCDDATA register and bit that it is associated with. Shown below in Example 1 is code that maps example LCD segments to LCDDATA bits and registers.

EXAMPLE 1: #DEFINE LCD MAPPING

```
#define 1A LCDDATA0, 1  
#define 1B LCDDATA3, 1  
#define 1C LCDDATA6, 1  
#define 1D LCDDATA9, 1  
. .
```

OPERATION

After connecting the hardware, configuring the LCD Driver module, and mapping the LCD segments, the LCD is ready to operate.

LCD segments can be turned on by setting and clearing LCDDATA register bits. If each LCD segment has been mapped then each segment can be turned on by setting the LCD segment name and turned off by clearing the segment name. Example 2 shown below shows code that turns segment a segment named 1A on and off.

EXAMPLE 2: TURNING LCD SEGMENTS OFF AND ON

```
#include <lcdmap.h> ; LCD Map  
  
BSF 1A ; turns on segment  
      ; 1A  
BCF 1A ; turns off  
      ; segment 1A
```

CONCLUSIONS

The LCD Driver module allows PIC microcontrollers to directly drive LCDs. The following steps to configuring the module have been discussed:

- Hardware Connections
- LCD Driver Module Initialization
- LCD Segment Mapping

Once these configuration steps have been completed, driving and controlling the LCD is easy. Microcontroller software is very flexible and programming constructs can be used to create efficient display routines (i.e., number, alphanumeric and graph display routines).

REFERENCES

- LCD PICmicro MCU Tips 'n Tricks*, DS41261
- AN658, "LCD Fundamentals using PIC16C92X Microcontroller", DS00658
- TB084, "Contrast Control Circuits for the PIC16F91X", DS91084
- DS41250, "PIC16F946/917/916/914/913 Data Sheet",

APPENDIX A:

FIGURE A-1: LCD SEGMENT MAPPING WORKSHEET (PART 1 OF 2)

LCD Function	COM0 LCDDATAx Address	COM1 LCD Segment	COM2 LCDDATAx Address	LCD Segment	LCDDATAx Address	LCDDATAx Address	COM3 LCD Segment	Pin No. 28/40-pin	PORT	Alternate Functions
SEG0	LCDDATA0_0	LCDDATA3_0	LCDDATA6_0	LCDDATA6_0	LCDDATA9_0	LCDDATA9_0	LCDDATA9_0	21/33	RB0	INT
SEG1	LCDDATA0_1	LCDDATA3_1	LCDDATA6_1	LCDDATA6_1	LCDDATA9_1	LCDDATA9_1	LCDDATA9_1	22/34	RB1	
SEG2	LCDDATA0_2	LCDDATA3_2	LCDDATA6_2	LCDDATA6_2	LCDDATA9_2	LCDDATA9_2	LCDDATA9_2	23/35	RB2	
SEG3	LCDDATA0_3	LCDDATA3_3	LCDDATA6_3	LCDDATA6_3	LCDDATA9_3	LCDDATA9_3	LCDDATA9_3	24/36	RB3	
SEG4	LCDDATA0_4	LCDDATA3_4	LCDDATA6_4	LCDDATA6_4	LCDDATA9_4	LCDDATA9_4	LCDDATA9_4	6/6	RA4	C1OUT/TTOCKI
SEG5	LCDDATA0_5	LCDDATA3_5	LCDDATA6_5	LCDDATA6_5	LCDDATA9_5	LCDDATA9_5	LCDDATA9_5	7/7	RA5	C2OUT/AN4/S ^S
SEG6	LCDDATA0_6	LCDDATA3_6	LCDDATA6_6	LCDDATA6_6	LCDDATA9_6	LCDDATA9_6	LCDDATA9_6	14/18	RC3	
SEG7	LCDDATA0_7	LCDDATA3_7	LCDDATA6_7	LCDDATA6_7	LCDDATA9_7	LCDDATA9_7	LCDDATA9_7	3/3	RA1	AN1
SEG8	LCDDATA1_0	LCDDATA4_0	LCDDATA7_0	LCDDATA7_0	LCDDATA10_0	LCDDATA10_0	LCDDATA10_0	18/26	RC7	RX/DT/SDI/SDA
SEG9	LCDDATA1_1	LCDDATA4_1	LCDDATA7_1	LCDDATA7_1	LCDDATA10_1	LCDDATA10_1	LCDDATA10_1	17/25	RC6	TX/CK/SCK/SCL
SEG10	LCDDATA1_2	LCDDATA4_2	LCDDATA7_2	LCDDATA7_2	LCDDATA10_2	LCDDATA10_2	LCDDATA10_2	16/24	RC5	T1CKI/CCP1
SEG11	LCDDATA1_3	LCDDATA4_3	LCDDATA7_3	LCDDATA7_3	LCDDATA10_3	LCDDATA10_3	LCDDATA10_3	15/23	RC4	$\overline{T1GI/SDO}$
SEG12	LCDDATA1_4	LCDDATA4_4	LCDDATA7_4	LCDDATA7_4	LCDDATA10_4	LCDDATA10_4	LCDDATA10_4	2/2	RA0	AN0
SEG13	LCDDATA1_5	LCDDATA4_5	LCDDATA7_5	LCDDATA7_5	LCDDATA10_5	LCDDATA10_5	LCDDATA10_5	28/40	RB7	ICSPDAT/ICDDAT
SEG14	LCDDATA1_6	LCDDATA4_6	LCDDATA7_6	LCDDATA7_6	LCDDATA10_6	LCDDATA10_6	LCDDATA10_6	27/39	RB6	ICSPCK/ICDCCK
SEG15	LCDDATA1_7	LCDDATA4_7	LCDDATA7_7	LCDDATA7_7	LCDDATA10_7	LCDDATA10_7	LCDDATA10_7	5/5	RA3	AN3/VREF+
SEG16	LCDDATA2_0	LCDDATA5_0	LCDDATA8_0	LCDDATA8_0	LCDDATA11_0	LCDDATA11_0	LCDDATA11_0	-26	RD3	
SEG17	LCDDATA2_1	LCDDATA5_1	LCDDATA8_1	LCDDATA8_1	LCDDATA11_1	LCDDATA11_1	LCDDATA11_1	-27	RD4	
SEG18	LCDDATA2_2	LCDDATA5_2	LCDDATA8_2	LCDDATA8_2	LCDDATA11_2	LCDDATA11_2	LCDDATA11_2	-28	RD5	
SEG19	LCDDATA2_3	LCDDATA5_3	LCDDATA8_3	LCDDATA8_3	LCDDATA11_3	LCDDATA11_3	LCDDATA11_3	-29	RD6	
SEG20	LCDDATA2_4	LCDDATA5_4	LCDDATA8_4	LCDDATA8_4	LCDDATA11_4	LCDDATA11_4	LCDDATA11_4	-30	RD7	
SEG21	LCDDATA2_5	LCDDATA5_5	LCDDATA8_5	LCDDATA8_5	LCDDATA11_5	LCDDATA11_5	LCDDATA11_5	-8	RE0	AN5
SEG22	LCDDATA2_6	LCDDATA5_6	LCDDATA8_6	LCDDATA8_6	LCDDATA11_6	LCDDATA11_6	LCDDATA11_6	-9	RE1	AN6
SEG23	LCDDATA2_7	LCDDATA5_7	LCDDATA8_7	LCDDATA8_7	LCDDATA11_7	LCDDATA11_7	LCDDATA11_7	-10	RE2	AN7

FIGURE A-2: LCD SEGMENT MAPPING WORKSHEET (PART 2 OF 2)

LCD Function	COM0	COM1	COM2	COM3	Pin No.	PORT	Alternate Functions
	LCD DATAx Address	LCD Segment	LCD DATAx Address	LCD Segment	LCD DATAx Address	28/40-pin	
SEG24	LCDDATA12, 0	LCDDATA15, 0	LCDDATA18, 0	LCDDATA21, 0	37	RE4	
SEG25	LCDDATA12, 1	LCDDATA15, 1	LCDDATA18, 1	LCDDATA21, 1	42	RE5	
SEG26	LCDDATA12, 2	LCDDATA15, 2	LCDDATA18, 2	LCDDATA21, 2	43	RE6	
SEG27	LCDDATA12, 3	LCDDATA15, 3	LCDDATA18, 3	LCDDATA21, 3	44	RE7	
SEG28	LCDDATA12, 4	LCDDATA15, 4	LCDDATA18, 4	LCDDATA21, 4	45	RF4	
SEG29	LCDDATA12, 5	LCDDATA15, 5	LCDDATA18, 5	LCDDATA21, 5	46	RF5	
SEG30	LCDDATA12, 6	LCDDATA15, 6	LCDDATA18, 6	LCDDATA21, 6	47	RF6	
SEG31	LCDDATA12, 7	LCDDATA15, 7	LCDDATA18, 7	LCDDATA21, 7	48	RF7	
SEG32	LCDDATA13, 0	LCDDATA16, 0	LCDDATA19, 0	LCDDATA22, 0	11	RF0	
SEG33	LCDDATA13, 1	LCDDATA16, 1	LCDDATA19, 1	LCDDATA22, 1	12	RF1	
SEG34	LCDDATA13, 2	LCDDATA16, 2	LCDDATA19, 2	LCDDATA22, 2	13	RF2	
SEG35	LCDDATA13, 3	LCDDATA16, 3	LCDDATA19, 3	LCDDATA22, 3	14	RF3	
SEG36	LCDDATA13, 4	LCDDATA16, 4	LCDDATA19, 4	LCDDATA22, 4	3	RG0	
SEG37	LCDDATA13, 5	LCDDATA16, 5	LCDDATA19, 5	LCDDATA22, 5	4	RG1	
SEG38	LCDDATA13, 6	LCDDATA16, 6	LCDDATA19, 6	LCDDATA22, 6	5	RG2	
SEG39	LCDDATA13, 7	LCDDATA16, 7	LCDDATA19, 7	LCDDATA22, 7	6	RG3	
SEG40	LCDDATA14, 0	LCDDATA17, 0	LCDDATA20, 0	LCDDATA23, 0	7	RG4	
SEG41	LCDDATA14, 1	LCDDATA17, 1	LCDDATA20, 1	LCDDATA23, 1	8	RG5	

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China - Shenzhen
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Fax: 86-755-8203-1760

China - Shunde
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China - Wuhan
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China - Xian
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ASIA/PACIFIC

India - Bangalore
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India - New Delhi
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India - Pune
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Japan - Yokohama
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Fax: 81-45-471-6122

Korea - Gumi
Tel: 82-54-473-4301
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Korea - Seoul
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Fax: 82-2-558-5932 or
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Malaysia - Penang
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Fax: 60-4-646-5086

Philippines - Manila
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Fax: 63-2-634-9069

Singapore
Tel: 65-6334-8870
Fax: 65-6334-8850

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Taiwan - Kaohsiung
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