

## EXPERT SYSTEM FOR LAYOUT OF A FLAT PATTERN OF A WAFFLE STRUCTURE CONTAINING BOSSES

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### ABSTRACT

A microcomputer-based code, CVEXT, has been developed that generates a CV EXECUTE file that, in turn, produces a flat pattern layout of a waffle structure containing bosses. Inputs to CVEXT can be provided interactively or through an interface with a CAE (Computer-Aided Engineering) code that generates structure definition parameters. The inputs include rib widths, spacings, skin thickness, and shell overall geometry at its cross-sectional planes. This paper describes the algorithms implemented in CVEXT. Results of test cases and examples are presented.

### INTRODUCTION

The capabilities of some CADDS 3 commands are exploited in this implementation of an expert system for the automatic generation of a flat pattern layout of a waffle structure containing bosses. The CVEXT expert system developed for this purpose could reduce operator time needed to produce such layouts by at least two orders of magnitude. In addition to saving time, it also produces a fully commented execute file from which all the dimensional features of the layout can be easily identified.

Since CVEXT is hosted on a microcomputer, the execute files can be generated and examined off line to CV.

### DESCRIPTION OF EXPERT SYSTEM

The system is described with reference to a simple case containing a single boss (Figure 1). Assuming that the case is of an integral waffle construction having constant rib widths, Figure 1 lists all the named input items required by CVEXT to create an execute file for the flat pattern layout of the case. This includes the waffle pocket and the boss CO3 blended into waffle pocket pattern with the menu-selected fillet radii.

#### Waffle Pocket

Figure 2 shows the geometry of a flat pattern waffle pocket including designations used for nodes, inflection points, fillet centers, and rib widths. Here the half rib widths in each pocket, C1 (A, B) to C4 (L, K), are indicated as variables that can be generated by other structural analysis programs or user-inputted.

The waffle pocket in Figure 2 is bounded by radials G-F and H-C and arcs D-E and A-I. Corner fillets are located at points K, L, M, and N.

### BOSS-POCKET INTERSECTION

The nature of the boss-pocket geometry is indicated in Figure 3 for a boss intersecting a radial G-F. The boss center is located at O. The figure indicates the boss radius  $R_B$  (at intersections with G-F) and all of the intersection parameters that have to be solved for this particular intersection condition.

There are many such intersection conditions that CVEX7 handles. These include single and double intersections between the boss and pocket radials, arcs, and fillets, as well as the several ways a boss can partially and totally enclose the pocket entities.

### Feature Recognition

After creating the flat pattern pocket geometry and locating the boss on it, CVEX7 undertakes a comprehensive series of tests to recognize the geometry near the boss as well as the entity intersections and different blending fillets that can be inserted. The sequence and extent of these tests depend on progressive test results. To reduce the number of crashing associated with the tests, a relatively simple algorithm sets up a limited region in which the pockets must be analyzed.

### Rules

In addition to basic rules implicit in using CADDS 3 commands, CVEX7 is governed, in part, by the following knowledge-based rules:

- When more than one boss blending fillet can be inserted, the one resulting in the shortest boss arc is selected.
- When the separation between two boss OD intersections on an entity is less than a selected minimum value (FF), no blending fillets are inserted.
- All entities totally enveloped by the boss OD are erased.
- Pocket radials and arcs intersected by boss are erased.
- Fillets whose circles are intersected by the boss are erased.
- Arc and radial segments are inserted and trimmed for fillet insertion when intersected arcs or radials are erased, and blending fillets must be inserted.

In addition to the above, CVEX7 performs and acts on feasibility tests of creating a flat pattern and tests to determine whether or not a boss is free-standing. That is, if the fillet radii are too large for the opening between the waffle rings or longitudinal members, a flat pattern cannot be created. And, if a boss is in a pocket where no fillet can be inserted relative to it, it is drawn as a free-standing boss.

### Ensuring Correct Blending Fillet Insertions

To ensure correct boss blending fillet insertions under a wide range of geometric conditions, an algorithm is implemented in CVEX7 that always tries two entities between which a fillet is to be inserted. The trimming is such that extension of one of the entities will not intersect the other.

Figure 4 lists the variables and Figure 3 defines the symbols that are the coordinates in which intersecting entities are trimmed. These coordinates are generated by first shifting the pocket perimeter toward the pocket center and, secondly, by increasing the boss radius by a fixed incremental value.

The above coordinates are explicitly invoked in the INS FIL command unless one of the fillet placement rules call for alternate coordinates.

## MAJOR CVEXT FUNCTIONS

The analysis flow and major functions performed by CVEXT are indicated in the algorithm description in Figure 3 and the outline in Figure 4. Several versions of CVEXT were developed and tested before this final version was selected. Its design is compatible with the CADDS 3 commands it uses.

## TYPICAL OUTPUTS

Figures 7, 8, and 9, respectively, are a CVEXT source file, debugging preview, and flat pattern layout of a simple test case. The case in this case has only four pockets and the selected boss intersects only one radial feature.

Comments in the source file make it easy to see what functions are being performed by different parts of the file. The pockets and pocket entities being created or operated on are also easy to identify from the comments at the ends of the command lines.

The source file actually submitted to CADDS 3 is derived from this file and is not as easy to read. It includes required line wrapping before the eightieth character and may exclude comments.

Figure 8 is a debugging preview containing a summary of all the inputs, outputs, and internally computed parameters. Definitions of variables in Figure 8 are given in Figure 3. The debugging preview is normally suppressed unless it is needed for debugging or variable values that are not output in the source file.

At this point the plan, Figure 9, such things as dimensions, rib cross-sections, and boss internal features are not included. These can be generated by additions to CVEXT, the source file, or they may be manually inserted.

Other test results are shown in Figures 10 through 17. For clarity, all the test cases are simple. Creation of layouts with large numbers of pockets and bosses are possible and would produce the greatest cost- and time-saving benefits compared to conventionally produced layouts.

### Problem Area

Figure 16 illustrates a current unresolved problem. The missing files on the boss OD was not inserted with the correct IN3 P11 command. A "Files Unloaded" error message is the output. However, the files do go in when the same command is implemented by manual digitizing on a table.

## SUMMARY

The described CVEXT expert system demonstrates the feasibility of creating such a system for specialized structures. Deviations from and/or analogies with CVEXT can provide the basis for creating expert systems for other structural types. These can include isogrid, skin stringer, and ring- or stringer-reinforced structures.

Possible enhancements to CVEXT include:

- Applications to multiple cylinder, cone shells.
- Multiple bosses.
- Automatically generated dimensions.
- Clustered bosses.
- Bosses falling on radial flat pattern split lines.
- Auto-layout of different rib widths.
- Numerical control tape generation for machining.
- Rectangular, triangular, or user-generated plan forms of boss contour.
- Transformation of flat pattern into a three-dimensional model.





Figure 3. Geometry of intersection of beam and G-F radial.

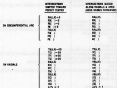


Figure 4. Designations of angle and radial in pseudo-intersection between beam and arc and radial.

The purpose of OVER2DCC is to create a flat pattern layout of a cone cylinder wafer shell structure, algorithm:

- 1 Menu input used for cone and wafer geometry
- 2 Convert cone to flat pattern
- 3 Generate outside flat layout flat pattern
- 4 Break appropriate entities. Lay in base OD axis, pocket axis & radial sections as a preliminary to flat insertion
- 5 Lay out wafer grid pattern using base axis & fillet
- 6 Determine region of grid intersected by lines
- 7 If intersection sides between cones OD & OD formed by fillet, then erase fillet
- 8 If boss intersects 2 ODs formed by adjacent in-pocket fillets, then erase the joining line or arc
- 9 For each element, identify & save relative location of boss center
- 10 For each fillet, test for false intersection between remaining grid & base OD. Insert fillet using flat pattern origin as a reference
- 11 Origin is selected to cause flat pattern to cover in flat quadrant & avoid 0-format HCB
- 12 Boss intersection points are filleted away from true intersections toward center of pocket by shifting pocket radial & axis before intersections are computed
- 13 Pocket radial & arc intersections or boss are shifted away from true intersections along radial & axis by increasing RC before intersections are computed
- 14 Trimming is performed to intersections found in items 12 & 13. Result is a set of arcs smaller than that will not intersect each other if only one is extended. This is necessary before of JPE peculiarities
- 15 Separate erase, trim & fillet insert modules are used for the different ways boss arc intersects circle extensions of pocket fillet
- 16 For case 2 or 3, corners enclosed or intersected by boss that does not intersect outside radial profile etc. The trim arc ends are switched from radial to arc or vice versa. There are 2 different termination modes. Unless otherwise indicated in definition of symbols, all printed data excludes bosses per items 12 & 13. Note PP 20 needed for 1/8" P1 to work. All pocket alterations are in inches and degrees unless otherwise specified in definitions.

Definitions of Symbols

AB(L)X	Angle between B-L & B-X
AC(L)X	Angle between C-L & C-X
AF(L)X	Angle between F-L & F-X
AG(L)X	Angle G-L & G-X
BE, BC, BF, BG(L)X	Angle between BO & B-X, C-L, F-X, G-X at point of intersection of base OD & radial
BD(L)X	Distance B-C
C	Half dia width of stringers & ribs. Used as an alternative for C1 (L)X to C4 (L)X
C1(L)X & C2(L)X	Half dia width on lower left, upper right side of pocket
COL(L)X	Distance
OD(L)X & OD(L)X	Distance between point P & pattern of pocket fillet
OB, OC, OF, OG(L)X	Coordinate angle of intersection on base-OD with pocket radials near points B, C, F, G shifted toward center
OB	"BOB L/R"
OB	"BOB ARC"
OB	"BOB L/R"
PA, PB, PC, PF, PG(L)X	Coordinate angle of intersection on base-OD with pocket arc near A, B, E, I shifted toward pocket center (PE, PI for left & PG, PD for right boss)
PP	Minimum allowable separation between 2 intersections of base-OD & pocket-OD & pocket arc or 1 intersection & inflection point
PQ(L)X	Distance P-Q
PQ(L)X	Distance P-Q
PT	This size is CADDS 3
PT%	Tolerance for number at end of the name
QA, QB, QC, QD(L)X	Coordinate angle of intersection on base OD with pocket arc near A, B, E, I (QE, PI for left & PA, PD for right boss) base radius increased by 0
QB, QC, QD, QD(L)X	Angle between BP & B-X, C-X, F-X, G-X at their intersections
QD(L)X	Distance Q-D
RB, RC, RE, RD(L)X	Coordinate angle of intersection on base OD with pocket radials near point B, C, E, G base radius increased by 0
RE	Loop control variable
RE%	"RE L/R"
R	Line input variable, original
RE	"RE ARC R" Example 13 P4277
RE	"RE ORN R"
RE, RE	Line output variables, final
RE	"RE PL, TRAMA R"
RE	"RE PL, TRAMA R"
RE	"RE L/R"

Figure 1. Preflight in OVER2DCC

IOE	"I/OE APC" $\theta$ Example 14 P4-275
J	Index variable for N, longitudinal
J1	Minimum J near base OD circumferential
J2	Maximum J near base OD
JPG	"I/OE PL, R"
K	Index variable for MO
K1	Minimum K near base OD longitudinal
K2	Maximum K near base OD
L	Chord wire length
LO	Location of base center from axial OD of cone
N	Number of longitudinal sections of equal height
NE	Fillet pattern file name
NI, NI2	Quantity variables for N, MO
NI3	Number of inches in CV section file transferred to block
NO	Number of longitudinal ribs equals number of circumferential pockets
O	Linear offset for this line
OO	Angular offset for 90th deg or 180 F/L, radius
ORLAR	Distance O-R, relative to line O-P
R	5.14782685
RA	Index to secondary base center termination modes (see text 18)
RA1	Radius to ring centerline on inner side of pocket
RA1-O1	Radius to O1, OD of fillet pattern parameter
R1	$R1 = R2$
RALAR & RALLR	Coordinate radii to inflection points A to B relative to reference center. RELLAR, RALLR are both to coordinate shifted toward pocket center
RO	Ring opening
RP	Fillet radius
RVALR & RVALR	Coordinate radii to fillet center K to H in pockets
RP	Coordinate radius to cone center in fillet pattern
RQ1 & RQ2	Small and large cone radii
RS, RC, RT, ROLLR	Coordinate radius at intersection on base OD with radial near S,C,P,Q shifted toward pocket center
TS	PWT
TO	Half cone angle
TR	"TRIM APC"
TRAR & TRLR	Coordinate angle of fillet pattern inflection points A to B
TR	Spring spacing angular increment
TR	Subtended fillet pattern perimeter angle
TRP	Coordinate angle to pocket left edge center line of fillet pattern
TRAR & TRLR	
TR	Coordinate angle of fillet centers at points K to H relative to reference center
TR	"TRIM LR"
TR	Coordinate angle to base center in fillet pattern
TR	Coordinate angle from split line heading base on cone
UR, UC, UR, UOLUR	Coordinate radius at intersection on base OD with radial near S,C,P, Q. Base radius increased by C
U	Location of X-axis center of fillet pattern layout
UOLUR	Distance X-C relative to line S-C
V	Location along Y-axis of center of fillet pattern
V-2D	Placed variables
V16	Base inside diameter I for base radius increased by 0.1 for radius & area toward pocket center
V17	5.745550 radians in degree conversion
V18	
V19	Variable name does not match point labeling

Figure 3. Prototype to CTEXT code (continued).

- Menu input items
- SADDON & command assignments
- Variables initialization, offset, trap size, constants, etc
- Compute fat pattern geometry
- Test for fillet radius being small enough to fit ring & frame spacing, if yes, abort processing
- Locate infection points, boss & fillet centers on fat pattern
- Determine the pocket number array subscripts of waffle pockets intersected by boss OD
- Compute coordinates for all intersection parameters between boss OD & radius, arc & fillet for (1) radius & arc based toward pocket center & (2) boss radius increased to fillet intersection along pocket radius and arc
- Test for (yes) inside of pocket and not intersecting pocket radius, arc or fillet circles. If yes, produce only fillet pattern of waffle grid & perimeter
- Create reference statement to locate fat pattern center
- Open buffer to create CV execute file
- Create commands for drawing complete fat pattern

*Figure 4. Outline of major CVEX7 program functions.*

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**  
 2. **IDENTIFICATION**  
 3. **DESCRIPTION**  
 4. **TESTS**  
 5. **RESULTS**  
 6. **DISCUSSION**  
 7. **CONCLUSIONS**  
 8. **REFERENCES**  
 9. **APPENDICES**  
 10. **NOTES**  
 11. **REVISIONS**  
 12. **APPROVALS**  
 13. **DATE**  
 14. **BY**  
 15. **FOR**  
 16. **PROJECT**  
 17. **NO.**  
 18. **REV.**  
 19. **DATE**  
 20. **BY**  
 21. **FOR**  
 22. **PROJECT**  
 23. **NO.**  
 24. **REV.**  
 25. **DATE**  
 26. **BY**  
 27. **FOR**  
 28. **PROJECT**  
 29. **NO.**  
 30. **REV.**  
 31. **DATE**  
 32. **BY**  
 33. **FOR**  
 34. **PROJECT**  
 35. **NO.**  
 36. **REV.**  
 37. **DATE**  
 38. **BY**  
 39. **FOR**  
 40. **PROJECT**  
 41. **NO.**  
 42. **REV.**  
 43. **DATE**  
 44. **BY**  
 45. **FOR**  
 46. **PROJECT**  
 47. **NO.**  
 48. **REV.**  
 49. **DATE**  
 50. **BY**  
 51. **FOR**  
 52. **PROJECT**  
 53. **NO.**  
 54. **REV.**  
 55. **DATE**  
 56. **BY**  
 57. **FOR**  
 58. **PROJECT**  
 59. **NO.**  
 60. **REV.**  
 61. **DATE**  
 62. **BY**  
 63. **FOR**  
 64. **PROJECT**  
 65. **NO.**  
 66. **REV.**  
 67. **DATE**  
 68. **BY**  
 69. **FOR**  
 70. **PROJECT**  
 71. **NO.**  
 72. **REV.**  
 73. **DATE**  
 74. **BY**  
 75. **FOR**  
 76. **PROJECT**  
 77. **NO.**  
 78. **REV.**  
 79. **DATE**  
 80. **BY**  
 81. **FOR**  
 82. **PROJECT**  
 83. **NO.**  
 84. **REV.**  
 85. **DATE**  
 86. **BY**  
 87. **FOR**  
 88. **PROJECT**  
 89. **NO.**  
 90. **REV.**  
 91. **DATE**  
 92. **BY**  
 93. **FOR**  
 94. **PROJECT**  
 95. **NO.**  
 96. **REV.**  
 97. **DATE**  
 98. **BY**  
 99. **FOR**  
 100. **PROJECT**

Figure 7. Typical CHEST master file.





Figure 9: Test 1.



Figure 10: Test 2.



Figure 11. Step 3.



Figure 12. Step 4.



Figure 11. Test 1.



Figure 14. Test 4.

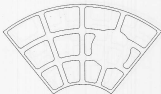


Figure 15. Test 7.



Figure 16. Test 8.

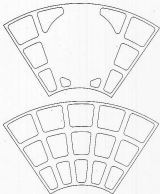


Figure 17. Fan 8.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Paul Slyk** was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. He attended the College of the City of New York where he majored in Mechanical Engineering, and Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute where he majored in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. He received a BME from the College of the City of New York and a MME from Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. He has also done post-graduate work Columbia University and University of California at San Diego, has written a textbook, and has taught courses on servo-control systems at the San Diego City College.

Paul Slyk has published numerous papers on structural analysis, tests, and concepts. He is currently a Senior Software Engineer in the CAD group of the General Dynamics Data Systems Division where he is now engaged in the development of CAE and CAD software for structural analysis and graphics. His previous experience includes program management and structural/mechanical design and analysis at General Dynamics, Control Division Airborne Instruments Laboratory, ITT Clevite Brakes Co., and American Machine & Foundry Co.