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Computer-Aided Design in the Aerospace Industry

Ema Ridhi Gowri Shankar

Highschool student, New Millennium School

Abstract
Computer-Aided Design, a multifunctional software application employed by designers and engineers, has altered the way products are conceived, visualized, developed, tested, and manufactured. Supporting a wide range of design types, to name a few: 2D drafting, 3D modeling, parametric design, surface modeling, and solid modeling, the reliance of industries on this software has risen inexplicably to meet the needs of its consumers or to yield a desired product. Here, the aerospace industry is no stranger.

Keywords: Computer-Aided Design, software, modeling, reliance, aerospace industry

In the Late 1950s, researchers at MIT and General Motors came up with the first prototypes of interactive graphical systems envisioned solely for design. Between 1966 and 1968, an engineer at Renault, Pierre Bezier, created the first true 3D CAD program, followed by a UNISURF CAD program that redefined the design and manufacturing of vehicles by switching from manual drawing boards to computer-aided design. The use of CAD/CAM expanded outside the automotive, aerospace, and electronics industries as computers became more accessible and decreased to the size of desktop PCs, enjoying nearly ubiquitous adoption. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the prevalence of 3D modeling and 3D designs, with programs including Romulus, Uni-Solid, CATIA, and the well-known AutoCAD system [1].

CAD, an approach of mocking up designs in 2D and 3D, helps with realistic, accurate digital representations and virtual manipulation of products before their production. CAD software enables users to work quicker and spare production costs by creating virtual prototypes more efficiently, allowing designers to seamlessly experiment with no real-world material waste. An enormous benefit is considered to be the decrease in manual errors. Moreover, monotonous tasks like logo placement and drawing storage are averted using this technology. These designs function as forecasts and prevent common design gaffes from recurring. CAD designers have the fluency of returning to their "virtual drawing board" whenever deemed necessary to address potential errors or future product scope. By allowing the consideration of a variety of calculations, designers can also feel more involved and in touch. Low-risk, virtual investigation allows organizations to improve production outputs and reduce resource waste due to flawed designs. Furthermore, CAD files may be freely shared and debated, making it easy for teams to participate [2].

Having the capability of designing aircraft and aerospace systems, CAD is significant for aerospace engineers, although real-word testing remains indispensable for the evaluations by a test pilot. CATIA, Inventor, and Autodesk, rendering 3D printing, parametric design, and geometry manipulation tools, makes them the three most prominent CAD software packages utilized in the aircraft sector. [3] The

Boeing 777 set the precedent for using CAD design to develop commercial aircraft. The generic steps of development remain unaltered across the aerospace industry. In almost all scenarios, aerospace engineering builds several preliminary digital concepts. Following a refinement and selection phase, they focus on the most technically feasible model to develop further. Aerospace engineers create a virtual representation of what the aircraft will appear like through a process called drafting. They use virtual models to enhance and validate design layouts, rendering actual models and mock-ups useless. The use of CAD/CAM software at this level includes Dassault Systèmes' CATIA, Parametric Technology Corporation's CADDS and Pro/Engineer, and Siemens Digital Industries' NX. Then, the real work begins with the actual modeling of an aircraft. Many 3D modeling design companies use parametric modeling to draw the vehicle's parts and subsystems and to exhibit the parts real-world behaviors. The data collection comprises information on the size, weight, composition, and tensile strength of the pieces. Since the model will serve as the basis on which an actual aircraft will be built, maintaining a near-obsessive level of precision is non-negotiable. CAD designers can easily detect risky, inefficient, or ineffective flight processes through 3- Dimensional models. They can easily renovate outdated plane models by analyzing previous models, digitally developing their prototype before production, and sketching out associated related product design and functionality. Accuracy to the tiniest details ensures precise design modifications and enhancements at every step. Numerous simulation processes are applied to the produced model in order to assess its performance, stability, and maneuverability. Depending on the type of analysis done, aerospace engineers employ various simulation parameters, such as load capacity and speed. And finally, prototyping. A prototype in the aerospace sector nearly always refers to a finished product. Developing an aircraft is costly, so building multiple test models isn't financially advantageous. For an industry that operates within an immeasurable margin of error, accuracy — even in the prototyped parts — is of the utmost vitality [4, 5].

CAD software, which generates massive amounts of sensitive data such as design specifications, intellectual property, trade secrets, and customer information, must implement robust data security and privacy measures such as encryption, authentication, authorization, backup, recovery, auditing, and compliance. Another concern is the interoperability and compatibility of CAD's multitude of data formats. All CAD software applications not being compatible or interoperable with each other can cause problems when different teams or stakeholders need to collaborate or communicate using different CAD software applications. This may sometimes even lead to data loss, errors, inconsistencies, or delays in the design process. Yet another concern is the accuracy and data quality of the designs. These models' quality and accuracy are influenced by a number of variables, including the input data, modeling methodologies, simulation approaches, validation procedures, and human factors. If any of these factors are flawed or inaccurate, the generated models may not reflect reality or meet the requirements of the aerospace industry. As a result, aerospace businesses must use dependable data sources, sophisticated modeling techniques, rigorous simulation techniques, detailed validation procedures, and knowledgeable human operators to ensure data quality and accuracy throughout the design process.

However, these challenges are not insurmountable and can be solved or mitigated by using appropriate solutions and best practices. Additive manufacturing, much like CAD, has proven to be a significant player in the development of flight vehicles in the aerospace industry. CAD software is a powerful tool that can help aerospace engineers and designers create and develop innovative products that can advance industry and benefit society. CAD software is not only a technical tool, but also a creative tool that can inspire aerospace engineers and designers to imagine new possibilities and solutions for the future of aviation and spaceflight [4].

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