

CAD/CAM - A CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY  
FOR CANADIAN INDUSTRY

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Abstract

As a result of advances in computer technology, the cost of computation is decreasing approximately ten-fold per decade. In the manufacturing industries, this is fostering the development of widespread changes in design and manufacturing techniques, referred to as Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacturing, or CAD/CAM, at an unprecedented rate. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for manufacturing companies and industrialized countries who wish to maintain or advance their relative positions as suppliers of manufactured goods of virtually all kinds.

CAD/CAM is defined as embracing the use of computers in the full sequence of manufacturing tasks, starting with the customer's order and proceeding to product design, manufacturing process planning, manufacturing, quality assurance, inventory, shipment and final delivery. A brief review of CAD/CAM development, emphasizing the role of governments, is given for Germany, Japan, U.S.A., United Kingdom, France and Italy.

A world view of CAD/CAM in the 1979-1980 time frame is given by means of an extensive list of selected literature references covering computer and graphics equipment; CAD analytical techniques; production, material and inventory control; data base design; numerical control; automated testing; industrial robots; computer languages; system design; project management and social implications plus applications in automotive, machinery, electronics, chemical and plastics, architecture, building design, automated warehousing and others. (381 references).

Introduction

Without making any attempt to be melodramatic it would appear that developments in computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing are taking place at a rate around the world that will strain the ability of companies and nations to maintain their positions in the world economy. This is both a challenge and an opportunity.

It is appropriate therefore in this light to examine some trends in Canada's performance in manufacturing industry productivity and some trends in world trade participation. It is appropriate also to examine some previous changes in technology and productivity, for example in agriculture and process computer control, and to see what effects or parallels, observable in those instances, may apply or provide guidance to what is happening today through the use of computers in design and manufacturing -- which some would describe as the CAD/CAM revolution. It is appropriate that we should have some definition, or at least an envelope of concepts, of what is meant by the term CAD/CAM. Last but not least it is useful to identify some of the issues involved, and responses that will be required, of Canadian industry, educational institutions and government in adapting to this new technological environment.

There is no doubt that CAD/CAM represents both a threat and a challenge to industry. It is the nature of the response to this challenge that will determine whether it represents an opportunity which will be used widely and to best advantage.

## A View of Canada's Present Position

In terms of long term growth and job creation, the manufacturing industries are one of the most important sectors of the total Canadian economy, yet manufacturing industry employment, as a percentage of the total labour force has been on a declining trend. Productivity will be especially important to the Canadian manufacturing industries in the 1980's if traditional markets are to be retained and new ones gained in the face of lowered tariff protection and increasing external competition.

In this context, the rapidly emerging use of Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAD/CAM) technology is of special importance.

With the advent of CAD/CAM, it will become increasingly evident in the 1980's that the design of the factory is just as important as the design of the product. Developments will lead increasingly to the marriage of both Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) into highly integrated design and production systems.

Productivity will be especially important to Canadian manufacturers in the 1980's. During this decade, tariff protection will be lowered, competition from external sources will undoubtedly increase, and inflation will continue at a strong pace. At the same time a new world wide wave of industrial automation, based on a rapidly increasing use of computers in design and manufacturing, is occurring.

As a result of the latest round of trade negotiations, Canadian industry will face increasing competition from imported products. At the same time, however, our industry will have better access to foreign markets. However, to compete successfully in this new trading environment, Canadian industry will have to achieve levels of performance, in terms of productivity and technical excellence, equivalent or superior to industry in other countries, whereas Figures 1, 2 and 3

indicate Canada's current declining trend in export performance, manufacturing industry employment and productivity improvement in manufacturing relative to other nations. (1)

## Previous Examples of Technological Change: Automation in Agriculture and the Process Industries

It is useful to remind ourselves that change is always with us, and that some very major adaptations have been made successfully, but not without effort, in the past.

One of the largest changes, which Canadians have responded to in the past 50 years, has been the change in farm labour and population as a percentage of total population. This has happened largely due to technology and the use of machinery. At one time nearly 100% of the population was directly involved in agriculture and food production. In 1941 it was over 30%. Today it is less than 5%. However we don't have 95% unemployment, because people now do other things, -- and most prefer it that way. In a mere 40 years this has produced a huge social and demographic change from a rural to an urban population society; from an agricultural to a non-agricultural economy.

A more recent example of technological change, bearing a closer relationship to computer technology, is available; namely the application of computers in control systems, which began about 1960, and which has since become widespread in the process industries such as pulp and paper, mineral production and petroleum refining.

This is a particularly useful example, because it bears many technical similarities to the current emerging use of computers in the discrete parts manufacturing industries which is generally referred to as CAD/CAM. Both the similarities and some differences are shown in tabular form in Fig. 4. (2) It will be to the advantage of many Canadian companies undertaking CAD/CAM developments and applications that much pioneering work has

already been done, at considerable time and expense, in the process industry and capital intensive industry applications where it could be first afforded. Executive operating systems for handling real time, sensor based data, interrupts and distributed computing are a by-product or legacy that is available today from this earlier work, along with some of the lessons learned regarding system and project organization. Hopefully they will not be ignored or forgotten in too many instances.

#### Microelectronics and Economic Justification

It is useful to consider why this change in design and production technology is happening. As one might expect, there are a number of factors. Basically it is because it is economically justifiable, and technically possible. Without going into detail, a vast number of developments in microelectronics and computer technology have reduced the size of computers, increased their reliability, and above all reduced their cost to the point where a myriad of new applications are possible -- provided that one has the applications knowledge in hand to do it. A calculation costing \$1,000 to perform in 1952 cost \$10 in 1972 and will cost 10 cents in 1992.

While microelectronics and computer industry developments make the computation part of CAD/CAM systems possible, it is the applications knowledge, people, economic justification and availability of funds for development and investment that will determine the diffusion rate for adoption of this technology. Technological change does not take place overnight. While the concept of an invention may take place in an instant, the adoption of a new technology on a wide spread basis is a diffusion process that takes time -- time largely determined by the magnitude of the economic justification. The economic justification and know-how for CAD/CAM does not come as a packaged product from the microelectronics or computer industry. It resides in the manufacturing industries who are not only the users, but also the application developers. The mechanical engineering

community has a large role to play in this. Reports from Germany, for example, indicate that CAD/CAM projects are organized with the mechanical engineering or manufacturing engineering personnel as leaders, and the electronics or computer oriented personnel in a secondary role.<sup>(3, 4)</sup> That could be a good formula for success, assuming that the mechanical or manufacturing engineering personnel are equal to the task, and particularly that they have the necessary orientation to think in terms of systems development. Trained or experienced personnel are already in short supply. There is a need for education and training in computer programming and applications analysis in virtually all industry sectors and disciplines. The situation today has been described succinctly with the remark "People who know how to program, don't know how to solve problems. People who know how to solve problems, don't know how to program".

#### What is CAD/CAM?

Besides being a useful abbreviation, it is useful as stated in the introduction, to have some sort of definition, or envelope of concepts, for what is meant by the term CAD/CAM. The term, with some slight variations, has come to very widely used in the past five or six years.

One may examine first the sequence of manufacturing industry tasks as shown in Fig. 5, starting with the customer and proceeding to product design, manufacturing process planning, manufacturing, quality assurance, inventory, shipment and final delivery. If one then identifies the ways in which computer systems are being used to assist in each of these design and manufacturing tasks, a series of application areas results, as shown in Table I, which can be regarded as a composite definition for the term "CAD/CAM". As indicated in Table I, the systems integration concept is important. There is a strong drive in this direction, particularly by larger companies who are the leaders in developing and applying the technology.

Another approach which can be useful, is to identify some of the technologies which are involved as elements in CAD/CAM, as shown in Table II. Education, understanding and development in these technologies, as applied to design and manufacturing, will determine the growth rate for CAD/CAM systems in numbers and in their technical capability.

Education and training is therefore of paramount importance. There are many facets to this. One point to be recognized is that if CAD/CAM was being developed and applied slowly on a world wide basis over a period of 10 to 20 years or more before use became prevalent, then it would be sufficient to focus the educational needs on the schools, colleges and universities who will train and educate the next generation of Canadians for their working life span. The role of these conventional education channels is important, but not sufficient under the circumstances. If the change to the widespread use of computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing takes place as quickly as would appear likely, then education and training of the existing work force is of equal or even greater importance. The mechanism preferred by industry for this is by means of in-plant training courses. The first requirement in this process, to multiply and fan-out capability, will be to assemble the best available source material and train the instructors who will then train their co-workers.

It may be important, especially in the long run, not to take too narrow a view of the training and education requirements related to CAD/CAM, especially if the secondary effects of its adoption are to be as broadly beneficial as possible. Education in the arts and cultural pursuits, in addition to education in technology, may become increasingly important if increased leisure is to be enjoyed, and as an alternative to the work ethic.

#### CAD/CAM Developments in Other Countries

A brief overview of CAD/CAM development in other countries, and the degree of involv-

ment by governments, may provide a useful perspective.

#### Germany:

Government funding of approximately \$179 million was provided for CAD, CAM and automatic process control from 1971-1979 as part of the \$1,366 million Second and Third Data Processing Plans.<sup>(3)</sup>

CAD/CAM development is conducted through an extensive system of centres and institutes employing thousands of scientists and engineers with strong emphasis on the mechanical engineering aspects.

#### Japan:

CAD/CAM and robotics have high priority. Individual companies such as Mitsubishi and the automotive industry manufacturers have extensive working systems. The Methodology for Unmanned Manufacture (MUM) project, with \$100 million government funding to develop an un-manned factory, has been modified to develop a Flexible Manufacturing System (FMS) as an intermediate step, incorporating machine tools and industrial robots.<sup>(5)</sup> Funding now reported is \$60 million over 7 years.<sup>(6)</sup>

#### United States:

CAD/CAM activity is increasing rapidly as companies strive to meet the productivity challenge of Germany and Japan. The Society of Manufacturing Engineers is one organization playing a leading role, for example through their Autofact conferences and special interest groups.

Government projects, largely contracted out, include the \$100 million United States Air Force, Integrated Computer Aided Manufacturing (ICAM) project for aerospace companies; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration CAD oriented Integrated Planning for Aerospace Design (IPAD) program; the United States Navy Computer Aided

Shiobuilding Design and Construction (CASDAC) program and others. (7, 8)

Following a bill enacted by Congress in October 1980, the Detroit Cooperative Generic Technology Center Inc. has been selected by the U.S. Department of Commerce to create and operate a research facility in the area of computer integrated manufacturing, supported by a grant of \$1 million plus a \$5 million grant for facilities and equipment.

#### United Kingdom:

Funding for CAD/CAM comes from three principal sources, the Science Research Council, Department of Education and Science and the Department of Industry. The National Engineering Laboratory near Glasgow undertakes development and provides advice in NC machine tool technology and tape preparation.

The Computer Aided Design Centre, a Department of Industry Research Establishment in Cambridge, as of 1980 has reached a staff of 150 and annual expenditure of \$5 million.

A January 1980 report by a Cabinet Office Advisory Council for Computer Aided Design and

- Greater coordination and focus for CAD/CAM research and development.

- An expenditure of £1.5 - 2.0 million over the next three years in measures to increase awareness and disseminate CAD/CAM information, (in addition to the Microelectronics Awareness Program - MAP).

- A merger of the NEL at East Kilbride and the Computer Aided Design Centre (CADC) at Cambridge into a single institute, and a physical move to "one or more sites nearer the main manufacturing centres of the United Kingdom" in order to facilitate access by industrial companies.

#### France:

The French government are making a major

effort under the Ministry of Industry to create awareness in general in industry of computer systems and to encourage small and medium sized firms to use CAD. A recent bulletin of the Institut National de Recherche en Informatique et en Automatique contains an extensive paper on CAD/CAM and reports on the CAM research and development activities of 19 other laboratories and institutes in France. (9)

#### Italy:

As of 1974, Italy ranked fourth in the world in production of numerically controlled machines (behind Japan, USA and West Germany), and second in NC machine tool installations (second and almost equal to West Germany). Italy does not appear to be a leader in CAD/CAM developments but the number of industrial robot installations reported is considerable.

The following figures for industrial robot installations (1979 estimates) may serve as a useful overall indicator of CAD/CAM technology diffusion and application. (10)

Japan	10,000
USA	3,000
West Germany	850
Sweden	600
Italy	500
Poland	360
France	200
Norway	200
Britain	185
Finland	130
USSR	25

The Canadian figure is estimated to be in the order of 100.

Another useful indicator of CAD/CAM activity may be provided by a count of the technical papers published on the technology. Of those selected in 1979-80 from the internationally recognized "Computer and Control Abstracts" for inclusion in the monthly newsletter, "CAD/CAM and Canada" the publications by country of origin are:

	<u>7</u>
USA	40
UK	23
Germany	14
Japan	6
France	3
Canada	3
USSR	2
Switzerland	1
Other	<u>8</u>
	100

In using these data, it should be recognized that some preference is exercised in the selection process to papers of most likely value or interest to Canadian readers.

It is clearly evident that development of CAD/CAM systems and equipment is widespread throughout all industrial sectors, and increasing rapidly. This is especially evident in the case of industrial robots, because they are relatively new, they are readily identifiable, and because they can be readily programmed to perform repetitive manipulation tasks previously difficult, prohibitively expensive or even impossible to perform in the practical sense, with any form of previously available mechanical apparatus.

As indicated above, the number of robots installed or produced by an industrial country is regarded by some as an indicator of the state of the art in manufacturing technology. It should be stressed that at best this is only an indicator. It could be as useful, as another indicator, to count CAD application programs, lines of code, or data bases; except that these are harder to define, identify and quantize. Another indicator is to count computers. During the early introduction of computers it was a common practice to maintain and publish survey data on numbers of computer installations of all types and sizes. For medium to large systems this census data is still partly maintained. For small computers it is becoming impossible. Such statistics can be useful, particularly when a new technology is at the frontier and the use of industrial robots is in this position today.

To maintain perspective, however, we may remind ourselves that printing presses when first introduced probably raised fears similar to some concerns regarding robots today. The number of printing presses installed in the year 1500 was 73 in Italy, 51 in Germany, 39 in France, 24 in Spain, 15 in the Low Countries and 8 in Switzerland. Although the number in use today is vastly greater, the associated fears have long since disappeared. The situation for typewriters is somewhat similar.

Major suppliers of industrial robots and their customers have now achieved hundreds of highly productive, relatively trouble free industrial robot installations. Many applications now considered straight forward such as:

- Spot welding of automobile bodies
- Die casting
- Investment Casting
- Machine tool loading and unloading
- Injection moulding of plastic parts
- Forging
- Spray painting

Provided that the application engineering is done carefully, the increased production, more consistent operation, improved operator safety, reduced scrap and savings in labour, will frequently pay for a \$30 - 80,000 robot in 1 - 3 years, depending on the application.

It is important to give neither too much nor too little attention to the industrial robot "revolution" and its impact. Most robots today perform only a routine sequence of mechanical motions, often characterized by the "pick-and-place" nature of the function performed. Lacking any form of sensor input, if something goes wrong they will continue to perform dumbly until shut-off. This will change as sensor inputs are added, most notably force feedback signals from the hand or gripper, and vision capability using TV cameras and pattern recognition techniques. Market forecasts for numbers of robots to be produced and installed are highly dependent on

the assumption of these developments, which will not necessarily take place without effort. Difficulties in achieving successful pattern recognition and other forms of robot "intelligence" may be greater than realized by some forecasts or popular reviews. Nevertheless we are in a world wide race for improvement of industrial productivity. Japan in particular, which already has 10,000 robot installations, has established a robot leasing program through the Japan Industrial Robot Association (JIRA), Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and 10 insurance companies.

### A World View of CAD/CAM Technology

The abstracts on CAD/CAM technology selected from the world literature and reproduced monthly in the newsletter of the CAD/CAM Technology Advancement Council provide a vantage point from which it is possible to view the fundamental technology change which is taking place on a world scale, which is revolutionizing design engineering and manufacturing and which will penetrate every industrial sector.

The twenty abstracts reproduced by permission each month from the INSPEC publication "Computer and Control Abstracts" provide a good representation of the world literature. The following review and accompanying bibliography represent those selected in the June 1979 - December 1980 time frame, and have been organized in a subject sequence which could be used to prepare a reference text or series of chapter monographs for education and training on CAD/CAM systems and technology.

Introductory and review references<sup>(11-31)</sup> include two collected sets of reprints<sup>(11-12)</sup> available from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Ottawa. Published information on the economic justification of CAD/CAM is not widespread<sup>(32-34)</sup>, partly due to the difficulty of documentation and commercial secrecy in detail but is known to exist elsewhere, for example in the papers of the SME Autofact conferences, Numerical

Control Society and CAM-I.

Computer graphics, along with the use of industrial robots represents one of the fastest growing segments of CAD/CAM in commercial terms and capability, along with the use of microprocessors in terminals and production equipment<sup>(35-59)</sup>. Two rapidly emerging CAD analytical techniques are the use of geometric modeling for the generation of NC machine tool cutter paths<sup>(60)</sup>, and finite element analysis<sup>(61-64)</sup>, for stress, vibration and heat transfer analysis. Pattern router algorithms<sup>(65)</sup> may represent another useful CAD analytical technique with particular application to printed circuit board connection layout.

Production material and inventory control<sup>(67-74)</sup> has been a common manufacturing industry computer application for the past twenty years, but which may be considerably extended due to the information demands of integrated CAD/CAM systems, and the greater availability of shop floor and feedback data<sup>(75)</sup>. Similarly data base systems have received a long history of development, but are likely to receive new impetus due to their key and central nature in integrated CAD/CAM systems.<sup>(76-86)</sup>

Metal cutting machine tools, including direct numerical control (DNC) and computer numerical control (CNC), are the most widely used form of numerically controlled production equipment<sup>(87-108)</sup>. This is being extended however into many other forms of production equipment including arc welding, spot welding, resistance welding, sheet metal punching and shearing, grinding, polishing, injection moulding and packaging<sup>(109-129)</sup>.

Automated testing and inspection for improved production and quality control form an important part of CAD/CAM systems if maximum benefits are to be obtained. Applications include mask testing for integrated circuits, line width testing on printed circuit boards, weld quality inspection, checking of dimensions, surface roughness, weighing and the



on-line monitoring of other production equipment(130-147).

Industrial robots(148-177) along with turnkey CAD graphic systems represent one of the two most rapidly emerging CAD/CAM technologies. Their widespread use for parts handling, machine tool loading, spot welding, arc welding, die and investment casting, spray painting and even sheep sheering, as an experimental application, will change the nature of many factory and production systems.

The integrated CAD/CAM factory of the future must necessarily be designed as a distributed or hierarchical system. Hence developments in message handling, bus and data highway design, distributed and hierarchical systems(178-205) are an important yet complex aspect of system planning.

Computer programming languages are also an important consideration(206-209) and some special languages have emerged or are under development such as Grapple for CAD, ADA for real-time embedded systems, VAL for industrial robots in addition to the many languages for NC machine tool programming such as APT and ATLAS for automatic testing.

Project management(210-222) and systems design(223-252) bear special consideration. Education, training, the location and most efficient use of scarce people will be important to project managers. Proper design of flexible manufacturing systems will be important to the profitability of the firm, where used. The social implications of CAD/CAM are being recognized and discussed(253-262) as part of the adaptation process to this new technology.

Application papers are becoming more and more prevalent as the technology advances from concept to installation in a wide variety of industries including automotive(263-272), machinery and equipment manufacturing(273-284), the aerospace industry(7, 8, 14, 30, 285, 286).

The electrical and electronics industry is noted for many applications(287-310), because its personnel tend to be close to and familiar with CAD/CAM systems potential at an early date, and also because some industry products, such as the LSI chip in particular, would be impossible to design by any other method. Conversely food and beverage industry applications are not widespread as yet, although examples do exist(311). Chemical and plastics industry applications are more widespread(312-318), particularly for injection moulding and the production of plastics parts.

CAD/CAM in the architecture, building and construction industry tends to focus on the CAD or design end(319-330). Conversely as one would expect, automated warehousing and distribution systems(331-346) deal primarily with mechanical movement. It should be noted that automated warehousing techniques are being applied in integrated CAD/CAM systems to the movement of parts and work in progress between work stations, and not just to the storage and handling of finished goods. Reductions in work in progress inventory, interest carrying charges and shorter delivery time to the customer being the objective and economic justification. Miscellaneous applications(347-363) as in the textile, printing, glass and shipbuilding industries give evidence that every type of industrial activity is a potential user of the technology.

Major national programs and studies exist, such as those in Germany(3, 4, 364, 365), Japan(7, 8, 366-368), the USA(7, 8, 369-371), the United Kingdom(6, 372-376) and elsewhere(377-381).

#### Conclusion

- Productivity will be especially important to Canadian manufacturers in the 1980's. During this decade, tariff protection will be lowered, access to foreign markets will increase, but competition will also increase for both domestic and foreign markets.

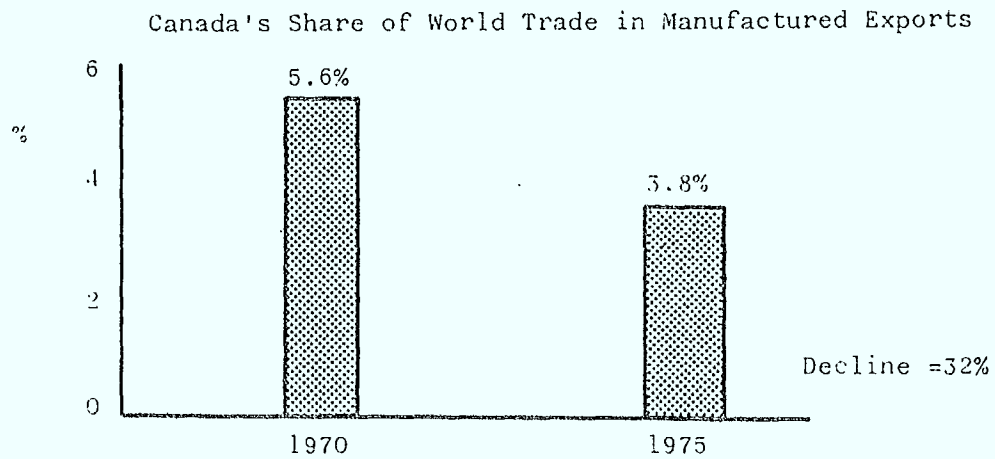
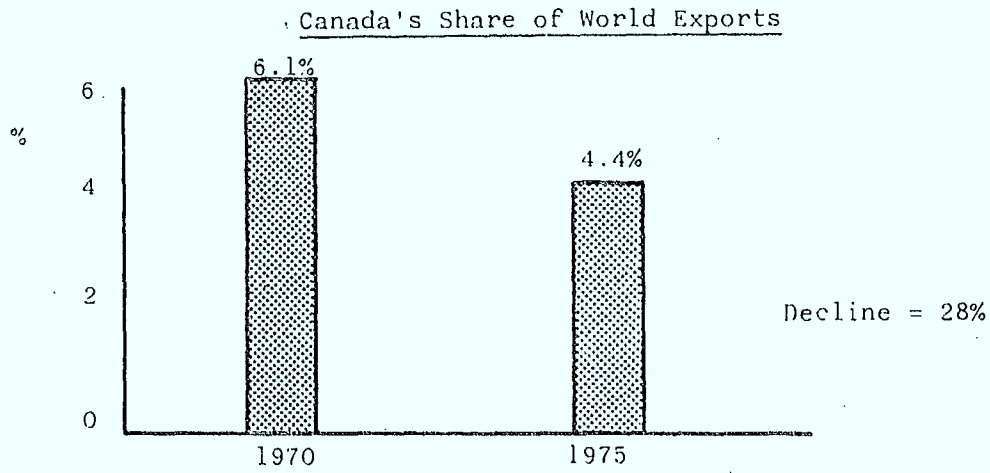
- At the same time, a new world wide wave of industrial automation is occurring in manufacturing, based on a rapidly increasing use of computers and industrial robots.

- As an indication of the rate and breadth of this technological change, approximately one thousand published articles on CAD/CAM are now appearing each year in the open literature.

- Within this wave of change, two of the most rapidly advancing fronts are the use of graphic systems for computer aided design and industrial robots for parts and tool handling, in addition to the more established use of numerically controlled machine tools and production machinery.

- It is the response to CAD/CAM, and not CAD/CAM itself, which will determine for companies and countries whether CAD/CAM represents a net challenge or opportunity to them.

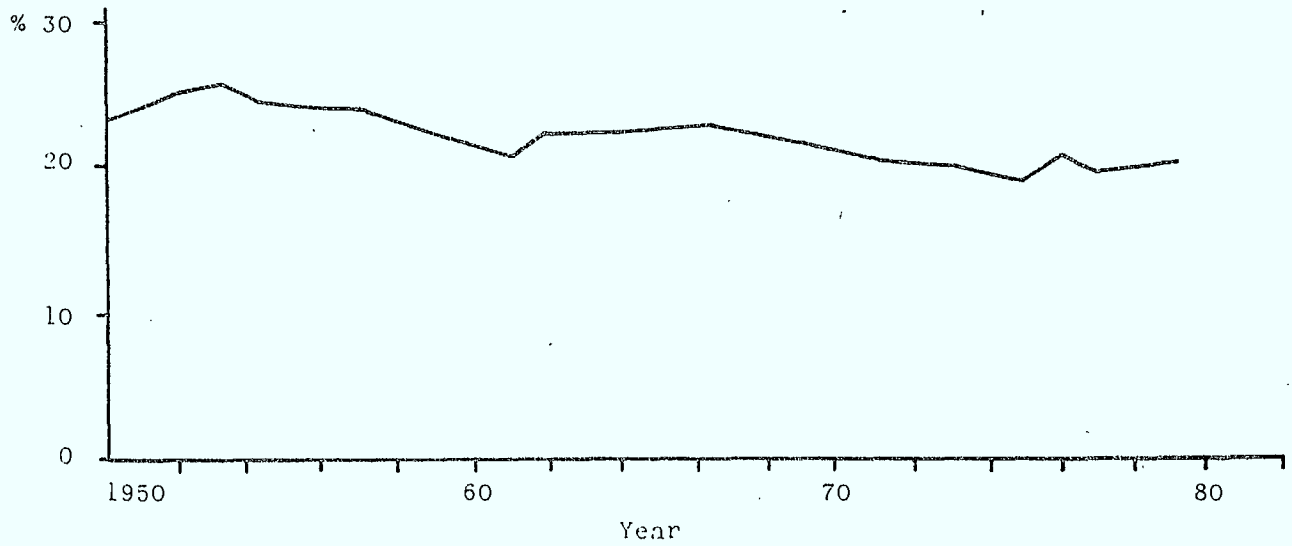
FIG. 1 - TRENDS IN EXPORT PERFORMANCE



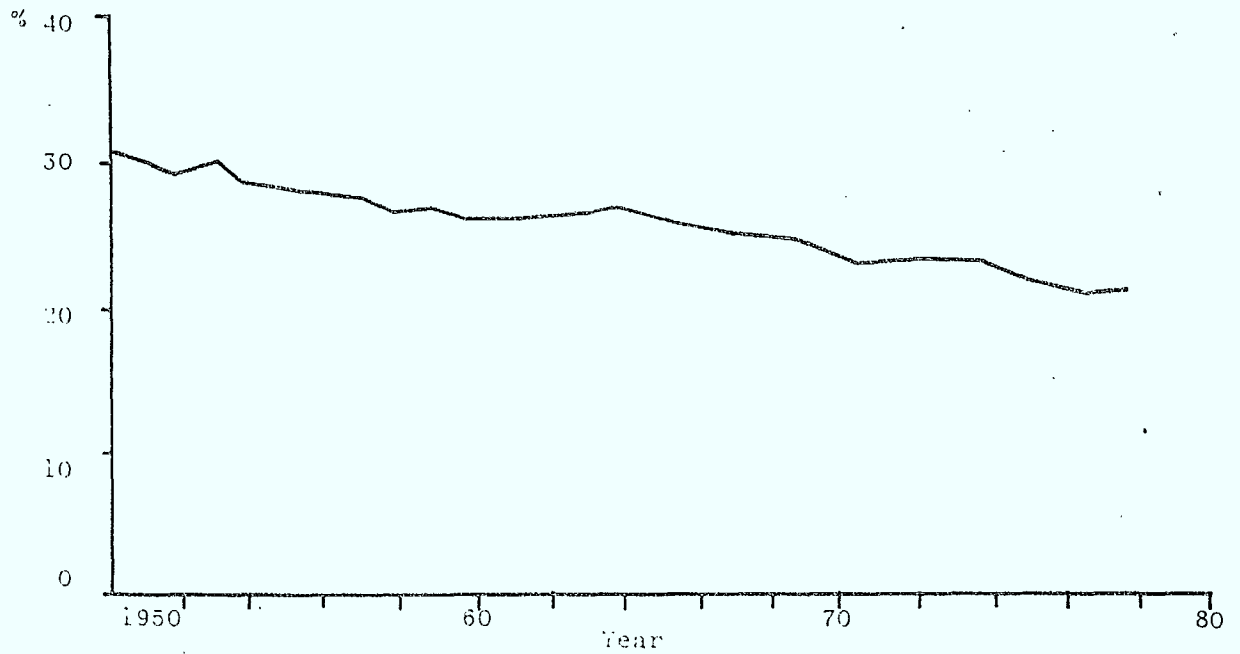
Source - Science Council of Canada "Forging the Links - A Technology Policy for Canada" 1979

FIG. 2 - MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES EMPLOYMENT AND OUTPUT

Manufacturing Industries Employment as a Percentage  
of Total Employment in Canada



Manufacturing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a Percentage of  
Total GDP in Canada



Source: Statistics Canada

FIG. 3 - PRODUCTIVITY INCREASE IN MANUFACTURING 1968-1977

United States	22.5%	
Japan	83.5%	
The Netherlands*	77.3%	
France	54.0%	
Germany	58.6%	
Italy	60.1%	
United Kingdom	18.2%	
Canada	34.3%	

\* 68-76

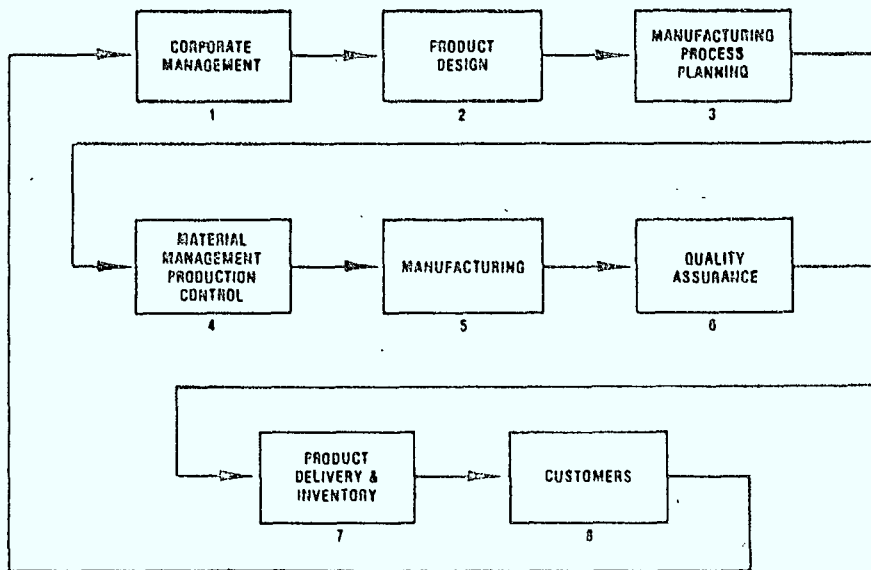
Source - U.S. Department of Labour May 1978

FIG. IV

SOME SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CAD/CAM AND PROCESS CONTROL

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Process Control</u>	<u>CAD/CAM</u>
Computer implemented	Yes	Yes
Real time system	Yes	Yes
Embedded System	Yes	Yes
Sensor based inputs	Main source for most information in system (Pressure, temperature flow etc, etc.).	Minor portion of information in system. Mostly events,timing,etc.
Input of human origin	Minor portion of information in system. (set points, etc.)	Major source of information.(Design configurations, production status, order status, information).
Expanding data base	No	Yes
Process control	Major purpose is feedback or feed forward control in classic sense. Major process units included within these loops, process gains & dynamics important.	Orientation is more towards the mere handling, timing, release etc. of large volumes of information.
Output interfaces	Set point stations, valves, etc.	Plotters, machine tools, wiring machines, flame cutters, robotic units, automatic test equipment.
Predominant user industries	Chemical, petroleum, steel, pulp and paper.	Discrete parts manufacturing, (transportation equipment, machinery, etc.)
Socio-economic impact	Modest	Much larger
Main period of pioneering	1960-1975	1975-1990

FIG. 5 - FLOW TASKS FOR MANUFACTURING



SUMMARY OF CAD/CAM APPLICATION AREAS

- Computer Aided Design - Production design and analysis including graphic design, functional analysis, stress strain analysis, heat and material balances, simulation and modelling, data reduction and analysis and cost estimating of the proposed product or system to determine fitness of purpose and economically optimized production.
- Customer Order Handling - Record keeping, tracking and reporting on the status of individual customer orders, particularly when part of an integrated on-line system.
- Production, Material & Inventory Control - Scheduling and information handling pertaining to material requirements planning, inventory control, facilities planning and order scheduling, particularly when related to an integrated on-line system.
- Automated Production - Numerical and computer control of machine tools, lathes, milling, boring machines, pattern and fabric cutting, welding, brazing, plating, flow soldering, casting, flame cutting, spray painting and automated assembly (all of these exist and are under further development).
- Automated Material Handling - Integrated materials handling using computer operated conveyors, robotic units, etc.
- Automated Testing - Automated inspection of machined parts, testing of electronic components, circuits and products, automated material inspection and grading using sensor based computer systems, pattern recognition.
- Automated Packaging - Computer implemented coordination of material and information in packaging, bottling, labelling and weighing systems.
- Automated Warehousing - Computer implemented order picking and material handling for both work in progress inventory and finished goods inventory. Automated label reading, routing of packages, parcels, baggage in shipping, sorting and distribution centers.

Notes: - CAD/CAM technology will yield its greatest economic and productivity gains when all or most of the above application areas are married or joined together to form an integrated system. Hence there is a strong development trend in this direction.



TECHNOLOGIES INVOLVED IN CAD/CAM

- Computer Graphics
- Mechanical Design
- Electronics
- Simulation & modelling
- Engineering computation
- Numerical Analyses
- Data Base Design
- Interface Design
- Distributed Systems
- Programming Languages
- Communication Protocols
- Human Engineering
- Data Transmission
- Production Scheduling
- Material & Inventory Control
- Robotics
- Machine tool technology
- Numerical Control
- Sensors & instrumentation
- Feedback Control
- Pattern Recognition
- Socio-Economic Effects

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