

# Extended Summary of the Arc Segmentation Contest

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**Abstract.** The Arc Segmentation Contest, as the fourth in the series of graphics recognition contests organized by IAPR TC10, was held in association with the GREC'2001 workshop. In this paper we present the extended summary of the contest: the contest rules, performance metrics, test images and their ground truths, and the outcomes.

## 1 Introduction

This contest on arc segmentation held at the fourth International Workshop on Graphics Recognition (GREC'2001), Kingston, Ontario, Canada, September 7-8, 2001 is the fourth in the series of graphics recognition contests organized by the International Association for Pattern Recognition's Technical Committee on Graphics Recognition (IAPR TC10). The first contest, held at the GREC'95 workshop, focused on dashed line detection [1,2,3]. The second contest, held at the GREC'97 workshop, attempted to evaluate complete raster to vector conversion systems [4,5,6,7]. The third contest, held off-line in association with the GREC'99 workshop, also aimed to evaluate complete raster to vector conversion systems. The purpose of this series of contests is to encourage third-party independent and objective evaluation of the industrial and academic solutions to the graphics recognition problem and therefore push the research in this area.

Following the success of these three contests, in this contest we focused on testing the abilities of participating algorithms and systems to detect solid arcs from raster images. The participating systems were tested on-site with synthesized and real scanned images at different levels of quality and complexity. An overall performance metric based on a previously developed line detection performance evaluation protocol [8] was used to measure each system and determine the winners. In this paper we present the extended summary of the contest, including the contest rules, performance metrics, test images and their ground truths, the outcomes, and discussions.

## 2 General Rules

We require the participants to correctly recognize solid arcs in raster images. Therefore we measure the recognition accuracy of solid arcs as the performances of the participants. The recognition accuracy is measured in terms of the difference between the geometric parameters of the recognized solid arcs and the corresponding expected solid arcs (which are also referred to as ground truth) by the differences in the geometry of the detected and expected (ground truth) arcs. The smaller the difference, the higher the accuracy, and hence, the better the performance. The details of the performance metrics are defined in Section 4.

Although we measure solid arcs only, the participating systems can compute anything they wish in order to improve the arc segmentation. For example, text and other type of graphics can be segmented to help reduce false alarms of arc segmentation. However, since detection of text, symbols, and other graphics may also produce false alarms, which are actually solid arcs, the impact of other detections on the overall performance is not known precisely. There is a tradeoff in this aspect. Participants were required to fix the graphics recognition processes and configurations (e.g., thresholds) of their systems during the test. That is, the participating systems were required to run on-site as black boxes, which accepted input files and yielded output files. No other human intervention was allowed.

Each participating system was required to run on the same set of testing images, which include four synthesized images and three scanned images. We present details of the test images in Section 3. All images are binary (black and white) and in common TIFF format. The output file format was VEC, defined by Atul Chhabra [9]. The system's score on each test images is calculated independently according to performance metrics defined in Section 4. If there were no result produced for any image due to any reason (e.g., system crash, dead loop, etc.), the score for that image is taken as zero. An overall average score for these seven images is used as the unique measure to judge the system's performance.

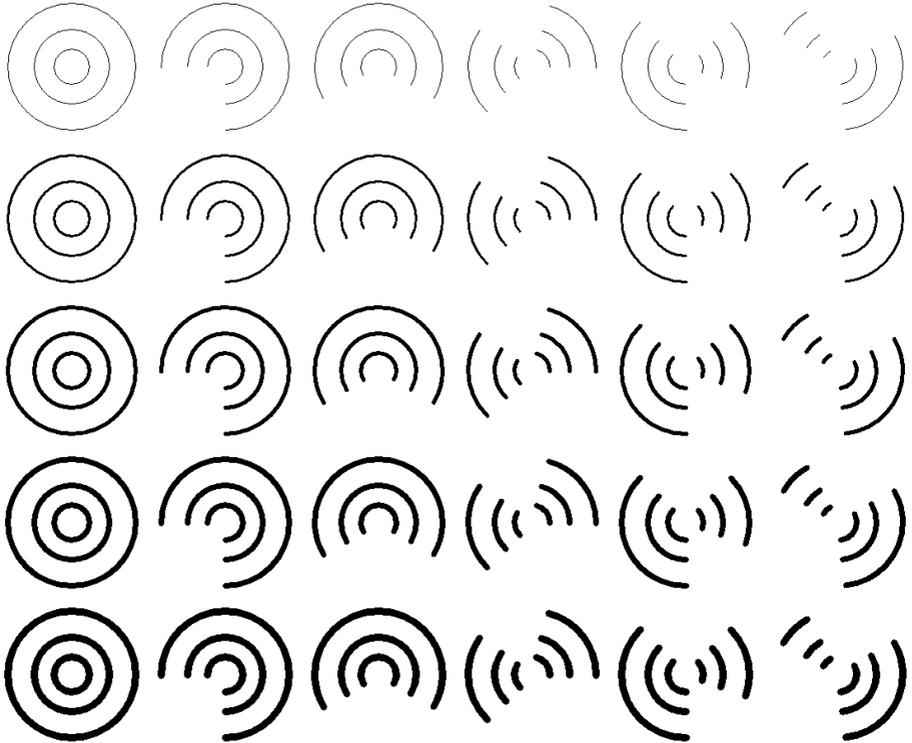
The contest rules are summarized below.

- Recognition accuracy of solid arcs was measured.
- System configuration was fixed during the contest.
- Seven images were tested: four synthesized and three scanned.
- The Input file format was binary TIFF and the output file format was VEC.
- An overall average score was used as the unique measure of performance.

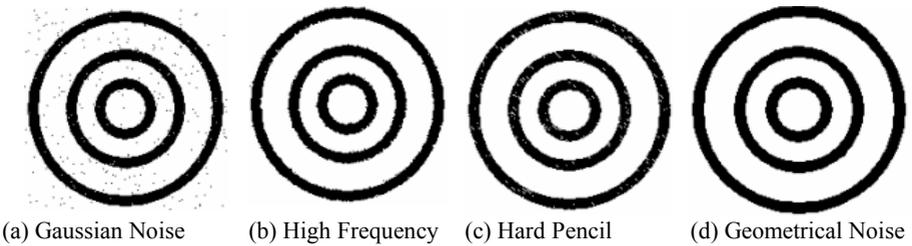
## 3 Test Images and Their Ground Truths

The four synthesized images were generated by the following way. First of all, we composed a ground truth vector drawing containing arcs of various radii, central angles, and line widths, as shown in Fig.1. The vector drawing was then converted into four images. During the conversion processes, four types of noise: Gaussian (Level 5), high frequency (Level 3), hard pencil (Level 3), and geometry distortion (Level 3), were added to the four images separately. Parts of the four test images are shown in

Fig. 2, which also show the effects of these noise types. The modeling processes of these noises are described in detail in [10].



**Fig.1.** The ground truth vector drawing for the four synthesized test images



**Fig.2.** Parts of the four synthesized test images, each showing the effect of one type of noises

The three scanned test images were yielded by scanning two real engineering drawings from a textbook. One test image is scanned from the drawing shown in Fig. 3. The other two test images are scanned from the same drawing shown in Fig. 4 but with different resolutions. The ground truth vector files for these real images are obtained by manually measuring their geometry parameters.

All ground truth vector files were also stored in the VEC format. These test images and other pre-contest training images are now available at the contest website [11].

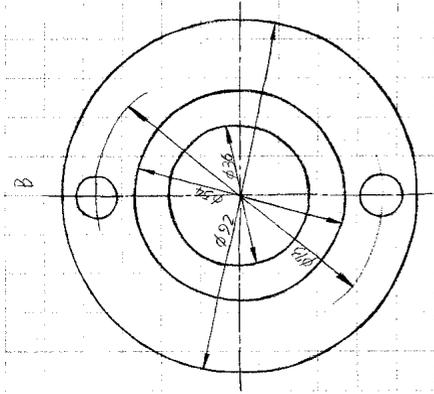


Fig.3. Once real scanned drawing

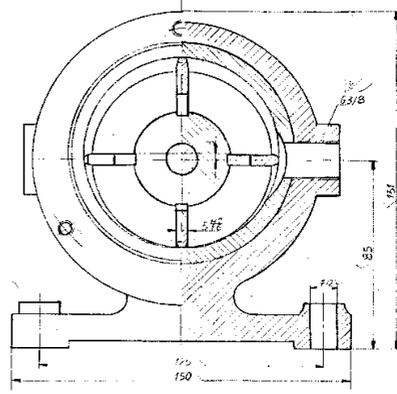


Fig.4. The other real scanned drawing

### 4 Performance Measurement

As we mentioned in Section 2, the recognition performance was measured in terms of the differences between the recognized arcs and ground truth arcs. To measure the difference between ground truth arcs and recognized arcs, correspondences between them should be established by matching ground truth arcs with the recognized ones. We define the matching degree of a pair of arcs based on the overlap area and the extent to which the endpoints match. Let  $c = k \cap g$  denote the arc segment of the recognized arc  $k$  that overlaps the ground truth arc  $g$ . The method of calculating  $c$  is presented and illustrated in Fig. 5.

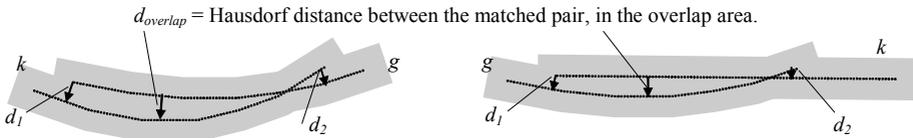


Fig.5. Illustration of the matching of arcs. (a) two arcs. (b) an arc and a line

A ground truth arc and a recognized arc are defined to be overlapping if the overlapping distance ( $d_{overlap}$ ) is smaller than half the ground truth line width. As Fig. 5 shows, the overlap distance is defined as the Hausdorff distance—the maximum of all minimum distances between the points on  $k$  and  $g$  in the overlap area. The overlapping distance and the distances between the two arcs at the overlapping segment’s two endpoints (denoted by  $d_1$  and  $d_2$ ) are used to define the vector detection quality of the overlapping segments and to calculate the following performance metrics. In a nutshell, the vector detection quality is measured by the detection accuracy using a number of criteria, including the endpoints, the location offset, the line width, the geome-

try, and the line style. We compute and record the vector detection quality of these overlapping segments, as well as their lengths, for both the ground truth arcs and their matched recognized arcs. The Basic Quality, ( $Q_b$ ) is then computed as the length weighted sum of the vector detection qualities of overlapping segments. Additionally, we compute the Fragmentation Quality, ( $Q_{fr}$ ), which is the measure of the detection fragmentation and/or consolidation, and the Total Quality, ( $Q_v$ ), which is the product of  $Q_b$  and  $Q_{fr}$ , for both the ground truth arcs and their corresponding recognized arcs. The total Vector Detection Rate,  $D_v$ , is length weighted sum of  $Q_v$  of all ground truth arcs. The total Vector False Alarm Rate,  $F_v$ , is the length weighted sum of  $1-Q_v$  of all recognized arcs. Since a good algorithm/system should recognize as many arcs as possible and produce as few false recognition as possible, we define the overall recognition performance (called Vector Recovery Index) for a single test image as  $VRI=(D_v+1-F_v)/2$ . These concepts were presented in detail in [8].

Once we obtain the  $VRI$  for each image, we define the overall performance of a system as the average of the average performance of the four synthesized images and the average performance of the three real scanned images:  $VRI_{all} = \frac{1}{2} [(VRI_1 + VRI_2 + VRI_3 + VRI_4)/4 + (VRI_5 + VRI_6 + VRI_7)/3]$ , where  $VRI_{1-4}$  are the  $VRI$  values of the four synthesized test images and  $VRI_{5-7}$  for the three real scanned images. The performance evaluation software is also available at the contest website [11].

## 5 Winners and Their Scores

Initially, several groups had expressed interest in participating in the contest. However, only two systems actually made it to the contest: Dave Elliman [12] and Xavier Hilaire [13]. The scores ( $VRI$ s) of their systems are listed in Table 1. Elliman’s system obtained an overall score of 0.681 and won the First Place while Hilaire’s obtained an overall score of 0.630 and won the Honorable Mention Prize.

**Table 1.** The scores of the participants

Test Images	Synthesized Images (filenames)				Scanned Images (filenames)		
	Gau 05	Frq 03	Pen 03	Geo 03	P1	P2	P3
Dave Elliman’s scores	<b>0.904</b>	0.853	0.896	0.927	0.547	<b>0.482</b>	<b>0.371</b>
	Average: 0.895				Average: <b>0.467</b>		
	Overall ( $VRI_{all}$ ): <b>0.681</b>						
Xavier Hilaire’s scores	0.891	<b>0.889</b>	<b>0.944</b>	<b>0.958</b>	<b>0.707</b>	0.311	0
	Average: <b>0.921</b>				Average: 0.339		
	Overall ( $VRI_{all}$ ): 0.630						

## 6 Summary and Discussion

We have presented the rules, the test images, the performance metrics, and the outcomes of the arc segmentation contest. From the scores in Section 5 we can see that

both systems were very good at synthesized drawings. Elliman's system was better on Gaussian noise and Hilaire's was better on the other three images. The average difference is only 2%. However, both exhibited almost equally insufficient performance on the three scanned drawings. While Hilaire's is better on the simple drawing p1, Elliman's is better on the other two complex drawings. An unexpected event was that Hilaire's system crashed on the scanned image P3 and therefore obtained a zero score. This made its overall score about 5% behind Elliman's.

From the contest results we can see that current solutions to real life test drawings are still far from satisfactory and this leaves the graphics recognition research community with a lot of room for improvement in arc segmentation. Another finding is that an individual approach may work better on some images but worse on others. Hence, a large number of test images should be used to obtain a reliable overall performance metric, as mentioned by Karl Tombre.

From this contest and other previous contests we can see that it is possible to set up such a third-party independent and objective performance evaluation database within this research community although this requires some effort. Actually, it has taken us more than 10 hours to manually obtain the ground truth data for the three scanned test drawings. We have also spent a lot of time on developing the noise models and pre-testing all of these test images. We plan to continue to augment the database and welcome any help from researchers in this community. Especially, we would like the feedback on this contest from the community, on all issues, including rules, test drawings, performance scores. Moreover, we suggest that researchers use this performance evaluation protocol and the dataset to test their algorithms and compare with other algorithms. In this way, more problems can be found and the performance evaluation protocol can then be improved. It is even better to publish and contribute their performance evaluation results on a public site, such that comparison among existing algorithms can be carried out efficiently, thereby advancing the state-of-the-art in this area.

Obviously, much work still needs to be done. Particularly, as Karl Tombre pointed out just after the contest, we need more real-life drawing images with ground truths as test images. We also need more experiments to improve the performance evaluation protocol, such that it can be accepted by most people as a standard. We may also need more efforts to simulate more types of noise in real scanned images. Though we did not evaluate other aspects of the recognition performance, e.g., memory, time, and system robustness, we believe that these are also important factors that should be considered in future contests.

## Acknowledgement

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