

1.6.1. PENETRANT TESTING AND YEAR 2060

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In 1970 a paper in an American NDT journal stated that by 2000, penetrant materials suppliers would have been wiped out due to new, non-contact, electronic NDT methods.

In fact, 2000 was the best year ever for them, followed by an even better 2001. Through all the terrorist attacks, crisis, hurricanes, SRAS, etc, year after year is better than the previous one!

This paper will give some clues as why Penetrant Testing is so successful and why it will likely be still a major NDT method 50 years from now.

Among the characteristics of this method: usable on any metal, independent of the direction of the discontinuities, able to detect very, very small discontinuities on complex-shaped parts, free of any battery- or mains-operated source when needed, no use of prone-to-bug software. Some people may think that using a very old system (sensor + image treatment unit) such as the combination of the human eyes with the human brain is a dramatic drawback. Further using chemicals which may pollute huge quantities of water is also seen as negative in these times of scarce resources of water. We will give also some food for thought to the audience on this matter.

We will probably be unable to plan a new conference in 2060 to confirm Penetrant Testing is still alive, but we are very confident others will do it.