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# SPREADSHEET TOOL FOR THE SELECTION OF CONDENSATION SECONDARY FLUID SOLUTION IN CHILLED WATER SYSTEMS.

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#### RESUMO

Este trabalho descreve uma ferramenta computacional simples, para análise de viabilidade econômica e energética, e tomada de decisão, quanto a utilização de *chillers* de condensação a água ou a ar, considerando como principais fatores de influência a região bioclimática em que se encontra instalada o sistema de climatização e a demanda de carga térmica. Uma metodologia foi desenvolvida que permite ao usuário definir, de maneira simples, os parâmetros suficientes para caracterizar a instalação. Por meio das entradas são estimadas a carga térmica; os custos iniciais (aquisição e instalação) e os custos operacionais (consumo de água e energia) de cada tipo de solução de condensação para os *chiller*. Os resultados obtidos com essa metodologia são comparados com os resultados de Softwares de aceitação mundial, obtendo-se resultados satisfatórios. Uma análise financeira, incluindo a avaliação de *payback* e economia futura, entre ambos os sistemas de climatização é realizada para determinar quando se deve adotar cada solução de condensação.

Palavras-chave: Condensação. Torre de resfriamento. HVAC. Viabilidade.

#### ABSTRACT

This work describes a simple computational tool for the economic and energy feasibility analysis and decision making regarding the use of water or air for condensation in chillers, considering as main influencing factors the bioclimatic region in which the system is installed and the thermal load. A methodology was developed that allows the user to define, in a simple way, the parameters required to characterize the installation. With the inputs, the thermal load; the initial costs (acquisition and installation) and the operational costs (water and energy consumption) of each type of condensation solution for the chiller, were estimated. The results obtained with this methodology are compared with the results of other software of general acceptance, obtaining satisfactory results. A financial analysis, including payback assessment and future economics, between both air conditioning systems is performed to determine when to use each condensing solution.

Keywords: Condensing. Cooling tower. HVAC. Feasibility.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

During the initial design of a central chiller plant, a common problem is the choice of air or water as the secondary cooling fluid. This is not a simple task since it depends on different variables and requires some evaluation through time for different seasons. Nevertheless, it is an unavoidable question which must be answered by the HVAC designer. According to the solution adopted,

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the costs involved may differ significatively with a great impact on the economic feasibility.

In the current design practice, engineers make their choice between condensation by means of water or air without an effective scientific approach. Because of that, the choice is much more based on the designer previous experience, initial cost, market influence, etc., than in a serious engineering analysis. The result is that the adopted system may not represent the best solution in terms of overall efficiency and economic return.

Unfortunately, the analysis is relatively complex, requires data not easily available and is quite time consuming. Thus, without the help of a calculation tool, a manual calculation done by the designer is a challenging task, which normally cannot be carried out.

## 2 COMPUTATIONAL TOOL

The computational tool developed in this work was based on a spreadsheet software, which helps in decision-making process, regarding the use of water or air as the condensation fluid for the chillers.

In this spreadsheet, first, the user needs to enter general data specifying the geographical location of the building, its envelop characteristics, occupation and pattern schedules. Then the user needs to inform the main taxes applied locally for the cost of water and electricity. Figures 1 and 2 presents the main windows from the spreadsheet for the data input step.

After entering all the required input data, the user can finally run the calculations.

To evaluate the types of condensation it is necessary to simulate the operation of the equipment used in each type of solution. The models used were based on ASHRAE Standard 90.1 (2016).

The chillers were simulated according to polynomial models, for the cooling towers the constant effectiveness was adopted, and it was considering variable consumption of the fans (on / off), and for condensation pump the consumption was determined from the nominal chillers flow.

The thermal load estimation adopted a model of instantaneous gain, heat transfer between external and internal environment considering global coefficient of exchange of the envelope and gains by internal generation and infiltration. Thus, this simplified model neglects the effect of thermal inertia.

The comfort conditions adopted were defined according to NBR 16401-2. Weather data files with hourly information were used, and so for each hour the calculations of thermal load and energy consumption were made.

The simulation model will be based on the input data of the user, allowing to estimate the maximum and average monthly thermal load, Fig. (3), and with that information, the consumption of each equipment; in addition, it will generate an initial cost (acquisition and installation), based on the analysis of the prices trend for public purchases; operational costs (water and electricity) by means of the value of each resource according to the location and consumption of each type of chiller.



Figure 1. Spreadsheet windows for data input by the user.

## **3 RESULTS AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION**

The monthly values of the cooling load (Fig. 2) are firstly calculated to obtain the predicted energy consumption for both water and air as cooling condensation choices (Fig. 3). A comparison between these results and similar simulation results from Duarte (2014) is presented in the paper allowing to observe, in general, a good agreement.

A financial analysis, including payback assessment and future economics, between both air conditioning systems is evaluated to determine which condensation solution is best for the specified Project, Fig. (6) and Fig. (7).



Figure 2. Monthly maximum and minimum cooling load calculated.

Figure 3. Energy consumption prediction for water and air condensing.



Finally, the calculation tool produces a synthesis report (Fig. 4) where initial and operational costs are presented for both water and air condensing options. A final evaluation summary and recommendation of the best condensing solution is also presented.

Figure 4. Water and energy costs for each type of condensation solution for a specific project.



 Custo da Energia
 R\$ 40,420.72
 R\$ 39,912.80

 Data/Hora:
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 Usuário:
 Leonidas e Lucas

 Local:
 Brasília - DF (Padrão)
 Cargo:
 Estudante de Eng Mec
 Empresa:
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R\$ 42,000.00 R\$ 41,000.00 R\$ 40,000.00

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Custo da Água

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Condensação a

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Condensação a

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