



# Specification Based Testing – Part 2

Combinatorial Coverage as an Aspect  
of Test Quality

# Objective

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## Objective

Apply  
combinatorial test  
coverage to  
assess test  
quality

# Assessing Test Quality



| Numerous approaches exist for assessing test quality including:

- Combinatorial coverage
- Mutation testing

| Combinatorial coverage looks at how combinations of parameter values are tested together

| Various studies show that most failures can be detected with combinations of a small number of parameters

[https://ws680.nist.gov/publication/get\\_pdf.cfm?pub\\_id=917352](https://ws680.nist.gov/publication/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=917352)

# Total t-way Coverage

| For a given test set of “n” variables and values, proportion of t-way variable-value combinations that are executed

| E.g. Assume we are testing a function with 3 variables:

- Variable a: has values 0 and 1
- Variable b: has value 0 and 1
- Variable c: has values 0 and 1

| What is the total 2-way variable-value configuration coverage achieved by the following tests:

a=0; b=0; c=0

a=1; b=1; c=1

a=1; b=0; c=0

# Summary





# Specification Based Testing – Part 2

## Design of Experiments

# Objective

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## **Objective**

Apply Design of  
Experiments to  
develop tests

# Background



| **Design of Experiments (DOE) is a systematic approach for evaluating a system or process**

| **DOE is heavily utilized in manufacturing and quality engineering**

| **DOE enables efficient investigation of the behavior of a system**



# Traditional Experimentation



| Traditional evaluation of the behavior of a system involves designing an experiment in which one factor is modified and the behavior on the system is assessed

| For example, consider varying oven temperature on the impact of the quality of a pizza

# Weakness of Traditional Approach



| The behavior of most systems is impacted by many factors

| Factors may also combine to create interactions

| In the pizza case, additional factors include:

- Rack positioning
- Cook time

# DOE Advantages



| DOE enables examination of the impact of a single factor as well as combinations of factors

| Values / ranges must be determined for each factor to investigate

| Experiments (runs) are made with combinations of the factors being considered and their impact on the system

# Pizza Example Factors



## | Cook time

– Low / Med / High

## | Rack position

– 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

## | Temperature

– 350 / 375 / 400

# Full DOE Combinations



| 45 Runs

# DOE Classification



## | Full factorial design

- Tests for every factor value combination
- Pizza example

## | Fractional factorial design

- Only a fraction of all combinations are addressed
- Orthogonal arrays often used to address limited combinations of factors

# Design of Experiments Pairwise Combinations



- 1. Identify the parameters that define each configuration**
- 2. Partition each of the parameters**
- 3. Specify constraints prohibiting particular combinations of configuration partitions**

# Design of Experiments Pairwise Combinations



- 4. Specify configurations to test which cover all pairwise combinations of configuration parameter partitions satisfying the constraint**
  - “For any two parameters P1 and P2 and for any partition value V1 for P1 and V2 for P2, there is a specified configuration where P1 has the value V1 and P2 has the value V2. “



# Pizza Example

1	Med	350
2	Low	350
3	High	350
4	Low	350
5	Low	350
1	Low	375
2	High	375
3	Med	375
4	Med	375
5	Med	375
1	High	400
2	Med	400
3	Low	400
4	High	400
5	High	400

# Experiences with DOE in Software Testing



| Several companies have used DOE in software testing and have reported good results

| DOE has been shown to achieve reasonable code coverage

# Warning



| Many software functions contain many parameters and factors

| Pairwise combination testing may leave many functions untested with normal, everyday scenarios

# Summary

