

Whither AnalysisGroup?

The end of an era

With the release of [VisualPlate](#) and [VisualShearWall](#), IES is officially retiring a product that helped launch our company. Portions of AnalysisGroup were originally written in FORTRAN in the 1980's at a large engineering firm by Dr. Dan VanLuchene (IES Partner) and had migrated and morphed into C on a DOS machine by the time IES was launched with [VisualAnalysis](#). We reconfigured the old code and adapted it for **AnalysisGroup 1.0**, which was released in June of 1994. Customers seem to love the simplicity and quick-turnaround provided by **AnalysisGroup** and we shoehorned it into a Windows mode by 1995 to make it much easier to use.

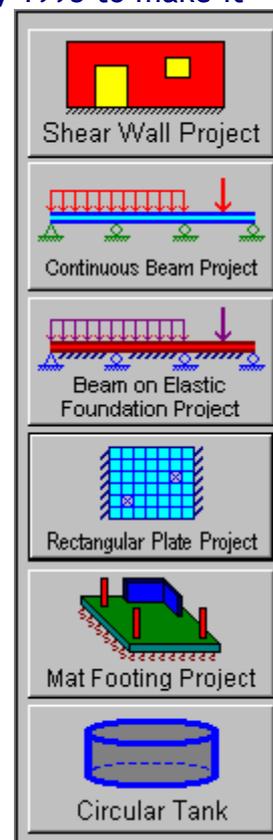
Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end, and **AnalysisGroup** had reached the end of its usefulness. The old code was so 'brittle' that bits would literally crumble to dust as we tried to extend it with our modern tools. So we have retired **AnalysisGroup**.

If you own a license for **AnalysisGroup** you may, of course, continue to use it indefinitely, but there will be no further updates or upgrades of this product. If you have a maintenance plan for the product, IES will 'convert' or 'upgrade' your plan into one for a different IES product, please contact IES sales for options.

AnalysisGroup handled six specialized analysis types and IES has (much improved) products for most of them:

- **Rectangular Mat Footings:** [VisualFoundation](#)
- **Plate Bending:** [VisualPlate](#)
- **Shear Wall Systems:** [VisualShearWall](#)
- **Beam/BOEF/Circular Tanks:** [VisualAnalysis](#)

So we say goodbye to an old friend and we say good riddance to some sloppy old spaghetti code from a bygone era. AnalysisGroup will live on in the new IES tools, but only in the good ways as our new products will offer easier access to the features and better extensibility as we move on into the 21st century.



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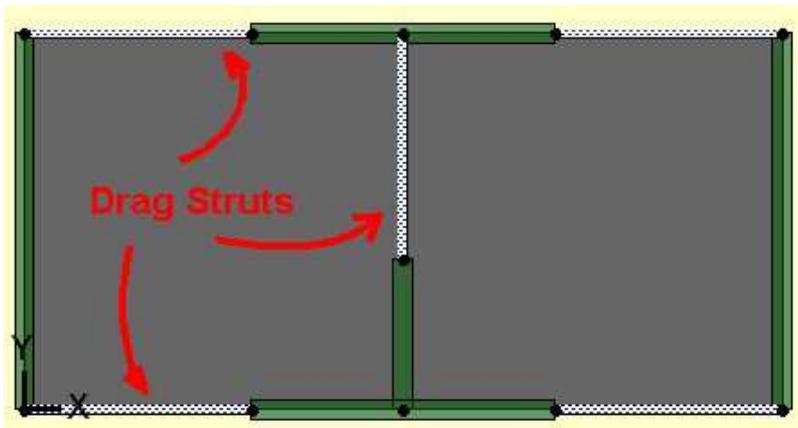
Drag Struts

Flexible Diaphragm Analysis in FEA--That's not Normal!

IES Customers have long been asking for wood shear wall design from IES. As FEA gurus we have simply looked down our noses at such notions, while secretly wishing we had more tools at our disposal to satisfy the demand. As we were working with [VisualShearWall](#) development, and listening to early adopter's commenting on how they wanted to use this tool, we decided to try to fool the FEA model into thinking it could behave like a traditional flexible diaphragm analysis. We tried using some really loosey-goosey plate elements for the diaphragm and found that for some simple situations, we could get reasonable

results, just like you could by traditional tributary load distribution methods for wood shear wall design.

Once we started trying more complicated shear-wall systems, we quickly realized that a FEA model doesn't do a very good "flexibility" analysis as the forces just dive into the nearest stiff wall. Hence the invention of the Drag Strut in **VisualShearWall**. This little "imaginary" object allow you to better control how diaphragm forces are distributed across a diaphragm and go to the walls in a way that is much more akin to your traditional analysis technique.



Implementation of Drag Struts

Behind the scenes, a drag strut is just a very stiff member element. In fact it is much like a rigid-link element used in **VisualAnalysis** to represent offsets or other eccentricities that are not present in a simplified model where everything is assumed to connect from centerline to centerline. In **VisualShearWall** a drag strut connects (very flexible) plate elements together so that a shear force is transmitted along the line of the drag strut and spreads throughout the system.

How to use Drag Struts

Using drag struts is somewhat an art and requires a good understanding of the structural behavior your are trying to model. It is a bit of voodoo that, in the wrong hands could yield just about any answer you want! From that standpoint, you should be careful how and when you use drag struts and you should probably try to solve some "known" problems to get a feel for how they work before you go off and try to solve some unknown problems.

You can read more about drag struts in the [VisualShearWall](#) help file.

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IES Updater 1.01

Two Clicks for Getting Current

When Microsoft started patching system files that we ship with our products, they also started breaking our 'updates'. You could no longer simply "update" an IES product, you would need to uninstall it and then install the update. The really sad part about this is that our current InstallShield "wizard" completely and utterly misleads you into thinking that an update was successful, when in fact, NOTHING was installed and the older release still sits on your hard drive.

This was driving many customers and the IES support people crazy, so we decided to implement a small updating utility that would automatically download and install any IES products that you have installed. Hence, the **IES Updater 1.01**, which is now available and installed with our latest releases.



How To Use IES Updater

The program is designed to be used in two phases:

1. **Download** all the updates
2. **Install** those updates

If you have admin privileges on your machine you can do both steps, and it is easiest if you run the IES Updater "As an Administrator". However, if you don't have admin privileges, you can still download all the updates before you call over the IT person to get them to update your machine. All they need to do is enter their credentials once and all the updates will get installed through the IES Updater.

The software is not set up to download and install any one specific product, it gets them ALL. If you just want one, visit the [web site and download](#) like you always have...

Bonus Features

The software also lets you "try" any IES product you don't have installed already, and has features to 'force' the download of a product or to take you directly to the IES downloads page (ie, for supplementary downloads, older products, etc.)

Future Simplicity

In the future we are planning to replace the dumb InstallShield technology we have with something smarter that will make installing updates foolproof.

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Meet Adam

Practical, with an Eye for Detail

IES has recently hired Mr. Adam Storhdahl to shore up our development team with an engineer who has some real-world, practical design experience. Adam comes to us from Morrison Maierle, Inc., where he worked during his graduate school days.

Adam has immediately brought some important knowledge and expertise to IES that has helped us correct some serious deficiencies in our products (things you, apparently, were too busy to tell us about?!).

Over the next few months, Adam will be heading up a major "Validation" initiative at IES where we are automating and expanding our validation suite of projects to insure that VisualAnalysis 8.0 (and the forthcoming 9.0) are accurate and correct. We have always done validation-testing of our products, but never to the extent we are envisioning for the future. This should result in a product that is more reliable for every update, which will help us all to focus on our real work.



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