GE Sensing

Applications

The DigitalFlow CTF878 clamp-on gas flowmeter is a complete ultrasonic flow metering system for measurement of most gases, including:

- Natural gas
- Compressed air
- Fuel gases
- Corrosive gases
- Toxic gases
- High-purity gases
- Air separation gases
- Specialty gases

Features

- Suitable for metal pipes with pressures as low as atmospheric pressure
- Clamp-on unobstructed installation
- No wetted parts
- No moving parts
- No pressure drop
- Simple installation
- Standard volumetric calculation
- Suitable for a wide range of temperatures
- High velocity capability

DigitalFlow™ CTF878
Panametrics Correlation Tag Clamp-On Gas Ultrasonic Flowmeter

DigitalFlow CTF878 is a Panametrics product. Panametrics has joined other GE high-technology sensing businesses under a new name—GE Industrial, Sensing.
Large-Pipe, High-Velocity, Clamp-On Gas Flowmeter

The DigitalFlow CTF878 clamp-on gas flowmeter utilizes a new technology called correlation tag (patented) to determine gas flow rate. This technique is very different from traditional ultrasonic transit-time measurement and is well-suited for gas applications. The DigitalFlow CTF878 can measure a wide range of velocities in small to large pipes up to 150 ft/s (46 m/s), giving it broad applicability in gas flow measurement. It is used on plastic and metal pipes from 6 to 30 in (150 to 750 mm) in diameter. Accuracy is excellent—better than ±2 percent of reading—with repeatability of ±0.6 percent of reading. The turndown ratio is 43-to-1.

The DigitalFlow CTF878 flowmeter can be used in applications where penetrating the pipe wall is undesirable, making it ideal for erosive, corrosive, toxic, high-purity or sterile gases. Because the pipe is not tapped or cut, the cost for permanent installation is considerably lower than with other meters. There are no wetted or moving parts, there is no pressure drop, and maintenance is seldom required.

A complete system comprises the DigitalFlow CTF878 electronics, two pairs of advanced clamp-on gas ultrasonic transducers, two preamplifiers for the receiving transducers and a clamping fixture to mount the transducers on the pipe.

Correlation Tag Technology

The DigitalFlow CTF878 uses an ultrasonic signal pattern recognition technology, called correlation tag, for flow measurement. Correlation tag technology utilizes a total of four clamp-on transducers externally mounted on a pipe. The transducers are arranged in two pairs, one upstream and one downstream. Each pair includes one transmitter sending ultrasound in a continuous wave mode through the fluid to its receiver, forming an upstream and downstream interrogation path. The continuous wave signal is modulated by turbulence and local density variations that are characteristic of a moving gas. Thus, both sets of the received signal contain a unique turbulence signature of the flowing gas. The received ultrasonic signals are demodulated and processed through a correlation algorithm. With turbulent flow conditions, a distinct correlation peak is recorded, which reflects the time it took for the unique turbulence signature to travel past each ultrasonic interrogation path. Since the distance between each interrogation path is defined in the transducer set-up, the flow velocity is determined by dividing distance by the time it took for the turbulence signature to pass between each interrogation path.

![Schematic representation of a correlation tag flowmeter setup](image)

Two sets of data are “tagged” and cross correlated through proprietary algorithms

A distinct correlation peak is formed for the time measurement ($R_{12}$)
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Advanced Clamp-On Gas Ultrasonic Transducers

One of the biggest challenges in developing clamp-on ultrasonic transducers for gas applications is the difficulty in transmitting an ultrasonic signal through a metal pipe wall, through the gas, and then back through the pipe wall to the second transducer that is waiting to receive the signal. In gas systems, only $4.9 \times 10^{-7}$ percent of the transmitted sound energy is actually received by traditional ultrasonic transducers. This simply isn’t enough to produce reliable measurements.

New GE clamp-on gas transducers produce signals that are five to ten times more powerful than signals of traditional ultrasonic transducers. The new transducers produce clean, strong signals with very minimal background noise. The result is that the DigitalFlow CTF878 flowmeter system performs well even in low-density gas applications.

Wide Range of Clamping Fixtures Available

Transducer alignment is crucial in obtaining accurate measurements in clamp-on gas installations. GE offers a wide range of clamping fixtures to help ensure proper alignment of transducers with minimal effort.

Convenient Installation

Straightforward installation is another advantage of the DigitalFlow CTF878 flowmeter. The system consists of two pairs of transducers, a clamping fixture, two preamplifiers, and an electronics console. The transducers are clamped onto the outside of the existing pipe. The electronics console can be located up to 500 ft (150 m) from the transducers. Setup and output options allow the DigitalFlow CTF878 flowmeter to be customized for any process.

No Pressure Drop, Low Maintenance

Because the transducers clamp onto the outside of the pipe, they do not obstruct the flow inside the pipe. This prevents the pressure drops typically caused by other types of flowmeters. The DigitalFlow CTF878 has no components that will foul or collect debris, and there are no moving parts to wear out. As a result, it requires no lubrication and little or no routine maintenance.
CTF878 Specifications

Operation and Performance

Fluid Types
All acoustically conductive gases. Minimum gas density: 0.074 lb/ft³ (1.2 kg/m³). Gas should not be wet or saturated with moisture.

Pipe Sizes
6 in to 30 in NB ANSI (152 mm to 762 mm DN)

Pipe-Wall Thickness
Up to Sch 80

Pipe Materials
Most metals and plastics. No lined pipes.

Flow Accuracy (Velocity)
±2% of reading at 3.5 to 150 ft/s (1.1 to 46 m/s) typical

Repeatability
±0.2% to 0.6% at 3.5 to 150 ft/s (1.1 to 46 m/s)

Range (Bidirectional)
±150 to ±3.5 ft/s (±46 to ±1.1 m/s)

Rangeability (Overall)
43:1

Specifications assume a fully developed flow profile (typically 20 diameters upstream and 10 diameters downstream of straight pipe run).

Gas Type and Minimum Pressure
Dry air, oxygen, nitrogen or argon ≤14.5 psia (1 bara) sweet natural gas 25 psia (1.7 bara)

Measurement Parameters
Velocity, actual and standard volumetric flow, and totalized flow

Electronics

Flow Measurement
Correlation tag technique

Enclosures
• Standard: Epoxy-coated aluminum
• Weatherproof: Type 4X/IP66
• Optional: Stainless steel
• C-US Class I, Division 2, Groups A,B,C&D (pending)

Dimensions
Standard: Weight 11 lb (5 kg), size (h x w x d) 14.24 in x 11.4 in x 5.12 in (362 mm x 290 mm x 130 mm)

Channel
Single channel

Display
240 x 200 pixel backlit LCD graphic display

Keypad
24 key rubberized tactile membrane

Power Supply
Standard: 85 to 264 VAC, 50/60 Hz

Operating Temperature
–14°F to 131°F (–10°C to 55°C)

Storage Temperature
–40°F to 158°F (–40°C to 70°C)

Standard Inputs/Outputs
Two 0/4 to 20 mA isolated outputs, 550 Ω maximum load

Optional Inputs/Outputs
There are six additional slots available for any combination of the following I/O boards:
• Analog outputs: Select additional output boards, with four isolated 0/4 to 20 mA outputs, 1 kΩ maximum load
• Analog inputs: Select one of the following types:
  – Analog input board with two isolated 4 to 20 mA inputs and 24 V loop power
  – RTD input board with two isolated, three-wire RTD inputs; span –148°F to 662°F (–100°C to 350°C); 100 Ω Pt
**CTF878 Specifications**

- **Totalizer/frequency outputs**: Select output boards, with four outputs, software-selectable functioning in two modes:
  - Totalizer mode: Pulse per defined unit of parameter (e.g., 1 pulse/ft³)
  - Frequency mode: Pulse frequency proportional to magnitude of parameter (e.g., 10 Hz = 1 ft³/h) 10 kHz maximum

- **Alarm relays**: Select one of the following types:
  - General purpose: Relay board with three Form C relays
  - Hermetically sealed: Relay board with three hermetically sealed Form C relays

**Digital Interfaces**
- **Standard**: RS232
- **Optional**: RS485 (multiuser)

**Data Logging**
Memory capacity (linear and/or circular type) to log over 6,900 flow data points

**Display Functions**
- Graphic display shows flow in numerical or graphic format
- Displays logged data and diagnostics

**European Compliance**
Complies with EMC Directive 89/336/EEC, 73/23/EEC LVD (Installation Category II, Pollution Degree 2)

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**Clamp-On Transducers**

**Temperature Range**
-40°F to 266°F (~-40°C to 130°C)

**Area Classifications**
II 2 GD Ex md IIC T6
-40°F to 167°F (~-40°C to 75°C), Kema 02ATEX2337X;
C-US Class I, Division 1, Groups B,C,&D

**Receiver Transducer Preampifier**
Operating and storage temperature: -40°F to 167°F (~-40°C to 75°C)

**Clamping Fixture Materials**
Anodized aluminum or stainless steel clamping fixture with rigid rail and strap

**Clamping Fixture Size and Type**
- 6 in to 8 in (150 mm to 200 mm) pipe: CFT-V8
- 8 in to 12 in (200 mm to 300 mm) pipe: CFT-V12
- 12 in to 30 in (300 mm to 762 mm) pipe: CFT-PI

**PanaView™ PC-Interface Software**
The DigitalFlow CTF878 communicates with a PC through the infrared interface and Windows® operating systems. Consult the manual for details on sites, logs and other operations with a PC.

**Transducer Cable**
- **Standard**: Two pair of coaxial cables, type RG62 AU
- **Optional**: Lengths up to 500 ft (150 m) maximum

**Pressure and Temperature Transmitters**
Available on request
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CTF878 Specifications

Minimum Straight Run
- 10 to 20 diameters (preferred) upstream
- 5 to 10 diameters (preferred) downstream
- Minimum of 20 diameters between circumferential welds

Dampening Material
May be installed inside and outside of the clamping fixture
- For acoustic noise reduction
- Typically three sections of adhesive-backed rubber
- Not necessary for plastic pipe material (e.g., PE)

DigitalFlow CTF878 tag V8 clamping fixture with dampening material.
### Independent Accuracy Test Results

**Certificate Number:** 3947/009  
**Order:** P-02712  
**Date:** 2003-06-15

#### Applied

- **Name:** Commercial Organization  
- **Parameter:** Test

#### Meter under Test

- **Type:** Ultrasonic  
- **Model:** GE Sensing CTF878  
- **Tag No.:** A1-8305  
- **Serial Number:** 157  
- **Name of Owner:** Thomsen Messtechnik  
- **Year of Manufacture:** 2008

#### Testing Conditions

- **p (absolut):** 124.61 mbar  
- **T:** 23.1°C  
- **η:** 11.35 ± 10-6 Pa s

#### Testing Medium

- **Natural gas (inlet):**  
  - **H2:** 0.01 Vol. %  
  - **CO2:** 0.17 Vol. %  
  - **H2S:** 10,425 ppm  
  - **N2:** 86.86%  
  - **O2:** 9.92%  
  - **dN2:** 6.34% kg/m³ at normal reference conditions (273.15 K, 101.325 kPa)

#### Results

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Qf / Qs</th>
<th>Qf (m³/h)</th>
<th>Qs (m³/h)</th>
<th>Deviation (%)</th>
<th>Deviation (%a)</th>
<th>Deviation (µ%)</th>
<th>Deviation (%b)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Remarks

- Calibration was performed with a pulse factor of 5800 pps/m³ according to the following output: 0 - 1000 Hz for flow range 0 - 3000 m³/h.  
- Values were calculated according to the formula:  
  \[ \frac{Q_f}{Q_s} = \left( \frac{V_{inlet}}{V_{reference}} \right)^{k} \]  

#### Diagram

- **Curve k-factor**

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**Note:** This document contains specifications and test results for the GE Sensing CTF878 ultrasonic meter, including details on the accuracy and testing conditions. The results show the deviation between measured and standard flow rates, with a focus on the k-factor for calculating flow rates accurately.