

## Yet another optimization problem

David Milovich, Math 211 TA for sections 306 and 312

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We're bidding for a contract to manufacture natural gas tanks. The volume of each tank will be 1000 cubic feet. As is typical, the shape of the gas tank will be a circular cylinder capped by hemispheres on both ends. In addition to a fixed cost of \$800 per tank, our cost per square foot of tank surface area is \$4 for the cylindrical part of the tank and \$6 for the spherical part. What is our minimal cost for making a such a tank?

First, let's get the geometry out of the way. Let  $r$  denote the radius (in feet) of the circular cylinder, which is also the radius of the hemispheres. Let  $x$  denote the length (in feet) of the cylinder. The circumference of the cylinder is  $2\pi r$ , so the surface area of the cylinder is  $2\pi r x$ . The volume of the cylinder is  $\pi r^2 x$ . The surface area of the hemispheres add up to the surface area of a sphere of radius  $r$ , which is  $4\pi r^2$ . The volume of the hemispheres is the volume of a sphere with radius  $r$ , which is  $\frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$ .

Thus, the total volume of the tank is  $\pi r^2 x + \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$ , which is constrained to equal 1000. The cost  $C$  (in dollars) of the tank is  $800 + 4(2\pi r x) + 6(4\pi r^2)$ . Solving our constraint for  $x$  (because solving for  $r$  is much harder), we find that

$$x = \frac{1000}{\pi r^2} - \frac{4r}{3}.$$

After plugging this formula for  $x$  into our cost formula, we find that the cost in terms of  $r$  alone is given by

$$C = 800 + \frac{8000}{r} - \frac{32\pi r^2}{3} + 24\pi r^2.$$

After simplifying, we have  $C = 800 + 8000/r + 40\pi r^2/3$ . To optimize  $C$ , we differentiate with respect to  $r$ :  $dC/dr = -8000/r^2 + 80\pi r/3$ . We next solve  $dC/dr = 0$  for  $r$  to find the critical points:

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= -\frac{8000}{r^2} + \frac{80\pi r}{3} \\ \frac{8000}{r^2} &= \frac{80\pi r}{3} \\ 24000 &= 80\pi r^3 \\ \left(\frac{300}{\pi}\right)^{1/3} &= r \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the unique critical point is  $r \approx 4.57078$  feet. Plugging this value into our formula for  $x$ , we get  $x \approx 9.14156$  feet. Plugging these values into our original cost formula, we get approximately \$3,425.37.

Is this truly the minimal cost? If we differentiate  $C$  again, we get

$$\frac{d^2C}{dr^2} = \frac{16000}{r^3} + \frac{80\pi}{3},$$

which is always positive if  $r$  is positive. Thus, for all physically meaningful  $r$ , our cost function is concave up, so \$3,425.37 is indeed a local minimum and the global minimum.