Factors Influencing Customers' Travel Reviews on Hotel Tourist Loyalty

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Abstract

Purpose
This Study Aimed To Examine The Factors That Influence Customers' Travel Reviews And Guest Loyalty. The Selected Study Setting Were At Two Different States In Malaysia, I.E., Kuala Lumpur And Selangor.

Methodology
Self-Administered Questionnaires Were Chosen For This Study To Collect Data From Both International And Domestic Tourists In Kuala Lumpur And Selangor. About 500 Questionnaires Were Distributed To The Tourists Through The Application Of Convenience Sampling Technique.

Main Findings
The Results Showed That Among The Factors That Influence Customer Travel Reviews On Guest Loyalty Are Review Valance, Review Variance, Review Volume, And Review Recommendation. Surprisingly, The Review Volume Is The Strongest Variable That Influences Customer Travel Reviews Towards Guest Loyalty.

Implication
The Current Study Is Beneficial For Policymakers And Hotel Managers In Malaysia. They Have A Better Understanding To Anticipate Future Marketing Strategies And Have A Better Planning To Influence Hotels Guest Loyalty.

Introduction

Today, The Internet Has Become An Essential Tool To Search Information Including Travel Reviews, Places To Visit, Or To Make Hotel Bookings For Vacations. Tourists Are Using The Internet To Gain Information On Products And Services' Quality Whether They Are Worthy Of Buying. Aforementioned That, Tourists Have Only Limited Chances To Access And Review The Quality And The Services Offered That Will Meet Their Expectations. According To Litvin, Goldsmith, And Pan (2018), Vacation Trips Is An Intangible Product. In Fact, It Is Difficult To Evaluate Before And After A Specific Service Or Product Is Being Used. This Review Functions As A Guide To Assess A Trip Destination Experience Or A Stay At A Particular Hotel. With The Rapid Advancement Of Today's Technology, Tourists Are Able To Seek Information About The Products And The Services' Quality Through Travel Reviews Over The Internet. Although Malaysia Has A High Potential For Online Purchases, Some Barriers To Online Buying Are Inevitable. The Information Gathered In The Travel Review Websites Nowadays Has Become The Most Influential Source Of Information For The Cyber Communities' Travel Planning (Kwok And Xie, 2016). In The Meantime, The Only Way To Get Word-Of-Mouth (Wom) Information Is Through Relatives, Acquaintances, And Friends.

Regardless, The Travelers Can Narrate, Revive, Rebuild, And Share What They Have Gone Through And Their Personal View On Products Or Services With Other Users Over Travel Review Platforms. Past Researchers, For Instance, Ye, Law, Gu, And Chen (2011) Have Found That 10% Increment Of Tourists Reviews Could Bring 5% And More In Further Booking Of The Respective Hotels. Reviews That Have Reached A Higher Number Of Users Will Have A Greater Impact On E-Commerce (E-Comm). However, Owing To Limited Information, Numerous Studies Have Used Proxy Measures, For Example, The Number Of Reviews In Place Of Actual Hotel Room Revenues, Where A Growth In The Number Of Online Reviews Has Been Interpreted As An Increase In Hotel Room Revenues. Therefore, It Is Relevant To Review The Role Of Travel Reviews On Hotel Guest Loyalty. To Fill The Gap Of This Study, The Existing Study Focuses On A Thorough Comprehension Regarding The Effects Of Hotel Reviews Of Attributes, As Well As Resources (Reviewing Skills) In Hotels With The Intention Of A Hotel Reservation.

Literature Review

1.1   Tourist Loyalty

Tourist Loyalty Is Known As The Tourists' Readiness To Preserve Their Relationship With A Specific Company, Service, Or Product (Kim & Yoon, 2004). Mcllroy And Barnett (2000) Define Loyalty As "Customer Commitment To Dealing With A Particular Firm, Buying Products And Services, And Referring Them To Colleagues In Reality". In Traditional Terms, Customer Loyalty Is Classified Into Two Types, Namely Behavior And Attitude (Guillén, Nielsen, Scheike, & Marìn, 2011). Customer Loyalty Is A Notion Of Integrated Behavior Equity, Which Is A Customer's Willingness To Buy Back And Keep Their Connection With The Organization, And Loyalty; Emotional Attachment And Customer Motivation Towards The Organization (Rauyruen & Miller, 2007). Customer Loyalty Acts As A Central Point For Various Business Organizations (Vesel & Zabkar, 2009). The Next Section Discusses The Influencing Reasons Behind Guest Loyalty, Evaluating The Valance, Reviewing The Variance, The Amount Of The Review, And The Proposed Proposal.

1.2 Review Valance

Review Valance Is Identified As A Fundamental Component Of Emotional Response And Is Also Known As A Fundamental Property Of Emotional Experience. Valance Has Been Used As An Objective Measure In Past Emotional Studies, For Instance, Activation Of The Peripheral Nervous System (Bradley & Lang, 2000; Cacioppo, Berntson, Klein, & Poehlmann, 2000), Expressive Behavior (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1997), Facial Movements (Cacioppo, Berntson, Larsen, Poehlmann, & Ito , 2000; Messinger, 2002), Nerve Activation (Wager, Phan, Liberzon & Taylor, 2003), As Well As The Vocal Cues (Bachorowski, 1999). Previous Research Has Delivered Proof Of Valence Or Intensity. The Results Of This Study Show That The Steps Are In Line With Each Other In Providing A Strong Empirical Foundation With Valance At Its Principal, Comprising Mainly Development Blocks Of Emotions In The Course Of Life.

1.3 Review Variation

Review Variations Measure Assessment Distribution Statistics. Not Only Does It Represent The Average Rating, But Also The Diversity In Customers' Opinion Based On Five Distinctions Which Are Excellent, Average, Poor, And Terrible (Xie, Zhang, & Zhang, 2014). Clients, On The Other Hand, Appear To Consider The Hotel's Whole Rating. Findings Have Shown That Although Reviews Provide Totally Distinctive Views, These Have No Negative Effect On Prospective Clients (Ye Et Al., 2011). The Overall Rating Is Also Crucial For The Image Of The Hotel. However, Sub-Ratings Or Scores Of Properties On Hotel-Specific Criteria, For Example, Service, Location, Price, Room, And Cleanliness, Must Be Taken Seriously As Clients Can Perceive These Criteria From Their Social Media. Normally, These Criteria Are Considered By The Clients To Rate Hotels (Choi & Chu, 2001; Liu, Law, Rong, Li, & Hall, 2013; Lockyer, 2005; Ramanathan & Ramanathan, 2011; Zhang, Ye, & Law, 2011). Therefore, To Evaluate Consumer Ratings Of Specific Attributes, This Also Includes Service Rating, Location, Price, Room, And Hygiene, As Well As The Overall Rating Of The Customers.

1.4 Review Volume

The Number Of Reviews Is Counted From The Amount Of Posted Reviews. An Enormous Amount Of Reviews Will Positively Impact The Rating Quality And Thus, Prospective Clients. According To Zhu And Zhang (2010), A Huge Number Of Online Reviews Are Considered More Valid As They Can Easily Influence The Clients' Decisions As They View Hotels Or Services. It Has Been Recommended That Hotels That Have The Highest Number Of Reviews Strengthen Prospective Customers To Reserve Hotels Which Have Been Reserved Previously. Hotels That Have Good And Bad Reviews Provide The Advantages Of Exposure Too, Which An Increasing Amount Of Reviews Will Attract More Positive Hotel Reviews (Zhu & Zhang, 2010). As Stated By Melián, Bulchand, And Lopez (2013), Positive Reviews Are Proposed As More Outstanding Than Negative Ones. Tripadvisor, For Instance, Possesses More Than 70% Positive Reviews.

Review Recommendations

People Regularly Consider Other People's Views Or Knowledge Before Spending On Goods Of Which Their Quality Is Something That The People Are Uncertain About. Comments From Other Users Can Be A Quality Index For Attractive Products. It Can, Therefore, Decrease The Quality Of Uncertainty That Is Faced By Potential Customers And Give Them Greater Confidence In Customer Purchase Decisions (Schubert & Ginsburg 2000). Thus, There Is A Reason To Believe That The Availability Of User Comments Can Decrease The Quality Of Uncertainty. When The Quality Of Uncertainty Is Reduced, Consumers Have The Tendency To Purchase Books That Get Higher Ratings Compared To Those That Obtain Lesser Ratings,

Where Things Are The Same. Although There Is A Lot Of Research On Online Reviews, Some Studies Have Investigated The Financial Benefits Of The Proposed System. According To Chen And Jinhong (2004), The Proposed System Has Increased The Sale Of Recommended Books And The Impact Of A Stronger Recommendation System For Popular And Less Popular Books. Therefore, The Proposed System Can Be A Substitute For The Customer Feedback System.

Methodology

The Study Population Are International And Domestic Tourists In Kuala Lumpur And Selangor. According To The Ministry Of Tourism, Art, And Culture (2018), The Total Number Of Tourists' Arrival In 2018 Was About 25.8 Million. Thus, Following The Rules Of Thumb By Roscoe (1975), About 500 Questionnaires Were Distributed To The Tourists. For This Study, The Convenience Sampling Technique Was Used To Examine The Factors That Influence A Customer's Travel Review. This Study Used A Questionnaire And Reviews From The Secondary Data, Where The Data Collection Process Began In September 2018 Until October 2018. The Questionnaire Was Divided Into Two Sections, I.E., Part 1 And Part 2. Potential Respondents In Kuala Lumpur Were Given Questionnaires Written In Two Languages, I.E., Malay And English To Obtain A Better Understanding. They Were Then Gathered By The Researcher In Person To Ensure The Privacy Of The Information Received From The Respondents And To Avoid Biasness.

The Questionnaire For This Study Was Divided Into Six Parts. Part One Were Questions Related To The Review Valance While Part Two Were Questions Related To Review Variation Variable. As For Part Three, The Questions Were To Query About The Review Volume, And Questions Related To Review Recommendations Were Developed In Part Four. In Addition, Part Five Consisted Of Questions About Guest Loyalty And, Finally, Part Six Were Questions On Demographic Profile. Scale Items For Evaluating Main Variables Were Adapted From Past Studies Which Were Performed With Seven Likert Scales. They Ranged From (1= Very Strongly Disagree To 7=Very Strongly Agree). Respondents Must Specify Their Degree Of Agreement And Disagreement Based On Their Experience, By Examining The Appropriate Responses To The Questionnaire Items Regarding The Research's Key Constructs. The Details Of The Scale That Were Used In This Research Are Shown In Table 1.

Table 1: *Research Instrument for The Study*

Parts	Variables	No of Items	Sources
1	Review Valance	5	Kordrostami (2016)
2	Review Variation	5	Darban & Li (2012)
3	Review Volume	5	Kordrostami (2016)
4	Review Recommendations	5	Schubert & Ginsburg (2000)
5	Guest Loyalty	5	Al-Maamari & Abdulrab (2017)
6	Demographic Profile	6	-

Ibm Statistical Package For The Social Sciences Version 25 Software Was Used To Analyze The Data. The Ibm Spss Is A Software That Can Correlate The Relationship Between Independent Variables And Dependent Variables From Analyzing The Descriptive And Correlation Analysis. Therefore, This Software Is Suitable For Researchers To Analyze The Data. As The Present Research Examined The Determinants Which Impacted Tourist Loyalty, Descriptive Analysis, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, As Well As The Multiple Regression

Analysis Were Adopted To Measure The Inter-Correlation And Relationship Between The Variables.

Result And Discussion

1.5   Demographic Profile

The Respondents' Demographic Profile Is Described In Table 2. There Were About 240 Female Respondents And 161 Male Respondents. This Elucidate That The Response Rate For This Study Was 60.2%. According To Baruch (1999), It Is Typical For Field Surveys To Receive Poor Feedback Ratio. Nonetheless, Salkind (1997) Mentioned That Getting A Moderated Feedback In Academic Research Of Behavioral Science (± 50%) Is Acceptable. Age-Wise, Most Of The Respondents Belonged To 16 To 25 Years Old Who Made The Total Of 134 Respondents. Next, The Second Largest Percentage Of Respondents Were From 36-45 Years Old, Where It Accumulated To 28.9% Or 116 Respondents. This Is Followed By 105 Or 26.1% Of Respondents Whose Age Was Between 26 And 35 Years Old. Those Who Were Between 46 And 55 Years Old As Well As Those Above 56 Years Old Represented 8% And 3.5%, Respectively. In Term Of Race, Majority Of The Respondents Were Malays, I.E., A Total Of 281 Persons. Secondly, Chinese Respondents Represented 16.7% While Indians And Other Races Represented 8% And 5.2%, Respectively. The Group That Answered The Questionnaire With The Highest Percentage Is Single, I.E., Representing 52.7%, Whereas Married People Represented 46.8%. Bachelor's Degree Or College Degree Holders Rated The Highest (70.1%) While Respondents Who Had Degrees Lower Than A Bachelor's Degree Represented 9.2%. The Highest Percentage Of Respondents Made An Income Of More Than Rm 4,000.00, Which Scored 27.4% Or 110 Respondents In This Group. The Smallest Group Of Income, With A Tabulated Income Of Around Rm 1,001.00-2,000.00, Came From A Total Of 31 Respondents.

Table 2 *Respondents' Demographic Profiles*

No	Profile	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	161	40%
		Female	240	59.7%
2	Age	16-25 Years Old	134	33.3%
		26-35 Years Old	105	26.1%
		26-45 Years Old	116	28.9%
		46-55 Years Old	32	8%
		56 Years Old And Above	14	3.5%
3	Race	Malay	281	69.9%
		Chinese	67	16.7%
		Indian	32	8%
		Others	21	5.2%
4	Marital Status	Single	212	52.7%
		Married	188	46.8%
5	Educational Level	< Bachelor Degree	37	9.2%
		Bachelor Degree	282	70.1%
		Master Degree	81	20.1%
6	Income	< Rm 1,000.00	98	24.4%
		Rm 1,001.00 – 2,000.00	31	7.7%
		Rm 3,000.00	78	19.4%
		Rm 3,000.00 – 4,000.00	80	19.9%
		> Rm 4,001.00	110	27.4%

1.6   Reliability Test

The Reliability Test Was Run To Deliver Information About The Gathered Data's Stability. According To Sekaran (2003), Reliability Test Acts As Stability And Consistency Indicators Whereby The Instruments Evaluate And Access The "Goodness" Of The Evaluation. Form The Abovementioned, One Of The Predictors For The Internal Consistency

In Quantitative Measurement Is The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient.   Each Of The Questionnaires Was Interpreted Within The Interval Scale And Calculated In Separation. Table 4.2 Shows The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient For The Whole Variables.

Table 4.2 *Reliability Coefficient For Each Section Of The Questionnaire*

Independent Variables	Num. Of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Review Valance	5	.723
Review Variation	5	.938
Review Volume	5	.860
Review Recommendations	5	.927
Dependent Variable		
Guest Loyalty	5	.935

A Reliability Test Is Usually Applied To Assess Inter-Item Stability And Scale Consistency (Pallant, 2007). In Addition, A Reliability Test Is Performed When The Items Are Measured And It Is Able To Bond Together As One Item Construct (Sekaran, 2003). In This Study, The Instrument Case For The Independent Variables Included Review Valance, Review Variation, Review Volume, And Review Recommendations. The Dependent Variable Of Guest Loyalty Was Performed With A Reliability Test For Its Item Constructs. The Most Typical Predictor To Assess The Internal Consistency, According To Pallant (2007), Is Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. As He Recommended, The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Of Scale Must Be Beyond .70 As To Signify That The Item Is Very Reliable. Nevertheless, Sekaran (2003) Regards That Cronbach's Alpha Above .80. As Highly Reliable Too. However, For The Purpose Of Determining The Inter-Item Consistency, The Present Research Employed Pallant's (2007) Reliability.

In Table 4.2, Each Dimension's Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Score Is Presented. The Scores In Cronbach's Alpha Stated The Whole Variable Measures Within The Range Of .938 As The Highest And .723 As The Lowest. This Elucidates That The Inter-Item Reliability Is High As Suggested By Past Researchers. The Fourth Independent Variable Dimension Was Review Valance With A Score Of A = .723. This Signifies High Reliability Coefficient Cronbach's Alpha. The Review Variation Cronbach's Alpha Score Was A = .938, Which Signifies High Reliability. The Review Valance Score Of A= .860 Also Signifies The High-Reliability Coefficient Cronbach's Alpha. The Fourth Variable In This Study Was The Review Recommendation Score Of A = .927. This Indicates That All The Variables In This Study Were Reported As Having High Reliability. The Dependent Variable Cronbach's Alpha Score Was A = .935 And The Dependent Variable Scores Of The Cronbach's Alpha Was High. Hence, It Can Be Summated That All The Variable Credentials Were Highly Reliable And Possessed High Inter-Item Correlation.

1.7   *Pearson's Correlation*

To Examine The Strength Of The Relationship Of Every Dimension, Pearson's Correlation Is A Suitable Analysis. According To Cohen (1988, Pp.79-81), The Strength Of The Relationship Is Being Measured Between Two Associations. The Number Represented In Pearson Correlation Refers To A Correlation Coefficient (Hair Et Al., 2007). The Bigger The Correlation Coefficient, The Stronger The Relationship For Every Variable. The Variable Analysis Provides Information About The Relationship Between Every Variable Whether It Is A Positive Or A Negative One (Pallant, 2007). The Table Below Lists Down The Size Of The Correlation Coefficient.

Table 4.3.1: *Rule Of Thumb On Correlation Coefficient Size (Cohen, 1988, Pp.79-81)*

Correlation Absolute Value Size	Strength Of Association
R=.10 - .29	Small
R= .30 - .49	Medium
R= .50 - 1.0	High

Table 4.3.2: *Correlation Coefficient Analysis All Independent Variable Towards Dependent Variable.*

Correlations	
	Guest Loyalty
Review Valance	.711**
Review Variation	.676**
Review Volume	.715**
Review Recommendation	.629**

A. Predictors: (Constant), Review Valance, Review Variation, Review Volume, Review Recommendation

B. Dependent Variable: Guest Loyalty

C. ** Correlation Is Significant At The 0.05 Level (2-Tailed).

Table 4.3.2 Specifies That All Independent Variables Possessed A High Correlation Coefficient Toward The Dependent Variable. The Review Valance, Review Variation, Review Volume, And Review Recommendation Were Highly Correlated With Guest Loyalty. The Review Valance Score Was R = .711** (P<0.05). This Stipulated That The Correlation Between Review Valance Toward Guest Loyalty Has A Significant Relationship Between Them. The Review Variation Score Was R = .676** (P<0.05). This Result Indicated That The Review Variation Had A Strong Relationship Toward Guest Loyalty. The Review Volume Score Was R = .715** (P<0.05) Which Indicated That The Result Was Highly Correlated And Represented A Strong Relationship Between The Review Volume And Guest Loyalty. The Review Recommendation Score (R = .629**; P<0.05) Also Indicated That The Result Was Highly Correlated And Thus Indicated A Strong Relationship Between Review Recommendations And Guest Loyalty.

1.8   Multiple Regressions

The Extended Version Of Simple Linear Regression Is Known As Multiple Regressions. It Became Widespread In Forecasting A Behavioral Impact (Meyers, Gamst & Guarino, 2006). Multiple Regressions Is A Combination Of Approaches Employed To Investigate The Relationship Between One Continuous Dependent Variable And Several Independent Variables, Which Further Tackles Different Research Hypotheses (Pallant, 2005). The Best Predictor Of A Dependent Variable From The Many Independent Variables Is Represented By The Regression Findings. Henceforth, Single Linear Regressions And Multiple Linear Regression Were Employed In This Research To Identify The Relationship Between Review Valance, Review Variation, Review Volume, And Review Recommendations Towards The Guest Loyalty As The Dependent Variable.

A Significant Linear Positive Relationship Between Valance And Loyalty Has Been Found. For Every 1 Unit Increase Of Valance, The Loyalty Score Would Increase By 0.25 (Adjusted B: 0.25; 95% Ci: 0.17, 0.32; P-Value<0.001). A Significant Linear Positive Relationship Between Volume And Loyalty Has Also Been Discovered. For Every 1 Unit Increase Of Volume, The Loyalty Score Would Increase By 0.24 (Adjusted B: 0.24; 95% Ci: 0.16, 0.32; P-Value<0.001). Last But Not Least, A Significant Linear Positive Relationship Between Recommendation And Loyalty Has Been Revealed. For Every 1 Unit Increase Of Recommendation, The Loyalty Score Would Increase By 0.49 (Adjusted B: 0.49; 95% Ci: 0.41, 0.57; P-Value<0.001).

4.4.1 Summary Of Multiple Regressions Analysis

Table 4.4.1: *Summary Of Multiple Regressions Independent Variables Towards Guest Loyalty*

	Variables	Regression (R^2)	Regression Correlation (B)	Regression Statistical Significance	Results
H1a	Review Valance	0.506	0.715	*.000	Supported
H1b	Review Variation	0.513	0.716	*.000	Supported
H1c	Review Volume	0.553	0.743	*.000	Supported
H1d	Review Recommendation	0.635	0.797	*.000	Supported

In Assessing The Model Of Customer Travel Reviews Towards Hotel Guest Loyalty, The Multiple Regression Analysis Results Have Shown That All Independent Variables Have A Strong Relationship And The Confident Interval Was Stated At 95%. The Statistical Results Also Show That The Review Recommendation Is The Highest Score At $R^2 = 0.635$ (B = 0.797) At The Significant Level (P < .005). This Result Shows That The Customers Would Review Guest Recommendations In The Travel Review Pages Online As Their Benchmark While Selecting The Hotels To Stay. Second Highest Regression Analysis Resulted From The Review Volume Towards The Guest Loyalty. The Statistical Scores Were At $R^2 = 0.553$ (B = 0.743) At The Significant Level (P < .005). The Statistical Results Are Followed By The Review Variation Towards The Guest Loyalty. The Statistical Scores Were At $R^2 = 0.513$ (B = 0.716) At The Significant Level (P < .005). Next, The Review Valance Statistical Result Scores Were At $R^2 = 0.506$ (B = 0.715) At The Significant Level (P < .005). The Results Presented In This Study Reveal A Significant Influence Between Review Valance, Variation, Volume, And Recommendations Towards Guest Loyalty.

Conclusion

The Present Study Has Several Limitations That May Potentially Influence The Interpretation Of The Results. Questionnaires Were Distributed Via Direct Interactions With Tourists In Different Places Throughout The Day Over A Period Of Four Weeks. A Convenience Sampling Technique Was Adopted To Collect The Data Due To Time Constraint And Costs. Although There Are Biases That May Be Connected To Convenience Sampling, It Is Difficult And Almost Not Possible To Employ Other Methods (E.G., Random Sampling Method). Thus, There Is A Limitation In The Results Of The Study, I.E., They Do Not Reflect The Whole Community, Especially The Consumers From Other States In Malaysia Who May Also Have The Same Opinion On Decision-Making Pertaining To Online Hotel Room Reservations That Are Secured Through Searching Travel Reviews. Accordingly, The Limitation Of The Study Is Focused On Review Valance, Variation, And Volume As Research

And Literature-Based Only. There Are Still Many Factors That Might Significantly Affect Travel Reviews Towards Guest Loyalty.

Besides That, The Study's Findings Have Brought To Light A Lot Of Interesting Facts, As Well As Implications On The Hospitality Industry. The Role Of Travel Reviews On Hotel Guests' Loyalty Requires The People's Concern As Technology Continues Improving. For Example, The Consumers Can Choose Wisely Their Preferred Hotels By Relying On Travel Reviews For Decision-Making Purposes. Hence, It Is Vital For Those Who Are In Hotel Management To Be Concerned About Factors Of Online Travel Reviews, In Terms Of Valance, Volume, Variation, And Customers' Recommendations. Additionally, This Research Can Be Used As A Reference By Hotel Marketers, Especially Y Those Who Are Designating A Suitable Marketing Strategy To Meet The Needs Of Their Consumers. To Gain More Information And Knowledge, Future Studies Can Be Carried Out Using A Qualitative Method Where The Researcher Can Interview And Obtain Information Directly From The Tourists. In Summary, The Findings From This Study Have Confirmed The Four Reasons That Influence Guest Loyalty. Thus, It Is Recommended That Hoteliers Need To Understand The Business Environment And Focus More On Online Marketing Tools In Order To Monitor Customers' Attitudes And To Make Corresponding Changes On How They Can Deliver The Best Service In The Future.

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