

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CUSTOMERS' BUYING BEHAVIOR IN SELECTED CASUAL DINING RESTAURANTS IN LAGUNA

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ABSTRACT

This study is about the influence of social media in customers' buying behavior in selected casual dining restaurants in Laguna. All the responses were rated as completely build up according to the influence of social media in customer buying behavior in casual dining restaurants. This study sought to answer the following questions (1) the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, location, marital, status, job status, monthly income, and educational attainment; (2) the influence of social media in terms of popularity, buying behaviour, product improvement, service improvement; and (3) the significant difference between the demographic profiles and the influence of social media in the customer buying behavior. The researchers used descriptive type of research design and used survey method to gather and measure the variables that are related to each other in relation with our study. The researchers have found that majority of the respondents are millenials with the age bracket of 18-25 years old, respondents that have social media are mostly employed and has a huge influence in finding information. The demographic profile of therespondent does not affect customers buying behavior.

Keywords: *Social Media, buying Behavior, Casual dining*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, social media has been a huge platform and has changed people's minds in the way that they have an easy access in information they want to know and that have successfully penetrated deeply towards the everyday life of an individual, affecting people's informal communications, as well as the institutional structures and daily routines. Far from being impartial platform for everyone, social media have changed the conditions and rules of social interaction. The logic of social media, embedded in these groundings of principle and strategies, is gradually invaded all areas of everyone's public lives (Dijck & Poell, 2013).

As stated by Obar (2015) Social media are the computer-mediated technologies made to promote the creation of exchanging conversations from one person to another, participating common interest of information, ideas, and other forms of expressions through virtual communities and different kinds of social media networks that people will totally use. Furthermore, before social media has been created, companies had to pay just to get out information about its business, but now there are significantly have much less barriers to reaching out people and according to Dr. Wu He (2013) many businesses have already adopted the use of social media to simply connect to its market. Many of the companies are using social media as crucial tools for their advertisements and for marketing such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and other social media sites to provide information, various types of services to offer and to interact especially with the customers. Companies need to check, monitor and analyze not only the customer's content and reviews on their own social media account just to increase the competitive advantages, effectively assess the competitive environment of businesses and to have a good relationship between the business and its customer, but also the information they could get on their competitors' social media sites to get some ideas on what's going on in the competitor's business. In addition, an effort to help companies understand how to perform a social media competitive analysis and transform social media data into knowledge for decision makers and even for the customer's behavior when it comes in purchasing.

Social media provide its own range of benefits and opportunities to the people that has been using social media to empower themselves

in various ways. Social media allow and encourage discovery and develop an individual's interests and find other people who share the same interests too (Reach Out, n.d.). Furthermore, based on Aichner (2015) Social media changes the way on how an individual and large organizations communicate with everyone and it actually has many different forms of communicating like blogs, social gaming, social networks, photo sharing, and video sharing also with regards in marketing. From influencing customer's dining habits to keeping them updated on restaurant trend news, social media marketing makes a difference.

Facebook is one of the largest and most dominant social sites in today's society and it was created by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 while he was an enrolled student at Harvard University. Facebook is an internet based social network which hosts a community of users making it easy for the users who wants to get connected to anyone far from them or even close and allows any users to share their everyday experiences to each other and helps to get connected at all times with friends, families regardless the geographical barrier (Miller, 2016). Furthermore, another social site was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in 2010 and it is called Instagram. It is an application which allows users to take photos and share them to their followers along with other social sites like Facebook and in the fact that the user can select the pictures and change them to the admirable beautiful images and make them fancier designs according the desire and attract their followers (Currid, 2013). In addition, according to Hosie (2017) many restaurants have now cottoned on to the power of Instagram too, especially the Instagram worthy photos of food really helped their business if their target demographic is millennial it'll be too easy to catch customer's attention and it appears that the traditional newspaper and magazine that has restaurant reviews are losing their influence over the millennial in favor of online reviews, social networks and influencers.

Moreover, in behavior of a customer when it comes in buying and purchasing stuffs Roesles (2015) have mentioned in his study that the most influenced people of social media are millennial because 47 percent of millennial are influenced in their purchases by social media. Moreover, he has mentioned in his study that a report from The Deloitte that consumers or customer who used social media throughout the shopping process are four times more likely to spend more on the

purchases stage than those who do not use social media while in the shopping process. In addition, as stated by iresearch (2018) customer behavior can be broadly classified as the decisions and actions that influence the purchasing behavior of a consumer.

With the restaurants already recognized the importance of using social media to build brand awareness to everyone, even small restaurants are using social media to market and to be recognize their establishment easier. A good social media marketing campaign should give a restaurant the ability to sell their food in a forum where people can express how much they appreciated the food and service of a particular establishment (Smith, 2014). Moreover, the restaurant industries adopted social media on marketing the business and its company's reputation along with the customer relationship in order to generate revenue streams and to build a trust and loyalty (Kim, 2016). Furthermore, there are various types of restaurant in the industry and there are classifications based upon the menu style, preparation process and pricing. Additionally, how the food is served to the customer helps to determine the classification. One of those types of restaurants is casual dining restaurant and according to Markovich (2017) casual dining restaurant's concept of casual dining is it implies relaxed and casual atmosphere characteristics that are moderately priced menu. It is more expensive than fast food restaurants but still presents the fair ratio between the price and service offered. Furthermore, as stated by Parashar (2017) most of the casual dining restaurants treat young people as their target customers and since majorly of the target customers are the young ones the business hours are longer than fine dining restaurants. Also, casual dining restaurants are lenient that doesn't implement a dress code on their customer.

This study is conducted to determine the influence of social media in customers' buying behavior in selected casual dining restaurant in Laguna. The researchers have chosen this location because there are a lot of new restaurants that have been discovered through the social media users in Laguna.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the modes of data collection or how a specific result were calculated (Howell, 2013). Moreover, the research

design, participants, and the tools that were used as well as the procedures in gathering data are also described.

Respondents of the Study

This study was conducted in the province of Laguna where the respondents are common customers of restaurants and who are also active in using social media. With the advice of the statistician, the researchers used G-Power version 3.1.9 to compute for the sample size of 85 with the effect size of 0.45 and using an alpha of 0.05. Also the researchers conducted this study in the selected casual dining restaurants in Laguna, wherein the industry of Restaurant is growing and increasing.

Data Gathering Tool

The researchers used a self-made questionnaire that asks the demographic profile of the respondents and contains the assessment of the awareness of the Influence of social media to customers' buying behavior in selected casual dining restaurants in the province Laguna (using Likert Scale). The Researchers also used Cronbach Alpha or pilot testing to test if the self-made questionnaires are applicable and understandable by other people, and the result was .845. Moreover, Review of Literature is also used in gathering data as for searching related studies that may help support the research. The researchers also asked the advice of the research advisers for the improvement of the data.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers asked the aid of the advisers to come up with a valid topic or title. After achieving the title, the researchers have diligently search for some literature related to the topic. Moreover, from the literature, objectives have been developed including the variables needed to conduct the study, after conducting the objectives of the study we have come up with the conceptual framework and thereby develop the questionnaires. The researchers gathered data through stratified sampling technique where there are subpopulations that vary and are advantageous to sample individually. After the questionnaires

have been answered by the respondents and retrieved after, the researchers with the help of a statistician calculated the gathered data and the results leads to an accurate conclusion.

Data Analysis

For the interpretation of the gathered data the following statistical tool/s were used. Frequency / percentage distribution were used to determine the profile of the respondents in Laguna in terms of age, sex, location, marital status, job status, monthly income, and educational attainment. However, to determine the extent of the influence of social media to the identified restaurants in terms of popularity, buying behavior, product improvement and service improvement, weighed mean was utilized. ANOVA (F-test) or Analysis of Variance was used in determining if there are significant differences on the influence of social media in customer buying behavior in selected casual dining restaurants in Laguna.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Customer Buying Behavior

Roesles (2015) have mentioned that a report from The Deloitte that consumers or customer who used social media during the shopping process are four times more likely to spend more on the purchases that those who do not use social media.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents, starting with the age. There is a total of 85 respondents from Blackbeard's Seafood Island in Solenad 2, Sta. Rosa and Samuel's Plate Gastropub in San Pablo City. The researchers categorized the age into five groups. Majority of the respondents are in the age bracket of 18-25 years old with percentage of 41.2 while the least number of respondents are in the age bracket of 50 years old and above with the percentage of 1.2

As Pratap (2017) have stated young people tend to spend more on their lifestyle need, while elderly people mostly stay indoors. Moreover, Pate and Adams (2013) have mentioned that other generations, as well as millennials, spend hours on social media sites

and retailers, advertisers and manufacturers have the millennials as target generation for product and services. Furthermore, as stated by Beall (2017) a surveyed said that seventy-one percent of millennials and fifty-nine percent of generation Z are both into following the advertisement online before making a purchase.

The sex of the customers from Blackbeard's Seafood Island in Solenad 2, Sta. Rosa and Samuel's Plate Gastropub in San Pablo City are mostly male with 55.3 % while the female is at 44.7 %. This could be because men tend to take larger bites, chew every mouthful, and they generally eat more often than women (Malik, 2015). In addition, As Hayes (2015) has stated, men have a reputation to show off in front of women, as stated by the Cornell study have suggested the men are the ones who eat a lot.

From the 85 respondents, 36 customers are from San Pablo with the percentage of 42.4 while the least number of customers came from Tagaytay with the percentage of 2.4.

Eze, Odigbo and Ufot (2015) have mentioned that store locations influence customer buying behavior. Choosing a business location especially when opening a food business might be considered as the most important factor during startup and it requires some serious work which includes planning and research, checking sources of material supplies, doing competitors' appraisal, understanding the state laws and taxes, and even surveying the demographics to have the potential target group of customer. A location that is far distance from a lot of customers has a negative effect because it will reduce the frequency of frequency of customer that will visit the business.

Next is the marital status of the customers. Out of 85 respondents, 52 are single (61.2%) while the least number of respondents are widowed with (3.5%). Aloomaa and Lawan (2013) have said that most marketing has been traditionally focusing on the marital status of everyone because household are continuous on consuming products and service even when at home. Moreover, as what Singh (n.d.) have mentioned is that the household itself is the most important unit of analysis for consumer behavior because households make many more acquisition, consumption, and disposition decisions than individuals do.

Another is the job status of the customers in this study. Majority of the customers are employed with the percentage of 80 while the least number of the job status of the respondents is self-employed with

the percentage of 5.9. Job status is one of the factors affecting the buying behavior of a consumer or an individual. A self-employed people have their own business that they can run on their own and take responsibility for the success of the business. Employed people have a contract of employment with a company Income is a very important factor that affects the buying decisions and the behavior of a consumer (acas.org, n.d.). Some unemployed people are those who have saved enough money so they to quit their jobs and with they have the luxury until they find the opportunity of finding a job (Amadeo. 2017).

Moreover, the monthly income of the customers from Blackbeard's Seafood Island in Solenad 2, Sta. Rosa and Samuel's Plate Gastropub in San Pablo City. It shows that from the 85 respondents, two of the brackets have the same number of customers that are earning Php 11,000-PhP 15,999 and Php. 21,000 with both having a percentage of 23.5 and above while only 14 of them have a monthly income which ranges from Php. 4999 and below with the percentage of 16.5.

Pratap (2017) have mentioned that a consumer that have a higher amount of income tend to spend more on luxury kinds of products while middle class who earns just enough are more on to the beneficial products for them. It really depends on the level of income to determine the kinds of products someone regularly buy

Lastly, the educational attainment of the customers from Blackbeard's Seafood Island in Solenad 2, Sta. Rosa and Samuel's Plate Gastropub in San Pablo City. It shows that from the 85 respondents, 75 of them are college graduates with the percentage of 88.2 while the least number of respondents is doctorate with percentage of 1.1.

Moreover, education do affects people on how they view things around them. People's buying behavior sometime depends on their educational attainment and could change their preferences. The more educated ones take much longer time to decide when buying an item because they think carefully before going to purchase something (Pratap, 2017).

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Profile of the Respondents

Age	f n=85	Percentage 100%
17-27	35	41.2
28-35	30	35.3
36-43	11	12.9
44-54	8	9.4
55 and above	1	1.2
Sex		
Female	38	44.7
Male	47	55.3
Location		
San Pablo	36	42.4
Cavite	3	3.5
Tagaytay	2	2.4
Sta. Rosa	27	31.8
Calamba	5	5.9
Others	12	14
Marital Status		
Married	30	35.3
Single	52	61.2
Widowed	3	3.5
Job Status		
Employed	68	80
Unemployed	12	14.1
Self- employed	5	5.9
Monthly Income		
Php. 4999 and below	14	16.5
Php. 5,000- Php. 10,999	16	18.8
Php. 11,000- Php. 15,999	20	23.5
Php. 16,000- Php. 20,999	15	17.6
Php. 21,000 and above	20	23.5
Educational Attainment		
High School	3	3.5
College	75	88.2
Masteral	6	7.1
Doctorate	1	1.1

Influence of Social Media

The following tables indicate the results of the statistical methods used to measure the influences of social media in the customer buying behavior in terms of popularity, buying behavior, product improvement and service improvement.

Table 2 shows the Influence of social media in customer buying behavior on selected casual dining restaurants in Laguna in terms of popularity. It is said that the respondents strongly agreed that social media has been the reason for casual dining restaurants to be discovered as it has the highest weighted mean of 3.51. In fact, according to Emma Vaughn (2018) with the continuous growth of social media, it influenced more the customers to rely on sites on discovering, communicating and deciding which restaurant to choose. The researchers assumed that the respondents are more influenced by social media on discovering casual restaurants other than posting positive social media reviews about the establishment

While in the other hand respondents agreed on posting positive social media reviews about the restaurant with the lowest weighted mean of 3.32. As to what Varney (2013) have mention, lack of planning or simply nothing at all is the reasons why some business in the food industry is decreasing in positive reviews and comments on social media.

Although, social media has the power to make a business known online or simply, it is still hard for them to evaluate their fruit of labor. As event managers always say, that there's always a room for improvement, earning positive response online is a continuous growth of the business.

Table 2. Mean of influence of social media in customer buying behavior in terms of popularity

INDICATOR	Weighted mean	Verbal Interpretation
Because of social media casual dining restaurants has been discovered	3.51	Strongly Agree
The casual dining restaurants has a good reputation on social media	3.47	Agree
Due to social the demand of the establishment to different places has increased	3.41	Agree
Followed the establishment’s social media accounts	3.33	Agree
Posted positive social media review about the establishment	3.32	Agree
Composite mean	3.41	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree; 1.50- 2.29 Disagree; 2.50- 3.49 Agree; 3.50- 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 3 indicates the respondent’s influence of social media in terms of buying behavior. It is shown that they strongly agreed that it is very convenient to know some products through social media with the highest weighted mean of 3.60%. The results was supported by Ray (n.d) stated that the traditional effective marketing strategy or the usual is the word of mouth but now the consumers are likely to found reviews about a certain business from social media. Also, nowadays people more into social media that is why they tend to search and know mostly all the information when regards to finding a casual dining restaurant.

However; spending more in buying products that are seen from social media are agreed by the respondents with the weighted mean of 3.45 Buying Behavior is the consumers' attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and even their decision making on acquiring product and/or services (Mbaskool.com n.d). Even though it is the lowest weighted mean still, it shows that a lot of respondents have agreed because some of them are basing their wants in other people reviews about a certain product.

Table 3. Mean of influence of social media in customer buying behavior in terms of buying behavior

INDICATOR	Weighted mean	Verbal Interpretation
It is very convenient to easily know some product because of social media	3.60	Strongly Agree
Because of social media, patrons and other loyal consumer has increased	3.55	Strongly Agree
Due to the uprising trends of posting pictures of instagram worthy foods, tend to try it out immediately	3.48	Agree
Social media influenced customer to buy establishment's product	3.38	Agree
Spend more buying products that seen from social media	3.22	Agree
Composite mean	3.45	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree; 1.50- 2.29 Disagree; 2.50- 3.49 Agree; 3.50- 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 4 on the next page shows the respondents' influence in terms of product improvement. They strongly agreed that due to comments and reviews on social media, establishment have developed/modified some products that had the highest weighted mean of 3.55. In fact, according to Bardawill (2014), that launching or introducing a new product, it can reach the same level of excitement in every guest. As does every culture is obsessed, and retailers/sellers are expected to provide a new product. With the rapid growth and innovation of the industry as well as the technology, the demand or needs and wants of every guest also increases and every business is coping with it. Business may also losses the loyalty of every guest. The reason why social media users often suggest pulling out some products is because establishments and other businesses often overlook fundamentals. Due to the market rush, the improvement and/or at least the maintenance of the quality in each product are maintained as they are the prior to every plan together with the marketing strategies.

However, the respondents agreed that the products that are not profitable are already removed as advised by the users of social media with the lowest weighted mean of 3.24. Mosca (2017) have mentioned that menu is one of the driving features in leading potential customers or loyal customers through the door of the restaurant, and making sure that the management of the restaurant properly priced it is mandatory to success. Some of the respondents have agreed that the management of the restaurant have removed product that are not that profitable.

Table 4. Mean of influence of social media in customer buying behavior in terms of product improvement

INDICATOR	Weighted mean	Verbal Interpretation
Due to comments and reviews on social media, establishment have developed/ modify some products	3.55	Strongly Agree

Table 4 continued...

Due to the comments, suggestions and reactions on social media establishment have improved their product	3.48	Agree
Products are being featured in some posts on social media	3.42	Agree
Additional products as requested by consumers on reviews, comments and share through the high influence of social media	3.41	Agree
Products that are not profitable are already removed as advised by the users of social media	3.24	Agree
Composite mean	3.38	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree; 1.50- 2.29 Disagree; 2.50- 3.49 Agree; 3.50- 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 5 shows the respondent's influence in terms of service improvement. It is stated the respondent's strongly agreed on the statement that the service are praised and has a good feedback in some posts on social media and has the highest weighted mean of 3.54. Improving, or at least maintaining, the quality of services, workplace and marketing practices is always to be the first plan for any business success (Improving Quality of Products and Services, n.d.). Having good feedback from the customers will really affect the improvement of the service and a lot of respondents have agreed on the statement.

While, the respondents agreed on the statement that some services are already removed as advised by the users of social media and has a weighted mean of 3.35. Many businesses often wonder they provide the same product to customers as their competitor do, but the competitor is winning and they are losing. This is just because they

lack something called ‘dedication for quality’; although the difference will be very minute but it is the deciding factor (Improving Quality of Products and Services, n.d.). It is because some employees or the service itself are having some lacking when it comes to proper training that is many of the respondents have agreed that there are some services are removed already.

Table 5. Mean of influence of social media in customer buying behavior in terms of service improvement

INDICATOR	Weighted mean	Verbal Interpretation
Service are praised and has a good feedback in some posts on social media	3.54	Strongly Agree
Due to the comments, suggestions and reactions on social media establishment have improved their service	3.47	Agree
Additional service as requested by consumers reviews, comments and share through the high influence of social media	3.45	Agree
Due to the comments and reviews on social media, staffs in this establishment improved.	3.39	Agree
Some services are already removed as advised by the users of social media	3.35	Agree
Composite mean	3.44	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree; 1.50- 2.29 Disagree; 2.50- 3.49 Agree; 3.50- 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 6 shows the difference between the respondents’ demographic profile and the influence of social media in terms of popularity. Based from the table; location and monthly income are significant to the popularity of the restaurant since it’s computed p-values were less than 0.5 level of difference.

That implies that the respondent's influence of social media doesn't depend on the location and monthly income. However, the respondents influence of social media does depends on the respondent's age, sex, marital status, job status and educational attainment since the resulted p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of difference.

Table 6. Significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of Popularity

Demo Profile	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	.715	.492	Not Significant
Sex	1.182	.312	Not Significant
Location	5.932	.004	Significant
Marital Status	.667	.516	Not Significant
Monthly Income	4.038	.021	Significant
Job Status	2.128	.126	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	.074	.929	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

Table 7 indicates the significant difference of the respondents' demographic profile in terms of buying behavior. It shows that all the profiles are not significant or not dependent on customer's buying behavior with the influence of social media.

Table 7. Significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of their Buying Behavior

Demo Profile	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	1.340	.268	Not Significant
Sex	1.756	.179	Not Significant
Location	1.235	.296	Not Significant
Marital Status	.497	.610	Not Significant
Monthly Income	.863	.426	Not Significant
Job Status	1.124	.126	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	.067	.936	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

Table 8 states the significant difference of respondent's demographic profile in terms of product improvement. It indicates all the profiles are not significant or not dependent for the influence of social media in customer buying behavior.

Table 8. Significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of Product Improvement

Demo Profile	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	.504	.606	Not Significant
Sex	.907	.408	Not Significant
Location	1.981	.144	Not Significant
Marital Status	.176	.893	Not Significant

Table 8 continued...

Monthly Income	.997	.373	Not Significant
Job Status	.106	.899	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	.821	.444	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

Table 9 shows the significant difference of the respondent's demographic profile in terms of service improvement. Moreover, it shows that the demographic profiles are not significant with the social media's influence in customer buying behavior.

Table 9. Significant difference between the respondent's demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of Service Improvement

Demo Profile	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	.090	.765	Not Significant
Sex	.330	.567	Not Significant
Location	.633	.429	Not Significant
Marital Status	.168	.683	Not Significant
Monthly Income	.670	.415	Not Significant
Job Status	.857	.357	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	.618	.434	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

CONCLUSIONS

Majority of the respondents can be considered as millennials, with ages ranging from 17 to 27. Nowadays most millennials are into social media sites and more likely knew how they work, even in the context of food consumption.

The finding shows that the respondents from Blackbeard's Seafood Island in Solenad 2, Sta. Rosa and Samuel's Plate Gastropub in San Pablo City have really been influenced by social media, specifically the level of buying behavior. Social media is the reason for casual dining restaurants to be discovered by the respondents. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that it is very convenient for them to easily know some products because of social media. For the level of influence of social media in customer buying behavior in terms of product improvement, most of the respondents strongly agree that due to comments and reviews on social media, establishments have developed / modified some products. This shows that comments and suggestions that are posted in social media are taken seriously by the establishments.

There are just two significant difference between the respondents' demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of popularity and it is the location and monthly income, because most of the respondents came from San Pablo City because the casual dining restaurant are near to them and for there are differences when it comes to the monthly income of the respondents because they might have different job. Moreover, the finding shows that there are no significant differences between the respondents' demographic profile and level of influence of social media in terms of buying behavior, product improvement and service improvement.

RECOMMENDATION

Restaurants should continue to use and include social media as part of their marketing strategy for continuous recognition of their establishment as well as their products and service. Management of the restaurants should innovate and improve their social media site in a way that it is more accessible and understandable especially by the consumers with the age bracket of 45 and above. In addition, the establishment should provide an excellent service to exceed

consumers satisfaction and for them to post positive social media reviews about the establishment to increase its popularity also to influence more the customer's buying behavior to spend more buying products that are seen from social media. Moreover, establishments should be more open for comments and suggestions from consumers especially on social media. Lastly, the researchers suggest to the future researchers to conduct the same study but with a larger respondents and industry, also, the researchers suggest that the future generations of researchers will use different type of methods to compare and improved our results.

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