Applying the information acceptance model to predict purchase intention in social media

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Abstract

E-WOM has become an essential marketing tool, as an online marketplace compete to dominate the online space. This paper assesses the relationship of e-WOM and its relationship towards purchase intention. The theoretical model based on the information acceptance model suggesting information (quality, credibility, usefulness, and adoption), needs of information and attitude towards information are the primary variables that influence purchase intention. This is a descriptive research; closed-ended questionnaires were distributed with 294 respondents with college students as the main demographic. The findings of this research show that the usefulness of information does play a significant influence toward purchase intention, but the attitude towards information does not significantly influence information usefulness. This study implies that some companies which compete in the online space should primarily focus on how useful their information is deemed by the consumers.

Keywords: Information acceptance model; purchase intention; e-WOM

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, e-commerce has proven to be an important shopping choice for consumers to buy. One of the main advantages of buying online is that consumers can immediately search for and buy the desired product (Ling *et al.*, 2010). The presence of online market places such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Bukalapak and many others, shopping has become simpler than ever. The presence of an online website together with a complimentary mobile application, with just a few clicks the user can complete the purchase of the product. Online shopping does make it easy for its users. However, one of the disadvantages of online shopping is that users cannot physically inspect the product, whereas offline shopping allows individuals to observe the product directly. Therefore, individuals will look for information online about products (Mosteller et al., 2014), to

ensure their decision to buy. In particular, online shopping carries risks such as product damage, because consumers cannot physically observe the product until the product has been shipped (Kim & Forsythe, 2010).

Consumers will look for information about the product before buying it online because they cannot check the product directly to make sure the purchased (Kwon & Kim, 2012). Consumers will look for this information by searching the internet, or asking friends about the product (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Exchanging information via the internet and social media sites called the electronic word of mouth or e-WOM (Goyette et al., 2010; Chu & Kim, 2011). Social media sites had an influence on e-WOM, namely reduced anonymity on social media, which has the potential to make e-WOM more trustworthy and reliable (Chu & Choi, 2011). However, due to a large amount of information available on the internet, and the potential for false information to be transmitted, consumers need to filter the information they received (Viviani & Pasi, 2017).

Referring to the above discussion, this study was conducted mainly because during the last decade researchers found that although there are studies that examine consumer behavior towards information and consumer behavior towards purchase intentions, research that combines the two consumer behaviors is still limited to information and information characteristics (Erkan & Evans, 2016). The important characteristics of information, such as a quality and credibility make individuals more likely to use the information and it can be considered useful (Viviani & Pasi, 2017; Li and Suh, 2015; Shen et al., 2012). Furthermore, information adoption will lead to purchase intention (Xue et al., 2018). Purchase intention influences a consumer's chances of buying a product or service (Rudyanto, 2018; Magetsari & Pratomo, 2019), which is important for a business. Table 1 shows previous research that studied purchase intention and the variables that influence it. The table also shows that few studies integrating information need in understanding purchase intentions (Erkan & Evans 2016). Purchase intention is the main factor affecting the possibility of consumers buying a product. One of the important and main variables that influence purchase intention is information (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

This study was conducted to further examine the impact of information characteristics that affect information adoption when consumers are considering buying online. Beside, the object of research is Shopee consumers. Shopee is a multinational e-commerce business. The variables of this study include information (quality, credibility, usefulness, and adoption), information needs, attitudes towards information, information needs, and purchase intentions. The reason why information characteristics are needed in this model is that information characteristics play an important role in predicting purchase intention (Shen et al., 2012; Viviani & Pasi, 2017; Fileiri & McLeay, 2013; Yan et al., 2016).

Table 1.
Previous Similar Research

Previous Researchers	IQ	IC	NOI	ATI	IU	IA	PI
Shu and Scott (2014)	V	V			V	V	
Salehi-Esfahani *et al.,* (2016)	V	V			V	V	

	IQ	IC	NOI	ATI	IU	IA	PI
Kuo and Lee (2009)	V				V		V
Xu and Yao (2015)	V	V				V	
Shen *et al.,* (2012)	V	V				V	
Zhu *et al.,* (2015)	V	V			V		V
Ayeh (2015)				V	V		V
Jafaar *et al.* (2012)	V	V		V			V
Gunawan and Huarng (2015)	V	V		V			V
Yu and Natalia (2013)	V	V					V
Erkan and Evans (2016)	V	V	V	V	V	V	V

Source: developed by the researchers (2019)

Notes: IQ: Information Quality
            IC: Information Credibility
            NOI: Needs of Information
            ATI: Attitude towards Information
            IU: Information Usefulness
            IA: Information Adoption

The process of information adoption is important in understanding how people integrate the information they receive (Lee & Kotler, 2011). Information adoption refers to an action where an individual processes information or internalizes it (Lee & Kotler, 2011). Furthermore, information adoption is the phase where transferred knowledge is being internalized, which means the information is being interpreted and applied context to gain meaning for the information (Li *et al.* (2013). Information adoption can be explained by the model called IACM, information acceptance model which was created by Erkan and Evans (2016). According to this model that information quality, information credibility, attitude towards information, needs of information affects information usefulness, and information usefulness affects information adoption, and in turn, affects purchase intention.

METHOD

The research questionnaire used in this study is a closed-ended questionnaire. All research indicators in the questionnaire were based on previous research. To measure *information quality* consist of four items (i.e., "I think the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is accurate", "I think the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is objectively presented", "I think the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is easy to understand", and "I think the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is sufficiently timely") adopted from Li & Suh (2015). Information credibility measured by four items (i.e., "I think that the information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is credible", "I think that the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media are factual", "I think that information shared by my friends in social media regarding the products in Shopee is from someone who is trustworthy", and "I think that the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media are believable") adopted from Li & Suh (2015).

Needs of information measured with four items (i.e., "I like to apply the information about products in Shopee which is shared by my friends when considering my

purchase", "I like to gather information from my friends in social media when considering my purchase", "I am comfortable when I have information regarding the products that I choose to purchase", and "I like to use products that I am familiar with"). These four indicators were based on previous studies (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Chu & Kim, 2011). Attitude toward information measured by four indicators (i.e.,   "I like to read the information regarding products in Shopee from my friends in social media", "I feel that the Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is helpful towards me making a decision", "The Information about products which are shared by my friends in social media makes me confident in purchasing products through Shopee", and "The information about products which are shared by my friends in social media is beneficial for me") based on the study (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Ryu & Han, 2010).

This research adopted four indicators for information usefulness variable based on the previous studies (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Luo et *al.,* 2014). Those indicators are "I think that the information I get in social media from my friends is useful", "I think that the information I get in social media from my friends is informative", "I think that the information I get in social media helps describethe product", and "I think that the information that I get in social media is valuable towards my decision to purchase". Likewise, to measure information adoption variable is "The information I receive in Shopee's platform make it easier for me to make purchase decisions in Shopee", "The information I receive in Shopee's platform enhances my effectiveness in making a purchase decision in Shopee", "I agree with the information (reviews and descriptions) I receive in Shopee's platform and will do what the information suggests" and "The information I receive in Shopee's platform helps me with knowledge regarding my decision to purchase" taken from the previously published studies (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Cheung *et al.*, 2009; Xue *et al.*, 2018).

The dependent variable of this research, purchase intention variable measured by four indicators based on previous studies (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Van der Heijden *et al.,* 2003; Paul *et al.,* 2016). Those four indicators were "It is likely that I will buy the products after considering information about products which are shared by my friends in social media", "I will purchase through Shopee next time I need a product", "I will purchase products often through Shopee in the future", and "I will still purchase a product through Shopee despite it being available in other online-markets. (e.g., Tokopedia, Bukalapak)". All these research indicators based on a 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4- agree, and 5-strongly agree). This survey conducted by distributing a research questionnaire was administered privately, together with an electronic questionnaire. The first reasons of using a personally administered questionnaire to collect data is that researchers can receive the questionnaires that have been filled indirectly. The second reason is that by being personally available when the respondent answers, confusing questions can be explained. The third reason is that by ensuring the questionnaires is well understood, it is less likely to have unusable data.

This research applied the purposive sampling technique, that involves choosing respondents with specific criteria. The respondent criteria are those who have purchased through Shopee in either the website or the mobile application. Furthermore, the sample size for this research was 300 based on the previous similar research (e.g., Bonson *et al.,* 2015; Hussain *et al.* 2017; Ali 2016; Gunawan & Huarng 2015; Kim & Forsythe, 2010;

Mirabi *et al.* 2015; Hsu *et al.*, 2015).

The goodness of data measure was assessed to ensure that the measuring instrument used is valid and reliable. This research used the inter-item consistency reliability of Cronbach's coefficient alpha, according to Sekaran &Bougie (2016), a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 and higher can be considered as acceptable. To see the correlation of each item in the measure, the corrected-item-total correlation must be identified, and there is a minimum of 0.3 value in the corrected-item-total (Hair et al., 2010). This research used construct validity, which includes convergent and discriminant validity. To test convergent validity, this research used Exploratory Factor Analysis, also known as EFA and Composite Reliability (CR). When using EFA, the general rule of thumb is that for factor loading of 0.32 is bad, 0.55 is good, 0.63 is very good, and above 0.71 is excellent (Comrey & Lee, 1992). There is another method to calculate convergent validity, which is the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). AVE is calculated by summing the square of all standardized factor loadings and then divided by the total number of items. A rule of thumb for AVE is that if the AVE is equal or higher than 0.5 means that there is good convergence, while lower than 0.5 points to an error in the items. To establish discriminant validity, a formula will be used from Hair *et al.* (2010), which the root of AVE.

Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) applied for this research to analyze data because the aim of this study not to prove a theory, but rather to explain and predict the latent variables. PLS-SEM is chosen to anticipate if the data distribution is not normal, hence it is better to use PLS-SEM since the provisions are more flexible compared to CB-SEM when it comes to irregular data distribution (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 2 shows that all 7 variables are considered reliable because they are above the threshold, which is 0.7 for Cronbach's Alpha and 0.3 for Corrected Total Item Correlation, therefore the reliability of measures are established. Based on Hair et al. (2010), convergent validity is assessed by conditions when Cronbach's alpha be greater than 0.70 and Composite Reliability be greater than 0.80.

Table 2.
Reliability and Convergent Validity Results

Variable	Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Corrected Item-total Correlation	Composite Reliability
Information Quality	IQ1		.813	
	IQ2	.879	.797	.918
	IQ3		.592	
	IQ4		.765	
Information Credibility	IC1		.677	
	IC2	.882	.856	.886
	IC3		.815	
	IC4		.645	
Needs of Information	NOI1		.785	
	NOI2	.892	.724	.924
	NOI3		.799	
	NOI4		.741	

Variable	Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Corrected Item-total Correlation	Composite Reliability
Attitude Towards Information	ATI1		.767	
	ATI2	.884	.787	.921
	ATI3		.719	
	ATI4		.731	
Information Usefulness	IU1		.747	
	IU2	.863	.713	.907
	IU3		.661	
	IU4		.743	
Information Adoption	IA1		.669	
	IA2	.864	.651	.907
	IA3		.744	
	IA4		.791	
Purchase Intention	PI1		.579	
	PI2	.871	.846	.913
	PI3		.727	
	PI4		.774	

Source: Data analysis (2019)

Table 3 is the table for outer loadings value, which shows that the measures are valid, above the 0.7 thresholds. Table 5 shows the results of correlation testing by applying the Fornell-Lacker criterion and compares it with the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) to another latent construct. The square root of AVE for each measure should be higher value than other latent constructs.

Table 3.
Outer Loading Test

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IQ1	.909						
IQ2	.886						
IQ3	.746						
IQ4	.886						
IC1		.794					
IC2		.929					
IC3		.897					
IC4		.818					
NOI1			.878				
NOI2			.855				
NOI3			.888				
NOI4			.854				
ATI1				.869			
ATI2				.884			
ATI3				.847			
ATI4				855			
IU1					.863		

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IU2					.856		
IU3					.798		
IU4					.855		
IA1						.830	
IA2						.783	
IA3						.882	
IA4						.872	
PI1							.752
PI2							.923
PI3							.843
PI4							.879

Source: Data analysis (2019)

The results from table 4 show that the constructs do not exceed the squared root of AVE of each construct, therefore discriminant validity can be established. Table 4 shows the Variance Inflation Factor, which indicates if multicollinearity exists or not and whether the indicators are redundant or no longer needed. VIF values that are below 5 shows little to no potential of multicollinearity.

Table 4.
Correlation Test

	IQ	IC	NOI	ATI	IU	IA	PI
IQ	*.859*						
IC	.588	*.788*					
NOI	.643	.654	*.868*				
ATI	.545	.671	.643	*.928*			
IU	.561	.650	.630	.649	*.918*		
IA	.647	.743	.737	.715	.819	*.918*	
PI	.636	.757	.684	.813	.753	.811	*.937*

Source: Data analysis (2019)

The results from table 4 show that the constructs do not exceed the squared root of AVE of each construct, therefore discriminant validity can be established. Table 5 shows the Variance Inflation Factor, which indicates if multicollinearity exists or not and whether the indicators are redundant or no longer needed. VIF values that are below 6 shows little to no potential of multicollinearity.

Table 5.
Variance Inflation Factor

	VIF
IQ1	3.146
IQ2	2.833
IQ3	1.589
IQ4	2.878

	VIF
IC1	2.611
IC2	3.837
IC3	3.306
IC4	2.355
NOI1	2.980
NOI2	2.332
NOI3	3.189
NOI4	2.517
ATI1	2.454
ATI2	2.640
ATI3	2.101
ATI4	2.189
IU1	2.269
IU2	2.080
IU3	1.808
IU4	2.237
IA1	2.154
IA2	2.107
IA3	2.519
IA4	2.154
PI1	1.701
PI2	3.534
PI3	2.398
PI4	2.761

Source: Data analysis (2019)

Additionally, the results from table 5 shows that the indicators have not exceeded the value of 5, which shows that there is little potential of multicollinearity. After the outer model testing, and all indicators are reliable and valid, it is time to test the inner model or to test the hypothesis (Table 6).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

294 questionnaires that can be used from 300 questionnaires that were given. From those 294 questionnaires, there are categories to classify the respondents by gender, age, occupation, and last education. From 294 respondents, the majority 51% were male (150 respondents), 237 respondent (86%) are between 17-21 years old, and 247 respondent (84%) are university students.

Table 6.
Hypothesis Testing

Variable Relationship	Path Coefficient	Critical Value	P-Value	Conclusion
Information Quality → Information Usefulness	.470	8.346	.000	Supported
Information	.229	3.851	.000	Supported

Variable Relationship	Path Coefficient	Critical Value	P-Value	Conclusion
Credibility→Information Usefulness				
Needs of Information → Information Usefulness	.224	3.436	.000	Supported
Attitude towards Information → Information Usefulness	.107	1.441	.149	Not Supported
Information Usefulness → Information Adoption	.716	9.981	.000	Supported
Information Adoption → Purchase Intention	.664	10.006	.000	Supported
Attitude towards Information → Purchase Intention	.274	4.035	.000	Supported

Source: Data analysis (2019)

The first hypothesis states that the higher the information quality, the higher the information usefulness. Information can affect the usefulness of information because, in the context of this research, which is about E-Commerce, products are not physically available to consumers, which means consumers must rely on information regarding the products they want since they cannot inspect the products physically unlike a traditional store (Forsythe *et al.*, 2006), additionally, according to Keshavarz (2014), due to the ever-changing information resources on the web makes the evaluation of information important, due to the possibility of untrustworthy information on the internet. Furthermore, the result of supported hypotheses regarding information quality positively affecting information usefulness is similar with previous research which indicates that better information quality would result in more information usefulness (Cheung *et al.*, 2009; Wang *et al.,* 2012; Lin *et al.*, 2011; Erkan & Evans, 2016).

The second hypothesis states that the higher the information credibility, the higher the information usefulness. It can be stated that consumers tend to seek information to find out more about the product (Hussain *et al.*, 2017) and according to Viviani & Pasi (2017), fake reviews, which is untruthful reviews of a product, can be distinguished based on the characteristics of the review. The credibility of information can also affect the user's decision whether to use the information given (Shen *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the result of supported hypotheses regarding information credibility positively affecting information usefulness is also similar with previous research which indicates that better information credibility would result in more information usefulness, as research from Cheung *et al.* (2009), Savolainen (2011), Zha *et al.,* (2018), Erkan & Evans (2016), Cheung & Vogel (2013).

The third hypothesis states that the higher the needs of information, the higher the information usefulness. Needs of information itself refers to the individual's need for information. Consumers seek out the best option or value when deciding on a purchase (Pi & Huang, 2011), and according to Savolainen (2012), consumers seek out information and need information to solve their problems, which in the context of this research, consumers needing information regarding a product. Previous research also shows a similar result (e.g., O'Leary *et al.,* 2011; Robinson, 2013; Erkan & Evans, 2014; Yun & Park, 2010).

The fourth hypothesis states that the higher the attitude towards information, the higher the information usefulness. However, this hypothesis is not supported. According to Erkan & Evans (2016), the context of the research itself can change the results, and the case of this research, since the information that is received is from the participants' friends, they may already have thought that it would be useful already regardless of their attitude towards information. Additionally, according to Zhu *et al.* (2016), consumers seek information from their acquaintances and friends regarding the product. According to Shin (2013), friendship is a trust factor, which means consumers are more likely to trust their friends. Therefore, the reason why there is no significant effect of attitude on information usefulness is that individuals have already trusted the information from their friends, which disregards their attitude towards information in this case. The result of the unsupported hypotheses regarding attitude towards information having no significant effects on information usefulness is supported by the previous researcher, Erkan & Evans (2016).

The fifth hypothesis states that the higher the information usefulness, the higher the information adoption. There are two main reasons why this hypothesis is supported. First, according to Shen (2012), the overall usefulness of information can affect information adoption because particular traits of information such as its overall quality and credibility is important for users. Additionally, when users search for information, they tend to find information that has certain traits, such as credibility (Viviani & Pasi, 2017). Additionally, information that has traits such as its overall quality and credibility, can affect the adoption of information (Rauniar *et al.*, 2014). Second, the result of supported hypotheses regarding information usefulness towards information adoption is also supported by the previous research (Rauniar *et al.,* 2014; Erkan & Evan, 2016; Hussain *et al.,* 2017; Park *et al.,* 2011).

The sixth hypothesis states that the higher the information adoption, the higher purchase intention. It can be stated that consumers tend to seek information regarding the products in order to feel secure regarding their decision to purchase (Yulin, 2013). Additionally, online shopping is unlike offline shopping. Offline shopping refers to shopping at physical places such as a department store, or an electronics store. Unlike offline shopping, online shoppers cannot inspect the products physically, so to retrieve information regarding the products, consumers tend to either ask or look at the reviews and comments regarding the product itself online. The result of supported hypotheses regarding information adoption positively affecting information usefulness is supported by previous research (Rauniar *et al.,* 2013; Erkan & Evans, 2016; Koththagoda & Herath, 2018; Shu & Scott, 2014).

The seventh hypothesis shows that the higher the attitude towards information, the higher the purchase intention. There are three reasons why this hypothesis is supported. First, by looking at the demographics, this survey has shown that 81% of the samples are 17-21-year old which is young. Young people are more familiar with technology due to their having more time to be more familiar with technology (Thompson, 2013). Additionally, Daud *et al.,* (2011) state that a positive attitude towards information can results in a higher chance of purchase due to familiarity and ease of access. Therefore, the results show that the attitude towards information positively affects purchase intention.

Second, in TRA, Sin *et al.,* (2012) postulate that a positive attitude towards technology usage, which in this context would be the application or website for shoppe, would lead to a higher likelihood of purchase intention. The second reason second reason is that customers being familiar with technology are more likely to make online purchases. According to Lai (2017), individuals who have positive experiences with a behaviour, which in this context is online shopping, would believe that it is beneficial to them, then their attitude would form towards that behavior. Third, the result of supported hypotheses regarding attitude towards information positively affecting purchase intention is supported by previous research (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Kanchanatanee *et al.,* 2014; Kim & Forsythe, 2010; Ayeh, 2015; Jafaar *et al.,* 2012).

The results from the hypothesis testing have shown that six hypotheses are supported and one is not. From this research, there are suggestions for Shopee in Indonesia. as Information usefulness positively affects information adoption, which means that Shopee or E-commerce companies might want to try increasing the volume of user reviews and user E-WOM regarding products from their sites and application since users tend to seek information before purchasing products.

Additionally, consumers tend to seek out information about products when making purchases (Gunawan, 2014), which companies should satisfy by encouraging the spread of user E-WOM. We can see that needs of information also has a positive effect on information usefulness, which means users generally need information, and they tend to seek out information that has traits that can be useful for the user. The information has proven to be important in this research, and company must ensure that consumers are satisfied enough to leave good reviews and good impressions to spread positive word of mouth such as reviews online, online testimonials uploaded as social media sites such as *Instagram, Facebook, Line.*

One of the variables that positively affects information usefulness is Information Credibility, which refers to the trustworthiness of information. This result implies that E-Commerce companies must tread carefully as users tend to seek out traits in information such as its overall credibility, which means companies should be discouraged from using fake reviewers or bots since there have been cases of such with *Amazon,* another E-Commerce company, where the company was caught using bots to post false reviews of products. A detailed managerial implication is shown in Table 7.

Table 7.
Managerial Implications

Variables	Prioritized Indicators	Customer Needs	Company's Actions
Information Quality	Information regarding products or services in Shopee	The information about products or services in Shopee is clear and easy to understand	Create an incentive for consumers to leave a review or to share information regarding their purchasing experience.
Information Credibility	Accuracy and honesty of	The information about products or	-Ensure a verifying system for users to ensure no fake reviews

Variables	Prioritized Indicators	Customer Needs	Company's Actions
	information regarding products in Shopee	services in Shopee is accurate and trustworthy	made by bots. -Encourage users to leave an honest review or sharing experiences
Needs of Information	The availability of information about products and how complete they are	Information about services or products are immediately available from the start	-User interface can be made to have more information regarding the products -require the sellers to provide more information
Information Usefulness	How relevant and useful the information about the products or services in Shopee	Information about products or services that are useful and is relevant to the product.	-Require the sellers to provide more detailed information -Guidelines for sellers on what information to provide
Information Adoption	How useful and trustworthy the information regarding products or services in Shopee	Information that is useful to the consumers and is also trustworthy, can be used for decision making.	-Encourage sellers to double-check their product information
Purchase Intention	Customer's Intention to purchase at Shopee	Have the intention to shop at Shopee	-Create a trustworthy system to use -Ensure that information being spread about the services of Shopee are not false or misguided -Better user interface for providing more information

Source: developed for this research (2019)

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to examine the information acceptance model to predict purchase intentions. The results showed that there was one research hypothesis that was not supported. The hypothesis is related to the relationship between attitudes towards information and the usefulness of the information. Furthermore, the results show that six other research hypotheses are supported. The six supported hypotheses are as follows. First, the higher the information quality, the higher the information usefulness. Second, the higher the information credibility, the higher the information usefulness. Third, the higher the needs of information, the higher the information usefulness. Fourth, the higher the information usefulness, the higher the information adoption. Fifth, the higher the information adoption, the higher the purchase information. Sixth, the higher the attitude toward information, the higher the purchase intention.

There are limitations in this study which the respondents only applied to university students and it cannot be generalized to different respondents or other contexts. Purchase intention in this research only predicted by information characteristics.

For further research will be interesting to investigate more on different customer segment, such as senior citizen, who is difficult to adapt with the new technology. To broaden understanding of purchase intention toward the online marketplace, there are some variables probably will influence such as E-Service Quality (Prateek et al., 2016) and Ease of Technology Use (Peña-García et al., 2020).

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