



ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYER BRAND THROUGH EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION (EVP). CASE STUDY ON EMPLOYER BRANDING OF PT.BUKALAPAK.COM

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INFORMASI ARTIKEL

Diterima: November 2020
Direvisi: Maret 2020
Tersedia: online: April 2020

KATA KUNCI

Communication; Employee Value Proposition; Employer Branding; HR Marketing

KORESPONDENSI

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A B S T R A K

Perkembangan kebutuhan perusahaan akan pekerja sesuai dengan standar perusahaan untuk mendukung bisnis menyebabkan fenomena yang disebut perang bakat. Fenomena ini memunculkan pengembangan bidang baru branding penyedia kerja. di mana perusahaan dan organisasi berusaha melakukan pemasaran dari sisi sumber daya manusia. Untuk mencapai tujuannya sebagai perusahaan pilihan, komunikasi adalah penting dalam merek perusahaan. Tesis ini akan membahas bagaimana merek perusahaan dapat dibentuk melalui komunikasi proposisi nilai karyawan yang dijalankan oleh branding perusahaan. Untuk mencapai tujuan komunikasi yang lebih efektif, penggunaan media online dapat terlibat untuk mendukung kampanye dan program yang dijalankan offline, kedua saluran ini penting untuk digunakan secara integral dalam upaya membangun persepsi audiens target merek perusahaan. sebagai tempat kerja yang diinginkan. Strategi untuk menggunakan komunikasi offline dan online perlu diseimbangkan dengan kekuatan konten komunikasi yang konsisten sehingga hasil yang diperoleh dimaksimalkan.

INTRODUCTION

Along with the demands for change, the organization of every company is growing both in terms of technology and in terms of the need for quality human resources. Human Resources (HR) is one of the supporting divisions that plays an important role in contributing to a company's business development. The competition to get the most superior human resources for the company has caused the emergence of the talent war phenomenon. Talent war is a phenomenon that emerged in the 21st century, in which companies and organizations compete with each other and try to maintain human resources belonging to the talent category.

The birth of the talent war phenomenon impacts companies to compete and ensure the status of being the best company as a place to work. This has implications for two main things, on the external side of the company or from the

perspective of the prospective employee candidates, and also from the internal side of the company or the existing employees' point of view. From the external side, employee candidates in the labor market need to be convinced that the company is a good place to work in order to attract and create the candidate's interest to join the company. Meanwhile, from the internal side, companies need to convince their employees that they have been working for the right company to avoid them from resigning, which can lead to a labor deficit.

In order to achieve the ideal labor situation, the employer branding of a company needs to analyze in advance what aspirations are considered as the attractive factors for candidates to join, and what factors can help companies not to lose their best employees. A survey conducted by LinkedIn in 2017 states that there are three main factors that become candidates'

consideration factors in choosing a place to work, namely compensation and benefits, opportunities for career development, and getting a more challenging job than the previous job.

Some literature explain that employer branding is the key in answering the challenges of companies that thrive to be the workplace of choice. Not only does employer branding have a role to attract, retain, and develop the human resources needed by a company, it also has a role to communicate employee value propositions which are described as a series of functional, emotional, and symbolic attributes aimed at marketing the company (Sousa et al, 2016). A survey conducted by Thomson Online Benefits (2018) explains that 77% of employees who understand the benefits that will be obtained from the workplace are more likely to survive for a longer term in a company. Looking at the results of the survey, it can be concluded that it is important for companies to define the things that are beneficial for their employees and communicate these things to prospective employees.

Defining an employee value proposition becomes critical in order for a company to maintain its image in the long run (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). This employee value proposition can be a guideline for employer branding to carry out its marketing activities as well as being a value that is unique to the company in its efforts to attract prospective employees. In practice, there are still some mistakes made by companies in defining their employee value propositions and internalizing them into employer branding activities.

Employee value proposition is one of the main contexts that can be used by employer branding in strengthening a company's brand as a workplace. In her book titled *Employer Branding: When HR Is The New Marketing*, Agnes Amelia (2018) explains that employer branding is an effort used by companies to position themselves as places of work sought by job seekers. The activities carried out by employer branding are different from marketing in general, namely by conducting soft selling or conducting promotions in a smooth manner in order to form the perception of job seekers that the company is an ideal workplace for them.

Bukalapak is one of the fast-growing startup companies of Indonesia, and since its inception in 2010, in 2018 this company has held the title as a Unicorn, a term for a startup company whose valuation has reached above US\$1 Billion. The rapid development of its business makes the need for employees in quality and quantity automatically increase. This can be seen from the rapid development of its employee.

In the last two years (2017-2019), the increase in Bukalapak's number of employees has reached 150%. Along with the development of the company's business, the development of the needs of these employees will also increase. As a technology company, Bukalapak needs employees who specialize in technology which are currently not abundant in the labor market, such as cloud engineers, data scientists, artificial intelligence engineers, and other positions where there are not as many candidates as fields such as marketing, human resources. In response to these needs, Bukalapak chose to form a special team to run its employer branding activities in early 2018 so that candidates who specialize in the mentioned technology fields can be more familiar with Bukalapak as a workplace, and become interested in joining as its employees.

Based on the background explanation and the problem identification discussed above, this study discusses more deeply the strategies and applications carried out by Bukalapak's employer branding to strengthen its brand as a work place through employee value proposition communication that is internalized in its campaigns and programs

LITERATURE AND METHODOLOGY

The concept of employer branding first appeared in the mid-1990s as a response to an increasingly competitive workforce needs. This condition creates competition between companies to become the desired workplace by labor candidates. This competitive climate is also supported by the fact that, at that time, the existing workforce was starting to increasingly have higher expectations and the high maintenance nature in which labor candidates expect companies to accommodate their various needs. Looking at these conditions, the brand becomes an important thing to note. The American Marketing Association defines a brand or image as a name, term, sign, symbol, design,

or a combination of some of these things that aims to identify an item or service offered, and become a differentiator between one product or service from another. In the case of a brand of a company, by looking at the definition of the brand itself and the need to determine the uniqueness of one company from another, it takes a special strategy to make the brand of a company visible to candidates, which is called employer brand management.

Richard Mosley (2014) explains in his book that there are 4 key components in employer brand management, namely employer branding, recruitment, on-boarding, and talent management. Employer branding itself has a role to create an initial strategy to brand the company towards prospective employees so that they have an interest in working at the company. Bakhaus and Tikoo (2004) define employer branding as a company's effort to promote the material and non-material uniqueness of a company that distinguishes it from others, to become an attraction that makes the company a workplace desired by candidates. For that reason, employer branding is currently used as a basic foundation for a company's recruitment strategy

Although it has different goal specifications than marketing in general, the context of employer branding is inseparable from the functions of other departments that also have the aim of improving the company's image. The strong brand image of a product produced by the company will affect how candidates see the results of the company, while the strong HR & Talent strategy has a role to improve the quality of human resources in order to produce a stronger product brand. It can be said that these two things are interrelated with each other and can be used to sharpen the analysis of groups that will be the company's target of communication, the content of messages that will be delivered externally, and through which channels of communication will these messages be delivered.

Employee Value proposition

Employee value proposition or EVP is a value or pillar created by the company as a basis for determining public perceptions of the image the company wants to get as a workplace. Employee value propositions can be translated as pillars or values that distinguish companies from one another, though the employee value

proposition does not explain what is offered materially to prospective employees. This value then gives clear reasons to employees and prospective employees to choose a company as a place to work and reasons to remain as employees of the company. Companies that have and are able to maintain the implementation of their employee value proposition well can attract the interest of potential candidates to become employees and also maintain the level of engagement and retention of their employees effectively.

In communicating an employee value proposition, there are various methods that can be used including through creating a series of programs and campaigns that are aligned with the employer brand that a company wants to form. There are several important aspects that need to be considered so that these programs and campaigns can deliver long-term employee value propositions. Mosley (2014) poured it into the Brand Engagement model which focuses on three main elements such as think, feel, and do.

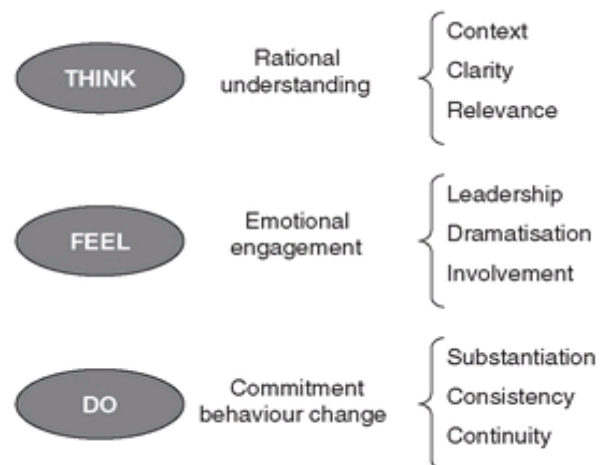


Illustration 2.1
Brand Engagement Model (Source: Mosley 2014)

In the current condition of talent war, companies are trying to stand out with their unique employer brands. Many companies are using the program and campaign methods in delivering their employee value proposition; hence companies need to form programs and campaigns that are not only widespread at the initial launch, but are consistent so that they can successfully internalize the employer brand that is being formed. The three main elements outlined above can be used as a measuring tool in the success of employer branding in communicating

employee value proposition through campaigns and programs.

Think

The think element emphasizes the target audience's understanding on the holding of programs and campaigns, including the context, clarity, and relevance of the campaigns and programs that are held. The message delivered to the target audience of each program and campaign needs to be clear, focusing on two or three core messages that are felt to represent the employer brand that is being conveyed. This is because generally the target groups of employer branding campaigns and programs, whether that be final-year university students or employed workers, they in fact process various brand messages every day. To be able to stick and become a top of mind, messages conveyed through programs and campaigns not only have to be unique, but also delivered in a simple and explicit language. In addition, the message conveyed also needs to be relevant to the needs of the target audience, because the message can be easily received if the recipient feels that they hold the same value in the experience they already have

Feel

The feel element emphasizes the emotional side of delivering messages through programs and campaigns. Companies must be able to provide dramatic accents in the messages conveyed without changing the core messages carried, by implementing new and creative ways of conveying messages such as building stories that can form emotional connections with the target audience. The delivery of messages also needs to involve the target audience directly using a variety of techniques, including holding joint training sessions in accordance with the themes of the programs and campaigns. Short-term involvement is built by effectively conveying messages, but long-term commitment can only be obtained by ensuring the message is proven

Do

Programs and campaigns can be determined as successful not only when the message can be well received by the target audience of the programs and campaigns, but more so when the message can shape the trust of the target audience towards

the company. This trust will only be formed if the target audience can see tangible evidence that the propositions and values of the employer brand conveyed through the programs and campaigns presented are truly a core part of the organization's operational structure.

Social Media and Employer Branding

The growing practice of employer branding in a company requires the development and expansion of strategies carried out by employer branding to be even more attractive to the target audience. The emergence of social media has become one of the new mediums that can be utilized by employer branding to expand the reach of publications in conveying information to the public. Boundouruk, et al (2014) explain the effect of social media on employer branding as follows.

Table 1. Impact of Social Media on Employer Branding

Factors	Impact
Employer branding in general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a target audience for recruitment need • Elevates company image and marketing • Media to communicate the competence of the company's Human Resource
Value proposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves engagement towards employees and prospective employees • Increases opportunity in promoting the company • Specifically determines the company's target audience
Internal market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing strategy • Company openness regarding work environment • Internal recruitment
External market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation • Talent Management • Company transparency

Although the types of social media are increasingly varied, not all platforms are suitable for use in terms of employer branding. Therefore, a needs analysis that is tailored to the target audience is needed so that the social media platforms used are right on target and effective in conveying the messages.

In this study, the analysis will be conducted using categories on social media as previously explained, but to adjust to the research needs, the social media categories used as the units of

analysis are blogs, content communities, and social networking sites (SNSs). The analytical framework proposed by Boundouruk et al (2014) will be used, which analyzes the social media categories that can influence employer branding dimensions, namely value proposition, internal marketing, and external marketing. To adjust to the research needs, the following adjustments will be made.

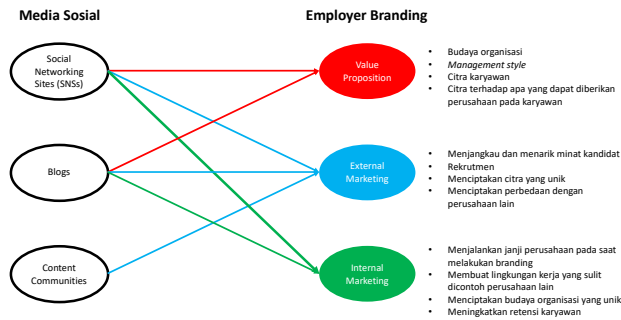


Illustration. The Pattern of Relationships between Social Media Categories and Employer Branding (Boundouruk, et al, 2014)

The Social Networking Sites category allows users to interact with one another by creating profile pages and sharing various types of content on their pages. This category of social media can be used by companies to influence the value proposition dimension by creating company profile pages and sharing knowledge in accordance with the company's image to create a trustworthy and loyal corporate image. In addition, this category can also affect the external marketing dimension by creating a profile that represents the company by considering the characteristics of the target audience with the aim of expanding the reach of communication and finding target candidates that fit the company's needs. From the internal marketing dimension, this category can be a means for employees to communicate the company's internal content to the public, and employees can even be ambassadors for the company in purpose of employer branding. With this category it is also possible for companies to get feedback from the audience regarding the various types of content shared. This can bring positive value for employer branding, allowing the evaluation for each content shared on social media

Social media platforms under the Blog category can also affect the three dimensions of employer branding, namely value proposition,

internal marketing, and also external marketing. Because social media platforms under this category have the flexibility to build longer and deeper stories, it allows employer branding to provide a picture or story in detail about the activities and values of the company. In addition, social media within the Blog category can also be used as a medium for sharing knowledge, in effort to better the company's image in the public.

Among the social media platforms that fall under this category, one example given by Boundouruk et al (2014) is Youtube. Through various video uploads, the company's employer branding can provide a clearer picture and narrative to promote the various activities carried out by the company, as well as promote the cultural values prevailing in the company

Methodology

This study applies the Post-positivism paradigm based on the main foundation of this paradigm in which it trusts the process of verifying the findings with various methods. Ontologically, Post-positivism is critical realism and assumes that reality does exist and is in accordance with natural law but it is impossible that reality can be seen fairly and correctly by researchers. Post-positivism emphasizes that there is no absolute truth in a reality so it must be proven by the process of verifying the findings of observations through various methods. In this paradigm, the relationship between researchers and objects must be interactive but neutral so that the level of subjectivity can be reduced (Creswell, 1996)

The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach, where the focus will be on data in the form of words rather than on the figures found in the process of data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2004). This study uses a qualitative approach because this approach is flexible, meaning the researcher can adjust the theories used according to the data from the field findings without having to remodel the research from scratch. Through this approach, researchers provide detailed descriptions of the topics discussed in accordance with the data obtained, which aligns with the normative objectives of the qualitative approach. The qualitative approach itself aims to increase understanding and insight regarding individual perceptions or experiences (Myers, 2009)

This study will implement the case study research strategy, where research will be conducted by means of intensive investigation of the phenomenon of employer brand formation through the communication of employee value propositions by conducting employer branding. This type of research usually combines methodological approaches and other theories. The purpose of research with case studies is to increase knowledge about real events in their contexts. Case study investigations enable researchers to gather a lot of detailed information through a broad dimension area of a case

Data collection techniques used in this study include both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data collection technique will be carried out by conducting in-depth interviews with the chosen informants. Researchers use the interview technique as a tool for collecting data in the hope that the researcher could explore more deeply about the topics discussed. This interview technique is also carried out so that the researcher can have the discretion to develop the questions completely and hence able to reconfirm the informants if they come across any unclear answers. The purpose of this interview is for the researcher to gain knowledge about the conditions that are of understanding by the informants according to the topic of the study. The secondary data collection technique will be carried out digitally as well as by directly observing the programs run by Bukalapak's employer branding team. The main purpose of secondary data collection is to supplement data that is not yet covered in primary data by using the subjectivity of the researcher in assessing the results of observations.

Data Type	Data Source	Data Collection Technique
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bukalapak's employer branding manager • Audience who has attended Bukalapak's employer branding programs 	In-depth interview
Secondary	Bukalapak's employer branding activities on social media	Digital observation, digital post archives, and other documents

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through the concept elaboration above, it can be seen that employer branding requires the communication of employee value propositions. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) explain that a company needs to develop an employee value proposition to be communicated both to external and internal parties. Some things to consider in formulating an employee value proposition include the company's work culture, management style, and current company conditions. The process of communicating employee value propositions to external parties needs to consider the characteristics and needs of the target audience, then these things need to be analyzed to find which media is suitable for use in conveying the desired message. Media in this case can be in the form of offline and online. In addition to being communicated to external parties, employee value propositions must also be internalized within the company. This is important because the employee value proposition is a company's promise to candidates, and a way to fulfill that is by internalizing it to existing employees. This needs to be done as an effort to validate promises that have been communicated to external parties.

Mosley (2014) explains that employee value proposition has several functions which include building brand image and company reputation, defining employment opportunities in a company, determining themes or values that will be communicated through employer branding, and forming employer brand experience. Bukalapak defines its employee value proposition into three main values namely game changer, innovation, and work environment. Through these values, Bukalapak's employer branding divides its communication channel into several programs and campaigns which are differentiated based on their respective target audience. This target audience is distinguished and adjusted to the company's needs of candidates to be recruited. In addition, to form a suitable corporate image, Bukalapak's employer branding internalizes the employee value proposition which is also adjusted to the audience. For example, for students or recent graduates, the internalized employee value proposition is focused more on the work environment, while for professionals, the

employee value proposition regarding innovation is more prominent than the other values.

Communication of Employee Value Proposition through Offline Activities

Based on the results of interviews conducted with three informants, at first it could be seen that there were differences in views among informants regarding perceptions of Bukalapak as a company. There were different perceptions of Bukalapak as a company engaged in the technology field between students and professionals. For audiences belonging to the professional category, they already understand that Bukalapak is a company engaged in technology. As for students, they are more likely to see Bukalapak as an e-commerce company because of the limitations of deeper knowledge of Bukalapak as a company. Students tend to look at Bukalapak from the business side only, which then shapes the students' perceptions.

The difference in perception was then captured by Bukalapak's employer branding who then formulated three employee value propositions, namely game changer, innovation, and work environment. These three employee value propositions become the main communication points for Bukalapak's employer branding towards the target audience through various offline campaigns and programs. The dimensions of think, feel, and do in the Brand Engagement model proposed by Mosley (2014) are important to be used as a guide for Bukalapak in measuring the success of the employee value proposition communication.

For the *think* dimension, Mosley (2014) explains that this dimension emphasizes understanding the context, clarity, and relevance of campaigns and programs that are run for the intended target audience. Bukalapak determines two main categories as their target audience, namely students and professionals. The two categories are then translated into campaigns and programs. Previously the informants have explained that each campaign and program communicates its own employee value proposition, but not all employee value propositions are part of all campaigns and programs, the values are adjusted back to the company's needs and to the target audience of each campaign and program.

For the *feel* element, the emotional side of the message delivery becomes an important thing that needs to be built. Some ways that can be done to produce a dramatic impression on a message include implementing new and creative ways of delivering messages. These methods can be used so that the audience experienced a different way of receiving a message hence creating an impression that is more easily remembered by the audience. Bukalapak's employee branding emphasizes the aspect of building direct experience with its audience through getting them to participate in the campaigns and programs rather than communicating directly the definition of the company's each employee value proposition. According to the informant, by directly feeling the values of the employee value proposition in certain campaigns and programs, this can be felt and remembered more deeply by the audience. Bukalapak's employee branding consciously allows each of its audiences to translate their own messages in every campaign and program. This was then felt by the other two informants who were participants in the program activities carried out by Bukalapak's employer branding.

The *do* dimension is the dimension that is formed when information conveyed through campaigns and programs can change the behavior of message recipients. In this case study, the *do* dimension can be translated into a number of behaviors such as the emergence of brand trust, the desire to continue to follow the campaigns and programs created, or eventually choosing the company as a place to work.

Based on information obtained from two other informants, as a student, they feels that Bukalapak provides a very comfortable work environment and is able to support her potential. Through the BukaMagang and BukaBeasiswa programs, they sees first-hand that Bukalapak employees can appropriately give her different treatment as a student. For another informant, they feels that the BukaMeetup program is one of the programs that aims to share knowledge with external parties of Bukalapak. Through this program, Bukalapak's external parties can better understand that innovation is a highlight for Bukalapak.

The methods utilized by Bukalapak's employer branding to internalize the company's employee value propositions through campaigns

and programs can provide maximum results when viewed from the perspective of the *do* dimension. In this dimension, the emotional attachment of the target audience can turn into a real action like one of informant who finally chose to join Bukalapak by considering the work environment as the main thing that drove her to join. In addition, the other informant said that the benefits gained from the BukaMeetup program will encourage her to keep attending the next BukaMeetup programs

Communication of Employee Value Proposition through Social Media

Referring to the various types of social media that exist today, there are three main types that are utilized by Bukalapak employer branding namely social networking sites, blogs, and community content. These three types of social media will have implications for value propositions, internal marketing, and external marketing. If seen from the uploads done by Bukalapak employer branding, the main focus of the communication content is more directed at the game changer and corporate work culture values of their employee value propositions. Various uploads that have been done also trigger comments from users of the social media platforms. This can be a good thing for it can build a two-way communication process. Bukalapak's employer branding team can also evaluate the content of each upload made based on the comments and other related factors.

In addition, by looking at and comparing uploads on Bukalapak's LinkedIn Page and the LinkedIn pages of other companies, it can be seen that Bukalapak emphasizes its communication with the power of stories. In each upload, Bukalapak provides complete information as well as the reasons or objectives of each activity of subject that is to be uploaded.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Employee value proposition (EVP) is the main value that must be possessed by employer branding. Through EVP, employer branding will be able to achieve the main goal of conveying each message to the targeted audience according to the company's specific needs. At Bukalapak,

the three employee value propositions to be formed are game changer, innovation, and a supportive work environment. These three values are then internalized through soft selling incorporated into the established campaigns and programs

From the results collected through this research, the strategies carried out by Bukalapak employer branding team in communicating their employee value propositions are implemented through campaigns and programs, which are derived into two different categories.

First, through various offline activities. The Bukalapak employer branding offline programs are divided into two distinct focus target audiences: new graduates and professionals. Each target audience has their own derivative campaigns and programs. For new graduates, Bukalapak's employer branding created the #BukaPotential campaigns with programs such as BukaMagang, BukaBeasiswa, BukaFigur, BukalapakkeKampus, and BukaRiset. These programs are adapted to the needs of new graduates who are still unfamiliar with working environments. Based on this consideration, the programs are made to emphasize more on the employee value proposition of work environment in Bukalapak. As for the target audience in the professional category, Bukalapak's employer branding creates #BukaMeetup campaigns and programs which include seminars and talk shows with more technical topics in the scope of technology. This program is created with the aim of introducing innovations owned by Bukalapak.

Second, Bukalapak communicates their employee value propositions through social media platforms. To fulfill the needs of its increasingly flexible target audience, Bukalapak's employer branding team utilizes social media to convey employer branding messages to a larger audience. The use of LinkedIn and Blogs through the Medium.com site are considered the most appropriate use of social media based on the needs of Bukalapak's employer branding. The selection of the two social media platforms is not only done based on the needs of the target audience, but also considered based on the content that is to be disseminated.

Some of the recommendations that can be given from the analyses of this research are in terms of program and campaign evaluation. This research is limited to narratives that are useful for

understanding how the communication process and strategy are carried out by Bukalapak's employer branding to convey their employee value propositions. Thus, other researches can continue on analyzing the results or evaluation of the communication that has been carried out, on its effectiveness in building a strong employer brand by conducting quantitative researches.

In addition, this research can be used as a reference to develop other researches on employer branding in various companies. Although there has been a growing development of employer branding practices in Indonesia, academic research in the area of employer branding is still lacking, hence there is still plenty of room to improve this research in the future

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