

**THE IMPACT OF USER GENERATED EVALUATION ON THE
PURCHASING INTENTION OF MILLENNIALS IN VIETNAM -
A CASE STUDY OF FOODY**

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ABSTRACT

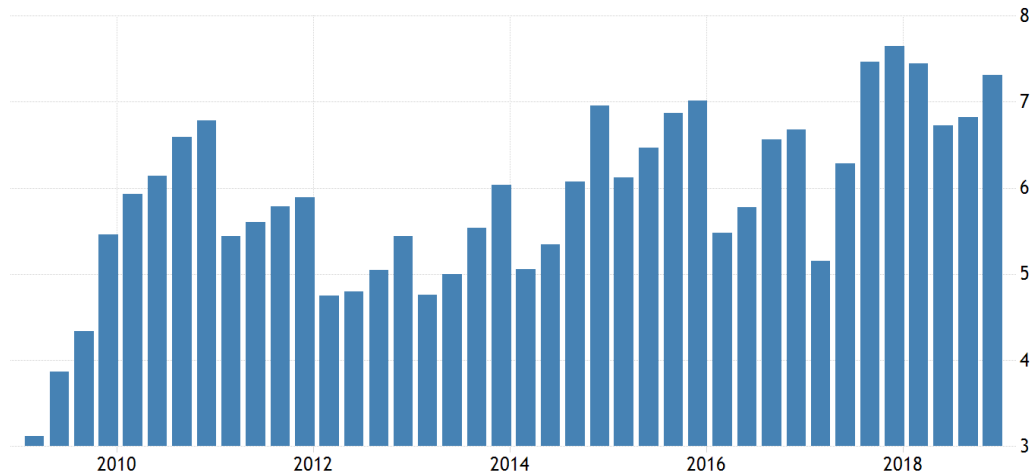
With the growth of e-commerce, online consumer evaluation has increasingly become integral sources of information, especially with business websites that help consumers in their purchase intention. However, almost the stream of online user-generated reviews have caused information overload, making consumers confused to choose reliable source. For an online retail market to succeed, it is important to lead product reviewers to be reliable, relevant, understandable, and for consumers to get helpful reviews more easily by figuring out the factors determining the helpfulness of them. For this research, selected data were collected from people have been used Foody.vn – the largest food sites in Vietnam. Our studies mainly focus on these principal elements: Information consistency, evaluation content, evaluation rating, evaluation trustworthiness which results in the influence on the value of online user assessment. Our findings provide new perspectives to online market owners on how to manage online reviews on their Web sites. Quantitative research will be the main methodology applied in this study with the sample size accounted at 312 processing in Explanatory Factors Analysis and deeply exploiting by Structural Equation Modeling method. The outcomes highlight the significant initial effect of independent dimensions information consistency, evaluation content, evaluation rating, evaluation trustworthiness, and evaluation value toward consumer awareness as well as towards purchasing intention of millennials in Vietnam, specifically in Ho Chi Minh City. According, there are several recommendations suggested to solve problems for Foody individually and Food services in Vietnam in general speaking.

Keywords: Information consistency, evaluation content, evaluation rating, evaluation trustworthiness, consumer awareness, purchase intention

1.1 Research background

In Macro view, the economy has been developing rapidly which was best expressed through the annual growth rate of GDP. In particular, during the period of 8 years, in 2018, the growth of

GDP exceeded 7% for the first time while the inflation rate was only 3.54%, lower than the target assigned by the National Assembly of 4%. This advancement was fostered by the development of several sectors, including: services (7.61%), manufacturing and structure (8.65%), cultivation, afforestation and fisheries (3.9%).



Source: tradingeconomics.com and General Statistics Office of Vietnam

Figure 1: Vietnam GDP Annual Growth Rate over 8 years recently

Following the trend of economical growth in Vietnam, Food Service Industry is also having a remarkable evolution. Specifically, according to a survey conducted by Asia-Pacific Ogilvy & Mather, the group specializing in advertising and marketing, Vietnam is an attractive market for investors in the food service sector as this is a populous country and people spend more time eating habit outside than other nations in the same region. One of the noticeable points observed from the survey is that catering businesses are not only interested in service quality but also promoting marketing activities, especially building online marketing models. There has been more than 2,000 food stores showing information on the Internet in Ho Chi Minh City.

Nowadays, with the rapid development of 4.0 Technology Era, Internet has been becoming the leading source of information to consumers. Accordingly, there have been several “upgraded” online websites, especially business websites that not only provide information but also create open-space for consumers to read and leave evaluation or express their opinions about goods and services they are interested in (Armstrong and Hagel 1996; Bailey 2004; Boush and Kahle 2001; Chatterjee 2001; O’Leary 2002; Perry 2000). In reality, before coming to the final purchase decision with a certain product/service, people often surf and make comparison between hundreds of evaluation from other consumers. Consequently, many people believe that community content

or user-generated evaluation on these pages make a remarkable contribution into stimulating customer buying behavior.

Being founded in mid-2012 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Foody has been no longer a food social network, but being formed as the general system for the food management with 4 main services, included Foody.vn, Tablenow.vn, Deliverynow.vn and FoodyPOS.vn. Currently, there are about 200 restaurants as well as partners of Foody in Vietnam who are acknowledged as appeals to 8 million visitors a day on this “ecosystem” page.

Foody connects consumers to various dining venues throughout the country and allows people to search, evaluate, and leave comments on eating areas, such as: “restaurants”, food stores, cafeteria,... in Vietnam - from webpage or portable application. Obviously, the user community plays an important role in the success of Foody. They are both potential customers and good friends willing to share personal experiences through useful evaluation.

1.2 Problem Statement

As there are many types of reviewers, they give diversified evaluation style. The reviews could be written out by both subjective and objective emotions. Therefore, creating positive and negative reviews that affects customers’ buying decisions is an unavoidable result. On the other hand, since Foody has little control over the content of the consumer-created information, the readers will find it difficult to ensure the accuracy of the reviews that may confuse their purchasing intentions.

Previously, when merely a social network, Foody.vn only competed with some pages, such as: diadiemanuong, lozi. Up to the present time, as an ecosystem for the food industry, the number of competitors of Foody increased considerably, in which vietnammm, Offpeak are the 2 most outstanding names. Therefore, even if user reviews are provided, competitors can take advantage of them which means that they utilize the information provided on Foody to inform purchases made in theirs. That’s the reason why there are many arguments about making investments in providing such content could be a poor strategy.

1.3 Research Question

The objective of this paper is to learn about reviewer characteristics and their essential influence as a supplement of word-of-mouth approach. In order to complete this mission, it is required to answer 3 key following questions:

- What are the factors of online user’s evaluation on Foody affect on the purchasing intention of Millennials in Vietnam?

- How does each factor of online evaluation on Foody affect on the purchasing intention of Millennials in Vietnam?
- What are the aspects of online evaluation on Foody need to be improved to bring about a positive impact on purchase intention?
- How does Evaluation Value affect on the Consumer Awareness?
- How does Consumer Awareness affect on purchasing intention of millennials in Viet Nam?

1.4 Research Objectives

To figure out the main point in the thesis topic, the objective of the research will consist of:

- To revise assumption, previous journals in order to create an appropriate conceptual model for the research.
 - To determine the factors of user-generated evaluation and analyze the level of their effect towards the purchasing intention of Millennials in Vietnam.
 - To give useful approachment and recommendation in solution for enhancing online review value to satisfy consumers.
- Concepts
 - General Concepts

Information Consistency

The correlation between evaluation information and evaluation helpfulness was originated from “Mudambi” and “Schuff” study. However, the main central point of this research is not only discussing this issue; but, analyzing one of the prominent factors in an evaluation helpfulness is the consistency of the information with existing reviews for a certain product. Zhang and Watts stated that information consistency, or the dimension to whether the current message is consistent with the previous understanding of the member or not, delivers a noticeable influence on knowledge “adoption” in the whole user community of a webpage.

Evaluation Content

As Bailey and Pearson pointed out in their work that the quality of online consumer evaluation content are mainly based on the relevance, authenticity, “comprehensibility, and “sufficiency” factors. “Relevance” refers to the compatibility standard between the information that the consumer requires and the information provided in the evaluation. Authenticity is estimated dependent on the interaction the review gains from users and consumers (McKinney, Yoon & Zahedi, 2002). Comprehensibility highlights the degree of understandability

in the evaluation. Finally, sufficiency”refers to the“level”of“detail. “High-quality”online evaluation are “persuasive when the information is relevant to evaluate the product and contains“comprehensive,“reliable withsufficient”reasoning. In contrast, low-quality evaluation are“irrelevant,“unreliable, and difficult to understand with“insufficient”reasoning (Petty, 1984).

Evaluation Rating

Evaluation ratingprovided by previous users could influence other consumers' perception of product quality (Wenjiing, Bin& Andrew, 2008). Duan et al. took an exapmle of CNET to illustrate this understanding that about 22% of users on this page sort products by user ratings. In addition, prior research also suggests that review ratings have a positive impact towards consumers' perception. To measure the persuasive effect of online user reviews, we consider rating as part of the measurement of word-of-mouth. Besides influencing a user's perception of product quality, user-generated reviews also increase product awareness among consumers. The awareness effect is most significant when user evaluationcontributed topromote for a previously unaware product bybroadcasting widely to online communities.

Evaluation Trustworthiness

In the early study on consumer trust, Jarvenpaa et al. (2000) found that reviews' trustworthiness in an Internet store affects consumers' attitude and perceived risk, which, in turn, influences their willingness to buy. According to the Bright Local Consumer Survey 2016, 84% of people trust online user-generated review as much as a personal recommendation and 90% from their opinion about a business by reading less than 10 reviews. This stresses the importance of evaluation trustworthiness in the context of online evaluation, since trust of a review's recommendation can lead a customer towards buying decision or not.

Evaluation Value

The user-generated evaluation value chain“encompasses”sourcing, planning, production, distribution, and consumption processes, which involve the participation of users (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery 2007; Feijoo et al. 2009). If previous consumers are provided with more specific knowledge regarding user-ganerated evaluation value structures, they will enjoy more valuable opportunities, allowing them to share their time and knowledge freely with others (Nov 2007; Jensen et al. 2009). However, the value of user-generated evaluation will not rest on the sheer volume of content but rather on the quality of the content generated (Stoeckl et al. 2007; Ye et al. 2012).

Consumer Awareness

According to Mohd Rafi Yaacob and Azman Zakaria, awareness consists of a human's perception and cognitive reaction to a significant situation or event. Awareness does not only necessarily imply “understanding”, but also an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive. One of the expected goals of user-generated evaluation is to establish awareness of a product in the minds of consumers and with the purpose of becoming the top of mind of the consumers (Azaria et al, 2014). The higher the consumer awareness to an online assessment or product, the higher possibility of purchasing intention.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention plays the most “important” role in determining the value of an online evaluation (Chen, 1999; Wu, 2006). Purchase intention measures the “possibility” of a customer to buy the product, and the higher the purchase intention is, the higher a consumer is willing to buy a product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). Moreover, “purchase intention” is “remarkably linked to “recommendations” and “brand’s” value that consumers have shared” on “social” “media” channels (Dehghani” and “Tumer, 2015). Therefore, evaluation from online user has to be considered positive towards consumers to be “successful” at its “ultimate” goal.

2.1 Conceptual Model

Conceptual framework is believed to play an important role in Thesis study. Additionally, based on various experimental researches, the model would be adjusted to be suitable with Vietnam context, such as the following model:

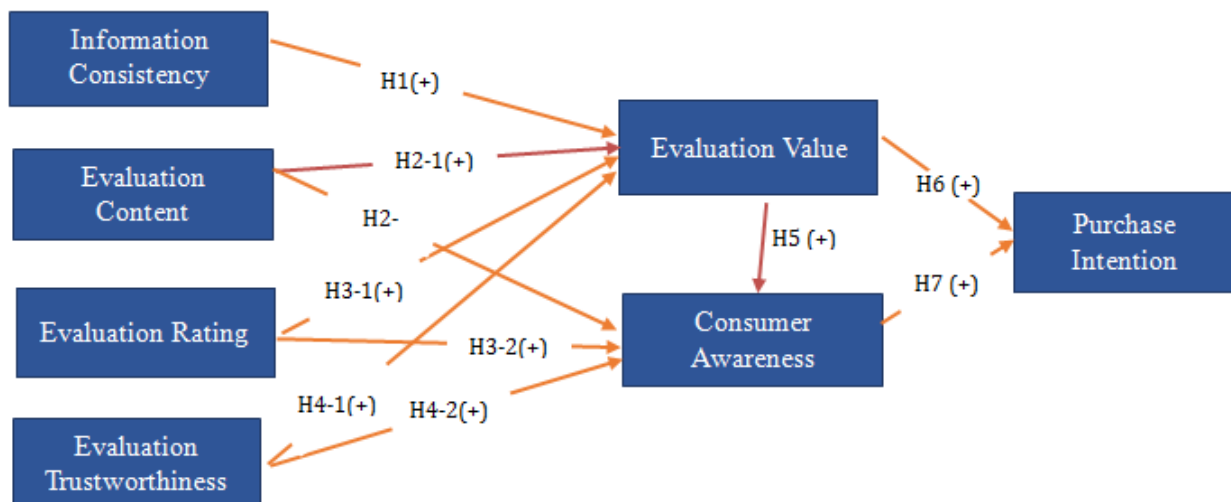


Table 1: Conceptual Model

- Hypothesis 1:** *Information consistency in online website is positively associated with the evaluation value.*
- Hypothesis 2-1:** *Evaluation content in online website is positively associated with the evaluation value*
- Hypothesis 2-2:** *Evaluation content in online website is positively associated with the consumer awareness.*
- Hypothesis 3-1:** *High evaluation rating in online website is positively associated with the evaluation value.*
- Hypothesis 3-2:** *High evaluation rating in online website is associated with the consumer awareness.*
- Hypothesis 4-1:** *Evaluation trustworthiness in online website is associated with the evaluation value.*
- Hypothesis 4-2:** *Evaluation trustworthiness in online website is associated with the consumer awareness.*
- Hypothesis 5:** *Evaluation value in online website is positively associated with the consumer awareness.*
- Hypothesis 6:** *Evaluation value in online review website is positively associated with the purchase intention.*
- Hypothesis 7:** *High consumer awareness in online review website is positively associated with the purchase intention*

3.1 Methods of Data Processing

Descriptive statistics will be applied as the basic statistic method based on collected primary data. Go further with the analysis, by running AMOS/SPSS with CFA/SEM, it demonstrates the result from data inputting. Besides, this study continues with the processes of evaluating the reliability (over time), across items (internal consistency), across different researchers (inter-rater reliability) based on Cronbach's alpha (SPSS) or CR coefficient (AMOS) and validity (convergent validity and discriminant validity) based on EFA (SPSS) or CFA (AMOS) of the research.

3.2 Measurement Scale

Variable	Code	Item	Reference
Information Consistency	ICS1	User-generated evaluations on Foody are consistent with each other	Mudambi and Schuff (2010)
	ICS2	The basic information such as: opening time, closing time, vouchers,... are informed correctly and consistent with each other	
	ICS3	The user-generated evaluations on Foody are clear and closely linked with each other	
	ICS4	Information provided by users helps consumers understand clearly about the restaurant/food stores/ cafés on Foody	
Evaluation Content	ECN1	I take more notice to long user-generated evaluation	
	ECN2	Evaluation with coherent system helps me better understand the products or services I am interested in	
	ECN3	Evaluation with image attached often provides a better overview for the consumers	
	ECN4	A detailed user-generated evaluation gets more attraction from the consumers	
Evaluation Rating	ERA1	I usually depend on the rating level to check the credibility of the evaluation	Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006)
	ERA2	High-rating evaluation gets high recognition from consumers	
	ERA3	High-rating evaluation gets more reaction from consumer community	
	ERA4	High-rating evaluation is recognized	

		as helpful analyzing method	
Evaluation Trustworthiness	EVT1	The user-generated evaluation is trustworthy	Fileri (2016)
	EVT2	I believe that the community of users is trustworthy	
	EVT3	I definitely believe all the evaluation provided by user	
	EVT4	I believe that user delivers exactly what they experience	
Evaluation Value	EVA1	I trust more in the user-generated evaluation than the information provided by the providers	Papathanassis & Knolle (2011)
	EVA2	The interaction between users on Foody will add more value to the evaluation.	
	EVA3	User-generated evaluation helps me become more confident in making decision making	
	EVA4	User-generated evaluation satisfies my needs	
Consumer Awareness	CAW1	I take notice every evaluation from previous user before making purchase decision	Mohd and Azman (2012)
	CAW2	I am attracted to the detailed user-generated evaluation on Foody	
	CAW3	I find it interesting to read user-generated evaluation on Foody	
	CAW4	I find it easy to use the function of user-generated evaluation on Foody	
	PIN1	I want to try the goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody	Hong and Cho(2011),

Purchase Intention	PIN2	I would become interest in buying goods or services of the food stores/restaurants/ cafés reviewed on Foody	Wu et al.(2011)
	PIN3	I would consider purchasing goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody	
	PIN4	I would introduce my family and my friends to purchase goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody	

Table 2: Measurement Scale

4.1.1 Demographic Analysis:

Evaluation	Criteria	Frequency	Proportion
Gender	Male	78	26%
	Female	222	74%
Age	18-25	193	64%
	26-35	81	27%
	36-45	26	9%
	Over 45	0	0
Education Level	High School	17	6%
	College	42	14%
	University	178	59%
	Go to work	63	21%
Income Level	Below 3 million	136	45%
	3-5 million	79	26%
	5-10 million	53	18%

	Over 10 million	32	11%
Frequency of using Foody last month	Once a month	52	17%
	2-3 times/month	106	35%
	4-6 times/month	84	28%
	7-10 times/month	29	10%
	>10 times/month	18	6%
	No use	11	4%

Table 3: Demographic Analysis

Corrected Item-to-Total Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha

No.	Item	Initial Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Items – Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha If Item Deleted
Information Consistency of the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	ICS1: "User-generated evaluations on Foody are consistent with each other"	0.859	0.736	0.807
2	ICS2: "The basic information such as: open time, closing time, vouchers,... are informed correctly and consistent with each other"		0.670	0.834
3	ICS3: "The user-generated evaluations on Foody are clear and linked with each other"		0.698	0.823

4	ICS4: "Information provided by users helps consumers understand clearly about the restaurant/food stores/ cafés on Foody"		0.714	0.817
Content of the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	ECN1: "I take more notice to long user-generated evaluation"	0.797	0.625	0.739
2	ECN2: "Evaluation with coherent system helps me better understand the products or services I am interested in"		0.604	0.749
3	ECN3: "Evaluation with image attached often provides a better overview for the consumers"		0.616	0.743
4	ECN4: "A detailed user-generated evaluation gets more attraction from the consumers"		0.590	0.756
Rating of the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	ERA1: "I usually depend on the rating level to check the credibility of the evaluation"	0.722	0.546	0.639
2	ERA2: "High-rating evaluation gets high recognition from consumers"		0.521	0.654
3	ERA3: "High-rating evaluation gets more reaction from consumer community"		0.453	0.694
4	ERA4: "High-rating evaluation is recognized as helpful"		0.522	0.654

	analyzing method”			
Trustworthiness of the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	EVT1: “The user-generated evaluation is trustworthy”	0.764	0.576	0.702
2	EVT2 “I believe that the community of users is trustworthy”		0.553	0.714
3	EVT3: “I definitely believe all the evaluation provided by user”		0.567	0.707
4	EVT4 I “believe that user delivers exactly what they experience”		0.559	0.711
Value of the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	EVA1: “I trust more in the user-generated evaluation than the information provided by the providers”	0.787	0.559	0.753
2	EVA2: “The interaction between users on Foody will add more value to the evaluation”		0.620	0.722
3	EVA3: “User-generated evaluation helps me become more confident in making decision”		0.576	0.744
4	EVA4: “User-generated evaluation satisfies my needs”		0.624	0.720
Consumer Awareness towards the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	CAT1: “I take notice every			

	evaluation from previous user before making purchase decision”	0.890	0.762	0.857
2	CAT2: “I am attracted to the detailed user-generated evaluation on Foody”		0.721	0.873
3	CAT3: “I find it interesting to read user-generated evaluation on Foody”		0.803	0.841
4	CAT4: “I find it easy to use the function of user-generated evaluation on Foody”		0.753	0.860
Purchase Intention towards the User-Generated Evaluation				
1	PIN1: “I want to try the goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody”	0.815	0.615	0.776
2	PIN2: “I would become interest in buying goods or services of the food stores/ restaurants/ cafés reviewed on Foody”		0.656	0.757
3	PIN3: “I would consider purchasing goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody” ^{4.763.59}		0.663	0.755
4	PIN4: “I will introduce my family and my friends to purchase goods or services of the restaurants/ food stores/ cafés reviewed on Foody”		0.605	0.782

As can be seen from the table, the highest to the lowest point of Cronbach's Alpha are arranged in the order of: Consumer Awareness, Information Consistency, Purchase Intention, Evaluation Content, Evaluation Value, Evaluation Trustworthiness, and Evaluation Rating with the levels 0.890, 0.859, 0.815, 0.797, 0.787, 0.764, and 0.722 respectively. Generally, the Cronbach's Alpha of all items are higher than 0.7 and the corrected items – total correlation of all items in 7 variables have the lowest point at 0.453; therefore, there is no need to remove any items to enhance the reliability and consistence of the research. The strongly connections between measurement scale (item) also mentioned as the result of the highly Cronbach's Alpha.

5.1 Conclusions and recommendation

The purpose of this research is to find out which online user-generated evaluation factors affect purchasing intention of millennials in Vietnam by analyzing online consumers using Foody.vn. Our findings bring important extensions to previous research on the relationships between online evaluation factors and attitudes of users towards them.

Firstly, consumers nowadays tend to take more notice on the rating that previous users estimated for a cafe/food store/restaurant in their evaluation. The higher rating level, the higher awareness these evaluation will get from consumers. In other words, the cafe/food store/restaurant included in this review will also be in a higher recognition. Additionally, we also found that review rating and review content are not always consistent with each other. The evidence for this decision was that, comparing to the highest rating of 10, in some cases, lower-rated reviews contain longer and more detailed message.

Secondly, our results indicate that people feel that online assessment are most helpful when all information provided by users in the assessment alike with each other; when assessment achieves high-ranked rating, when assessment is recognized to bring out useful value to consumers' perception of locations they are searching for.

Thirdly, based on the positive correlations illustrated in the final hypothesis testing table, it can be concluded that Evaluation Value, included evaluation arrangement and interaction between users takes the most vital participants in building an effective evaluation structure. In other hands, the more eye-catching design and the more cooperation between members the page has, the higher attention it will get from consumers.

In terms of recommendation concluding from this study, it may eventually help online market owners recognize what factors contribute to create a helpful user-generated evaluation as well as the impact of these elements towards the purchasing intention of millennials in Vietnam context. Moreover, by using the findings of the research, online market managers would think out solutions in controlling evaluation system more effectively; and designers can find out ways for

decorating their Web sites to expose helpful reviews more easily-looking and lessen unnecessary information to avoid confusion for consumers. In terms of competing with other rivals, uniqueness and trustworthiness are two other components Food managers should take more notice of.

5.2 Research Limitations

This research exists several limitations. The first as well as the main drawback is that the sample data were collected from reviews generated by users on Foody, whether the findings of our research can be used to generalize online reviews from other online markets is not yet confirmed. Further research should analyze actual review data from other online retail markets.

Moreover, because evaluation helpfulness is measured only by those who vote on whether the review is helpful or not, there is uncertainty on whether the findings can be generalized for those who do not vote (Mudambi and Schuff). To solve this limitation, we need to expand our survey to answer the research questions.

The scope of the research is acknowledged as the last limitation as it mainly focused on generation Y in terms of sample size and places around Ho Chi Minh city in terms of sample location. In order to diversify the research results, future research should expand the sample in other generations living in other cities in Vietnam such as Hanoi or Da Nang city.

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