

Digital Marketing in Indian Car Market: Is Demographic Dividend Paying off?

Rekha, Dr. Aparna Mishra
PhD Scholar, UTU Dehradun,
Assistant Professor, Marketing,
BCIPS, Dwarka, Delhi
rekhadahiya@gmail.com,
aparna46@gmail.com

Abstract

Digital technologies have redefined the marketing communication parlance with its unique capabilities. Digital marketing has affected each and every industry irrespective of its nature, size, type and category. Hence Indian Car market is no exception in which digital 'Midas' touch is affecting both the customers and marketers. India is a young country as compared to its Asian and Western counterparts. The young population of India offers competitive advantage to India in terms of productive and young workforce; known as Demographic Dividend. The present study dealt with investigating the relationship if any between the 'demographic dividend' that India has with digital marketing in Indian Car market. Study made use of primary data collected from 801 respondents using area wise proportionate cluster sampling technique. Data was analysed with the help of SPSS 18.0 version and chi-square was used as test of significance to test the hypothesis.

Keywords: Digital Marketing Communication, Digital Technology, Indian Car Market, Demographic Dividend, Chi-square.

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1.1 Introduction

Philip Kotler defines objective of marketing as creation and satisfaction of demand with customer satisfaction (Kotler et. all, 2009). Marketing has been there for more than a century (Ellis et. all, 2012) as Bartels (1988) suggested the use of term as early as in the year 1906. Brussiére (2000) found that people were writing about marketing even in 1897. Marketing as a business philosophy gained momentum during 1950s (Kotler et. all, 2009). More than over a century old discipline irrespective of time line; has made customers aware about the products using various communication channels and generated demands with the objective of creating satisfactory customer relationships (Keelson, 2012). Traditionally marketers used variety of communication channels having outbound focus like print, TV and radio advertisements, posters and banners, events, personal selling, word of mouth etc. to reach their target customers (Kaufman and Horton, 2014). These traditional channels became less effective due to customers' frustration with similar promotional messages, lack of

participation from consumers' end and adoption and proliferation of new age innovative digital technologies especially internet having inbound focus (Koekemoer and Bird, 2004, Dalziel, 2013). Digital technologies can be attributed for creation and satisfaction of customers' demand in innovative ways (Ryan, 2014). New age digital technologies are creating win-win situation both for the marketers and customers (Dhar, 2008).

Digital technologies especially the internet has revolutionized the every facet of business namely the product development, profitability, brand management, customer relationship management, buying and selling and communication etc. Technology usage has not only reduced the various business costs but has also offered competitive advantage for numerous organizations (Edelman and Heller, 2015). Companies have been able to leverage the power of digital technologies to obtain accurate customers' input that has led to improvement in overall product development capabilities of the firm. Digital mediums provide a broad platform to acquire new customers and engaging with them meaningfully that helps spreading awareness about brands, building brand image and positioning the brand in target customers' mind. Customers can be targeted profitably due to resultant accurate customer profiling over digital mediums. Better customer relations can be maintained with the help of latest technological tools which unravel the specific needs of the customers to the marketers. The vital information about target customers leads to valued customer engagement and augmented customer experience. Marketers are using digital technologies for competitive advantage as they are increasingly using digital technology for engagements and customers' acquisition (Kinomoto, 2014).

Digital technologies have had the most significant impact on business communication process. These technologies have redefined the marketing communication parlance with its unique capabilities viz. interactivity, measurability, customer engagement, customization, accessibility and managing large informative sources (Edelman and Heller, 2015). Marketers are resorting to digital marketing communication as it allows marketers to deliver real-time, personalized services and content, and deal with one consumer at a time (Alexa, et. all, 1996). Marketers have found novel ways to connect and engage with its customers with the help of digital technologies. Over the last decade marketers have exploited the potential of websites, e-mail, search engines, mobile phones and other digital applications and products to their advantage for communicating effectively with its target audience. Marketers are directing their marketing efforts on increasingly expanding range of digital devices and platforms. Adoption of digital technology can be attributed to the ability to deliver value to both customers and marketers apart from access and connectivity. Use of interactive media to deliver real time, personalized services and content to individual customer is at the center of digital marketing campaigns (Kierzkowski, et. al, 1996). Digital technologies due to their capability to leverage the interactive nature affect the future development of an organization. Addressable nature of digital technologies which deals with identifying and targeting individual customer; makes digital mediums as the most preferred channels of modern time. Digital technologies facilitate two way communications which paves the path for valued customer relationship at lower cost. Marketers can also use digital technologies as new

distribution channel also. People find commercial side of internet marketing i.e. e-commerce convenient and easy to use (Hooda and Aggarwal, 2012).

1.2 Digital Marketing: The Concept

Term digital can be defined as a data transmission technology which is finite and non-variable in nature (Kaufman and Horton, 2014). Digital is expressed in contrast to analog which is a continuous data transmission technology. A marketing action becomes digital if relies over a digital medium to execute a marketing function (Yasmeen et.al, 2015). Sreedhran (2015) defines digital marketing as promotion of products and services via one or more form of digital or electronic media. Techopedia defines digital marketing as disposition of various promotional techniques to reach customers via digital technologies. Bird (2007) defines digital marketing as a communication activity conducted over mediums using digital transmission that establishes a direct relationship between a company and its customers or prospects as an individual. Internet and mobile phones are the most powerful digital mediums. Strauss et al. (2009) define digital marketing as a process of marketing a brand over digital channels.

Digital marketing communication refers to the targeted, interactive and measurable communication about goods and services with target audience made over digital mediums (Merisavo, 2008). The term medium used here refers to the channel, instrument, manner, device and applications which function using digital codes (Ferrell and Hartline, 2012). Digital mediums include internet, mobile phones, applications, digital TV, digital outdoors, e-mails, YouTube, social networking sites etc. Digital media also extends itself to the channels that don't make use of internet like SMS, MMS, Call back and on-hold mobile ringtones, games, e-books etc. Moreover convergence of multi-device world and emergence of wearable technology and augmented reality are pushing the boundaries of digital marketing beyond internet (Yasmeen et. al, 2015, Merisavo, 2008).

Digital marketing communication has an edge over traditional communication as it can facilitate information exchange which is interactive, quick, personal and cost effective. Interactivity in digital marketing communications deals with the participation between the audience and an entity. (Edelman and Heller, 2015). Traditional channels also exhibited interactivity in the form of making phone calls, in-person visits and postal mails to the customers. New age digital channels have expanded the platforms for interactivity and augmented the experience of marketers-customers interactions. Now it has been relatively much easier for the marketers to cater individual customers as digital channels permit one to one communication with its target audience (Kaufman and Horton, 2014). Moreover target audience has access to updated content as marketer can refresh the vital information time to time (Wind and Mahajan, 2002). Bird (2007) also emphasized upon the capability of digital channels to establish a direct relationship between the marketer and its customers whereby marketer considered its prospect as an individual customer rather than seeing him or her being a constituent of mass market. He further asserted that marketers can identify when their customers are online with myriad digital technological tools. Marketer can exploit the opportunity by talking to them, knowing their preferences, responding to their inquiries if any etc. Marketers can also test, act, learn and improve their marketing plans in the due-course.

Customers often associate digital with a set of marketing channels operating over digital technologies. However the term digital goes beyond select marketing channels and incorporate a different way of thinking and behaviour that determines how customers engage with media, one-another and world around them. Digital is that participatory layer of media that helps customers to design and select their own experiences and convert traditional passive customers in to prosumers who are also the editor, creator, publisher and commentators along with the consumers of goods and services.

Digital stats of India are impressive. Growing internet users' base, increased possession of digital devices, falling prices of digital devices and data plans, increased connectivity, improved internet compatibility of various digital devices; are leading the digital revolution in India which have not only put the digital industry in the fastest growing business league; but are also impacting the consumer behaviour. Indian internet user base reached 40 crores in December, 2015 (Sharma, 2015). India now stands at number two just after China in terms of number of internet users. The rate at which new internet users are adding to the existing pool is also the fastest for India. Mobile subscription in India crossed 1 billion mark in 2016 (Jain, 2015). Affordable devices and reduced call tariffs have accounted for increased mobile subscriber. There were 64 crores mobile phone users in year 2015 (Statista, 2016); which is further expected to rise to 90 crores by 2019 (Cisco, 2015). There were 14 crores smartphones in year 2014 which rose to 16 crores in year 2015 (Cisco, 2015 & Statista, 2016). Gartner India (2016) predicts a big chunk of mobile subscriber converting into smartphone users in near future. This number is further expected to reach 20 crores by the end of 2016 (eMarketer, 2015). People are accessing internet from mobile phones and this number stood at 30 crores in 2015 (IAMAI, 2015). Mobile applications are getting popular among people. A study conducted by 9Apps Company states that an average user in India installs 32 apps in his/her mobile (Elets News Network, 2015). The report further states that people prefer offline playbacks rather than online streaming. Games like car racing and action; constitute 17% of daily total apps downloads. Social Networking Sites in India are very popular among urban and rural users. There were around 6.3 crores social networking sites users in 2012 which rose to 12 crores by 2014 (Statista, 2016). The number further increased to 14.3 crores by 2015. There were 11.8 crores urban users whereas 2.5 crores users were from rural area (IAMAI, 2015). Statista (2016) predicts the number of social media users in India to be around 22.4 crores by 2018. Facebook is the most popular social networking site in India having 13.8 crores Facebook users (Malviya, 2016). The number is further expected to be around 21 crores by 2018 (Statista, 2016). India is the second largest market for Facebook after USA. Digital revolution in India is not limited to metropolitan cities or urban areas; but tier-II and tier III cities are also showing the increased demand for e-commerce. Highest demand for e-tailers has been observed from 4,000-5,000 Tier II and tier III towns and cities in India which accounts for about 50% of revenue for the most e-tailers.

1.3 Digital Marketing in Indian Car Market

Digital marketing has affected each and every industry irrespective of its nature, size, type and category. Hence Indian Car market is no exception in which digital 'Midas' touch is affecting both the customers and marketers. Marketers are using all digital channels to

connect with their target and potential customers and increasing their digital spend year by year. Digital marketing by car companies includes the utilization of digital channels that includes leveraging the power of social media, behaviourally targeted advertising, search engines, lead generation including micro sites, landing pages and other tactics that involve other digital channels. Indian passenger car market leader Maruti Suzuki is very active across all the digital platforms. The company is engaged in activities like building the website, organizing campaigns, online reputation management, search engine optimization, search engine marketing, building and nurturing customers trust online etc. Company started experimenting with digital platforms as early as 2009 when it launched SX4 through a virtual test drive. Later on in 2011, new swift was also launched over digital platform rather than going through the traditional route (afaqs, 2013).

Ford India keeps 15-20% of their total ads spend for digital front (exchange4media, 2015). Ford normally creates a digital contest for its customers who not only review the car but also upload their videos online. Another market player, Mahindra and Mahindra (M&M) took the advantage of digital media in designing its pricing strategy whereby it ran innovative 'Guess the Price' contest ten days before the launch of its XUV 500. The innovative campaign saw an overwhelming response whereby it received 1.15 lakh entries (Anand and Chaudhari, 2012).

Volkswagen India has been a really active player on digital front right from its launch in India in 2007. Volkswagen harnessed the power of digital medium in generating awareness for the brand with the help of display ads (Gupta, 2015). In 2011, the brand took another creative digital initiative "Planet Volkswagen" that informed target group not only about the products of the company but also the ideas, philosophies and values that brand cherished (afaqs, 2011). The portal showcased five digital properties namely Think Blue, Text Drive, Volkswagen Play, Volkswagen Corporate and Volkswagen Junior. Volkswagen also launched social media campaign called "#AnythingforJetta" campaign in 2011 (Gupta, 2015). The company also introduced its LinkedIn page where Volkswagen brand lovers could give their recommendations (Digital Vidya, 2014).

Consumers are also getting accustomed to digital channels during their purchase journey. They are trusting on manufacturers' sites for getting information about vital information about cars. They are also visiting the specific car comparison sites like Carwale.com, cardekho.com etc. Customers are giving due weightage to the expert's opinion and other customers' recommendations and reviews. Consensus recommendations are overpowering the marketers' well planned strategies. Customers are subscribing to their favorite car brand's newsletters and blogs. They are also sharing among each other any exciting car content they come across. They are following their company online and joining their communities and forums too. Customers also don't mind venting off their satisfaction and dissatisfaction through digital channels.

1.4 Demographic Dividend of India

India is a young country as compared to its Asian and Western counterparts. Census 2011 and the Planning Commission of India (in 12th Plan discussions) indicated that India has the youngest population in the world with a median age of 24 years. The young population of

India offers such competitive advantage to India in terms of productive and young workforce; that no other country in the world has and the resultant benefit is known as Demographic Dividend. Demographic dividend ensures the high proportion of young working people which leads to increased productivity and growth of economy. Census 2011 data showed that about 65% of people in India are below the age of 35 years. Dependency ratio which shows the number of people who are in the age brackets of 0-14 years and 65-100 years and are dependent upon the working person in the age bracket of 15-64 years; has also shrunk to 0.55. Average age in India by 2020 is further estimated to be around 29 years as against the 47 years in Japan, 46 years in Europe, 40 years in the USA and China. It is further estimated that after 20 years; the productive labour force will increase by 32% in India whereas the story would be different for the rest of the world whereby the productive labour force would decline by 4%, in the major industrialised economies (Tharoor, 2014).

The present study dealt with investigating the relationship if any between the 'demographic dividend' that India has with digital marketing in Indian Car market. In other words, study aimed to see the relationship between age and occupation with the usage of digital channels while buying a car.

2.1 Research Methodology

The study aimed to see the relationship if any between age and occupation with usage of digital marketing communication if any while buying a car. As the study dealt with clearly defined variables; nature of research was descriptive. Study made use of primary data which was collected through survey from Delhi. Area wise proportionate Cluster Sampling was used to collect the data from the respondents. Census 2011 was considered as a frame of reference which divided Delhi into 9 districts. Purposely seven districts were chosen for further inclusion in the study. Researcher conveniently chose areas in each district. Researcher proportionately and conveniently picked samples from the chosen area. A total of 801 responses were collected from the study's sampling area Delhi. The proportion of respondents in the sample was kept same as it was in the population in each district. A respondent in the study was any person in the family who has a car or plans to buy a car in near future i.e. potential customer. Primary data was collected from the respondents with the help of research tool i.e. questionnaire. Survey method was used for collecting primary data. Both online and physical modes were used to administer the questionnaire to the respondents. Data was analysed with the help of SPSS 18.0 version and chi-square was used as test of significance to test the hypotheses. Table 1.1 given below gives the details of sampling plan followed for the study.

Sr. No.	District	Population	% of total population	Proportion in Sample
I.	North west	3,656,539	22.76	183
II.	South Delhi	2,731,929	17.01	136
III.	West Delhi	2,543,243	15.83	126
IV.	South West Delhi	2,292,958	14.27	114

V.	North East Delhi	2,241,624	13.95	112
VI.	East Delhi	1,709,346	10.65	85
VII.	North Delhi	887,978	5.53	45
				Sample Size = 801

2.1.1 Research Objectives

The study aimed to see the relationship between demographic dividend (defined in terms of age and occupation) with the usage of digital marketing communication. It also aimed to assess the relationship between places of living i.e. Urban, Semi-Urban and Rural with the usage of digital marketing communication. To be more precise following primary objective was set as an objective of the study:

- To assess the relationship between age and occupation with the usage of digital marketing communication while buying a car.

Secondary Objective:

- To determine the association if any; between place of living and use of digital marketing communication.

2.1.2 Research Hypotheses

Following hypotheses was envisaged to study the relationship that would reveal the statistical significance if any; between demographic dividend and use of digital marketing communication while buying a car.

Ha₁: There is an association between demographic dividend (age and occupation) and usage of digital marketing communication while buying a car.

Ha₂: There is an association between place of living and use of digital marketing communication channels.

3.1 Data Analysis

Responses were collected from 801 respondents from Delhi. Out of which 603, people used at least one of digital channel namely Website, SNS, YouTube, Digital TV, digital Outdoors, E-mails, Smartphones etc. during their purchase decision journey while buying a car; whereas 198 people didn't use any digital channel and used only the traditional channels namely TV, Radio, Newspaper, visiting Dealers' Showroom etc. The results of the study showed that 75% people used at least one of the digital channels whereas 25% used only the traditional channels while buying a car.

3.1.1 Age and Usage of Digital Marketing Communication

Data for the study was collected from respondents belonging to various age groups. 36% of the sample was represented by respondents belonging to 18-25 years age group. Respondents belonging to 26-30 years age group made 18 % of the sample whereas 31-35 years age group was represented by 15% of people. About 15% of sample was represented by respondents belonging to 31-35 years age group. It can be said that about 69% of the sample was represented by people below the age of 35. The sample distribution by age almost congregates with the findings of Census, 2011 whereby it stated that 65% people in India are

below the age of 35. 31% of the sample was represented by respondents above the age of 35 years. The variable was included in the study as researcher wished to see whether usage of various digital channels of communication is affected by age or not. Do people belonging to a particular age group have preference for particular digital channel or not? It was seen in the study that people belonging to age group of 18-25 years made the most usage of digital marketing communication while buying a car followed by people belonging to age group of 26-30 years. People belonging to age group of 36-40 years made least use of digital marketing communication. Chi-square test was applied as test of significance to see the significant association between age and use of digital marketing communication. The test was conducted with 95% confidence level. Table II represents the results.

Table II: Chi-Square Test			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.753 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	37.904	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.906	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	801		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 20.52.

A significance value of .000 obtained in the test which was less than the significance value of .05; indicated that there was a significant association between age and use of digital marketing communication while buying a car. The findings can be attributed to the fact that young generation has an increased and constant exposure to the new age digital technologies and are more comfortable using these technologies while making any purchase decision.

3.1.2 Occupation and Usage of Digital Marketing Communication

Data for the study was collected from respondents with different occupations. 40 % of the sample was represented by respondents in service sector. 30% of the sample was represented by the students whereas business and home-maker represented the 22% and 9% of the sample. The variable was included in the study to assess whether people belonging to different occupations use different digital channels of communication.

It was observed in the study that people who were in service followed by students made the most use of digital marketing communication while buying a car. People belonging to Home-maker category made the least use of digital marketing communication while buying a car. Chi-square test was applied as test of significance to see the significant association between occupation and use of digital marketing communication. The test was conducted with 95% confidence level. Table III represents the results.

Table III: Chi-Square Test			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.299 ^a	3	.006
Likelihood Ratio	11.517	3	.009
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.419	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	801		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 17.30.			

A significance value of .006 obtained in the test which was less than the significance value of .05; indicated that there was a significant association between occupation and use of digital marketing communication while buying a car. The findings might stem from the fact that people who are in service come to know about various digital sources from their colleagues, superior, and subordinates. They also might influence from other people like their clients and customers. Sometimes the nature of the job might also act as a motivator to use digital channels which later on they use while making their purchase decisions in their personal lives also.

3.1.3 Place of Living and Use of Digital Marketing Communication

Data was collected from urban, sub-urban and rural areas of Delhi to see whether digital marketing is an urban phenomenon or it has crossed the boundaries of place and people use digital channels of communication in rural and suburban areas also. Census 2011 was considered as a frame of reference which divided Delhi into 9 districts. Deliberately two districts namely New Delhi and Central Delhi were not included in the sample as both were composed of urban population only whereas all other districts were heterogeneous in terms of composition as they had urban, semi-urban and rural population within them. Definitions for urban, sub-urban and rural areas were taken from Census 2011. An urban area as per Census 2011 has been defined as a statutory place with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee, etc.; which has minimum population of 5,000; at least 75 per cent of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and with a density of population of at least 400 per sq. km. (1,000 per sq. mile). An area is considered 'Rural' if it is not classified as 'Urban' as per the above definition. As per Census 2011 Sub-Urban area is also known as Census town; and are the settlements that possess a population over 5,000 and have lost the characteristics of a village – primarily agriculture as the principal occupation. However, they have not reached the 'municipality level' to deserve categorization as statutory towns. For the present study, 45% of data was collected from respondents residing in urban area, 28% of data was collected from Sub-urban areas and 27% of data was collected from respondents residing in rural areas. The variable was included in the study to see the association if any between the place of living and use of digital channels of communication. Chi-square test was applied as test of significance to see the significant association between area and use of digital marketing communication. The test was conducted with 95% confidence level. Table IV represents the results.

Table IV: Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.533 ^a	2	.465
Likelihood Ratio	1.516	2	.469
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.474	1	.225
N of Valid Cases	801		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 53.64.			

The value of .465 obtained in the test which is more than the significance level of .05 indicated the absence of significant association between place of living and use of digital marketing communication. The null hypothesis could not be rejected and it was concluded from the study that place of living doesn't associate with the use of digital marketing communication and people from Urban, Semi-Urban and Rural equally make use of digital marketing communication while buying a car. The findings can correspond with the KPMG-IAMAI Report (2015) wherein it was mentioned that people in rural India are giving a vital push to digital revolution of India as people in rural India access internet with their mobile devices.

4.1 Findings and Suggestions

The study which aimed to assess the association between age, occupation with digital marketing usage while buying a car; revealed that demographic dividend of India is paying well for car marketers. It also concluded that people irrespective of place of living whether urban, semi-urban and rural are making use of digital communication channels while buying a car. Precisely, major Findings of the study were as follows:

- 75% of the people made use of digital marketing communication through at least one of the digital channel while buying a car.
- Age had a significant association with the usage of digital marketing association as people belonging to age groups of 18-25 years and 26-30 years; respectively used digital marketing communication the most while buying a car.
- Occupation too, had a significant association with the usage of digital marketing association as people in service used digital marketing communication the most while buying a car.
- People from urban, semi-urban and rural areas equally make use of digital marketing communication while buying a car.

Based on the findings of the study; it is suggested to the car marketers that they should devise exclusive targeting strategies to cater to the segment which is young, working, tech-savvy and makes maximum use of digital marketing communication. Car marketers can send the exciting digital content via myriad digital channels available today which not only engage the potential customers but would also result in valued relationships with them. However they are supposed to ensure compatibility and responsiveness of the content with various digital channels. The digital content should be made as interactive as possible so that greater details can be obtained about the target customers who later on can be targeted individually and more precisely. Marketers can also motivate their target customers sharing their feedback and opinion with them.

It is also advised that car marketer must identify the opinion leaders in the target segment's group which can be easily done over digital channels given their identification and targeting capabilities; so that the target customers trust the digital communication. The digital content should also be easily sharable which would enable customers share the content with their friends, colleagues and relatives if they find the content interesting. Relevant information about the given product category that might deal with new offers and variants of car, special discounts, new launches, contest and games, loan and financing options, due date of services,

maintenance updates etc. should be communication to the target audience at a right time that would help them in taking an informed and valued decision.

Car marketers are also advised to give due consideration to the rural and semi-urban areas also as there is no dearth of opportunities for marketers. People in such areas are equally making use of digital channels. Marketer can provide the content in the local language especially in the rural areas thereby removing the language barriers if any and making the overall experience interesting and personal for the users.

5.1 Conclusion

Digital marketing is writing new rules in business communication across all the businesses. Indian Car Market is also experiencing the change and marketers are actively applying various digital communication marketing practices across various digital channels. For past five years Indian Passenger Car marketers have been one of the top digital spenders and are gradually increasing their digital spends. Consumers have also experienced a change in traditional car buying process whereby they are making fewer visits to the showroom than before and relying heavily on digital information for making a purchase decision. They are also comparing and reading reviews of experts and other consumers before deciding about the brand. Young generation especially belonging to the age groups of 18-30 years and in service are especially more active than others when it comes using digital marketing communication while buying a car. So, it can be concluded that demographic dividend is paying off in Digital Marketing Communication in Indian Car Market. Moreover digital marketing is no longer only an urban phenomenon as people from Semi-Urban and Rural areas are also making use of this interactive and attractive modern day communication tool. So, it can also be concluded that digital platform is offering itself to an exciting proposition to both marketers and consumers.

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