IMPACT OF HOTEL SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: IN CASE OF LANDMARK HOTEL, GONDAR CITY, ETHIOPIA

ASCHALEW ADANE BRHANU

Assistant Professor, Department of Marketing Management
College of Business and Economics, University of Gondar, Gondar, Ethiopia

Abstract: *Service industries compete strongly with all service mix elements and hotel industry has its exceptional service delivery system being operated as a tool to attract and retain the customer aiming at their utmost satisfaction. In this race, the execution of service delivery with the mix announced has become a challenge for many hotels and the previous research witnessed that the efficacious efforts of the industry in order to gain the consistent satisfaction of the customers and employees. The objectives are established to know the impact of service delivery system of the popular Landmark hotel in Gondar city on customer satisfaction. Methods used for this research are descriptive, mixed approach, random and convenience sampling techniques and data collection through questionnaire. The conclusions and recommendations are established for the accurate execution of the service mix elements to improve the delivery.*

Keywords: *Service delivery, Customer satisfaction, Landmark hotel, service mix*

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to be successful in the market it is not sufficient to attract new customers; managers must concentrate in retaining existing customers, implementing effective policies of customer satisfaction is largely hooked up on service quality. Customer satisfaction is a provision of goods and services expectation in term of quality and service related to price paid. In other way customer satisfaction happened when customer satisfied with product or service that meet customer needs, wants and expectations (Philip Kotler, pp 40, 2006).

"The terms customer satisfaction and perception of quality are labels we use to summarize a set of observable actions related to the product or service" (Hayes, 2008, pp.33)

There are many service industries such as airplane, health care, transportation service, communication service and hotels that provide service to customers. One of the most important characteristics of the hotel industry is the leading role of human factor in service process. It cannot be accomplished without the participation of customer and without the participation of the staff. (Gronoos,1990; Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Hotels are increasing their investments to improve service quality and the perceived value for guests so as to achieve better customer satisfaction and loyalty, thus resulting in better relationships with each customer (Jones et al., 2007). Relationship quality has a remarkable positive effect on hotel guests' behavior: it creates positive word of mouth (WOM) and increments repeated guest rates (Kim et al., 2001)

Nowadays one of the biggest challenges for managers in the hotel industry is to provide and sustain customer satisfaction. A customer requirement for quality products and service in the tourism industry has become increasingly evident to professionals (Lam & Zhang, 1999; Yen & Su, 2004).

There are many hotels in Gondar city. These hotels try to keep the comfort of their guests continuously by providing service based on the desire of the customer. Among these hotels Landmark hotel is one of the most known hotels and the hotel provides different services for its customers.

In Ethiopian service sectors, a customer is mostly not pleasant to the service delivery process (Raja and mangnale, 2011). Because it has a lot of challenges in service quality delivery, like incompetency employees, an improvement of service quality delivery gap model and like. Service quality is one of the critical success factors that influence the competitiveness of organization, high quality of service will result high customer satisfaction and increase customer loyalty (Kumar et al 2000).

Parabhakaran (2003), mentioned that customer is the king. Service Sectors in Ethiopia are the problem of customer dissatisfaction because their delivery is not concerned from the customer point of views (Raja and magnale, 2001).Generally, while hotels renders a service for their customers whether they offer quality service which may satisfy customers, or poor quality which may dissatisfy the customers, thus that this is researchable fact that the researchers going to investigate.

Service quality has been recognized as a key factor in differentiating products. Customer satisfaction can be secured through high quality produces, highlight that the concept of service should be approached from customer point of view since it was his/her perception of the outcome that constituted the service. Customer has different ground for assessment and most of the time; they may perceive the same service in different ways. (Tsang and Du, 2000)

The advantage of customer satisfaction has gradually been recognized throughout the service provider.

In the mean time some problems are occurred, misunderstanding of customer need, problem of efficient service and deluged response for customer request. These and other factors might disappoint customers. Hence the researchers have addressed the Impact of Service Delivery System on Customer Satisfaction.

The main issue these researches have addressed is the impact of service delivery system on customer satisfaction of the study.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Specifically the researchers have tried to achieve the following specific objectives;

1. To evaluate hotel service delivery culture.

2. To identify to which service quality dimension customers give more delight.

3. To identify the factor that hinder quality service delivery internally.

4. To identify how customers perceive the service delivery of the hotel.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 Factors affecting service delivery and customer satisfaction

According to Parasuman, Zeithmal and Bery who formulated service quality model high light the main requirements for delivering high service quality; the model identifies five gaps that cause unsuccessful delivery.

1. Gap between consumer expectation and management perception. A Service provider does not always correctly service what customer wants.

2. Gap between management perception and service: quality specification. Management might correctly perceive customer wants but not set a performance standard.

3. Gap between service quality specification and service delivery personnel might be portly trained, or incapable of or unwilling to meet the standard

4. Gap between service delivery and external communication consumer expectation are affected by statements made by company representatives.

5. Gap between perceived service and expected service. This factor occurs when the consumer misperceive the service quality (Kottler, 2000, pp 439)

3.2 Definition of customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is defined as the extent to which a product perceived performance in delivering value links a buyer expectation. (Philip Kottler, 2000, pp36)

According to Kotler (2000, pp36) satisfaction is a personal feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a products perceived performance out comes in relation to his/her expectations..

It is a function of perceived performance and expectations customer can more satisfaction judgments with respect to any or all of the aspects or stages of products and service experience. If the performances fall short of expectations the customer is highly satisfied delighted.

3.3 Definition of service quality

Quality is externally is defined in a few words. That means it can be defined only by customers.

Service quality refers to a comparison of expectation will level performance service. It also defined as conforming to requirements. (Big Mac; www.cbsnews.com)

This implies that organization must established requirements and specifications. Customers evaluate the quality of service delivering quality service also mean, conforming to customer expiation on consistent basis. This assessment of quality is making during the service delivery process, which is usually occurs with an encounter between customer and customer and a service contact person. (A. Fitzsimons, 1998, pp 270).

3.4 Dimensions of service quality

Parasurman ,Berry and Zeithams conducted the most systematic and through work on quality in services. They categorized service quality in to five dimension, namely reliability, tangible, responsiveness, assurance and empathy of the five dimension, reliability is primary concerned with the service outcome where as the service process. However all the five dimensions emphasize the customer's perception of the service rather than the service producers' view of how the service should be delivered.

- Reliability: reliability in service is defined different form reliability refers to the ability to perform the promised service decently and accurately.

- Tangibles: tangible in service refers the physical aspect of a service and include the appearance of the physical facilities,

equipment, personnel, and communications

- Responsiveness: is willingness to provide both to help customers and to provide prompt service

- Assurance: assurance relates to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence

- Empathy: empathy is the ability to show caring and individual attention to customers

IV. RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research we used is descriptive research in order to be easy and clear. The researchers have described the state of affairs as it exists at a present with what happened. Descriptive research design is appropriate when the research objectives include the determination of the degree to which marketing variables are related to actual market phenomena (Donald's and Hawakis, 2005). We have used both qualitative & quantitative type of approach (data). The target population of the study is bothemployees (permanent and temporary) and customers in Landmark hotel. However, wehave focused on permanent employees and some customers because; the temporary employees may not have enough understanding on the hotel activity. The study used random sampling for customers; the total number of customers is unknown & convenience method for employee; the total number of employee is 100. The researchers have selected 50 from 100 employees of the company. Based on this, the researchers have conveniently taken respondents from the hotel customers and employees that have been selected based on random sampling techniques. And one manager of the hotel has been interviewed. The

researchers collected data through primary source and secondary sources. Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretation are done through transformation of possessed data into certain measures and pattern which help to perform the relationship among the data. The gathering of data through different methods has been analyzed in descriptive statistics

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data gathered through distribution of questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted are as follows. The questionnaires were distributed to random customers and selected employees. For the purpose of this study 68 questionnaires were distributed among the distributed questionnaires to customers, only 53 completed questionnaires were properly obtained. Both questionnaires of employees and customers were analyzed below and interviewed questions were responded by the manager accordingly

5.1 General characteristics of the customers

- Item 1 of table one shows that the male customers who responded are 56.3% and the female respondents are 43.3%.

- Item 2 of table one shows the age of total respondents of both sex which are 18-25 (26.4%), 26-30 (26.3%), 31-35 (9.4%), 36-40 (9.4%), & above 41 (26.4%).

- Item 3 of the table one shows the educational level of the respondents. High school (9.4%), Certificate (1.8%), Diploma (13.2%), Degree (37.7%), Masters (37.7%).

- Item 4 of the table one shows the address of the respondents. Gondar (50.9%), Bahirdar (7.5%), Addis Ababa (22.6%),

other (18.8) .This implies that from the total number of the respondents, the larger number is the residents from the city.

- Item 5 illustrates the frequency of visiting the hotel 7.5 % visit the hotel daily, 22.6% of them visited the hotel weekly, 33.9% visit monthly, & 35.8 % visited for the first time. This implies the larger number of the respondents is new comers

- Item 6 show the reason of usage 32% for rooms, 64.1% pleasure, and the rest 3.7% used it for other i.e. occasional purpose, weeding etc… This implies that large number of the respondents use the service for pleasure purpose

5.2 Customers response regarding the food service.

In this section various questions related to the food service in the hotel is analysis. Including variety presented as per customers taste, the delivery of the order as per ordered and promptness, the general presentation of the hotel i.e. the ambient conditions and the staff members professionalism in serving the order.

- ➤ Frequency of dining in the hotel.

To demonstrate the frequency of dining in the hotel by customers; 9.4% of the respondents dine in the hotel daily while 7.5% of the respondents dine monthly, 30.1% of the respondents have only used the hotel for dining only once and the remaining 18.8% of the respondents never dined. This implies that more than 50% of the respondents have used the food service of the hotels quite repeatedly so their response would be of a reliable good source.

- ➤ Ccustomers rating who have dined in the hotel regarding to the variety of food served by the hotel, the ordering of the food, the prompt service, etc…

- Item 1 represents the variety of food served by the hotels.As shown in the table, 13.9% of the respondents strongly disagree in the fact that the menu have a variety of food items. 4.6% of the respondents disagreed to the content of the menu. while 16.2% of the respondents were neutral, 30.2% of them agreed& 34.8% have strongly agreed that the menu containes good variety of food items. This implies that the hotels are providing a different variety of food items to meet customers need.

- Item 2 shows the correctness and completeness of ordered food. Here, 11.6% of the customers strongly disagreed & 2.3% disagreed. 9.3% of the customers are neutral. 55.8% and 20.9% of the respondents agreed & strongly agreed that the service provided was correct and complete. Finally, this implies that most of the customers agree on the fact that the food ordered was served as required.

- Item 3 shows promptness of the food servicefrom the respondents 13.9% strongly disagree, 13.9% disagreed. From the repondents 16.2% were neutral, 41.8% agreed and 13.9% strongly agreed on the promptness of the food serviceWhich implies that most of the customers expectation is meet by the excellent service they have received. But still needs improvement.

- Item 4 shows the way the food & beverage was displayed. The customers respond 13.9% have strongly disagreed, 9.3% have disagreed. 16.2% of them are neutral, where 35.8% have agreed & 16.2 have strongly agreed.

- Item 5 illustrates that the professionalism of the service provider of food & beverage. 11.6% of the customers strongly disagreed, 9.3% disagreed, 9.3% were neutral & finally the rest 46.5 %& 23.8% agreed & strongly agreed respectively.

- Item 6 illustrates that whether the general service of the restaurant/bar was excellent. In this case 9.3% of customers strongly disagreed, 6.9% of them disagreed, 11.6% of the customers were neutral, & finally 51. % & 20.9% agreed & strongly disagreed respectively.

5.3 Analysis related to recreational centers

A variety of questions related to recreational centers were asked to respondents and the distribution of response is presented in tabular form in the following tables.

➢ Recreational centers

Item one of table four indicates that only 60.3% of the customers are familiar and the remaining 26.4%& 13.2 of the customers are not familiar % doesn't know it exist respectively i.e. they haven't used the recreational center. most of the respondents are familiar with the recreational centers

Item two of table 4 Those customers who have used the service also responded on how they grade the gymnasium that is, 16.9% of them gave it

excellent, 39% very good, the other 28.8.% good, 2.2% bad and the remaining 13.2% stated that they have never used the gymnasium implying that the service of the gymnasium is satisfactory.

➢ Satisfaction on the recreational centers

From item one, it could be understood customers13.2% were dissatisfied with the spa and related services of the hotel, while 32% of the respondents were satisfied with the service, remaining 54.7% of the customers have never used the service at all. This implies that there isn't that much user for those services but most of those who have used it are satisfied.

As it could be observed from this table item two illustrates if the consumers are satisfied with the parks and green area of the hotel or not. 12.5% of the customers were dissatisfied with the green area and the parks and 87.5% were satisfied.. This implies that the hotels have much satisfactory of a green area.

5.4 Analysis on Customers Expectation of the service & on the general service of the hotel

- Item one shows that what matters most in delivering any product or service is the perception of the customers towards the product or the service. And 20.7% of the customers were unsatisfied by the service rendered compared to their expectation. 15% of the customers find the service of the hotel were less satisfied, while 26.4% of them as expected, 37.7% were strongly satisfied. This implies that the hotels are providing services as per the expectation of its customers but with still a little improvement needed to meet their disappointed customers.

- Item two shows the customer's service delivered of the individual the suggestion. 56.6% were strongly satisfied, others 15% were satisfied, & 18.8% implied that is moderate, the remaining 9.4% were unsatisfied. As a result the customers are by far satisfied.

- Item three shows: in a hotel business, different kinds of customers could visit the hotel and it is essential that they have access to every service. These customers could be disabled; as they are too a customer the hotel should be suitable for them to easily access it too. On this issue 66% of the customers strongly disagree and 13.2 disagree, 16.9% agree, 3.7 strongly agree that the hotels are suitable for the disables. This implies that it tends to be not that much of access for the disabled customers. The hotel should work more on access for disabled customers.

- Item four is about the overall facility of the hotel, 66% of the customers said it's adequate, 33.9% said it's not adequate at all. The large number of the customers are satisfied but the hotel should also consider little improvement for those who are not satisfied.

- Item five is about the satisfactory of the restrooms, 37.7% were very satisfied, 35.8 are satisfied, 13.2% were moderate; finally others 13.2% never used the restrooms. Most of the customers are satisfied by the restrooms.

5.5 Analysis related to room service

- ➢ Response on room service.

- Item one shows whether customers are satisfied with the room amenities or not. According to the respondents 11.7% responded not satisfactory, 23.5% medium satisfactory, 23.5% satisfactory and the remaining 41.1% of the respondent customers stated that the room amenities are very satisfactory. This implies that there is almost equal number of customers to being both satisfied and moderately satisfied.

- Item two illustrates if the extra services in the room services are clearly displayed or not. 88.2% agreed (yes) and the rest 11.7% disagreed (no) on the fact that the extra service manuals were displayed. This implies that almost all of the customers have access to any extra service required.

- The last item demonstrates whether the room services are available 24-hours, and 70.5% of the responses show that it is available and the remaining 29.5% that it is not. This implies that the customers receive a room service almost at all of their time of request.

5.6 Analysis related to service giving personnel

- Item one shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's sociability is were excellent is 66.5%, very good 7.5%, good 16.9%, fair 15% and finally poor is 3.7%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the sociability of the service giving personnel.

- Item two shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's Politeness is were excellent is 66.6%, very

good 7.5%, good 16.9%, fair 15% and finally poor is 3.7%. This implies most customers have agreed with the politeness of the service giving personnel.

- Item three shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's sense of responsibility is were excellent is 64.4%, very good 9.4%, good 13%, fair 16% and finally poor is 3.7%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the sense of responsibility of the service giving personnel.

- Item four shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's cooperativeness were excellent is 73.5%, very good 18.8%, good 7.5%. This implies most of the customers are happy with the cooperativeness of the service giving personnel.

- Item five shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's Language clarity is were excellent is 13.2%, good 22.6%, fair 47.1% and 16.9% of the customers said poor. This implies the customers are by far happy with the language clarity of the service giving personnel.

- Item six shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's Speed of understanding orders is were excellent is 75.4%, very good 24.4%, and finally fair 15%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the speed of understanding of the service giving personnel.

- Item seven shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's

Taking orders correctly is were excellent is 71.6%, very good 9.4%, good 3.7%, fair 28.3 and finally poor is 18.8%. This implies the customers are by far happy with theTaking orders correctly of the service giving personnel.

- Item eight shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's Facial expressions is were excellent is 84.9%, very good 3.7%,fair 5.6% and finally poor is 18.8%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the facial expression of the service giving personnel.

- Item nine shows customers' response on how they have observed personnel's Interest to accept customer requestis were excellent is 67.9, very good 1.8%, good 16.9%, fair 9.4% and finally poor is 3.7%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the interest to accept customer request of the service giving personnel.

- Item ten shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's readiness to serve is were excellent is 71.6%, very good 13.2%, good 13.2%, fair 9.4% and finally poor is 3.7%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the readiness to serve of the service giving personnel

- Item eleven shows customers response on how they have observed personnel's The prompt of service is were excellent is 39.6, very good 9.4%, good 3.7%, fair 28.3% and finally poor is 18.8%. This implies the customers are by far happy with the interest to accept customer request of the service giving personnel

5.7 Analysis of Employees response

➢ Background of the staff members

● Item 1 shows staff respondents; the male are 60% and female respondents 40%.

● Item 2 shows the respondents' age. 28% of the employees are 18-25. 42% of them are 26-30. 18% of the employees are 31-35. 4% are 36-40. And finally 8% of the employees are above 41.

● Item 3 shows the work experience in the hotel. From the employees' respondents 26% worked b/n 1-6 months.   36% of them worked b/n 6months-1year. The others 38% worked b/n 1-5 years.

5.8 Analysis *on the service delivered*

➢ Time of service delivery and service quality

Item one 84% of the employees believe they deliver customers request timely, 18% partially and none of them believe that they deliver customer request late. This implies that there is undelivered customer request.

Item two demonstrates the confidence level of employees in giving quality service. It shows that 11.5% are very confident and 30% are confident. 20% are moderately confident & only 4% are not confident

5.9 Analysis of employees rating their own service excellence

● In item one, 54% of the employees strongly agree and 28% agree that, the others 18% they are sociable.All

respondent employees don't disagree or strongly disagree about their sociability

● In Item two, 64% of them strongly agree and 17.7% agree that they are polite. Others 22% are neutral.

● In Item three, All employees respond, neither strongly disagrees nor that they are neutral about their responsibility while 90% and 10%% strongly agree and agree, respectively.

● In Item four, 66.6% strongly agree, and 22.2% agree respectively to express their cooperativeness. Others 22.2% are neutral.

5.10 Analysis related to customer satisfaction

➢ Customer satisfaction

● Item one shows that from total respondents of 50 employees 36% of them stated that customers encounter quality problem sometimes and the remaining 64% said never.

● Item two shows how employees handle conflict with customers and 4% stated that they handle conflict perfectly, 16% stated that they handle conflict moderately while the remaining 26% stated that they refer to the supervisor in such issues and 54% stated they didn't encounter conflict. This implies that service recovery doesn't take place at the spot.

● Item three shows the reasons behind the dissatisfaction of customers. 4% stated that the reason behind customer dissatisfaction is the different rules and regulation of the hotel.12% Stuff

confidence level and insisting to raise issues to managers. 76% stated it is due to staffs not understanding their responsibility and the remaining 8% stated it is because unclear managerial hierarchy. This implies that there exists a lack of transparency in the stuff confidence.

- Item four demonstrates that customer give more weight from determinants are 10% are tangibility, 26 are %, 50% are responsiveness, 10% are assurance and 4% are emphaty of implies that most customersgive more weight for responsiveness.

- Item five demonstrates that 6%stated not selecting the right service delivery standard, 78% stated not knowing customer expect, 6% stated not delivering to service standard and 10% stated that not matching promise with performance implies that most of the gap that render quality service is not knowing what customer expect this came from management of customer expectations

5.11 *Analysis related to employee satisfaction*

➤ Staffs language skills and training.

- Item one shows how many international languages that an employee can speak. i.e., 96% of the employees know only one, 2% of the employees speak two. Within their responses they have indicated which language they speak i.e. those who responded to two languages is English and French. This implies that there is no lack of language to communicate with each and every customer.

- Training to employees will improve the efficiency of the employees and enhance their knowledge about their job. Item two of table 12 shows whether training program have been offered to the employees in their field so as to enhance their performance skill. And their responses indicate 92% of the employees have taken training but the rest 8% of them have never taken any training arranged by the hotel nor the HRM department.

➤ Staffs perspective towards the hotel

- Item one assess how likely would the customer's recommend the hotels to others. 34% of the respondents responded likely and 66% of them are unlikely to recommend it to others. This implies that those who are unlikely to recommend it to others are very much unsatisfied with the hotel service.

- Item two shows the response of employees on what they think of customer's satisfaction. 6% of the employees believe that customers are very satisfied, 44% satisfied and 50% of the employees didn't know their customer's satisfaction.

- Item three shows how the employees would rate the hotel in relation to other hotels. 26% of the employees graded the hotel as its top of all, 18% of the employees agreed that it is good and 10% of them sad it is on equal performance with others. This implies it's relatively to be top of all according to the employees of the hotel.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Conclusion

What can be seen is that there are both positive and negative aspects to that of the performance of the hotels and some of the positive points analyzed are stated below;

- There is high level of customer satisfaction in terms of the food delivery, variety and the overall performance of the employees in handling customers.

- The customers are satisfied with the amenities that are delivered with the room service. Also, they are very satisfied with the display of the different manuals and the availability of the room service for 24 hours.

- Customers also believe that the sociability, politeness and cooperativeness of the hotel employees are very good.

- The facial expression of the employees is very welcoming from the customer's point of view and their sense of the responsibility is also very good.

Also, according to the findings, there are certain points that the hotel should be improving. Some of the negative (weak) points of the hotels raised are stated below;

- The majority of the respondents were either dissatisfied or the actual facility doesn't exist at all. This scenario occurred in the recreational center and different related facilities. Also from what has been observed swimming pools and green areas are not available in the hotel.

- Since the hotel doesn't have access to the disables they don't consider this part of their customers' interest fully.

- The language usage and most of the communication capability of the employees are not satisfactory.

The above statements show that the hotel has both strong parts to maintain and weak points to correct. So as a conclusion we would like to state the major point to be mentioned.

- ✓ The hotel tries to do their best to fulfill the needs of the customers and with this aspect we also haven't seen any significance error in both our observation and by the responses from the customers.

- ✓ From our observation the hotel are trying their best to stand out in the market with different facilities like swimming pool etc.

- ✓ They lack certain crucial recreational centers.

6.2 Recommendations

As the reason behind any research is to find out the major problems the study andgive solutions based on the findings, this fact makes the recommendation part of any research more valuable than others.

Any organization, company or institution will always have a certain kind of problem despite how hard they have been trying to deliver the product/ service perfectly. Especially in service giving organization it is really difficult to say the service

would be excellent for every user. part of the literature review I.e. its intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and pershablity .

In the hotel industry what is mostly delivered is pure service and this makes it difficult to say that there is no problem in delivering it. These problems occur due to the failure of the hotels in delivering the expectations of customers most of the times. And as we have also observed it is really difficult to satisfy the need of every customer as they come from different cultural backgrounds and having different psychological expectation. We have also discovered some problem in the hotels which need serious attention and which should be improved.

For this the recreational center manager and the facility manager should;

- First make a study to know what kind of recreational tool to have at hand then clearly make every facility available to customers' request.

- To make the customers interested give some of the recreational services free of charge..

By our recommendation we are trying to spot out all the necessary minor and majorerrors that we have found during the study. We would like to encourage that the hotel performance is very good and is certainly satisfactory for the users.Despite the problems mentioned above and some other minor problems.

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