

Do Online Customer Reviews Matter? A Study of Woman's Buying Interest in Beauty Products

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ABSTRACT

The growth of internet users in Indonesia is accelerating rapidly, especially in 2022. This surge in internet users can be attributed to the pandemic's impact on lifestyle, which encourages people to adopt digital products, including reliance on online customer reviews for product information. This study aims to determine the influence of online customer reviews on buying interest in beauty products. Researchers used quantitative methods and non-probability techniques with purposive sampling using an online questionnaire with the criteria of customers (women) who use and have read beauty product reviews. Researchers obtained 122 respondents who were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis techniques. The results proved that online customer reviews covering all dimensions influenced purchase intention. The credibility of a review and reviewers as in the dimension of review credibility is important for customers reading online customer reviews to influence buying interest in beauty products. This research helps beauty product owners to understand and utilize online customer reviews in their business.



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Keywords: Buying Interest; Beauty Products; Online Customer Reviews

INTRODUCTION

The growth of internet users in Indonesia is rapid, especially in 2022. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) reported that internet users in Indonesia have reached 210 million users, meaning that almost 77% of Indonesians have used the internet (Dewi, 2022). The increase in internet users in Indonesia is one of the effects of a pandemic where a lifestyle change encourages people to utilize digital products because of the convenience provided. One of the changes is that people get information about products through online customer reviews (Hermawan, 2019). Online customer reviews are information obtained online that provides convenience, especially for customers in making choices when shopping (Aryanto, 2021).

According to Venkatesakumar et al. (2020), online customer reviews are an assessment of a business, product or service made voluntarily by customers. When shopping, customers are given many choices of various types of products, but often, customers are faced with the dilemma of choosing which product suits them (Aryanto, 2021). Online customer reviews help

people get information about a product through ratings, brief descriptions, and even documentation provided by previous buyers (Andita & Hermawan, 2023).

In addition to helping customers get information, online customer reviews can help customers express appreciation or complaints freely regarding products or experiences felt when shopping (Hermawan, 2021). For sellers, online customer reviews help evaluate or develop a business based on customer reviews. Beauty products are one of the product categories attached to online customer reviews because many customers get information from online customer reviews. The development of beauty products in Indonesia is supported by increasing public awareness of skin appearance and beauty (Oktariani et al., 2019).

Chen et al. (2022) revealed that nearly 60% of customers search for online customer reviews at least once a week to get information about a product. According to Zhao et al. (2021), in each review uploaded, there are different customers, such as customers who have bought a product and written a review, as well as potential buyers looking for information about the product through previous buyers' reviews.

According to Kompas.com, the development of beauty products in Indonesia continues to grow despite the COVID-19 pandemic (Hamasy, 2022). BPOM (The Indonesian Food and Drug Authority) said that beauty products have received the most distribution licenses in Indonesia, totaling 411,410 products in the last five years (Hamasy, 2022). According to Sutiani (2022), beauty products were the most purchased in January - June 2022 and reached a sales quantity of up to 19 million pieces.

According to Maryani (2021), the largest revenue was in the skincare category at \$2.1 billion, followed by the cosmetics category with revenue of \$1.7 billion. Based on a survey from Statista.com in Figure 1, the estimated revenue for beauty products in Indonesia will continue to increase by 2027 by 20.64%, with estimated revenue reaching \$96 billion (Statista, 2023).

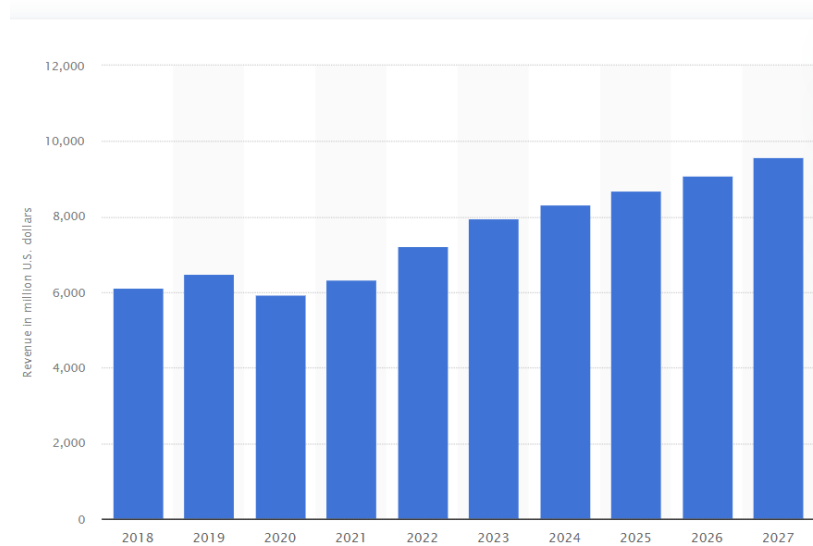


Figure 1. Indonesia Beauty Market Revenue Forecast 2018-2027

Source: Statista (2023)

Based on the background of the problem above, the problem identified in this study is how online customer reviews influence buying interest in beauty products. This study focuses on the variables of online customer reviews and buying interest to research beauty products. Online customer reviews include dimensions which include dimensions of review quantity, review credibility, review quality, review recency, and review valence. Also, this study involves customers (women) who use and have read reviews of beauty products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online customer reviews

According to Venkatesakumar et al. (2020), an online customer review is an assessment of a business, product or service voluntarily made by customers who buy, use, or have experience with a particular product or service. Online customer reviews can be seen or measured from several dimensions, such as quantity, credibility, quality, recency, and valence (Alabdullatif & Akram, 2018).

Quantity reviews refer to the number of reviews or reviews of products selected or purchased. When many reviews are given, more potential buyers will consider a product because of the information that spreads about the product (Alzate, Arce-Urriza, & Cebollada, 2022). Therefore, online customer reviews are expected to be dominated by positive reviews because prospective buyers' buying interest can be influenced by the number of reviews on the product by previous buyers. Credibility reviews refer to source credibility and trust in an online review. Credibility is an important factor for customers in assessing the quality of information available (Kurniawan & Hermawan, 2022).

Customers assess the credibility with the possibility of customers realizing that fake reviews are made for an advertisement (Sutanto & Aprianingsih, 2016). Quality reviews refer to whether customers see the quality of reliable reviews. It is often found on some platforms that some customers provide invalid reviews. Therefore, a review rating is needed based on other customers (Felbermayr & Nanopoulos, 2016).

Recency reviews refer to the period a review was uploaded. The chances of customers seeing the latest reviews are higher than an old review because they are considered more relevant and can help consider their buying interest in a product (Wang, Du, & Wang, 2023). Valence reviews refer to the equality of a product's positive and negative review types. The valence of positive and negative reviews is an important psychological principle that has a major impact on customers (Alabdullatif & Akram, 2018).

Online customer reviews can be seen and measured, one of which is the quality of reviews. It is one of the important factors to increase consumer buying interest. There are several platforms to see online customer trusted reviews, such as beauty review platforms, social media, and e-commerce. The trend of beauty products increasing in the past couple of years has led to the term beauty enthusiast. Beauty enthusiasts are people interested in beauty products and expertise in the beauty world (Fahira, 2022).

Almost everyone uses social media today. Social media has many benefits, allowing

people to do anything on social media, including voluntarily uploading reviews of a particular brand or product. Social media can positively impact a brand or product because reviews uploaded on social media get public attention faster or are commonly called viral (Silfitri & Hermawan, 2023). E-commerce is closely associated with online customer reviews. Some e-commerce suggests that users leave a review after making a purchase. E-commerce is one of the reviews whose quality tends to be trusted. E-commerce also makes it easy for prospective buyers to see reviews on its platform, such as filter features ranging from star ratings, highest rating order, lowest rating, and latest reviews. In addition, there is a filter feature based on the review topic, which contains the quality of the goods, seller service, and description suitability.

Buying Interest

Buying interest supports product purchasing decisions. According to Tonce & Rangka (2022), buying interest concerns customers planning to buy the necessary products at a certain time. Buying interest can be measured from several dimensions. Dimensions of buying interest are transactional interest, referral interest, preferential interest, and explorative interest.

Transactional interest refers to denoting an individual's inclination to make product purchases. In contrast, referral interest signifies a person's inclination to recommend a product to others. Preferential interest occurs when the behavior of someone who has a primary preference for the product (D'Alessandro & Chitty, 2011). This inclination remains steadfast unless an unforeseen event occurs involving the preferred product. Explorative interest portrays the conduct of an individual consistently seeking information regarding a product of interest. This individual actively seeks information reinforcing the product's positive attributes (Nurvia & Sarasati, 2020).

RESEARCH METHOD

Given the number of populations that are not known with certainty, the determination of the number of samples to be used is as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2}{4(Moe)^2}$$

Based on this formula, n means several samples, Z means the confidence level in determining the sample (95%), and Moe is the margin of error. Researchers used non-probability sampling techniques for this study using a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling determines the sample based on the composition and behavior of the population (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Researchers selected samples that were considered representative. The criteria set are customers (women) who use and have read reviews of beauty products. The reason for setting these criteria is that the respondents who have these criteria can better understand the statements from the distributed questionnaires. Then, the answers given by the respondents were assessed using a Likert Scale, a scale designed to test how strongly the respondents agree with the

statements given using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) – 5 (strongly agree) points. The research model form can be described in Figure 2 as follows:

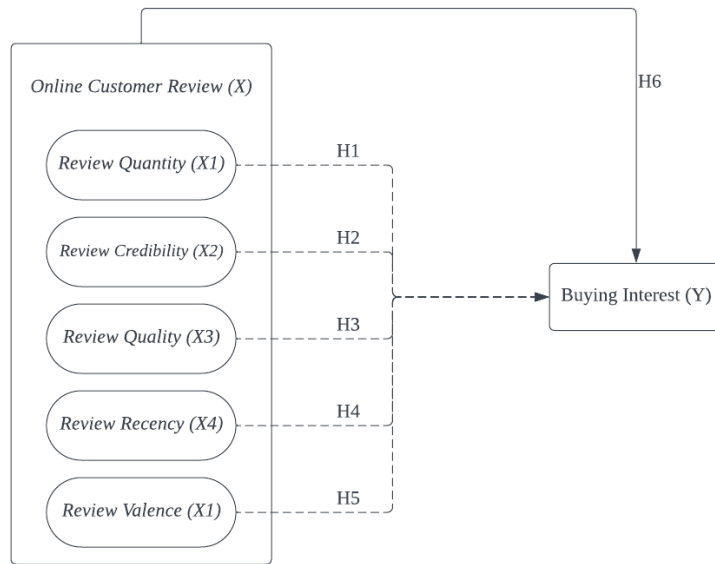


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Figure 2 visualizes the relationship between the two variables in this study, online customer reviews as variable X and buying interest as variable Y. Variable X has dimensions as an indication of measurement, including review quantity, review credibility, review quality, review recency, and review valence.

The data collected is further analyzed in several stages. The first test is the validity and reliability test research instrument and is continued by the classical assumption test. The classical assumption test aims to test deviations from research variables and is a prerequisite for analyzing multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression analysis was chosen because using more than one independent variable tested for its effect on buying interest. Multiple linear regression analysis results can compile regression equations, analysis of determination, partial test, and simultaneous test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents selected as research samples can be described based on age, occupation, level of education, monthly income, monthly expense, review source, beauty product used, and purchase quantity. Table 1 clarifies the characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Age	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
12-16 years	5	4%
17-21 years	57	47%
22-26 years	52	43%
>26 years	8	7%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Occupation	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
Highschool/University Student	73	61.5%
Civil Servant/Private Sector Employee	29	23.8%
Self-Employed	9	7.4%
Freelancer	9	7.4%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Level of Education	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
Middle school Graduate	5	4%
High school Graduate	47	39%
Bachelor	70	57%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Monthly Income	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
<Rp 1.500.000	47	39%
Rp 1.500.000 – Rp 3.500.000	70	57%
Rp 3.500.000 – Rp 5.000.000	5	4%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Monthly Expense	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
<Rp 1.500.000	39	32%
Rp 1.500.000 – Rp 3.500.000	78	64%
Rp 3.500.000 – Rp 5.000.000	5	4%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Review Source	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
<i>E-Commerce</i>	30	25%
<i>Aplikasi Beauty Review (Female Daily/Sociolla)</i>	26	21%
<i>Beauty Influencers/Beauty Reviewer</i>	20	16%
<i>Media Sosial</i>	46	38%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Beauty Products used	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
Wardah	23	19%
Emina	11	9%
Somethinc	46	38%
Barenbliss	19	16%
Make Over	14	11%
BLP	6	5%
Dear Me Beauty	3	2%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%
Purchase Quantity	Amount (People)	Percentage (%)
Not every month	24	20%
1-3 times	84	69%
4-6 times	10	8%
>6 times	4	3%
<i>Total</i>	122	100%

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Validity Test Results

The number of samples obtained was 122 respondents (n = 122) with a two-way test significance of 0.05, so the degrees of freedom (df) of 120 were obtained with a simple formula $df = 122 - 2$, showing that the r-table value used is 0.1779. Each statement item can be valid if the r-count exceeds the r-table value. The following are the results of the validity test in this study based on each statement item.

Table 2. Instrument Validity Test Results

Variable	Dimension	Code	r-count	r-table	Status
Online customer reviews (X)	Review Quantity	RQN_1	0,509	0,1779	Valid
		RQN_2	0,615	0,1779	Valid
		RQN_3	0,607	0,1779	Valid
	Review Credibility	RC_1	0,605	0,1779	Valid
		RC_2	0,620	0,1779	Valid
		RC_3	0,617	0,1779	Valid
	Review Quality	RQL_1	0,641	0,1779	Valid
		RQL_2	0,682	0,1779	Valid
		RQL_3	0,717	0,1779	Valid
		RQL_4	0,691	0,1779	Valid
	Review Recency	RR_1	0,628	0,1779	Valid
		RR_2	0,617	0,1779	Valid
		RR_3	0,674	0,1779	Valid
	Review Valence	RV_1	0,546	0,1779	Valid
RV_2		0,544	0,1779	Valid	
Buying Interest (Y)	Transactional Interest	TI_1	0,674	0,1779	Valid
		TI_2	0,617	0,1779	Valid
	Referential Interest	RI_1	0,605	0,1779	Valid
		RI_2	0,424	0,1779	Valid
	Preferential Interest	PI_1	0,509	0,1779	Valid
		PI_2	0,521	0,1779	Valid
	Exploration Interest	EI_1	0,620	0,1779	Valid
		EI_2	0,522	0,1779	Valid

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Based on Table 2, the validity test results show that all statement items used are valid in measuring online customer review variables and buying interest, as seen from each statement item with a calculated r-count greater than the r-table value.

A reliability test was conducted with Cronbach's Alpha using the SPSS 28 program to measure the reliability of this study. The variable can be declared reliable if Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds the limit value of 0.6. The following are the reliability test results.

Reliability Test Results

Table 3. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Limit Value	N of items	Status
Online customer reviews (X)	0,890	0,6	15	Reliable
Buying Interest (Y)	0,738	0,6	8	Reliable

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Based on Table 3 reliability test results, the online customer reviews variable is reliable because it has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.890. The purchase interest variable is declared reliable because it has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.738.

Classic Assumption Test

This study used data testing, the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests.

Table 4. Normality Test Results

N	Unstandardized Residual	
	122	
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.47064541
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.047
	Positive	.047
	Negative	-.038
Test Statistic		.047
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^d

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Table 4 is the result of the normality test with the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov method using IBM SPSS Statistic 28 software, concluding that the data processed is normally distributed. The Asymp can prove that the Sig (2-tailed) value obtained is 0.200, greater than the 5% or 0.05 significance level.

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	6.815	1.456		4.680	
Review Quantity	.271	.137	.116	1.983	.050
Review Credibility	.953	.115	.466	8.256	.001
Review Quality	.237	.104	.160	2.275	.025
Review Recency	.462	.104	.274	4.464	.001
Review Valence	.205	.157	.068	1.304	.195

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Table 5 illustrates the multicollinearity test using IBM SPSS Statistic 28 software, concluding no multicollinearity in all dimensions of online customer reviews. The VIF value of all dimensions is less than 10, or the tolerance value is more than 0.10.

This heteroscedasticity test can be tested using the Glejser Test method in the SPSS program with a significance level of 0.05. If the Sig. value in each dimension has a Sig. value

greater than 0.05 or the confidence value, there is no heteroscedasticity. The research model is good because there is no bias.

Table 6. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Review Quantity	-.0,86	.077	-.138	-1.121	.265
Review Credibility	.079	.065	.144	1.216	.226
Review Quality	-.131	.059	-.327	-2.221	.050
Review Recency	.020	.058	.045	.350	.727
Review Valence	.116	.089	.142	1.303	.195

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Table 6 shows the heteroscedasticity test with the Glejser Test method, concluding that there is no heteroscedasticity in each dimension or deviation because of the Sig. value in each dimension has a value greater than 0.05.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	6.815	1.456		4.680	
Review Quantity	.271	.137	.116	1.983	.050
Review Credibility	.953	.115	.466	8.256	.001
Review Quality	.237	.104	.160	2.275	.025
Review Recency	.462	.104	.274	4.464	.001
Review Valence	.205	.157	.068	1.304	.195

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Based on Table 7, the multiple linear regression model is:

$$Y = 6,815 + 0,271X^1 + 0,953X_2 + 0,237X_3 + 0,462X_4 + 0,205X_5 + e$$

Based on the interpretation of the linear regression model equation above, quantity, credibility, quality, recency, and valence reviews positively influence buying interest. Based on the linear regression test above, the dimension that influences buying interest most, seen from the largest regression coefficient value, is credibility, followed by recency, quantity, quality, and valence reviews.

Partial Significance Test (t-test)

In this t-test, if the calculated t-value is greater than the t table value or the Sig. value is smaller than the significance level (0.05), then Ho is rejected, and Ha is not rejected. The number of samples was 122 respondents (n = 122), obtained a degrees of freedom (df) value of 116 (df

= 122 - 5 - 1), so the t table value obtained was 1.98081. The following are the results of the t-test using IBM SPSS 28 software.

Table 8. Partial Significance Test Results (t-test)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	6.815	1.456		4.680	
Review Quantity	.271	.137	.116	1.983	.050
Review Credibility	.953	.115	.466	8.256	.001
Review Quality	.237	.104	.160	2.275	.025
Review Recency	.462	.104	.274	4.464	.001
Review Valence	.205	.157	.068	1.304	.195

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Table 8 is the result of the partial significance test, which can be concluded that in each dimension, H_0 is rejected, and H_a is not rejected. Thus, a positive and significant effect partially exists between online customer reviews and buying interest.

Simultaneous Significance Test (F-test)

The F-test determines whether a group of variables collectively significantly affects the outcome variable in a statistical model (Sugiyono, 2018). In this F-test, if the calculated F-value exceeds the F-table value or the Sig. value is smaller than the significance level (0.05), then H_0 is rejected, and H_a is accepted. The number of samples was 122 respondents ($n = 122$), obtained a degrees of freedom (df) value of 116 ($df = 122 - 5 - 1$), then the F-table value obtained was 2.29. The following are the results of the F-test using IBM SPSS 28 software.

Table 9. Simultaneous Significance Test Results (F-test)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1009.61	5	201.832	89.526	0.001
Residual	266.024	116	2.254		
Total	1275.185	122			

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Table 9 illustrates that the F-test hypothesis test with the calculated F-value obtained is 89.526, where the value exceeds the F-table value of 2.29 and the Sig. value is less than 0.001 where the value is smaller than 0.05, so there is an influence of all dimensions on online customer reviews (X) in the form of review quantity, review credibility, review quality, review recency, review valence on buying interest (Y) in other words H_0 is rejected, and H_a is not rejected.

Determination Analysis

Table 10. Determination Test Results

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.890 ^a	.791	1.50148

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

The R test is useful for measuring changes in the level of variance of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Table 10 shows the coefficient of determination (R^2) test with the R square value obtained as 0.791. The R square value obtained is included in the strong category in the interval 0.67 - 0.99. Therefore, all dimensions of online customer reviews (X) in quantity, credibility, quality, recency, and valence reviews strongly influence 79% of buying interest (Y).

Discussion

Syah and Indriani (2020) stated that the quality, quantity, and credibility of source reviews positively influenced buying interest. In contrast, the valence dimension did not affect consumer buying interest. In this study, researchers expressed that consumers assume the reviewer is not entirely honest if they only give positive or negative reviews without documentation or pictures. Zahra (2022) stated that the variable online customer review partially affected buying interest. Online customer review variable also positively and significantly affected buying interest in Azarine beauty products during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Riyanjaya and Andarini (2022) found that online customer reviews and rating variables significantly influenced buying interest in Wardah products on the Shopee shopping site. As for online customer reviews, negative or positive sentences can also include documentation or images that can help review readers. On online customer rating, a rating scale can help potential customers consider purchasing Wardah products. Based on some of the comparisons above, the results of other studies can be strengthened by this study, where the online customer review variable has a positive and significant effect on buying interest.

CONCLUSION

Online customer reviews include quantity, credibility, review quality, review recency, and review valence, positively affecting buying interest in beauty products. Based on the multiple linear regression tests conducted by researchers, of all online customer reviews, credibility influenced the most interest in buying beauty products. Hence, the credibility is critical to customers. Reliable and accurate reviews and reviewers who are experienced in using the product and can be trusted will encourage consumer perceptions of a beauty product and buying interest. This research makes customers feel that reviews are available, informative, helpful, and provide benefits. Then, customers will take advantage of these reviews and encourage consumer buying interest. In addition, this research helps beauty product owners understand and utilize online customer reviews in their business.

Based on the research and tests, the recommendations given by the researchers are to increase review credibility, and beauty product sellers can utilize reviews and manage them into user-generated content-type reviews. A beauty product can implement a reward system for selected reviewers with positive, detailed, and interesting reviews to increase the number of reviews, especially positive reviews. Rewards can be discount vouchers, free product vouchers, or gifts. In managing reviews about beauty products to keep them up to date, beauty product sellers need to encourage customers who have purchased to share reviews related to certain beauty products by sending messages or notifications via WhatsApp or email to customers who have purchased to share reviews related to beauty products and informing customers who share reviews will get prizes such as vouchers, gifts, and free products.

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