

MARKETING APPROACHES IN THE LUXURY HANDBAGS INDUSTRY: NAVIGATING TRENDS, CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR, AND BRAND POSITIONING FOR SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how luxury handbag brands are strategically marketing their products to engage with consumers in a rapidly changing landscape. As consumer behaviours evolve, luxury brands are adapting by using tactics such as partnering with influencers, creating immersive marketing experiences, and crafting compelling brand narratives to connect with their discerning customer base.

To understand the effectiveness of these strategies, the study employs a comprehensive approach. It combines both quantitative analysis, which involves crunching numbers and data, and qualitative insights gathered from industry experts, who provide valuable perspectives and observations.

The research aims to measure how these marketing efforts impact customer engagement and loyalty. It looks at various aspects, including how well marketing campaigns perform, which specific points of contact with customers are most crucial, and how technology can be leveraged to enhance the overall customer experience.

Furthermore, the study examines the challenges luxury brands face when implementing these marketing initiatives, as well as the opportunities they present. By uncovering these insights, the research provides practical recommendations and guidance to luxury handbag brands, enabling them to refine their marketing strategies, meet the evolving expectations of consumers, and ultimately maintain a competitive advantage in the market.

Keywords: luxury handbags industry, strategic marketing, customer engagement, evolving consumer behaviour, influencer partnerships, experiential marketing, brand storytelling, mixed-methods approach, quantitative analysis, qualitative insights, campaign effectiveness, crucial touchpoints, technology, customer experience enhancement, challenges, opportunities, strategic recommendations, competitive advantages.

Marketing Approaches In The Luxury Handbags Industry: Navigating Trends, Consumer Behaviour, And Brand Positioning For Sustained Competitive Advantage.

CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

• Capturing Wallets and Hearts: Strategic Marketing in the High-End Handbag Sector

The world of high-end handbags involves a careful balance between maintaining a classic style and keeping up with a rapidly evolving market. In order to genuinely enthrall discriminating consumers, firms must utilise strategic marketing techniques that strike a deep chord and establish enduring relationships. Here is a closer examination of a few crucial tactics:

• Influence Power: Associating with the Correct Voices

The use of influencer marketing has changed the game. Luxury handbag firms can reach a highly engaged audience by partnering with fashion icons and tastemakers who share the brand's ideals. These influencers can present the bags in a sympathetic manner to their followers, piquing their curiosity and igniting desire, thanks to their well-established credibility and reach.

Unforgettable Experiences: Transcending Traditional Marketing

Luxury transcends mere products; it embodies an experience. Experiential marketing empowers brands to create immersive events or pop-up shops that breathe life into the brand narrative. Customers can intimately engage with the handbags, experiencing the quality materials and understanding the craftsmanship behind each piece.

The Narrative Art: Cultivating Emotional Bonds

Luxury handbags symbolize more than fashion accessories; they epitomize achievement, personal style, and enduring grace. Brands capable of weaving compelling narratives around these sentiments forge deeper connections with their audience.

Convergence of Technology and Luxury: Personalized Experiences

The contemporary luxury consumer expects seamless, personalized service. Technology serves as a pivotal facilitator by offering features such as:

- Virtual try-on experiences leveraging augmented reality: Tailored online recommendations derived from past transactions and browsing patterns Exclusive digital content providing glimpses into the design process
- The Core Tenet: Harness technology to cultivate an aura of exclusivity and personalized attention. Remember, despite digital interactions, human touch remains paramount. Offer impeccable customer service and streamlined online transactions.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

• Understand Consumer Segments: Identify key characteristics and motivations of brand aficionados and value-conscious consumers.

- Marketing Strategies for Different Segments: Analyze strategies for brand aficionados and develop messages for value-conscious consumers.
- Emotional Connection and Luxury: Investigate the link between luxury handbags and positive emotions, confidence, and self-image.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on marketing in the luxury handbags industry reveals key strategies for navigating trends, understanding consumer behavior, and establishing a strong brand positioning for sustained competitive advantage.

Luxury Marketing Strategies:

While scholars emphasize elements like exclusivity and heritage (Kapferer, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007), there is a need for more research that investigates the evolving nature of these strategies and how they adapt to contemporary consumer expectations.

Consumer Behavior:

While Vigneron and Johnson (2004) and Kim et al. (2014) provide insights into luxury perception and social influences, there is a gap in understanding the nuances of changing consumer behaviors, particularly in the context of evolving societal values.

Brand Positioning and Identity:

Although Fionda and Moore (2009) and Kapferer and Bastien (2009) underscore the importance of brand elements, there is a research gap in exploring how the emergence of new luxury brands challenges or complements traditional brand positioning strategies.

Digital Marketing and Online Presence:

Research by Okonkwo (2019) and Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2012) provides a foundation, but further studies are needed to explore the long-term effects of digital marketing on consumer perceptions and the overall brand experience.

Experiential Marketing:

Pine and Gilmore's (1998) concept of the "experience economy" is influential, yet there is a research gap in understanding the specific elements of experiential marketing that contribute to sustained consumer engagement and loyalty in the luxury handbags sector.

Sustainability and Ethical Practices:

While Atwal and Bryson (2017) discuss the integration of ethical practices, there is room for more research on the effectiveness of these initiatives in influencing consumer choices and shaping brand image.

Post-Pandemic Adaptations:

Keller and Richey's (2020) exploration of post-pandemic adaptations is timely, but ongoing research is needed to track the sustained impacts and explore innovative strategies adopted by luxury handbag brands to stay resilient in a rapidly changing landscape

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used is primary research. The research involve a quantitative research design that uses a survey questionnaire to collect data from respondents. The following steps will be taken to conduct the research:

Questionnaire design: A structured questionnaire was developed with closed-ended questions that measure the constructs of interest. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure the questions are clear, concise, and easy to understand.

Data collection: The survey was administered to the selected sample through an online link via email or webbased survey tools like Google Forms. Participation was voluntary, and only those who gave their consent participated in the survey.

Data analysis: The data collected was then analyzed. The analysis was done using statistical software like SPSS and Excel to generate tables, graphs, and charts to present the results.

Ethical considerations: The research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards and guidelines for conducting social research set by relevant legislation and professional associations. The confidentiality and anonymity of respondents was ensured, and their personal data was kept secure.

Combining data sources strengthens the research findings.

Deliverable: A comprehensive report outlining:

Consumer preferences and buying behaviours for luxury handbags.

Trends and challenges faced by the luxury handbag industry.

Effective marketing strategies and brand positioning approaches used by leading companies. Recommendations for optimizing marketing strategies to achieve sustained competitive advantage.



CHAPTER 3 HISTORY

The history of the luxury handbags industry is a captivating narrative that spans centuries, reflecting changes in fashion, craftsmanship, and consumer preferences. The origins can be traced back to ancient civilizations where bags served both practical and symbolic purposes. In medieval and Renaissance Europe, handbags became status symbols among the aristocracy.

The 18th century saw the emergence of specialized craftsmanship, with artisans creating bespoke handbags for the elite. The Industrial Revolution in the 19th century brought mass production, making handbags more accessible to a wider audience.

The 20th century marked a turning point with the rise of iconic luxury brands such as Hermes and Louis Vuitton. These brands established themselves as leaders in the industry, emphasizing quality materials, craftsmanship, and exclusivity. The mid-20th century witnessed the introduction of the first designer handbags, notably with names like Chanel and Gucci.

The latter half of the 20th century saw the handbag industry evolve with changing fashion trends and consumer demands. Luxury conglomerates played a significant role in consolidating brands and expanding their reach globally.

In the 21st century, the digital revolution transformed the way luxury handbags were marketed and sold. Online platforms and social media became integral to brand promotion, while experiential marketing gained prominence.

Sustainability and ethical practices have become crucial considerations in the contemporary luxury handbags industry. Brands are increasingly incorporating responsible practices to meet the evolving values of environmentally conscious consumers.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges, leading to shifts in consumer behavior and adaptations by luxury handbag brands. Increased emphasis on online presence, digital experiences, and revaluation of business models became prominent strategies.

Throughout its history, the luxury handbags industry has adapted to societal changes, fashion trends, and technological advancements. The allure of these accessories lies not only in their functionality but also in the craftsmanship, brand prestige, and the ever-evolving intersection of tradition and innovation.

CHAPTER 4

Navigating the Intricacies of Luxury Handbag Consumer Behavior

Delving into the realm of luxury handbags unveils a complex interplay of emotions, practical considerations, and societal influences, shaping the fascinating landscape of consumer behavior within this segment.

Motivations Steering Purchase Decisions:

Symbol of Status: Luxury handbags serve as potent symbols of success and social stature, with iconic brands such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel becoming badges of accomplishment within specific social circles.

Emotional Resonance: Beyond functionality, these handbags evoke emotions of luxury, confidence, and empowerment. Consumers form emotional attachments rooted in the craftsmanship, design, and heritage associated with a brand.

Investment Perspective: Some consumers view luxury handbags as more than accessories, considering them long-term investments whose value may appreciate over time. This perspective seamlessly blends notions of status with practicality.

Practical Considerations: While not the primary driver, practicality remains a factor. Certain styles are chosen for their spaciousness, versatility, and durability, catering to those seeking a harmonious blend of luxury and functionality.

Influential Factors in Purchase Decisions:

Brand Aura: The brand's image, heritage, and endorsements by celebrities play pivotal roles in shaping consumer choices. Effective brand storytelling and associations with luxury and exclusivity are critical components.

Emphasis on Quality and Craftsmanship: Consumers value top-tier materials, meticulous construction, and timeless design, distinguishing luxury handbags from mass-produced alternatives.

Power of Marketing: Sophisticated marketing campaigns weave narratives of desire, craftsmanship, and emotional connections, often amplified through social media channels, significantly impacting purchasing decisions.

Price as a Symbol: The substantial price tag associated with luxury handbags acts as a deterrent for some but, for others, serves as justification for superior quality and exclusivity.

Diverse Consumer Segments:

The luxury handbag market is not homogeneous, encompassing various consumer segments with distinct preferences:

The Status Seeker: Driven by the aspiration to showcase social status and affiliation with specific brands or social circles.

The Fashion Enthusiast: Draws appreciation from the design, craftsmanship, and exclusivity of luxury handbags, considering them essential wardrobe components.

The Quality Conscious: Values the investment potential and superior quality materials linked with luxury brands.

The Practical Purchaser: Seeks a delicate balance between luxury and functionality, appreciating both style and usefulness.

Strategic Implications for Luxury Brands:

Understanding these diverse motivations and consumer segments empowers luxury brands to tailor their strategies effectively:

Targeted Marketing Campaigns: Craft messaging and storytelling that resonates with specific desires, be it status, investment, or aesthetic appreciation.

Compelling Brand Experiences: Highlight not just the product but also the emotions and aspirations linked to the brand, creating a holistic consumer experience.

Diverse Product Offerings: Appeal to a broader audience by offering a range of styles and functionalities that cater to both practical and aesthetic preferences.

Upholding Exclusivity and Heritage: Despite catering to diverse segments, it is crucial for luxury brands to maintain their image of quality and exclusivity.

CHAPTER 5

Luxury Handbags: Mastering the Art of Marketing

Luxury handbag brands are constantly adapting to stay ahead of the curve. Here's a glimpse into their strategic playbook:

- **Digital Revolution:** Think Louis Vuitton's smart handbags that blend traditional luxury with cutting- edge technology.
- **Immersive Experiences:** Chanel's extravagant runway shows are more than fashion spectacles; they create a one-of-a-kind brand experience that reinforces exclusivity.
- **Celebrity Influence:** Dior's collaboration with Jennifer Lawrence is a prime example of how partnering with popular figures can attract new audiences and modernize a brand's image.
- **Sustainability Matters:** Stella McCartney exemplifies how luxury can be eco-conscious. Their use of sustainable materials caters to the growing demand for environmentally responsible products.
- **Exclusivity and Desire:** Hermès' Birkin bags are a masterclass in scarcity marketing. Limited production and coveted editions fuel demand and maintain high perceived value.
- **Personal Touch:** Burberry's monogramming service lets customers personalize their handbags, creating a unique and individual piece.
- Social Savvy: Gucci's social media presence, particularly on Instagram with influencers, showcases a lifestyle of luxury, inspiring their followers.
- **Seamless Shopping:** Prada offers a smooth customer journey across physical stores and online platforms, ensuring a consistent brand experience.
- The Power of Story: Bottega Veneta emphasizes their heritage by sharing stories about the artisanal process of crafting their handbags, fostering a deeper connection with customers who value tradition.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** YSL leverages customer data to provide personalized handbag recommendations, making the shopping experience more tailored and satisfying.



CHAPTER 6

Dominating the Luxury Handbag Arena: A Multifaceted Approach to Brand Positioning

The world of luxury handbags is a fiercely competitive landscape, where brands vie for consumer attention and loyalty. To achieve sustained success, a comprehensive brand positioning strategy is crucial. Here, we delve into ten key approaches that have helped leading brands carve out a niche and maintain a competitive edge:

• Cultivating an Aura of Exclusivity and Prestige:

Strategic Masters: Hermès

The Tactic: Deliberate scarcity combined with meticulous craftsmanship elevates iconic bags like the Birkin to the status of coveted trophies. Limited production runs and a selective customer base further enhance the mystique and desirability.

Impact: Owning a Hermès bag becomes a badge of honor, signifying exclusivity, prestige, and impeccable taste.

• Leveraging Heritage and Tradition:

Strategic Masters: Chanel

The Tactic: By drawing upon its rich history and timeless designs, Chanel positions itself as a brand steeped in tradition and enduring value. Consistent references to iconic designs like the Chanel flap bag create a narrative of legacy and unwavering elegance.

Impact: Customers perceive Chanel bags as investment pieces, imbued with a timeless quality that transcends fleeting trends.

Embracing Innovation and Modernity:

Strategic Masters: Louis Vuitton

The Tactic: Louis Vuitton seamlessly blends traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge design. Collaborations with contemporary artists and the integration of innovative technology into handbags showcase the brand's commitment to staying relevant and forward-thinking.

Impact: This approach attracts a discerning customer who appreciates both heritage and a forward-looking aesthetic.

• Championing Craftsmanship and Artistry:

Strategic Masters: Bottega Veneta

The Tactic: Intricate weaving techniques and meticulous detailing elevate Bottega Veneta handbags to works of art. The brand emphasizes its artisanal heritage, showcasing the dedication to quality and the human touch behind each creation.

Impact: Consumers perceive Bottega Veneta bags as more than mere accessories – they are investment pieces imbued with artistic merit and exceptional craftsmanship.

• Aligning with Sustainability and Ethical Practices:

Strategic Masters: Stella McCartney

The Tactic: By using eco-friendly materials and upholding ethical production practices, Stella McCartney establishes itself as a leader in sustainable luxury. This strategy resonates with a growing segment of conscientious consumers seeking responsible choices.

Impact: Stella McCartney attracts customers who value both luxury and environmental consciousness.

• Empowering Personalization and Customization:

Strategic Masters: Burberry

The Tactic: Burberry offers a monogramming service, allowing customers to personalize their handbags with initials or unique designs. This fosters a sense of individuality and exclusivity, making each bag a one-of-a-kind expression of personal style.

Impact: Personalization elevates the customer experience, transforming a purchase into a unique and cherished possession.

• Harnessing the Power of Celebrity Endorsements and Influencer Collaborations:

Strategic Masters: Dior

The Tactic: Strategic partnerships with influential celebrities create aspirational connections. Associating with iconic figures like Jennifer Lawrence imbues the brand with a touch of glamour and reinforces its association with luxury.

Impact: Celebrity endorsements enhance brand visibility and appeal, positioning Dior as the choice of the elite and fashion-forward.

• Mastering Digital Presence and Online Accessibility:

Strategic Masters: Gucci

The Tactic: Gucci leverages social media platforms with remarkable effectiveness. Their strong online presence and collaborations with digital influencers contribute to a modern and globally accessible image. Social media becomes a powerful tool for storytelling, engaging with audiences, and showcasing the brand's latest offerings.

Impact: Through its digital prowess, Gucci connects with a wider audience and fosters a sense of community around the brand.

Weaving Compelling Brand Narratives:

Strategic Masters: Prada

The Tactic: Prada crafts a captivating brand narrative by emphasizing the creative process, the inspiration behind designs, and the brand's rich history. This storytelling goes beyond the product, fostering an emotional connection with consumers.

Impact: Consumers develop a deeper understanding of the brand's values and heritage, creating an emotional attachment that transcends the purely functional aspects of the product.

Cultivating an Opulent In-Store Experience:

Strategic Masters: Chanel

The Tactic: Opulent flagship stores and personalized service elevate the shopping experience to a new level. The luxurious ambiance reinforces the brand's image of unparalleled luxury and exclusivity.

Impact: The physical retail space becomes an extension of the brand, further strengthening the association with premium quality and exceptional service.

CHAPTER 7 DATA ANALYSIS

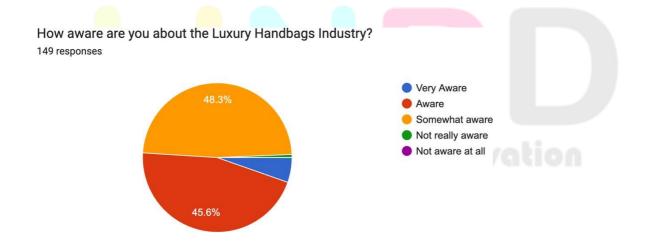
This research consists of interviews with people which included friends, classmates, family members and acquaintances. A structured interview method was used to take the interview which helped to build this closed-ended research. I also made them fill in questionnaires which contain questions related to the topic. Shut finished questions are normally useful for overviews since purchasers answer more rapidly when they don't need to include so a lot. A structured interview is the sort of interview which most people prefer these days in which information is gathered using a series of predefined and prepared questions. It simply means conducting interviews using the same procedures or we can say an entire process used to evaluate individuals seeking the same position. According to research, an organized interview can predict any applicant's success even for positions that are essentially unstructured.

The study was conducted through an online survey of 150 individuals. A questionnaire was designed with the help of Google forms to gather data on consumer behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions towards unethical advertising practices. The survey was distributed through social media platforms and other online forums to ensure a diverse sample.

ANALYSIS

Q1 How aware are you about the Luxury Handbags Industry?

Standard Deviati <mark>on,</mark> s: 37.96	
Count, N: 4	
Sum Σx:149	
Mean, $\bar{\mathbf{x}}$: 37.25	
Variance, s2: 1440.92	



Q2. Which luxury brand are you most likely to buy?

Standard Deviation	s: 35.93
Count	N: 5
Sum	Σx: 149
Mean	x:29.8
Variance	s2: 1290.7

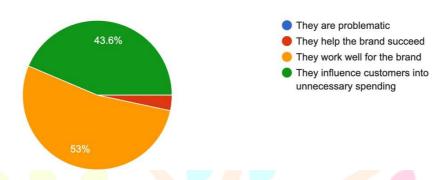
Which Luxury Brand are you most likely to buy? 149 responses



Q3. What do you feel about the marketing strategies that these popular brands use for their bags?

Standard Deviation	s: 39.31
Count	N: 3
Sum	Σx:149
Mean	x: 49.67
Variance	s2: 1545.33

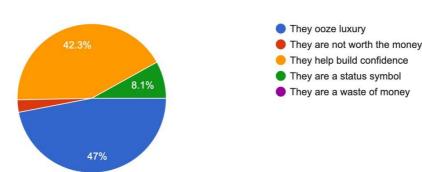
What do you feel about the marketing strategies that these popular brands use for their bags? 149 responses



Q4 What do you think when you see luxury handbags?

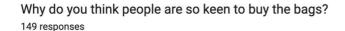
Standard Deviation	s <mark>: 34.05</mark>
Count	N: 4
Sum	Σx: 149
Mean	x̄: 37.25
Variance	s2: 1159.5 <mark>8</mark>

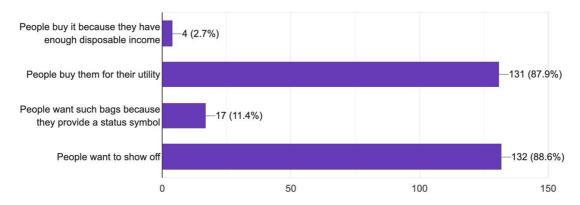
What do you think when you see luxury handbags? 149 responses



Q5. Why do you think people are so keen to buy the bags?

Standard Deviation	s: 70.06
Count	N: 4
Sum	Σx: 149
Mean	x̄: 71
Variance	s2: 4908.67





CHAPTER 8 FINDINGS

The luxury handbag market caters to a surprisingly diverse audience in terms of brand awareness. While the average score indicates a generally high awareness of the industry, the significant standard deviation highlights a wide range of knowledge among consumers. This translates to a market with two distinct segments:

- **Brand Aficionados Consumers:** This group actively engages with the luxury handbag market. They possess a strong understanding of different brands, materials, and trends. They likely appreciate the craftsmanship, heritage, and status associated with luxury handbags. Marketing strategies employed by these brands likely resonate with this segment, influencing their purchasing decisions.
- **Brand Aware but sceptical Consumers:** This segment possesses some basic awareness of luxury handbags but may not be deeply invested in the intricacies of the market. They might view the marketing tactics of luxury brands with a critical eye, questioning the emphasis on status and the perceived inflated value.

Despite this difference in brand awareness and perception of marketing strategies, an interesting trend emerges regarding the overall perception of luxury handbags. A significant majority of respondents associate these items with positive emotions. Luxury handbags are seen as confidence boosters and symbols of luxury. While a smaller segment acknowledges the status symbol aspect, the dominant sentiment leans positive, with most rejecting the notion that luxury handbags are a waste of money. This suggests that emotional connection and perceived value play a crucial role in purchasing decisions, even for those who might be sceptical of marketing tactics.

These findings offer valuable insights for luxury handbag brands. While strong marketing strategies remain important for brand awareness and influencing brand-savvy consumers, brands can also focus on creating a deeper emotional connection with their products. Highlighting the craftsmanship, heritage, and timeless style associated with luxury handbags can resonate with both segments, fostering a sense of value and justifying the price point. Additionally, addressing the concerns of brand-

aware but sceptical consumers by emphasizing ethical sourcing, sustainable practices, and exceptional quality can help bridge the gap and foster trust.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The Delicate Dance of Luxury: Balancing Tradition and Progress in Handbags

The world of luxury handbags is a captivating dance between time-honored heritage and the evershifting currents of innovation. Brands that master this delicate balance are the ones poised for enduring success. To achieve a lasting competitive edge, they must become adept at deciphering the complexities of consumer behavior, anticipating the whims of evolving trends, and all the while, safeguarding their distinct brand identity.

This multifaceted approach necessitates a multi-pronged strategy:

- **Decoding the Consumer Psyche:** The luxury handbag consumer is a discerning individual with a kaleidoscope of desires and aspirations. Brands that can unlock this intricate puzzle, understanding the emotional drivers and functional needs behind purchase decisions, will be best equipped to craft products that resonate deeply.
- **Embracing the Winds of Change:** The luxury handbag market is a dynamic landscape, constantly morphing to reflect new trends and cultural shifts. Brands that cling stubbornly to tradition risk being swept aside. It's about striking a harmonious balance honoring their heritage while remaining future-focused, adept at identifying and incorporating emerging trends without diluting their core brand essence.
- Championing Responsible Practices: Today's luxury consumer is not only concerned with exquisite craftsmanship and timeless design, but also with ethical sourcing and sustainable practices. Brands that demonstrate a commitment to environmental and social responsibility gain a significant edge, fostering a deeper connection with conscious consumers.
- **Crafting a Compelling Narrative:** A strong brand identity is the cornerstone of sustainable success. It goes beyond just a logo it's a compelling story woven around the brand's heritage, values, and vision. Brands that can craft a captivating narrative, one that resonates with their target audience's aspirations and values, will build enduring customer loyalty.
- The Tightrope Walk to Luxury's Peak: Navigating the intricacies between tradition and progress requires agility and foresight. In today's dynamic market, brands that master this tightrope walk, remaining true to their heritage while embracing the future and anticipating consumer desires, will be the ones who ascend to the peak of the luxury handbag industry.

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