

Role of Social Media Marketing In Brand Building: The New Age Marketing Strategy



Management

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ABSTRACT

India being 2nd largest in population, 3rd largest by purchasing power parity and 7th largest in the economy by nominal GDP is a significant destination for all marketers to generate revenue. Brand plays a very significant role in generating sales. Different marketing strategies are adopted by marketers to create brand. In the information age, the companies try to exploit every possible avenue to create their brand image. No longer are today's techno consumers contented with the traditional marketing communication channel hence social media marketing has become the essential part of their marketing communication. Also the demographic shift in India is in favor of young population, forcing the companies to adopt new marketing strategies for creating brand. As majority of young population uses one or other social media networking site, it presents a unique opportunity to companies to reach a million of potential customers in a fraction of the cost as compared to traditional communication mix. The objective of this paper is to identify the role of social media marketing in brand building and influencing consumer buying behavior while making a purchase decision in buying a product. This study has used primary data collected from 265 respondents through survey method using structured questionnaire. Convenient sampling method was used to analyze significant factors through ANOVA and factor analysis which differ across different demographic variables such as age, income, education and occupation. From the factor analysis, five factors were identified as [1] brand impact [2] brand recognition [3] brand approval [4] brand association and [5] brand reliability. These findings highlight the utility of social media marketing in building brands.

1. Introduction

Building a brand in competitive market is a prolonged process that not only consumes time and money but also requires a proper strategy to give intangible outputs to the company. With a paradigm shift in the demography and growing competition, the approach to communicate with customers have changed drastically from traditional to modern marketing with Social Media Marketing (SMM) being the latest stratagem.

Brand awareness is quoted as the highest priority for marketers in both business-to-business and business-to-consumer fields. According to the United Nations agency which superintends international communications, over 3 billion people are currently using the Internet. In accordance with a new report from the International Telecommunication Union, the number of Internet users has boosted from 738 million in 2000 to 3.2 billion in 2015. Nearly 2.1 billion people possess social media accounts which is just over 2/3rd of the active internet users. Hence it's easy to apprehend why business and consumer marketers almost in unison believe that social media is vital to building a brand.

According to Elisabeta Ioanăș and Ivona Stoica in their paper "Social Media and its Impact on Consumers Behaviour" by making use of social media, consumers have the supremacy to influence other buyers through appraisals of products or services used. Consumers are also swayed by psychosocial physiognomies like revenue, purchase motivation, company presentation, firm or brand's presence on social networks, demographic variables such as age and gender, workplace, method of payment, type of stores (online or physical), etc. While business owners cannot make customers operate social media, they can influence the type of things a social media connected shopper discovers. For this reason it's eminent to establish a social media presence.

SMM provides an opportunity to engage and interact with the current and potential consumers and encourage a better sense of intimacy of the customer relationship; thereby improving the brand. A variety of branding and social media marketing activities can be conducted to help achieve the anticipated brand positioning and building brand equity. Marketers are progressively embracing alternative forms of brand-building undertakings. In particular, greater emphasis is being placed on "social media marketing," crafting emotion-laden experiences, creating "buzz" among consumers, and establishing real-world online communities.

SMM is the way of promoting a website, brand or business by interacting with or attracting the interest of current or prospective customers through the channels of social media. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are the most popular social media that are widely used by the companies and the celebrities in promoting themselves and their brands. With the number of users rising each day in Facebook and other social networking sites, it is bound to bring in more customers for the business and much more promotions and marketing thus making social media the better platform for marketing as said by M. Saravanakumar and T.SuganthaLakshmi in lifescience.com.

2. Literature Review

Online marketing has a plethora of strengths; the speed of accessing the information is very fast and extremely cost effective, besides that internet has no geographical boundaries (Chaffey et al, 2004) as mentioned by Simona Vinerean et al. (2013) in their paper "The Effects of Social Media Marketing on Online Consumer Behavior"

Social networking sites can be explained as networks of friends for professional or communal interactions (Trusov et al. 2009). Undeniably, online social networks have intensely changed the broadcast of information by making it unbelievably simple to share and absorb information on the internet (Akrimi & Khe-makhem, 2012).

Jothi et.al in their research paper mentioned that Smith (2010) studied Facebook is gaining popularity and is becoming the greatest source of communications of people. Many companies are trying to emulate Facebook's success/challenge it in one geography or another. Facebook has proven that the core asset on which all of its services are built, the social graph – is much more defensible and powerful than many others once anticipated. Ricadela (2007) says, Coca-Cola has been running promotions on Myspace for the past two years for brands including Cherry Coke and Fanta and has promoted Diet Coke and other drinks on Google's YouTube.

Weber (2009) studied Promoting a community is just like as promoting a new brand product or service to the consumers. Social media is used to communicate people in the promotional aspect and inclined to involve the people. Traditional advertising and direct marketing in social media is to send people to the digital community to be informed, entertained and heard. Users find appealing, a value high enough to encourage them to participate.

According to Jacqueline Simard Ireton, in her blog "Social Media Marketing Influences Consumer Behavior" (www.blastmedia.com), Social media toughens the relationship amongst businesses and consumers. Through these networks, brands can correspond with consumers on a more recurrent and more individual level than formerly possible.

Brent Gleeson in his blog "6 Ways Brands Build Trust through Social Media" (www.forbes.com) said that in today's digital world, transparency is an inborn reality, as people will be speaking about issues linked with the brand online. In a report from e-Marketer, 77% of buyers said they are more likely to buy from a company if the CEO uses social media, and 82% trust the company more. This is impressive, and telling of how consumers want to engage with brands and top-level executives.

Sczmigin (2010) focused on the commercial evolution of the World Wide Web which has resulted in an environment where consumers engage directly with business in a variety of ways. The internet has become an indispensable tool for today's businesses. Every business organization is using in some way or another. Marketing companies or managers who are failing to use internet as marketing strategy will be at disadvantages.

Hamed Karamian et al (2015) in their paper "Do Social Media Marketing Activities Increase Brand Equity?" International Journal of Economy, Management and Social Sciences concluded that Social media marketing aids companies and consumers discover new communication routes. Firms can use social media marketing to set up relationships with loyal consumers and influence their personal perception of the product, advertise their own information and also study from and about their customers. So by using social media marketing, companies can magnify communication with customers and augment customer loyalty day by day.

From the literature review, it is clear that intensive work has been done in social media and brand building. But there is not enough contribution aligning Social Media and brand building. This study helps to bridge the gap and to identify the relationship between them.

2.1 Objectives of the study

- To figure out the role of SMM in building brand.

- To analyze the impact of social media marketing in consumer buying behavior.

- To offer suggestions to the marketers.

2.2 Hypothesis

Related to the above objectives, the following null hypotheses were formulated for testing:

H₁: There is no significant relationship between respondent's age and influence of social media marketing.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between respondent's gender and influence of social media marketing.

H₃: There is no significant relationship between respondent's income and influence of social media marketing.

H₄: There is no significant relationship between education and influence of social media marketing.

H₅: There is no significant relationship between lifestyle and influence of social media marketing.

H₆: There is significant relationship between dependent variable and independent variables.

3. Research Methodology

From literature review and informal discussion with people and marketer helped to form the basis of the study. For this research, primary and secondary data were used. A questionnaire survey method was adopted to find the role of social media marketing in the respondents view. An interview was conducted to 265 respondents to collect primary data with no discrimination on the basis of Age, Gender, Education or Income. The respondents opinion were being gauged by using a questionnaire containing close-ended question, which were designed to ascertain satisfaction level of the respondents using a five point Likert scale with following options: Highly Satisfied, Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied and Highly Dissatisfied. The sample broadly fulfills the purpose of cross sectional survey. The research and statistical tools employed in this study are frequency analysis, factor analysis, ANOVA (Analysis of variance) & Regression. SPSS 22 was used to perform statistical analysis. The reliability of the data was carried out by using Cronbach's Alpha Value. ANOVA was employed to find the association between demography and relevant attributes. The third major analysis carried out was factor analysis to reduce the clustering effects of the similar attributes. Both Bartlett's test of Sphericity and measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) were also carried out to ensure that the requirements of factor analysis were met. In addition, regression analysis was performed to derive a predictive model.

4. Analysis and Interpretations:

The analysis of this data was divided into following sections:

Demographic profile Respondents	: Table 1
Social Media profile	: Table 2
Factor Analysis	: Table 3
ANOVA	: Table 4
Regression Analysis	: Table 5
Proposed Model	: Figure 1

5. Limitations of the study:

1. The study was restricted to Delhi-NCR alone.
2. The data were collected only from Social Media user.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Age	Less than 30	133	50.2
	31- 35	65	24.5
	36-40	39	14.7
	Above 40	28	10.6
Gender	Male	138	52.1
	Female	127	47.9
Income Per Annum	Less than 5 lakhs/year	72	27.2
	5-10 Lakhs	102	38.5
	10 – 20 Lakhs	67	25.3
	20-30 Lakhs	18	6.8
	Above 30 lakhs	6	2.3
Educational Qualification	HSC	18	6.8
	Graduation	109	41.1
	Post-Graduation	109	41.1
	Professional Degree- Others	29	10.9
Lifestyle	Self-Actualizers	61	23.0
	Innovators	59	22.3
	Strivers	39	14.7
	Esteem Seekers	37	14.0
	Openness to change	69	26.0

Source: Primary Data Collected and Compiled by authors

The demographic profile of the respondents shows that the respondents below 30 years are 50.2%. This age group represents majority of respondents who are the frequent users of SNS. Further it is revealed that 38.5% of respondents are in income group between 5-10 lakhs whereas 27.2% of the respondents belonging to the lowest income group of less than 5 lakhs. The composition of the sample according to education is 41.1% graduates, 41.1% Post-Graduates. Whereas if we look the life style statistics reveals that 23% actualizers, 22.3% innovators and 26% openness to change. This is an ideal demographic profile for statistical analysis.

The table below mentions the Social media users and marketers profile.

Table 2: Social Media Profile

Leading Social Media Accounts	Users	SM Promotions according to respondents	Ads mostly come across on Social Media Networking Sites		Types of Ads (%)		Accessibility Rate of Ads (%)	
Facebook	70 %	63.00 %	Shopping goods Ads (Myntra, Snap deal, Flipkart etc.)	49.40 %	Web Banners	40.40	Never	18.5
Twitter	40 %	12.80 %	FMCG goods (Soap, Detergent, Biscuits)	7.90 %	Pop-ups	28.30	Occasionally	40.40

Linked-In	35 %	15.50 %	High Involvement Product (Property-House, Car, Camera, Mobile, Stereo, Washing Machine, Cars)	37.20 %	Flash Ads	7.20	Sometimes	28.30
Google+	22 %	7.50 %	Service related goods (hotels, tourism, movies, airlines)	25.50 %	Video Ads	5.70	Often	7.20
Any Other	10 %	1.20 %	Others	10.20 %	Others	14	Very Much	5.70

Source: Primary Data collected and compiled by authors

Reliability and Validity: To undergo the research, reliability and validity analysis was done to measure the consistency between survey scales. Since, the value of Cronbach's alpha (Ca) can get inflated by multiple variables in the data set so there is no interpretation as to what is the acceptable limit. (Zhang, 2005). The value of Ca can be anywhere between 0 and 1, where the higher value denotes greater consistency. In many situations the following ranges: Ca > 0.9 denotes excellent, 0.9> Ca>0.8 denotes good, 0.8> Ca>0.7 as acceptable, 0.7> Ca>0.6 questionable, 0.6> Ca>0.5 as poor, and less than that unacceptable. The score of Ca calculated for all 32 attributes was 0.798 which is considered to be acceptable. A reliability of 0.798 means the variability is about 79.8 % true ability and 20.2% error. Hence the research can be carried out on this data set.

6. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a statistical approach that addresses the problem of analyzing the structure of the interrelationships (correlations) among a large number of variables. Once these dimension and explanation of each variable are determined, the two primary uses for factor analysis –Summarization and data reduction can be achieved (Hair et al., 1998). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is an index used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. Overall, the set of data meets the fundamental requirements of factor analysis satisfactorily (Hair et al, 2006). In analyzing the data given, a set of 19 statements were reduced to 16 on the basis of correlation. These attributes describe various factors items which were considered to be important in building brand and influencing consumer purchase. These were subjected to a factor analysis using the principal component method. As in common practice, a Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was performed to achieve a simpler and theoretically more meaningful factor solution. The Cronbach's alphas score for all the factors were above the cutoff point (0.7) recommended by Nunnally's (1978). The KMO value for the selected 16 attributes is .828 (sig: 0.000) which is quite above the standard value.

Applying SPSS, the principal component analysis was carried out to explore the underlying factors associated with 16 items. The table below shows 61.56% of variation in brand building with the help of new age marketing strategy – Social Media is explained by 5 factors.

Table 3: Factor Analysis: Components Extracted

F. No	Variables	Name of Dimension	Factor Loading	% of Variance Explained
F1	SMM helps in generating positive attitude	Brand-Impact	0.590	16.856
	SMM helps in generating attachment with the brand to loyalty		0.677	
	SMM helps in comparison of information		0.695	
	SMM and the brand displayed influence your purchase		0.715	
	SMM and the brand Ads influence your decision.		0.752	
F2	SM helps in creating brand awareness	Brand-recognition	.761	15.659
	SM marketing helps to recall and recognize brand		.794	
	Frequency of brand exposure leads to brand recognition		.754	
	Visual ads with favorable endorser leads to brand association		.549	
F3	SMM helps in creating likeability about the brand	Brand-Approval	0.761	11.277
	SMM helps in social approval		.695	
	SMM makes consumer feel a sense of pride		.594	
F4	SMM helps in creating a sense of brand community	Brand-Association	.669	10.392
	SMM engages consumer to visit brand related website		.739	
F5	SMM helps in establishing trustworthiness	Brand-Reliability	0.808	7.376
	SMM of the brand enhances your reliability		0.501	

Discussion of the extracted factors

1. Brand Impact:

It's the most significant factor. It explains 16.856 % of total variance. The consumer purchase decisions are influenced by SMM which has an impact on the brand. This can be seen from The Deloitte report which noted that consumers who use social media in the course of their shopping process are four times more liable to spend more on purchases than those who do not. Another important variable is SMM helps in creating connection between the brand and loyalty of customers. This is in association with the philosophy of Wharton Associate Professor Dr. Americus Reed and his Persona Partners co-founder, Samuel Botts, which says "all brands want loyal customers but building that community can be challenging.

2. Brand Recognition:

This is also a momentous factor showing 15.659 % of total variance. It says SMM helps in creating brand awareness and brand recognition. This is very well explained in Niels-

Table 4: Computation of ANOVA

Items	Age		Gender		Income		Education		Lifestyle		Impact of SMM	
	F	SIG	F	SIG	F	SIG	F	SIG	F	SIG	F	SIG
SMM helps in creating brand awareness	10.88	0.001	0.001	0.973	1.17	0.33	3.28	0.021	0.259	0.904	11.9	.000
SMM helps to recall and recognize the brand	6.443	0.001	0.045	0.832	0.4	0.81	2.32	0.76	0.312	0.87	8.276	.000
Frequency of brand exposure leads to brand recognition	3.724	0.012	0.954	0.33	1.29	0.28	3.84	0.029	1.841	0.121	5.515	.000

en's Global Online Survey on "How social media impacts brand marketing" which articulates that Social media plays an important role in how consumers discover, research, and share information about brands and products. 60 percent of consumers researching products through multiple online sources learned about a specific brand or retailer through social networking sites. Research of Shankar et al. (2011) has concluded that retailers can intensify awareness of their brand by being innovative when involving customers on social media sites. He stated, "As more shoppers are using social media e.g., Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn and depend on them for marketing and shopping decisions, promotion through these modes has become significant"

3. Brand Approval:

This factor combines three factors SMM helps in creating the likeability about the brand, SMM helps in social approval and SMM makes consumer feel a sense of pride with total variation of 11.277 %. The factor identified is Brand Approval which is approved by the respondents after seeking approval from the social networking sites such as Facebook which reinforces the findings of Keller (2003).

4. Brand Association:

Brand association is an essential factor indicating 10.392 % of total variance. The allied variable specifies that SMM helps in creating a sense of brand community. Nielsen's Global Online Survey portrays the interest of consumers to act as ambassadors and advocates for brands through social media. According to Lisette de Vries a, and Sonja Gensler a and Peter S.H. Leeftang in their research "Popularity of Brand Posts on Brand Fan Pages: An Investigation of the Effects of Social Media Marketing Brand Reliability", brand fan pages reflect part of the customers' relationship with the brand (McAlexander et al. 2002), broaden the brand-customer relationship (Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001), and provide a source of information and social benefits to the members (Bagozzi and Dholakia 2002; Dholakia et al. 2004).

5. Brand Reliability:

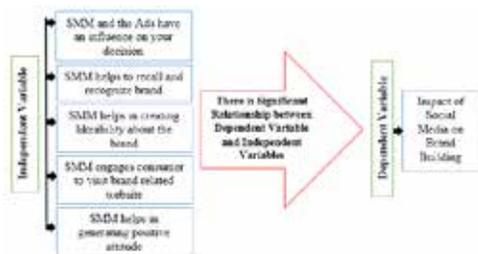
This factor shows 7.376 % of total variance. The significant variable indicates that SMM helps in establishing trustworthiness. This is proved by Brent Gleeson who in his blog "6 Ways Brands Build Trust through Social Media" (www.forbes.com) mentioned, "As humans, without trust, our relationships can never go past a certain level. The same goes for brands building relationships with consumers. What some companies don't realize is social media sites like Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest have become search engines themselves. Instead of going to a traditional search engine, consumers might go directly to a social media channel to search for content and to learn more about products or services.

Visual ads in SM with favorite endorser leads to brand association	0.448	0.719	0.04	0.841	1.04	0.39	5.32	0.001	0.586	0.673	3.080	.017
SMM helps in establishing trustworthiness about the brand	0.211	0.889	0.471	0.493	0.31	0.87	0.55	0.66	0.37	0.83	2.657	.033
SMM helps in creating likeability about the brand	1.103	0.348	0.178	0.674	0.57	0.69	2.56	0.05	0.176	0.951	2.579	.038
SMM helps in social approval of product	2.51	0.049	0.455	0.501	1.96	0.1	1.02	0.384	0.219	0.928	2.582	.038
SMM makes consumer feel a sense of pride, accomplishment and fulfillment of needs	0.551	0.648	0.259	0.611	1.72	0.15	2.66	0.049	0.911	0.458	7.628	.000
SMM helps in creating a sense of brand community	0.612	0.608	0.012	0.912	0.99	0.42	0.2	0.895	1.331	0.259	13.516	.000
SMM engages customer to enter brand related website	1.208	0.307	1.559	0.216	0.31	0.87	0.23	0.875	1.023	0.396	4.721	.001
SMM helps in generating positive attitude about the brand	0.212	0.888	0.466	0.495	0.97	0.42	0.65	0.586	1.1	0.357	7.179	.000
SMM helps in generating attachment with the brand-loyalty	0.72	0.541	1.194	0.276	0.91	0.46	1.51	0.212	0.58	0.678	14.297	.000
SMM and the brand displayed influence your purchase	1.574	0.196	1.029	0.311	0.19	0.94	1.01	0.39	1.695	0.152	15.96	.000
SMM helps in comparison of information	0.584	0.626	0.372	0.543	1.26	0.29	0.93	0.427	1.117	0.349	13.98	.000
SMM and the brand Ads influence your decision.	0.779	0.506	1.663	0.198	1.58	0.18	0.74	0.53	1.775	0.134	13.65	.0001
SMM of the brand enhances your reliability	1.277	0.283	0.096	0.757	1.25	0.29	2.01	0.113	0.903	0.463	7.309	.000

7. Regression Analysis

To investigate the relationship between dependent variables and independent variables, regression analysis is done for hypothesis H₆. The dependent variable is: Impact of SMM on brand building. The independent variables are: SMM helps in establishing trustworthiness, SMM helps in creating likeability about the brand, SMM helps to recall and recognize brand, SMM engages consumer to visit brand related website, SMM and the brand Ads influence your decisions. The error is denoted by 'e' & 'a' is constant.

Figure 1: Proposed model to evaluate Impact of SM on Brand Building



Hypothesis H₆

The basic model tested in the study is:

$$Y = a + b_1(x_1) + b_2(x_2) + b_3(x_3) + b_4(x_4) + \dots + b_m x_m \pm e$$

As factor analysis describes the existence of clusters of large correlation coefficients with measured dimensions as factors, these factors do not have the predictive strength of any order on the measured phenomenon. However, multiple linear regression describes the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Hypothesis is tested with the help of ANOVA at 5% significance. The attributes used are the outcomes from the factor analysis. Thus, we get independent variables. The dependent variable is the Impact of SMM which has been asked separately from the respondents.

Table 5: Regression Model

Source	Coefficient	Std. Error	Sig.	R, R ² , Adj R ²
Constant	-0.469	0.293	0.009	R = 0.796, R ² = 0.633 Adj R ² = 0.613 df = 5, 258 f = 24.15, sig = 0.00
SMM and the ads have an influence on your decision	0.415	0.056	0.001	
SMM helps to recall and recognize brand	0.117	0.05	0.021	
SMM helps in creating likeability about the brand	0.031	0.051	0.543	
SMM engages consumer to visit brand related website	0.159	0.054	0.004	
SMM helps in generating positive attitude	0.047	0.055	0.393	

From the ANOVA analysis we find that the significance value is <0.05 . This denotes that the dependent variable has significant relationship with the independent variables. So our hypothesis H₆ is accepted.

8. Findings

As per the model summary table $R=0.796$, $Adj R^2=0.613$ and R^2 is 0.633 – which means 63.3% of the variance of the dependent variable is explained by independent variables. Adjusted R^2 is 0.613, model account for 61.3% variance, it is a good model as the concept of brand development is a persistent exercise by the marketer with various marketing tactics. Since, there are several communication mix used by marketer and if SMM is contributing nearly 63%, the marketer should be happy to keep promoting brands through it. From the table, except SM marketing helps in generating positive attitude, SMM helps in creating likeability about the brand, all the other independent variables have significant value <0.05 . The group of independent variables shows statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable which implies that the marketer should advertise in social networking sites helping the marketer to influence consumer decision and also involve consumer for acquiring information from their official website to build trust and recognize brand.

9. Results and Discussion

Therefore, we present the modified regression equation to measure the impact of SMM on consumers as:

Impact of SMM (Y) = $-0.469 + 0.415(\text{SMM influences your decision}) + 0.159(\text{SMM engages consumer to visit brand related website}) + 0.117(\text{SMM helps to recall and recognize brand})$.

This means that today's consumer not only uses social networking sites for their personal use but also keeps an eye on the ads getting displayed and if they like the brand they gather information from the website and while purchase it is easier for them to recall and recognize the brand.

10. Hypothesis Testing

In order to analyze the role of social media marketing on demographic elements we carried out ANOVA on the customers' response. The results of ANOVA is given in Table 4. Based on the level of significance value of 0.5 from Table 4, it indicates that SMM has significant impact on the age of the respondents and hence we reject H₁. However for hypothesis H₂, H₃ and H₅, it can be seen that all the values are significantly higher than 0.5, so there is no significant relationship between respondent's gender, income & lifestyle. Hence we accept H₂, H₃ and H₅.

From the demographic table it is clear that majority of respondents are graduates or post graduate and are the major users of internet. Hence it is obvious that the impact of social media marketing is significant in this demographic factor and we reject H₄.

The relationship between dependent and independent variables were found to be significant and therefore we accept H₆.

11. Conclusion

The findings of the study clearly signifies that Social Media Marketing influences brand building as the consumers are regular user of the various networking sites. The adaptation of social networking sites would always be a handy exercise for the marketer to build brand and influence sales as majority of the user uses Facebook or LinkedIn more

often than other networking sites. Factor analysis have brought five factors representing various elements considered by the respondents. These factors are brand impact, brand recognition, brand approval, brand association and brand reliability. Gender, income and lifestyle of respondents have no significant impact of social media marketing whereas age and education has significant impact of SMM. Further Regression analysis shows that 63% of the respondents are getting impacted by various networking sites. Hence, this new age marketing strategy should be used to enhance brand building.

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