

# User's Guide and Tips on Successful Sponsorships



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by Linda Hollander, Wealthy Bag Lady

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Articles and updates at [www.WealthyBagLady.com](http://www.WealthyBagLady.com)

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## How to Use the Sponsor Proposal Template

Write the sponsor proposal in the third person. Avoid words like "I", "me" and "we". You will be referred to as the "property". This is different from a company brochure. A good sponsor proposal is 25% about your property and 75% about the sponsor benefits.

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### ***Cover Page***

Think of a tagline and the major benefit to the sponsor, such as connecting their brand to women entrepreneurs with purchasing power.

Use logos, graphics and visuals whenever you can for a professional look.

For stock photos, go to these web sites:

<http://www.fotolia.com>

<http://www.istockphoto.com>

### ***Splash Page***

These are the quick facts about your property. List the juicy benefits and all the information the sponsor needs to know such as dates, locations, attendance, etc. This may also be used as the proposal brief.

### ***Table of Contents***

This is optional, but it does force you to organize the proposal and makes it easy for the reader. In the Microsoft Word document, you can update the table of contents by right-clicking on one of the fields. Then choose update field and then update entire table. The page numbers will automatically fill in. If you want to add new categories to your document, just enter them as headlines and they will be added to the table of contents.

### ***Goals for Sponsors***

I like to put the goal succinctly into a box for easy reading. Everything in the proposal should support this goal. Remember this is the sponsor's goal, not yours.

### ***Founder's Story and Photo***

Be sure to make the story captivating and use a good quality photo. You want to pull the reader in and establish an emotional connection. Appeal to their humanity and make them see the founder as a real person. Describe the dedication of the founder and their purpose.

### ***Story of the Property***

Continue the story, hook the reader and reel them in here. Talk about how the property was created, and the people you've helped. Remember to relate the story to the sponsor and their goals.

### ***Mission Statement***

The stated purpose of your organization or event complete with how you measure success.

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### ***Description of Program***

If you're doing an event, describe it here. Will there be speakers? Are there trade show booths? For a non-profit, describe how you help the association members or recipients of the charity. You can also describe your book tour, products, services, speaking presentations, radio or television show, columns you write, etc.

### ***Sponsor Benefits***

Make your offering benefit-rich. List all of the opportunities and be as specific as possible. Avoid general statements and promise deliverables. Fill in the parenthesis with your personal information about your property.

### ***Demographic Information***

Be specific about your demographic. Include gender, age range, education, household income, buying habits, etc. Also list the psychographics and how the sponsor can benefit from this target audience.

### ***Media Opportunities***

Hopefully you've acquired in-kind media partners. Describe them and remember to use specifics, not generalities.

### ***Ultimate Marketing Plan***

Describe everything you will use to get the word out including traditional and non-traditional media. Include short and long-range plans.

### ***Cause-Related Marketing Opportunities***

Describe how the sponsor can use your property to create an image of doing good for the community.

### ***Strategic Alliances***

With strategic alliances, you can broaden your reach and add value to your sponsors. Describe your association partners and alliances here.

### ***Advisory Board and Management Team***

Describe the influential people on the board and staff along with their accomplishments.

### ***Charitable Partner***

Tell the sponsor about the work of your chosen charity.

### ***Present and Past Sponsors and Clients***

Let the sponsor know they're in good company. Include their logos if possible. This gives the proposal a professional look and adds credibility

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### ***Testimonials***

Put in as many testimonials as you can. If you have photos, use them with the testimonials. You can put the testimonials in one section, but I like to pepper them throughout the proposal to make sure they get read and to create interest.

### ***Year-Round Multi-Benefit Packages***

You've come this far. Don't turn back on me now! This will be the hardest part of the proposal, but if you've laid down a great foundation with your story and benefits, this will be a piece of cake. Remember to think outside the box and ask for big sponsorship fees. Don't sell yourself short. Instead of reducing your prices, get creative and add more benefits. Refer to your assets and their related benefits. Call the sponsorship fee an "investment".

Try not to call the different levels of sponsorship Bronze, Silver, Gold, etc. Get creative. Habitat for Humanity has the Master Carpenter Sponsor.

### ***Call to Action***

Restate the main benefit to the sponsor and ask for action now.

### ***Back Page (Optional)***

If your proposal will be printed, it's good to have a back page with your logo, tagline, sponsor benefit and all contact information

### ***Formatting the Sponsor Proposal***

- Give your contact information in the footer on each page or each 2 page spread. That way, if the pages get separated, the sponsor still knows how to contact you.
- Don't email a PowerPoint presentation, because they might not be able to open it.
- Email your proposal as an Adobe PDF document. This is the industry standard and can be opened by anyone. If you do your initial document in Word, convert it to an Adobe PDF document.
- If you send a hard copy of your proposal, print it on the best bright white paper you can find with heavy stock on the front and back of each page. Then take it to the local copy store and have it comb-bound with a nice backing and an acetate overlay for a professional look. If you send out lots of proposals, you may want to invest in your own binding machine available at office supply stores.
- Pay attention to the details. Have someone proof-read your proposal for typos and grammatical mistakes.

## **Definition of Sponsorship**

A cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property in return for access to the commercial potential associated with that property.

## Why Would a Company Sponsor You?

- Increase brand loyalty
- Create awareness and visibility
- Change / reinforce image
- Drive retail traffic
- Grow customer base
- Open up a desirable geographic territory
- Showcase community responsibility
- Sample and display brand attributes
- Entertain clients
- Narrowcasting- A company can hone in on a niche market
- Recruit and retain employees – events are used as perks for employees
- Merchandising opportunities
- Incentives to retailers, dealers and distributors
- Direct connections with target market
- Putting a friendly face on the company
- Be known as a good corporate citizen
- Forge new links with opinion leaders
- To be on your advisory board if you have influential opinion leaders
- Reward top salespeople
- Attract new customers
- Thank old customers
- Demonstrate category leadership
- Open new channels of distribution
- Create customer loyalty
- Opportunity to test a new product or service
- To make people aware of a line extension
- Chance to tell the public about a lesser known part of the company
- Damage control
- Identification with a particular lifestyle
- Enhance commitment to a demographic or ethnic group
- Drive sales

## **Tips on Successful Sponsorships**

1. Sponsorship is not about your needs. It's about achieving the sponsor's goals. You need to accept this to be successful in the with corporate sponsors.
2. Try to get sponsorships from companies that are a natural fit for your property.
3. Don't think of sponsorship as free money. The sponsor is not your "Sugar Daddy". They are your partner. Once you get the check, you're just getting started. You need to provide value to a sponsor, give them frequent reports and communicate with them on a continual basis to make sure you're meeting their needs.
4. When you make your initial call, ask for the marketing department. You may also find money in the public relations department, community affairs, sales, advertising, promotions, brand or product management, public affairs, or supplier diversity. Human Resources is less desirable, but some companies have money there. My clients get really excited when there is a sponsorship department, but this typically is a screening device where only a small percentage of proposals are approved. I've often thought of the sponsorship department as a black hole in space, where things go in, but are never seen again. Remember that you can get a "no" from one department in a company and a "yes" from another. It's happened to my clients again and again.
5. Logo identification on banners and printed materials is now considered a secondary benefit. Sponsors are looking for connections, not just exposure.
6. Be sure your proposal can stand on it's own without you explaining it. Your contact person in an organization may have to show it to their colleagues before getting an approval.
7. With sponsorships, less is more. Just a few large sponsors are better than many smaller sponsors. Sponsors don't like clutter (think of NASCAR).
8. You may want to prepare 2 proposals: 1 full proposal and 1 brief proposal. Some sponsorship seekers submit the brief and then present the full proposal at the first meeting.
9. If you partner with a charity, make sure it's a good fit. If you're doing a women's event, don't donate part of the proceeds to an animal charity. Instead choose a breast cancer charity, women's abuse shelter or Habitat for Humanity that will build a home for a single mom.
10. Don't promise more than you can deliver. For an event, be realistic about the projected attendance. It's very easy for a sponsor to see that you don't have as many people as you promised. Once you burn your bridges, you may not get a second chance.
11. Try not to make general statements that can't be supported by solid facts.
12. When researching your demographic think of the print publications they read and the radio stations they listen to. Then call for a media kit. This will give you great information about the target audience and their buying habits.
13. Expand your vision. If you're a speaker and author who runs an event, don't just get an event sponsor. Instead, get a corporation to sponsor your entire brand: the event, speaking, media, products and book tour.
14. Have an outline of the different sponsor packages, but tailor each package to the particular sponsor's needs.
15. Don't price your sponsor packages so that you only get enough money to cover your expenses. Sponsorships are about the value and assets you bring to a company, not just covering your costs.

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16. Include pricing in your proposal. I like to price the different levels of sponsorship in round numbers. Instead of \$9,999, I would put the price at \$10,000. I also don't like to see range pricing, such as \$10,000-\$14,999. If they're getting the same benefits, it's tempting for a company just to pay the lower amount.
17. Don't price your assets a la carte. Create multi-benefit packages for your sponsors that include exposure, media, direct response, etc.
18. Photos usually look better when they are framed within a black border.
19. In sales "No" usually means "Not yet. I need more information." or "You haven't listened and responded to my needs."
20. Don't mass produce your sponsorship proposal or send generic form letters.
21. Remember that the proposal should tell the prospective sponsor enough about your property to get a phone or an in-person meeting. When negotiating, try to meet the sponsor in person, rather than a phone call. If the sponsorship fees are big enough, you may want to fly in to close the deal with a prospective sponsor.
22. Offer marketing solutions that are relevant to your prospective sponsor, not just information. Tell them how you can solve their issues and challenges
23. Talk to the sponsor about activation, this is how the sponsor will promote your property. Sponsorship is a two-way street. You don't have to do all the work. For example a retail store can display posters and take-one brochures about your event.
24. Use research and statistics to strengthen your offering. Be very specific about your demographic, the media partners, and your marketing plan.
25. Most people don't do enough follow-through after the initial contact. Tenacity is one of the traits of successful sponsorship sales.
26. When following up with a sponsor, don't say, "Did you get my proposal?" Instead say, "I'd like to talk to you about the proposal that I sent over. There are some new developments that I think would benefit you and your company."
27. Do plenty of pre-media and post-media for your event.
28. Remember that a big part of your brand is your integrity. Your word is your bond and you always do what you say. Always be on-time or early to both in-person and phone appointments. If you can't finish something on time, call your sponsor and let them know you're working on it. Never try to fake an answer to a sponsor's question. Admit that you don't know and tell the sponsor that you'll get back to them with the information.
29. Be clear about the sponsor's goals and their expected return on investment.
30. When you meet with a prospective sponsor always have a contract with you. They may be ready to sign a deal. If they are deciding between 2 different packages, bring a contract for each package and ask them which one they would like to authorize. You can always cross-out clauses and make changes on the spot.
31. Keep your contracts as short as possible and be specific about the sponsor's benefits and rights.
32. When you get to the right person in the company, find out who their colleagues are and how to reach them. If they leave the company, you can contact their colleagues.
33. Deal with problems before they get out of hand.
34. Don't be afraid to ask for the order. If you are turned down, ask why. This will give you great feedback for approaching the next sponsor.
35. Trade concessions, don't give them away. Whenever you are asked to give a concession in order to close the deal, always create a "quid pro quo," something for something. People may not respect you if you crumble under pressure. Remember, if you just give, they will just take. Always seek a trade.
36. Telephone sales skills are crucial. If your sales skills are weak, take a course or hire someone to do the phone solicitation for you.



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37. Think carefully before selling your naming rights. Many sponsored properties regret this decision.
38. Decide if certain sponsors, such as fast food, alcoholic drinks or cigarette sponsors would be appropriate for you.
39. Use Google Alerts to get information about your target market. You can also do a Google Alert for your name with quotation marks around it.
40. If you're looking for a charity, go to <http://www.charitynavigator.org>
41. Check references of a prospective charity through <http://www.give.org>
42. It's best to have one charitable partner, rather than a few different charities.
43. If you have a charity, remember that the sponsor's decision is usually not solely based on the fact that your charity is doing wonderful work. Sponsors need a return on their investment. That being said, I had once had a client who got a great sponsor for a leukemia charity because the CEO had a son with leukemia. Occasionally this does happen.
44. If you're a 501c(3) charity, include all of your official papers when you submit your proposal.
45. If you're a non-profit, include testimonials of people you've helped.
46. Have the charitable recipients tell their stories at your live event and be sure to get plenty of video coverage and photos.
47. Americans are very receptive to cause-related marketing by companies. 80% believe it's good for companies to support causes.
48. Receptivity to cause-related marketing is greatest among those most likely to make key purchasing decisions: women (84%), parents of young children (81%) and individuals (81%).
49. Connect sponsors to each other so they can do cross-promotions. You can even host a sponsor summit.
50. Walk away from bad deals. Don't be so emotionally-invested in your property that you're afraid to get up and walk away.
51. Make an emotional connection with your sponsor. Business is done between people, not faceless companies. Don't write a dry proposal full of numbers and statistics. Your proposal should include stories, testimonials, emotion, personality and even humor.
52. Remember, it's about them, not about you.

## Things in the Package That May Have Little Value to Sponsors

- Logo on banners, press releases, promotional materials and on-site booth. (*Yeah, so what? Who will see my logo? What other logos will be there? Will there be clutter?*)
- Event will endeavor to publicize sponsor's involvement. (*What does this mean? Who will it be publicized to? What are their buying habits? Where will it be publicized?*)
- Positive public awareness. (*What does this mean, exactly?*)
- Sponsor will get media exposure (*What media? What is the circulation, viewers, listeners? What are their demographics?*)

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## Possible Categories for Sponsorships

When trying to identify possible sponsors, think of categories first. Then list the companies in that category. Get creative and list the possible top tier and second tier sponsors in each category.

Banks  
Financial Services  
Credit Unions  
Utilities  
Software Companies  
Aerospace  
Cosmetics  
Booksellers  
Universities  
Staffing Companies  
Communications  
Office Supply Stores  
Insurance Companies  
Car Companies  
Broadcast Media (Television and Radio)  
Airlines  
Retailers  
Gasoline Companies  
Office Supply Manufacturers  
Apparel Manufacturers  
Beverages  
Health Care & Pharmaceuticals  
Consumables  
Computers & Peripherals  
Electronics  
Personal Care Products  
Household and Cleaning Products  
Printing Companies  
Food Products and Food Service  
Department Stores  
Associations  
Search Engines  
Women's Products  
Men's Products  
Children's Products  
Diet Products  
Athletic Gear  
Web Sites  
Internet Service Providers  
Hotels  
Shipping Companies  
Print Media (Magazines and Newspapers)  
Restaurants

## **Powerful and Effective Phrases**

(Use them as needed)

- Measurable response
- Diverse, integrated marketing opportunities
- Tremendous consumer needs and purchasing power
- Industry standard
- Targeted marketing messages
- Encourages diversity
- Qualified media coverage
- Improve market share
- Increase customer base
- Database marketing opportunities
- Cause-related marketing opportunities
- Generous hospitality components
- Increase product exposure
- Enhance existing marketing efforts
- Develop qualified sales leads
- Growth communities
- Diversity
- Baby Boomers
- Matures – Greatest Generation
- Generation X
- Generation Y
- Teens
- Tweens
- Cultural Creatives
- Disposable income
- Tremendous purchasing power
- Consumer needs
- Solidify client relationships
- Increase sales
- Integrated marketing program
- Pre-marketing campaign, marketing during event and post-marketing campaign
- Access to proprietary database

## **How to Sell a First-Time Event or a New Sponsored Property**

- Get your media partners first. Then leverage them to get corporate sponsors.
- To build credibility, create strategic alliances with associations, established businesses, charities, and successful events with a track record. You can even partner with a competing event, business or charity and turn them into your ally.
- Get influential people on your advisory board.
- Do plenty of research on the companies you plan to approach. Use the internet and request the company's annual reports.
- Talk about short-term and long-term marketing so sponsors know you're in for the long haul.
- Be realistic about your projected attendance, demographics, extended reach, etc.
- Use magnet sponsors – impressive companies with household names can be in-kind sponsors to draw-in cash sponsors.
- If a sponsor wants to cut the fee because your property doesn't have a track record, tell them you'll consider it if they commit to a full fee sponsorship for the next (year or event). Tell them that if they are not satisfied they can withdraw in a certain time period.

## **Assets and Their Related Benefits**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Related Benefits</b>
Displaying company logos and marks	Promotional rights
Your demographic	Access and sales opportunities
Publications and Marketing Materials	Recognition
Signage	Exposure
Web Page	Extended reach
Locations	On-site branding
Trade show booth or tabletop	Relationship marketing opportunity
Speaking opportunity	Chance to promote new products, reinforce brand and establish goodwill
Media	Extended reach
VIP Opportunities and Hospitality	Incentives for clients and employees
Talent	Promotional tie-ins and involvement
Broadcast Media	Visibility
Email Campaign	Direct links to company website
Public Relations	Enhance corporate image with shareholders and the public
Charity Tie-In	Tax write off and creation of goodwill for sponsor's brand
Media Buys	Reinforcing brand image
Exclusivity	Guarantee of no competitors as co-sponsors
Award Presentations	Cause-related marketing and media
Other Sponsors and Partners	Added value and cross-promotions

## Glossary of Terms

### **Activation**

The marketing activities a company conducts to promote its sponsorship. Money spent on activation is over and above the rights fee paid to the sponsored property.

### **Ambient Media**

The non-traditional or new media such as advertisements on furniture and promotional items.

### **Assets**

The benefits to your sponsor. These can be tangible and intangible. Usually assets are listed in the sponsor packages.

### **Audience Composition**

The distribution of an audience into demographic or other categories.

### **Brand Equity**

The totality of what consumers, distributors, dealers, and competitors feel and think about a brand over an extended period of time. In short, it is the value of the brand's capital.

### **Brand Loyalty**

The consumer's conscious or unconscious decision-expressed through intention or behavior to repurchase a brand continually. This occurs because the consumer perceives that the brand has the right product features, image, quality, or relationship at the right price.

### **Cause-Related Marketing**

A sales or promotional partnership between a business and a non-profit for mutual benefit. Money spent on cause-related marketing is a business expense, not a donation, and is expected to show a return on investment.

### **Cross-Promotions**

A joint marketing effort conducted by two or more co-sponsors using the sponsored property as the central theme. Sponsors appreciate being connected to each other for mutual benefit.

### **Customer Lifetime Value**

The total sales or profit value of a customer to a marketer over the course of that customer's lifetime.

### **Demographic Information**

Based on the age, gender, life-cycle stage and occupation of consumers.

### **Emotional Appeal**

Marketing that is directed at the consumer's psychological, social, or symbolic needs.

### **Hospitality**

Hosting key customers, clients, politicians, employees and other VIPs at an event. Hospitality can involve tickets, parking, dining and other amenities in a specially designated area. Also referred to as client entertainment.

### **In-Kind Sponsorship**

Payment (full or partial) of sponsorship fee in goods or services rather than cash. Also referred to as trade or soft dollars.

### **Mark**

Any official visual representation of a property which includes logos, emblems and mascots.

### **Market**

A group of potential customers who share a common interest, need or desire, who can use the offered goods or services to some advantage.

### **Media Sponsor**

TV, radio, print media, internet and outdoor advertising companies that provide either cash, or more frequently advertising time or space to a property in exchange for official designation.

## Glossary of Terms (Continued)

### **Premiums**

Promotional products customized with a sponsor's logo to promote a sponsor's involvement with a property.

### **Presenting Sponsor**

The sponsor that has its name just below or just above the name of the sponsored property. Example: XYZ event presented by Company A. The sponsor's name is not fully integrated into the property since the word(s) "presents" or "presented by" always come between them.

### **Property**

The entity available for sponsorship. Also known as a sponsee or rightsholder.

### **Psychographics**

Quantified psychological profiles of individuals based on their attitudes and behavior.

### **Relationship Marketing**

Creating, maintaining and enhancing long-term relationships with customers and other stakeholders that result in exchanges of information and other things of mutual value

### **Seeding**

Giving products to trendsetters (celebrities and influential people) to help create buzz.

### **Signage**

Banners, billboards, electronic messages, decals, etc. displayed on-site and containing sponsor's identification.

### **Sponsor**

A commercial entity that pays a property for the right to promote itself and its products or services in association with the property.

### **Sponsorship**

A cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property.

### **Sponsorship Fee**

Payment made by a sponsor to a property. Also called a rights fee.

### **Sponsorship Proposal (also called Sponsorship Deck or Prospectus)**

Document describing the property and outlining the benefits and sponsor fees.

### **Street Teams**

Groups of young people hired by companies to hang out in clubs, parks, and malls talking to teens and young adults about everything from fashion to finance, trying to pinpoint trends as they emerge.

### **SWOT Analysis**

An acronym for internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, which represent the four categories used by advertising managers when reviewing a marketing plan. The SWOT analysis restates the company's current situation, reviews the target market segments, and itemizes the long-term and short-term objectives.

### **Target Market**

The specific group of individuals to whom the message is directed. Also called target audience.

### **Title Sponsor**

Company that has its name incorporated into the name of the event. Example: Chrysler Classic Golf Tournament.

### **Web Sponsorship**

The right to exploit the commercial potential associated with a site on the world wide web, including integrated relationship building and branding.



## Who is the Wealthy Bag Lady?



Linda Hollander has become known as the “Wealthy Bag Lady”. She is the industry leader in teaching entrepreneurs about corporate sponsorships. She is the author of the #1 best-selling book, ***Bags to Riches: 7 Success Secrets for Women in Business***.

She is the founder of the ***Women’s Small Business Expo***, which takes place every year in Los Angeles, California.

Her sponsors include Citibank, Fed Ex, American Airlines, Staples, Health Net, Smith Barney, Wal Mart / Sam’s Club, Bank of America and IBM.

She is the president of the International Association of Business Sponsorships.

She has over 20 years of experience as a small business owner and she is the only person to be featured in both Entrepreneur and Female Entrepreneur magazine in the same month. She has also been on NBC, CBS, FOX Television, Bloomberg Radio and Remarkable Women.

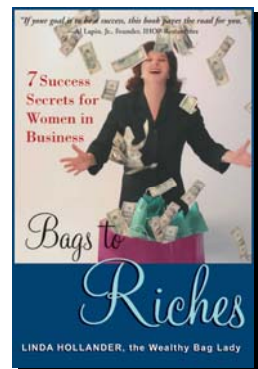
She started out worse than broke. She was buried in debt and couldn’t find a way out of the poverty trap and abusive relationships. But that’s not what really bothered her. It was that she was short and had frizzy hair to boot.

She and her best friend, Sheryl Felice, used their girl-power to the max. They launched a packaging business which sells custom-printed shopping bags to leading-edge companies.

Her company was formed in 1988. She devised a sales and marketing plan which made the fledgling business profitable in a very short amount of time. As revenues for the company increased every year, she met entrepreneurial women, understood what motivates them and how she could increase their success. By the way, she is still short with frizzy hair. Hey, some things you just can’t change.

Disney, Cisco Systems, Mattel, Universal Studios, Nissan, Yamaha, Sony, Revlon, Dunn Edwards Paints, Sanyo, Avery Dennison, Columbia Tri Star, CBS, City of Hope, Union Bank, ASCAP, Powerade, Kaiser Permanente, IBM, Variety, Ocean Spray, Sears and Infiniti are some of her clients. Her passions are business, sponsorships, marketing, promotion and packaging (she is a “Bag Lady”, after all).

Linda Hollander owes her success to the wonderful people in her life: Her parents, Bob and Blossom Hollander, Rhoda and Howard Goldie, and her best friend, Sheryl Felice. She lives in Los Angeles, California with her husband, Leslie Greenfield, and their two cats, Carmella and Sneakers.



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# Notes



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