



Product Innovation and Its Impact on Firm Competitiveness: Evidence from PT Martabak Mak Yung

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Abstract

The martabak egg business represents a traditional culinary sector with significant potential in Indonesia's economy. Despite its popularity, martabak producers face increasing challenges in maintaining business sustainability and remaining competitive in a rapidly evolving market. This study examines the role of product innovation in enhancing the competitiveness of PT Martabak Mak Yung to ensure its growth and long-term sustainability. Using a descriptive qualitative approach supported by in-depth interviews, the findings indicate that product innovation is a key driver of business success. Strategies such as diversifying fillings, offering variations in spiciness levels, providing different portion sizes, and improving packaging have proven effective in attracting and retaining customers. In addition, competitive advantages including homemade thin crispy skin, premium filling options, and the signature cuco sambal contribute to distinguishing the brand in both traditional and digital markets. These innovations not only enhance customer satisfaction but also boost business performance, as evidenced by a 12–18% increase in online customer engagement. The study highlights that continuous product innovation is essential for PT Martabak Mak Yung to sustain its market position and adapt to changing consumer preferences in the modern culinary landscape.

Keywords: *Product Innovation, Competitiveness, Egg Martabak, Msmes, Marketing Strategy*

Abstrak: Bisnis martabak telur merupakan sektor kuliner tradisional dengan potensi signifikan bagi perekonomian Indonesia. Meskipun populer, produsen martabak menghadapi tantangan yang semakin meningkat dalam menjaga keberlangsungan bisnis dan daya saing di pasar yang terus berkembang. Studi ini meneliti peran inovasi produk dalam meningkatkan daya saing PT Martabak Mak Yung untuk memastikan pertumbuhan dan keberlanjutan bisnis jangka panjang. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif yang didukung oleh wawancara mendalam, temuan menunjukkan bahwa inovasi produk merupakan faktor kunci keberhasilan bisnis. Strategi seperti diversifikasi isian martabak, variasi tingkat kepedasan, pemilihan ukuran porsi, dan peningkatan kemasan telah terbukti efektif dalam menarik dan mempertahankan pelanggan. Lebih lanjut, keunggulan kompetitif seperti kulit martabak yang tipis dan renyah buatan sendiri, pilihan isian premium, dan saus cabai khas berfungsi sebagai faktor pembeda yang memperkuat posisi merek di pasar tradisional dan digital. Inovasi-inovasi ini tidak hanya meningkatkan kepuasan pelanggan tetapi juga meningkatkan kinerja bisnis, sebagaimana dibuktikan dengan peningkatan pelanggan online sebesar 12–18%. Studi ini menekankan bahwa inovasi produk yang berkelanjutan sangat penting bagi PT Martabak Mak Yung untuk mempertahankan posisi pasarnya dan beradaptasi dengan preferensi konsumen di era kuliner modern.

Kata Kunci: *Inovasi Produk, Daya Saing, Martabak Telur, UMKM, Strategi Pemasaran*



INTRODUCTION

The culinary industry in Indonesia has experienced very dynamic development in recent years. This is marked by the emergence of various variants of traditional food products that continue to innovate to meet the increasingly complex tastes of modern consumers. Today's consumers are not only looking for taste, but also consider aspects of practicality, quality, packaging, and other added value. Egg martabak, as a popular traditional culinary dish, faces the challenge of remaining relevant amidst increasingly fierce business competition. Businesses are not only required to maintain their distinctive traditional taste but also to innovate their products to compete, increase market share, and meet changing consumer needs. In this context, PT Martabak Mak Yung is a clear example of a business that is able to innovate without losing its traditional product identity. (Desvi et al., 2025)

PT Martabak Mak Yung develops its business through product innovation that responds to changes in consumer behavior, particularly the younger generation who tend to seek variety, practicality, and different culinary experiences. These innovations include diversifying martabak fillings, varying spiciness levels, choosing portion sizes, and improving packaging for a more practical and attractive experience. In the digital era, product innovation is a crucial strategy for increasing competitiveness. Modern consumers judge products not only by taste, but also by the quality of presentation, packaging, convenience in accessing the product, and ease of purchasing through digital platforms such as GoFood, GrabFood, and other marketplaces. The transformation of egg martabak from a simple street food into a product with added value and visual appeal demonstrates how entrepreneurs must adapt to the demands of the times without sacrificing traditional flavors. (Mariansyah & Syarif, 2020)

Changing consumption patterns in modern society present both opportunities and challenges for egg martabak businesses. Consumers now expect products that are practical, varied, and customizable to personal preferences, including spiciness levels, portion sizes, or unique filling combinations. Meanwhile, easy access through digital platforms expands the market, but also demands consistent quality and high service to ensure customer satisfaction and loyalty. In this context, product innovation is key to maintaining existence and increasing competitiveness, as stagnant products tend to lose relevance and struggle to compete in an increasingly competitive market. (Wijoyo et al., 2022)

Despite its importance, research on product innovation in traditional culinary businesses, particularly egg martabak, remains relatively limited. Most previous studies have focused on financial or operational aspects, such as production cost analysis, marketing strategies, inventory management, or distribution efficiency. However, discussions on how product innovation can

be a competitive strategy in maintaining tradition while meeting modern market needs are still rare. Yet, product innovation is not only about adding variants or increasing efficiency, but also how business owners can maintain the authenticity of traditional products while remaining responsive to changing trends and consumer preferences. This presents a unique challenge for MSMEs, as innovation must strike a balance between maintaining distinctive characteristics and meeting modern consumer expectations.

Therefore, this study is important to provide a comprehensive overview of product innovation practices in egg martabak businesses, particularly in the context of MSMEs. PT Martabak Mak Yung was chosen as the research object because it has demonstrated real efforts in product innovation while maintaining the traditional recipe that has become its trademark. The company's vision to become the most trusted egg martabak stall with a distinctive savory taste and premium quality demonstrates a commitment to balance between tradition and modernization. PT Martabak Mak Yung's success in maintaining its product identity while innovating can be a valuable lesson for other traditional culinary entrepreneurs facing the challenges of competition and dynamic market changes.

This article aims to explore in depth various aspects of product innovation implemented by PT Martabak Mak Yung, its impact on competitiveness, and the challenges faced in its implementation. The analysis focuses on the forms of innovation, strategies for balancing tradition and modernization, the competitive advantages created, and the marketing strategies used, both in traditional and digital markets. The findings are expected to provide new insights for business actors and serve as a reference for developing more sustainable traditional culinary business strategies. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of product innovation as a key instrument for MSMEs to adapt to changing consumer behavior, expand markets, and increase sustainable business growth.

Thus, this study not only highlights the importance of product innovation in the context of competitiveness but also demonstrates how traditional culinary entrepreneurs can maintain their relevance in the modern era, preserve culinary traditions, and simultaneously capitalize on the opportunities offered by technology and digital platforms. The practices implemented by PT Martabak Mak Yung serve as a concrete example that appropriate innovation can be an effective strategy for facing increasingly competitive market dynamics without losing the cultural identity that characterizes traditional Indonesian products. (Sari et al., 2019)

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe and analyze the phenomenon of product innovation at PT Martabak Mak Yung in depth and comprehensively. The qualitative approach was chosen because it

allows researchers to understand the context, process, and meaning behind the company's innovation practices, including the factors influencing innovation decision-making and its impact on business competitiveness.

Data collection was conducted through a combination of techniques. First, in-depth interviews with PT Martabak Mak Yung management focused on the company's vision and mission, the definition and focus of product innovation, the product development process, market research, marketing strategies, and challenges faced in implementing innovation. Second, direct observation was conducted to observe the actual innovation practices, including the production process, customer interactions, and the implementation of innovation in service. Third, a documentation study involved collecting supporting data in the form of sales reports, menus, promotional materials, and internal company records to strengthen the validity of the data.

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative descriptive techniques through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction was carried out by identifying the main themes from interviews and observations, presenting the data in a systematic descriptive narrative, and drawing conclusions based on the reduced data. Research validity was enhanced through source and method triangulation, by comparing information from various sources and data collection techniques to ensure the reliability and credibility of the research results. (Irfan et al., 2025)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Innovation Orientation and Product Development Vision

PT Martabak Mak Yung's egg martabak business demonstrates a clear focus on product innovation as a key strategy for increasing competitiveness in Indonesia's traditional culinary market. The company prioritizes innovation as a strategic pillar to maintain product relevance while attracting new customers. Its vision is to become the most trusted egg martabak restaurant in its operational area, offering a distinctive savory flavor and premium quality. This vision is translated into three interconnected mission pillars: first, maintaining traditional flavors with fresh, high-quality ingredients; second, developing product variations to suit modern market tastes; and third, providing fast, hygienic, and affordable service.

The innovation approach implemented by PT Martabak Mak Yung is incremental, adding value to the product without changing the fundamental characteristics of traditional egg martabak. This approach differs from radical innovation, which completely changes the product's identity, as the company focuses on maintaining the essence of traditional egg martabak while adding modern elements that consumers desire. This strategy aims to maintain the loyalty of existing customers while also capturing new segments, particularly the younger generation seeking a variety of flavors, flexible portion sizes, and

more practical packaging. This incremental innovation philosophy also demonstrates the company's awareness of the importance of balancing tradition and modernity in maintaining competitiveness in a competitive market. (Iskandar et al., 2023)

Market research is a crucial component of PT Martabak Mak Yung's innovation orientation. The company conducts market research regularly, at one to two-month intervals, using simple yet effective methods. This strategy includes direct interaction with loyal customers to understand their needs and preferences, benchmarking against competitors to identify trends and successful strategies in the market, and limited-scale trials of new product variants. This pragmatic approach allows the company to respond quickly to changing trends without requiring significant investment in formal research. Furthermore, the company utilizes social media as a market monitoring tool, tracking culinary developments, listening to consumer demand, and analyzing trending trends.

In addition to market research, PT Martabak Mak Yung also addresses the growing demand for online delivery platforms in the digital era. With the increasing use of food delivery services like GoFood, GrabFood, and similar apps, the company has adapted its product innovations to meet the expectations of digital consumers. These adjustments include portion variations, selectable spiciness levels, and practical packaging for long-distance delivery. This strategy not only increases customer satisfaction but also opens up broader market opportunities, including consumers across regions previously difficult to reach through offline sales. (Safitri et al., 2022)

PT Martabak Mak Yung also applies the principle of value-added product development. Innovations include diversifying martabak fillings, developing spiciness levels, varying portion sizes, and improving packaging to make it more attractive and functional. For example, the addition of premium variants with select ingredients or the company's signature chili sauce creates a competitive advantage that differentiates the product from competitors. This innovation is carried out without sacrificing the original taste, allowing the company to maintain its traditional identity. This strategy demonstrates that innovation doesn't always have to be revolutionary; a careful and consistent approach to aspects that consumers are interested in can generate significant growth.

Furthermore, PT Martabak Mak Yung's innovation philosophy emphasizes continuous adaptation. The company consistently anticipates changes in consumer preferences through product trials, monitoring social media trends, and engaging with customers actively. This reflects a dynamic and responsive innovation approach, emphasizing not only new product creation but also the continuous improvement of existing products. This approach aligns with the theory of incremental innovation, which emphasizes

the value of gradual product adjustments to maintain competitive advantage. (Saputra et al., 2023)

Thus, PT Martabak Mak Yung's innovation orientation is not merely a marketing strategy, but rather a business philosophy that emphasizes a balance between tradition and modernization. The company has successfully demonstrated that careful, incremental innovation can maintain the loyalty of existing customers, attract new ones, and expand market share, both through direct sales and digital platforms. The company's practices serve as a concrete example of how a traditional culinary MSME can navigate competitive market dynamics while maintaining its distinctive identity and product quality. (Pohan et al., 2024)

Product Innovation Implementation

The implementation of product innovation at PT Martabak Mak Yung is reflected in four key aspects that mutually support the creation of value for consumers while simultaneously enhancing the company's competitiveness in the traditional culinary market. This approach demonstrates that the company is not only focused on maintaining traditional flavors but also responsive to market trends and modern consumer needs, including the preferences of the younger generation and users of online delivery platforms.

The first aspect is the diversification of martabak fillings. PT Martabak Mak Yung offers six premium variants: minced chicken, beef, tuna, vegetables, sausage, and smoked beef. This diversification strategy allows the company to reach a wider market segment, from budget consumers to the upper middle class, without sacrificing the basic characteristics of traditional egg martabak. The smoked beef variant, for example, has successfully attracted consumers seeking a traditional culinary experience with a modern twist. Furthermore, the variety of fillings provides consumers with choices based on their taste preferences, thereby increasing customer satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat purchases. This diversification strategy also demonstrates the company's ability to adapt its products to current culinary trends, while strengthening its brand image as an innovative martabak producer while maintaining its traditional identity.

The second aspect is the variety of spiciness levels, which are divided into three categories: mild, medium, and extra spicy. This innovation responds to the rapidly growing spicy culinary trend in Indonesia while also accommodating individual consumer preferences. This clear spiciness categorization system reduces ambiguity for customers and provides a more personalized experience. The extra spicy variant is a significant differentiator because not many traditional martabak stalls offer extreme spiciness options. Thus, this innovation not only meets consumer demand but also serves as a product differentiation strategy that increases the company's appeal and competitiveness in a competitive market. (Nurul Aini et al., 2024)

The third aspect is the variety of portion sizes across three categories: mini, regular, and jumbo. The mini size serves as an entry point for new consumers who want to try the product with minimal risk, while allowing them to enjoy a variety of flavors in a single purchase. The regular size meets standard individual consumption needs, while the jumbo size opens up opportunities for the informal catering market, including family events or small gatherings. This flexibility in portion sizes allows consumers to tailor purchases to their needs, increasing customer satisfaction and purchase frequency. This strategy also expands the potential market because the product is accessible for various consumption contexts, from individual to group.

The fourth aspect is packaging innovation specifically designed for online delivery. Martabak packaging is designed to be neater, moisture-resistant, and maintains the crispiness of the martabak skin, while also being easy to carry and practical for consumers. Packaging innovation is crucial given the increase in transactions through GoFood and GrabFood platforms, where consumers' first impressions are heavily influenced by the condition of the product upon receipt. Good packaging not only enhances the consumer experience but also builds a perception of professionalism and brand quality, which in turn increases customer loyalty and the likelihood of repeat purchases. (Ardiansari et al., 2020)

Overall, these four aspects of product innovation complement each other and form a comprehensive implementation strategy. Diversified fillings reach various market segments, variations in spiciness adapt to individual preferences, varying portion sizes provide consumption flexibility, and innovative packaging ensures quality is maintained in the context of digital sales. This combination of strategies demonstrates PT Martabak Mak Yung's ability to balance tradition and innovation, increasing consumer satisfaction, expanding market share, and strengthening its competitive position in the increasingly dynamic traditional culinary market. (Rahayu, 2025)

Strategy for Balancing Tradition and Modernization

PT Martabak Mak Yung implements a balanced strategy between preserving tradition and adopting innovation through the principle of core-peripheral innovation. This strategy serves as the foundation for the company to remain relevant in a competitive market while maintaining the identity of traditional products. The core-peripheral innovation concept distinguishes core elements that must be maintained from peripheral elements that can be modified to create added value and variety for consumers.

The three core elements of PT Martabak Mak Yung's egg martabak that must remain unchanged include: first, the thin, homemade dough crust made according to a traditional recipe; second, the composition of eggs and spring onions as the signature filling that characterizes the martabak's flavor; and

third, the traditional savory spice mix that becomes the product's flavor identity and main attraction. These three elements form the product's DNA that must be maintained so that consumers continue to experience the authenticity of traditional egg martabak. By maintaining the core, the company ensures that the loyalty of existing customers is maintained, while maintaining its reputation as an authentic and high-quality martabak producer. (Irawan & Ghonisyah, 2023)

Meanwhile, innovations were made in peripheral elements, namely additional fillings and serving formats. With this strategy, consumers still enjoy the authentic classic martabak experience, but gain flexibility through customization options, such as premium fillings (smoked beef, tuna, sausage), different spiciness levels, and portion sizes. The "Original Egg Martabak" menu remains the flagship product and the highest quality benchmark, so innovation does not shift the focus from the core product that has built the business's reputation. This approach reflects the company's deep understanding of traditional values while adapting to modern consumer trends that demand variety and product personalization.

Each new variant undergoes a pilot testing phase before being officially designated as a permanent menu item. This process involves limited production, taste evaluation, and monitoring consumer response through direct interaction and feedback from digital platforms. This method helps companies minimize the risk of product failure and ensure that each innovation provides real added value for consumers. This phased approach demonstrates caution and a well-thought-out risk management strategy, ensuring that innovations do not compromise quality or brand identity. (Ahmad Ferdiansyah Ramadhan, 2023)

Furthermore, PT Martabak Mak Yung utilizes sales data and customer interactions on social media and online delivery platforms to gauge the popularity of new variants. This information informs decisions about whether the product is worthy of being marketed permanently or needs to be adjusted. This data-driven decision-making process strengthens the effectiveness of its innovation strategy, ensuring the company remains responsive to market dynamics without neglecting its traditions.

Overall, the implementation of core-peripheral innovation allows PT Martabak Mak Yung to balance preserving traditional flavors with the need for innovation that drives growth. This strategy not only maintains the loyalty of existing customers but also attracts new segments, particularly the younger generation who appreciate the variety of flavors and the convenience of modern services. This approach demonstrates that careful and measured innovation, when combined with respect for tradition, can be the key to the success and sustainability of traditional culinary businesses in the face of increasingly dynamic competition.

Competitive advantage and the impact of innovation

PT Martabak Mak Yung builds its competitive advantage by focusing on five key pillars that create unique added value and are difficult for competitors to imitate. The first pillar is the thin, crispy martabak crust, hand-made with special expertise. This crust-making process relies on traditional techniques passed down through generations, resulting in a texture that is distinct from competitors who use ready-made dough. The thin, homemade crust not only provides a distinctive crunchy sensation but also creates a product identity that is difficult for other martabak stalls to match.

The second pillar is the higher egg content compared to the dough. This strategy produces martabak with a higher protein content and a richer flavor. The use of more eggs makes martabak not only delicious but also more filling, thus enhancing the perception of quality in the eyes of consumers. The third pillar is a variety of unique premium fillings, such as smoked beef, tuna, and sausage, combined with creative flavors to appeal to a wide range of consumer segments, from traditional consumers to millennials who appreciate culinary innovation.

The fourth pillar is the secret recipe of sambal cuko, a signature dish of PT Martabak Mak Yung. This sambal cuko provides a distinctive flavor that sets the company's martabak apart from competitors' products. The unique consistency of sambal cuko also builds customer loyalty, as the martabak experience is not only about the texture and filling, but also the lingering taste sensation. The fifth pillar is consistent standards of cleanliness and speed of service. PT Martabak Mak Yung prioritizes cleanliness and speed, especially in the context of online delivery, ensuring customers feel safe, comfortable, and satisfied when enjoying the product.

Product innovation is key to strengthening PT Martabak Mak Yung's position in a competitive market. New products such as smoked beef martabak, mini martabak, and extra-spicy variants have successfully captured the attention of a wider consumer segment. These innovations not only adapt to modern culinary trends but also maintain the traditional values of egg martabak. The positive impact of innovation is evident in the increase in the number of online customers, which has reached between 12 and 18 percent. This quantitative growth is reinforced by an increase in repeat purchase frequency, indicating stronger customer loyalty and high confidence in product quality. (Nirwana et al., 2024)

This competitive advantage not only drives sales growth but also strengthens PT Martabak Mak Yung's brand image as an authentic and progressive martabak stall. By combining tradition and creativity, the company successfully delivers a distinct, memorable, and personalized culinary experience for customers. This strategy allows PT Martabak Mak Yung to maintain its relevance amidst the fierce competition in the traditional culinary market, attract new customers without sacrificing the loyalty of

existing customers, and build a reputation as a favorite choice among various consumer segments.

Overall, the combination of five pillars of competitive advantage and measurable product innovation makes PT Martabak Mak Yung an example of a traditional culinary company that has successfully maintained a balance between preserving tradition and modern adaptation. This approach ensures sustainable business growth, strengthens its market position, and establishes the brand as a benchmark for quality and innovation in the egg martabak industry. (M. Son Aghni & Luthfy Purnanta Anzie, 2025)

Marketing Strategy for Innovation Products

PT Martabak Mak Yung implements an integrated marketing strategy that combines digital and traditional approaches to maximize market penetration and support innovative product launches. This strategy is designed to reach a wide range of consumers, increase brand awareness, and drive sales conversions, while also taking into account the budget constraints typically faced by MSMEs.

The first strategy implemented was utilizing social media platforms as the primary channel for product launches. Engaging visual content, including high-quality photos and short videos, showcased the martabak-making process and the final product, specifically designed for easy sharing and viral potential. This content leveraged social media algorithms to increase organic reach, enabling it to reach new audiences without relying solely on paid advertising. This approach enabled PT Martabak Mak Yung to build initial engagement with consumers while simultaneously establishing a professional and authentic impression of product quality.

The second strategy is an attractive opening promotion program, such as a "buy two get two free drinks" offer designed to encourage trial purchases. This promotion effectively lowers consumers' perceived risk, makes them more willing to try new products, and converts awareness into actual sales. Furthermore, the third strategy is a mini martabak bundling package, where consumers can try various product variants in one package at a more economical price. This strategy not only increases the average transaction value but also introduces consumers to a wider range of product variants, thus opening up follow-up sales opportunities. (Kurniawati et al., 2024)

The fourth strategy leverages social proof through testimonials and reviews from existing customers published across various communication channels. This approach is effective because the credibility of existing customers is higher than that of direct promotional messages from the company, thus building trust with new consumers and strengthening the brand's reputation. The fifth strategy is a product tester program, where small samples of new products are given to walk-in customers to obtain direct feedback. This approach not only provides valid data on consumer preferences

but also encourages organic word-of-mouth marketing, which has a significant impact on expanding market reach naturally.

This combination of online and offline strategies is tailored to the characteristics of MSMEs, particularly their limited marketing budgets. Focusing on content marketing and customer engagement has proven to be more cost-effective than large-scale paid advertising, while still allowing for measurable evaluation of increased brand awareness and sales conversions. The use of digital platforms allows for real-time monitoring of promotional performance through metrics such as reach, impressions, engagement rate, and clicks to the catalog or ordering platform. With this data, strategies can be quickly evaluated and adjusted, ensuring optimal marketing campaign effectiveness.

Overall, PT Martabak Mak Yung's integrated marketing strategy demonstrates a careful and adaptive approach. By combining digital content innovation, creative promotions, direct interaction with customers, and leveraging testimonials and word-of-mouth, the company has successfully built a competitive advantage. This strategy not only increases brand visibility and sales but also creates long-term relationships with consumers, ensuring sustainable growth and business success in an increasingly competitive market. (Wahyuni & Lastariwati, 2023)

CONCLUSIONS

PT Martabak Mak Yung implements an integrated marketing strategy that combines digital and conventional approaches to maximize market penetration while supporting innovative product launches. This strategy is designed to reach a wide range of consumers, increase brand awareness, drive sales conversions, and consider the budget constraints common to MSMEs. The first strategy is utilizing social media platforms as the primary channel for product launches. Visual content, consisting of high-quality photos and short videos, showcases the martabak-making process through to the final product, purposely designed to be easily shareable and potentially viral. By leveraging social media algorithms, content can organically reach new audiences without relying solely on paid advertising. This strategy allows PT Martabak Mak Yung to build initial engagement with consumers while simultaneously establishing a professional and authentic impression of product quality. The second strategy is an attractive opening promotion program, such as a "buy two, get two drinks free" offer to encourage trial purchases and lower consumer perceived risk. The third strategy, a mini martabak bundling package, allows consumers to try various variants in one package at an economical price, increasing average transaction value while introducing a variety of new products. The fourth strategy leverages social proof through testimonials and reviews from existing customers published across various communication channels, building trust with new customers and strengthening brand

reputation. The fifth strategy is a product tester program, where new product samples are given to walk-in customers to gain direct feedback, while simultaneously encouraging effective organic word-of-mouth marketing to expand market reach. This combination of online and offline strategies emphasizes content marketing and customer engagement, is more cost-effective than large-scale paid advertising, and allows for real-time evaluation of campaign performance through metrics such as reach, impressions, engagement rate, and catalog clicks. With this adaptive approach, PT Martabak Mak Yung has successfully built a competitive advantage, increased visibility, sales, and fostered long-term relationships with consumers.

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