3 WAYS ONLINE EDUCATION CAN IMPROVE YOUR

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

+ How to Create a Successful Program

Introduction

The increased usage of technology across society and uptick in market competition are forcing you to evolve. In 2022 and beyond, your success will hinge largely on your ability to stand out.

So, what's the best way to do that?

Product updates? Nope.

The lowest price? Sorry, no.

Better marketing? Wrong again.

The best way to shine brighter than the competition is to perfect the customer experience (CX), which has surpassed product and price as the best way for you to differentiate yourself.

The premium on CX is why more businesses are investing in online education. **In fact, 90% of companies used online education as a training tool in recent years.**

But why, exactly, is online education such a powerful tool to improve CX? Keep reading to find out 5 of the greatest benefits.
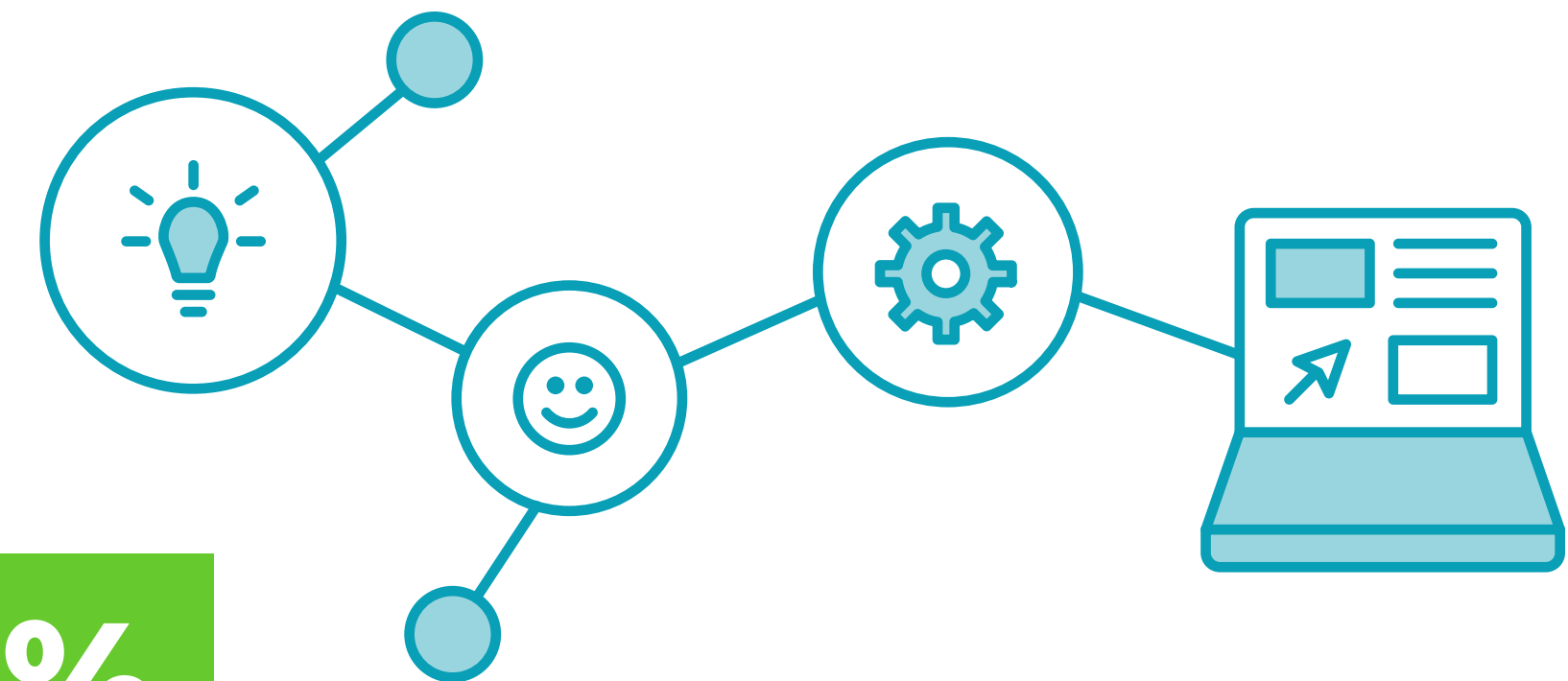
85%

of US adults say they go online daily, **including 31% who go online almost constantly.**

Source: Pew Research Center

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1. Create a Stronger Bond Between Internal Teams

74% of consumers are at least somewhat likely to buy **based on experiences alone**.

Source: Forbes

Perfecting CX is a long and winding road that goes through nearly every part of every part of your business. From the initial discovery call with the Sales team to onboarding with Customer Success and technical support with IT, all of these touchpoints play a role in delivering a good customer experience.

To provide a good experience, however, these teams need to understand the product or service. When your team is filled with experts, your business can thrive. The Sales team can sell solutions that solve customers' unique challenges. The Customer Success team can more easily decrease time-to-value and initiate meaningful conversations about product updates. Your IT teams can help solve technical problems on the fly. The list goes on.

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An online education program is the only way to consistently provide these teams with this knowledge to maintain a healthy (and profitable) relationship with your customers.

PRO TIP

Educating these teams may seem time-consuming and tedious.
With a learning management system (LMS), it doesn't have to be.
An LMS can automate and streamline many of the tasks associated with online education, freeing your teams up to spend time on other high-return activities such as strategizing with customers.

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2. Your Customers Will Get Long-term Value

A good product or service is no longer a differentiator. You could have the undisputed leader with the best solution to a given problem, but it could fail if your customers don't use it, understand its value or feel confident using it.

Here's an example: Say you're a SaaS company providing people with a solution to start and manage their e-commerce business. But upon signing up, most of them have no idea how to activate their accounts. As a result, they're prevented from realizing the product's value; you're increasing time-to-value.

See the problem? This is a poor experience that'll lead to decreased product adoption and engagement.

The simple way to fix this is to give your customers the resources they need to get off on the right foot (e.g., a video on how to activate their account). Not only will they be happier and use your product more, but so too will your Leadership team when they see retention rates and product adoption go up.

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3. You'll Reduce Friction During Onboarding

Onboarding is a huge part of a good customer experience. Unfortunately, it's also one of the most neglected. Case and point: 88% of organizations don't onboard well.

By not onboarding quickly and efficiently, you're preventing customers from seeing that what you just sold them can actually help them succeed. Consider any friction during onboarding your enemy and something you must address immediately.

In fact, 63% of people say they've returned a product because they didn't understand how to use it, while 63% of customers consider the company's onboarding program when making a purchase.

An onboarding process supported by online education makes sure this doesn't happen.

By providing your customers with a steady hand to guide them through the early stages of product usage, you're setting them up for success. A smooth onboarding process is good for you, too.
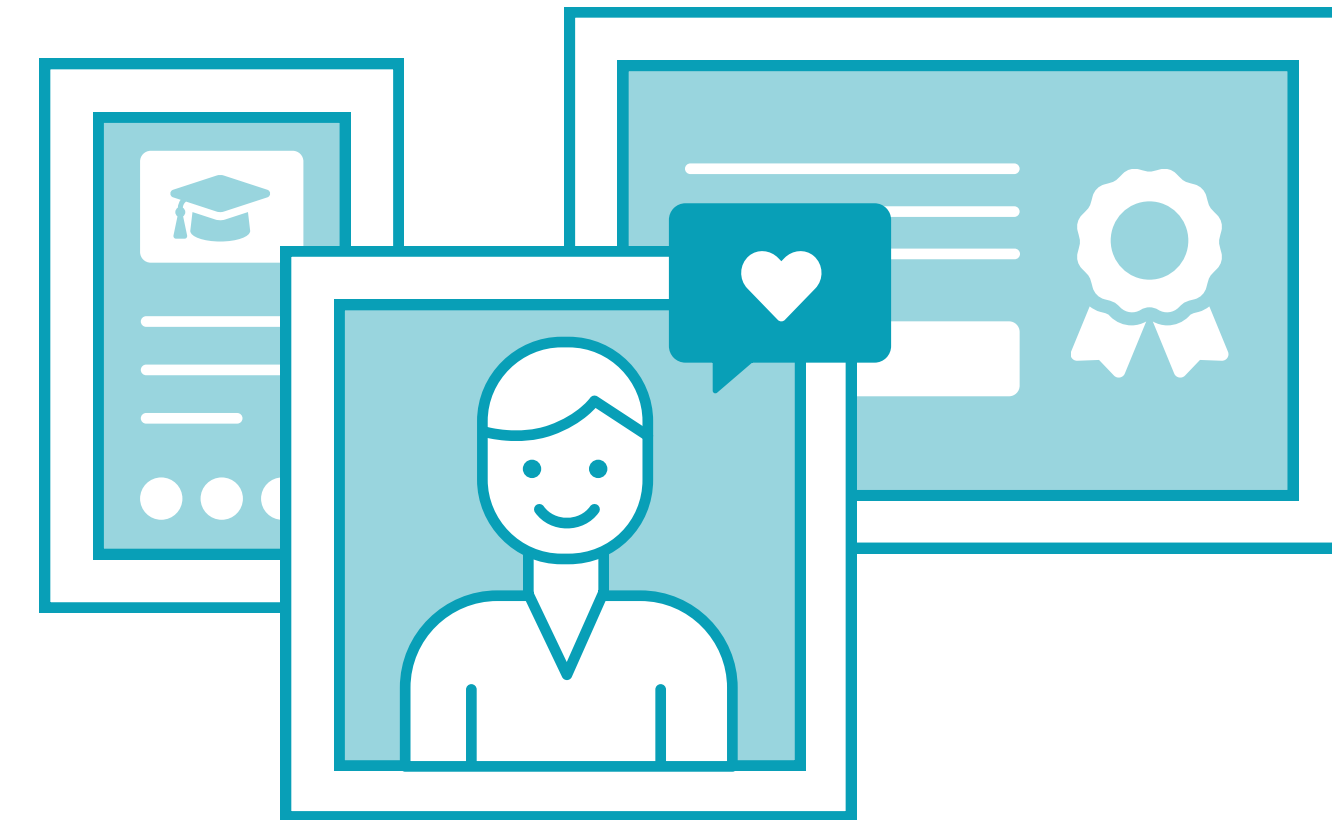
Engaged customers buy 90% more frequently,

spend 60% more per transaction and have three times the annual value compared to other customers.

Source: HubSpot

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HOW TO SET YOUR ONLINE EDUCATION PROGRAM UP FOR SUCCESS

A 4-STEP PROCESS

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Step 1. Set Clear Goals

No online education program will impact CX if you can't tie it to real-world results. The best way to make this happen is to align with the rest of the company and set clear goals.

Here's what that should look like:

Business Goals

Talk to your company's leaders (e.g., the C-suite, the board (if applicable) and so on) and ask them about customer acquisition, lifetime value (LTV) and other metrics they use to make strategic decisions.

Departmental Goals

Talk to the heads of Sales, Marketing, Services and Customer Success to understand how they measure performance and how education currently plays a role. For example, the Marketing team could use cost per lead (CPL) as its leading indicator of success.

Team Goals

This is all about you and whether or not your program is working — think user-level metrics such as engagement rate and course completion.

Every person you talk to has some part in creating a positive customer experience. Understanding their POV and objectives will help you make more strategic decisions and set clear goals for your program.
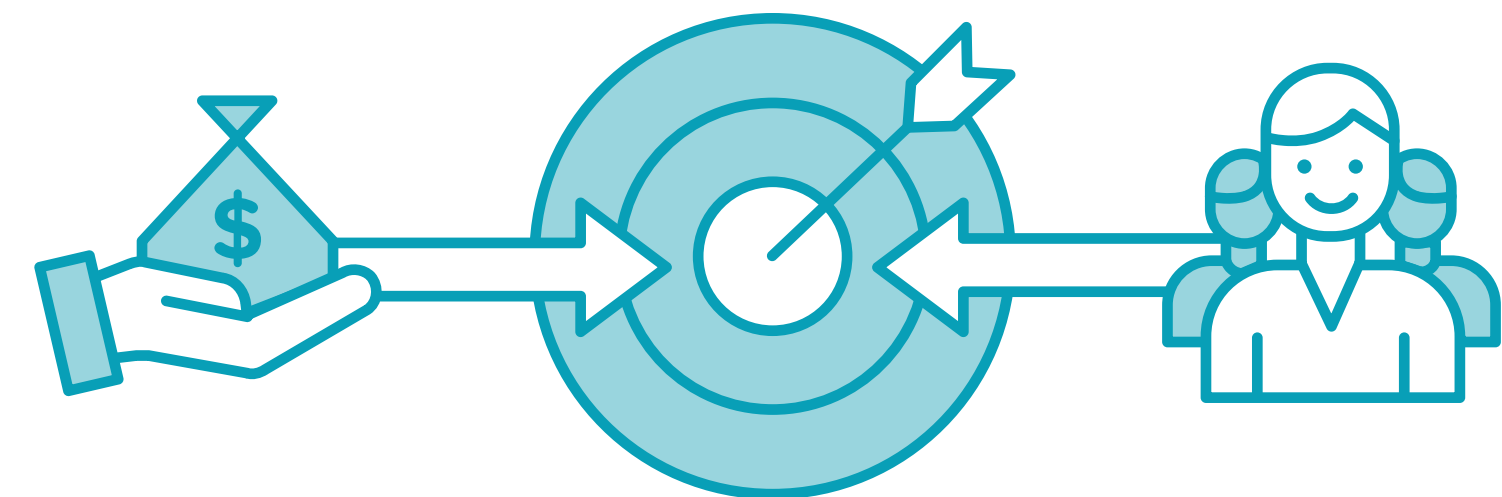
PRO TIP

Focus on gains instead of gaps. In other words, don't get stuck envying other online education programs. Instead, find gaps in yours that you can fill right away. If you obsess over the former, you'll find yourself stuck in the mud.

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## Step #2: Allocate (and Reallocate) Resources

There will always be more you can do, but not enough people do it. Whether that's making more videos to onboard your customers, hosting live webinars to teach them about a new feature or something completely different, there will always be something on your wishlist.

To deal with this, you must allocate resources toward high-impact customer-experience initiatives.

To do this, return to your goals and the expectations you set with other teams. These early conversations will be your guiding light when you're allocating resources.

PRO TIP

Need more resources? See if other teams have some that you can borrow or trade. For example, the Marketing team might have an intern with video experience who can help you for a week or two. Not all resources have to come from your team.

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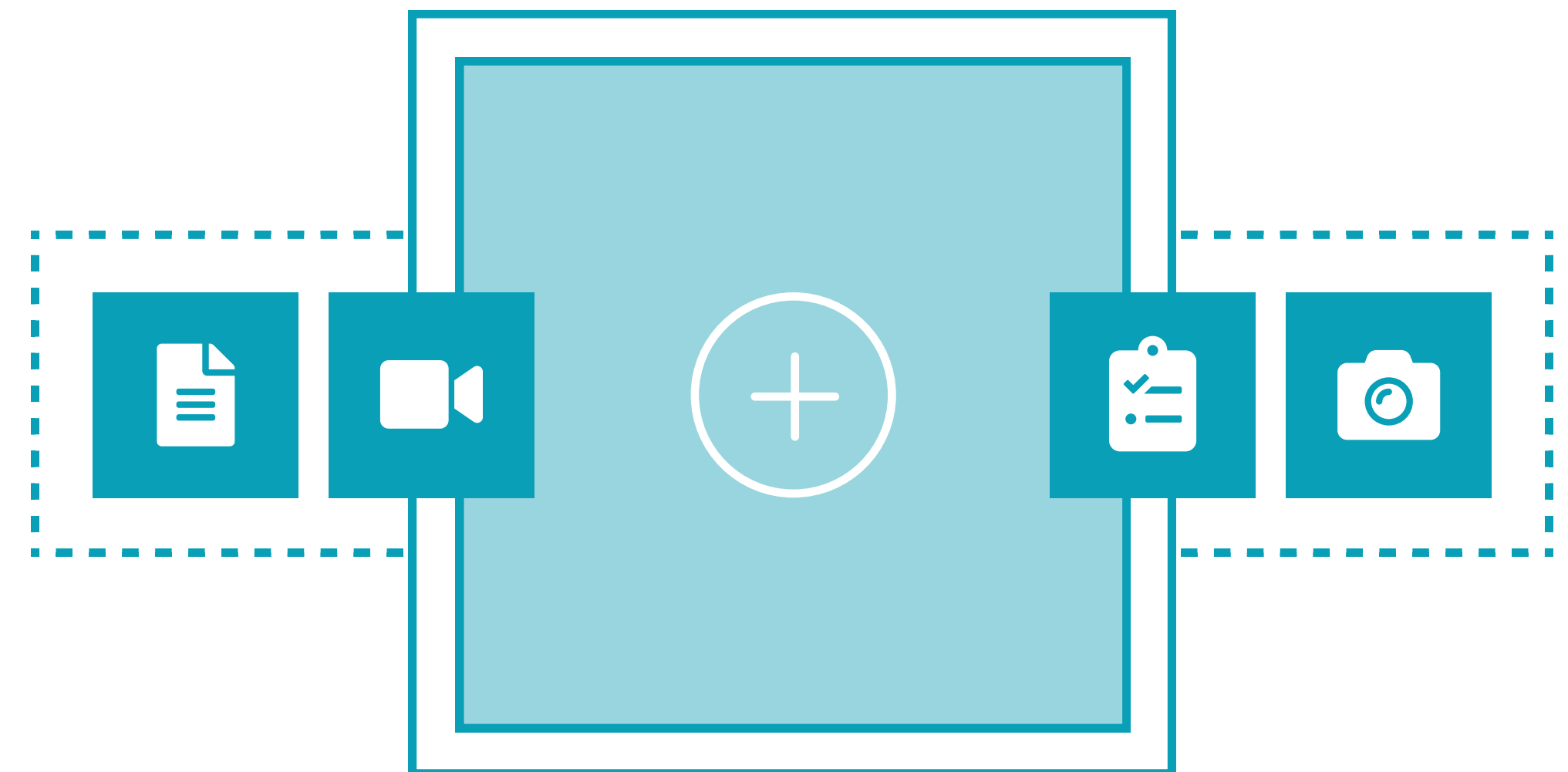
Step #3: Deliver Content With Purpose

With your goals and resources in place, it's time to deliver the content. But not in any old way; make sure that it provides real value to your customers and meets their preferences.

Start by asking yourself what you want your customers to get out of the content and how they're more likely to learn. Said another way, you need to find out how to lead them down the easiest path to success.

63% of people said they'd think more positively of a brand if it gave them **content that was more valuable, interesting or relevant**.

Source: Instapage

Here are some questions to ask:

- Do they need a mobile-optimized experience? For the gig economy, absolutely.
- Will they need continuing education or is this just a one-off training for something like onboarding?
- Which content mediums do they prefer?
- Will sequential learning and microlearning help improve knowledge retention?
- Do you think they'll be willing to provide frequent feedback?
- Do they prefer visuals over text?
- Will an always-on help center help them succeed?

Truly understanding your customers and their learning preferences will help you personalize the experience and deliver meaningful content. Remember: Delivery is just as important as the content itself.

PRO TIP

Be thoughtful about the length of the content. Nine times out of ten, you're better off delivering bite-sized pieces of content (a.k.a microlearning) since the majority of people won't have time to sit down and watch a 4-hour video or read a 1,000-page manual.

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Step #4: Measure KPIs

Optimizing CX won't happen overnight; it takes time. This is why measuring KPIs are so important. Are CX-related metrics (e.g., product adoption, retention, churn, etc.) trending up? If they are, great. If they're not, take a step back and see what you can do better.

When gauging the impact of your program, look at performance from different angles:

Learner Proficiency

By giving customers resources and guidance, they'll be more successful, which should translate to metrics such as lower cancellation rates.

Operational Proficiency

Name any operational objective — decreasing onboarding time, increasing retention or boosting product adoption. Look toward time taken to onboard and time-to-value as proxies for success.

Relationships

Customer satisfaction (CSAT) is a great indicator of loyalty and increased customer lifetime value (LTV). You should also look at your customer satisfaction scores and the number of positive reviews.

Growth

If your customers are happy, they're probably going to spend more money. One metric you can look at is revenue-per-customer.

Support Costs

By enabling your customers to learn, the demand for support services should decrease, so look at the number of support tickets and the workload on your Support and Customer Success teams.

PRO TIP

If you're using an LMS, you can get even more quantitative data. For example, time spent with the course and course completion. With more granular data, you can make more strategic decisions and evolve in the smartest way.

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IMPROVE YOUR
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
EVEN MORE
WITH NORTHPASS

We get it. Getting CX right isn't easy, especially today when your customers expect so much and one wrong move can send them running to a competitor. But there are steps you can take to make sure this doesn't happen. One of those is powering your online education program with an LMS like Northpass.

With Northpass, you can take complete control of your online education program, automate time-consuming tasks, deliver personalized experiences and measure results in meaningful ways.

Want to learn more? Send us a message at sales@northpass.com and we'll be in touch.

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