

Internship for Career Development: The Case of Marketing Graduates

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Business success of the corporates relies on hiring academically talented and practically experienced well groomed Marketing graduates. But there is obvious scarcity of the required number of such graduates in comparison with the rising industrial demand. So, the current study has been endeavored during June to September 2015 in Bangladesh with 577 sample respondents from 8 business schools including 2 public and 6 private universities and found six components as relevant to the career development of the marketing graduates through internships. It is expected that the study will enable both the academia and industries to find out the gap between theory and practice and improve the curricula as well as guide the marketing graduates in developing their career as successful professionals.

Field of Research: Management and Marketing

Keywords: Internship, Career Development, Practical Experiences, Skill Development, Job Opportunities, Marketing Career, etc.

1. Introduction

The Government of Bangladesh has set Digital Bangladesh vision 2021 to uplift her status from the ranking of the lower income countries to the list of the higher income countries. The Government has also liberalized its economic policy by inviting the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and developing 100 new economic zones other than the current big sized export processing zones (EPZs). It is worthy to mention that Bangladesh has already achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by taking massive development initiatives. The country has also become one of 18 countries that made “extraordinary progress” among 187 countries in terms of global human development index having 142nd ranked graduating from the previous year’s position of 143rd as highlighted in the UNDP’s projection (Human Development Report 2014 cited in Bangladesh Chronicle).

To continue such enormous success in the days to come Bangladesh requires competent marketing professionals who will expand the country’s business volume at home and abroad. In this regard, the Government has already approved 37 public universities, 85 private universities and 3 international universities to run their academic activities. To cherish the vision of the country, most of these universities excluding the Engineering universities have prioritized on the education of Business Administration with marketing concentration. In these

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universities, internship program before graduation equips the students with practical experience and make them industry ready career oriented Marketing professionals in order to ensure their contribution in the mainstream economic activities.

Even though all these, there is enormous challenges for the Government to develop adequate number of skilled and resourceful Marketing graduates with practical experience in order to meet the rising demand of the industries. In this connection, internship may be an effective approach to enhance the practical experience of the final semester students to a great extent. Since the Marketing graduates of the Business Administration discipline can play a constructive role in this arena for further business expansion of the concerned industries, the current study aims to assess the role of the internship programs of the Business Schools in Bangladesh in developing the Marketing career of their graduates. With this end in view, the present study is very significant to investigate the research question: "Does Internship have any role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates?" The current study hypothesized that "Internship has role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates".

But the relevant past studies were not very much concrete and exhaustive because most of their findings were partial as they focused on limited number of factors other than the holistic view. From this perspective, it is clearly evident that there is a research gap for which it is significant to conduct a detailed study on the basis of extensive primary and secondary data.

So, it is the main reason of motivation for the current research study to identify the best possible relevant factors or components which may enable the concerned to take necessary policy measures and actions. Thus, excellence of the internship programs in developing the career of the marketing graduates is ensured. The current paper is organized having a detailed literature review followed by the primary survey findings and analysis together with conclusive implications.

Thus, the factors of internship programs which, positively affect the career development of the Marketing graduates, have been identified and necessary course of actions have also been recommended for their career development in the concluding section. It is, therefore, the present study has unique contribution in advocating the implementation of the necessary initiatives and measures of linking the academic programs of the universities with that of various industries. Furthermore, the current study may contribute to future research for innovative, academically enriched and industry centric career oriented internship program.

2. Literature Review

Career development is a process of transitions in and out of employment, periods of under- or over-employment, and potentially more than one career change and multiple returns to education (McMahon & Tatham 2008). The term 'career development' is used to describe the 'complex process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan' (MCEECDYA 2010). Career development emphasizes the developmental nature of careers and cultivating the career efficacy and resilience of young people to manage a dynamic and elongated career and transition process' (Miles Morgan Australia, 2012). Career development process includes educational engagement and attainment, self-awareness and self-confidence, and awareness of the labour market (Miles Morgan Australia 2012). Robertson (2013) argues that career development can promote wellbeing and contribute to the overall health of a society.

Littke (2004) defined internships as real work integrated into the everyday world of the school. Gault et al. (2010) defined Internship as an opportunity to integrate work-related experience

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into graduate education by participating in scheduled and supervised work. Internships involve professional employment and supervision in a vast array of academic disciplines by awarding academic credit to the interns for their contribution in the workplace (Gault, Leach & Duey, 2010). Internships are believed to provide higher quality education and better career preparation than formal classroom learning (Gault et al., 2000). The importance of integrating students' classroom learning with real-world practical experience has been recognized as a vital component of student engagement and development in higher education (Kuh, 2008).

According to Lam and Ching (2007), internship assists the internee to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality. D'Andrea (2005) found that internship is a type of educational program that can be used to wean students away from traditional classrooms, and connect students with learning environments. Academics generally see internships as an opportunity for students to gain valuable experience by applying the knowledge they have gained in their course work to real world situations (Narayanan, et al., 2010; UIW, 2011).

Internships also build stronger resumes (Coco, 2000; Divine et al., 2007). According to the Washington Center (TWC), even if an undergraduate is not offered a position when their internship is complete, the professional contacts or, networking opportunities they were exposed to while in their internship position are invaluable for finding future jobs (TWC, 2010).

Hergert (2009) found that students value internships when they see a connection to their employment goals. Thus, they can test their career interests as well as explore the suitability of a particular job. According to Siegel, Blackwood, & Landy (2010), previous internships positively influence subsequent performance evaluations, retention, and promotion outcomes of the participants. Coco (2000) and Knemeyer & Murphy (2002) viewed internships as access for the students to temporary employment having short-term work experience. Mounce *et al* (2004) highlighted the importance of internship in gaining career related practical experience for students and stated that internship benefits graduating students through improvements in career-related direction, gaining practical experience, etc.

Litke (2004) found that during internship period students learn while earn. This study also found that students work with and learn from skilled professionals in a work setting, which gives them opportunities to associate with the people and the resources that can make work real. Kolb, Boyatzis & Mainemelis (2001) viewed internships as the role of purposive experience in learning. Referring internship Kolb & Kolb (2005) used the term "experiential learning" to emphasize the central role that experience plays in the learning process. Moore (2010) also stated "Experiential pedagogy, done right, is extremely rewarding".

Sattler (2011) found that job shadowing internships enable the students in more learning about their career areas during a specific period which is generally planned to occur at or near the end of a program of study. In this period, the students are offered in professional fields, with supervisors encouraged to provide meaningful support as well as supervision. The supervisors engage students in meaningful work (Sattler, 2011).

According to Getzel, Briel & Kregel (2000) internships can assist students when seeking expected job or, permanent employment after graduation. Freestone, Williams, Thompson, and Kerry (2007) showed that internships promote undergraduate employment prospects by providing the opportunity for them to apply their knowledge and skills in a real world setting. Many undergraduates are offered positions immediately following graduation because of the connections they made while networking as an intern (TWC, 2010). A survey conducted by the

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National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2011) found that nearly 60% of interns turned their internship into a full time job. As a consequence of internships, students receive sooner and more high-quality job offers (Gault et al. 2010; Knouse and Fontenot 2008; Mello 2006; Rothman and Lampe 2009) and higher earnings afterwards in their first job (Callanan and Benzing 2004; Gault et al. 2000; Knemeyer and Murphy 2002).

Through internship students can develop good working habits and other personal qualities, become more confident in order to contribute towards enhancing the early employment experiences (Birch et al. 2010; D'abate et al. 2009; Gault et al. 2000; McCollum and Schoening 2004; Sapp and Zhang 2009). Haimson & Bellotti (2001) found that internships provide students with valuable, first-hand, work-based experiences and relevant workplace skills. Beard, D. F. (2007) asserted that well-organized and carefully supervised internship programs can enhance students' skills, and help develop the competencies for classroom learning as well as employment. Research studies also reported that the students have the possibility to gain appreciation of professional careers and specific skills needed for success in their chosen profession (Beard 2007; Knouse and Fontenot 2008).

Internship assists students in planning for their futures and helps in transitioning them as future workforce in their post academic life (D'Andrea, 2005; Greifner, 2007; Littke, 2004). Research has also shown that there is a high correlation between the career paths students select and the internships in which they have served (Kensinger & Muller, 2006). Thus, students can make more informed career decisions. According to Sattler (2011) internships benefit students in avoiding uncertainty about career choices instead it offers opportunity for career exploration. Premier Wynne indicated that colleges and universities play greater sense of responsible role for ensuring high-quality internship experiences for students (McKnight, 2013).

Wynn (2003) found that internships enable students to get exposure to workplace environments, norms of the workplace, work expectations and obligations. The internships have been seen to be beneficial in socializing the student through training and teamwork assignments at the workplace (Lubbers, 2008). Jowdy, McDonald & Spence (2004) found that through internships students appear to be increasingly interested in seeking ways to gain an edge in the job market by acquiring valuable employment experience prior to graduation. Thus, their marketability is increased.

The above mentioned studies did not answer to the research question by examining the holistic role of internship in the career development of the marketing due to their specific or partial focus on the subject matter of the current study. This can further be clarified in the manner that such previous studies focused on one or, some specific factors other than the maximum factors influencing the career development through internship. So, it is clearly evident that there is a research gap and to mitigate this gap a rigorous research is yet to be systematically attempted. The hypothesis derived from this identified research gap exhibit(s) the following:

H₀: Internship does not have any role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates.

H_a: Internship has role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates.

3. Methodology of the Study

This research paper is the embodiment of the collection of both primary and secondary data and their analyses. The secondary data have been collected from the updated research

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studies conducted after the year 2000 while the primary data of the study have been collected during June to September 2015 in Bangladesh from the sample size of 577 Marketing graduates from 2 public universities and 6 private universities as respondents using 'random sampling' method through a structured self-administered Likert 5 scale questionnaire based survey method. In this study, the selected universities have very long history of providing marketing education as specialization or major concentration of their graduates and they have already contributed to the industries with more than 5000 marketing graduates. So, the available list or databases of the sample respondents have been found readily available. This helped in random sampling to avoid research biasness of any kind in one hand and select adequate number of samples (i.e., 577) against the identified 20 independent variables with 1:4 decision rule of sample-variable proportion on the other hand. Thus, the requirement of reliability and validity of the study through sampling adequacy has been ensured.

4. Findings and Analysis

On the basis of the literature review 20 independent variables from v1 to v20 and 1 dependent variable (i.e., cd1) have been identified which are exhibited in the **Table 1**.

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Table 1: Identification of Variables

Code	Items	Sources
v1	Academic credit	Gault, Leach & Duey, 2010
v2	Better career preparation than formal classroom training	Gault et al., 2000; Kuh, 2008
v3	Bridge between theory and actual practice	D'Andrea, 2005; Lam and Ching, 2007; Narayanan, et al., 2010; UIW, 2011
v4	Improves resume	Coco, 2000; Divine et al., 2007
v5	Professional contacts/ Networking	TWC, 2010
v6	Explore the suitability of a particular job	Hergert, 2009; Siegel Blackwood, & Landy, 2010
v7	Short-term work experience	Coco, 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002
v8	Gain career related experience	Mounce et al, 2004
v9	Learning while working	Kolb, Boyatzis & Mainemelis, 2001; Littke, 2004; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Moore, 2010
v10	More learning about the career area	Sattler, 2011
v11	Permanent employment	Freestone, Williams, Thompson, and Kerry, 2007; Getzel, Briel & Kregel, 2000; TWC, 2010; NACE, 2011
v12	Earn higher starting salaries	Callanan and Benzing 2004; Gault et al. 2000; Gault et al. 2010; Knemeyer and Murphy 2002; Knouse and Fontenot 2008; Mello 2006; Rothman and Lampe 2009
v13	Gain qualities	Birch et al. 2010; D'abate et al. 2009; Gault et al. 2000; McCollum and Schoening 2004; Sapp and Zhang 2009
v14	Gain skills	Beard 2007; D. F. Beard, 2007; Haimson & Bellotti, 2001; Knouse and Fontenot 2008
v15	Enhance career goals and direction	D'Andrea, 2005; Greifner, 2007; Littke, 2004
v16	More informed career decisions	Kensinger & Muller, 2006
v17	Avoid uncertainty about career choices	Sattler, 2011
v18	Greater sense of responsibility and career development	McKnight, 2013
v19	Gain greater exposure	Lubbers, 2008; Wynn, 2003
v20	Increase marketability	Jowdy, McDonald & Spence, 2004
cd1	Career Development	Mceecdy, 2010; McMahan & Tatham, 2008; Miles Morgan Australia, 2012; Robertson, 2013

Source: Literature Survey

From the results of the reliability, validity and factor analysis based on the field survey, the following results have been found:

4.1 Reliability:

The Cronbach's Alpha value of all the 21 items together including 20 independent and 1 dependent variables is .869 which is greater than 0.7, indicating an overall higher reliability factors of internship variables used in this study for the career development of the marketing graduates.

4.2 Validity:

The validity of the study was examined through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and the Bartlett Test of Sphericity. The value of KMO is .822 which is

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“meritorious’ (Kaiser, 1974) suggesting the adequacy of the sample size for the factor analysis. From the results of the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity, it is seen that the approximate chi-square statistics is 4250.009 with 190 degrees of freedom, which is greater than table value. This means that the null hypothesis that the population correlation matrix is an identity matrix, is rejected by Bartlett’s test of sphericity. So, the result of Bartlett’s test of sphericity is significant suggesting that the population was not an identity matrix.

4.3 Factor Analysis:

Table 2: Component Loadings (Internship and Career Development)

Name of Components	Variables	Component Loading*	Eigen Value **	Component Interpretation (% of Variance Explained)**
Component 1: Learning and Experience	v7: Short-term work experience	.713	5.429	27.146
	v8: Gain career related experience	.809		
	v9: Learning while working	.844		
	v10: More learning about the career area	.807		
Component 2: Planned Career	v15: Enhance career goals and direction	.633	2.318	11.592
	v16: More informed career decisions	.803		
	v17: Avoid uncertainty about career choices	.818		
	v18: Greater sense of responsibility and career development	.756		
Component 3: Presentability and Marketability	v13: Gain Qualities	.525	1.741	8.703
	v14: Gain Skills	.631		
	v19: Gain greater exposure	.765		
	v20: Increased Marketability	.769		
Component 4: Career Preparation	v1: Academic credit	.818	1.249	6.245
	v2: Better career preparation than formal classroom training	.859		
	v3: Bridge between theory and actual practice	.583		
Component 5: Professional Improvement	v4: Improves resume	.570	1.171	5.857
	v5: Professional contacts/Networking	.753		
	v6: Explore the suitability of a particular job	.646		
Component 6: Employment and Income Opportunities	v11: Permanent employment	.830	1.103	5.516
	v12: Earn higher starting salaries	.881		
		Total Variance		65.059

Source: *Rotated Component Matrix, **Total Variance **Extraction Method:** PCA

By using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation, six components of internship for career development have been with the eigen values greater than 1.0 using the factor loading of 0.50 as the cut-off point and cumulative proportion of **65.059%** variance. This has been exhibited in the **Table 2**.

From the findings of the Table 2, it is evident that career development of the marketing graduates is ensured through internship for the six reasons namely ‘Learning and Experience’, ‘Planned Career’, ‘Presentability and Marketability’, ‘Career Preparation’, ‘Professional Improvement’ and ‘Employment and Income Opportunities’.

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Component 1: Learning and Experience

It is the most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 5.429 and 27.146 respectively. This component contains 4 (four) variables (v7, v8, v9 and v10) with component loading .713, .809, .844 and .807 respectively which are related to learning and experience. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as 'Learning and Experience'.

Component 2: Planned Career

It is the second most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 2.318 and 11.592 respectively. This component contains 4 (four) variables, namely v15, v16, v17 and v18 with component loading .633, .803, .818 and .756 respectively which are related to Planned Career. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as Planned Career.

Component 3: Presentability and Marketability

This is the third most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 1.741 and 8.703 respectively. This component contains 4 (four) variables v13, v14, v19 and v20 with component loading .525, .631, .765 and .769 respectively have relevance to the Presentability and Marketability of the graduates. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as Presentability and Marketability.

Component 4: Career Preparation

This is the fourth most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 1.249 and 6.245 respectively. This component contains 3 (three) variables, (v1, v2 and v3) with component loading .818, .859 and .583 respectively have relevance to the Career Preparation. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as Career Preparation.

Component 5: Professional Improvement

This is the fifth most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 1.171 and 5.857 respectively. This component contains 3 (three) variables, (v4, v5 and v6) with component loading .570, .753 and .646 respectively have relevance to the Professional Improvement. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as Professional Improvement.

Component 6: Employment and Income Opportunities

It is the sixth most important component since the eigenvalue and percentage (%) of variation explained by this component are 1.103 and 5.516 respectively. This component contains 2 (two) variables v11 and v12 with component loading .830 and .881 respectively which are related to Employment and Income Opportunities. The examination of the role of internship on career development reveals that all these four variables are significant. So, this component may be labeled as Employment and Income Opportunities.

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From the findings of the PCA, it has been revealed that the above six are significant components of internship that play positive role in the career development of the marketing graduates. So, the H_a has been proved.

4.4 Correlations of Internship and Career Development:

In the present study, a correlation coefficient measured the strength of a linear between the career development and six components (Learning and Experience, Planned Career, Presentability and Marketability, Career Preparation, Professional Improvement and Employment and Income Opportunities) of internship. The correlation between career development and six components of internship is positive and is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the correlation between 'Career development' and 'Learning and Experience' (Component 1) is 0.486 ($p=0.000$); the correlation between 'career development' and 'Planned Career' (Component 2) is 0.406 ($p=0.000$); the correlation between 'Career development' and 'Presentability and Marketability' (Component 3) is 0.442 ($p=0.000$); the correlation between 'career development' and 'Career Preparation' (Component 4) is 0.150 ($p=0.000$); the correlation between 'career development' and 'Professional Improvement' (Component 5) is 0.124 ($p=0.000$) and the correlation between 'Career development' and 'Employment and Income Opportunities' (Component 6) is 0.268 ($p=0.000$). Therefore, the study result exhibits a positive correlation between the independent variables of the Internship and dependent variable career development of the marketing graduates which have been identified earlier from the literature review.

Thus, the result of correlation rejects the null hypothesis (H_0) that 'Internship does not have any role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates' and proves or accepts the alternative hypothesis (H_a) that "Internship has role in the Career Development of the Marketing Graduates". So, there is a relationship as expected.

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Table 3: Correlations of Internship and Career Development

	Career Development	Component 1: (Learning and Experience)	Component 2: (Planned Career)	Component 3: (Presentability and Marketability)	Component 4: (Career Preparation)	Component 5: (Professional Improvement)	Component 6: (Employment and Income Opportunities)
Career Development	1	.486** .000	.406** .000	.442** .000	.150** .000	.124** .003	.268** .000
Component 1: (Learning and Experience)	.486** .000	1	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000
Component 2: (Planned Career)	.406** .000	.000 1.000	1	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000
Component 3: (Presentability and Marketability)	.442** .000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	1	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000
Component 4: (Career Preparation)	.150** .000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	1	.000 1.000	.000 1.000
Component 5: (Professional Improvement)	.124** .003	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	1	.000 1.000
Component 6: (Employment and Income Opportunities)	.268** .000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	.000 1.000	1

Source: Field Data

5. Implications

From the light of the above findings and analysis section, it can be stated that the proper implementation of the following course of actions can ensure successful career development of the Marketing graduates of the Business Schools in Bangladesh through well planned internship programs. There should be the provision of joint supervision by assigning two supervisors for each graduate of which one will be from the academia and the other from the organization where the intern will be placed. In this regard, careful attention must have to be given in assigning resourceful and dynamic supervisor(s) so that the interns can integrate their theoretical knowledge with practice and vice versa.

In assigning the internship opportunities to the marketing graduates, all the necessary measures have to be taken to place them into the marketing related arenas like branding, product development, customer service, advertisement copy writing and design, campaign planning, digital marketing planning, search engine optimization, distribution, pricing, customer relationship management, etc. Such placement can enhance career development of the concerned marketing graduates.

The placement cells of the Business Schools must play their active role in extending their relationship with the reputed local, multinational and global companies which have extensive marketing operations. Before assigning the internship opportunities, the head or chairman of the Department of Marketing and placement cell officials of the Business Schools may jointly or separately undertake career counseling for the candidates to enable the latter in matching their skills, traits and passion with the various intern positions.

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Apart from the regular career counseling, various types of training programs and workshops including resume or CV writing, professional etiquettes and manners, personality development, presentation skill, conflict management, office management, relationship marketing and the likes may be organized under the supervision of the industry leaders so that the marketing graduates can develop them as market ready professionals.

6. Conclusion

The present study though has been confined to the scenario analysis of only 8 business schools including 2 public and 6 privately administered entities, it is unique in its respective fields by focusing on 20 independent and 1 dependent factors or variables. In the literature review, it has already been found that the previous studies were confined to a small number of factors identification. Again the factors identified in one study were not included in the other. So, none of the past studies was found complete in nature. From this perspective, the scope of the present study is much broader and obviously superior to those of the earlier studies. The superiority and uniqueness of the present study can be observed from the findings of its six components on the basis of the previously identified 20 variables from the literature review. The six components namely Component 1: Learning and Experience, Component 2: Planned Career, Component 3: Presentability and Marketability, Component 4: Career Preparation, Component 5: Professional Improvement and Component 6: Employment and Income Opportunities are quite appropriately relevant to the career development of the marketing graduates of the present study through internships. However, the study is not free from some limitations the unavailability of ready reference on the subject matter from Bangladesh perspectives and collection of primary data from such a big number of samples was also very time consuming. Moreover, the study was undertaken with person research initiative and so no fund was available from any source other than the author himself. Finally, it can be stated that the findings of this study will enable the Business Schools of Bangladesh to provide role model of career oriented internship placement to their graduates of marketing discipline in the relevant positions so that they can develop their qualities and skills and utilize the same to contribute in their professional achievement, advancement and growth. However, to explore the new factors some studies in the respective domain of the present study may be endeavored in future to overcome the limitations arising from the coordination of the tie among the academia, industry and research institutes.

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