



Attracting & Retaining Younger Members

Best Practices

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The Episcopal Network for Stewardship

Learning Objectives

1. Different approaches for different generations
2. What we need to know about younger generations & Church
3. What to do (and not to do) about liturgy, design, pledges, and methods of giving

Introduction



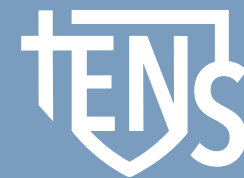
Generational Differences impact Donor Motivation

How you message to different generations matters

- Let's take a look at how generational demographics impact donations in your community



Different Generations = Different Approaches



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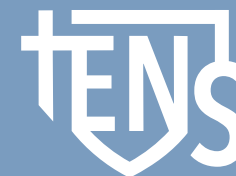
The “Matures”

- ▶ Born before 1945
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Institutional support – they trust the institution
 - ▶ Pastoral care
 - ▶ The Church “being there” for them and future generations
 - ▶ Planned, Capital, and Annual Giving

From the Lake Institute of Faith & Giving, 2024

Different Generations = Different Approaches

MATURES
1945 & EARLIER



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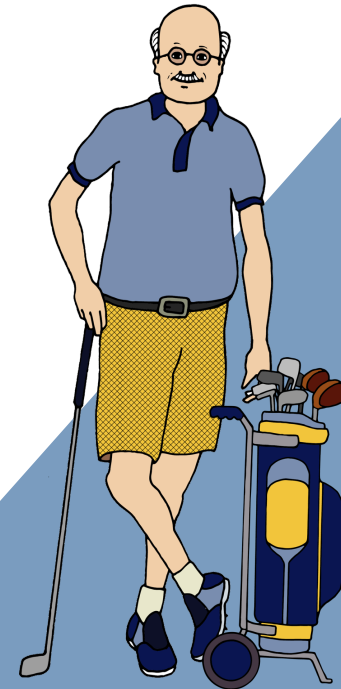
The “Baby Boomers”

- ▶ Born 1946 - 1964
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Wanting to know the finances before they decide to donate
 - ▶ The Church “being there” for them and future generations
 - ▶ Planned, Capital, and Annual Giving
- ▶ This is the wealthiest generation ever to have lived

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BABY BOOMER
1946-1964



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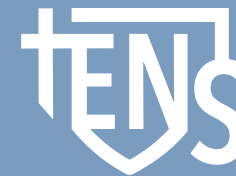
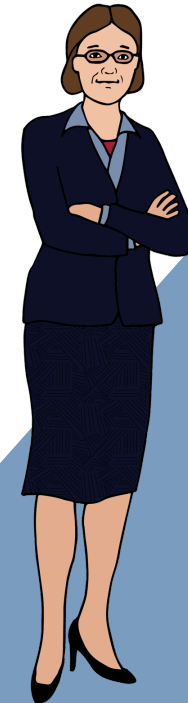
Generation X – The Lost Generation

- ▶ Born 1965 - 1976
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Far more interested in volunteering than donating to their church – or see volunteering as a first step
 - ▶ Less trusting of the institution, more interested in the work
 - ▶ Annual and Capital Giving
- ▶ This generation will inherit +\$40 Trillion in the next 15 years

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GENERATION X
1965-1976



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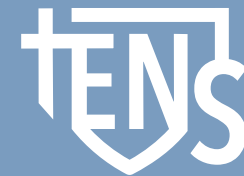
The Millennials

- ▶ Born 1977 - 1995
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Results – what is the church doing in the community and why does it matter?
 - ▶ Even less trust in organization and institution, more interested in donating to grassroots or defined ministries than to overall budgets
 - ▶ Largest online donors
- ▶ 89% of this generation donates to nonprofits, they are very generous

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MILLENNIAL
1977-1995



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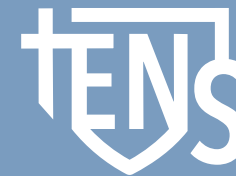
Generation Z

- ▶ Born 1996 +
- ▶ By 20 years old 30% have made a donation to a nonprofit
- ▶ 97% of this generation has made an online gift for a charitable purpose
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ They want their work to make a difference, therefore their church needs to prove the same
 - ▶ 76% are worried about the planet, and want to see their faith communities do something about it
 - ▶ Prefer apps and mobile giving. They don't write checks
 - ▶ Least likely to pledge, but will give when asked
- ▶ This group makes up 40% of all customers – they have buying power, and they're using it

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Different Generations = Different Approaches

GENERATION Z
1996 & LATER

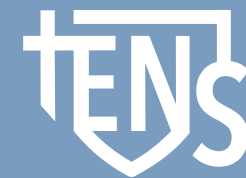


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Preparing for Younger Members

GEN-Z have become the most CHURCHED GROUP in the United States.

Source: Giving USA 2025 *Key Findings*

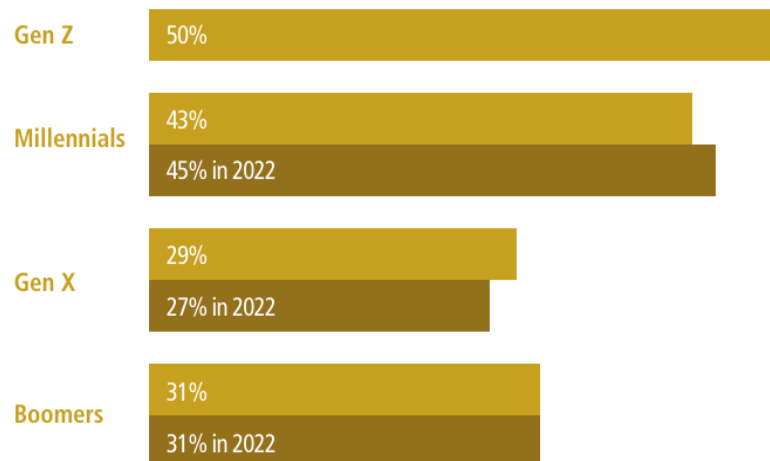


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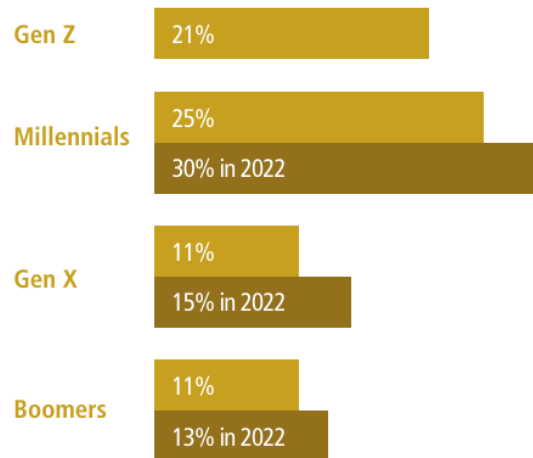
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Preparing for Younger Members

THOSE WHO SAY THEY ATTEND IN PERSON ALMOST EVERY WEEK OR EVERY WEEK



THOSE WHO SAY THEY ATTEND VIRTUAL SERVICES ALMOST EVERY WEEK OR EVERY WEEK

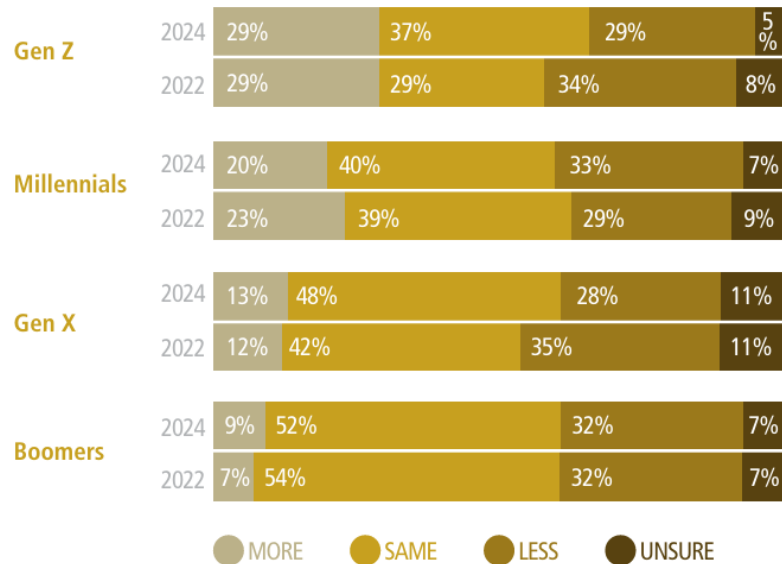


Attracting Younger Donors

Source: Giving USA 2025

Preparing for Younger Members

LIKELIHOOD TO SUPPORT PLACES OF WORSHIP IN THE COMING YEAR



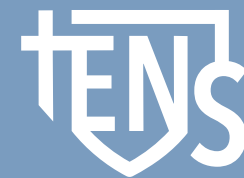
Source: Giving USA 2025

Attracting Younger Donors

Strategies to Adopt to make our Church ready for Younger Members

In order to encourage Millennials and Generation Z to become donors, the Church needs to adopt and adapt

1. How we engage the wider community
2. How we increase volunteer engagement
3. How we expect to raise funds
4. How we make disciples



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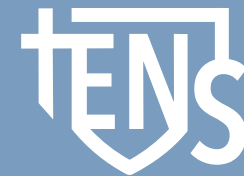
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Show Them Results

- ▶ Gen Xers and Millennials are not motivated to give to simply maintain the status quo.
- ▶ They want to see results. They want to know how their sacrifice (and at this age and income experience, giving is sacrificial) is making a difference.
- ▶ **Make a concerted effort to help people see how their giving is having an impact.**



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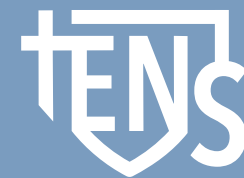


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Preach Sermons that are Honest

- ▶ Young members are hungry for thoughtful, provocative engagement on the Gospel and age-old questions
 - ▶ Engaging science and climate science
 - ▶ Honest conversations about health and wellness
- ▶ Engage the News
 - ▶ Respond rather than react to today's headlines
 - ▶ Relate today to the Gospel, to our lives
- ▶ Healthy, Whole Relationships
 - ▶ Preach about relationship values that are in line with the culture. Model reality, not morality

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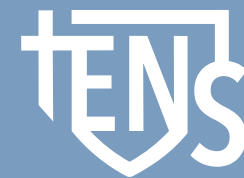


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Make Church like ... Church!

- ▶ 2014 Barna study on “Designing Worship Spaces with Millennials in Mind” revealed that most younger members appreciate traditional architecture and elements: pews, aisles, and altars that resemble traditional altars.
- ▶ The same study revealed that church spaces that are medium-sized – not cavernous, and not too intimate – make them feel at home

<https://www.barna.com/research/designing-worship-spaces-with-millennials-in-mind/>

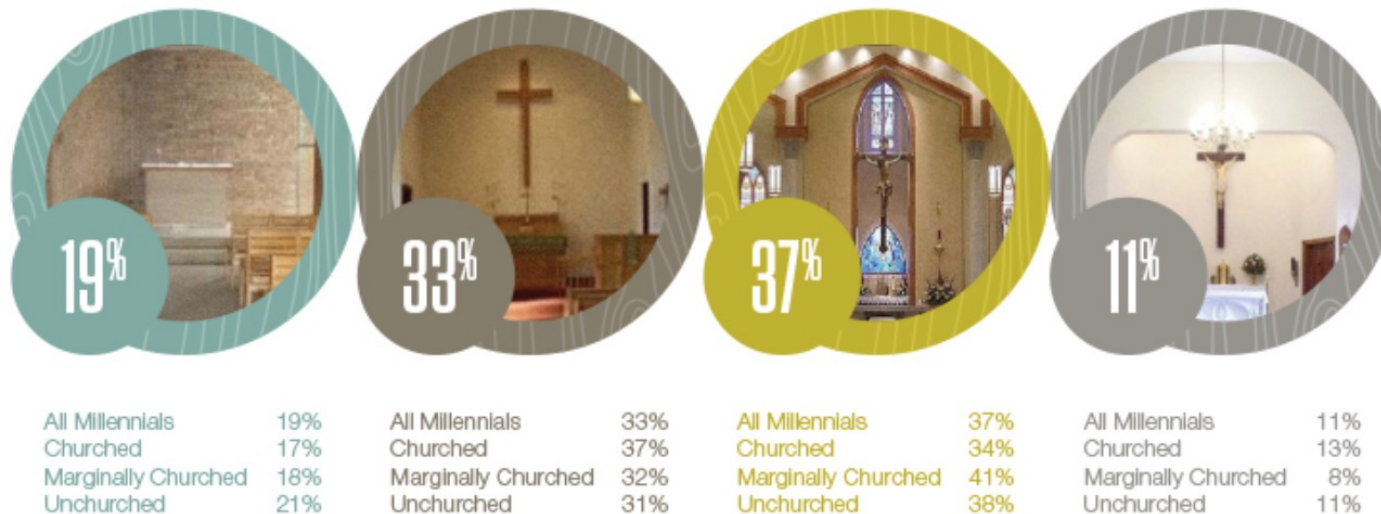


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Make Church like ... Church!

► SELECT THE **ALTAR** IMAGE THAT IS MOST APPEALING TO YOU ◀



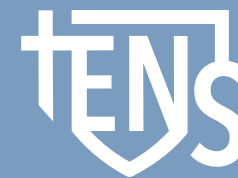
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Get Good on Tech

- ▶ Know how to post engaging copy on social media – questions that promote dialogue
- ▶ Do you know how to use #?
- ▶ Don't ditch bulletins for screens and hymnals for projected lyrics unless your tech team is ready to go. Check out this resource from the United Methodist Church on how to time your Powerpoint to your music

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/powerpoint-tools-and-timing-techniques-for-churches>

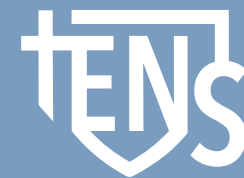
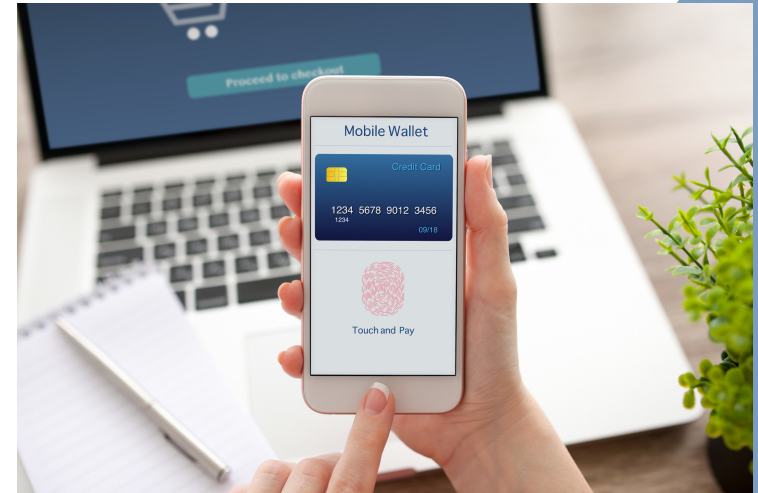
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Focus on Retention

- ▶ The number one goal is helping people understand the importance of regular consistent giving.
- ▶ This means **encouraging them to see the value of generosity as a discipline.**
- ▶ It also means using digital giving solutions as a way to promote recurring giving as an option.



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Encourage Volunteerism

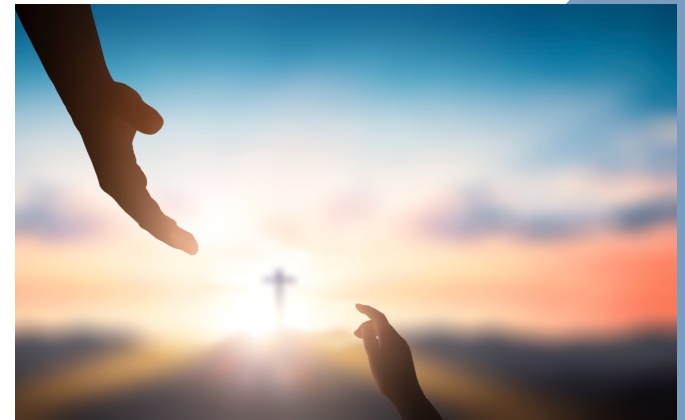
- ▶ The key to encouraging generosity among these generations is **emotional involvement**.
- ▶ They are much quicker to give when they're invested in the cause and work.
- ▶ By making volunteerism an organizational priority, you're making it easier for people to give.



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Don't Forget Discipleship

- ▶ Ultimately, every discipleship and mentoring program needs to help people **understand how spirituality impacts their financial decisions.**
- ▶ The best way to do this is through the example and encouragement that comes from a one-on-one relationship.

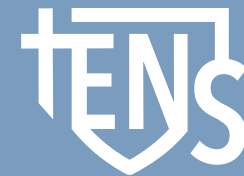


Make Questions Normative

- ▶ 11% of Millennials say they do not believe in God
- ▶ 32% of Millennials say they do not know if they believe in God, or not
- ▶ As a whole, they are more comfortable with questions and uncertainty about faith, and open to learning

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/belief-in-god/do-not-believe-in-god/generational-cohort/younger-millennial/>

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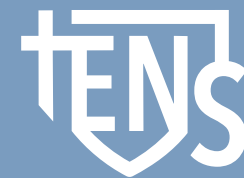
Diversity is Key

- ▶ Millennials and Gen-Z are the most racially diverse generations. **43% are non-white.**
- ▶ When the leadership and worship leaders are mono-racial, **there is a disconnect** with what these young people see in their workplaces, schools, and friend groups and what they experience in Church.
- ▶ Raise up non-white leaders
- ▶ Seek, recruit, and hire for diversity in gender, identity, and ability



Optimism Attracts

- ▶ 19% of Millennials and GenZ think that leaders can be trusted.
 - ▶ Media, True-Crime TV, headlines of corruption
- ▶ The Christian Hope – the desire, conviction, and connection to change the world is a message that appeals
- ▶ We must learn to capture the hope of the New Jerusalem and use it to talk about the brilliant future God has for us

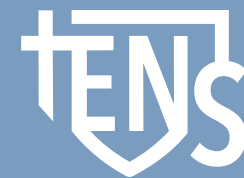


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Politics are Important ... locally!

- ▶ Half of Millennials and Gen-Z claim no party affiliation – independence is attractive. Ideas over Ideology
- ▶ We must avoid talking about politics by name in our church, but talk about issues instead.
- ▶ Local initiatives are more appealing than those of far-away Washington



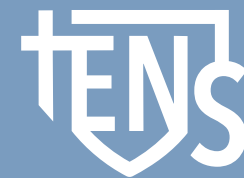
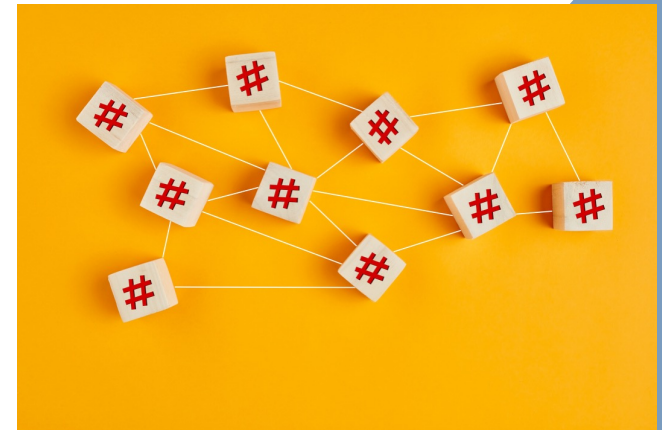
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Don't be Web 1.0 in a post Web 2.0 World

- ▶ Early websites provided information, but no interaction
- ▶ Social media created a generation of user-generated content and an exchange of ideas, even if often hard to control or distasteful
- ▶ Church must do more than have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – *we must engage a story thousands of years old with the tools at our disposal today.*
- ▶ Dialogue, questions, meaningful interaction

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Giving is Easy: Here's how!

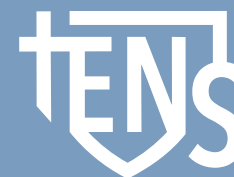
Adopt as many methods for accepting donations as your staff and volunteers can effectively manage

- ▶ **Online giving** platform/s
- ▶ **Mobile / App-based giving** platform/s
- ▶ Pledge forms or Intentions to Give are **easily available** (online is great!)
- ▶ Instructions on how to give by **ACH or bill pay**
- ▶ Instructions on how to give **securities**
- ▶ Reminder that members may give from their **required minimum distribution** (not in 2020) or **qualified charitable distribution**
- ▶ **Planned Giving** options are easy to find, and included on your pledge / intention cards

Don't forget to include time and talent intentions, too!



Did you miss our webinar on Virtual Stewardship 201? You can find it on our website at:
<https://www.tens.org/webinars-events/tens-webinars/virtual-stewardship-201/>



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Broad Approaches to Fundraising

TENS Theme for 2025

What is the good news that you cannot wait to share with the world? What stories do you have that need to be told, that can help others relate to the world around them? How do you inspire generosity in others by your words, actions, and witness?

The theme of our campaign materials this year focuses on our storytelling, on the way we tell our friends and neighbors about our faith, our ministry, and our mission. What is your good news?

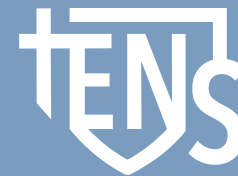
*And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..."* **Luke 1:46-47, NRSV**



Tell Out
My Soul



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Thank you!

For more information, resources, and videos,
find us at www.tens.org

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