

The Effectiveness of TikTok in Increasing Brand Awareness Among Users

Kullanıcılar Arasında Marka Bilinirliğini Artırmada TikTok'un Etkinliği

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Abstract

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Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of TikTok in increasing brand awareness among users. **Material and Method:** This study employs a quantitative research approach. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to B2C TikTok users to gather data. **Findings:** Mobile Application Value, System Quality, and Influencer Trust significantly influence TikTok's brand awareness. Information Quality does not exhibit a significant effect on Brand Awareness. Brand Awareness positively impacts both Word of Mouth and Purchase Intention. **Results:** This study demonstrates TikTok's effectiveness in enhancing brand awareness, primarily through system quality, mobile app value and influencer trust, while minimizing the role of information quality. The positive impact on word of mouth and purchase intention underscores TikTok's potential as a powerful marketing tool.

Öz

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı, kullanıcılar arasında marka farkındalığını artırmada TikTok'un etkinliğini araştırmaktır. **Gereç ve Yöntem:** Bu çalışma nicel bir araştırma yaklaşımını kullanmaktadır. Veri toplamak için bir anket geliştirildi ve B2C TikTok kullanıcılarına dağıtıldı. **Bulgular:** Mobil Uygulama Değeri, Sistem Kalitesi ve Etkileyici Güveni, TikTok'taki Marka Bilinirliğini önemli ölçüde etkilemektedir. Bilgi Kalitesi Marka Bilinirliği üzerinde önemli bir etki göstermemektedir. Marka Bilinirliği hem Ağızdan Ağıza İletişimi hem de Satın Alma Niyetini olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. **Sonuçlar:** Çalışma ile elde edilen sonuçlar yorumlandığında; bilgi kalitesinin rolünü küçümsenirken, özellikle mobil uygulama değeri, sistem kalitesi ve etkileyenlerin güveni aracılığıyla TikTok'un marka farkındalığını artırmadaki etkinliği ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ağızdan ağıza iletişim ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki olumlu etki, TikTok'un güçlü bir pazarlama aracı olma potansiyelini ortaya çıkarmaktadır.



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1. Introduction

Technological advancements have impacted every aspect of life, including social media marketing. Social media has become a vital communication channel for businesses, enhancing brand awareness among consumers (Nguyen et al., 2024). This is mainly due to its extensive reach, allowing businesses to connect with a diverse audience and effectively engage

them with their brand message. Building brand awareness is crucial for marketers, as consumers are likely to choose products from brands they recognise well (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997). With over 4.8 billion people using social media daily (Chaffey, 2021), its impact on businesses' financial outcomes is significant (Alves, Fernandes & Raposo, 2016; Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Keegan & Rowley, 2017). Marketing professionals, such as Lunyai et al. (2021), Kalam

et al. (2023), Parveen et al. (2014), and Jamil (2020), acknowledge that the growth of social media advertising in Malaysia is projected to continue, with a forecasted increase of 7.18% and reaching 31.31 million users by 2027. This trend reflects the widespread adoption of social media platforms among Malaysian consumers, as well as the increasing recognition of their marketing potential.

Current research primarily focuses on established platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram (Dehghani et al., 2016; Febriyantoro, 2020; Voorveld et al., 2018). However, there needs to be more studies exploring emerging platforms like TikTok (Lim, 2020). Despite being relatively new, TikTok has quickly captured global attention, with 1 billion monthly users (Iqbal, 2021), surpassing established platforms in app downloads. TikTok guarantees at least 5 million daily advertising views, making it a powerful branding tool (Sloane & Rittenhouse, 2019). It primarily targets Generation Z, appealing to users with dance and lip-syncing content, with women aged 18 to 24 being a significant portion of its audience. Generation Z allocates more of their time to TikTok than to any other platform.

Given TikTok's marketing potential, it is crucial to assess and understand its effectiveness as a branding tool (Sheak & Abdulrazak, 2023). This study focuses on "The Effectiveness of TikTok in Increasing Brand Awareness Among Users." While businesses recognise TikTok's potential, comprehensive studies on its specific impact on brand awareness still need to be completed. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between TikTok usage and brand awareness, providing insights and recommendations for companies looking to leverage TikTok to enhance brand awareness and engagement.

Therefore, this research was conducted with the following research objectives (RO):

RO1: To identify the effect between Information Quality, Mobile Application Values, System Quality, Influencer Trust, and Brand Awareness

RO2: To identify the effect between Brand Awareness and Word of Mouth

RO3: To analyse the effect between Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention

2. Literature Review

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can recognise a brand, playing a vital role in their process of making decisions (Seo & Park, 2018; Tabrizi & Valanejad, 2018; Hsin et al., 2019). In marketing terms, brand awareness is percentage of potential buyers who can identify or recall a specific brand. This awareness falls under brand identification and retrieval (Hsin et al., 2019). Additionally, brand awareness helps a brand stand out from competitors, aiding consumers in making informed choices (Nguyen et al., 2024). To achieve strong brand awareness businesses must to consistently and effectively showcase their brand through diverse communication channels. These may include unique symbols, catchphrases, and unique packaging. Brand awareness can be built by presenting brands to customers, prompting a response that allows them to associate with, recognize, recall, and develop a comprehensive understanding of the brands (Utama et al., 2023). Kumaresan and Chandramohan (2024) state that consumers' ability to assess a specific product is rooted in their awareness of the brand.

2.1. The Effect of Information Quality (IQ) on Brand Awareness

According to Chen and Chang (2018), information quality (IQ) mobile apps is defined by the accuracy, lucidity, dependability, and comprehensiveness of the provided product and service details. High-quality information not only enhances users' understanding of the brand but also builds customer loyalty, which in turn boosts app recommendations and user retention. On the other hand, poor information quality can deter users and reduce recommendations (Pocatilu et al., 2015). Platforms that provide valuable content often attract more consumers, build trust, and enhance the platform's and its provider's overall worth (Bertan et al., 2016; Rezaei & Shahijan, 2017). However, excessive, or low-quality

information can lead to information overload, potentially harming the brand's image. To combat this, app developers can include filtering features that ensure only relevant information is displayed (Wang & Wang, 2010). According to Barreda et al. (2015) and Chen and Chang (2018), high-quality content on mobile apps significantly boosts brand awareness and recognition. Therefore, the second hypothesis is:

H₁: The quality of information has an impact on brand awareness.

2.2. The effect of Mobile Application Value on Brand Awareness

Marketers increasingly use branded apps to build customer loyalty, recognising that consumers rely more on mobile apps for product information (Hew et al., 2016). As more people prefer mobile devices for internet access (Green & Lomanno, 2012), businesses are incorporating augmented reality (AR) into their mobile apps to boost marketing efforts. These apps offer anytime, anywhere interaction and navigation, enhancing perceived benefits and fostering loyalty (Adukaite et al., 2014). According to Orman and Sebetci (2021), entertainment apps boost brand engagement, while informational apps enhance learning experiences. Additionally, mobile apps can generate brand experiences; for example, interactive features within an app allow users to engage directly with the brand (Boonsiritomachai & Sud-On, 2020). Deng et al. (2010) found that different aspects of value influence customer decisions to use a product, impacting brand awareness and overall experience. Therefore, if customers find mobile apps valuable and use them, companies can enhance brand awareness and improve the overall brand experience. Thus, the hypothesis is:

H₂: Mobile application value has an impact on brand awareness.

2.3. The Effect of System Quality (SQ) on Brand Awareness

System quality (SQ) in mobile apps, as defined by Koo, Wati, and Chung (2013), encompasses performance aspects such as convenience, usability, functionality, and security. Premium

mobile applications are intuitive for users due to their simplicity, ease of understanding, and intuitive access. According to Ruiz-Molina, Gil-Saura, and Šerić (2013), the simpler the app's system, the more efficient it is perceived to be. In connection, when applications offer intuitive navigation and essential functionalities, users perceive them as valuable and are more likely to engage with their features. Furthermore, robust data security enhances system quality, fostering trust and acceptance among users, which helps retain customers (Gibbs, Gretzel, & Saltzman, 2016). For instance, users often explore and use all its features after downloading TikTok. Additionally, Wang and Wang (2010) pointed out that mobile applications have the potential to deliver customised services, utilising Global Positioning System (GPS) functionalities for location-specific or geographically tailored offerings. Therefore, the third hypothesis is:

H₃: System quality has an impact on brand awareness.

2.4. The Effect of Influencer Trust on Brand Awareness

Influencers play a vital role in molding customers' purchasing decisions and service usage. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), in their Two-step Flow Hypothesis, identified opinion leaders as early adopters knowledgeable and trusted on specific topics. Likewise, social media influencers serve as digital thought leaders and are perceived as trustworthy and well-formed authorities. Stubb and Colliander (2019) proposed that social media influencers ought to disclose their sponsorships consistently to establish trust with consumers. This is because earning consumers' confidence is crucial for the effectiveness of an influencer's recommendation.

Moreover, trust from consumers is critical in determining how believable an endorser is, which Goldsmith et al. (2000, p. 43) defined as "how much people think the source knows about the topic and can be trusted to give a fair opinion. "Consumers are more apt to recall and recognise a brand if they feel a personal connection with the product or brand promoted

by an influencer on TikTok through their content. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is:

H4: Influencer Trust has an impact on brand awareness.

2.5. Word-of-Mouth (WOM) and Purchase Intention as Forms of Brand Awareness

Word of mouth (WOM) refers to the communication about a product received from individuals or groups, typically friends or relatives, unaffected by company biases (Harwani & Sakinah, 2020). It is a reliable channel for informing consumers about product quality (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006), encompassing both positive and negative feedback about the company, brand, product, or service from non-involved individuals (Goyette et al., 2010). Word-of-mouth (WOM) is a critical

source of information for new customers, impacting their intention to purchase and brand awareness (Severi et al., 2014). Research has shown that customer brand awareness through mobile devices enhances word-of-mouth (WOM) and purchase intention (Kim, Wang, & Malthouse, 2015). Brand rewards, engagement, and the appeal of brand ads affect consumers' purchase intentions in mobile marketing. For instance, engaging with official brand pages on Facebook enhances brand recognition, boosting word-of-mouth (WOM) and purchasing decisions (Hutter et al., 2013). Therefore, the hypotheses are:

H5: Brand awareness impacts word-of-mouth.

H6: Brand awareness impacts purchase intention.

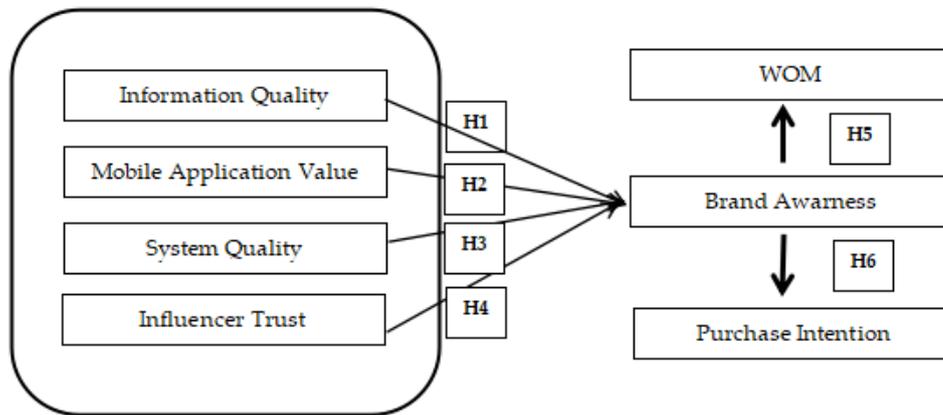


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of This Study

3. Method

A quantitative approach is adopted in this research, employing a questionnaire with multiple items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). These questionnaire items are derived from earlier studies conducted by Wang, Liao, and Yang (2013), Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2020), Jang et al. (2008), Li Y. (2016), Tang et al. (2023), Yang Y. (2022), Sasmita and Suki (2015), Doğan-Südaş et al. (2023), and Mikalef, Giannakos, and Pateli (2013), tailored to the specific scope of this study centres on evaluating the effectiveness of TikTok in increasing brand awareness. The questionnaire

comprises three sections: demographic information, TikTok effectiveness, and satisfaction level. The target population consists of B2C users of TikTok. Based on government data, Kuala Lumpur has a population of 1.99 million, Selangor has 7.2 million, and Johor has 4.1 million. This study adhered to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black's (1998) recommendation that a sample size of at least five times the number of items requires a minimum of 180 respondents. Therefore, a sample size 343 was determined using Raosoft's sample size calculator. Despite adapting questionnaires from previous studies, a pilot study was conducted to ensure the content's

clarity, comprehension, fluency, and interpretation and the study is based on data from 304. According to Whitley & Ball (2002), sample size estimates are rough guides, and small differences like this don't usually harm the accuracy of the results. Practical issues, like recruiting enough participants, often affect the

final numbers (Scales & Rubenfeld, 2005). Therefore, 304 participants should still be enough to support the study's findings, given that key factors like statistical power and effect size were considered. This step was taken to validate the questionnaire's validity before full-scale implementation.

Table 1.
Source of Research Instrument

Variables	Source	Number of Items
Mobile AppsValue	Wang, Liao and Yang (2013), Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2020)	8
InformationQuality	Jang et al. (2008), Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2020), Li Y. (2016)	5
System Quality	Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On(2020), Tang et al. (2023)	5
Influencer Trust	Yang, Y. (2022)	4
Brand Awareness	Sasmita and Suki (2015), Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On(2020)	5
Word of Mouth	Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2020), Doğan-Südaş et al. (2023)	5
Word of Mouth	Mikalef, Giannakos and Pateli (2013),Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2020), Kim, H., & Park, M. (2023)	4

The raw data gathered from surveys and questionnaires was meticulously organised and imported into the SPSS software. Subsequently, the data collected from 304 respondents underwent analysis using the SPSS statistical analytical tool, encompassing descriptive and regression analyses. Cronbach's Alpha values were computed for all independent and dependent variables, with scores exceeding 0.90, indicating the high reliability of the questionnaire items.

Demographic information of the respondents was analysed using percentages and frequencies, while variables were assessed using mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, the study employed linear and multiple regression tests to evaluate the impact of independent variables on dependent variables. It should be noted that this study did not specify the use of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) or Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

EFA is typically applied to explore underlying factor structures when relationships between variables are not predefined, while CFA is used to confirm theoretical models. Since the aim of this research was to examine the direct relationships between independent and

dependent variables using regression analysis, factor analysis was not deemed necessary. The high reliability of the questionnaire items (with Cronbach's Alpha exceeding 0.90) further supports this approach, indicating strong internal consistency without the need for further factor reduction.

4. Findings

4.1 Respondent's Profile

Table 2 below shows the frequency and percentages of respondents, including gender, age, employment information and the frequency of using TikTok. The number of females who participated in this study was higher than males where the number of female respondents who answered the questionnaire was 179 (58.9%) while male respondents were 125 (41.1%). Most of the respondents fall between the ages of 21 and 25 (53.3%).

The highest number of respondents who answered this questionnaire were from full-time employment with a frequency of 122 equivalent to 40.1%. Next, the above data shows that the highest frequency of using TikTok was 1 – 3 times a day (38.8%).

Table 2.
Profile of Respondents

	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	179	58.9
	Male	125	41.1
Age	18 – 20 years old	33	10.9
	21 – 25 years old	162	53.3
	26 years old and above	109	35.9
Employment Information	Full-time employment	122	40.1
	Part-time employment	25	8.2
	Unemployed	9	3.0
	Self-employed	15	4.9
	Home-maker	9	3.0
	Student	117	38.5
Frequency of Using TikTok	Retired	7	2.3
	1 – 3 times a day	118	38.8
	4 – 6 times a day	101	32.2
	7 – 10 times a day	85	28.0

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis encompasses the size of the data distribution, incorporating the range from the questionnaire, as well as standard deviation and variance values. Standard deviation illustrates the typical variation from the sample mean, while the mean measures central tendency (Kumar et al., 2013). Descriptive statistics for each item and variable were computed to assess their prevalence among respondents. Mean levels were categorised as low (1.00-2.33), medium (2.34-3.67), and high (3.68-5.00) based on suggestions by Pallant (2020). Table 3 summarises of the

rankings of factors affecting Brand Awareness based on their mean scores. These factors include Mobile Application Value, Information Quality, System Quality, and Influencer Trust. Each factor is evaluated in terms of its mean score, standard deviation (SD) range, and mean level (categorised as high or medium). Both Mobile Application Value and System Quality exhibit high mean scores, indicating they are perceived as highly impactful on Brand Awareness. Meanwhile, Information Quality and Influencer Trust demonstrate medium mean scores, suggesting a moderate impact on Brand Awareness.

Table 3.
Descriptive Analysis

Variables	Number of Items	Mean	SD Range	Mean Level
Mobile Application Value	304	3.845865	.81261	High
Information Quality	304	3.437500	.86778	Medium
System Quality	304	3.8474	.79710	High
Influencer Trust	304	3.2689	.96358	Medium

4.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The findings of the regression testing are presented in Table 4. Multiple regression was conducted to test hypotheses H₁, H₂, H₃, and H₄. The results show that H₁, H₃, and H₄ are supported, while H₂ is not. Mobile Application Value (MAV_MEAN) significantly affects Brand Awareness (BA_MEAN) (Beta=0.289, p<0.001), as do System Quality (SQ_MEAN) (Beta=0.261, p<0.001) and Influencer Trust (IT_MEAN) (Beta=0.392, p<0.001). Information Quality

(IQ_MEAN) has no significant effect (Beta=0.094, p=0.047). The model explains 77.3% of the variance in Brand Awareness (R²=0.773) and is statistically significant (F=254.603, p<0.001). No multicollinearity issues exist (Tolerance>0.1, VIF<5). The most influential factor is Influencer Trust, followed by Mobile Application Value and System Quality. These results underscore the importance of enhancing mobile application value, and system quality,

and leveraging influencer trust to boost brand awareness.

Table 4.
Multiple Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Variables Path	Beta	P-Value
H ₁	MAV_MEAN → BA_MEAN	0.289	<0.001
H ₂	IQ_MEAN → BA_MEAN	0.094	0.047
H ₃	SQ_MEAN → BA_MEAN	0.261	<0.001
H ₄	IT_MEAN → BA_MEAN	0.392	<0.001

4.4 Linear Regression Analysis

Table 5 shows the linear regression results for brand awareness and word of mouth. Brand awareness explains 77.8% of the variance in

Table 5.
Linear Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Variables Path	Beta	P-Value	Result
H ₅	BA_MEAN → WOM_MEAN	0.882	<0.001	Supported
H ₆	BA_MEAN → PI_MEAN	0.838	<0.001	Supported

5. Conclusion and Discussion

To address Research Objective 1, which aims to identify the effects of Mobile Application Values, Information Quality, System Quality, and Influencer Trust on Brand Awareness, this study found that Mobile Application Value emerged as the most influential factor affecting brand awareness among TikTok users, with a mean score of 3.85. This aligns with Deng et al. (2010), who emphasised the impact of perceived value on customer usage decisions. While System Quality also received a high mean score (3.85), its impact on brand awareness was slightly lower, suggesting that overall value perception in the mobile application plays a more significant role. Conversely, Information Quality and Influencer Trust received lower mean scores (3.44 and 3.27, respectively), indicating their lesser impact on brand awareness. These findings underscore the importance of prioritising enhancing mobile application value for brands aiming to leverage TikTok for marketing purposes. The significant and positive effect of mobile application value on brand awareness was supported by this study ($p < 0.05$, p -value: 0.000), reinforcing the findings of Deng et al. (2010). This highlights the potential for app publishing companies to raise

word of mouth ($R^2=0.778$). The analysis shows a significant impact of brand awareness on word of mouth ($F=1061.150$, $p < 0.05$). Specifically, a one standard deviation increases in brand awareness results in a 0.902 standard deviation increase in word of mouth. The linear regression results for brand awareness and purchase intention as follows brand awareness explains 70.2% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2=0.702$). The analysis indicates a significant impact of brand awareness on purchase intention ($F=712.618$, $p < 0.05$). Specifically, a one standard deviation increases in brand awareness results in a 0.887 standard deviation increase in purchase intention.

brand awareness and enhance the brand experience by focusing on delivering valuable mobile applications that resonate with users. Concerning Research Objective 2, which aims to determine the relationship between Word of Mouth (WOM) and Brand Awareness, the results demonstrate that WOM communication among TikTok users is significantly influenced by brand awareness. In particular, the study shows a strong correlation ($p < 0.05$, p -value: 0.000) between elevated brand awareness and WOM activity engagement. Put another way, people are more inclined to discuss a brand with others when they know it (Kozzielski et al., 2017). This supports the notion that increasing WOM marketing through brand awareness building might benefit companies looking to get greater exposure on platforms like TikTok. The report also emphasises how vital brand awareness influences customer conversations and suggestions. Higher brand awareness makes brands more likely to come up in discussions since people will always share and recommend well-known goods and services. The observed positive association underscores the possibility of utilising brand awareness as a stimulant for naturally occurring word-of-mouth advertising on platforms like TikTok. In conclusion, the study emphasises the importance of brand

awareness as a critical strategic requirement for encouraging word-of-mouth among TikTok users. Businesses may increase their reach and influence in the digital sphere by fostering natural discussions and recommendations by developing high brand awareness and recall. The study demonstrated substantial impacts of brand awareness on purchase intention ($F = 712.618, p < 0.05$), indicating its crucial role in influencing user behaviour. This finding addresses Research Objective 3, which intends to analyse the effect of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention. These findings highlight the significance of integrated tactics that raise brand recognition and consider the knock-on impacts on user behaviour and recommendations. While Brown (2005) backed the idea that brand awareness is essential for producing customer recommendations, Keller (2001) stressed the significant role that brand awareness plays in consumer decision-making processes. Similarly, Macdonald and Sharp (2000) found a strong link between purchase intention and brand awareness. These results demonstrate the numerous benefits of raising brand recognition, which helps businesses become more visible in the marketplace and encourages positive consumer behaviour, which contributes to long-term brand success.

6. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

The research contains several limitations. Firstly, although statistically significant, the sample size of 343 respondents could not accurately represent the different demographics of TikTok users globally, affecting how broadly applicable the findings are. Secondly, the study needs to be more concise in the dynamics of influencer marketing on TikTok by failing to distinguish between different types of

influencers and their unique effects on brand recognition, even while it acknowledges the importance of influencer trust, such as macro vs. micro-influencers. Furthermore, qualitative content analysis needs to be included in the study, which only employs quantitative methodologies and might provide deeper insights into the kinds of content that effectively raise brand awareness. Therefore, future research could expand the sample size, incorporate qualitative insights, and explore the nuances of TikTok's effectiveness across different industries or consumer segments in different countries. Enhancing measurement tools and continuously monitoring TikTok trends are also recommended to refine marketing strategies in the dynamic social media landscape.

7. Statement of Research and Publication Ethics

This research was carried out by the rules of scientific research and publication ethics.

8. Authors' Contribution to the Article

All authors contributed to the study's conception and design. Nur Nadia Najihah Binti Azadan, and Logaiswari Indiran performed material preparation, data collection, analysis and first draft writing. Saranya Nair Pavithran then collectively proofread, edited, and formatted the final manuscript for submission.

9. Statement of Interest

This research is not subject to any conflict of interest.

10. Grant Support

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