
Tourism Organization and Coordination in Australia and the Managerial Strategy for Tourism Development

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This paper presents synthetically the organisation of tourism activities in Australia, harmoniously integrated within the functional unit of the economy, as well as the relations between the components of this system, so that they function as real motors of accomplishing the national strategy of tourism development. This paper also deals with sustainable tourism and tourism ecolabelling programs in Australia.

The opinions expressed are based on the research of the cited bibliographic sources and the interpretation of current information, taken from the websites of some reliable organizations (Tourism Australia, Australian Bureau of Statistics). Primary statistics were taken from Tourism Research Australia (TRA), Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Tourism Satellite Account.

This study may be extended through a similar approach of tourism industry' organization and tourism development strategy in other regions with great tourism potential, using relevant comparative analyses thereafter.

Keywords: *tourism, management, strategy, sustainable tourism, ecolabelling*

Introduction

Tourism management is not limited to management activities in tourism and hospitality services, but is closely connected to all major functions, processes and procedures that are practiced in various areas related to tourism as a system. Tourism management involves the functions of planning, organizing, coordinating, training and monitoring-evaluating at all

levels (international, national, regional, local).

Tourism should be integrated into the functional unit of the economy. In the macroeconomic sense, tourism organization implies the existence of an appropriate framework, succession and networking of its components, which ensures the optimal functioning of the system. Statistics demonstrate the economic importance of this sector in the use of labor, exports and imports, while governments are increasingly involved, supporting tourism, from their growing need for capital.

At present, the tourism market is characterized by new trends (UNWTO):

- rapid changes in production and consumption of tourist services;
- a greater competitiveness and the emergence of new tourist destinations;
- faster and more accessible (in terms of cost) means of transportation;
- new marketing strategies and tools, new information technologies;
- a new approach to quality.

Literature review

Considerations on tourism organizing

The unitary, coherent, effective evolution of tourism, as any other field of activity, requires an appropriate institutional framework, a set of links with clearly defined attributions, a system of functional relations between them, and an adequate information system. The features and heterogeneous content, the dynamism and dependence on other sectors of the economy, the number of participants in developing and selling holidays, give specific features to tourism organization (organizational structures, forms of integration, role of state, supply chain of tourism products) [1].

The tourism organization is structured into three hierarchical levels: the central body (coordinator), the regional (local) organizations and the sectorial organizations [2].

In most countries, tourism activity is coordinated nationally by a central body whose functions depend on the development and importance of tourism in that economy. This central body may be synonymous with the national administration and often correlated with the international bodies and their structures. Its primary functions are: to coordinate tourism activities nationally, to draft the strategy of tourism development, to promote tourism

domestically and internationally, to initiate and promote specific laws and regulations, to be representative within international bodies.

Regional organizations develop and coordinate the local tourism strategy (in collaboration with municipalities), carry out tourism marketing - by providing information services and using a variety of promotional activities. These are also known as “organizations on destinations”, resorts, and tourist areas [3]. The regional organizations generally have functional autonomy and their own budgets, such as non-profit organizations, associations and foundations. They may collaborate and form nationwide networks.

The sectorial organizations constitute the basic cell of the tourism system, represented by companies or associations, direct manufacturers of holidays and tourism service providers. They are specialized in different links of the tourism product distribution chain, such as hotel units, catering facilities, transport agencies, tour operators, promotion offices, professional training centers.

Organizing tourism activities currently tends toward decentralization, interest groups are increasingly involved in tourism policy and tourism development and competitiveness concerns have become major objectives for the national tourism agencies and strategic objectives for the regional tourism organizations.

The systematic and permanent information about supply and demand in tourist (national, regional, local) destinations are essential in achieving an effective tourism policy. The legislative, organizational and administrative measures represent the institutional support necessary to carry out tourism activities. The organizations or bodies involved in tourism belong to the public or private sector, as companies with international, national or regional (local) business or professional associations.

General considerations on tourism management strategy and sustainable tourism

Tourism development requires a focus on the environment, the conservation and development of its quality in touristic areas, as well as deep analyses of tourism impact on the environment, in order to use touristic resources rationally [4].

The concept of “sustainable tourism” was defined at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992): “the sustainable tourism development represents all forms of tourism development, tourism

management and marketing, that respect the natural, social, and economic integrity of the environment, using the natural and cultural resources for the benefit of present and future generations” [5].

A sustainable tourism policy should ensure environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainable operation at all levels, according to the needs of endogenous and exogenous use. From planning and development of tourist infrastructure and ending with marketing, all tourist operations should consider sustainable criteria from the economic, social, cultural and environmental points of view.

Ecotourism, as the main form of sustainable tourism, should provide: optimal and sustainable exploitation of resources and environment, economic and social benefits for the resident population; compatibility between local people and tourists; and interest in sustainable development. Therefore, when applying properly its basic principles, ecotourism should lead to careful sizing flow of tourists and tourist behavior modeling, establishing a tolerance threshold supported by the local population [6].

The strategic planning is the accurate and in advance inventory and calculation of most advantageous strategies in various evolution hypotheses. A key to a successful strategy is the ability to change plans and structures rapidly [7].

In planning, development and management of sustainable tourism at regional or local level, there should be a partnership between the tourism industry represented by tourism businesses’ owners, environment with its defenders, local community with its residents, stakeholders, local leaders and local authorities. Such a partnership, by working together interactively and without prejudice, will lead to a sustainable and effective tourism, a better life quality for the local community, environment and touristic resources protection, and reasonable benefits for the tourism industry [8].

Ecolabels are certifications or accreditation schemes for products or services according to the environmental standards. These are run by government agencies, voluntary organizations or companies. There is a large variety of ecolabels and tourism certification schemes, such as those for tourist spots, certain tourism activities or tourist destinations. An ecolabel refers to the quality or „green” character of a tourist product or tourist destination.

The ecolabelling systems in tourism address to tourism service providers such as accommodation facilities, catering, tour operators, transport companies, tourism associations and so on, regarding environment performance of companies, businesses or destinations, product quality or social

responsibility. The ecolabelling programs covers three aspects: environmental, socio-cultural and economic. From the environmental point of view, the use of ecolabels and ecolabelling systems in the tourism industry leads to a greater awareness among tourists and local communities, but also to a better protection of the local environment.

Most ecocertification programs in tourism are run by government agencies or organizations with government involvement. Therefore, UNWTO supports governments and stakeholders in ecolabel implementation, verification and granting nationally. UNWTO also provides consulting services, marketing and communication for those interested and funds to obtain tourism ecocertification. There are over 500 ecolabels and ecocertification in the world, but some are applied globally: NEAP, ECO Certification Program.

Tourism organization and coordination in Australia

The tourism industry is an important economic sector of Australia, contributing \$ 34 billion annually to GDP, 9% of exports and half a million people. With an export value exceeding \$ 23 billion, tourism is the largest service export sector of Australia [9]. Given Australia's geographical position, these indicators demonstrate the outstanding achievements of the tourism industry in a global market of tourism, characterized by a fierce competition.

The tourism industry consists of about 280,000 companies providing a wide range of tourist services (from accommodation, restaurants, casinos, tour operators, travel agents, travel agencies, transport companies, commercial and educational units). The tourism industry relies on a chain of suppliers which generate significant multiplier economic effects. Every dollar spent on tourism generates other 91 cents in other parts of the economy (this value is above the multipliers from other economic sectors such as mining, agriculture and financial services).

Australian Government offers a direct and substantial support (hundred million dollars) for tourism development. All governmental hierarchic levels support tourism industry, Australians wishing to show the world that "nothing compares to Australia". In addition, internally, Australia has benefited from the economic stimulus package offered by the Commonwealth Government in response to the global financial crisis.

Organization and coordination are the engines to accomplish the objectives of the national tourism strategy in Australia. Tourism is an economic

sector that involves a network of collaborating organizations, as Figure 1 shows.

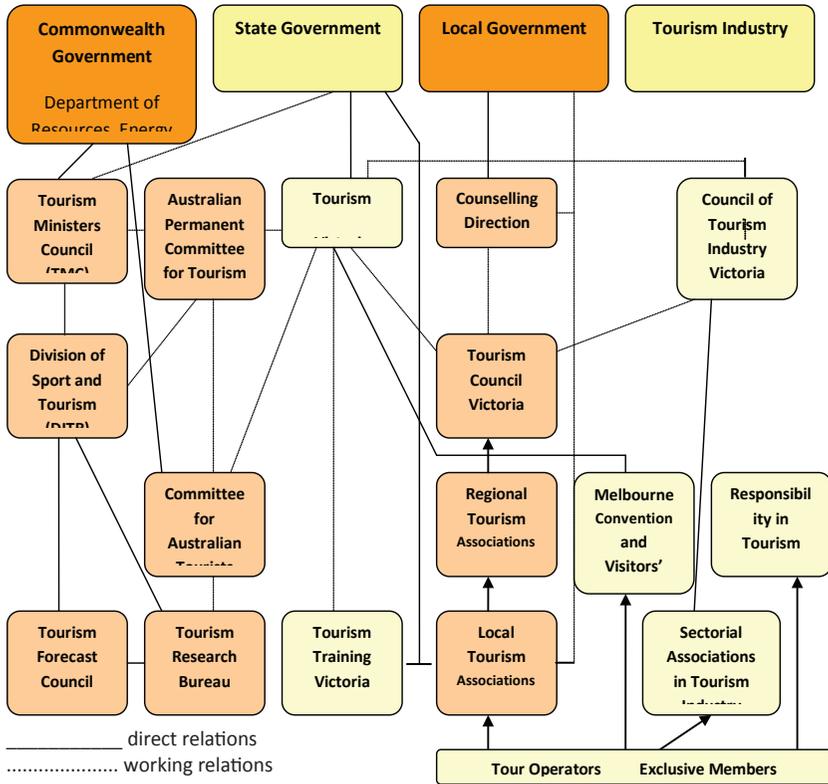


Figure 1: The organizational structure of tourism in Australia – model of complex, functional, cohesive, cooperation and relational structure (processed from the *National Long-Term Tourism Strategy*, Australian Government, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism [10])

In Australia, this network consists largely of a national tourism organization, regional tourism organizations and tour operators and it may be considered a model of organizational structure of tourism, as it is focused on increasing the efficiency of the sector, through good knowledge of stakeholders in tourism and the relations between them.

The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) of the Commonwealth Government is involved in these activities, aiming at improving international relations between governments, through a series of bilateral agreements and participation in international tourism forums (such as APEC

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and UNWTO). This involvement reflects the importance of tourism in international trade and world market. Also RET assists the tourism sector by providing information such as constantly updated research, statistics and targets.

Tourism Ministers Council (TMC) is a strong governmental structure that connects stakeholders in the tourism industry, focusing on the productive capacity of industry and tourism destination marketing. It also directs the Commonwealth Government, Australian states and territories, as well as the tourism industry on key priorities. TMC is actively involved in all tourism issues; for example, the tourism ministers are in charge of the entire portfolio, from planning, control, accreditation, to infrastructure development, professional development labor, environmental management and involvement of indigenous people in the tourism industry. TMC appoints working groups for specific issues on a warrant. These working groups include relevant operators in the tourism industry, government and the government agency Tourism Australia. Tourism ministers' meetings focus on monitoring the progress of implementation of the national tourism strategy and strategic direction for the tourism industry. The tourism ministers are supported by the Australian Permanent Council for Tourism (TMC, ASCOT). Table 1 shows Australia's Tourism Ministers, their roles and jurisdictions.

Table 1: The role and jurisdiction of the 13 Tourism Ministers of Australia

Tourism Minister	Role	Jurisdiction
The Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP	Minister for Tourism	Commonwealth
The Hon Louise Asher MLA	Minister for Tourism and Major Events	Victoria
Mr Andrew Barr MLA	Deputy Chief Minister Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation	Australian Capital Territory
The Hon Jann Stuckey MP	Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and Commonwealth Games	Queensland
The Hon Dr Kim Hames MLA	Deputy Premier Minister for Tourism	Western Australia

The Hon Gail Gago MLC	Minister for Tourism	South Australia
The Hon George Souris MP	Minister for Tourism	New South Wales
The Hon Scott Bacon MP	Minister for Tourism	Tasmania
The Hon Malarndirri Barbara Anne McCarthy MLA	Minister for Tourism	Northern Territory
The Hon John Key	Prime Minister, Minister for Tourism	New Zealand
The Hon Chris Tremain	Associate Minister for Tourism	New Zealand
The Hon Charles Abel MP	Minister for Culture and Tourism	Papua New Guinea
The Hon Andre Nobbs MLA	Minister for Tourism	Norfolk Island

(table source: Australian Government, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism [11])

Each Australian state and territory has its own tourism government agency (Australia Capital Tourism, Tourism Tasmania, Tourism New South Wales, Tourism Victoria, Tourism Northern Territory, Tourism Western Australia, Tourism Queensland, South Australian Tourism Commission) working with the tourism industry. The role of state tourism organizations (STOs) is to support sustainable development and marketing of tourist destinations in the respective state, to attract visitors.

The structure of the tourism industry in Australia, on levels of involvement and responsibility, is shown in Table 2.

The government agency Tourism Australia (TA) has an experienced management, focused on tourism industry and prior tourist markets. Its actions include cooperation between national and regional tourism organizations and the private sector, aimed at increasing the number of tourists, their expenditure and the number of jobs in tourism. The leadership of Tourism Australia works closely with stakeholders and local governments to develop the tourism industry, promotes quality standards in tourism and represents Australian tourism brand internationally.

Tourism Australia is the Australian government agency responsible for tourism marketing domestically and internationally, attracting foreign tourists

to visit Australia, and encouraging Australians to travel in their own country for both leisure and business. This organization is also engaged in a number of activities related to promotion, media programs, commerce and industry, consumer promotions, online communication and market research. Its role is:

- to influence tourists to travel to Australia, in other words to increase demand for Australia as a tourist destination;
- to increase the economic benefits of tourism and strengthen the travel distribution system;
- to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in Australia by market research, commerce development and research activities.

Another mission of the Tourism Australia is implementing, together with other organizations, the new strategic approach “Tourism 2020”, which aims at increasing tourism receipts to 140 billion dollars by the end of this decade.

The regional tourism organizations (RTOs) establish and promote quality tourism experiences, implementing strategies to maximize the tourism potential in the respective region. The Australian Regional Tourism Network is an organization representing tourism practitioners regionally.

Table 2: The structure of tourism industry in Australia

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	
Tourism Australia (TA)	Government agency that promotes Australia as a tourism destination.
▲	
STATE GOVERNMENT	
Tourism Victoria (TV)	Responsible for tourism development and marketing domestically and internationally for Victoria state.
▲	
INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS	

Tourism Alliance Council of Tourism Industry Victoria	The most important industrial organizations of counseling and supporting sustainable and professional tourism.
△	
MARKETING COOPERATIVES	
Great Southern Touring Route (GSTR) Melbourne&Surroundings	Strategic marketing activities to sell holidays on international tourist markets.
△	
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE	
Great Ocean Road Marketing (GORM)	Marketing activities for the region Ocean Road.
△	
REGIONAL TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS	
Geelong Otway Tourism (GOT)	Implements business strategic plans for tourism development in the region Geelong Otway.
△	
LOCAL TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS	
Geelong by the Bay Tourism (GBTB) Bellarine Tourism (BT) Surf Coast Tourism (SCT) Otways Tourism (OT)	Local tourism businesses whose purpose is to deliver tourist services locally.

The local tourism associations (LTAs) develop local tourism businesses and collaborate with regional tourism authorities and state bodies in the interest of local tour operators. Associations and industry organizations can provide resources and opportunities and support tourism business operators in their daily activities.

Strategic orientation of tourism activities in Australia

The “National Long-Term Tourism Strategy” was launched in December 2009, followed by the “Potential Tourism Industry”, in November 2010. The strategy “Tourism 2020” was released on December 6, 2011, as an update of the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy. “Tourism 2020” integrates the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy with the objectives of tourism industry to be achieved by 2020. Approved by tourism ministers from all states and territories of Australia, the strategy “Tourism 2020” brings together the work and research in the field, as well as the collaboration between tourism industry and governments in a single document, a plan connecting supply and demand in tourism.

“Tourism 2020” is considered a milestone in Australia’s tourism policy, a long-term integration of research and collaboration at an unprecedented level between the tourism industry and the governments of the Australian states and territories, in order to maximize the economic potential of the tourism industry. It is about creating a policy framework to support the development of the tourism industry with tools capable to ensure competitiveness in the global economy, especially in the Asian market opportunities. This is because, in recent years, arrivals of tourists from China and South Korea have increased significantly, by 24% and 18% due to favorable economic conditions in these markets and increase air capacity. China has become the most valuable tourism market of Australia, surpassing the United Kingdom in 2010. Receipts from Chinese tourists have increased by 17.1% per year since 2001.

“Tourism 2020” marks the next phase in the evolution of National Long-Term Tourism Strategy, through which the Australian governments will work together with tourism industry operators to implement the strategy and monitor progress towards achieving the 2020 Tourism Industry Potential.

“Tourism 2020” is the national strategy of development and competitiveness increase of the tourism industry, focusing efforts on six strategic areas [10]:

- increasing demand from the Asian market;
- developing competitive digital capabilities;
- encouraging investments and implementation of reforms;
- ensuring the support capacity of the environment;
- increasing participation of local people as labor in tourism;
- increasing adaptability, productivity and quality of the tourism

industry.

The strategy will be implemented in more stages, including periodic quantifications of results.

The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) of the Commonwealth Government runs a series of programs to support small businesses, including those in tourism [11]. RET is involved in:

- National Long-Term Tourism Strategy, a policy framework that supports the development of the tourism industry and provides tools to compete more effectively in the global economy;
- T-Qual Grant Program supports improving the quality of tourism products and experiences, through grants for large and small projects;
- T-QUAL Accreditation is a new national tourism accreditation framework, identifiable with the national symbol of quality, T-QUAL Tick;
- China ADS is a scheme focused on the Chinese tourism market. This allows Australia to host groups of tourists from China for leisure and allows the Australian Government, through Tourism Australia, to promote Australia as a tourist destination in China.

Other government programs administered by RET are:

- “Enterprise Connect” offers consultancy for small and medium tourism enterprises;
- “Business.gov.au” is an entire government department that provides information on business planning, initiating and developing;
- “Grant and Assistance Finder Tool” provides assistance in obtaining grants offered by the governments of the Australian states and territories;
- “Programs and Resources to Aid Indigenous Tourism Development” provides information on the available government programs of assisting tourism business for the local population;
- “Programs and Resources for Responding to Climate Change” provides information on Australian Government’s programs and resources that can benefit the tourism industry in reply to climate change issues;
- “Crisis Management Programs and Resources” provides information on Australian Government’s programs that can benefit the tourism industry in case of crisis management.

Tourism Australia also runs three programs from public funds, reporting the results to the Australian Parliament. These programs refer to:

- increasing demand for Australia as a tourist destination;
- improving the distribution system for holiday packages;

- contributing to the development of a sustainable tourism industry, involving stakeholders, supporting decision making, marketing and trade development (Corporate Plan).

Tourism Australia and its predecessor (Australian Tourism Committee) has sold Australia as a tourist destination internationally even since 1967. Since that time, Australia has established a reputation for innovative tourism marketing, building one of the most successful and desirable tourism brands: “Our story begins with this land, a land that inspires dreams, embraces adventure and invites you to learn its secrets with the people who call Australia home. You do not only visit Australia, but live as in Australia, finding your own story. “

Ecolabels are tools that lead the tourism industry to sustainable development. They provide reliable information and guarantee the quality of tourism products and services for tourists, tourism managers, government agencies and politicians. Ecotourism has grown significantly in recent decades due to the influence of ecolabels on travel decision making. Tour companies use ecolabels as tools for obtaining competitive advantage. Among the world renowned ecocertification programs and ecolabels, Australia developed the followings:

- ECO Certification Program is conducted by Ecotourism Australia, ensures and guarantees that the certified products are in accordance with the best sustainable practices and the travel experiences in nature is of high quality. It is now exported worldwide as the International ECO Certification Program. The program EcoGuide Australia provides an authentic, professional and environmentally responsible travel experience;

- NEAP is the Nature Tourism and Ecotourism Accreditation Program of Australia, operating under the authority of the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA). The program serves three ecotourism sectors (accommodation, attractions and tours), respecting eight principles: nature travel for its better understanding and appreciation; the best practice of sustainable tourism; contributing to nature conservation; benefits for local people; involving different cultures, especially the local culture; meeting tourists' expectations; realistic marketing and realistic experiences [12].

Conclusions

The present characteristics of the tourism industry in Australia can be summarized as follows [9]:

- the existence of 36,000 available jobs in the tourism industry and another 56,000 to 152,000 jobs needed to use its full potential;
- 40,000-70,000 rooms needed to value the potential;
- the aircraft transport capacity has to increase with 40-50% for international flights and 23-30% for internal ones;
- only one third of Australia's tourism operators have online booking and payment systems for the tourist packages.

The Australian Government is working with tourism industry operators to effectively use the tourism potential of Australia.

All stakeholders have important roles in implementing the strategy "Tourism 2020", as follows:

- the tour operators and other related organizations will continue to participate in or support the working groups, and to use, improve and promote the objectives of the strategy. These will be integrated into their work, in their own strategies and plans;
- the working groups will continue to monitor prior actions under the strategy, by means of cooperation between governments' members of the Australian States and Territories and tourism industry. Tourism Quality Council of Australia will ensure competitiveness and quality objectives;
- the governments of the Australian States and Territories will continue to work closely with the tourism industry and will have key responsibilities in all strategic fields;
- the Australian Government has leading role in several areas through the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, and the government agency Tourism Australia, while other government agencies will be responsible for monitoring and coordinating the policy levers in tourism;
- the leadership is provided by the Tourism Ministers at federal, state or territory levels, backed by the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (which includes the CEOs of government tourist organizations).

The main objectives to be achieved by 2020 are [10]:

- 115-140 billion dollars in tourism receipts;
- maintaining or increasing market shares on key markets;
- increasing labor in tourism;

- increasing accommodation capacity;
- increasing international and domestic aircraft capacity;
- improving quality and productivity of tourism industry.

The tourism industry in Australia focuses on the following prior forms of tourism:

- leisure tourism: the main objective is to attract foreign tourists that visit Australia for the first time, and the secondary objective is to repeat this tourist experience (their return to Australia);
- international business tourism: business meetings of various corporations and associations.

The marketing strategy of Tourism Australia [13] refers to the concentration of most marketing resources on the markets of highest tourism potential by 2020. Tourism Australia also aims at those emerging markets with the highest growth potential, as well as at the other markets around the world:

Category I:

- tourism markets whose potential will exceed \$ 5 billion by 2020: China, UK, U.S.A., Australia;
- tourism markets whose potential will exceed \$ 3 billion by 2020: New Zealand, Japan, South Korea.

Category II:

- potential tourism markets of 1,5 to 3 billion dollars by 2020: Singapore, Persian Gulf States, Malaysia, Germany, Indonesia, Hong Kong, India, Canada, France.

Category III:

- rapidly emerging tourism markets: Brazil, Vietnam;
- high priority tourism markets: Italy;
- other markets.

Australia's competitive advantages that differentiate it from other tourist destinations in the world, include: unique landscapes, nature trips, cultural heritage of indigenous people, sophisticated cities and regions, but also friendly and tolerant people. However, the recipe for a successful and sustainable tourism requires more. Improving the quality of tourism products and services, tourism infrastructure, professional development of workers in tourism, are elements that will maximize and sustain the economic value of Australia's natural advantages as a tourist destination.

This study is the first step in analyzing the organization of tourism industry and tourism development strategy of a region with great tourist

potential. It may be a procedural model of presenting information, that may be extended through a similar approach of organizing tourism industry and tourism development strategy in other areas. Comparative analyses could be made, starting from the research of tourism industry and tourism development strategy in the investigated countries, resulting in useful conclusions on the overall performance of different systems.

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