

The Role of the 4Ps Marketing Mix Elements in Achieving Customer Satisfaction: Korek Telecom Company as a Model

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ABSTRACT: The research aims to determine the role of the marketing mix elements in achieving customer satisfaction at Korek Telecom Company. The sample population consisted of Korek Telecom Company service users in Baghdad, and the sample size was 100 customers. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to measure the study variables, where the independent variable was the marketing mix elements and the dependent variable was customer satisfaction. A questionnaire was prepared for this purpose, consisting of 24 paragraphs. The study reached the following results: 1) There is a significant effect of the marketing mix elements on customer satisfaction at a 0.05 significance level (95% confidence), indicating that the marketing mix elements effectively and significantly impact customer satisfaction. 2) The predictive relationship index (Q2) for product, price, physical distribution, and promotion dimensions reached a value of 0.419, greater than zero, indicating predictive relevance of the model.

KEYWORDS: Marketing mix elements, customer satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

The marketing mix consists of four basic pillars that are indispensable to all areas and branches of marketing. In fact, no marketing process can be carried out without incorporating the elements of the marketing mix (the 4Ps). The marketing mix consists of four important elements: product, price, place, and promotion. Each of these four elements represents a stage through which the product passes. For example, the first element is the product itself, including its quality, product line, packaging, and warranty. The second element is price (basic price, discounts, allowances, transportation conditions, etc.). The third element is distribution (distribution channels, banking services, transportation, storage, etc.). The fourth element represents promotion (advertising, personal selling, publishing, publicity, etc.). Each of these elements plays an important role in achieving customer satisfaction by providing what customers seek and fulfilling their needs and desires with the highest quality, most competitive prices, and least time and effort possible. We consider the quality and price of competing companies while taking the community's purchasing power into account.

- Research Problem:

The telecommunications sector has seen significant development in our country and around the world. Many similar companies have matured, but the company in the research sample suffers from weak marketing activities and an inability to build a marketing mix that aligns with customer requirements and desires.

- Research Hypotheses:

Main Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between the elements of the marketing mix and customer satisfaction at a significance level of 0.05 for Korek Telecom Company.

Several sub-hypotheses emerge from this main hypothesis, including:

1. There is a statistically significant relationship between the elements of the marketing mix and perceived quality.
2. There is a statistically significant effect between the elements of the marketing mix and customer satisfaction analysis.
3. There is a statistically significant effect between the elements of the marketing mix and customer follow-up.
4. There is a statistically significant relationship between the elements of the marketing mix and customer loyalty.

-Research Objectives:

This study aims to understand the role of marketing mix elements in achieving customer satisfaction and to evaluate customers' perceptions of the services provided by Korek Telecom. The research also aims to present findings and recommendations that will help the aforementioned company provide appropriate services to customers in a timely and cost-effective manner.

- Importance of Research

The success of any organization is closely linked to understanding customer needs and desires. By understanding these needs and desires, the service customers desire can be

produced and delivered. This research provides Korek Telecom's senior management with information that helps them make appropriate decisions, which positively impacts customer satisfaction. Hence, the importance of the research emerges:

1. This study helps address many of the problems Korek Telecom faces.
2. It adds a new study in the field of marketing.
3. It is considered one of the most important studies in this field, especially in Iraq.

-Research Variables

The research contains two important variables:

First: The independent variable, the elements of the marketing mix (consisting of four elements), is as follows:

1. The product is the thing that can be offered in the market to satisfy a desire.
2. Price: The price paid by the buyer to obtain the service.
3. Distribution: The availability of the product at the appropriate time and place.
4. Promotion: The promotional mix used by the company in its advertising campaigns.

Second, the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) consists of four components:

1. Perceived quality: Expresses the customer's opinion about the overall quality or image of the product.
2. Customer satisfaction analysis.
3. Customer follow-up by monitoring customer needs and desires and working to meet them.
4. Customer loyalty.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

▪ Elements of the Marketing Mix

The marketing mix is defined as an integrated set of strategies, tactics, policies, programs, and activities directed toward an organization's resources to achieve its marketing objectives (Belkhaier, 2014: 389). (Belkhaier, 2014, p. 389).

Elements of the Marketing Mix: The elements of the marketing mix are represented by the following:

1. The product: Any good, service, idea, or anything else that can satisfy customer needs. (Al-Rubaie et al., 2015: 132).

Based on our studies, the most important element of the marketing mix is the product. Without a product, no marketing process can take place. Products come in two forms: tangible commodities and intangible services.

The levels and dimensions of the product are represented by the following: (Abdul Hamid, 2015: 113).

A. Core product: This represents the essence of the benefit the customer seeks from purchasing the product.

B. Tangible Product: It has five basic characteristics: quality level, features and dimensions, design, brand name, and packaging.

C. Augmented product: This aspect includes additional services and benefits, such as personalized customer service,

commitment to delivery dates, warranties or guarantees, and refunds.

2. Pricing: Pricing is the art of translating the value of goods and services offered at a specific time and place into a monetary value according to the currency in circulation in society. (Ibrahim et al., 2014, p. 36). The most important objectives of pricing are: (Source above, 2014: 37).

- Achieving the maximum possible profit.
- Achieving the maximum possible sales volume.
- Achieving stability and consistency in the market.

3. Distribution: Doyle defined it as follows: "The set of decisions and processes involved in the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer" (Previous source, 2015: 237).

There are two types of distribution:

1) Service distribution: Statistics from the World Resources Institute show that services represent a significant percentage of high-income countries' global GDP.

• Physical distribution: Physical distribution involves transporting goods from their place of production to their place of consumption. (Previous source, 2015: 238).

The functions of distribution include: (Al-Taie & Al-Alaq, 2009: 289).

- Gathering information
- Promoting the services offered
- Direct contact with potential buyers and matching service offers with buyers' needs
- Negotiating prices and service specifications.
- Providing services in the right place at the right time
- Facilitating services, such as providing customers with information

4. Promotion: This form of marketing communication consolidates or changes attitudes and opinions. It includes activities and events through which promoters provide customers with information about product advantages to arouse interest and convince customers that these products can satisfy their needs. (Al-Rusan, 2011: 120).

Promotion is also defined as follows: "A set of communications undertaken by an organization to inform customers about its products, conveying information about their characteristics and benefits, with the intent of influencing, convincing, and encouraging customers to purchase the products" (Jalab, 2010, p. 471).

The elements of the promotion mix consist of the following:

- Advertising
- Personal selling
- Sales promotion
- Public relations
- Direct marketing

Customer Satisfaction

1. Kotler defines customer satisfaction as follows: "The customer's sense of pleasure or disappointment resulting from

comparing the product's performance to their expectations" (Harkinambal, 2006).

It is also defined as a pleasurable experience, meaning the customer believes their purchase will meet their needs, satisfy their desires, or help them achieve their goals. Therefore, satisfaction is the feeling that consumption provides pleasure, while dissatisfaction is the feeling that consumption does not. (Oliver, 1999).

2. The Kano model distinguishes three types of product requirements that affect customer satisfaction:

A. Essential requirements: These are the basic characteristics that a product must have to be valuable.

B. Individual requirements: These are the specific, measurable, technical requirements typically requested by the customer.

C. Attractiveness requirements: These are the distinctive features of a product or service that significantly impact customer satisfaction. (Zouin, 2009).

3. Measuring Customer Satisfaction

From the researcher's perspective, customer satisfaction is measured by providing the goods and services they need. However, customers' moods change over time due to several important and influential factors, including alternative products, such as competitors offering additional features to the service or product and presenting it in a different light, or competitors introducing new, high-quality products to the market at a price that matches customers' purchasing power.

III. ANALYTICAL ASPECT (FIELD STUDY)

First: Evaluating the Quality and Conformity of the Scale Used in the Research

A- Evaluating the Quality and Conformity of the Items of the Marketing Mix Elements Variable

Figure (1) shows the external saturations and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the items of the Marketing Mix Elements

variable, which consists of four basic dimensions and comprises (12) items. The model will be tested against the following indicators:

1. Internal Reliability and Consistency

• Table (1) shows the (CR) values for the Marketing Mix Elements variable, all of which are within acceptable limits, ranging between (0.859-0.905), which is a good indicator and indicates the stability of the scale. The results showed a high degree of stability for the dimensions of the Marketing Mix Elements variable scale.

• The Cronbach's alpha coefficient, whose results ranged between (0.753-0.843), is greater than (0.70). This indicates that the validity and reliability coefficient of the measurement tool enjoys a high degree of acceptance and stability.

2. Convergent Validity

• The external loadings (OL) values for the scale items for the "Marketing Mix Elements" variable are greater than the minimum acceptable limit of 0.70. The external loading values ranged between 0.603 and 0.865, indicating that the data for the "Marketing Mix Elements" variable are suitable for subsequent statistical analyses. All data exceeded the significant saturation values, which is a good indicator.

• Table (1) shows the average variance extracted (AVE) values for the "Marketing Mix Elements" variable. It is clear that all of them are acceptable, ranging between 0.67 and 0.762, which is greater than the value of 0.50, indicating the convergent validity of the dimensions.

• It is clear from Table (1) that all the parameter estimates were significant for the paragraphs of the marketing mix elements variable, as the calculated (T-Value) value, which ranged between (8.104-50.94), was greater than its table value, which was (1.984), and the calculated (P-Value) value was less than (0.05), which reached (0.000) for all paragraphs, indicating that all paragraphs were significant.

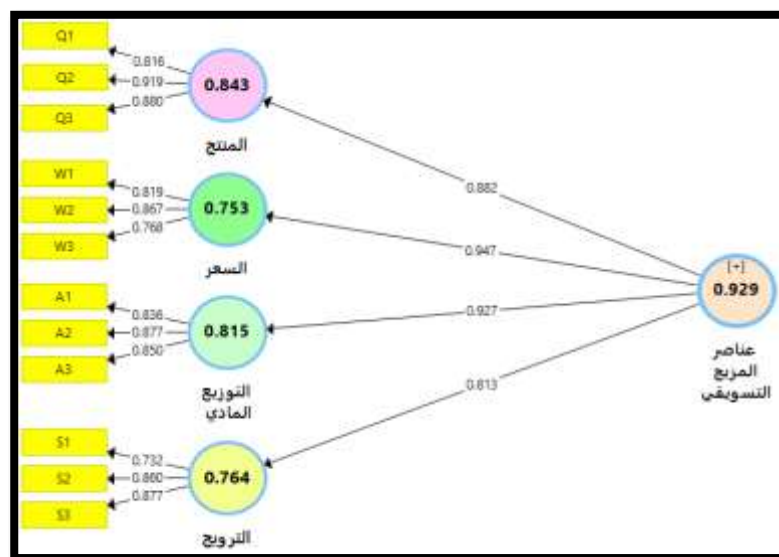


Figure (1) The complete model of the marketing mix elements variable.

Source: SmartPls V.3.3.2 program outputs.

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Table (1) Results of the test of stability, composite consistency and convergent validity of the marketing mix elements variable

P-Value	T	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Outer Loadings	(AVE) Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Parameters	Dimensions
0.000	17.749	0.046	0.816	0.762	0.905	0.843	Q1	Product
0.000	50.940	0.018	0.919				Q2	
0.000	23.914	0.037	0.880				Q3	
0.000	20.800	0.039	0.819	0.670	0.859	0.753	W1	price
0.000	23.282	0.037	0.867				W2	
0.000	10.020	0.077	0.768				W3	
0.000	19.349	0.043	0.836	0.730	0.890	0.815	A1	Physical distribution
0.000	25.804	0.034	0.877				A2	
0.000	24.080	0.035	0.850				A3	
0.000	8.104	0.090	0.732	0.681	0.864	0.764	S1	Physical distribution
0.000	21.467	0.040	0.860				S2	
0.000	22.051	0.040	0.877				S3	

Source: Program SmartPls V.3.3.2

B. Evaluating the Quality and Conformity of Items in the Customer Satisfaction Variable

Figure 2 shows the external loadings and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the items of the customer satisfaction variable. This variable consists of four basic dimensions and 16 items. The model will be tested against the following indicators:

A. Internal reliability and consistency

Table 2 shows the composite reliability (CR) values for the customer satisfaction variable, which are within acceptable limits ranging from 0.888 to 0.937. This indicates the stability of the items, as the results showed a high degree of stability for the items of the research scale for the customer satisfaction variable.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value ranged from 0.81 to 0.865 and is greater than 0.70. This indicates that the measurement tool for the two variables (the questionnaire) has high validity and reliability.

B. Convergent validity:

• The external saturation values of the scale items for the variable (customer satisfaction) exceed the minimum acceptable limits. All exceeded significant saturation values, as shown in Table 2. The external saturation results ranged from 0.654 to 0.866, indicating that the data are suitable for subsequent statistical analyses.

Table 2 shows the average variance extracted (AVE) values for customer satisfaction. They are all acceptable because they range between 0.725 and 0.881, which is greater than 0.50. This indicates the significance of the dimensions in general.

Table 2 shows that all parameter estimates for the customer satisfaction items were significant, as the calculated T-value ranged from 10.198 to 43.824, which is greater than the table value of 1.984. The calculated P-value was less than 0.05 for all items, with a value of 0.000. This indicates the significance of all items, which is a good indicator.

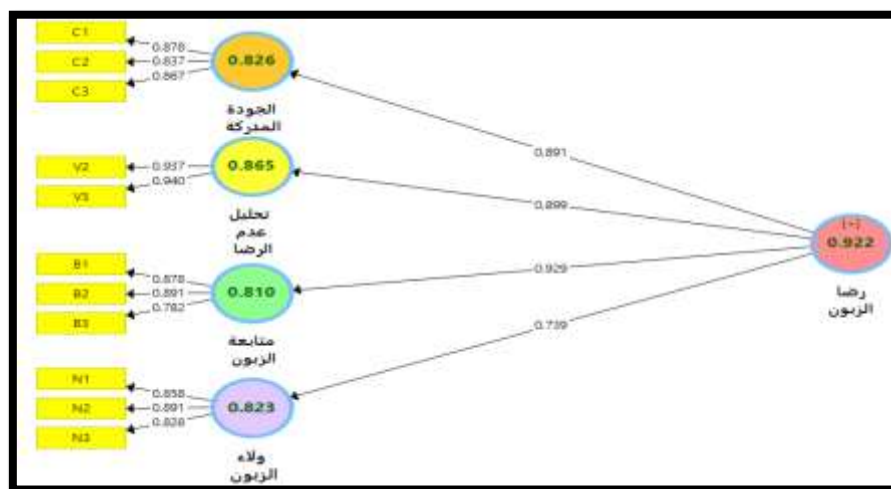


Figure (2) The complete model for the customer satisfaction variable

Source: SmartPls V.3.3.2

Table (2) Results of the test of stability, composite consistency and convergent validity for the customer satisfaction variable

P-Value	T	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	(OL) Outer Loadings	(AVE) Average Variance Extracted	(CR) Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Paragra phs	Dimensio ns
0.000	30.972	0.028	0.878	0.741	0.896	0.826	C1	Perceived quality
0.000	17.029	0.049	0.837				C2	
0.000	22.031	0.039	0.867				C3	
0.000	38.978	0.024	0.937	0.881	0.937	0.865	V2	Dissatisfacti on analysis
0.000	43.824	0.021	0.940				V3	
0.000	24.356	0.036	0.878	0.725	0.888	0.810	B1	Customer follow-up
0.000	23.899	0.037	0.891				B2	
0.000	10.198	0.077	0.782				B3	
0.000	22.575	0.038	0.858	0.738	0.894	0.823	N1	Customer loyalty
0.000	29.746	0.030	0.891				N2	
0.000	17.891	0.046	0.828				N3	

Source: SmartPls V.3.3.2

Second, a descriptive analysis of the research variables is provided.

A. Marketing Mix Elements Variable

Table 3 shows that the highest overall arithmetic mean was for the price dimension, reaching 4.198, which is a good level. The standard deviation was 0.673, and the coefficient of variation was 16.038. This places the price dimension at the second level in terms of relative importance. The lowest overall mean was for the product dimension at 4.068, which is also at a good level. Its standard deviation is 0.782, and its coefficient of variation is 19.230, placing this dimension at the fourth level in terms of relative importance. The overall arithmetic mean for the marketing mix elements variable was 4.153, which is good, with a standard deviation of 0.594 and a coefficient of variation of 14.304. This places this dimension at the first level in terms of relative importance across variables.

B. Customer Satisfaction Variable:

Table 3 shows that the highest general arithmetic mean was for the dissatisfaction analysis dimension (4.149), which was at a good level with a standard deviation of 0.711 and a coefficient of variation of 17.142. This dimension ranked first in terms of relative importance. The lowest general arithmetic mean was for the customer loyalty dimension, reaching 4.063 at a good level with a standard deviation of 0.729 and a coefficient of variation of 17.947. This dimension ranked third in terms of relative importance. Overall, the general mean for customer satisfaction was 4.100, a good level, with a standard deviation of 0.643 and a coefficient of variation of 15.682. This variable ranked second in terms of relative importance.

Table (3): Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation, Coefficient of Variation, and Relative Importance of the Study Variables

Study Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Relative Importance
Product	4.068	0.782	19.230	4
Price	4.198	0.673	16.038	2
Physical Distribution	4.167	0.711	17.073	3
Promotion	4.180	0.535	12.810	1
Marketing Mix Elements	4.153	0.594	14.304	First
Service Quality	4.108	0.734	17.873	2
Complaint Analysis	4.149	0.711	17.142	1
Customer Follow-up	4.081	0.812	19.907	4
Customer Loyalty	4.063	0.729	17.947	3
Customer Satisfaction	4.100	0.643	15.682	Second

Source: SmartPls V.3.3.

Third: Testing Research Hypotheses

This section examines the previously identified hypotheses of influence. The regression analysis equation will be used to estimate the model's parameters. The value of the influence will be demonstrated using the calculated t-value, the coefficient of determination (R^2), the corrected coefficient of determination (R^2), the marginal slope coefficient (β), and Q2, which indicates the accuracy and predictive ability of the model. Table (4) and Figure (3) show the statistical indicators for testing the hypotheses between the dimensions of the marketing mix elements on customer satisfaction.

- The calculated t-value for the estimated model achieved (23.174), which is greater than the tabular t-value of (1.664) at a significance level of (0.05). This indicates the stability of the significance of the marginal slope for the marketing mix elements variable. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis. This means that "there is a significant influence between the marketing mix elements on customer satisfaction" at a significance level of (5%), i.e., with a degree of confidence. (95%), indicating that the marketing mix elements have an effective and substantial impact on customer satisfaction.

- The adjusted coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.742 indicates that the marketing mix elements are able to explain 74% of the changes in customer satisfaction.

- The results showed that the predictive relationship index (Q2) reached a value of 0.378, which is greater than zero. Therefore, the model has a predictive relevance.

- The adjusted coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.761 indicates that the dimensions (product, price and

physical distribution, and promotion) are able to explain 76% of the changes in customer satisfaction.

- The results showed that the predictive relationship index (Q2) for the dimensions (product, price and physical distribution, and promotion) reached a value of 0.419, which is greater than zero. Therefore, the model has a predictive relevance.

- The t-test values indicate that the model has a predictive relevance. For the dimensions of price, physical distribution, and promotion, the values of (1.796, 1.756, and 3.864) are greater than the table value of (1.664). This indicates that the marginal slope of the price, physical distribution, and promotion dimensions is significant. As for the other dimensions, represented by the product dimension, the calculated t-test value of (1.033) is less than the table value of (1.664). This indicates that the marginal slope of the product dimension is not significant.

- The value of the marginal slope coefficient for the price dimension, which is (0.252), shows that a one-unit increase in the price dimension will lead to a 25% increase in customer satisfaction.

- The value of the marginal slope coefficient for the physical distribution dimension, which is (0.239), shows that a one-unit increase in the physical distribution dimension will lead to a 23% increase in customer satisfaction.

- It is clear from The marginal slope coefficient value for the promotion dimension, which is (0.373), indicates that increasing the promotion dimension by one unit will lead to an increase in (customer satisfaction) by (37%).

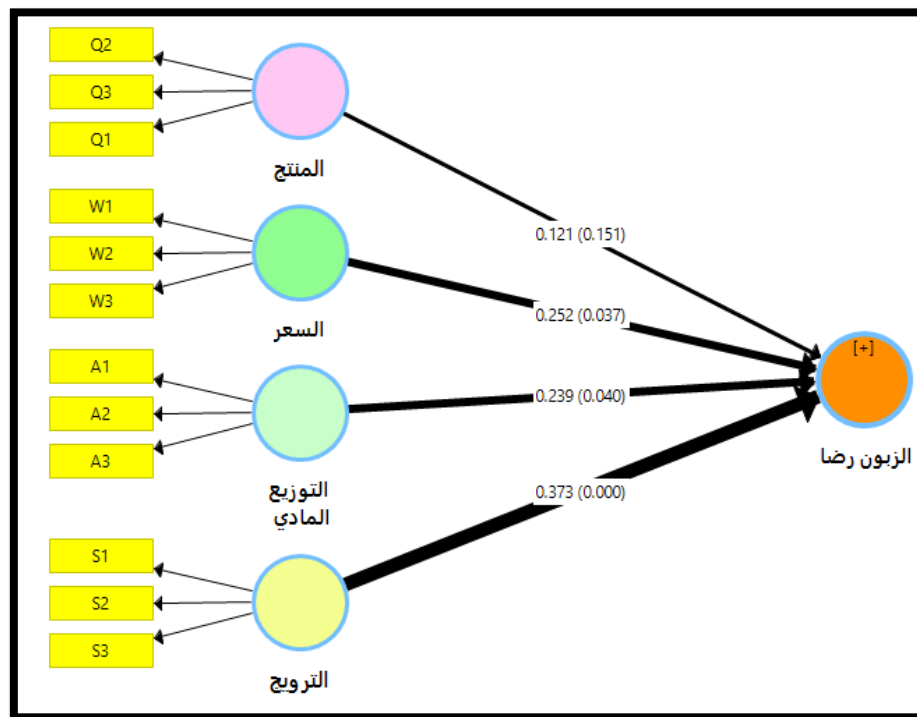


Figure (3) The impact of the dimensions of the marketing mix elements together on customer satisfaction.

Source: SmartPLS V.3.3.

Table (4) Statistical indicators between the dimensions of the marketing mix elements together in customer satisfaction

Q ²	Adjusted (R ²)	(R ²)	P Values	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Original Sample (O)	Dimensions of the marketing mix elements
0.419	0.761	0.774	0.151	1.033	0.117	0.121	Product
			0.037	1.796	0.140	0.252	price
			0.040	1.756	0.136	0.239	Physical distribution
			0.000	3.864	0.097	0.373	Promotion
0.378	0.742	0.746	0.000	23.174	0.037	0.864	Marketing mix elements

Source: SmartPls V.3.3.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The elements of the marketing mix effectively and fundamentally impact customer satisfaction.
2. The marketing mix elements can explain 74% of the variables affecting customer satisfaction.
3. The four dimensions (product, price, physical distribution, and promotion) explain 76% of the variables affecting customer satisfaction.
4. The calculated t-value of 1.33 for the product dimension is clearly smaller than the tabular t-value of 1.664. This indicates that the marginal slope of the product dimension is not significant.
5. A one-unit increase in the price dimension leads to a 25% increase in customer satisfaction.
6. A one-unit increase in the physical distribution dimension leads to a 23% increase in customer satisfaction.
7. Increasing the promotional dimension by one unit will lead to a 37% increase in customer satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support the marketing mix with new and distinctive elements to remain competitive.
2. Provide the services that customers need and desire.
3. Prices should be comparable to those of competing companies.
4. Expand the company's branches to all Iraqi governorates, including densely populated areas.
5. Open multiple branches (service distribution channels) to reach the largest possible number of target groups.
6. Target customer emotions before advertising.

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