



# The Advantages of Christianity in the Era of Disruption

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## Abstract

Christianity is not just a slogan for the Christian community, but refers to the identity of one being a disciple of Jesus Christ. As a disciple of Christ, Christians live in the midst of family, their church, the world of work and broader society. This means that the expression 'Christianity' represents all Christians in all ages and in all places. Christianity shows that there is indeed a unity as one is a follower of Jesus and lives according to God's will. Indeed, in the past, humans have lost the glory of God and lived in sin. But because of His grace, God in His absolute sovereignty requires that everyone must believe in Him in order to obtain eternal life. God's grace poured out upon all Christians enables them to do God's will in often vexing times. This has been the hallmark of Christianity throughout the ages, including the current era of disruption. The first, and foremost advantage of being a Christian is that one belongs to Jesus. In Him, one has eternal life, and in this world, peace and joy that is in essence beyond anything the world can offer one. In Jesus believers have hope, and have the strength to face and defeat whatever comes their way, be it illness or even death. This brief article seeks to show in a modest manner that that every era has always had its own distinct and soul shattering challenges, but God gives excellence for every Christian to be able to adjust to His divine will so that His people have a positive impact on the family, their church, the world of work and the society where God places has placed them to serve. Believers must demonstrate their faith and this refers both to the their acts of trust and to the content of their faith. The Christian faith is having confidence in Jesus Christ in his ability to bring a believer through every difficult circumstance of life. Digital media technology must be used in the propagation of the faith as it offers endless opportunities, but also challenges.

**Keywords:** Excellence, Christianity, disruption, era, challenges, faithfulness.

## Introduction

The Era of Disruption is one including massive innovation and changes that fundamentally alter all existing systems, orders and landscapes in many new ways. Major changes have occurred at least due to the industrial revolution 5.0, climate change, and the Covid-19 pandemic (Harianto, 2022). It can be concluded that the 'Excellence of Christianity' in the Era of Disruption means a condition in which Christians must live according to the developments of the current era but still adhere to the teachings of the Holy Bible. While these changes may often bring opportunities for Christians, they can also be disastrous and soul destroying. Disaster is imminent for Christians who are swept away by the changes that exist as they set aside the word of God as the foundation of their life. The advantage of Christianity per se, in the era of disruption is how Christians are able to continue to do God's will and rely on Him or remain a light for others in existing changes that impact the global community. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, disruption is defined as "uprooted from its roots". If it is associated with the changes above, then the changes that occur are truly fundamental and for many they are devastating. What most people might not have imagined before, is happening today (Pujiono, 2022).

The "Fourth Industrial Revolution" (4IR) was an expression, which is now used to frame and assess the impact of emergent technologies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The speed and quantity of changes that are occurring are soon going to be resulting in socio-economic and also political disturbances as there are likely to be increasing changes in power dynamics, wealth acquisition, and information. This is clearly a leading transformation in society, and especially the IT worldview demands suitable ethical insights, actions and sanction (Mpofu and Nicolaidis, 2019) and of course faith in God and His faithfulness.



The Era of Disruption, which is usually referred to as the industrial era 5.0, is characterized by rapid technological developments that affect all aspects of people's lives. In the past there were three major industrial revolutions that impacted society positively but also negatively. The first Industrial Revolution was the one with steam power introduced and locomotives. This was followed by the age of science and mass production, and then the digital revolution. We now face the beginning of the next phase which is an era of disruption with very rapid technological expansion and social changes— in this the Fourth Industrial Revolution, society is required to quickly adapt to existing developments so as not to be left behind or clueless (technology stuttering). Many examples have occurred where people carry out more of their activities online than onsite, online learning, online business, all integrated online (Harianto, 2022). This integration is felt to facilitate work in every field. The characteristics of the era of disruption are total changes that massively change a community's behaviour, in which these changes tend to be irreversible to the previous normal state (Harianto, 2022). People are required to develop themselves so that they are not left behind in all aspects of life. The question is what about Christians living in this era of disruption? How will they cope, or will they crumble and fall by the wayside?

## **Research Methods**

In writing this article the authors used the descriptive-analytic method. It is said to be descriptive-analysis because it describes or gives an overview of the object of research. The research objects were in the form of data obtained through literature studies (Fadli, 2021). In this study, the methods used were: (1) using articles, books as study material; (2) providing a description regarding the superiority of Christianity in the Era of Disruption. The research in the article provides benefits for readers to be more firm about what has been believed so far as relating to their Christian faith (Rakhmat et al., 2022).

## **Discussion**

### **Challenges in the Era of Disruption**

The Era of Disruption has its own challenges for everyone, and in all aspects of life. Existing challenges become lessons for one to develop oneself to be better. The challenges in this era are related to aspects of family life, the church, the world of work and society in general terms.

### **Christian Family Life in the Disruption Era**

The family is a place where all family members grow and develop. The family is where parents educate and set an example for children to live by as they role model good actions. Children grow spiritually and physically in the family. This means that the family is the basis for a child's growth in all aspects that affect him or her now and in the future. God has commanded every parent to educate their children to become individuals with Christ-like characteristics (Tandana et.al, 2022). A character that is Christ-like is reflected in how children love God and others they associate with (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). This means that the family comes from God and is processed to glorify Him as the Lord of All. The Internet in the Era of Disruption is a challenge, but we should use the all wisely. Dovich (2017) reminds us:

For spiritual growth, it is best to stick to the simplicity of sitting quietly before our Maker with only our Bible open, reading, listening and hearing God's voice. We need to read for comprehension – pausing and pondering the words. We need to read reflectively – reading slowly to be more aware, listening for God to speak to us through His word. We need to participate in our reading – allowing what we read to change us, to change our lives.



Christian family life in the era of disruption is also certainly not without such challenges. The family as a place where children are educated does not always display positive things, but often sadly promotes negative things. Take the example of communication between parents and children being disrupted because of gadgets. Gadgets do not always have a positive but also a very negative impact on children (Riana Udurman Sihombing, 2019). Some parents give gadgets to their children so they don't get distracted by them, but these tend to damage the children's eyes, allow the dangers of pornography, hate speech, and watching things on mobile phones for example that promote violence and many other negative ideas. Parents in this era tend to neglect their children, perhaps there is rarely even an evaluation of the spiritual and practical life between husband and wife, parents and children. Technological development has drastically altered life in the era of disruption. The social media and the internet as such are now a main interest aspect of daily life. Everyone tends to be more interested in interacting with the visual-based internet than reading books and scriptures (Prianta et al., 2017).

This challenge awakens parents to educate their children to grow in their faith. The Holy Bible has given us many examples that parents must play an active role in educating children to know God. God told Moses that parents educate and teach their children to know and live according to His decrees (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). Even the Lord Jesus really cared about the family, as evidenced by His message "let the children come to Me" (Matthew 19:13-15), and "This mother is your child" (John 19:26).

Even Law Number 20 of 2003 in Indonesia, Concerning the National Education System, in article 1 paragraph 1, states that parents must take an active part in children's education. Parents must play an active role so that their children can learn and develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, a noble character, and the skills needed for them to be able to function well in their communities, broader society, and in the state (Sulastri & Tarmizi, 2017). It is clear that parents also have a very important role for all family members, including each other, so all need to have abilities required in order to be able to survive the challenges of living in this era of disruption. If God gives a mandate to every family, it means God also gives them the ability through prayer and reading God's word every day so that they can accomplish His will. Therefore, all need to realize that the Christian family has an advantage because it is formed and processed for the glory of God and His Kingdom in both the present and in the future.

### **The Church in the Era of Disruption**

Church in KBBi means first, a building/house where Christians pray and perform ceremonies. Second, Christian bodies/organizations that share the same beliefs, teachings, and procedures for worship are also referred to a a Church (<https://kbbi.web.id/church>, nd). In Greek the church known as the *Ekklesia* which means people who are called out of 'darkness to light', people who believe in Jesus as Lord and Saviour and follow Jesus' teachings (Browning, 2014). Nicolaides (2010:5) says that the term *Ekklesia* "...is used to refer to all those who are obedient to God and who are, in a sense, a universal manifestation of God's concern for the entire human race, rather than just for the Jews". The church is called in this era of disruption to be a 'light to the world'.

As previously stated, the era of disruption is an era that is very fast and capable of changing a fundamental order within society. The era of disruption has also given its own color to all churches and Christians in Indonesia. Its influence can be seen from the use of social media and information that circulates very quickly among the congregation (Sugiono & Waruwu, 2021). The development of the era of disruption has an impact on church services to congregations. The congregation must be directed to access correct and constructive information. All news that spreads widely and quickly can have a negative influence on the congregation in daily life. Congregations can choose to attend



services online from the churches they like. The danger of onsite worship is only a routine issue because it is registered as a permanent member of a church.

The Era of Disruption also brings its own challenges for God's servants who serve. God's servant must be able to prepare a sermon's material correctly. Fast use of social media and information can often be a hindrance for those who serve. It is not customary for ministers of the word to just take things from the internet, because the congregation can also access this. The information obtained at this time can be used as material for development. However, on the other hand the ability of a servant of God is required in this era to truly provide healthy 'spiritual food' to the congregation. In addition, the church must also be supported by social media and information facilities. The facilities really help the servants to provide maximum quality services for the congregation in this era of disruption.

The development of the Disruption Era has had a huge impact on the church. Habits in worship, both how to read the Bible, listen to sermons at Sunday services, how to present sermon material, interact with *diakonia*, and distribute messages to the congregation have also experienced a shift. It is feared that visits by church members to hospitals and at home will likely be carried out virtually by church ministers. Even the congregation can choose to worship onsite or online. Practically the role of the church for the congregation will decrease because the congregation does not experience the worship directly (Priowidodo, 2018). Church leaders must be aware of all of this so that they continue to apply pastoral values to the congregation. Church leaders must serve well, even though there are developments, and all biblical values must still be applied as required. Because the church must grow in quality and quantity in any situation it is imperative to have faithful servants who are committed to the task of serving others. All church members, are of one and the same body, and they are the 'people of God' who are united with one another and with the divine head of the body, by means of divine grace. It is through grace that people live a new existence, which is spent in continuous communion (*koinonia*) with God (Nicolaidis, 2010).

There are many aspects that can benefit the Christian faith in the Era of Disruption. For example, one can use message boards, podcasts, simulcast worship services and also internet mailing lists to allow Christians to stay connected with their congregation. The Internet offers numerous resources for priests, pastors and Christian religious leaders. As technology advances, religious learning will change with it and faithful believers will develop new, innovative ways to uncover and grow their faith, irrespective of what the future looks like.

### **The World of Work in the Era of Disruption**

In facing the challenges of the world of work in the industrial era 4.0, the Indonesian government strengthened new literacy moves as a reinforcement and even shifted the old literacy movement. The intended new literacy movement focuses on three main literacy skills, namely, 1) digital literacy, 2) technological literacy, and 3) human literacy (Ghufron, 2018). These three skills are predicted to be skills that are much needed in the industrial era 4.0 and in the future. As it develops more, the industrial world is currently living and will live in the industrial era 5.0 emerging as a complement to the future industrial era 4.0. The industrial era 5.0 demands that humans can work together with robots and artificial intelligence. Industrial era 5.0 I.T. continues to utilize IoT (internet of things) technology to combine artificial intelligence with the human mind. The industrial era 5.0 is also here not to replace humans with robots, but to support human work (Ghufron, 2018).

We have heard the term 'remote working', where workers can complete their work from anywhere with the help of the internet, technology, and software. Remote working is useful for exchanging work data, communicating with the team, and assessing employee performance. The goal is that



humans are assisted by technology and artificial intelligence, but those who work are still humans. Humans are required to get used to working with the help of robots. Humans must be able to understand and adapt to this situation very rapidly.

Christians must then also be able to adapt to such circumstances, because what is happening has been recorded in the Bible. Genesis 11:6 the Lord said, "*Behold, they are one nation, and they all have one language; and this is only the beginning of what they are going to do; and nothing they plan now will be impossible for them*" (Revised Standard Version). The Bible has told us that indeed humans are generally given the ability to do something and succeed. Because of that, it is wishful thinking that all humans, and especially some Christians, will on the contrary glorify humans or even technology, rather than God who owns everything. Christians should glorify God more as the Creator of the Cosmos. He has given everything needed to support human life on earth. However people are straying from doing the required things and many are destroying our gift from God. People are increasingly caught up in everyday activities in their daily lives and Christian teachings are often ignored as morals 'fly out of the window' in various areas of life on a daily basis. People have become conditioned to focus on personal individual achievement rather than on communal efforts. Everyone is seeking greater material wealth as opposed to spiritual advancement.

### **Community Life in the Era of Disruption**

One of the points stressed by Our Lord Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew 5: 14 is that we are the light of the world. This word confirms that every Christian is obliged to be a light to others. The 'light' here relates to how we illuminate the world. This means that Christians must be able to enlighten others with the truth. The era of disruption is clearly a challenge for every Christian. People must not forget to be themselves as the light of the world and not be caught up in passing fancies. It is not uncommon to find some Christians playing online games all day long without working. There are also Christians who get carried away when they respond to the status of fellow Christians on social media. Even Christians today prefer to love themselves rather than God and their fellow human beings.

The Bible has warned us that in the last days difficult times will come. Humans will love themselves and become slaves for money. People will boast and they will become slanderers, they will rebel against their parents and be ungrateful, and very careless about religion. Many will not know love, and be unwilling to make peace, and will like to badmouth others, and be unable to restrain themselves. Additionally some will be fierce, not like good, be treacherous and thoughtless, pretend to know, and follow lust more than obey God (2 Timothy. 3:2-4)(Bani et al., 2022). All of this is indeed a picture of what is currently happening in our global society. This means that we are living in the last days. Christians must be aware that everything is happening right now fulfilling what has been conveyed by God's word. The facts above are being and will continue to be felt by every human being in this era. So, Christians must pay attention to all these influences so that they still have a way of life that pleases God. These influences can lead us away from God (Andrian et.al, 2021). Let us be careful because the Israelites were also exiled to Assyria and Babylon because they were influenced by the life of their time. The Word of God states "Repent, repent of your evil life" and RSV "turn back from your evil ways" (Ezekiel 33:11). Let us repent of our evil thoughts and deeds.

People were created in the image and likeness of God, and have a directive to manage the earth well (Genesis 1: 27-18). God has made us accountable as new technology is created and all must be ultimately accounted for. In Matthew 28: 19-10, we are called on to spread the word far and wide as part of Our Lord's Great Commission. In this regard Purnomo (2020) says:



The new media undoubtedly offer the Church a greater opportunity to make known its teaching more widely and more directly to ever greater numbers and across all types of political and cultural boundaries. It is possible, using the new technologies, to reach new audiences, to invite them to a consideration of the great questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life and to offer to them the great wisdom of our tradition. We need to understand better how our message is being heard and understood by different audiences.

## Research Results

### Christianity Begins with God

The term 'Christian' itself was only used during the ministry of Paul and Barabbas in the city of Antioch (Acts 11:26). But before that Jesus had said to Peter "on this rock, I will build My church" (Matthew 16:18). Then comes the word *ekklesia* which means to be called out, "...as well as to live out the experience of the variety of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the sacramental life of the church" (Harianto, Metekohy, Sahertian & Ming, 2023). The Apostle Peter explained that Christians are called out of darkness into the light of God (1 Peter 2:9). This confirms that everyone who becomes a Christian has been chosen by God from the beginning. It means that there are people who have been determined by God to be in need of saving and Christians are called out to tell all people about Jesus. Christians must proclaim Jesus through the way they think, speak and also act.

The Westminster Short Catechism notes: "What duty does God require of man? The obligation that God requires of man is obedience to his revealed will. What was the first thing God revealed to man to be the rule for his obedience? That is the moral law, the moral law is summed up in the ten commandments of God. The essence of the ten commandments is love the Lord our God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself" (Williamson, 2009).

This reason prompted the apostles to continue preaching the gospel to Jews and non-Jews (Brier & Jayanti, 2020). The gospel must be preached to all nations with God's inclusion. Many people who became Christians ranged from the respected to the common people. There was enthusiasm that emerged even though there were obstacles because they believed in God's promise to be with them to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Barriers experienced by Christians come from both within and outside of the church (Yuli et al., 2022). The Church throughout the era has always faced challenges from within and without. The challenges of the church show that being God's children means we must face challenges both internally and externally. Jesus founded the church and has preserved and continues to preserve the church from a thousand kinds of challenges ( Yuli & Bani, 2022). History provides evidence that the more inhibited the church the more it spreads. The church still exists today because it originates from God and is there for the glory of God. So if someone is against the church or Christians it is as though they are in fact against God.

### The Bible is the Foundation of Christian Life

The Bible is referred to as the Word of God because of the recognition from the Bible which states that the authors did not just express their thoughts. Their words were inspired by God. The Apostle Paul wrote: "All writings that are inspired by God are useful for teaching, for reassuring mistakes, for correcting behavior and for educating people in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). The word inspiration is translated from the Greek word "breathed by God". God 'breathes' the Bible, just as we breathe out of our mouths when we speak, so it can be said that God speaks through the Bible (Sproul, 2008).



Therefore, the Bible must be the basis of Christian life in all ages. Through the Bible we find the truth that is not subjective and also does not change. In the Bible we find norms and principles that go beyond the prejudices or conventions of society. We find an objective basis for our standard of living (Sproul, 1996). If the Bible becomes our standard of living then what we think, what we say, what we do is about God. Luther argued the church should focus on the gospel, preaching about Christ and His crucifixion, then the church is the answer, and not the problem.(Carson, 1997). Unrighteousness will bring the church into trouble as we see happening in many denominations around the world.

The Lord Jesus wants all Christians to know Him. The knowledge of God never stops in our lives, because no human being can say that I fully know God. God cannot be fully known by humans, to that extent by which God introduces Himself (Deuteronomy 29:29). The historical view of Christianity teaches that Christ alone is a prophet to the Church, and that Christ now speaks to His church only through the Bible.(Williamson, 2009a). The Bible must be a source of truth throughout the ages for Christians. The Bible should not be replaced with other sources as the basis for a believer's life. Thus, things of the internet that are opposed to faith should be shunned totally. "Social media is not the problem, technology is not the problem, the problem is wickedness bound within the human heart. The heart is the well and the tongue is bucket and the bucket reaches down into the well to bring up the contents" (Tate, 2020).

Jesus tell us in Luke 6:45 that: "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." The truth is God will bless those who stick to His word. Luke records that Jesus said to a woman and the disciples at that time that blessed/blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it/do it (Luke 11:28). This means that if the Bible is the basis of Christian life, then every day we must read and practice God's Word. The gifts we receive from God, such a technological advances must be used to the glory of His name and should enhance the quality of life and guide us to spread the good news of Christ to others. The digital era allows us to communicate personally with each other at any time. Any person with a mobile phone or a basic computer, should be able to use the technology to learn about Jesus Christ. This means it offers scope for excellent evangelism. We must nonetheless be concerned about the negative aspects too.

### **Christianity Guaranteed by God**

The third part which is very important as the superiority of Christianity in the era of disruption is God's guarantee. God's guarantee is related to the person of Almighty God and God's providence for each of His people. Of course, God's guarantee does not say that the road to heaven is as simple as people think. The road to heaven is something that cannot be attained by mere human effort.

#### **a. Assurance through God the Son**

Jesus has two natures, a divine and a human one. The Bible states that "In the beginning was the Word; The Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Jesus is the Word who became flesh, and He is aware that He is the Son of God (John 3:13; 5:17; 6:37). The Divine Nature of Jesus is very important to clarify that: first, the human Mediator is the true God. The divine nature of Jesus guarantees that His sacrifice was without limit in value and provided perfect obedience to God's law. Second, Jesus can bear God's wrath and bring redemption, so that He can free others from the curse of the law. Third, Jesus applies the fruits of His completed work to those who receive Him by faith (Ephesians 2:8)( Berkhof, 2011).





The human nature of Jesus is also evident from His sinless self. Christ possessed not only natural perfection, but also moral perfection and integrity, that is, He was totally sinlessness. This not only means that Christ could avoid sinning or "*potuit non peccare* He did avoid it, but also that it was absolutely impossible for Him to sin or be "*non potuit peccare*" because of the essential bond between human nature and Divine nature. The human nature of Jesus is very important because humans sinned, so the penalty for sin must be borne by humans too. Also the payment of the wages of sin includes suffering of body and also the soul, which only man can bear (John 12:27; Acts 3:18). Jesus sacrifice guarantees every believer in all ages. The death of Jesus was a very expensive priceless gift for every believer but His resurrection has the greatest value. The death of Jesus proves that human salvation is only determined by and through Jesus. Jesus is the only way of salvation, because Jesus himself said "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) (Browning, 2014). Even in another part Jesus stated "I give eternal life to them and they will never perish forever and no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28). This verse emphasizes that the salvation given by God to every believer will not be lost. Christians must face challenges in life but, those challenges will not snatch us from God's hands (1 Corinthians 10:13). Thus, the death of Jesus guarantees every Christian has a chance to remain in His will, including in this era of disruption.

### **b. Assurance through God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Triune God (Sproul, 2008). The Holy Spirit is the applicator of all God's design based on himself and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Because the Holy Spirit is the applicator of God's design in and through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will never work outside of or apart from God the Father and God the Son. That is why, the Lord Jesus confirmed that the coming of the Holy Spirit is to testify about Jesus (John 15:26). This means that every witness of a believer is carried out by the Holy Spirit (Wibowo et.al, 2022). The Holy Spirit bears witness about Jesus through Christians who think right, say right, and do right. With the testimony of Christian life, others believe and glorify God (Nainggolan et.al 2022).

The reality is that Christians are faced with various life problems, including in this era of disruption. There are family problems, problems at church, problems at work, problems in society. The Holy Spirit guarantees the believer's life convicts him of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11). It is the work of the Holy Spirit that makes us aware when we feel that what we are doing is wrong or right. The Holy Spirit leads every Christian to practice the truth and become a servant of the truth (John 16:13; Romans 6:18). The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ and enables Christians to live to glorify Christ (John 16:14). So, the guarantee from the Holy Spirit does not stop at a certain era but until Christ comes twice. Because in every era, the Holy Spirit still guarantees Christians to live holy lives. Dreyer (2019) says that the main challenge facing the church is to 'be church' and to 'stay church' as the body of Christ. It must still be the community of the Spirit and the people of God (Bender, 2005).

Churches must act with integrity and show a deep consciousness of the true nature of the church and this must include a continual reformation of the church to be what it is meant to be (Dreyer 2019). We should use the social media and other aspects in the Era of Disruption to boost religious experiences and facilitate prayers, Bible studies, and even computer-generated pilgrimages. The various search engines must be used to increase our knowledge of our faith. We also need to be aware that what is on the Internet can also undermine Christianity in various ways, by discouraging people to believe our faith by showing competing claims, and by allowing anti- Christian elements to give their opinions on what is true and what is false. Contradictory opinions may causes believers to move away from the faith, so we need to be discerning and pray for God's guidance in what we do.



## Conclusion

Every era must have its own challenges for everyone, both in the context of the family, church, world of work, and society. However, as Christians we have an advantage because everything starts from God, the Bible remains the foundation of our lives, and Christians are guaranteed by God. Therefore, Christians out to be firm in their faith and believe in God while seeking to strengthen one another. Our excellence occurs because of God who starts and guarantees it to the end of its purpose for each of us. This is because we are made by God, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared beforehand. He wants us to live in it (Ephesians 2:10).” Every Christian has an advantage, therefore they must play a role from where they are to the ends of the earth. Dreyer (2019) also argues that what the church is should be clear in what it does on a day to day basis. The new media in the Era of Disruption can definitely give Christianity a far larger opportunity to make its teachings known more widely to billions of people and should be used to summons them to a consider the meaning and purpose of life and to offer to them an opportunity to learn the Christian faith better.

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