

A Case Study of Customer Experiences, Expectations and Satisfaction Level Toward Services Provided by E-Commerce Shopee during COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

Publication information

Research article

HOW TO CITE

Khairul Anuar, N. A., Zulkifli, N. S., Mohd Kassim, N. H., Zaihaimi, N. H. A., Kumar, A., Sinha, A., Yadav, L. S., Huei, L. Y., Oh, Z. J. (2022). A Case Study of Customer Expectations, Experiences and Satisfaction Level toward Services provided by E-commerce Shopee during COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia. *International Journal of Tourism & Hospitality in Asia Pacific*, 5(3), 50-64.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.32535/ijthap.v5i3.1889>

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Published by IJTHAP



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Received: 20 August 2022

Accepted: 20 September 2022

Published: 20 October 2022

ABSTRACT

The study's objective is to examine the customer expectations, experiences and satisfaction levels toward using e-commerce Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. A total of 110 Shopee users from Malaysia participated in an online survey via a google form. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. According to the findings, consumers have been motivated to use Shopee for online transactions by perceived convenience and perceived trust. Not only that but practitioners will better understand consumer perceptions and intentions when it comes to using the Shopee platform for online purchases. Our findings provide new insights into customer expectations, experiences and satisfaction, which are helpful for the company. This study also provides recommendations that lead to improved customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, COVID-19, E-Commerce, Expectations, Experiences, Malaysia, Shopee.

INTRODUCTION

Shopee is an international company that focuses mainly on e-commerce. It is also known for being one of the globe's most significant and advanced online markets. Due to the pandemic outbreak, the company has boosted rapidly to serve consumers and sellers in different countries across America and Europe who wanted to make a purchase and sell their products online, with 343 million monthly visits. Shopee provides customers with a simple, fast, and delightful online shopping experience that millions worldwide enjoy daily. According to Madan et al. (2022), Shopee is a mobile-friendly online marketplace that lets consumers buy and sell items quickly and easily. In addition, buyers can see product reviews given by previous buyers (Astuti, 2019).

Shopee has turned out to be one of the prominent E-commerce platforms in Malaysia. Based on quarterly average traffic, mobile app-based rating, social media followers, and the number of workers at work, Shopee is the second most popular E-commerce company in Malaysia (The Sun Daily, 2018). In Malaysia, there were around 21.93 million active internet users in 2018, providing ample opportunity for online commerce. Shopee, a Malaysian online shopping platform, is frequently used by Malaysians to make purchases. In the second quarter of 2021, monthly visitors of Shopee were approximately 54 million, which is an increase compared to the previous quarter. Shopee's headquarter is based in Singapore, one of the dominant e-commerce platforms in Southeast Asia and Taiwan (Hirschman, 2022).

Shopee was introduced in Malaysia in 2015 with approximately 501 to 1000 employees (Nee, 2017). Shopee has outperformed its major competitors like Lazada and Tesco Online during the Covid-19 situation. Shopee was one of the most admired e-commerce platforms in a poll conducted by Vase-ai on Malaysian customers' buying behavior under the Movement Control Order, with 88 percent of respondents shopping from it. In comparison, Lazada came second, with 53 percent of respondents shopping from it (MCO, 2020). According to Iprice (2018), Shopee's monthly traffic rate was 12,330,200, placing it second behind Lazada and ahead of competitors like 11th Street, Lelong, Zalora, eBay, and others. However, Shopee is in a tied competition with Lazada in all aspects, such as visit rate or the type of business model used to achieve operational excellence (Lim, 2017).

Shopee researched consumer perceptions to make the app competitive with its competitors. The Technology Acceptance Model surveyed consumers' perceptions of effectiveness, ease of use, price, convenience, and perceived trust. Therefore, 110 people on Malaysia's East Coast who have done online shopping were requested to participate in this study via an online survey, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. This study is expected to aid practitioners in better understanding consumer online shopping perceptions and intentions to increase Shopee usage and visitation. This online shopping platform allows customers to shop for an extensive range of products at any time and anywhere, with the best deals and discounts (Ryantika & Hidayat, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Feedback

Customer feedback is information, ideas, problems, and suggestions from your community about their interactions with your company, products, or services. This input improves the client experience and, even when negative, can help a company adjust for the better. According to Shagari and Abubakar (2014), for every percentage improvement in customer satisfaction, there is a 2.37 percent rise in return on investment. Furthermore, when consumers are satisfied, they spread the word about the brand, functioning as marketers. Customer satisfaction is a broad and specific psychological assessment of a customer's experience with a product or service. Pleased consumers are commonly understood to be critical to long-term corporate success (Rashid, Ahmad, & Othman, 2014). However, as per Usrey and Dooley (1996), quality is in the eye of the beholder. Regardless of how relative this is, consumers have a widespread agreement, particularly at the extremes of good and bad service.

Based on Farrell, Souchon, and Durden (2001), customer happiness is linked to customer experience. Meanwhile, Giao (2020) explain that customer experience is customers' emotional response to their product or service experience. Yi and La (2004) define consumer satisfaction as the reaction of customers to their expectations being satisfied. At the same time, Hossain and Quaddus (2011) state that consumer satisfaction is a precondition for quality of service, and the pricing issue must also be considered while researching customer satisfaction. As a result, various aspects have been demonstrated to affect consumer happiness with a firm in terms of preserving customer satisfaction. According to Abou-Shouk and Khalifa (2016), the creative design appearance of a website acts as a connection between the consumer and the seller, with a good design having a better possibility of pleasing customers. Aside from digital marketing, client satisfaction has become a top emphasis. Similarly, online activity and surfing savings are more likely to be related to pleasure (Wilson & Christella, 2019).

In a nutshell, the network company has a better chance of satisfying its customers by offering various products and attempting to meet their wants. Delivering the right products without flaws, packaging the product safely, and products that can fulfill the promised delivery process or be called on time are all critical features of digital marketing that will thrill or satisfy the online consumer with the products (Jun, Yang, & Kim, 2004).

Customer Experience

A customer's engagement with an e-commerce environment goes further than the internet to encompass the delivery process, post-sales assistance, service and product consumption, etc. According to prior research by Kipkirong Tarus and Rabach (2013), a higher consumer experience is expected to result in higher satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, the research from Ali, Kim, Li, and Jeon (2018) has discovered that customer experience is a significant determinant of loyalty.

Our findings confirmed that satisfaction mediates the relationship between anticipation, perceived enjoyment, and repurchase intent to some extent. Encouraged by previous research, Ashfaq et al. (2019) state that in marketing, for instance, they developed ECM based on expectation–confirmation theory (ECT). In the marketing field, ECT is commonly used to study buyer happiness.

Lastly, in e-commerce, the consumer experience with products and services is essential because it encourages long-term ties between customers and e-commerce. Therefore, customer experience and customer relations might be thought to influence each other to provide better service levels in e-commerce (Sukendia et al., 2021).

Customer Expectations

Customer expectation is a collection of thoughts, desires, and anticipation about the product that the customer has in mind during and after purchasing it from the business or seller (Bhasin, 2021). Customer expectation can be determined based on asking questions about how high the level of performance is needed, which is the performance level to meet the customer expectation (Tukiran et al., 2021). Understanding customer expectations may help ensure the customer experience consistently meets or exceeds their expectations (Chan & Leung, 2021).

Every day, e-commerce creates a large amount of data in the form of consumer reviews. Therefore, understanding client expectations, providing a better shopping experience, and increasing sales can be aided by analyzing e-commerce data (Vanaja et al., 2018). Based on Hsieh and Yuan (2019), customer expectation relates to customer emotion. Therefore, when the customer has high expectations but does not perceive the service well, customers quickly get negative emotions, affecting the customer experience and satisfaction with the services or product.

Lastly, customer expectations toward using e-commerce will impact the customer experience and satisfaction with the e-commerce they use and affect their attitudes and behavioral attention toward the company (Oliveira, Souki, Silva, Rezende, & Batinga, 2022). Therefore, Shopee should increase the accessibility where Shopee should maintain ease in accessing the Shopee website and the operational time of Shopee fits the customer expectation because it influences the satisfaction of Shopee customers (Aisyah & Sisilia, 2020).

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction is essential in the business world to lead the business organization to success. Customer satisfaction also involves customer experience while purchasing the product or service (Lim, Fern, & Kler, 2021). Satisfaction is the customer's feeling when purchasing and comparing the product they receive with their expectation (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Because it is easier and less expensive to keep existing consumers than to attract new ones, the online vendor must maintain and improve client satisfaction with the company (Yo et al., 2021).

Furthermore, according to Schiffman, Long, and Sherman (2015), customer happiness will lead to consumer repurchase behavior and eventually to customer loyalty. According to Wirani and Wibasuri's (2020) research, an increase in repeat purchases implies consumer happiness, and pleasure is also the outcome of comparing product and service expectations with performance. Moreover, customer satisfaction with an online business or e-commerce service influences loyalty to that service. Providing superior-high-quality services improves customer pleasure and stimulates consumer participation in the business, and delivering high service quality leads to total customer satisfaction (Merugu & Mohan, 2020). Shopee can increase service quality and brand image, according to Vierdwiyan and Syafarudin (2020), so that greater features and application services can improve buying decisions and customer happiness.

Finally, Mahadin, Akroush, and Beta (2020) believe that customer satisfaction is critical because it encourages customers to make repeat purchases and promotes a long-term relationship between the vendor and the client. Furthermore, Miao et al. (2021) stated that vendors might improve consumer happiness by lowering perceived risk. If the perceived threat is minimal, customers will feel a high perceived value and raise online repurchase intentions within the organization or business.

RESEARCH METHOD

We used primary and secondary data to collect data for this research. An online questionnaire survey via Google Forms was conducted to gather information about Shopee users' experiences, expectations, and satisfaction levels toward Shopee during the Covid-19 pandemic. Firstly, we gather information from the internet and by observing product reviews in the Shopee app to develop our questionnaire survey form (Shopee Malaysia, 2022). We are using an adapted approach to change some information to suit our research. We divided the questionnaire into several parts. Based on a 5-point Likert scale, respondents could choose one from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). At the end of the questionnaire, we develop one open questionnaire about opinions on how to improve Shopee users' satisfaction after buying the product through Shopee. We distributed our questionnaire to our targeted respondents, Shopee users in Malaysia, across social media channels such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, and Instagram. A total of 110 Shopee users participated in the survey. Secondary data from journals, articles, and the internet were also collected to support the study. All data collected from questionnaires are analyzed by IBM SPSS Statistics 26 (Glen, 2022).

Measures

Five sections are included in the Questionnaires: demographic characteristics of respondents, consumer experiences, consumer expectations, and consumer satisfaction towards Shopee online goods or services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Demographic Characteristics

The demography of Respondents is determined using single statement items, which include gender, ethnicity, nationality, occupation, monthly income, education level, living area, and frequency of respondents shopping through Shopee.

Consumer Experience

This section will prepare five optional questions to identify the respondent's experiences in buying goods or services through Shopee platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Consumer Expectation

Four scale questions are prepared which measure respondents' expectation level towards Shopee services. In this section, 5-point Likert scales are used as a measurement of responses to customer expectations. The scale items are created based on preference, ease to use, delivery, and goods condition. In this section, respondents need to specify that "1" means "strongly disagree" and "5" means "strongly agree."

Consumer Satisfaction

There are 11 scales to identify customer satisfaction. The rating scales are based on convenience, price affordability, quality, security, responses, ease to reach, time-saving, and sales frequently in the shop. In the section, respondents need to specify that "1" means "strongly disagree," and "5" means "strongly agree".

Open Opinion

In this section, there is only one open question to obtain opinions from the respondents regarding how to improve customer satisfaction after buying the product using e-commerce Shopee.

RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of respondents' demographic (N=110)

Responses		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender			
Valid	Male	35	31.8
	Female	75	68.2
	Total	110	100.0
Ethnicity			
Valid	Indian Muslim	1	.9
	Siamese	2	1.8
	Indian	13	11.8
	Chinese	17	15.5
	Malay	77	70.0
	Total	110	100.0
Age			
Valid	45 years old and above	3	2.7
	25 - 34 years old	6	5.5
	Under 18 years old	9	8.2
	19 - 24 years old	92	83.6
	Total	110	100.0
Occupation			
Valid	Unemployment	1	.9
	Industries Worker	3	2.7
	Self-employed	4	3.6
	Government Staff	8	7.3
	Private Sector	12	10.9
	Student	82	74.5
	Total	110	100.0
Monthly Household Income			
Valid	RM2,500 - RM4,000	5	4.5
	Above RM4,000	7	6.4
	Below RM1,000	10	9.1
	RM1,000 - RM2,500	23	20.9
	No income	65	59.1
	Total	110	100.0
Education Level			
Valid	ACCA	1	.9
	Master's Degree	7	6.4
	Secondary-School	14	12.7
	Diploma	22	20.0
	Bachelor's Degree	66	60.0
	Total	110	100.0
Living Area			
Valid	Rural	7	6.4
	Town	46	41.8

City	57	51.8
Total	110	100.0

Table 1 shows the summary of respondents' demography in this research. Most of the respondents were female (68.2%). Regarding ethnicity, most of the respondents are Malay (70%). In addition, most of the respondents are between 19-24 years old (83.6%). Furthermore, most respondents were students (74.5%) and had no monthly house income (59.1%). Regarding education level, over half of the respondents have a Bachelor's Degree (60%). Besides, most respondents lived in the City (51.8%). Based on the survey results, 40% of the respondents often Shopped on the Shopee platform at least once a month during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 2. Summary of customer experiences toward Shopee services during Covid-19 pandemic (N=110)

	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How often do you shop on the Shopee platform during the Covid-19 Pandemic?			
Valid	At least once every three months	6	5.5
	At least once every two months	11	10.0
	Several times a week	20	18.2
	Once a week	29	26.4
	At least once a month	44	40.0
	Total	110	100.0
How many products have you bought on the Shopee platform in a month during the Covid-19 Pandemic?			
Valid	1	6	5.5
	5-10	24	21.8
	More than 10	25	22.7
	2-5	55	50.0
	Total	110	100.0
What products did you buy on the Shopee platform during the Covid-19 pandemic?			
Valid	Cup	1	.9
	Juice blender machine	1	.9
	Home appliances	1	.9
	Book	1	.9
	Diapers	1	.9
	Salixium test kit	1	.9
	Baby food	3	2.7
	Electronics	41	37.3
	Skincare product	44	40.0
	Entertainment product	59	53.6
	Accessories	63	57.3
	Clothing and footwear	91	82.7
	Total	110	100.0
How much do you spend on the Shopee platform every month during the Covid-19 Pandemic?			

Valid	Less than RM50	28	25.5
	More than RM100	30	27.3
	RM50 - RM100	52	47.3
	Total	110	100.0
Have you used the Shopee platform before the Covid-19 Pandemic?			
Valid	No	21	19.1
	Yes	89	80.9
	Total	110	100.0

Table 2 shows respondents' experiences with Shopee services in buying goods during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results showed that 40% of respondents shop on the Shopee platform at least once a month, and another 26.4% of respondents shop the goods once a week on Shopee. Most of the respondents, which is 50%, have bought 2-5 products in a month, while 22.7% have bought more than ten products in a month during the Covid-19 pandemic. It shows that Shopee user has increased experiences using this platform.

The most popular products that Shopee users buy on this platform are electronics, accessories, skin care products, entertainment products, clothing, and footwear (11.8%). Another 10.9% of respondents prefer to buy entertainment products, clothing, and footwear on the Shopee platform. Then, 47.3% of respondents spent RM50-RM100 on Shopee service every month, and another 27.3% spent more than RM100 in a month during the Covid-19 pandemic. Lastly, 80.9% of respondents started using the Shopee platform before the pandemic, while 19.1% of respondents used the Shopee service during the pandemic Covid-19. In conclusion, most Shopee users have great experiences as they like and believe in using the services during the pandemic of Covid-19.

Table 3. Summary of customer expectations toward Shopee services during the Covid-19 Pandemic. (N=110)

Responses		Frequency	Percentage (%)
All products can be purchased via Shopee during Covid-19 Pandemic			
Valid	1	1	.9
	2	6	5.5
	3	13	11.8
	4	41	37.3
	5	49	44.5
	Total	110	100.0
The online platform (Shopee) is easy to use			
Valid	2	1	.9
	3	3	2.7
	4	27	24.5
	5	79	71.8
	Total	110	100.0
Goods are safely delivered to consumers			
Valid	2	1	.9

3	16	14.5
4	38	34.5
5	55	50.0
Total	110	100.0

Goods delivered to consumers same like show
in the Shopee

Valid	1	1	.9
	2	4	3.6
	4	25	22.7
	3	32	29.1
	5	48	43.6
Total		110	100.0

Note: 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither disagree nor agree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree

Table 3 presents the customer expectations level toward e-commerce Shopee during the Covid-19 pandemic in Malaysia. Almost half of the respondents of Shopee users which is 44.5% strongly agreed. About 37.3% agreed with the statement that all products could be bought via Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic and 96.3% of respondents stated that the online platform of e-commerce Shopee is easy to use. It shows that the Shopee service provides the best benefits to most respondents as they like to use it during pandemics.

Besides, 50% of respondents strongly agree, and 34.5% agreed that the goods they buy using Shopee are safely delivered to them. Lastly, around 72.7% of Shopee users' respondents agree that the goods delivered are the same as shown in Shopee. In conclusion, most Shopee users have a good expectation of Shopee service and products during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 4. Summary of customer satisfaction toward Shopee services during Covid-19 pandemic (N=110)

Responses		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Using Shopee is so convenient during the Covid-19 pandemic			
Valid	2	1	.9
	3	7	6.4
	4	29	26.4
	5	73	66.4
Total		110	100.0
Shopee security is secured			
Valid	1	1	.9
	2	1	.9
	3	11	10.0
	4	40	36.4
	5	57	51.8
Total		110	100.0
The product's price is affordable			
Valid	2	1	.9

	3	8	7.3
	4	42	38.2
	5	59	53.6
	Total	110	100.0
The quality is suitable with the price			
Valid	1	1	.9
	2	1	.9
	3	14	12.7
	4	39	35.5
	5	55	50.0
	Total	110	100.0
Shopee seller response so fast			
Valid	2	8	7.3
	4	32	29.1
	3	35	31.8
	5	35	31.8
	Total	110	100.0
Shopee provides a guarantee to make sure products delivered			
Valid	1	1	.9
	3	13	11.8
	4	34	30.9
	5	62	56.4
	Total	110	100.0
Shopee customer service is easy to reach			
Valid	2	1	.9
	1	2	1.8
	3	17	15.5
	4	31	28.2
	5	59	53.6
	Total	110	100.0
The Courier charge is affordable			
Valid	1	2	1.8
	2	5	4.5
	3	14	12.7
	4	41	37.3
	5	48	43.6
	Total	110	100.0
Shopee has sales frequently			
Valid	2	1	.9
	3	10	9.1
	4	29	26.4
	5	70	63.6
	Total	110	100.0
Shopee's online services can save your time			
Valid	3	7	6.4
	4	30	27.3
	5	73	66.4

Total	110	100.0
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Note: 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither disagree nor agree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree

Table 4 presents respondents' satisfaction with Shopee services. It shows that most of the respondents (93%) find Shopee has been convenient during the pandemic time, and 9% of respondents disagree with the statement. About 88% acknowledge that Shopee has great secure security. However, 10% of respondents choose not sure that Shopee security is secured. Moreover, as MCO started, many netizens have been saving and reducing spending. This makes more than the majority of respondents (92%) choose Shopee as an e-commerce platform that has affordable product prices. Also, 86% conclude that the quality suits the price very well. Whereas 9% of respondents only choose to disagree with the quality satisfaction. Here we can conclude that Shopee has put efforts into fulfilling consumer satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

About 61% of respondents agreed that Shopee sellers are a fast response to their customers. However, 32% several of the respondents stated disagree. A total of 87% say that Shopee provides guarantees in their services. Over half of the respondents, 82% agreed that the service provided by Shopee is easy to reach and only 1.8% of respondents did not agree with the statement. Moreover, the majority of respondents choose 70% agreed that products sold on Shopee have mutual sales like physical stores during the pandemic season. Whereas only 9% stated disagree. These indicate that the demand for Shopee is quite high, especially during pandemics.

Furthermore, more than half of the respondents 82%, agreed that couriers' charge is affordable in Shopee, and 1.8% do not agree. Almost 90% of respondents 90% agree that Shopee has frequent sales as it encourages people to shop online at lower or discount prices. As stated in the table, 94% of the respondents say that Shopee's online service saves their time and the least of the respondents 6.4% disagree with the statement. In conclusion, the survey signifies that most customers had a blast satisfaction using Shopee apps and gave the best experience to the customer to gain their trust and provide them great satisfaction.

For the last section of questionnaire, we obtain several opinions on how to improve customer satisfaction after buying the product using e-commerce Shopee, which we summarize in this research. Customers' opinions work as an anchor to improve customer experience for the product and drive more sales to the company. Taking actions on customers' opinions about the product and services attached to it helps gain customer loyalty. It also helps to enhance the products after altering the product and online services according to the customer's opinion. Companies that take customers feedback positively and work on improving are likely to be popular among them and gain more customers as compared to the competitors.

In our survey, we found a lot of customer opinions such as fast delivery as one of the opinions; fast delivery is essential when it comes to satisfying customer needs. Every customer wants their product delivered as soon as possible to their doorsteps. Fast delivery systems help e-commerce websites stand ahead of their competitors. As well as customers need their products to be delivered safely too. So, managing the speed and safety of delivery is a challenge for all e-commerce companies. Also, customers who want shipping fees must not be charged or reduced, resulting in just paying a little extra

money for the product. Customers also need free shipping vouchers and discounts on delivery while purchasing the product.

An interesting opinion that we received was that the customer wanted to have a video sent of the actual product purchased before it was packed for shipping. This will give a sense of relief to customers that their purchase is not damaged and it's the same product that they saw online and made the purchase. All these opinions will hence improve customer satisfaction levels.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Shopee platform significantly has positive growth as most Shopee users in Malaysia like to use the services for buying the products and services during the covid-19 pandemic. It would increase the demand for products and services on Shopee and increase the national income to tackle the pandemic outbreak. Most customers have been spending a lot of time grabbing the products by 'clicking one hand' during the pandemic of Covid-19. The customers might have a great experience purchasing online products, have higher expectations of products, and be fully satisfied after receiving the products in good condition. It implies the customers' loyalty and belief in using Shopee services during the pandemic of Covid-19. Moreover, the Shopee online services also can save customers time as they can be more aware to keep the safety and social distancing to avoid the Covid-19 infection.

Customers who are satisfied with all the products intend to repeat and try another item to purchase. It is because they believe the products would be delivered the products as same that shown in Shopee. Most Shopee users are also really satisfied when the quality of products is suitable for the price, the courier charge also can be acceptable, and the Shopee service has a higher secured platform. It cannot be denied that Shopee services can grab customers' attention as it recorded the higher satisfaction for all feedback from customers.

The outbreak of Covid-19 brought a bright side to Shopee services because they have attracted more new customers to use the platform. Shopee is one of the most successful online business platform services in the market; they always ensure to achieve fulfilled customer experiences, expectations, and satisfaction to keep their business performance in the future or will be Malaysia's second-largest e-commerce company.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

N/A

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The declaration that there is no conflict of interest while completing this paper.

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