

Social Media Marketing as a Correlate of Small-Scale Business Profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

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Abstract

The study investigated Social Media Marketing as a Correlate of Small-Scale Business Profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The study was carried out in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Three specific objectives were posed, three research questions were answered and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational design. The population of the study was 3120 registered small and medium scale businesses in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 399. Self-structure questionnaires developed by the researcher titled “Social Media Marketing” (SMM) and “Small-Scale Business Profitability (SSBP) was used by the researcher. The Instrument was validated by experts in the field of the study (Business Education) and one in Tests and Measurement. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and a coefficient index of 0.83 and 0.76 was obtain. Which indicates that the instrument is reliable. Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) statistics was used to answer the research questions and hypotheses. Findings from the study revealed that there is very weak negative correlation between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. While there is a very weak positive correlation between TikTok and Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. Based on the findings the researcher recommended among others that business owners should use trending hashtags related to the business niche to increase visibility, small scale business owners should use create entertaining and engaging short videos on TikTok showcasing products, services, and behind-the-scenes business activities.

INTRODUCTION

Today, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the backbone of modern society as it is affecting nearly every aspect of life. It enables global communication, drives economic growth, enhances access to education and healthcare, improves governance, and promotes social change. The ongoing digital transformation is reshaping the world, creating new opportunities. Onojetah and Utoware, (2019) opined that the introduction of technology such as social media has made activities round the globe a bit easier, concrete, real and more result oriented-our routine has been digitized in all its aspects.

Social media marketing (SMM) has become an integral aspect of modern business strategies, offering significant opportunities for small-scale businesses (SSBs) to enhance their visibility, customer engagement, and profitability. Social media marketing (also known as digital marketing and e-marketing) is the use of social media the platforms on which users build social

networks and share information to build a company's brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic. In addition to providing companies with a way to engage with existing customers and reach new ones, SMM has purpose built data analytics that allows marketers to track the success of their efforts and identify even more ways to engage. Social media marketing enables companies to achieve a better understanding of customer needs in order to build effective relationships (Cox, 2022). Social media marketing is marketing using online communities, social networks, blog marketing and more. It's the latest "buzz" in marketing. Global companies have recognized Social Media Marketing as a potential marketing platform, utilized with innovations to power their advertising campaign with social media marketing (Neti, 2021). Social media is digital technology that allows the sharing of ideas and information, including text and visuals, through virtual networks and communities. Social media typically features user-generated content that lends itself to engagement via likes, shares, comments, and discussion. According Maya (2025), social media refers to a variety of technologies that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information among their users. Social media is a form of electronic communication which facilitates interaction based on certain interests and characteristics.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Xhandle (Twitter), and LinkedIn are utilized to promote products and services, SMM is particularly advantageous for businesses with limited marketing budgets (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020). By leveraging these platforms, SSBs can reach a broader audience, foster meaningful interactions with customers, and gain valuable insights into consumer behavior. Social media is all about networking and networking in a way that espouses trust among parties and communities involved. Any website which allows user to share their content, opinions, views and encourages interaction and community building can be classified as a social media. Some popular social media sites are: Facebook, YouTube, X (Twitter), TikTok, Instagram, Pinterest, Whatsapp, Snapchat, Dig, and my space, stumble Upon, Delicious, Scribe, Flickr. (Neti, 2021). Social media has caused a significant change in the strategies and tools companies use for communicating with customers.

X handle is a free social networking site where users broadcast short posts known as tweets. These tweets can contain text, videos, photos or links. To access X handle (Twitter), users need an internet connection or smart phone to use the app or website. Twitter is a social media platform and online microblogging service where users post and interact with messages known as **tweets**. It is widely used for communication, news sharing, and public conversations. Twitter's importance spans enhancing academic visibility, facilitating science communication, transforming journalism, shaping public discourse, and serving as a real-time emergency communication tool. Its multifaceted impact underscores its significance in contemporary society. Twitter is rooted in the idea of a real-time communication platform that enables users to share short, concise updates and interact with a global audience. Initially launched in 2006, Twitter introduced a new way of social networking with its microblogging format, emphasizing brevity and immediacy. Adepetun, Aikulola, Nwokoro, Ugoeze, and Akpa, (2021) asserted that x handle (Twitter) has become a source of livelihood, camaraderie, and information over the past 10 years in Nigeria. With its 2023 rebranding to "X," the platform was aimed to expand its functionality beyond microblogging, aspiring to become an "everything app" encompassing communication, commerce, and other digital services. Despite these changes, Twitter's original concept of real-time, open, and concise communication remains central to its identity.

TikTok is a popular social media platform that allows users to create, share, and discover short-form videos. It is known for its engaging and creative content, which includes music, dance, comedy, challenges, tutorials, and more. TikTok is a fairly new social networking applications

where we see short snippets of videos, its popularity is sharing of videos has exploded the last couple of years. It is a user generated platform where you can continuously scroll through endless short videos with no limit and can even tailor your feed to what you prefer to see. Derek (2021), saw TikTok as a platform that gives brand huge opportunity to connect with audiences in a real and authentic way. Unlike other social networking channel, TikTok is a playground for employees to be themselves and build audiences for their companies just by being themselves. A great TikTok strategy maybe for brands to just let employees do their thing. Arcand (2021) argued that TikTok is a popular social networking platform that allows users to make and share short-forms videos, it is not just for individual looking for funny and entertaining content. It is an amazing opportunity for employers to step up their employer branding efforts and engage with job seekers in a new exciting way. Arcand buttressed that if any company hasn't considered using TikTok for employer branding, here are reasons to incorporate TikTok into your employers branding efforts today.

Pinterest is an American social media service for publishing and discovery of information in the form of pinboards. This includes recipes, home, style, motivation, and inspiration on the Internet using image sharing. Pinterest is a social media platform and visual discovery engine designed for finding and sharing ideas. Users create and manage collections of images, videos, and links (known as "Pins") that are organized into themed boards based on their interests, hobbies, or goals. Pinterest is particularly popular for inspiration in areas like fashion, cooking, DIY projects, event planning, and home design. Its visual and organizational structure makes it user-friendly and engaging for creative exploration. Naylor, Lamberton and Norton, (2022) explained that the visual-centric nature of Pinterest fosters a strong emotional connection, making it a powerful platform for brand storytelling. Jiang and Benbasat (2021) found that features such as "buyable pins" and direct links to e-commerce platforms streamline the consumer journey, fostering impulse purchases and repeat visits. Pinterest is a visual discovery engine for finding ideas like recipes, home and style inspiration, and more. With billions of Pins on Pinterest, small scale business owners always find ideas to spark inspiration.

Small-scale businesses (SSBs) are generally defined based on criteria such as the number of employees, annual turnover, and capital investment. The definition varies by country and industry. For example, the European Commission (2020) classifies small businesses as those employing fewer than 50 people and having an annual turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding €10 million. In contrast, the Small Business Administration (SBA) in the United States defines small businesses based on industry-specific size standards, often measured by employee count or revenue (SBA, 2020). Small-scale businesses typically have between ten and fifty-nine employees, while medium-scale businesses usually employ fewer than fifty individuals but can have up to two hundred. Small scale enterprises are those whose total project cost, excluding cost of land and including working capital, is not more than five million naira (Ubulom & Markson, 2024). In the view of Ogonu and Okejim (2018), no matter the kind of definition given for small scale businesses, the criteria are usually: size of paid employees, size of capital invested, including money, excluding the value of land, sales turnover, usually annually, and employment of machines. It is believed that leveraging the vast potential of social media, small-scale businesses can create cost-effective campaigns, engage directly with their target audience, and significantly enhance profitability. It is against this background the researcher deemed it fit to carry out a study of this magnitude.

Generally speaking, profitability is the capacity of a certain investment to generate income from its use. The terms "profitability" and "ability" combine to form the phrase. There are several

ways to define "profit," but one common definition is the amount left over after subtracting all costs from sales. The capacity of a company to generate profit is reflected in the term "ability." The ability of the investment in question is also known as its earning power, earning capacity, or operational performance. A business's overarching goal is to provide at least a respectable return on investment while upholding a stable financial position. The nature of the business risk involved in the venture, among other things, determines the satisfactory return. When an enterprise is not profitable, invested money is depleted, and if this condition persists, the enterprise may eventually go out of business. A company's profitability reveals its financial strength and tends to increase its potential for making money (Ritu, 2016). These days, in both developed and emerging nations, profitability analysis has eclipsed other factors that are emphasized in the interpretation of financial accounts.

Profitability is defined as ability capacity to obtain profit from its economic activity, by using its resources and it represents an economic instrument which underlies all the company's decisions regarding activity management and relationships with the business partners; therefore, it acquires the status of an essential criterion used for assessing economic efficiency. (Cojocaru, Marinela 2016). Profitability, synthetically defined as the enterprise's capacity to obtain profit is considered a decisive instrument for the market economy mechanism, for shaping production according to consumers' needs. Profitability means obtaining an income from production sale that should exceed expenses. As a consequence, profitability mirrors the efficiency of an enterprise's whole economic activity.

Statement of the Problem

Social media has become indispensable for connecting, marketing, and growing personal and professional brands. Its ability to reach the global audience, foster engagement, and offer cost-effective advertising options makes it essential in today's digital age. Social media is a powerful tool to build brand loyalty, gather data, and drive conversions. For small businesses, social media marketing is not just an option but a necessity. It offers an affordable way to build brand awareness, engage with customers, drive traffic, and build lasting relationships. With careful planning and a clear strategy, social media can be leveraged to compete effectively, increase sales, and cultivate customer loyalty. Despite the widespread use of social media platforms, many small scale businesses struggle to implement strategies that maximize engagement and return on investment. It is also observed that small scale businesses seem to struggle with low profitability due to limited access to marketing resources and strategies that resonate with their target audience. The lack of effective digital marketing approaches, combined with limited budgets and expertise, results in poor customer reach and engagement. This, in turn, impacts their revenue streams, leading to reduced business sustainability and a higher risk of closure. The scenario describes above prompted the researcher to carry a study of this nature to determine the correlation between social media and small scale business profitability.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine Social Media Marketing as a correlate of Small-Scale Business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
2. Examine the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Area.

3. Find out the relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
2. What is the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
3. What is the relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
2. There is no significant relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
3. There is no significant relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Methods

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consisted of 3120 registered small and medium scale businesses in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State (Rivers State Business List, 2024). The sample size for this study is 399 small and medium scale business operators. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size. Two questionnaires that was self-structured by the researcher was used for data collection; the instrument was titled “Social Media Marketing” (SMM) and “Small-Scale Business Profitability (SSBP) in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area”. The instrument was validated by three experts, one in Measurement and Evaluation and others from Business Education department. The instruments were structured on a 4-point likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument that was used for the study, test re-test method was adopted, scores obtained were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.74 and 0.82 which revealed that the instruments are suitable for the study. Data collected was analyze using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer research questions and hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 28.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

		X(Twitter) Marketing	Small scale Business Profitability	Level of Correlation
X(Twitter) Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	-.055	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.277	
	N	399	399	Very Weak
Small scale business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	-.055	1	Negative
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.277		Relationship
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 1 for research question 1 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result on table above revealed that responses to questionnaire items 1-5 X(Twitter) Marketing and questionnaire items 1-6 for Small scale business profitability had correlation value of $-.055^{**}$. This implies that there is a very weak negative correlation between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the Relationship between TikTok Marketing and Small-scale Business Profitability in Obio- Akpor Local Government Area

		TikTok Marketing	Small-scale Business Profitability	Level of Correlation
TikTok Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.033	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.517	
	N	399	399	Very weak
Small-scale Business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.033	1	Positive
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.517		Relationship
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 2 for research question 2 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result on table above revealed that responses to questionnaire items 6-10 TikTok marketing and questionnaire items 1-6 for small-scale business profitability had correlation value of .033. This implies that there is a very weak positive

correlation between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the Relationship Between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

		Pinterest Marketing	Small-Scale Business Profitability	Level of Correlation
Pinterest Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.049	Moderate Positive Relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.329	
	N	399	399	
Small-Scale Business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.049	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.329		
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 3 for research question 3 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result on table above revealed that responses to questionnaire items 11-15 Pinterest marketing and questionnaire items 1-6 for small-scale business profitability had correlation value of .049. This implies that there is a weak positive correlation between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the Relationship Between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

		X (Twitter) Marketing	Small-Scale Business Profitability	Remark
X (Twitter) Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	-.055	Accepted
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.277	
	N	399	399	
Small-Scale Business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	-.055	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.277		
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 4 for hypothesis 1 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result revealed that since the p-value of .227 is higher than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null which states that there is no significant relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area is accepted. This implies that the correlation is not statistically significant.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 5: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

		TikTok Marketing	Small-Scale Business Profitability	Remark
TikTok Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.033	Accepted
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.517	
	N	399	399	
Small-Scale Business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.033	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.517		
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 5 for hypothesis 2 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result revealed that since the p-value of .517 is higher than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null which states that there is no significant relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area is accepted. This implies that the correlation is not statistically significant.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 6: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the Relationship Between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio- Akpor Local Government Area.

		Pinterest Marketing	Small-Scale Business Profitability	Remark
Pinterest Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.049	Accepted
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.329	
	N	399	399	
Small-Scale Business Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.049	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.329		
	N	399	399	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's SPSS Data output (2025)

Table 6 for hypothesis 3 showed the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on the relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The result revealed that since the p-value of .329 is higher than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null which states that there is no significant relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area is accepted. This implies that the correlation is not statistically significant.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher presented the discussion of findings as follows:

Relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

The findings obtained on research question 1 on Table 1 indicated that there is a very weak negative correlation between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. These findings are in agreement with the view Alond Solution (2023) who stated that Twitter is an effective way to increase visibility and get your brand in front of more people. By tweeting regularly and using relevant hashtags, SMBs can reach new audiences, get retweeted, and gain more followers. Twitter is a great platform to engage with your audience, respond to their inquiries, and address their concerns. You can also use Twitter to listen to what people are saying about your brand, industry, or competitors. Alond Solution further buttressed that twitter is a great platform to engage with your audience, respond to their inquiries, and address their concerns. You can also use Twitter to listen to what people are saying about your brand, industry, or competitors. The researcher is of the view that Twitter can help SMBs connect with influencers, thought leaders, and others in their industry. By engaging with them on Twitter, SMBs can build relationships and potentially collaborate on future projects. The corresponding hypothesis 1 revealed that there is no significant relationship between X (Twitter) marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpr Local Government Area.

Relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

The findings obtained on research question 2 on Table 2 indicated that there is a very weak positive correlation between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. These findings are in agreement with the view of Derek (2021) who stated that TikTok is a platform that give brand huge opportunity to connect with audiences in a real and authentic way. Unlike other social networking channel, TikTok is a playground for employees to be themselves and build audiences for their companies just by being themselves. A great TikTok strategy maybe for be for brands to just let employees do their thing. In the same manner, Arcand (2021) stated that TikTok is a popular social networking platform that allows users to make and share short-forms videos, it is not just for individual looking for funny and entertaining content. It is an amazing opportunity for employers to step up their employer branding efforts and engage with job seekers in a new exciting way. The researcher is of the view that with TikTok though, you can reach a new audience every single day. Depending on factors like hashtags, videos content and sound you use, your videos will reach the audience most likely to interact with them, due to TikTok insanely accurate algorithm. The corresponding hypothesis 2 revealed that there is no significant relationship between TikTok marketing and small-scale business profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Relationship Between Pinterest Marketing and Small-scale Business Profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Area

The findings obtained on research question 3 on Table 3 indicated that there is a very weak positive correlation between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business Profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Area. These findings are in agreement with the view of Kim, Seely and Jung, (2017) stated that it is an online information service that acts as a virtual pin board. The special feature of Pinterest is that it is not focused on self-portrayal like other social media, but rather puts the user's own passion for collecting visual content in the foreground. This differentiates it from other conventional social media such as Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. in the same direction, Mull, Pleasant and Lee, (2023) stated that Pinterest is one of the most popular social media 2.0 and currently ranks sixth among the most popular social networking sites. The researcher explained that Pinterest is composed of the English terms "pin" and "interest," which in the figurative sense means as much as to pin one's interests. The idea is to transfer and expand the concept of a pin board from the physical world into the virtual one. On Pinterest, relevant information can be noted and sorted on pin boards in the form of pins. Pinboards can be created and named as desired. The marked content is referred to as pins in the form of pictures or thumbnails and contains various other information such as links, comments or descriptions. Users can also search for images and topics on Pinterest and memorize relevant content found on a virtual pin board. The corresponding hypothesis 3 revealed that there is no significant relationship between Pinterest marketing and small-scale business Profitability in Obio-Akpor Local Area.

Conclusion

Based on the results and findings of this research work, the researcher concluded that there is a very weak negative correlation between X (Twitter) and small-scale business profitability, while a very weak positive correlation between TikTok, Pinterest and Small-Scale Business profitability. Also, social media platforms play a significant role in enhancing the visibility,

customer engagement, and revenue generation of small-scale businesses. Businesses that actively utilize social media marketing strategies tend to experience increased brand awareness, customer loyalty, and overall financial growth.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Business owners should use trending hashtags related to the business niche to increase visibility.
2. Create entertaining and engaging short videos on TikTok showcasing products, services, and behind-the-scenes business activities.
3. Engage with other Pinterest users by repinning and commenting on relevant content.
4. Individuals should create a business page with detailed information, including contact details and services.

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