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Abstract

This research is motivated by the large number of developments in digital start-ups and large digital-based companies that are starting to understand customers. This research aims to analyze Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) and examine what instruments are involved in digital-based start-up companies to finally develop a process model for CJM in digital-based start-up businesses. This study uses the qualitative case study method on digital-based start-up companies in Magelang and Yogyakarta, Indonesia by conducting in-depth interviews with 5 start-up owners/CEOs. The results of this research show that CJM has three stages that customers will go through and the company will respond to. In the form of prepurchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages, all stages simultaneously relate to creating a unique experience. For practical implication, this model can be maximized in start-up businesses to acquire loyal customers.

Keywords: Customer Journey; Start-up business; Pre-purchase; Purchasing; Post-purchase

Introduction

The definition of startup is often associated with everything related to technology, the web, the internet, and anything related to this domain (Ayu, 2017). Yudhanto (2019) explained that a startup is a new business model that maximizes technological facilities and is supported by careful planning, individual idealism, and also a unique business theme for a business. In Indonesia, the growth of Start-up businesses continuously increases yearly. In 2018 there were 992 start-up companies in the country, then in 2019, there was a fantastic increase in number, namely to 2,074 (Databooks.com; OJK; Startuprangking.com).

The emergence of this company type is related to the rapid advances in technology which are changing people's lifestyles to become completely digital. The rapid transformation of digital technology and changes in the role of the internet has an impact on changes in customer behavior. This situation encourages customers and markets to become increasingly connected and other digital online channels have become very diverse. Hence, a deep understanding of customers is the main key to business continuity and the key to developing the company.

Currently, Large companies attach great importance to understanding customer experience, several large companies such as Amazon, KPMG, and Google, now have chief customer experience officers, customer experience vice presidents, or customer experience managers who are responsible for creating and managing customer experiences (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) to assist customer journey from pre-purchase to post-purchase experience. This shows that the role of the Customer Journey is very important for a start-up founder or CEO to learn to develop and introduce their business widely. However, previous studies focus on their in-depth understanding of well-established and global companies that have unlimited resources to develop their customer journeys (Tueanrat et al., 2021; Stickdorn et al., 2018; Homburg et al., 2017), where the approaches most likely will be different in small, new, and limited resources-companies.

The customer journey map (CJM) is a tool for understanding the customer journey. Micheaux & Bosio (2019) explain that a customer journey map is a diagram that depicts the steps a customer engages with a company, in the form of a product, online experience, retail experience, or service, or any combination. CJM lists all possible company touchpoints that a customer may encounter during the service exchange process. By clearly understanding specific touchpoints, managers can use tactics to drive service innovation for customers.

This research refers to research by Micheaux & Bosio (2019) which examined the development of customer journey mapping as a new way to teach data-based marketing as a service. This research reveals experiential learning innovation is based on the optimization of CJM, which includes theoretical marketing concepts, modern database architecture, and practical digital market knowledge. Researchers stated as a visualization of an individual's interactions with a product, service, or brand, customer journey mapping helps explain how an interaction occurs in one moment and how it occurs and influences all other moments. To enhance previous literature, this research takes a "data as a service" perspective on the customer journey to result more innovative and creative approach to data-driven marketing, which helps increase customer attention and motivation.

Even though the research about customer journey is well-developed in marketing and management fields, the business industry rapidly shifted due to some crises worldwide that changed all the ways of running the business. Recently, our world has just recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic, in the meantime, wars and famine in some parts of the world affect business directly and indirectly (Bachtiar et al., 2023; Kaukab & Bachtiar, 2022; Nugroho et al., 2022). In terms of customer analysis, current crises also impact the adjustment of customer analysis from the transformation to customer digital analysis, customer behavior, customer preference, and customers' emotions (Alhubaishy & Aljuhani, 2021; Ghadban & Fayad, 2023; Rehman et al., 2023; Salamat & Rudbaneh, 2021). To answer those dynamics and change, this study argues that a higher novelty and development can be found in learning the customer journey in Start-up businesses due to their rapid characteristics and fast-changing environment which lead to the shifting in the customer journey. This research provides answers to the following research questions:

- (1) What type of CJM is suitable for digital-based start-up businesses?
- (2) Which instruments should complement the CJM for digital-based start-up businesses?

Literature Review

Customer Journey

This term addresses the processual and experiential aspects of the service process as seen from the customer's perspective. It is described as repeated interactions between service providers and customers (Følstad & Kvale, 2018). De Keyser et al (2015) found that leading

service providers often use a customer journey approach in service management and design. Følstad & Kvale (2018) also explain in their research that the customer journey approach is also used for the management and design of public sector services and service innovation in customer markets. In this approach, customer behavior and experiences are usually analyzed according to a predefined onboarding process, broken down into steps such as awareness, familiarity, consideration, purchase, and loyalty or pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), often supported by customer relationship management (CRM) systems or web analytics (Anderl et al., 2016).

Customer Journey Map (CJM)

The Customer Journey Map (CJM) is a visual depiction of the sequence of events in which a customer interacts with a service organization during the purchasing process (Rosenbaum et al., 2017). The customer journey perspective is closely related to the use of visualization, or what is often called a customer journey map. A customer journey is a sequence of a customer's direct and indirect contacts with a product, service, or brand (Tueanrat et al., 2021), each of which is a positive, negative, or neutral experience. A customer journey map is structured as a sequence of phases of the customer experience in each of the pre-service, service, and post-service periods influenced by past experiences and by one or more touch points during each phase, which influence future experiences (Micheaux & Bosio, 2019). Customer journeys are generally developed from personas (Stickdorn et al., 2018). A customer journey is a sequence of a customer's direct and indirect contacts with a product, service, or brand (Tueanrat et al., 2021), each of which is a positive, negative, or neutral experience. Micheaux & Bosio's (2019) research explains that the value of customer experience at each touch point influences the perceived quality of the relationship which in turn influences the commitment of the touch point which can occur in online and offline channels. Customer journey maps can include various types of information from key agents, general descriptions of touch points, storyboards, and graphic depictions of emotional journeys.

Research Method

Research design

This study utilizes the qualitative approach. Sukmadinata (2014) stated that qualitative descriptive research is aimed at describing and illustrating existing phenomena, both natural and human-engineered, which pays more attention to the characteristics, quality, and interrelationships between activities. In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative research method in the form of research with a case study method or approach. This research focuses intensively on one particular object and studies it as a case. Case study data can be obtained from all parties concerned, in other words, this study was collected from various sources (Fitrah & Luthfiah, 2017).

In qualitative research, the research subject has a very strategic role because the research subject is the data about the variables that the researcher observes (Arikunto, 2016). In this research, the main subject is the founder or owner of a digital-based start-up business which is directly related to the management of digital-based start-up businesses or start-ups. We contacted 8 founders in Magelang and Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Among them, 5 founders were agreed to be our informants. The list of informants in this research can be seen in Table 1.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are an important step in research because the data collected will be used as material for analysis in research. Data collection techniques include:

a. Semi-Structured Interview

According to Sugiyono (2018), semi-structured interviews are a method for finding problems more openly, where the party being interviewed is asked for their opinions and ideas. The basic consideration for choosing semi-structured interviews is that the implementation is freer compared to structured interviews so that there will be familiarity between the researcher and the existing respondents and ultimately it will make it easier for the researcher to collect data.

b. Documentation

The use of documentation techniques can increase the researcher's understanding of the symptoms of the problem being studied because documentation studies aim to reveal events, objects, and actions (Rukajat, 2018). Documentation techniques are used to obtain data in the form of documents or archives. This method is implemented to complement data from interviews or observations. However, in documentation studies, it is possible to find differences or contradictions between the results of interviews and observations and the results contained in the documents.

Table 1. List of Informants

No	Informant	Position
1	Putra (Codeinaja.net)	Founder / CEO
2	Dyan Zulfany (Hostaja.com)	Founder / CEO
3	Dean Bunayya (Belajarsiber.com)	Founder / CEO
4	Istofani Api Diany (Fitinline.com)	Founder / CEO
5	Rahmadhani Novianjaya (Linkaku.com)	Founder / CEO

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this research uses data analysis developed by (Miles et al., 1994), stating that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continue continuously until completion so that the data is saturated. The data analysis process according to the Miles and Huberman model includes three activities, namely:

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, paying attention to, abstracting, and transforming rough data from the field. Carrying out data reduction will provide a clearer picture, making it easier for researchers to collect further data and search for it if necessary. Data reduction can be done with the help of a computer by assigning codes to certain aspects (Sugiyono, 2019).

b. Data Display

After the data has been successfully reduced, the next step is to display the data. Display of data in qualitative research can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts, and the like. The display of data is intended to find meaningful patterns and provide the possibility of drawing conclusions and providing action. The data display that is often used in qualitative research is in narrative form.

c. Drawing conclusions

Rijali (2018) explained that researchers carry out conclusion-drawing activities continuously while in the field. From the beginning of data collection, qualitative researchers begin to look for the meaning of things, noting regular patterns (in theoretical notes), explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions.

Data Triangulation

The technique for checking the validity of the data used in this research is the triangulation technique. Moleong (2019) explains that triangulation is a data validity technique that utilizes something else. Apart from that, the data is for checking purposes or as a comparison against other data. Helaluddin & Wijaya (2019) divides triangulation techniques into three ways, namely source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation. This research uses the technique of checking the validity of triangulation data with sources and methods. Triangulation technique with sources, researchers compare the results of interviews obtained from each research informant as a comparison to check the veracity of the information obtained. The triangulation technique uses a method, namely by checking research results using different data collection techniques, namely interviews, observation, and documentation so that the degree of confidence in the data can be valid.

Results

Pre-Purchase Stage

Lemon & Verhoef's research (2016) explains pre-purchase as behavior such as recognizing needs, searching, and considering all aspects that customers will look for. Micheaux & Bosio's (2019) research shows that various features from website ease of use, website appearance, and information quality create the customer experience. As someone who owns a product, they must think about the entire customer experience from initial needs, and goals, to unexpected recognition. Regarding this matter, the resource persons have their way of introducing their business brand.

"The way I introduce the brand to customers who don't know yet is through holding events that are held by myself and related to my business."

(Female, Web Fashion, 28 Years)

"I often create content such as 'product sold out' so that it can attract curious customers and potential customers who want to know more."

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

"By focusing on Facebook communities that need hosting, then hosting forums in Yogyakarta-Jateng and increasing interaction with customers."

(Male, Website Hosting, 24 Years)

"We are more focused on improving the quality of the services we have, then we use search engineering to make it easy for customers who don't know us to find us."

(Male, Design Buying and Selling Website, 22 years)

The data gained from the interview stated that the informants defined the pre-purchase stage as "grabbing the whole market" by creating creative gimmicks, introducing the product/service online and in person, and improving their quality to attract new customers. This finding is in line with Rosenbaum et al., (2017) who explained in their research that the pre-purchase process is the stage a customer experiences before the actual service in the customer journey. Touchpoints or touch points are media that contain direct information and experiences

that allow the company brand to be included in the initial considerations of customers starting their journey. The interviewee explained that introducing their brand through several touch points started with creating an event where customers would see the company brand directly, a media forum where customers would see and discuss it online so that they could understand it virtually so that it could be used as a reference or choice for the brand and introduction to quality development that can be felt directly by customers that have used the company's products or services. From the interviews, we can highlight some significant strategies in this stage, namely discounts, in-person events, social media, and quality of the product/service.

According to research by Court et al., (2009), customers will consider a limited number of brands, based on the customer's previous experience and brand exposure during initial touch points. Customers will actively search, collect different information, and evaluate different information. Furthermore, based on customer needs and desires, companies must be able to respond so that new customers can buy their products. Following are the comments from the source.

"It's always the customer's perspective, so when creating a company I often make discounts because usually that's one way to get them interested in the products I offer. "Like if you buy hosting on that day, you can get 1 month of website service for free."

(Male, Website Hosting, 24 Years)

"Advertise via social media with counter-content about cyber security and provide more value at affordable prices and service experiences that are new or not available to competitors."

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

"We already have customers and suppliers, so we just have to build relationships. We can also customize the company according to their needs. We always focus on providing quality to customers so that they are interested in collaborating or buying our services."

(Male, Custom Website Applications and Websites, 24 Years)

"We introduce products through e-commerce marketing and introduce products via the website."

(Female, Fashion Website, 28 Years)

Truong (2021) explains that the most important contact point during the pre-purchase stage is advertising, various advertising channels can be the main contact point in pre-purchase which can determine customer attitudes and evaluations of products or services. Advertisements can create emotions according to the theme of the advertisement being carried out, such as surprising, irrelevant impressed, interesting, or triggered. At the same time, customer moods, emotions, and feelings also influence the evaluation of the brand product or service offered. For this reason, effective marketers must interact and recommend products or services from the customer's perspective, about how they view the brand, not as a company to promote the product (Crosier & Handford, 2015). Hence, the findings of this part were supported by the above studies.

Based on the results of field interviews by comparing the literature, the pre-purchase stage in the literature is in line with the interview results. The pre-purchase stage is the first step in the customer's journey to get to know the product, from the touch point of social media advertising, offline events, and brand quality development, so that the initial customer contact point can occur. So customers will make their decisions by exploring the company's website and carrying out evaluation steps before the actual purchase.

Purchase Stage

This purchasing stage is the stage where customers decide to buy a product/service from the company after they have gathered information from several sources, evaluated it, and decided where to buy and what the customer should buy (Qazzafi, 2019). This stage includes behaviors such as selection, ordering, and payment. In the process of making a purchase, sometimes customers still feel unsure about the product/service they are going to purchase (Crosier & Handford, 2015). In Naliniben Chauhan's (2013) research, customers will make purchases after they are finished with the questions they have. For this reason, in the purchasing stage, companies need to facilitate customers to act based on their purchasing intentions. Companies can use various techniques to achieve this, The following are responses from interviews conducted in the field.

"We provide 24-hour live chat where you can ask directly if there are problems in the transaction process or questions about the product."

(Male, Website Hosting, 24 Years)

"With the ease of using the website to register and announcements via Instagram, you can always ask"

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

"Direct WA is ready to receive various customer questions, and we also provide email, Facebook chat, and forums on the website."

(Female, Fashion Website, 28 Years)

Ease of customer interaction is one of the determining factors in customer purchasing decisions because interaction can raise the customer's perspective and customer psychology in making purchasing decisions (Peña-García et al., 2020). The interview results explain the use of live chat, direct WA, and the forum on the company website is the company's way of providing facilities for customers to ask about products before making a purchase. The findings of this research encourage previous research by Naliniben Chauhan (2013) that stated the speed of a company's response is very important for customers to be more confident that the products/services they buy are by their decisions. The company's response speed is seen from the speed of replying to messages, the speed of transactions, and the speed of customers getting the products they want. Because the internal psychological process related to purchasing decisions is integration, once integration is achieved the company can influence purchasing decisions easily. The following are the results of field interviews with sources regarding the speed with which customers get the products/services they want.

"It's very fast, once they are interested in the products we sell we will immediately carry out packaging, so customers don't need to wait or pre-order first"

(Female, Fashion Website, 28 Years)

"Because we provide 24/7 service to customers, so when a customer is interested or has made a payment transaction, just 5 minutes after the transaction the customer can get the product"

(Male, Website Hosting, 24 Years)

"It's very fast because we are fully online. When a customer has made a transaction and filled out the class form, they will automatically enter the cyber class."

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

"Customer needs are the benchmark for the speed at which a product can be completed, because we provide custom website and application creation services that require discussion between the team and the customer so that the system creation runs smoothly and according to expectations."

(Male, Custom Web Applications and Websites, 24 Years)

Interaction during the product/service purchasing process is a determinant of customer satisfaction and psychology in making decisions because customers need to evaluate the results of the comparisons they make to produce decisions that will not disappoint (Rybackowska et al., 2020). This study discovers that the purchasing stage is the stage where the company must provide customer facilities after they have evaluated the brand, the facilities provided by the company include online chat interactions, website chat forums, and direct WA which can be done anytime and anywhere. Apart from that, the company also determines the speed at which customers get their products to create customer trust in the brand. Comparing the literature and the results of interviews in the field, the purchase stage in the literature is in line with the results of interviews in the field.

Post-Purchase Stage

The customer decision-making process does not end with the customer purchasing a product/service. But after customers buy the product, they will assess the product's performance. This stage involves behaviors such as use and consumption, post-purchase engagement, and service requests. In brief, this stage consists of aspects of the customer's experience after purchase that are truly connected in some way with the brand or product/service itself (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). This stage focuses on the consumption experience, service recovery, and the decision to return the product or look for variations as well as other behaviors such as providing product/service complaints for errors made to the company (Miquel-Romero et al., 2020). Miquel (2020) also explains in his research that companies must be able to identify key aspects in each stage, companies must also facilitate customers to interact after the purchasing process occurs. Following are the interviewees' comments regarding how they interact with customers post-purchase:

"We provide complaint tickets that are obtained after purchasing the product, and also 24-hour chat that can be accessed anywhere, anytime on our official website."

(Male, Design Buying and Selling Website, 22 years)

"Because the products we offer are custom websites and applications, all interactions are direct via WA during the post-purchase process."

(Male, Custom Website Applications and Web, 24 Years)

"We create interactions through Telegram groups so that all mentor members can interact in real-time"

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

Post-purchase communication with customers will increase satisfaction in the minds of customers with the company, conversely, if the company does not communicate and the product does not meet customer expectations, the customer will feel disappointed and will not renew

(Rosenbaum et al., 2017). Based on field interviews, the resource person interacted with customers through complaint tickets, direct WA, and Telegram groups so that the company's interaction with customers continued post-purchase. Establishing company communication with customers can trigger customer loyalty through repurchase and further engagement, conversely, if communication is not well established, customers will start a new process, entering the prepurchase stage and considering other alternatives (Mishra, 2018). For this reason, companies must try to identify certain touch points that can cause customers to become loyal and make repeat purchases or stop their work journey. Following are the comments from the source:

"We measure through customer loyalty with repeat purchases and membership registration. Because we will provide discounts for customers who have registered for membership."

(Female, Fashion Website, 28 Years)

"Because the system is a subscription when customers renew, we will know that they are interested in our product. Then we compare it with new buyers. If they subscribe, it means they are interested in the product we offer."

(Male, Website Hosting, 24 Years)

"By looking at how quickly customers are enthusiastic about joining cyber classes, it is proven that within 5 minutes when the class opens it is usually sold out"

(Male, Cyber Security Learning Website, 24 Years)

Lemon & Verhoef's (2016) research states that interacting with customers can increase the retention of customer interest in products and companies can identify elements and evaluate touch points of the customer journey. By engaging with customers companies should try to identify specific trigger points that cause customers to continue or stop their work journey. Based on the results of field interviews, sources stated that customer interest can be seen through repeat purchases or membership registration, repeat purchases using a subscription system, and customer enthusiasm for the company's products or services.

From the results of interviews in the field and compared with the literature, the post-purchase stage is the stage where customers assess customer satisfaction or disappointment with the product/service that has been purchased. Customers will carry out some alternative evaluations that lead to disappointment with the product or satisfaction in using the product. The steps taken by the company are by the literature where facilitating customers post-purchase is the next step in the customer journey. Companies must look at customer touch points and respond to customer complaints so that customers feel satisfied with the products/services they have purchased. The company's interactions with customers are made by company sources using complaint tickets, Direct WA, and Telegram groups so that customers can directly communicate with the company regarding the products they have purchased.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis carried out by the researcher to answer the objectives outlined in the introduction, the researcher then concluded the development of CJM or customer journey mapping in start-up-based companies in Magelang and Yogyakarta, which obtained the following results. In the Customer Journey Mapping stage, there are three main stages for the company to carry out customer touch points for the products/services it has as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 above explains the circular stages of the CJM process in start-up businesses. **The first stage** that customers go through is the pre-purchase stage, the first step in the

customer's journey to get to know the product, from the touch point of social media advertising, offline events, and brand quality development that has been carried out by the company so that the initial customer touch point can occur. So customers will make their decisions by exploring the company's website and carrying out evaluation steps before the actual purchase. In the process of customers exploring the company's website, companies need to develop a user interface so that the customer's touch point to the next stage occurs. **The second** or next stage is where the customer is interested in the product, the purchase stage is the stage where the company provides customer facilities after they have evaluated the brand, the facilities provided by the company start from online chat interactions, website chat forums, and direct WA which can be done at any time and anywhere. Apart from that, the speed at which customers get their products is also carried out by startup companies to create customer trust in the brand. In the purchasing process, companies need to provide ethnic customer satisfaction or experience so that purchasing touchpoints can occur. **The third stage**, the stage after the purchase is made by the customer, the post-purchase stage or post-purchase stage, companies need to facilitate post-purchase customers for the customer journey. Companies must look at customer touch points and respond to customer complaints so that customers feel satisfied with the products/services they have purchased. Customer interactions with the company are made by resource persons using complaint tickets, Direct WA, and Telegram groups so that customers can directly communicate with the company regarding the products they have purchased. The explanation of each stage above at the same time answers RQ 1: What type of CJM is suitable for digital-based start-up businesses?

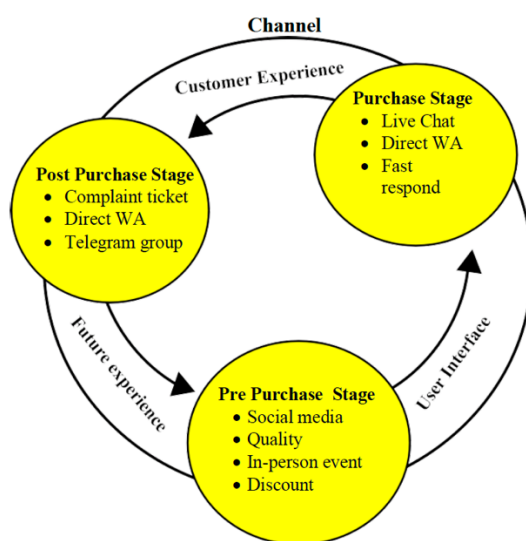


Figure 1. CJM Process in Startup Businesses

Next, the first stage explains that the user interface can assess customer satisfaction when using the company's website, so an interactive and informative website is needed so that customers know the information contained on the website with a simple appearance. Unfortunately, in developing the user interface, the resource person has not developed an interactive website, they are still focused on an informative website because they are more concerned with the information that will be conveyed to customers. Furthermore, the second stage implies Customer experience is formed in customer perceptions during direct or indirect interactions which have an impact on whether the customer is comfortable or not. To ensure customer comfort, the resource persons have made 24/7 availability for customers, comfortable learning, and establishing good relationships with customers to create loyal customers and have an impact on repeat purchases of the company's products/services. Finally, the third stage declares that after the post-purchase is complete, the customer will experience a future experience that includes customer satisfaction after completing the product purchase journey. The

resource person responded to this feedback by requiring feedback, providing promotions so they could provide feedback, and asking customers directly via direct WA. Customer feedback is very necessary for companies to evaluate their products/services. Feedback is also one way for companies to pay attention to customers so that they can buy products/services in the future. These 3 elements, namely user interface, customer experience, and future experience, answer RQ 2: Which instruments should complement the CJM for digital-based start-up businesses?

The last one is the marketing channel that connects CJM in the customer journey process. Unfortunately, social media marketing channels have not been used optimally by the resource person, due to limited time and energy, the resource person must focus on developing a website and improving the quality of products/services. One of the speakers used social media marketing effectively to introduce cyber learning brands and posters to those who don't know about the products/services they have. So literature and field interviews are not appropriate because the focus of the interviewee is on improving the website or product quality which comes first.

Finally, customer journey mapping in start-up companies is very necessary for companies to determine and analyze customer touch points or contact points in purchasing company products/services. Companies must be able to develop projected customer journey mapping for the company so they can analyze customer behavior from their customer journey. Future researchers can extend the research time and develop greeting writing as much as possible because each of these allows this research to be developed.

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