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ICANN69 | Prep Week – Registrant Program Update  
Monday, October 05, 2020 – 18:30 to 19:30 CEST

JUSTIN HO:

Hello and welcome to the Registrant Program Update. My name is Justin Ho. Interpretation for this session will include all six UN languages and will be conducted using both Zoom and the remote simultaneous interpretation platform operated by Congress Rental Network.

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In the case of disruption during the session, our Technical Support team will unmute all participants. With that, I will hand the floor over to Brian Gutterman.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Thank you so much, Justin. Thanks to our Technical Meeting team and to all the interpreters as well. Guten abend for those in Germany, our host country. Welcome. Good afternoon, good evening, and good morning. Thank you for joining the final session of Day 1 of ICANN69 Prep Week.

You've joined the Registrant Program Update session. We have one hour. So we certainly have a busy agenda. Today we'll be telling you about the Registrant Program, if you don't know about it already. You'll be hearing from some of my outstanding colleagues from across the organization about some of the work they do with domain name holders with registrants. I will be talking about some of our recently published educational materials and we'll be looking ahead to some of our upcoming work that we will be publishing and undertaking with ICANN Org and together with the community in support of registrants.

We encourage you to save your questions, ideas, and feedback to the end. But if you have a point of clarification, you can certainly raise that in the beginning of the meeting here and while we present the materials. But we want to save time for feedback. We will save time for feedback and Q&A at the end. So save your questions, write them down and we will address them.

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What’s important to state here again is that we really want to hear from you. We haven’t had an update session from the Registrant Program facing the community in a while so we want to get your feedback and use your ideas to carry the Registrant Program work forward. Any questions at the top? Justin? No. Okay.

A bit about the Registrant Program. Throughout all of our work, we endeavor to serve the global public interest, registrants, and end users of the Internet by ensuring a secure and stable DNS, while promoting trust, choice, and competition in the industry. The organization has always of course recognized registrants as being essential to a robust DNS and marketplace, but more can be done always of course to improve their experience when interacting with the organization and participating in the ecosystem.

Our goals—I’ll go through these quickly, again, because many of you may have already seen this. But the primary goal is to educate registrants about their rights and responsibilities, the domain name ecosystem and how to navigate it, and the ICANN policies that impact them directly. We do this in a variety of ways. Much of the content can be found on our homepage for registrants, [icann.org/registrants](https://icann.org/registrants). We do our education through blogs, articles, FAQs, infographics, through presentations and webinars. We have our outstanding colleagues in GSE, OCTO Technical Engagement, and others who are doing capacity building in the field, so to speak, sometimes with registrants in addition to other stakeholders.

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Second goal is to identify and raise awareness about issues and challenges that registrants face. That work is only successful if we work with the community—with you, with the stakeholders that care about this stuff. We do our small part, we think, by publishing some data from the Org, from our touch points with registrants to inform community dialogue, and through our engagement activities. And that’s just not the registrant program, that’s colleagues across the organization who engage and collaborate with relevant ICANN community groups about registrant issues and challenges. So we’ve done a variety of projects directly, bilaterally with different community groups and we have some ideas for things coming up. But again, if you’re representing an SO or an AC that would like to collaborate with us in any way or have ideas, please let us know and contact me directly.

The third and probably the least priority work but still important, we also ensure that registrant perspectives are reflected in ICANN’s ongoing work, services, and reviews.

A little bit about our audience and what I want to emphasize here is that what I said earlier also is that our work is collaborative and cross-functional. It’s more than just our program. The program is meant to be at the middle of things and facilitate the work done by others, but the whole organization of course supports registrants and our work is collaborative.

But from a communication’s perspective our primary audience are everyday registrants. We typically describe these registrants as having

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one or two domain names max, and these aren't people that are coming to ICANN meetings. They're probably not people that are here today with us at this session. They have little to no knowledge of the DNS ecosystem, of ICANN, of ICANN policies that are impacting them. So we want to reach them through our blogs, through our social media, and through the community.

Secondary audience which we will speak to a little bit more later when our OCTO Technical Engagement colleague speaks, but we do speak to larger portfolio registrants and companies with domain names and carry out education and capacity building mainly around security, preventing phishing and malware, and other fraudulent attacks. Again, you'll hear more about that later.

And then you are our audience. We want to speak to you and we want to hear from you. I listed some of the groups here but that's not an exhaustive list. Again, please write down your ideas, we'll take them at the end, and we look forward to working with you to facilitate discussions about registrant issues and challenges to ultimately help them.

Now, a bit about some of our recently published educational materials that have come out since we last had an engagement session with the community. To start, I want to invite my colleague, Betsy Andrews, from the GSE from the ICANN Learn team. Betsy?

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BETSY ANDREWS:

Hi. Thanks, Brian. My name is Betsy and I work for Public Responsibility Support under the GSE, the Global Stakeholder Engagement arm of the ICANN organization. One of my several responsibilities is to manage our online learning platform. So you can see that it's free and you can access it at the URL provided here, [learn.icann.org](https://learn.icann.org).

We really encourage you as a part of your capacity building goals to check out ICANN Learn. There are several different streams of training available to you. So there's skill building that can help with participation in the policy-making exercises. Then we have some technical courses as well as some policy-related courses.

Specifically, for you, we have the Registrant Basics: Essentials for Domain Name Holders course. We also have a Domain Name System Fundamentals course. Both of which would be appealing to this audience. We launched the Registrant Basics course in March and it has been very successful and we've received a lot of good feedback, in addition to some constructive feedback. So we welcome you to take that course and let us know what you think of it.

When you get on to ICANN Learn, you can set your dashboard to your preferred language. So you scroll down to the bottom and there's an icon of a globe. You click on the globe and there are 30 different choices. While ICANN offers training in the six different UN languages, much like this ICANN meeting session where you can have translation in the six UN languages, we offer courses in those languages. But in

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terms of the interface for ICANN Learn, you can choose up to 30 different languages. So there's sure to be one that will suit you.

The Registrant Basics course—some of the highlights from that course are listed here. It really is for the broad end-user community and it covers the registrant rights and responsibilities, which plays into that first goal that Brian was articulating, as well as the important role that registrants play in the DNS, best practices in domain name management and the ICANN policies that impact registrants. So it's a really good home base to visit to get your knowledgebase built so that you can then participate in this community. As ever, if you have any questions about online learning or this course in particular, feel free to reach out to me and my team at ICANN Learn at [icann.org](https://icann.org). Thanks a lot, Brian.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Thank you so much, Betsy. This is a course that came out in April or May. It actually stemmed from the work we were doing with ALAC directly. Some of the ALAC members thought that this was a good idea. We know they really enjoy and use ICANN Learn a lot as a sort of complementary educational tool with learning checkmarks, which is different content from what we have on static webpages with articles and such. So we really encourage people to take the course and to give us feedback on the course. We'd love for you to share this with your colleagues in the community and outside of the community. So, please do so.

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Again, thank you, Betsy. This is an example of what I was speaking about earlier that our work is truly collaborative. Betsy is on the Public Responsibility team of the GSE on this ICANN Learn stuff. Across the organization, we have our Policy team. Some of your focal points, if you're a community member that you interact with from your SO/AC, they're there in the field with you facilitating discussions about registrant issues. We have our GSE and OCTO Technical Engagement team doing capacity building work, and we're going to hear from them next. Samaneh, please take the floor.

SAMANEH TAJALIZADEHKHOOB: Hi, everybody. Thank you, Brian. Hi, everybody. I'm Samaneh Tajalizadehkhoob. I'm joining you today from OCTO as a Lead Security Specialist. So one of the things that Brian already pointed out is the engagement part, of which OCTO is also active in. We provide technical engagement to registrants by providing education in terms of presentation, conferences, trainings, publishing articles, and trying to push and encourage industry best practices. Sometimes the technical engagement colleagues in our team provide more targeted anti-abuse assistance at times when there are specific events of security incidents such as domain hijackings or spear phish campaigns aimed at particular companies or targets. Once they reach out to us for help, we always try to help them by engaging with registrars. Actually, our main goal is to facilitate communication and technical help when it's appropriate.



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We also always have a set of recommendations for managing domains which are also published in terms of a blog by our colleagues from OCTO. Here, I list some of the most essential items that we recommend to registrants of domains to adapt. First and most important is to make various selection of the registrar when you are planning to register a domain. Do a small research before and make yourself familiar with who are the well-known registrars in terms of security in the market that you are planning to register your domain. Once you're registering your domain, make sure that it's under your name and not under the name of your website owner or hosting provider or lawyer. And if you choose otherwise, then make sure it's an informed choice.

When it comes to security, we always recommend registrants to opt for registrars and hosting providers and DNS providers who will offer multi-factor authentication. Sometimes it comes as an add-on to the registration package, sometimes it's in the basic package but it is recommended to have it enabled where it's possible.

We also recommend for admin related purposes that registrants don't use personal e-mails, rather company or related business e-mails. Normally, instead of your name, we recommend to use more generic roles such as the example that you see on the slides, domain-admin@yourcompany.com. Next slide, please.

One important thing also when it comes to security is not using an e-mail address that is registered under your domain for your name server and other administrative roles. This is because if you lose

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control of your domain, then you also will lose control over your e-mail address and your name servers, which is not an ideal situation if you have everything stored there or if you want to take back the control.

There are also a certain statuses that are used or changed when you register a domain which are what's called Extensible Provisioning Protocols, EPP statuses. It's always recommended for the registrants to make sure that they understand them or otherwise they are aware of them so that they can look it up. Examples are what you see on the slide, our `clientTransferProhibited`, `clientDeleteProhibited`. There are several more that you can also find on ICANN resources online.

Other set of security provisioning protocols are extensions that are recommended when registering a domain. One of them is DNSSEC, Domain Name System Security Extension, which is an extension to Domain Name System to assure its data integrity and to assure that the communication is encrypted and the DNS configuration is not altered. There is the DMARC, which comes on top of security protocols that are therefore e-mail communication. DMARC, it stands for Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting, and Conformance. In simple words, it's a protocol that makes sure of a clear collaboration between the receiver and sender of an e-mail, provides authentication and makes sure that on the receiver side, the authenticated messages are rejected.

One last point that we do recommend to the registrars is that they make sure that your name server, that your domain is registered on a

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different name server than an Autonomous System Numbers or ASMs, so that if one of the two is the target of let's say, for instance, a distributed denial-of-service attack (DDoS), you still have a chance to be online and stay online with your domain name. The next slide, please.

I think from our group, they will come infographics online soon, which summarizes recommendations on best practices for domain name registrants. Stay tuned. This will come soon to your attention. Thank you, Brian.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Thank you so much, Samaneh. Her team has been super helpful not only their work in the field, but what they also do—and an example of the sort of collaboration that we do across the Org—is they act as subject matter experts for us when we develop our blogs and this one pager that we are previewing today that will be coming out soon. The idea there is to take a lot of technical and complicated information and boil it down to more easy to understand language. We also get this stuff translated to in the six UN languages to try and disseminate it and make it as accessible as possible to our everyday registrant audience.

So we encourage you to have a look at this blog that was referenced. You can access it on the registrant homepage, [icann.org/registrants](https://icann.org/registrants). It came out in May, identifying phishing scams, DNSSEC signing, and other tips to protect your domain name. Again, as mentioned, we preview it here, we have a one pager that we will be promoting

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primarily via social media. So keep a lookout for it and please share it with others who might find it useful. Again, I will say not simply inside the ICANN bubble but outside, to registrants that you know. Moving along, remember to please, if you have questions and ideas, put them in the Q&A and we will get to them at the end. So keep those questions in mind, write them down.

Moving along to get to the one of the goals that I stated earlier about raising awareness about issues and challenges impacting registrants, I wanted to mention here a reporting series that we've been doing for a couple of years now and our next iteration of this reporting series will come out in the next month or two with data from this year from March through August, a six month dataset. We will be previewing a bit of that data today. But just wanted to note this, all of the reports that have been published thus far over the last couple of years, with six month datasets can be accessed again on the ICANN Org registrant homepage. You can go there and look at previous data that has been published from our touch points with registrants across the organization. I will say and I always like to mention that it is our awesome Global Support team and our Contractual Compliance team that are actually on the front lines and have the most direct interactions with registrants. With that being said, I would like to pass the microphone to Mr. Lamar Faulkner from GSC. Lamar?

LAMAR FAULKNER:

Thanks, Brian. Good day, everyone. As Brian stated, my name is Lamar Faulkner and I'm the director of ICANN Global Support. I just want to

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say that the following slides that we'll be reviewing and looking at, they really contain really content that's been observed and notated by Global Support within the timeframe that Brian previously mentioned, March 2020 through August 2020.

Having actually looked at some previous reports and presentations over the last few years, the landscape, if you will, of the registrant community and how they interact with Global Support really hasn't changed very much over the past years.

We still noticed that the typical profile of a registrant that engages with Global Support is still consistent with small to mid-sized business owners. Of course, we still see bloggers and your basic individual Internet users. As you can imagine, with small to mid-sized business owners, anything that would negatively impact their website, which is often essential to their survival of their business, so when they reach out to us, they often do illustrate a very high sense of urgency when reaching out.

When we do receive the increase from registrants, probably bear in mind to note that we do receive this increase that originated from around the globe. We continue to observe that many of the registrants that contact us, they often demonstrate very little, sometimes, to no, I would say, technical knowledge and has very little to no real understanding of kind of the Internet community or the ecosystem as a whole, often really have no idea who should we be contacting about our concerns, about our challenges. And so we kind of become, as Brian said, that frontline touch point where we can guide, direct and

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triage, and really give them the best support based on what their concerns and what their needs are. Next slide, please, Brian.

So, when the registrants do contact Global Support, we really observed that there's five main sources, if you will, as to how we're contacted. Please note that this is not in any particular order. But either the registrar or the reseller would refer the registrant to us or they'll perform an Internet search. Oftentimes, they can find this by going to the Contact Us link on the icann.org page. ICANN Complaints Office, when applicable, often direct registrants to Global Support, or they find a phone number on the icann.org website, or somewhere on the Internet and they actually give us a phone call as well. So these are the five main ways in which they reach out to us—again, sources. I'd say the two different communication channels, either by phone or by e-mail, is how we're able to provide that support.

When we do service the registrant community, we've observed that the type of support that we provide, it's really more educational in nature, and often consists of either guidance and/or direction. We typically help them to identify who their registrar is. Explain, I guess you could say, the dichotomy of the registrar, then with registrant and ICANN's role in that dynamic of that relationship. Then obviously, when applicable, we do refer them to the ICANN Compliance team. Then depending on the concern or the nature of their inquiry, we also direct them to a host of resources that we have on the icann.org page.

So looking at our volume, as I previously stated, the six-month block, March 2020 through August 2020, we received just over 6,000 increase

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during that time period, 6,039 to be exact. And as you can see, about 63% of the inquiry types that we received, which is really our biggest inquiry type of registrant cases during that timeframe, consisted of domain management inquiry types. And this really consists of your basic renewals, transfers, cancellations, and just general domain inquiry. About 18% of the volume of received, which is our second largest inquiry type, were related to WHOIS case type or inquiry types. And these are pretty straightforward, in that they often consist of WHOIS verifications and WHOIS type or WHOIS inquiries.

A third inquiry type makes up about 10% of the increase that we received were Rights Protection, Trademark Clearinghouse increase, which typically include things like trademark infringement and domain ownership acquisition. Then our smallest inquiry type or category type, which is really content, and that's made up of phishing scams, fraud accusations, and website content concerns or errors or abuse.

So that is about it. Thank you, Brian. With that, I'll turn the session back over to you, sir.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Thanks, Lamar. That was great. Remember, write your questions in the chat and we'll cover them at the end if you have specific questions for any of the speakers thus far. Next, I will move along to some quick data from Compliance. So this is the other sort of main dataset that you'll find in the reporting series. So you can sort of track this over

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time by accessing the three previous reports and the next one will be coming out shortly with data from March to August of this year.

But what you'll notice is that the data from Contractual Compliance about the top drivers and problems that registrants come to the Org with are quite similar to the data that we see from GSC that Lamar just spoke about: transfers, renewals, WHOIS inaccuracies questions, etc.

So, there's some information here about how you can contact Contractual Compliance directly with different various questions about their metrics. Go check out their pages on [icann.org](https://icann.org), there's a lot of stuff there. They're very transparent. They're coming up with and publishing more and more data all the time. So I encourage you to go there if you're interested in their work. Again, please, I'm going to pause now for any questions. Just check in with Justin. Any ideas from the community?

JUSTIN HO:

I don't see any hands raised or questions posted.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Okay. Thank you, Justin. We'll have a Q&A at the end. Again, reminder.

So what's next for the Registrant Program? I continue to emphasize, our work is collaborative, it's ongoing, we want your feedback. But I will go through now just a couple of things that we have in the pipeline. Our regular work is continuing to create educational content on relevant topics and publishing data from the Org and registrant



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issues and challenges through the report series, through our blog series, educational blog series. Updating FAQs as new issues and topics arise that we see. Sometimes we are reactive, we hear from the community that something has happened, or there has been a change in policy or a variety of things going to happen that will prompt us to think about producing some content to do the education. We want to continue and actually enhance our collaboration with the community with you. So if you have ideas, please come to us directly about that. We'd love to work with you.

The ICANN Learn course, we are gathering feedback, the course that Betsy spoke about earlier, please go ahead and take it and then there's feedback you can give us about how to improve it. So we're going to use the Learn course and we're also going to try and expand some other capacity building activities, potentially working with the community to target our everyday registrant audience.

I see a hand is raised. I will pause. Justin, do you want to—or Marita? It looks like a question from the community or participant.

MARITA MOLL: I unmuted myself.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN: Okay, great. Yes?

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MARITA MOLL: I haven't read through all of the information that you are offering on the site. But I'm just wondering whether there's been any consideration given to the different kinds of domain names that people might have. For example, domain names that are registered under country codes, is that going to have a little different spin than some of the domain names that are registered under .com? I think it is, specifically with privacy issues. Can you elaborate on that a little bit, how much you've taken that into account?

BRIAN GUTTERMAN: Thank you so much for the question. Can you just for the record, just state your name again, quickly, and if you represent an SO or an AC or an organization, please?

MARITA MOLL: Hi, my name is Maria Moll. I'm with At-Large, and I'm on ALAC Council, representative for NARALO, North American Regional At-Large Organization.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN: Fantastic. Thank you for your question. You are right, the sort of ccTLD registrant audience, we do we do keep in mind. You are right, there might be a slightly different approach or more things to think about when creating our content, when thinking about those types of registrant. However, I think with regards to the blogs and articles and our FAQs, we want to produce content that is relevant for every different type of registrant. So if you have a .com or .org or a .net or .ch

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or a .gov, we want to create content that is applicable for everyone and that everybody can use in regards to the education.

But if there's something specific, a topic or an issue, that the ccNO, for example, wants to come to us with, that they think that their customers, their registrants have a specific topic that is something that's confusing them or something that has come up with their customers, we would love to hear about that, and then we can think about targeting educational materials for them.

Does that make sense? I know you said you haven't had a chance to look at a lot of material. So we certainly encourage you to look at everything that we have published thus far and come back to us with ideas or suggestions or criticisms. We're an open book. So I hope that answers your question generally, Marita.

MARITA MOLL:

Thanks, Brian. Generally, it's helpful. Most of my domain names are registered under .ca, for example. Many of the people I would send this out to would also be registered under ccNSO, and I just want to make sure that it won't be causing confusion for those people when they see something on there, which is not going to be applicable to their particular situation. I know that can be quite complex for you people, but as long as you're taking that into account, that's just my question and I guess you are. Thank you.

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BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Yes, we certainly are but there's always things we can do a lot better. So your question is right on point. We've heard from ccTLD registrants before and some of the country code managers as well participated and have enjoyed the content and have shared it with their customers. So we'd like that reach. Please do have a look and please do share it with others, Marita. We'd really appreciate that.

Okay, moving along, if nobody else has their hand up. I went through the ICANN Learn course. Again, please take the course and send it to others, have them register on ICANN Learn.

Something else that we will be trying to achieve in the coming months is improving the registrant user experience when visiting ICANN Org through the Information Transparency Initiative, the ITI. If you haven't done so already, I know there's a lot of great materials already up from the ITI team that you can check out and give feedback on. Go to [icann.org](https://icann.org) for that. You can find that stuff that's sort of in beta mode and you can give them feedback. But the idea is to enhance and make the information on ICANN Org more easily findable, organized in a better way. We are going to be giving our registrant content pages a facelift as well. So we hope to improve the experience for registrants when coming to our sites to find what they want and find what they need and take that and go take action on what they want to do.

So now I'm kind of coming to the end of our presentation from staff. We want to know if you have ideas for next steps for us. If you have any reactions to what we've said so far during this presentation, any

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questions, feedback, no stupid questions, of course. We'd love to hear your ideas. So the floor is yours, to the participants. Anything?

Okay. I'm not hearing much. Any of my fellow panelists have any follow up or anything they'd like to add before, I guess, we will close up? Betsy, Samaneh, Lamar, anything to add? Justin, anything in the Q&A or the chat?

JUSTIN HO:

I see one from—sorry if I'm pronouncing this incorrectly—[Moamin Hamad]. This individual asks why there's no Arab Learn channel.

BETSY ANDREWS:

Thanks. Hi, this is Betsy. We do have Introduction to ICANN. That course is available in Arabic and there are about four more that are currently in process. You can choose Arabic as your dashboard default language. So the answer to your question is that yes, we do have it but we have more content coming. And when this Registrants course is translated, it will be available in Arabic.

BRIAN GUTTERMAN:

Thanks, Betsy. That was helpful. Hanan, is that good? We also translate our blogs and other articles for registrants or educational materials into Arabic. So, go check out the Arabic sections, the Arabic pages on icann.org and you'll find registrant content there. Again, we would love for you to share that with others who are reading it. If Arabic is their first language, they would like to read it that way. We

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would really appreciate all the help with sharing and disseminating our materials. I hope that's helpful.

Okay, going once. Well, the good thing is this session is being recorded and the presentation deck is available on the Meeting Schedule site. So please, if you participated today, please go back, tell your colleagues, tell your registrant friends, you share this with your SOs and ACs. Think more about what you think new activities would be for us and reach out to your focal points on Staff. They can contact me directly and put us in touch. We look forward to working with you. Okay?

All right. I think we can close then if there's nothing else. Thank you for joining this webinar. I think that concludes Day 1 of Prep Week. Great job, everyone. On to Day 2 tomorrow.

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