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Bakker to leave when TNT demerges



TNT has completed the internal separation of its mail and express businesses in advance of its general meeting in May when shareholders will formally approve the proposed demerger transaction. Once the two new companies are formed, TNT chief executive Peter Bakker will stand down, leaving the group in order to pursue other opportunities.

Early in December, the company announced the capital markets transaction designed to separate TNT into two companies. Mr Bakker said the company's proposal would realise all stakeholder objectives by providing a low-risk and efficient demerger transaction and an opportunity to invest in two sector leaders.

The mail company

After demerger, TNT NV will comprise the mail activities. It will retain a minority 29.9% stake in the express company but will return this to shareholders as soon as possible, up to the level allowed by mail's targeted credit rating.

Late in December, TNT Post reached an agreement with mail unions that reduced the number of compulsory redundancies planned to 2,800 from an original figure of 4,500.

The postal parcel service, the "Auto Unit" and other parts of the company will absorb 1,700 postal operations workers who risked compulsory redundancy.

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The company and unions also agreed to increase the involvement of TNT Mobility, the assisted reemployment agency, in a bid to reduce the number of redundant employees needing to claim unemployment benefits.

Following demerger, TNT Post will aim to optimise cash flow in the face of declining mail volumes, expanding its activities in its core competence areas. Reporting will be divided into three sectors: mail in the Netherlands, international and parcels.

The express company

The express company will aim to strengthen its existing business and expand into adjacent market segments.

In Europe, the company will pursue growth opportunities in "high-end standard parcels and freight" and in sector-specific added value solutions. In emerging markets, express will seek to enhance domestic day and time-definite services and to grow intercontinental volumes.

Each of the two new companies will have a new board of management. The mail business will be headed by Marie-Christine Lombard as chief executive and Bernard Bot as chief financial officer. The express business will be headed by chief executive Harry Koorstra.

Announcing Peter Bakker's plan to depart TNT, supervisory board chairman Piet Klaver said: "Under Peter's leadership, TNT has been shaped into a strong, professional, responsible industry-leading organisation with a great reputation for corporate responsibility: a company to be truly proud of."

Mr Klaver said the board regretted but respected Mr Bakker's decision to leave.

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NetPosti goes mobile via free download

Itella's NetPosti electronic mailbox service is now available as a free download on iPhone and Android phones and tablet devices such as iPad.

The service allows users to view invoices, payslips and other correspondence via their mobile device and to monitor the delivery progress of packages.

"Smartphone users want to handle their affairs using their phones. It is not enough that they can pay bills, for example, sitting in front of a computer with an Internet connection, they need to be able to do the same with their phones or tablet devices, regardless of time and place," said Pasi Ketonen, business development director of NetPosti services.

The application is downloaded and registered using a four-digit PIN code that limits access to the authorised user.

Itella expected the total number of e-letters and e-invoices sent via NetPosti to exceed 5m in 2010. The service has 300,000 recipients, and new senders are joining each month.

NetPosti, first launched in 2000, is described as a content-independent electronic service that allows recipients to receive official mail electronically. The service also contains some 7,000 official forms.

TNT Italy delivers to shoppers' homes

In Italy, TNT Express has signed an agreement with factory outlet retailer Fashion Direct to deliver purchases dropped off by shoppers at TNT Points located in shopping centres.

Fashion Direct runs three large shopping centres comprising a total of 300 factory outlet stores. TNT will deliver goods purchased to shoppers' homes both in Italy and abroad. It will also take care of VAT refunds for shoppers who are resident outside the European Union.

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TNT Express has a network of 1,500 TNT Points in Italy providing pick-up and drop-off locations for small shipments.

TNT partners with French B2C parcels operator

TNT Express is to form a partnership for business-to-consumer parcels with French publishing company Spir Communication by taking a 50% stake in Adrexo Colis, Spir's parcels subsidiary.

The two partners intend to build a strong position for e-commerce deliveries by developing standard home delivery services in the French domestic market with a 48 or 72-hour guarantee.

Adrexo will contribute a guaranteed parcel delivery network with full track and trace that complements TNT's existing business-to-consumer express services. TNT's 450-strong French sales force will market the services operated by Adrexo nationally.

In a separate move, TNT Express France has launched an iPhone application allowing recipients to check shipment status and location and informing them of delivery times. The service is aimed in particular at e-commerce customers. An Android version of the application is due for launch this month.

Itella Logistics does more for Rautakesko

Itella Logistics has further expanded its services for retail building and home improvement trader Rautakesko.

Under a new agreement, Itella will transport goods from warehouses to Rautakesko customers in Finland, including K-rauta, Rautia and K-maatalous stores and K-customer contract stores.

Itella Logistics has been providing Rautakesko with warehousing services in Finland since 2002 and became the company's international logistics partner in 2008.

Royal Mail announces price increases

Royal Mail is to increase the price of first and second class stamps for standard letters up to 100 grammes by just over 12% from 04 April.

Increases across a range of mail services follow approval by the regulator, Postcomm, for an overall 10% rise in rates for stamped mail with increases of up to 13% permitted on individual services.

Prices charged to competing postal operators for access mail introduced downstream for final delivery are still under review. Postcomm has stated it is "minded" to accept Royal Mail's proposal to raise access rates by 15% on average from May.

Royal Mail chief executive Moya Greene said: "If we don't generate more income, we will simply not be able to keep funding our six-days-a-week collection, sorting, transport and delivery operation to the UK's 28 million homes and businesses."

The company said it lost £163m on stamped mail in its last financial year and an average of 2.5 sterling pence on each item of access mail delivered.

From April, the price of a first class stamp will rise by five pence to £0.46 for a standard letter and by nine pence to £0.75 for a large letter. Second class stamps will increase by four pence to £0.36 for a standard letter and by seven pence to £0.58 for a large letter.

Prices for first and second class franked mail will rise by three pence; prices for standard parcels weighing more than 2kg will rise by 8%, and prices for Special Delivery services will start at £5.45, an increase of £0.40.

Customers wishing to collect their mail in the morning from local offices rather than wait for their delivery will have to pay an annual charge of £210 for a facility that is currently free of charge.

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Poste Italiane know-how helps Russian Post

Poste Italiane is to provide Russian Post with skills and know-how under a commercial agreement signed during the Italy-Russia bilateral summit in Sochi.

The agreement marks the operational launch of services outlined in a memorandum of understanding agreed in March 2010. Poste Italiane will help Russian Post to modernise its 40,000 post offices, to optimise its logistics network and to introduce financial services online and mobile phone services.



Swiss Post announces three-year strategy

Swiss Post has announced a three-year corporate strategy following approval by the Swiss parliament of new postal legislation.

The strategy is designed to meet the Federal Council's objectives and will see the company focus on communications, logistics, retail finance and public passenger transport.

In markets outside Switzerland, Swiss Post will aim for gradual, risk-aware growth, concentrating activities mainly on the needs of Swiss customers abroad, providing them with access the global network.

The company is targeting profits of CHF700m to CHF800m a year in order to remain an attractive, socially responsible employer, keeping pension funds healthy, investing in the development of the company, strengthening equity and paying a contribution to the Confederation.

Legislation embodied in the Postal Act and the Postal Organisation Act provides Swiss Post with a new legal status giving it entrepreneurial freedom. PostFinance will become a legally independent public company but will remain unable to issue loans independently.

Swiss Post has adjusted pricing for some services including unaddressed direct mail (PromoPost) and PO Box services. Price adjustments will also apply to irregular shaped parcels that have to be processed manually, and express services.

From April 2011, returns of B mail (business letters to customers and periodicals) will be billed to originators as an incentive for businesses to keep databases up to date.

Service enhancements include introduction of track and trace for debt collection documents and a paperless cash on delivery service for parcels and letters.

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Pay deal agreed for French postal workers

Groupe La Poste has signed an agreement with French postal unions that awards a 0.6% pay increase on 01 April 2011 and a further 1.2% on 01 September. Other benefits will increase by 1.8% from 01 July.

Once the new agreement is implemented the starting salary for a non-management employee, including benefits, will be €18,337 gross.

Swiss Post relaunches IncaMail



Swiss Post has enhanced and relaunched its secure email service, IncaMail, to comply fully with e-government legislation being rolled out from this month.

The new legislation requires local and government authorities and courts to accept documents sent electronically via approved secure mail services.

The new IncaMail no longer obliges recipients to download messages from a server; the email can be opened directly via protected access. Both message text and accompanying documents can be encrypted and sent as an integral part of the email. IncaMail can be integrated into Outlook and other email programmes.

Swiss Post said that owners of SuisseID, its digital identity, would benefit from a simplified registration process enabling them to submit electronically signed documents as registered email with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Awards recognise logistics innovators

Deutsche Post DHL has named its DHL Innovation Award winners to recognise innovation by its customers, its employees and academics.

The customer award went to TetraPak which set up a sophisticated regional distribution centre in Shanghai.

The employee award was made to Keinosuke Miyazaki and Keishi Yamada who work at DHL Supply Chain Japan in the logistics technology design department.

They developed two packaging solutions, the Heavy Weight Returnable Container and the Air Protector, for which patents are pending.

The company made two awards to academics. The most innovative junior scientist award went to Dr Ing Stephan Mayer who invented the Flexförderer flexible conveyor system. Prof Helmut Baumgarten received the senior scientist award for his life's work for the logistics industry as vice-chairman of the German Logistics Association and co-founder of Germany's first university department for logistics at the TU in Berlin.

The DHL Innovation Awards have been granted for the past three years.

Royal Mail exceeds its quality targets

Royal Mail exceeded its quality of service targets in the three months from July to September.

It delivered 93.7% of first class stamped and metered mail the day after posting, beating its 93% target. Second class stamped and metered mail achieved a 99% on-time performance to exceed its 98.5% target.

Standard parcel delivery was significantly above its 90% target at 96.8%.

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DHL agrees job losses with Swiss union

DHL Switzerland has reached agreement with the Unia union on job losses resulting from its decision to centralise its accounting function in Germany.

Under the agreement reached at the arbitral court of the canton of Geneva, the original total of 86 job losses reduced to 57 with 38 employees to be made redundant in Geneva instead of 48 and 19 in Basel instead of 38.

Under the agreed social plan, DHL will make severance payments and will fund training for redundant workers.

“Where do I put it?” campaign wins awards

The “Where do I put it?” marketing campaign run by Spanish parcels operator Seur received a bronze award in December from the Interactive Advertising Service which represents the digital advertising sector in Spain.

In October, the campaign received a gold award at the Spanish Association of Advertising Communication Marketing and Integrated Communication Awards.

The campaign, run in cooperation with a Spanish TV programme, invited people to send in peculiar, useless or unwanted objects. The best items were selected for an online auction and the proceeds were used to finance food deliveries to community dining centres for poorer people.



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DP DHL realigns its credit facilities

Deutsche Post DHL has agreed a €2bn revolving syndicated credit facility with a consortium of German and international banks to replace bilateral credit lines and strengthen further the group's financial position.

Itella wins financial outsourcing contract

Itella Information has won an outsourcing contract from Suomen Lähikauppa to manage the company's financial administration. Itella will take over employment of 61 finance department workers who will continue to be based at Suomen Lähikauppa's Tampere service centre.

Swiss Post listens to customer feedback

Swiss Post says it has gained positive feedback from pilot tests of new letter delivery procedures. Results to date indicate that mail should be delivered no later than 12.30 hours, so Swiss Post will forgo the additional savings to be had from a 14.00 hours delivery cut-off. Tests based on automation and new processes continue.

APC Overnight offers integrated shipping label

The United Kingdom's APC Overnight has introduced an integrated shipping label system that embeds parcel label information in its customers' own label. It said the facility would allow customers to streamline sales order processing, warehouse and delivery operations.

DPD Russia continues to expand

DPD continues to expand in Russia, opening four more offices and a 200sq metre depot in Bijsk, south-western Siberia. The company is concentrating its efforts on developing in the north-western region of the country. DPD now operates from 60 locations across Russia.

Snow and ice costs Royal Mail £20m

Royal Mail spent £20m on additional measures to tackle the impact on delivery of severe weather in the run-up to Christmas. It recruited more temporary staff, took on 500 lorry drivers, deployed an extra 250 large lorries and made evening deliveries.

DHL adds two transatlantic flights

DHL is inaugurating two direct dedicated flights from Paris and Frankfurt to its North American air hub in Cincinnati to allow next day delivery for shipments from France, Germany and neighbouring countries.

Anti-privatisation protest in the UK

Postal workers protested against plans to part-privatise Royal Mail in December when they staged a demonstration in the Westminster area of London. The Communications Workers Union said it would stage further protests in January and February.

PostBus stays in Frauenfeld

PostBus Switzerland has won a public tender to retain the provision of urban bus services in the city of Frauenfeld for the next ten years.

Itella gains further ISO accreditations

Itella Logistics has gained ISO 9001 and 14001 accreditation at additional units in three countries bringing to 27 the total number of units in six countries with quality and environmental management accreditation.

DPD Germany confident of growth

DPD Germany estimates that its overall volume rose by almost 8% in 2010 with the retail sector driving growth. The company said it expected to outperform market growth in Germany in 2011.

Two more DHL depots for Poland

DHL Express has invested €7.9m in two new terminals in Poland. One, in the city of Szczecin, covers 2,850sq metres and has capacity for 10,500 shipments a day; the other in Kielce can sort up to 7,500 shipments a day.

New centre in Mozambique

Corre, the Mozambican express subsidiary of CTT-Correios de Portugal, has opened a new operations centre and branch in Tete.

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Donahoe announces his line-up for change



The new US Postmaster General, Patrick R Donahoe, has announced his team of top executives who will work with him to create a more profitable, nimble Postal Service able to compete in the marketplace and provide exemplary customer service.

Mr Donahoe said the Postal Service would have to do many things

differently and at a faster pace in order to meet the challenges it faced. "We must break down structural challenges to change and empower our executives, managers and employees to achieve at a higher level," he said.

He identified four core business strategies: strengthening the business-to-customer channel; improving the customer experience; growing the package business and becoming a leaner, faster, smarter organisation.

Addressing a US Senate subcommittee on the eve of taking on his new role, Mr Donahoe said he was looking at all the ways the Postal Service deals with its customers. "Every interaction with us, with a carrier, a clerk, at a kiosk, at a contracted desk or online, must be a great one," he said.

The executive leadership team comprises six key individuals.

Paul Vogel, president and chief marketing/sales officer, is responsible for all product management and development and is charged with building a strong platform of offerings to meet the demands of an increasingly digital world.

Megan Brennan, chief operating officer, moves from the position of vice president for the eastern area to lead all network and process improvements and the allocation of people and resources.

Joseph R Corbett continues in his role as chief financial officer applying financial rigor to Postal Service strategy development and management decision-making.

Tony Vegliante also continues in his role as chief human resources officer driving major workforce development efforts to enable the Postal Service to operate faster and more flexibly.

Ellis Burgoyne, chief information officer, moves from his position as vice president, southwest to oversee all systems and data management, helping to develop new products quickly and to leverage the network fully to meet changing customer needs.

Mary Anne Gibbons, general counsel, will continue to provide expert legal advice and counsel to decision-making helping to navigate the many regulations and laws that govern the Postal Service business.

USPS simplifies unaddressed mail

The United States Postal Service (USPS) has eased its rules on simplified addressing to allow businesses to use the format on city delivery routes.

The move is designed to provide smaller businesses access to the service and thereby to earn "millions of dollars in new revenue".

Simplified addressing enables business mailers to use mail delivery route information instead of full names and addresses to reach target customer groups in specific areas. Until now, the format has been used in rural areas and for government mailings.

Under the new arrangements, business mailers are able to reach every address in a geographic area via a process named saturation mailing.

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Simplified addressing is also available for irregular shaped parcels delivered on city routes.

The Postal Service said that simplified addressing could lower costs by reducing mail preparation time and eliminating the need to purchase address lists and on-press printing.

“Simplified addressing will serve as the on-ramp for many small businesses trying to reach their audiences within a specific geographic range,” said Paul Vogel, president and chief marketing/sales officer. “It will allow them for the first time to take advantage of the most effective marketing channel there is — direct mail.”

FedEx acquisition boosts Mexican presence

FedEx is to purchase Mexican domestic express company Multipack in order to offer a broader range of services under its own brand.

The acquisition is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2011 after which the two companies will integrate in phases.

MultiPack has a well established pick-up and delivery network across Mexico. “Our two companies represent a strategic fit with a common commitment to enhance the service we can offer Mexican businesses, invest in our people and positively impact on our communities as good corporate citizens,” said Roby G Brown, vice president of FedEx Express Mexico, Central America and Andean.

Contract talks break down with APWU

The United States Postal Service failed to reach agreement on a new contract with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) during extended negotiations between Christmas and New Year.

The terms of the 2006-2010 collective bargaining agreement, due to expire on 20 November 2010, remain in force until a new agreement is reached either through negotiation or binding arbitration.

According to the APWU, both parties will submit all outstanding issues to binding arbitration if no agreement is reached within 60 days of the contract's expiry date.

Stephen Fenwick heads DHL Americas

Stephen Fenwick is DHL Express's new chief executive for the Americas region, responsible for business activities in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

He has moved to his new role from DHL's Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe and Middle East (APEM) express management board where he oversaw network operations in the region's 131 countries and territories.

Mr Fenwick replaces Roger Crook who is now chief executive of the APEM regions. Mr Crook continues to lead the DHL Express global sales and e-commerce teams.



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FedEx strong despite profit dip

FedEx's second quarter profits were lower year-on-year owing to one-off charges but the main business units showed continuing growth.

Overall revenue rose by 12% to US\$9.63bn between September and November but operating income dropped by 18% to US\$469m, leaving an operating margin of 4.9%, down from 6.6%.

FedEx Express revenue increased by 13% to US\$5.99bn. However, operating income dropped 23% to US\$264m owing to the negative impact of a US\$66m reserve associated with a lawsuit with ATA Airlines. In addition, the previous year's second quarter result included a one-off benefit from plan design changes for a self insurance programme.

FedEx Ground revenue rose by 13% to US\$2.08bn and operating income rose by 24% to US\$296m.

FedEx Freight saw its revenue rise by 14% to US\$1.22bn, but its operating loss deepened to US\$91m compared with US\$12m the previous year.

The increased loss resulted largely from US\$86m of costs associated with the merger of FedEx Freight and FedEx National LTL operations which becomes effective on 30 January.

Commenting on the results, FedEx Corp chairman, president and chief executive Fred Smith said: "Our yield improvement strategy is working, holiday peak season volumes are exceeding our expectations and our economic forecast for calendar 2011 has improved."

Alan B Graf Jr, FedEx Corp executive vice president and chief financial officer, said: "Our operating performance in the quarter was impacted by strong compensation and benefits headwinds as we reinstated programs curtailed during the recession.... Yield improvement and cost management remain our focus."

We expect margins to improve in the second half of fiscal 2011 and in fiscal 2012, as we continue to benefit from solid global demand for our differentiated services and as certain cost headwinds subside next fiscal year."

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UPS funds airport investment

UPS Capital, the financial services arm of UPS, has arranged a loan of almost US\$23m through its subsidiary, UPS Capital Business Credit, to finance installation of baggage handling equipment in seven Mexican airports.



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Australia Post buys secure payment firm

Australia Post has made another advance in its strategy to expand online services with the purchase of payment gateway company SecurePay.

SecurePay provides secure business-to-business and business-to-consumer payment services to companies, utilities, local government and e-retailers via internet, phone or custom software applications.

Australia Post said SecurePay would continue to operate as a standalone entity led by its existing management.

"Acquiring SecurePay strengthens Australia Post's capability in offering business and government customers their own online payments channel," said Australia Post managing director and chief executive Ahmed Fahour. "SecurePay's capability in shopping cart payments also positions Australia Post for the rapid growth of e-commerce in Australia."

SecurePay delivers online payment services through its customers' own websites with their own branding. Mr Fahour said that service complemented Australia Post's existing, branded, online payment channel, Postbillpay.

Roche names senior managers

New Zealand Post's new group chief executive, Brian Roche, has announced appointments to a new senior management structure designed to be more customer-focused, agile and efficient.

Gary Woodham takes up the position of group general manager of the customer solutions and services division, moving from New Zealand Post's data management company, Datum, where he was chief executive. His division will encompass retail, postal and datum businesses.

Ashley Smout will move to New Zealand Post in February from his current role as chief executive of Airways Corporation of New Zealand. He will head up the newly formed operations division incorporating the delivery network, postal production and processing.



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In March, Paul Reid will join New Zealand Post in the new role of group general manager, innovation and technology. He moves from MetService where he is chief executive.

“Paul has helped MetService turn good science into good business,” said Mr Roche. “He will bring to New Zealand Post the expertise to drive and oversee the development of innovation and technology strategies across the group.”

FedEx brings its import service to India

FedEx Express has launched import services in India to provide door-to-door, customs-cleared, customised and time-definite services that offer Indian importers more choice and control of import shipments.

The service enables customers to raise invoices and make payments in Indian rupees and claims to offer transit times of two to three days from 220 countries and territories worldwide.

Aramex opens Indian facility

Aramex has opened a 4,180sq metre logistics facility in India, close to Mumbai, as part of its global expansion strategy.

The company said the warehouse was located close to both the airport and sea port in order to serve the distribution needs of multiple sectors.

GeoPost in Vietnamese cooperation

Groupe La Poste’s GeoPost has signed a cooperation agreement covering express parcels and logistics services with a unit of Vietnam Post.

Under a memorandum of understanding, VNPost Express and GeoPost will supply quality economical parcel services both domestically and internationally through their respective networks.

Parcels boom brings staff shortages

A boom in parcels volume is forcing Singapore Post to take on additional delivery staff and to look outside its borders for new recruits.

Between June and November, the volume of packets and parcels handled by Singapore Post rose by 30%, driven by a growing trend for online shopping. In November alone, volume increased by 90%.

SingPost has to process parcels manually and needs more time to deliver them. “A postman delivers about 750 letter-mail items an hour compared with just 18 packets an hour,” the company said.

A recruitment drive produced about 100 candidates, but only ten applied for postal delivery roles and only six of those were suitable. SingPost is now looking outside Singapore for suitable personnel. To help retain mail sorters, the company is increasing salaries by 10% this month.

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Later pick-up in Eastern China

FedEx Express has extended weekday pick-up times for exporters in Eastern China sending shipments to the United States. The company said its service enhancement provided customers with greater flexibility and pick-up as late as 18.00 hours.

Korea Express up for sale

Korea Express has been put up for sale by its struggling minority owner, Kumho Asiana, and creditor banks including the Korea Development Bank which holds a controlling interest.

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

***IPC Market Flash* is a bi-weekly newsletter providing a comprehensive look at new developments emerging in the international postal marketplace. It is published by the Markets and Communication Department of the International Post Corporation.**

***IPC Market Flash* is sent out exclusively to IPC member posts. If you would like to contribute an article or photograph to this publication please send your contributions to:**

publications@ipc.be

© IPC
Avenue du Bourget, 44
1130, Brussels
Belgium
Tel.: +32 (0)2 724 72 11
www.ipc.be

For more information on this publication, please contact britt.janssens@ipc.be

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