

RETAIL SERVICE CONVENIENCE IN HYPERMARKETS OF INDIA AND INDONESIA

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Abstract: Background/Objectives: This research work focuses on service convenience, its antecedents and consequents in setting of hypermarket in India and Indonesia. This element of retail service experience management has not received much attention till now. **Methods/Statistical Analysis:** Descriptive and Exploratory research designs have been implemented in this research. Primary data has been compiled by survey method through structured questionnaire in English and Indonesian Bahasa. Customers shopping at hypermarkets in Jakarta and Bangalore formed the Sampling frame. Sample size was derived using formula $(\sigma^2 \cdot z^2)/D^2$ after conducting a pilot study. Stratified Proportionate Sampling was used. The main tools used for statistical analysis were Percentages, Means, Standard deviation, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). **Results:** It was found that Shopping Enjoyment has a significant positive influence on Service Convenience while Familiarity and treatment, Use of Technology and Environment quality have moderate positive influence on Service Convenience. Service Convenience has a significant influence on satisfaction respectively. Satisfaction has significant positive influence on Store Loyalty. It is found that the calculated p value was greater than 0.05; Goodness of Fit index (GFI) value, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) value and Comparative Fit index (CFI) value were greater than 0.9 indicating a very good fit. It was found that Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value was minimal. This research has served to assess the antecedents influencing Service Convenience and its consequents in the retail format of hypermarkets in Indonesia and India. **Conclusion/Application:** The research has actually served as another measurement technique to assess how service convenience leads to loyalty in hypermarkets. This in turn helps the retailer to improvise their customer retention strategies and enhance store loyalty.

Keywords: Hypermarkets, Loyalty, Patronage Intention, Retail Convenience, Service Convenience.

1. RETAILING

Retailing consists of business activities involved in selling goods and services to consumers for their personal, family or household use. It includes every sale of goods and services to the final consumer and is the last stage in the distribution process. The major elements of retailing are:

The Total Retail Experience: The total retail experience includes all the elements in a retail offering that stimulate consumers during their contact with a retailer.

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Many elements, such as the number of salespeople, displays, prices, brand assortment and stock keeping units on hand are controllable by the retailer.

Customer Service: Customer service refers to the identifiable but sometimes intangible activities provided by the retailer along with the basic goods and services it sells. It has a strong impact on the total retail experience. Customer Service comprises two elements.

Expected customer service: is the level of service that customers want to receive from any retailer. *Augmented customer service:* encompasses the actions that enhance the shopping experience and give retailers a competitive advantage.

Relationship Retailing: Relationship retailing refers to establishing and maintaining long term bonds with customers. Long-term customers buy more, take less of a firm's time, are less price sensitive and bring in new shoppers. Four important factors in relationship retailing are customer base, customer service, customer satisfaction and loyalty programs and defection rates.

2. GLOBAL RETAIL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

The Retail industry is responsible for over USD 15 trillion (AT Kearney, 2015) in global revenue. The industry is highly globalized with large retailers operating in almost every country along with small retailers still prevalent in developing countries. The retail sector offers substantial amount of employment. Approximately 142 million people were employed in this sector in 82 countries including China and India. Also in a country like India and US, retail contributes a significant amount to GDP. Changes in various policies, zoning laws and restriction on Foreign Direct Investments led to liberalization policies in emerging markets also had a strong influence on the retail structure of many countries. For example, south-east Asia was dominated by local retailers for much of the 20th century, but as a result of the Asian financial crisis, Indonesia agreed to liberalize their retail and consumer policies in 1998 as a condition for IMF assistance. Malaysia and Thailand both became flexible for their regulations regarding mergers and acquisitions and joint ventures.

3. ORGANISED RETAILING

There two major players in the modern retail sector: large domestic or international corporations and smaller entrepreneurs. The former have a long-term vision and sustain without quick profits. For international corporations many chains stop growing after opening a single store, as they are not able to sustain without profits. The share of organized retail to total retail is just about 8% in India and around 32% in Asian countries like Indonesia while countries like USA and UK have an organized retail share above 80%.

4. HYPERMARKETS

A *hypermarket* is a superstore combining a supermarket and a department store. The result is an expansive retail facility carrying a wide range of products under one roof, including full groceries lines and general merchandise. Hypermarkets allow customers to satisfy all their routine shopping needs in one trip. A hypermarket is a big box store which combines the attributes of a supermarket and a department store. It is usually bigger than a supermarket, with size of around 150,000 square feet, to 300,000 square feet. A hypermarket retails a wide range of products under one roof, including groceries and general merchandise. The merchandise mix of a hypermarket includes all items needed to manage a household. Usually, there is a heavy focus on private label brands also. Generally, hypermarkets have more than 200,000 different SKUs of merchandise available at any given time. In terms of location, hypermarkets are usually located in suburban area, which allow for larger store space, and easy accessibility to vehicles.

5. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

5.1. Overview of Retail Sector in India

Retail market in India has matured with retailers focussing on profitable rather than unconstrained growth. While consumer spending has expanded, desirable real estate is becoming more difficult to secure and local competition is becoming more sophisticated. However, low penetration of modern retail in the overall market indicates significant room for growth and is expected to see strong double-digit growth in the next 5-10 years. Even as India's tier 1 cities are becoming saturated, there is immense scope for modern retailers to expand into tier 2 and 3 towns and become first movers in untapped growth markets.

The recent changes in FDI norms are expected to only improve the market attractiveness of India. Retail formats in India have evolved significantly in the last decade. With the retail industry finally coming of age, newer formats that mirror those found in western developed markets are taking precedence over older forms. Consumer's lifestyles are continuously evolving and they are becoming more demanding and selective in terms of products as well as services. Retailers are also realizing this shift and have been proactively remodeling and fine tuning their existing formats to serve them better, while managing their profitability and costs.

Hypermarkets, in India, contribute to almost 2.5% of the total organized retail sales and 21% of total retail space. In India, hypermarkets bring together the concept of modern retail format and reasonable priced offering. Thus the retail format has a high appeal with the Indian middle and upper middle class which seek a higher level of experience from their shopping, along with the convenience of shopping for all their needs in one place.

Major hypermarkets in India are Big Bazar, Spencer's hyper, Reliance Mart, More Megastore, Spar/Auchan, Star Bazaar and Hypercity. **Table 1** gives retail hypermarket scenario in the city of Bengaluru in Karnataka, South India.

Table 1
Retail Hypermarket Scenario

<i>Hypermarket</i>	<i>Bengaluru Stores</i>	<i>Hypermarket</i>	<i>Jakarta Stores</i>
Auchan	5	Carrefour	16
Big Bazar	10	Lotte Mart	6
Hypercity	3	Giant Hero	3
Reliance Mart	2	Total Outlets	25
Star India Bazar	3		
Spencers Hyper	2		
More Megastore	4		
Total Outlets	29		

Source: Compiled by Researcher.

5.2. Overview of Retail Sector in Indonesia

Indonesia is world's fourth largely populated country after China, India and US. High industrialization, rising incomes, shifting of socio economic segments, tourism...are some of the factors that are driving the economic growth of the nation by offering huge potential base for the global investors. The modern retail sector of the country is one such segment that is attracting the foreign investors for its huge unexplored potential.

Even today the largest retailer in the country is the French hypermarket brand 'Carrefour' that has 64 hypermarket outlets in the archipelago. Hypermarkets are now quite popular in Indonesia and now account for over 40% of the sector's sales with Carrefour being the market leader. A hypermarket is a big box store which combines the attributes of a supermarket and a department store. It is usually bigger than a supermarket, with size of around 150,000 square feet, to 300,000 square feet. Major hypermarket brands in Indonesia are Giant Hypermarket, Lotte Mart and Carrefour. **Table 1** gives retail hypermarket scenario in the city of Jakarta (Indonesian Retail Report, 2013).

5.3. The Concept of Service Convenience

Marketers these days are acknowledging a steady rise in consumer demand for convenience and attribute this trend to a variety of economic and socio cultural factors. Hence these days marketing firms devote greater resources to offer convenience a part of strategic shift to more effective customer management. Researchers also are increasingly interested in understanding the effects of convenience on consumer behaviour, and recent empirical studies indicate that convenience influences critical marketing consequences, including customer

evaluation and purchase behaviour (Seiders *et al.*, 2000). Although convenience may not be sufficient to ensure customer loyalty, it appears a necessary threshold condition for maintaining customer relationships.

Berry *et al.* (2002) articulated the service convenience construct and subsequently a Service Convenience (*ServCon*) scale to measure the second order service convenience construct and its five first order dimensions were developed in the Western context. *ServCon* was tested and validated by researchers in the context of a national specialty retail chain, internet services, and personal cellular phone service respectively.

Till now majority of research conducted in this sector have been focusing on service quality and improvement in the quality of the retail services delivered. For this Dabholkar (1996) developed the scale of RSQS and tested it with US department store customers which gives dimensions to measure retail service quality exclusively. There have been studies based on determinants of store format choice behavior. But the critical factors affecting consumers cross shopping in an evolving retail market still needs to be investigated.

In all these research one very important factor has been overseen time and again and that is service convenience which actually acts as an important determinant of many aspects of shopping behaviors and can be interpreted as an important element to improve the quality of service delivered and retain customers for a longer period of time. Till recent time service convenience has been defined as a construct that consumers try to achieve with minimal time and effort. Most of the prior studies focused only on the time saving aspect. Others mixed concepts of convenience goods and services. Seiders *et al.* (2007) presented a comprehensive conceptualization of service convenience and validated the subscales offering comprehensive measures of perceived service convenience.

Aagja *et al.* (2011) validated service convenience scale and profiled customers in the Indian retail context. But so far no serious investigation has been done to validate the scale in the context of hypermarkets. The whole concept of organized retailing is all about providing the customers with convenient and a holistic shopping experience and not only offering wide array of products and services. Researchers also are increasingly interested in understanding the effects of convenience on consumer behavior, and recent empirical studies indicate that convenience influences critical marketing consequences, including customer evaluation and purchase behaviour.

Although convenience may not be sufficient to ensure customer loyalty, it seems to be a threshold condition for maintaining customer relationships. Seiders *et al.* (2007) propose four distinct dimensions of convenience relevant to retailers: Access, Search, Possession and Transaction.

Access Convenience: Defined as “the speed and ease with which consumers can reach a retailer” by Seiders *et al.* (2007).

Search Convenience: Is defined as “the speed and ease with which consumers identify and select products they wish to buy” by Seiders *et al.* (2007).

Transaction Convenience: Is defined as “the speed and ease with which consumers can effect or amend transactions” by Seiders *et al.* (2007). Many retailers are now opting for Self Service Technology which offers greater transaction convenience as they speed up the process of billing and check out.

Possession Convenience: The speed and ease with which consumers can obtain desired products. In this in-stock merchandise, timely production and timely delivery are the key components.

Proposed antecedents of retail service convenience in hypermarket settings in this research are:

Shopping Enjoyment: Shopping enjoyment refers to a consumer’s positive affect toward shopping for items in specific product or service categories, such as apparel or travel services (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). Since shopping enjoyment is an affective state that includes the shopping experience and involves positive emotions toward the overall process, it is expected to be positively related to each of the four retail service convenience dimensions.

Environment Quality: Environment quality in organized retail setting of hypermarket means offering the customers with a pleasant shopping environment. According to Turley and Milliman (1992), the most influential store variables in the atmospherics literature are perceptions of ambience, design, layout and retail density.

Familiarity & Treatment: Familiarity and personal treatment by the store positively affect a customer’s cognitive assessments of service convenience.

Use of SST-Self Service Technology: The face of shopping has transformed from salespersons to self-serving. SSTs are technological interfaces that allow customers to perform the entire service on their own, without direct assistance from service employees (Meuter *et al.*, 2003).

Proposed Consequents of Retail service convenience in the hypermarket settings in this research are:

Satisfaction: Researchers have identified that consumers’ satisfaction is highly correlated with the overall convenience which would exert a positive influence on consumers’ future purchase behavior.

Loyalty: Customer loyalty has two aspects behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty refers to customers’ willingness to build relationships with

service providers, whereas behavioral loyalty refers to customers' repeated purchasing behaviors. Both kinds of loyalty indicate that customer satisfaction with products and services is crucial to a customer's decision to remain in a buying relationship with a business.

6. RESEARCH GAPS

Not much research has been done in exploring the concept of retail service convenience in different service sectors. Both the countries India and Indonesia are now experiencing retail revolution, many researches have been focused on the service quality and service performance aspect. Little work has been done regarding the validation of the dimensions of service convenience in different retail formats.

7. SIGNIFICANCE & BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH

This study alleviates the research gap by validating the proposed antecedents and consequents of Retail Service convenience in the hypermarket settings of India and Indonesia thereby testing the proposed conceptual framework. This research attempts to benefit all the global retailers who plan to invest in both the countries and the players which already exist and would like to strengthen their positions by having a strong customer following.

8. OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The prime objective is to develop a comprehensive framework defining the antecedents and consequents of retail service convenience in the hypermarkets of Indonesia and India.

9. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

9.1. Sampling

The population comprised customers shopping at organized retail formats in Jakarta and Bengaluru respectively. The frame comprised customers shopping at hypermarkets in Jakarta and in Bengaluru respectively. Proportionate stratified sampling was used. The population (customers of hypermarkets) in Jakarta and Bengaluru are not known. Hence, the standard deviation value needed to be ascertained from pilot study. The ascertained standard deviation value was then used for computing the estimated sample size using the formula $n = (\sigma^2 \cdot z^2) / D^2$ where n = estimated sample size; σ = standard deviation; D = level of acceptable error (Level of significance); and z = standard variate. The actual sample size was arrived at after discounting for refusals (by respondents) and rejections (by researcher).

9.2. Pilot study conducted in Jakarta

The standard deviation value was computed from the average standard deviation values of the three statements for retail store loyalty and was found to be 0.610.

Z= Standard variate corresponding with D value = 1.96

Standard Deviation(σ)= 0.610 (obtained from pilot study)

D = alpha = 5% level of significance = 0.05

$n = [(0.610)^2 * (1.96)^2] / (0.05)^2 = 571.78 = 572$ hypermarket customers.

Proportionate Stratified sampling was employed wherein strata comprised customers shopping in respective outlets of each brand of hypermarkets.

The list of hypermarkets in the city of Jakarta was compiled including number of branches for each hypermarket. The ratio of each hypermarket to total stores was computed and the estimated sample size was proportionately distributed amongst these stores. **Table 2** shows the outlet wise distribution of sample size according to proportionate stratified sampling.

Table 2
Sampling

<i>Bengaluru Hypermarkets</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Jakarta Hypermarkets</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>
Auchan	136	Carrefour	366
Big Bazar	272	Lotte Mart	137
Hypercity	82	Giant Hero	69
Reliance Mart	54	Total	572
Star India Bazar	82		
Spencers Hyper	54		
More Megastore	108		
Total	788		

Source: Compiled by Researcher

9.3. Pilot study conducted in Bengaluru

Sample size is calculated using the formula $n = (\sigma^2 \cdot z^2) / D^2$ where

Z= Standard variate corresponding with D value = 1.96

Standard Deviation (σ)= 0.716 (obtained from pilot study)

D= alpha = 5% level of significance = 0.05

$n = [(0.716)^2 * (1.96)^2] / (0.05)^2 = 787.767 = 788$ hypermarket customers. **Table 2** shows the outlet wise distribution of sample size according to proportionate stratified sampling in Bengaluru.

10. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The Endogenous (Descriptive) variables are Service Convenience, Satisfaction, and Loyalty. The Exogenous (Operational) Variables are Shopping enjoyment, Environment quality, Familiarity & Treatment, Use of Technology/SST.

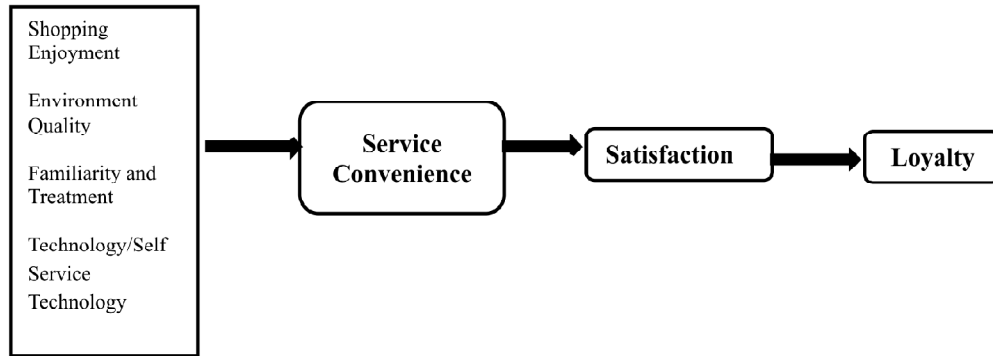


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

11. NULL HYPOTHESES

H_{01a} : Shopping enjoyment has no significant influence on Service Convenience in hypermarkets

H_{01b} : Environment quality has no significant influence on Service Convenience in hypermarkets

H_{01c} : Familiarity and treatment does not have significant influence on retail service convenience in hypermarkets

H_{01d} : Use of technology/SST does not have a significant influence on retail service convenience in hypermarkets

H_{02} : Retail service convenience has no influence on customer satisfaction in hypermarket setting.

H_{03} : Satisfaction has no significant influence on loyalty.

12. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

The Reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was found to be 0.944 and 0.892 for 31 items for the survey conducted in Bengaluru and Jakarta respectively.

13. STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING

Measurement Model: The measurement model indicated an acceptable model fit of the data. Table 6 gives the model fit indices.

Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted: Composite reliability (CR) of all the latent variables is greater than the acceptable limit of 0.70 (Carmines and Zeller, 1988). The average variance extracted for all the factors is greater than 0.5, which is acceptable (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). **Table 3** shows the values of CR and AVE of all the dependent and independent factors.

Table 3
CR & AVE Values

Constructs	Composite Reliability (CR)		Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	
	Jakarta	Bengaluru	Jakarta	Bengaluru
Shopping Enjoyment (SE)	0.79	0.80	0.52	0.54
Environment Quality (EQ)	0.87	0.87	0.67	0.69
Familiarity & Treatment (FT)	0.86	0.86	0.54	0.56
Self Service Technology (SST)	0.80	0.804	0.50	0.51
Service Convenience (SCON)	0.84	0.84	0.53	0.52
Satisfaction (Sat)	0.78	0.76	0.55	0.53
Loyalty (Loyal)	0.74	0.81	0.58	0.51

Source: Primary Data and AMOS output.

Discriminant Validity: **Tables 4 & 5** gives the correlation matrix which indicates the square roots of the AVE values of all the latent constructs are greater than the interconstruct correlations thereby supporting the discriminant validity of the constructs for both the countries.

Table 4
Correlation Matrix for Discriminant Validity (Jakarta)

	SE	EQ	FT	SST	SCON	SAT	LOYAL
SE	0.72						
EQ	0.586	0.81					
FT	0.566	0.71	0.74				
SST	0.585	0.689	0.628	0.70			
SCON	0.715	0.617	0.674	0.602	0.73		
SAT	0.654	0.658	0.584	0.567	0.72	0.74	
LOYAL	0.678	0.448	0.476	0.347	0.745	0.733	0.76

Source: Primary Data and AMOS output.

Structural Model & Hypotheses Testing- Structural equation modeling was used to estimate the parameters of the structural model. Goodness of fit statistics of the structural model were acceptable. Table 6 gives the model fit indices and Table 7 gives the results of hypotheses testing.

Table 5
Correlation Matrix for Discriminant Validity (Bengaluru)

	SE	EQ	FT	TECH	SCON	SAT	LOYAL
SE	0.734						
EQ	0.608	0.830					
FT	0.579	0.658	0.75				
TECH	0.595	0.698	0.63	0.714			
SCON	0.704	0.612	0.675	0.591	0.721		
SAT	0.668	0.654	0.593	0.571	0.643	0.728	
LOYAL	0.660	0.438	0.472	0.329	0.698	0.629	0.714

Source: Primary Data and AMOS output.

Table 6
Measurement and Structural Model Fit Indices

	Measurement Model		Structural Model		Acceptable Values
	Indonesia	India	Indonesia	India	
χ^2	267.786	297.314	329	321.415	-
df	137	155	179	299	-
p	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	-
χ^2 / df	1.954	1.918	1.84	1.068	<2
CFI	0.932	0.932	0.943	0.923	>0.9
TLI	0.916	0.90	0.916	0.89	>0.9
IFI	0.94	0.93	0.92	0.91	>0.9
NFI	0.825	0.82	0.84	0.81	>0.9
PNFI	0.71	0.70	0.73	0.69	>0.9
PCFI	0.75	0.75	0.82	0.74	>0.9
RMSEA	0.052	0.040	0.048	0.038	<0.08

Source: Primary Data and AMOS output.

Table 7
Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesized Paths	Jakarta	Result	Bengaluru	Result
	Standardized Path Coefficients		Standardized Path Coefficients	
H ₀₁ : SE=>SCON	0.499	***	0.508	***
H ₀₂ : ENQ=> SCON	0.168	***	0.139	***
H ₀₃ : FT=> SCON	0.396	***	0.402	***
H ₀₄ : TECH=> SCON	0.124	***	0.161	***
H ₀₅ : SCON=>SAT	0.740	***	0.724	***
H ₀₆ : SAT=>LOYAL	0.857	***	0.856	***

*** Null hypothesis is accepted as it is significant at $p < 0.001$.

Source: Primary Data.

14. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

14.1. Survey of Hypermarket Customers in Bengaluru, India

The standardized path coefficients of Shopping Enjoyment (0.508) represent significant influence of this variable on Service Convenience and the coefficients of Environment Quality (0.139), Familiarity & Treatment (0.402) and Use of Technology (0.161) represent moderate influence of these variables on Service Convenience.

The standardized path coefficient of Service Convenience (0.724) represents significant influence of this variable on Satisfaction.

The standardized path coefficient of Satisfaction (0.856) represents significant influence of this variable on Store Loyalty.

The top five variables (highest rating) influencing Service Consumption experience are importance of these hypermarkets, products that are offered are important, recommendation to others, strong personal interest in such store and pleasant and comfortable shopping environment. The bottom five variables (lowest rating) influencing Service consumption experience are SMS promotion alerts, strong personal interest in such hypermarkets, kiosks with touchscreen displays, special privilege for regular visits and added benefits to familiar customers.

13.2. Survey of Hypermarket Customers in Jakarta, Indonesia

The standardized path coefficients of Shopping Experience (0.499) represent significant influence of this variable on Service Convenience and the coefficients of Environment Quality (0.168), Familiarity & Treatment (0.369) and Self Service Technology (0.135) represent moderate influence of these variables on Service Convenience.

The standardized path coefficient of Service Convenience (0.734) represents significant influence of this variable on Satisfaction.

The standardized path coefficient of Satisfaction (0.875) represents significant influence of this variable on Store Loyalty.

The top five variables (highest rating) influencing Service Convenience are Convenience due to SST, preference to shop at stores with SST, shopping enjoyment at stores due to convenience and fun, courteous and helpful hypermarket personnel and attractive architecture of the store with good lighting arrangements. The bottom five variables (lowest rating) influencing Service Convenience are SMS promotion alerts, regular shopping at the outlet makes it more convenient, free and spacious layouts and less overcrowding.

For both the surveys it is found that the calculated p value was greater than 0.05; Goodness of Fit index (GFI) value, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) value and Comparative Fit index (CFI) value were greater than 0.9 indicating a very good fit. It was found that Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value was minimal.

15. CONCLUSION

This research has helped to assess the antecedents influencing Service Convenience and also its consequents in the retail format of hypermarkets in India and Indonesia. It has actually served as another measurement technique to assess how service convenience management leads to patronage intentions loyalty in hypermarkets and thereby retaining customers by increasing their convenience in the entire process of shopping.

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