Marketing Strategy 2011-2016
& Action Plan

aqaba
RED SEA WADI RUM·PETRA

The Process

- **Research** √
- **Consultation** ←
- **Writing Marketing Strategy**
- **Writing Action Plan**
- **Assist with implementation**

Not a presentation of the strategy -

A consultation opportunity

<u>We need your input</u>

Vision for Aqaba

- **To make Aqaba a world-class place to live, learn, work and visit.**
- **To transform Aqaba into an important regional and international hub, with thriving business as well as holiday traffic, an attractive place to live, work and visit.**

Vision for Tourism to Aqaba

1. **Aqaba will become a premier international holiday and residential tourism destination with a variety of quality experiences on the Red Sea and seamless links to Petra and Wadi Rum.**

Vision for Tourism to Aqaba

2. Aqaba aspires to become a leading holiday and meetings destination where visitors enjoy a relaxed atmosphere in a quality environment which offers a wide range of authentic experiences.

Mission Statement for ASEZA Tourism (1)

- **To build the sustainable success of Tourism to Aqaba -**

  with dedication, commitment and in joint partnership with all tourism stakeholders.

Mission Statement for ASEZA Tourism (2/3)

- **To deliver economic, employment and social benefits through tourism, and to stimulate product improvement.**
- **To enhance the attractiveness of Aqaba as a differentiated and branded international destination that can compete effectively in global markets.**

To achieve the Mission Statement, ASEZA has to:

- **Develop a strong brand in all major source markets**
- **Provide professional, cost effective marketing**
- **Strengthen cooperation with the private sector**
- **Provide accurate and helpful tourist information**
- **Provide market intelligence to stakeholders on the basis of customer research in order to help them enhance quality and competitiveness**

Aqaba's Brand Values

- **Historic: Castle, Ayla, oldest church, Great Arab Revolt, + Petra**
- **Active: events, special interests, soft adventure, desert explorations and sports, especially diving**
- **Relaxed: atmosphere, attitude of locals, beach**

The brand feelings to be projected:

***relaxation, simplicity, freedom, community, adventure* and *mystery*.**

USPs – Real Competitive Advantages

- As a regional touring base
- Cultural aspects (genuine living community with rich history)
- Diving (for those seeking personal service and uncrowded waters)
- As a cruise liner stop.

Positioning

- **Aqaba is a historic and colourful Red Sea city with traditional culture, an ideal centre for water sports, diving and other activities as well as for relaxing, and an ideal touring base from which to visit the beauties of Petra and the spectacular desert scenery of Wadi Rum.**

SWOT Analysis

A summary of Aqaba's

- **S**trengths
- **W**eaknesses
- **O**pportunities
- **T**hreats

Strengths (1)

- Arab character, history, heritage
- Proximity to Petra, Wadi Rum. Good roads
- Climate
- Red Sea – water sports and diving. Quiet waters good for children
- Excellent crossroads location close to several countries – good spread of potential source markets

Strengths (2)

- Good airport capacity
- Deep water port suitable for cruise ships
- Good security – safe and relaxed atmosphere. No hassling of tourists (taxis?)
- Sole national seaside access for Jordanians
- Range of authentic experiences on offer – desert/adventure tourism

Weaknesses (1)

- Heritage poorly presented, under-exploited
- Limited beach access (but provision being made for tourist beach in South)
- Lack of entertainments, nightclubs, cinemas, attractions and cultural events. Need for a flagship attraction (aquarium – Marsa Zayed)
- Difficult to find suitable staff

Weaknesses (2)

- Intrusive industry & development near some tourist areas (being addressed by moving port)
- Duty free status underexploited. Shopping product not organised and low quality
- No cruise terminal (but planned)
- Inadequate MICE facilities (but planned)

Weaknesses (3)

- Acute shortage of direct flights. Poor connections. Open skies underexploited
- Poor utilisation of JTB opportunities, especially overseas
- Slow implementation of decisions. Poor communications to stakeholders. Need to involve SMEs in decision making, & to build up community support

Weaknesses (4)

- Public transport needs improvement
- No city walking tour (but is there enough product yet anyway?)
- Poor signage
- Hygiene needs improvement
- Litter in centre and underwater.

FRIENDS OF IRONY

Threats (1)

- Two speed Aqaba (gated luxury communities - city centre left behind)
- Underperformance with events program in 2011 – negative customer feedback
- Development of all inclusive packages bringing low spend mass tourism
- Construction sites detracting from attractiveness

Threats (2)

- Too many five star hotels competing for limited top end of holiday market
- Major expansion of resorts in Egypt leading to intensified price war
- Competition from Dead Sea, especially for MICE business (Conference Centre)

Threats (3)

- Excessive development of holiday homes creating a ghost town atmosphere in low season
- Pollution accident/ reef damage
- “Double dip” recession
- Tension & instability in region. Further deterioration of political climate

Maybe even Global Warming?

Opportunities (1)

- Demographics & evolving tourism motivations ("experiential") in traditional source markets. Independent (car hire?)
- In the medium term for Aqaba - emerging new markets, e.g. E. Europe, India, China. World tourism will continue to grow
- Increase in intra-regional travel
- Maturity of Mediterranean resorts

Opportunities (2)

- **Wide range of quality product in pipeline: conference centre, golf course(s), tourist beach & cruise terminal**
- **Potential to develop into a major hub for the region, not just a holiday break destination. Needs high profile attractions and entertainment + better facilities for residents/expatriates as well as for visitors**

Opportunities (3)

- Aqaba 2011 Events Programme. Increase awareness with tour operators & build repeat business. Encourage widespread use of logo. Potential for outdoor events
- Realise Open Skies & airport expansion potential. Promote destination to airlines (especially LCCs) and offer time-limited tactical charter support

Opportunities (4)

- Plaza area, castle, museum, Ayla, oldest church & central shopping area upgrade. Develop souk & Fishermen’s Harbour
- Improve signage & public transport. Start walking tours
- Set up duty free shopping area. Entry by showing passport

Opportunities (5)

- Intensify clean-up campaign & implement quality control. Continue to improve beaches. Aim to become a truly green eco-city medium term
- Staff training & capacity building, particularly for SMEs

Opportunities (6)

- More proactive marketing in partnership with the industry. Public Private Partnership
- Develop stakeholder supported action plan, with preapproved budgets & streamlined implementation authority
- Detailed service contract with JTB

Aims (1)

- To broaden the awareness of Aqaba as a holiday base, as a quality diving centre, as a soft adventure destination, as a cruise liner port, & as a potential gateway to Petra, Wadi Rum, Jordan and the region
- To promote market growth and competitiveness

Aims (2)

- To ensure the development of a diverse range of quality products and services to enhance the visitor experience and encourage repeat visits
- To develop world-class events, building on Aqaba's nomination as Arab City of Tourism 2011, but ensuring continuity into subsequent years

Aims (3)

- To integrate best practice market research into all activities, thus ensuring a constant improvement in performance and the progressive strengthening of the destination
- To expand the use of environmental best practice

Aims (4)

- To promote tourism awareness, improving customer service and delivery
- To ensure that all activity of Aseza Tourism Directorate is customer focused with realistic objectives and evaluation mechanisms
- To provide quality service to the tourism industry & develop effective joint promotions with partners, including JTB

Key Marketing Objectives
1. Access 2. Increase benefits

- To improve access by boosting air carrier services (scheduled and charter) through KHIA
- To increase the number of visitors, length of stay and expenditure of visitors in Aqaba

Key Marketing Objectives
3. Partnership 4. Events

- To maximize marketing efficacy by working in closer partnership with JTB and with the industry
- To use Aqaba's nomination as Arab Tourism Capital 2011 as an opportunity to create a strong & sustainable events programme

Targets per Objective: Access

- Maintain all existing charters from primary markets
- Increase passengers on charter flights by 20% per annum
- At least 3 regular direct international flights by 2012 and 5 by 2015

Targets per Objective: Benefits

- Increase visitor numbers by 12% in 2011 (Arab Tourism Capital) and 10% in each subsequent year
- Increase average length of stay by 0.3 nights each year until 3 is reached in 2013, then by 0.2 per annum in subsequent years

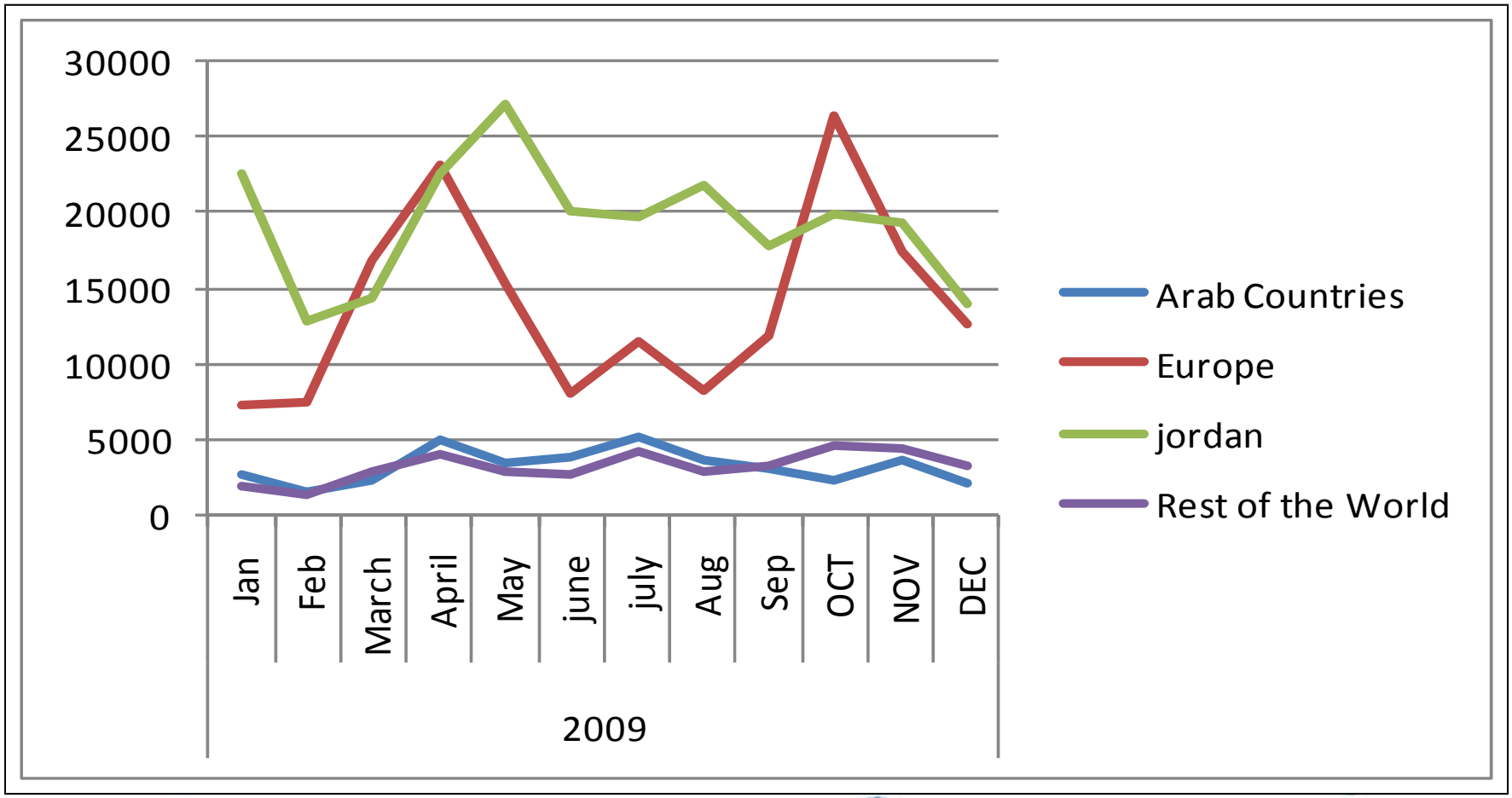
Targets per Objective: Partnership

- Agree a detailed service contract with JTB each year
- Set up marketing structure led by stakeholders early in 2011
- At least five joint marketing schemes each year with international operators

Targets per Objective: Events

- **Create 3 high profile events in 2011 which are then repeated on an annual basis throughout the life of the strategy.**

Seasonality?



Other Annual Targets - Action Plan

- Number of media representatives hosted and resultant coverage
- Number of tour operators hosted and resultant programmes
- Trade shows to be attended and number of contacts to be made at each
- Website hits and conversion to bookings
- Information requests answered

Target Markets: Priority

- **Western and Northern Europe: Benelux, France, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, Spain, UK**
- **Russia**
- **Arab Markets: GCC, Lebanon & Syria**
- **Domestic**

Target Markets: Secondary

- USA
- Eastern Europe: Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Slovenia
- Emerging tourism tigers (China, India)

Market Segmentation: Visitor Preferences

- Authentic experiences - dinner with Bedouins, desert mystery
- Culture - local food, crafts, music, customs
- History - Castle, Great Arab Revolt, Petra
- Adventure activities and special interests - diving, watersports, trekking, boating, jeeps, camels, aero sports, birdwatching
- Relaxation - climate, beach

Market Segmentation

- **Not all segments will be targeted in all markets**
- **Education: medium to high**
- **Profession: middle and upper management, entrepreneurs**

Aqaba cannot – and should not want to – compete in the Sharm/Benidorm market

CRUZCAMPO

Prime Segments: Best Agers

- **Between 50 and 70 years old. Very important growth segment -**

  by 2020 a third of the population of Germany and more than 1/4 of the population of France & UK will be 60+

Prime Segments: Families

Middle to high income. Two groups:

- **young European families with 1-2 pre-teen children**
- **at weekends & during local holiday periods, Jordanian/regional families normally larger in numbers**

Prime Segments: DINKS

Double income no kids:

- **High-earning couples without children (either the children are grown up or the couple does not have children), therefore able to afford a more expensive lifestyle**

Prime Segments: Affinity Groups

- Share a common interest, support each other, sometimes work together
- Sporting & special interest clubs, senior organizations, & other groupings are easy to target & resilient in times of crisis
- Vast variety of possibilities - culture, history, sports, nature and adventure …..

MICE?

- Excellent geographical location
- At the moment lacks sufficient venues & ancillary services
- When new Saraya Convention Centre comes on stream, this target segment will be of high importance for Aqaba, both regionally and internationally

Market Mix – Facilitation because (1)

- Destination marketing budgets seldom adequate
- Private sector support essential to achieve goals
- Can reach up to 10% of visitors through promotional campaigns, but virtually all through various types of facilitation

Market Mix – Facilitation because (2)

- Destination has range of areas, products & segments with different priorities
- Government Objectives typically expressed in economic, social & environmental terms. Industry has clear targets & marketing expertise

Facilitators

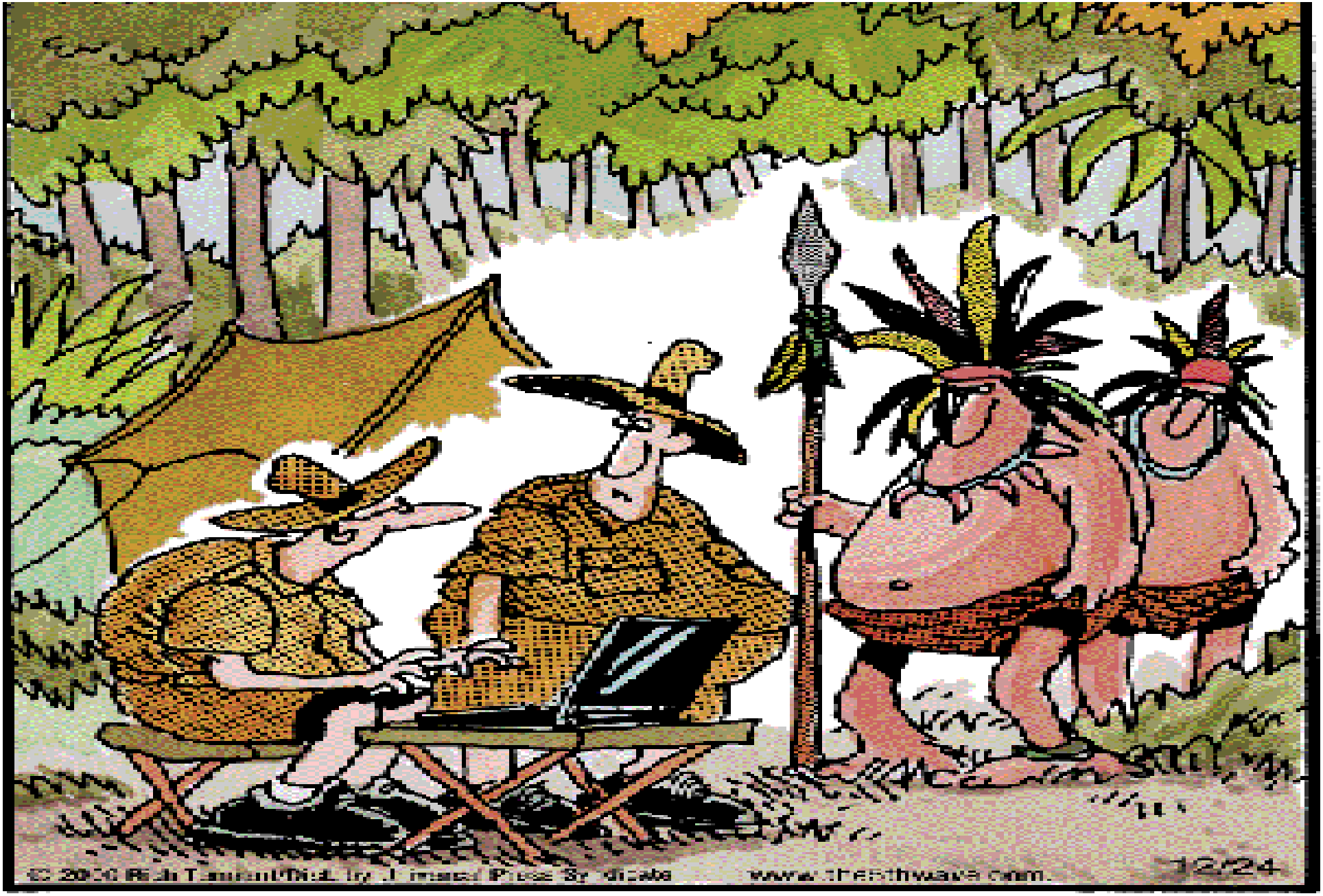
- Airlines (including LCCs)
- Tour Operators & Travel Agents
- Jordanian & Regional Handling Agents
- Cruise Operators
- Media

Via

- Trade Exhibitions
- Hosted Study Visits
- Joint Schemes
- Newsletters/ b2b web
- JTB

Consumers

- Research → Product Quality & Development (including events)
- Advertising (normally shared)
- Information/Print
- Website/emarketing (including social networking)



"He saw your laptop and wants to know if he can check his Hotmail."

Next Steps

- Your verbal comments/questions now
- Written comments by 10th September to timcbartlett@hotmail.com
- Modifications to reflect your input
- Finalisation Strategy - end September
- Finalisation Action Plan - end October
- Implementation starts 1st Jan. 2011

WOW!

Thank you for your attention

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