

E-Commerce Of Micro & Small Enterprises in Hochiminh

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess and evaluate the industrial practice of e-commerce of Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs) in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. To attain the objectives of this research, questionnaires were used in gathering data. The profile of the entrepreneurs and staff and industry-related factors includes age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, number of training programs and or seminar attended, types of business & ownership, types of enterprise products in e-commerce, online transactions, forms of business organization, location, start-up capital, the present capital, sources of capital, number of workers, length of years in operation, average monthly sales, assistance received, forms of assistance, number of assistance received and memberships of trading associations. The level of practice of the e-commerce of the entrepreneurs and staff were gathered from their human resources, capital and marketing management. In addition, the output of the level of e-commerce practice was measured in terms of human resources and marketing management of the Micro and Small enterprises.

The respondents of the study were 250 entrepreneurs and 250 staff of the enterprises belong to four categories of Food & Beverage, Clothing, Home appliances and Health & Pharmacy in Ho Chi Minh city. The statistical tools were frequency counts and percentage, weighted mean, multiple regression analysis and frequency count and ranking to identify the influence of the profiles of respondents and industry-related profile to the level of e-commerce practice as well as the influence of e-commerce practice to the output of human resource and marketing management.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the renovation of economy in Vietnam starting in 1986 the Vietnamese government opened its door to foreign investors and created policies and environment to boom the development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) which now are essential components of the economy of Vietnam, a developing country. MSMEs have functioned as key factor of the national economy which occupied 97.6 % of total enterprises and contributed from 24.5% in 2000 to 33.3% in 2006 and to 50% GDP in 2016 (VCCI, 2017).

The MSMEs have striven to adapt to the evolving world economy and in order to succeed, it is essential that Vietnamese SMEs be open to new techniques, in particular the Internet and e-commerce and just over the last few years, some Vietnamese enterprises have adopted e-commerce and are already benefiting from it. From the first connection to the Internet in November 1997, the internet usage in Vietnam has achieved positive increase in 20 years and it is among the countries with the most internet users in the Asia Pacific region. In 2021, the number of internet users was approximately 69 million out of the total of its population of 96 million. Internet usage in Vietnam is predominantly mobile-based, thanks to the high smartphone rate. According to the survey of Vietnam E-commerce and Digital Economy Agency in July 2018, the first preferred internet connection devices were laptop & smartphone with the ratio of 75 and 65%. In addition, the quantity of users having tablets has significantly increased to 19% from 2014 to 2016. The revenue of e-commerce in Vietnam in 2021 reached about 13.7 billion USD, up 16% compared to 2020 and accounting for 6.5% of total retail revenue. As of March 2022, there were 1,446 e-commerce exchanges registered to operate with the Ministry of Industry and Trade. There is a big gap of e-commerce among big cities and the rest where Hanoi city and Ho Chi Minh city only account for more than 16% of the national population, they account for about 70% of the country's e-commerce scale. Meanwhile, the remaining 61 provinces and cities account for more than 83% of the population but only about 30% of the e-commerce scale. There has been rapidly change of internet connection devices from desktop with 84% users in 2010 to 33% in 2017 and Mobile phone is the first choice of internet users with 72% of Vietnamese population according to 2017 statistics from Google. As smartphones are key to conduct E-commerce activities online, the rise of smartphone ownership will have a profound effect on the E-commerce landscape. Almost 90% of Vietnamese internet users approach internet at their own homes and the second popular connection location is at work meanwhile the others are 22%, 16% and 5% at public areas, schools, and internet shops accordingly. The main purposes of internet users are joining social network (81.2%), reading email (73.8%), watching film & listening music (64.8%), learning (63.9%) and purchasing (36.2%).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

In theory and in practice, the basic criterion for classifying small and medium sized enterprises is based on the strength of the labor force capital. With criteria as such, small and medium-sized enterprises can be classified into micro-sized enterprises, small-sized enterprises, and medium-sized enterprises.

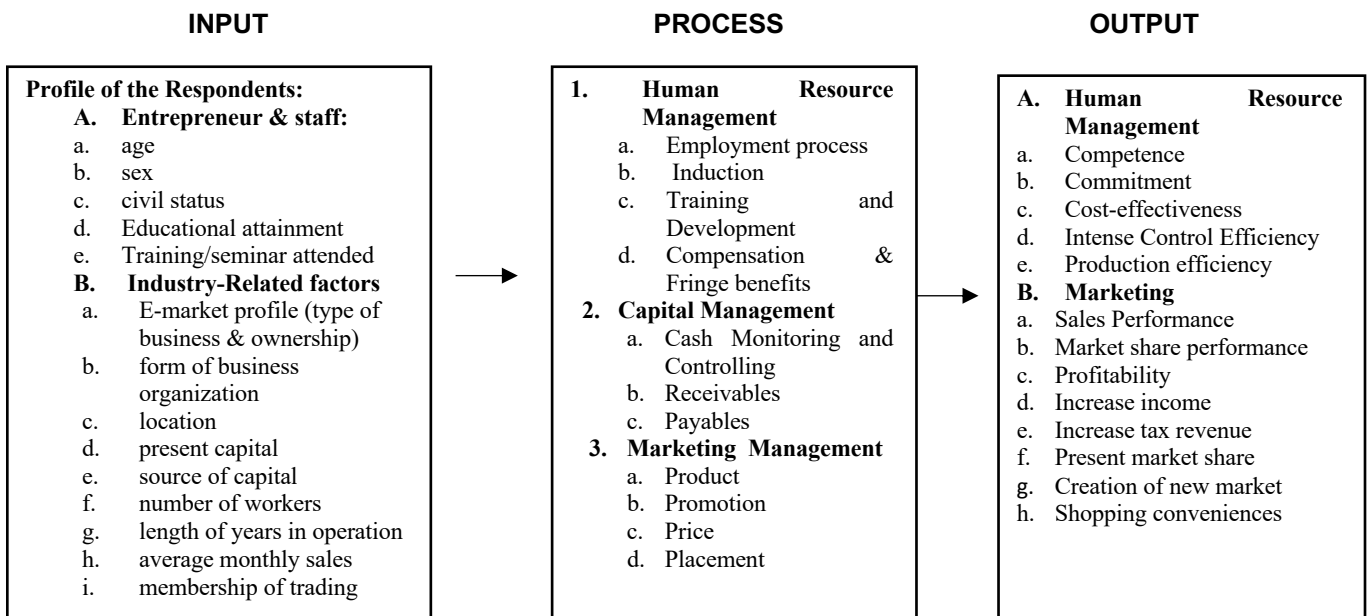
Depending on the country, the size of the enterprise can be categorized based on the number of employees, annual sales, assets, or any combination of these. It may also vary from industry to industry.

In Vietnam, the definition of Small & Medium-sized enterprises is regulated by article 3, Decree No 56/2009/ND-CP as the businesses that have business registration in accordance with law and be divided into three levels: micro, small and medium scale total capital (total capital equivalent to total assets is determined in the balance sheet of enterprises) or number of employees per year (total funding is the priority criteria), as follows:

Sector	Micro		Small		Medium	
	Number of laborers	Total capital	Number of laborers	Total capital	Number of laborers	
I. Agriculture, forestry and fishery	10 persons or fewer	VND 20 billion or less	Between over 10 persons and 200 persons	Between over VND 20 billion and VND 100 billion	Between over 200 persons and 300 persons	
II. Industry and construction	10 persons or fewer	VND 20 billion or less	Between over 10 persons and 200 persons	Between over VND 20 billion and VND 100 billion	Between over 200 persons and 300 persons	
III. Trade and service	10 persons or fewer	VND 10 billion or less	Between over 10 persons and 50 persons	Between over VND 10 billion and VND 50 billion	Between over 50 persons and 100 persons	

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This research inquiry utilizes the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model as a research paradigm in the conduct of the study.



4. METHODOLOGY

The study adapted the questionnaires to gathering data. The profile of the entrepreneurs and staff and industry-related factors includes age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, number of training programs and or seminar attended, types of business & ownership, types of enterprise products in e-commerce, online transactions, forms of business organization, location, start-up capital, the present capital, sources of capital, number of workers, length

of years in operation, average monthly sales, assistance received, forms of assistance, number of assistance received and memberships of trading associations. The level of practice of the e-commerce of the entrepreneurs and staff were gathered from their human resources, capital and marketing management. In addition, the output of the level of e-commerce practice was measured in terms of human resources and marketing management of the Micro and Small enterprises.

The respondents of the study were 250 entrepreneurs and 250 staff of the enterprises belong to four categories of Food & Beverage, Clothing, Home appliances and Health & Pharmacy in Ho Chi Minh city.

The statistical tools were frequency counts and percentage, weighted mean, multiple regression analysis and frequency count and ranking to identify the influence of the profiles of respondents and industry-related profile to the level of e-commerce practice as well as the influence of e-commerce practice to the output of human resource and marketing management.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found out key findings includes:

Majority of the entrepreneurs are male, belong to the age bracket 35-49 years, married, colleague graduates and attended training in e-commerce. The e-commerce industries are association forms of business organization and located in urban areas. The enterprises have limited owned websites and mainly use social platforms and Google networks to implement e-marketing and trading of food & beverage, clothing, home appliances and health services. The e-transactions use payment through bank accounts in together with email transactions. Majority of the industries are in the form of single proprietorship registered in the Investment & Planning department in Ho Chi Minh city. The capital has business operated with from 200 to 500 million VND combining their personal capital with borrowed capital mainly from bank as mortgage loans. The enterprises have six to fifteen workers and less than 5 years in operation of e-commerce industries. The monthly sales revenue is from 51 to 200 million VND with a shortage of assistance from governmental authorities and NGOs. The enterprise receives assistance mainly from e-marketing partners and they are participating at least three and above trading organizations.

5.1 Sub-problem No1. What is the profile of the Small & Micro enterprises, entrepreneurs in Ho Chi Minh City

On sex. Majority of the entrepreneurs (143 or 57.2%) are male while the females are 105 (or 42.8%).

On Age of entrepreneurs. 106 or 42.4% of entrepreneurs are in the age of 35-49 years. 67 or 26.8% is in the age bracket of 54-60. 42 or 16.8% belongs to the age bracket of 21-34. The rest (35 or 14%) belongs to the age bracket of 65 and above.

On Civil Status. Majority of entrepreneur respondents (210 or 84%) are married, 27 or 10.8% is single, and just 13 or 5.2% is widows and widowers.

On Educational Attainment. A majority of the entrepreneurs (119 or 47.6%) is colleague graduates. 103 (41.2%) is high school graduates. 18 (7.2%) is elementary graduates, and 10 (4%) is post-graduation.

On Number of Training Programs/Seminar Attended. All of the respondents both entrepreneurs and staff have attended at least 3 times of training program/seminars on provincial, national levels.

On E-market profile. 32 or 12.8% of entrepreneurs have no website. 116 or 46.4% applies their discounts and promotion via some Marketing Mobile App Platforms.

On Types of Enterprise Products in E-commerce. A majority (115 or 46%) of entrepreneurs are in Food and Beverage products. 76 or 30.4% is in Clothing & Fashion products. 31 or 12.4% is in health & pharmacy and the fourth (28 or 11.2%) is in home appliances.

On-Line Transactions. Almost of industries (250 or 100%) open bank accounts, A larger number of entrepreneurs conduct their e-commerce service by using Telesales (215 or 86%).

On Form of Business Organization. Majority of the industries (99 or 39.6%) of the e-commerce services are in the form of Single Proprietorship registered in the Investment & Planning department in Ho Chi Minh city.

On Location. A majority is in city centre (173 or 69.2%). The rest is in suburb (77 or 30.8%).

On Start-up Capital. Majority of the respondents (96 or 38.4%) have start-up capital lasting from 201 to 500 million Vietnamese Dong (VND) in equivalent with from 8,739 to 21,739USD at the current time of Aug 2022 (1USD is equal 23,000VND). 49 or 19.6% of them have from 51 to 200 million VND. The lowest star-up capital is in from 10 to 50 million VND (32 or 12.8%).

On Present Capital (vnd). The study records significant changes of present capital in comparison with the start-up capital in the middle-up group in which the majority portion (98 or 39.25) have their own present capital from 501 million to 1 billion VND.

On Sources of Capital. Majority of entrepreneurs (121 or 48.4%) combine their personal capital with borrowed capital mainly from bank as mortgage loans. 26 or 10% uses their own personal capital. 43 or 17.2% uses borrowing capital from their relatives and friends.

On Number of workers. A majority (127 or 50.8%) of entrepreneurs have six to fifteen workers. 40 or 16% of them have one to five workers. 35 or 24% of them have sixteen to thirty workers. 31 or 12.4% of them have 31 to 50 workers. 17 or 6.8% of them have fifty-one and above workers.

On Length of years in Operation. 178 or 71.2% has less five years of e-commerce business operation (178 or 71.2%). 51 or 20.4% has six to ten years. 21 or 8.4% has more than ten years in operation.

On Average Monthly Sales. Majority of entrepreneurs (134 or 53.6%) have 51 million to 200 million VND. 36 or 14.4% has below 50 million VND. 38 or 15.2% has 201 million to 1 billion VND. 26 or 10.4% has more than 1 billion to 5 billion VND, 16 or 6.4% has more than 5 billion VND.

On Assistance Received. There is just a minority of e-commerce entrepreneurs (44 or 17.6%) having assistance from government agencies.

On Form of Assistance. Majority of e-commerce entrepreneurs (110 or 44%) have marketing assistance from their digital partners and digital business platforms as Facebook, Zalo, Google. 54 or 21.6% has financial assistance and another significant percentage of 30 or 12% gained technological assistance from the local governmental agencies and their own partners. 30 or 12% e-commerce industries has other forms of assistance.

On The Number of Assistance Received. 170 or 68% has five to nine assistances. 60 or 24% has below three times of assistance.

On Membership in Trading Organization. Majority of e-commerce industries (87 or 34.8%) have joined three and below trading organizations.

5.2. Sub-Problem No.2. What is the level of e-commerce practice of the Micro & Small enterprises in terms of the Human Resource Management, Capital Management and Marketing Management

5.2.1. Human Resources

The e-commerce practice of Micro & Small enterprises along human resources management on the the implementation of the employment process, induction, training and development and compensation and fringe benefits have high level (\bar{X} =3.42). There is a moderate level of e-commerce practice of the employment process (\bar{X} =3.00) and the induction (\bar{X} =3.25) meanwhile there is high level of e-commerce practice of the training & development (\bar{X} =3.62) and the compensation and fringe benefits (\bar{X} =3.80). In the variable of training & development, the on-job training and coaching activities for workers in relevance with the company's e-commerce & online marketing improvement has very high mean rating of 4.24 which is come from both entrepreneurs (\bar{X} =4.24) and staff (\bar{X} =4.23). In the variable of employment process, the best sources of securing satisfactory workers to be done through on-line performance monitoring system provided in the website has very low level of mean rating (\bar{X} =1.82).

Table 1: The level of E-commerce practice of Enterprises along Human Resources Management

Human Resources Management	Entrepreneurs		Staff		As a Whole	
	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR
Employment process	3.08	SO	2.92	SO	3.00	SO
Induction	3.25	SO	3.24	SO	3.25	SO
Training and Development	3.64	OF	3.60	OF	3.62	OF
Compensation and Fringe Benefits	3.88	OF	3.71	OF	3.80	OF
Overall	3.46	OF	3.37	SO	3.42	OF

5.2.2. Capital Management

The Micro & Small enterprises have moderate level of e-commerce practice (\bar{X} =3.11) in the implementation of monitoring & controlling cash budget, receivables and payables along the capital management. There is a significant gap between the level of e-commerce practice of Monitoring and Controlling Cash Budget (\bar{X} =3.30) in comparison with the e-commerce practice of receivables (\bar{X} =3.97) and the e-commerce practice of payables (\bar{X} =3.01).

Especially, the receivable to be done via e-commerce tools has very high level of e-commerce practice ($\bar{X}=4.27$) which is contributed by the staff ($\bar{X}=4.32$) and the entrepreneurs ($\bar{X}=4.22$).

Table 2: Summary of the level of the e-commerce practice of entrepreneurs along Capital Management

Capital Management	Entrepreneur		Staff		As a whole	
	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR
Monitoring and Controlling Cash Budget	3.30	SO	3.16	SO	3.23	SO
Receivables	2.97	SO	3.07	SO	2.99	SO
Payables	3.01	SO	3.18	SO	3.10	SO
Overall	3.09	SO	3,14	SO	3.11	SO

5.2.3. Marketing management

The level of practice of e-commerce of Micro & Small enterprises along the marketing management is moderate in the implementation of product, promotion, price and placement ($\bar{X}=3.33$). There is a substantial difference between the process of promotion ($\bar{X}=3.70$) in comparison with the others as products ($\bar{X}=3.16$), price ($\bar{X}=3.05$) and placement ($\bar{X}=3.09$). In the variable of product, the delivery supports to buyers in time and quality as committed on e-commerce website has very high level of practice ($\bar{X}=4.29$) and in the variable of price, the discount mechanism in the e-commerce of the enterprise products for large volume of purchase has very high level of 4.39.

Table 3: The level of the e-commerce practice of the entrepreneurs along marketing management

Marketing Management	Entrepreneur		Staff		As a whole	
	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR
Product	3.16	SO	3.18	SO	3.17	SO
Promotion	3.70	OF	3.59	OF	3.65	OF
Price	3.05	SO	3.65	OF	3.35	SO
Placement	3.07	SO	3.22	SO	3.15	SO
Overall	3.25	SO	3,41	SO	3.33	SO

5.3. Sub-problem No.3. What is the perceived output of the e-commerce practice along the components of human resource management & marketing management in Micro & Small enterprises

5.3.1. Human Resource Management

The output of e-commerce practice along human resource management is in high level with an overall mean rating score of 3.47. The output of e-commerce practice is high on competence ($\bar{X}=3.87$), commitment ($\bar{X}=3.61$) and production efficiency ($\bar{X}=4.51$). Meanwhile, the output on cost-effectiveness ($\bar{X}=3.19$) and Intense control efficiency ($\bar{X}=3.18$) are just in moderate level.

The evaluation of entrepreneurs and staff in the practice of e-commerce in the e-commerce integration that resulted to the work effectively in business production is very high ($\bar{X}=4.23$). In addition, the output on the commitment of e-commerce workers to do right things for improving the e-commerce performance ($\bar{X}=4.24$) and the output of e-commerce practice to improve the attitude and behaviors of e-commerce workers ($\bar{X}=4.24$) are very high also. Furthermore, the enterprise has got better performance with e-commerce application in comparison with the past ($\bar{X}=4.23$); And the e-commerce resulted to an increase of awareness in sharing of the responsibility through a safe, healthy and productive workplace ($\bar{X}=4.35$).

Table 4: Summary of the output of e-commerce practice along human resource management

Items	Entrepreneur		Staff		As a whole	
	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR
Competence	3.91	H	3.82	H	3.87	H
Commitment	3.50	H	3.72	H	3.61	H
Cost-effectiveness	3.07	M	3.30	M	3.19	M
Intense control efficiency	3.24	M	3.11	M	3.18	M
Production efficiency	3.56	H	3.46	H	3.51	H
Sub - mean	3.46	H	3.48	H	3.47	H

5.3.2. Output of the E-commerce practice of Micro & Small enterprises along the Marketing Management

The output of e-commerce practice along the marketing management is in moderate level ($\bar{X}=3.37$) in which the highlight variable is shopping convenience with a high level of output ($\bar{X} = 3.75$) as a results of the application of e-commerce practice including e-technologies in online marketing, e-product displaying, merchandising, online payment via Visa, ATM cards and e-wallets that attract and satisfy the online customers in local market. Furthermore, the output of e-commerce practice on market share is in high level ($\bar{X} = 3.49$). The output of e-commerce practice on other processes are all in moderate level including: sales performance ($\bar{X} = 3.49$), market profitability ($\bar{X} = 3.25$), increase income ($\bar{X} = 3.25$), increase tax revenue ($\bar{X} = 3.23$). present market share ($\bar{X} = 3.23$), and creation of new market ($\bar{X} = 3.28$).

Table 5. Summary of the perceived output of e-commerce practice along marketing management

Marketing Management	Entrepreneur		Staff		As a whole	
	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR	\bar{X}	DR
Sales Performance	3.51	H	3.29	M	3.40	M
Market share	3.87	H	3.11	M	3.49	H
Market Profitability	3.22	M	3.27	M	3.25	M
Increase income	3.14	M	3.55	H	3.35	M
Increase tax revenue	3.32	M	3.13	M	3.23	M
Present market share	3.32	M	3.13	M	3.23	M
Creation of new market	3.39	M	3.16	M	3.28	M
Shopping conveniences	3.53	H	3.96	H	3.75	H
Overall	3.41	H	3.33	M	3.37	M

6. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

6..1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- 6.1.1. Majority of the entrepreneurs are male, belong to the age bracket 35-49 years, married, colleague graduates and attended training in e-commerce. The e-commerce industries are association form of business organization and located in urban areas. The enterprises have limited owned websites and mainly use social platforms and Google networks to implement e-marketing and trading of food & beverage, clothing, home appliances and health services. The e-transactions use payment through bank accounts in together with email transactions. Majority of the industries are in the form of single proprietorship registered in the Investment & Planning department in Ho Chi Minh city. The capital has business operated with from 200 to 500 million VND combining their personal capital with borrowed capital mainly from bank as mortgage loans. The enterprises have six to fifteen workers and less then 5 years in operation of e-commerce industries. The monthly sales revenue is from 51 to 200 million VND with a shortage of assistance from governmental authorities and NGOs. The enterprise receives assistance mainly from e-marketing partners and they are participating at least three and above trading organizations.
- 6.1.2. The level of practice of e-commerce of the entrepreneurs and staff is in high level along human resources management in utilization of e-marketing tools & e-technical platforms via websites and social network on the process of employment, induction, training & development, and compensation. The Micro & Small enterprises have moderate level of e-commerce practice in the implementation of monitoring & controlling cash budget, receivables and payables along the capital management with a significant gap between the level of e-commerce practice of Monitoring and Controlling Cash Budget in comparison with the e-commerce practice of receivables and the e-commerce practice of payable There is moderate level of e-commerce practice along the marketing management as a results of the application of e-technologies in online marketing, e-product displaying, merchandising, online payment via Visa, ATM cards and e-wallets that attract and satisfy the online customers in local market.
- 6.1.3. The output of e-commerce practice along human resource management is in high level. The output of e-commerce practice is high on competence, commitment and production efficiency. However, the output on cost-effectiveness and Intense control efficiency are just in moderate level. In addition, the output of e-commerce practice along the marketing management is in moderate level, in which the highlight variable is

shopping convenience with a high level of output as a results of the application of e-commerce practice including e-technologies in online marketing, e-product displaying, merchandising, online payment via Visa, ATM cards and e-wallets that attract and satisfy the online customers in local market.

6.2. Recommendation:

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- 6.2.1. The level of practice of e-commerce of the Micro & Small entrepreneurs and staff along human resources, capital and marketing management should be improved in technical, budget investment and human expertise that enables enterprise to develop their own websites, e-technological platforms, online marketing tools and result to improve the process of employment, induction and training along the human resource management; to improve budget monitoring & controlling budget, payable & receivable along the capital management; And to improve the process of product, price and placement along the marketing management.
- 6.2.2. The output of the e-commerce practice of the entrepreneurs and staff along human resource management should be improved in Cost-effectiveness, Intense control efficiency and Production efficiency, Otherwise, the output of the the e-commerce practice along the marketing management should be improved in all the process of sales performance, market share, market profitability, increase income, increase tax revenue, present of market share, creation of new market and shopping conveniences.
- 6.2.3. The e-commerce enterprise needs to get more assistance from governmental authorities on the institutional and legal supports that improve their capacity to get & create new market via participating online and off-line trade fairs & trading exhibitions as well as to ensure the quality and authentic aspects of products.

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