

The IB's plan for fundraising: The challenge for 2014

About 20 years ago this autumn, I was a first year student at university. Part of the initiation ritual in American universities are days of bonding activities, in which you play group games to try to get you relax, punctuated by long speeches from faculty and administrators designed to make you think about Your Future.

Oh, the places I you will go, Dr. Suess once wrote, much more succinctly.

Alas for me, and my education, I remember only one of those long-ago speeches. It was given by the college librarian, and it began with this musing:

How much easier would this speech be, he wondered, if he could divide the audience into those who had experience with libraries, and those who had none. In the first case he would deliberately alarm his audience, those who believed that they knew it all, by telling us how little we knew of universities, and research, and the world into which we were entering. The purpose would be to frighten us so that we would immediately visit the librarian gorgons to avoid a terrible misstep.

For the neophytes, however, he would give a different speech. That one would be populated by motherly librarians available to answer all of our questions while gently initiating us into the greater world of knowledge.

I exaggerate, of course. Dr. Moffett was far too serious to do so.

Maybe I remember this speech because I was one of the arrogant ones who was duly frightened by the vision of the abyss that awaited me should I not consult a librarian. Or maybe I remember it because the man who gave it, the historian and librarian William A. Moffett, was already famous for personally apprehending the international book thief James Shinn. After all, a speech given by a thief-catcher is, by its very nature, far more interesting to a 17-year-old than one given by a university president.

Probably, however, I remember Dr. Moffett because now I empathize with his desire to have a uniform audience. You are all IB, yes, but

- Are you in private schools or state schools?
- Are you heads or coordinators?
- Are you part of the IB organization, doing curriculum development, teacher training, assessment, or school support?
- Does your country have a fundraising culture or not?
- Do you know the IB well, or did you only start last week?
- Are you none of the above?

Given the diversity of this audience, then, providing truth in advertising, that this speech will be about the fundraising plans of the IB, is a slightly complicated proposition.

Let me start, then, with the most frequently asked question I have received since beginning with the IB last May. That is, Andrea, why did you join the IB?

Let me reemphasize that question, so that it more closely mimics the tone in which it is usually delivered. WHY did you join the IB??? The implication in the question is why,

if you had a really good job in a well-endowed university, with hefty staff and lots of resources, why would you ever join us?

The reason that I can honestly give, that I do honestly give is: I want to make a difference. I wish to get up in the morning and believe that the labor that is my part of the world's work not only earns me my daily bread, but improves the lives of others. There is, in my mind, and I suspect in the mind of most of you here, no more important area to devote one's energies than in education. I came to the IB because I believe I can make more of a difference working on your behalf, with children ages 3-18, than I can at university.

Of course, this then begs the question, how can fundraising make a difference?

Well, there's the money, of course. Most of us need money to reach the pinnacle of our aspirations, whether it is for a new teacher for your school or providing access to millions of students who could benefit from the IB.

However, if helping the organization were only about getting as much money as possible, I would best serve the IB by honing a different set of skills.

Such as highway robbery.

That I chose not to become a robber on behalf of the IB speaks not only to my desire to stay away from tight supervision in small spaces for long periods, but also to my current working definition of good fundraising.

To whitt, **when done well, fundraising brings the right money in a way that strengthens an organization and its relationships.**

Let me parse this slightly.

“Fundraising brings the right money”

Like the Latin injunction, “first, do no harm,” there is an implied corollary here: “first, do not raise the wrong money.” The wrong money? Do I really mean to say that you can raise the wrong money? Yes. I do.

Here are a few examples of “the wrong money”, some of which have become well known in fundraising circles.

- Example one, and least common:

You can get a gift that is too large for your organization to absorb. This is like too much yeast in bread, with the mixture over spilling the bowl and eventually deflating itself into a flat, inedible mass. So too, an organization that grows too fast, especially based on one volatile ingredient such as money loses its proper focus and fails to fulfill its mission.

- Example two and slightly more common:

You can raise the wrong money by taking a gift for something you don't really need, and then are honor-bound to complete it. This happened a few years ago in one of the

most prestigious small universities in the United States where the president accepted a gift from a Very Famous Person to build a building that would have made the Very Famous Person look even better. I can only imagine that the president was excited at his connection with said Very Famous Person and agreed to the building even though it was the wrong thing to do. Ultimately, the president lost the confidence of his faculty and board of trustees and then, lost his job.

- Example three and most common:

You can raise money because you think that money can solve something that money can't. This happens remarkably often to fundraisers, with people asking us to find funds to solve problems that should be solved by common sense, by leadership, or by proper strategy. A struggling program that should be allowed to die. Bickering faculty members who have to have new offices so their colleagues can have some peace. A pet project of the founder that has outlived its relevance.

Like a squabbling family when a rich relative dies, when money comes along, existing problems only become worse. Fundraising won't solve those problems.

Fundraising is about raising the right money—for things that you need, that money can assist, in the amounts that you can absorb.

To go back to parsing my definition of excellent fundraising; **When done well, fundraising brings the right money in a way that strengthens an organization.**

“That strengthens an organization”

How does fundraising, the process--the way, not the outcome--strengthen your organization? Basically, I believe, by holding you accountable to other people.

And you say to me, “and this is a good thing?”

Before I lose my credibility with you entirely, let me hasten to add that I don't mean to say you should be unduly beholden to other people—you shouldn't—or that you shouldn't control your own destiny—you should. What I mean is that fundraising, asking other people to invest in your enterprise, sharpens your focus and makes you ask yourself all sorts of questions that you will forego if you always have all the money you need. It forces you to plan well; to get your books in order; to question assumptions that you didn't know were assumptions.

Currently, for example, with the Diploma Program Online proposal, the IB is creating an operating plan that we can take to funders. We have gone through several iterations of the plan and continue to fine-tune it to get it right. We're asking basic questions about our core competencies, our aspirations, our relationships with schools, students, and others.

In so doing, we are not only trying to craft the best possible proposal, we are also building our own skills in project development and program planning. We are articulating our aspirations for student learning and relationships with schools. We do this because we know other people are going to be involved, with their hard-earned

money, and they are going to ask us stupid questions that turn out to be not so stupid after all.

So, fundraising strengthens your organizational capacity to plan, it gives you reason to examine and articulate your mission, and it gives you incentive to get your affairs in order.

Finally, the last part of the parsing; **Fundraising is about raising the right money in a way that strengthens your organization...**

“and its relationships.”

This is where fundraising really gets fun.

Fundraising connects people to one another and gives them an opportunity to make a difference in the world. It aids the development of community.

Here is a quote taken from the diary of Greg Stowe Head of Junior School and Director of Curriculum Y1-10, Scotch College, Perth Australia, after visiting MIN1 Elementary School Lhokgna, in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Through the schools to schools program, Scotch College had been paired with MIN1 Elementary after the tsunami. This is part of his report on the visit.

Of the one hundred and forty remaining students, one hundred are orphans. The school was completely destroyed by the tsunami. It was clear from the discussion that the staff were unable to see how things could return to the way they were before the disaster. They were clear about what they needed to do given their situation. This was summarized by a staff member who said they would need to “build a community from the heart, not from money”. They were also clear about the positive impact of our visit on their hopes for the future. When asked would they rather have the money we had spent to travel to Aceh or our presence at the school, they emphatically stated they had gained more from our visit and support. Currently, we are working with IBO and other NGOs to provide our partner schools with uniforms. Students and staff expressed this as their greatest need. It is clear that wearing a uniform to school is an important symbol to all that restoration of the schools may be possible. It is our hope that Scotch College will be able to contribute to this restoration.

Charity is loaded in many ways, and I don't want to belittle its very many complexities. Just to make some of them clear here, it is Greg who is writing and reporting, not the Aceh staff. Despite his disclaimer to the contrary, of course it is about the money. To rebuild a school, to find uniforms for the students, to try to establish normalcy in a world turned upside down, money is needed.

But it is also very much about the relationships between those who give and those who receive, about the desire of those asking to not have their world reduced to cash transactions, and the desire of those giving to find a way that their agency, their personal human activity, might make some difference in the face of an otherwise overwhelming problem.

It is about a relationship between people that strive for dignity on all sides.

There has been a lot written on charity's greatness and pitfalls and I will not weigh in with the mighty on this issue other than to recommend Monique Seefried's excellent 2003 speech entitled "Learning to Give: the gift of an IB education" in which she states: *We need to fully realize and make [students] aware that the social justice of tomorrow is built through the charity of today. I am on purpose using the word CHARITY because this is how all cultures have called the act of showing compassion, of reaching out, of helping others either in words, in deeds or with money. Students also need to realize that the importance being placed on charitable actions is part of a heritage we share with all the cultures that have come down to us, and that it is an essential part of the world's greatest religions or philosophies.*

I would only wish to add that by asking, you and we assist those searching for a way to make an impact on the world. We also connect those people to us and to our mission: *... to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*

By asking—appropriately, strategically, and with the donors in mind—we help and are helped and we help again.

So, here again come the questions. What is appropriately, and what is strategically?

Well, you heard from Director general Jeff Beard earlier today about the projects in which the IB is currently engaged. They include the DP online, the MPY/DP continuum, schools to schools, and other things. Those are priority projects—in access, in excellence, in innovation—for which we need to find funding.

Okay, but from whom?

In general, fundraising acknowledges that there are many potential donors available to any organization at a particular time. These possible donors come in all varieties. There will be those with great means, and those with few. There are going to be those who are deeply connected, and those with little connection. Some will be only interested in a small aspect of what you do, others with the whole.

Given that an organization like the IBO might have quite literally millions of people who have been affected by the program in the past—students, parents, teachers, examiners, heads, coordinators, volunteers, businesses, governments, the list goes on and on—and we have limited resources to reach those donors, what do we do first? Second? Third?

Some, maybe most, maybe all of you will be familiar with the idea of a pyramid used to represent a possible group of donors. Here, I'm going to use this pyramid to represent all of the donors that we can rationally reach using all the resources and methods at our disposal.

Let the top of the pyramid represent the donors who can give us the largest gifts. In your organization the number of a large gift may be anything. In this case, let's say these donors might be able to give us more than a million dollars. The second third of the pyramid, then, would be people who could give us gifts of, say, 25,000 to 1 million dollars.

There are naturally fewer people who can give us larger gifts, more that can give us smaller, and many who could give only a little. It is a useful rule of thumb in fundraising that it almost always takes you as much time to raise ten thousand dollars as it does one hundred thousand dollars.

Therefore, if it is only about the money, we will only spend our time at the top of the pyramid. More big donors, more cash.

But remember, it is about the projects that we want to do—the money—and it is about strengthening our relationships in the world.

So, here is where we are right now.

At the top of the pyramid are the really big funders and the really big projects. For the time being, the major relationship that we are working on, and the major project associated with it, is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the MYP/DP continuum.

This program is in line with the particular interests of the Gates Foundation: to help students in the United States be successful in high school regardless of their socioeconomic background.

It is also squarely in line with the IB's access agenda. Functionally, the program will create more articulation between the MYP and DP programs, as well as a scaffold of supports for students in difficult circumstances. The aim is to make it possible for less privileged students to also succeed in a rigorous academic environment.

Given that this gathering is from Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, how does this affect you?

Well, initially it may affect some of you as we come to you for your knowledge and assistance. Those of you who have been able to successfully implement a clear relationship between the MYP and DP programs possess important experience that we would like to make more universal within the larger IB community. For the rest of you, we are deliberately working on programs that we can translate outside of the US context into all schools, a way of looking at all of our programs together, and of supporting all students.

It is not unusual in this kind of circumstance to look to one donor and through their particular lens at a problem--in the case of Gates their lens is to make high quality education available to all students in the United States—and have only one funder targeted for a program that very much fits into our strategic plan for access. We may or may not get funding from Gates, we may or may not seek other funds as we progress. Stay tuned.

Slightly lower on the pyramid of donors is the project for the Diploma Program online, for which we will go to multiple funders, for slightly smaller gifts.

There will be several concurrent sessions on the programmatic aspects of the DP online during the conference, so rather than indulging right now, I will recommend you to my colleagues Paul Fairbrother and Ruth Adams who will be leading those sessions.

In terms of funding for the DP online, our plan is to go to a variety of donors who might have an interest in this area, including foundations that are supporting on-line work, individuals who might be interested in the subject, and corporations who are particularly interested in the IB because of a mobile workforce. We are actively seeking prospective donors to this area in order for the project to go forward, and so I would ask you to get ahold of me if you have people or organizations that we should consider approaching.

Other projects, including the schools-to-schools project, the Mostar school, and language access also fall into this area of the pyramid.

Having looked at the top two-thirds of our pyramid, from whence come the majority of our funds,

what about the bottom third?

Ah, this is where fundraising and friendraising really meet. Here sit the vast majority of people connected to the IBO who are either not capable or not interested in gifts with many zeros trailing behind them. Here I rest, Andrea Lucard, already a donor to the IB, interested in supporting the mission of the IBO with my donations, but neither born nor likely to attain great wealth. What to do about me? What to do about you, your teachers, your young alumni?

It is in this space that the IBO has been discussing for some time, the start of an IB Association, a group of people affiliated with the IBO who would like to remain connected. The seeds of this organization already exist in the many autonomous online communities that have sprung up in the past five or six years.

For example there is *ibscrewed.net*.

In this particular instance, I feel sorry for our translators today, who I hope can find a way to get the slightly naughty spirit of that name across in French and Spanish. For those of you who can use some translation from the colloquial, let me say that “screwed” in American English means some cross between the reproductive act between men and women, and being overwhelmed and taken advantage of.

ibscrewed.net is an online community of some 3000 mostly current students of IB. Its members are largely North American, but I suspect that is continuing to change. It was started by Katie Lorenz, an IB student in Kansas, in the middle of the United States more than five years ago. Exhausted and frustrated, as many students are in the preparation for her exams, Katie set up a website for herself and her friends to complain about the IB.

Rather than simply dying when Katie got to college, however, *ibscruwed.net* has continued to flourish and grow.

I wrote to Katie a few months ago to ask her about the website, how it got started and what it means. Here's a bit of our second email exchange:

Andrea: *Hello, Katie. Thanks for your quick reply. I have about a million questions, but let me start with one. You say ibscruwed has become a "true community"—can you describe that to me?*

Katie: *Community is a hard thing to put into words.*

We celebrate each other's birthdays. We share thoughts/feelings/problems on the site that we haven't told any one in "real life" because we trust everyone here. We post our music compositions and give each other feedback and criticism. We attend the theatre shows put on by a member who we met through the site. We share our experiences both positive and negative with younger members in hopes of saving them the headaches we mistakenly inflicted on ourselves. We complain all day long about IB to each other, but when an outsider joins the forum, looking to get dirt on the evils of IB, we spring to IB's defense with surprising passion. We stay up late talking on Skype for hours with other ibscruweders. And we're grateful to be able to do all this with amazing people that we never would have met any other way.

Incidentally, I wrote Katie and asked her permission to quote our correspondence in this speech. She said she would be happy to have it quoted, and would love to know what people think. I hadn't intended to post her picture, but when I was looking her up again last night I found it on her other website, *badpoetry.net*, and I thought it was great. So here it is.

ibscruwed.net is one example, seemingly the largest with 3000 members, but only one example of many small IB-focused communities that have sprung up in public web spaces. *Facebook.com*, which is used by mostly university students, has several forums.

Fora.

That's a good sign for the IB, as it means that the students are continuing to identify with us after they enter university. Most of these groups have names that are insulting to the IB, so often reflecting the exhaustion and frustration that students feel in the throes of the diploma program. Most of them also reflect serious pride in being part of our community.

What does this mean for fundraising? Well, for the immediate future, it means a great deal more in friendraising than in fundraising.

I think that we need to celebrate those communities. We need to connect with them. We maybe need to help some others flourish. Parents? Older alumni?

A few months ago, for example, I met with a small group of heads in Buenos Aires. They very much wanted to help create an IB Association that would focus on service in

local communities. Their alumni already get together do to service work for the poor of Buenos Aires. The heads thought it quite likely that connecting that service with the work of other IB alumni around the world would create a sense of pride and international understanding. That same international understanding which they seek to inculcate their students.

This is friendraising in support of our deeply held values.

So what about fundraising? This friendraising will, I hope before terribly long, turn to fundraising and friendraising. But not yet. It would be salting a tender plant to go crashing into these new communities asking for money.

Yes, I just spent ten minutes trying to convince you that asking for support can ennoble both the asker and the asked.

But, we need to go back to our pyramid again, and take a look at the way that fundraising happens with different groups.

When we go to those people at the top of the pyramid, we are spending time with them, generally face to face. Together we gain trust by looking for common solutions to an identified problem—low achievement by poor American students, inaccessibility of the DP for students who move too often. Face to face we develop a relationship of trust and mutual work between organization and donor.

At the base of the pyramid, where our relationships branch into a million different directions, the way we connect is, by necessity, different.

Here, gifts are smaller, they are solicited from a distance, and they are usually given out of loyalty or identity (that is—I am a graduate of such and such a school, I am an IB parent, etc.) or because of a transaction (I get an IB hat or an invitation to a dinner).

From a distance, via the web, email, telephone, mail-- relationships take a different course. Especially so when people identify strongly with a set of values but also struggle to reconcile those values with what can be seen as a faceless bureaucracy. Of course the IB community isn't really faceless—I am here, you can see my face, you are here, I can see yours—but when the IB, or your alumni director, begins to solicit donations en masse, people feel like a number, and the magic of the community is lost.

So, how will this friendraising turn to fundraising? To be perfectly honest, I don't know yet. That is the work of the next year and the next ten. It is our work at the IBO, and it is your work in your schools. Community service holds great promise. I know, however, that whatever fundraising is generated over time, it must spring out of the deep connection people feel to the IB and its values, it must feel personal, and it must respect the ways that people have been connected, whether through CAS or TOK or a specific teacher or school.

Which brings me to our own little issue among ourselves. The relationship of the IBO to the schools that are IB schools.

I have promised you a question and answer time, and I hope I will be able to deliver. If not, I have two other sessions during this conference. But before you begin the questions, allow me to give voice to the most common objections I have heard regarding the IB's fundraising. There are two, and they might both be boiled down to a common American acronym called NIMBY or Not in My Back Yard.

Usually, NIMBY is expressed by people who understood that there is a need for a common good—a power plant, a homeless shelter, a nuclear waste dump—but they don't want it to be their responsibility. Not in my back yard. Someone else's maybe. Not mine.

Thus far in the IB, I would say that I've encountered NIMBY in a slightly different form. The first NIMBY is about how fundraising is generally impossible, culturally or politically; the second NIMBY is about how we are all competing for the same donors and thus a threat to one another.

First, to fundraising is impossible. I have heard any number of times now some variation on "it is all very fine you coming here, an American, telling us that fundraising is a good thing. But in my country we don't do it. And furthermore, the charity that we do have is only for the very poor. No one gives to education."

Fair enough. It is true that the Americans have a highly developed sense of charity and volunteerism. It is a firm part of our national identity that somehow exists quite peaceably along with our militarism and other less savory national characteristics.

I promise, I am not here to preach to you about how you should import my version of fundraising to your particular cultural circumstances. Let me, however, just plant these questions with you.

Do you believe that all of the people in your country are inquiring, knowledgeable, thinking communicators? Are they all *intègres, ouverts d'esprit, et altruistes*? *Audaces, equilibrados y reflexivos*?

No?

So why, then, do you go into your schools every day with these values in mind? Do you not hope that, through your work with children and their teachers, you are going to seed such a culture?

This is at the heart of what you do. You, we, are engaged in the business of education because we have a long view. We believe that the students can and will change the world when we are gone. CAS is an important element of the work that you do in your schools because you want students not only to be compassionate, but because you want them to believe that their agency, their activities, make a difference.

Do you also believe that philanthropy, that the voluntary gift of money for a worthy cause, means something?

If you don't give, of understanding, yes, of compassion yes, but also of funds when you can, who will? If your students don't understand the importance of understanding,

compassion, and generosity, who will give when you are gone? Who is going to combat the forces of global disintegration, and with what funds, if it is not them? If it is not us?

If I sound a little overexcited about this, I ask your forbearance. It may be because I am an American and we can be a little excitable. But my nervous energy also stems from a sense of urgency, because I see that there are people and organizations who are already engaged in fundraising worldwide to support the forces of ignorance, intolerance, and aggression. There are many people who are willing to give money because they believe other people, with their differences, cannot possibly be right, and they will provide the funds to prove it.

Not in my back yard cannot happen here. The world is our back yard—the IB is in 124 countries. If we do not decide that our mission is important enough to enlist the help of others, today and in the future, then someone else will take over.

Which brings me to the other backyard, one that was eloquently described by Jaap Mos, of ECIS and the Director International of Stichting Het Rijnlands Lyceum in a meeting I had with him last week in Amsterdam. There, he gave excellent expression to the issue that has been troubling me as I undertake this work. That is, “are we all fishing in the same pond?” In other words, if the IB is fundraising, and the UWC is fundraising and your schools are fundraising, are we not all fishing in the same pond?

I hasten to emphasize, here, that Jaap was only putting words to my experience, not insisting that I leave his country lest I steal his donors. On the contrary, I expect that we will be able to work actively together in the future. But the question remains in the air, and it is one that we as a community, as an organism of IBO and IB schools will have to resolve and re-question and resolve again—are we in competition with one another? Are we in fact, fishing in a small pond?

There are some longer answers to this question, full of technical fundraising detail that I can give you about donor motivation, giving behavior, affinity and the like. Catch me afterward if you would like to hear my jargon.

Since, however, I started this talk with Dr. Moffett, historian and librarian, perhaps I can finish with him as well.

As I was doing some quick background checking for this speech to be sure I got Dr. Moffett’s information correct in the matter of the book thief, I discovered another important fact about his career.

In 1991, after his tenure at my university, Dr. Moffett was the director of the Huntington Library in California, one of the great research libraries in the world. Soon after he arrived there, he learned, apparently, that the Huntington was one of only two libraries in the world that had a complete set of archival photos of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Until Dr. Moffett’s directorship, access to the scrolls in any complete form had been given to only seven scholars in the entire world. Only those seven knew what could be found on these fragments of parchment, and no more than those seven were allowed.

Based on what criteria these scholars were allowed to have sole access and to control this scarce resource, I do not know. I can only imagine the politics and infighting that would accrue to such an arrangement. “Ah, Jack appears almost on his deathbed. Perhaps I will get his scrolls position. But only if I discredit Maria, who recently published that excellent article in the Dead Sea Scrolls Journal. I wonder how I might make her look bad.”

Confronted with this issue, Dr. Moffett did two important things.

The first is that he did some research and discovered, in fact, that he was guardian of a valuable resource that had been made particularly scarce by those who felt that they owned it. In other words, he discovered the photographs.

The second is that he revisited the mission of the Huntington Library and the people it was to serve. Here is what he said when the Huntington made the microfiche available through interlibrary loan throughout the world:

“When you free the Scrolls you free the scholars. Opening access to the Dead Sea Scrolls is an affirmation of the mission of research libraries: not merely to store and preserve information, but to make it available in as free and unfettered a way as possible.”

Just like that, the competition, the scarcity, was reframed. Not without controversy, but done. Fundamentally, Dr. Moffett decided that the enemy could not be framed as scholar versus another, the enemy must be seen as ignorance of the past. The huge task--of reconstructing and understanding the scrolls--was far too great for infighting and small mindedness.

I may be hopelessly naïve and optimistic to think that we can work seamlessly together toward a common end.

I may be too much of a newcomer to understand that it really can't, or shouldn't be done, in your back yard.

I may be wrong in all the particulars of the structures of how to fundraise for the IB.

But I am certain in one thing. If we are serious about our mission, if we truly aim

to develop knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect,

then we have huge task in front of us.

We can only do it if this entire organism—the IBO, the schools, the communities that care about us—work hand in hand. There are so many in the world who would work against us. There are so many who believe that others, with their differences, cannot possibly be right.

I promised, in the advertisement for this speech that I would give you a glimpse of the challenge for fundraising for 2014. The challenge, I think, is clear. We have projects

for which we should be fundraising. We have relationships that we need to develop. We have systems that we must build. All with a tiny staff and a whole world to cover.

But if I were to look at a vision for fundraising for 2014, it would be for an extended community--of IBO and schools--that values its relationships, that actively fundraises, and that finds the necessary support for **access** and **innovation** in education around the world.

And I would hope, in 2014, for a community, that, like Katie Lorenz says, is hard to put into words, but that might be summed up by saying:

That we're grateful to be able to do this with amazing people that we never would have met in any other way.

Thank you.

Andrea Lucard
IBO Director of development

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