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Issue: # 37

March 2013

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Education betters us and ensures our decisions are well-informed! Never be lulled by "we have always done it this way".

LET'S GO



Ford Shifting 2.0L EcoBoost Engine Production to U.S. to Meet Demand

Automotive Fleet

Ford said it's investing nearly \$200 million in its Cleveland Engine Plant to meet demand for its 2.0L EcoBoost inline four-cylinder engine. The automaker said production of the 2.0L EcoBoost engine for North America is currently based in Valencia, Spain, and this change will shift production of the engine to Ohio and add 450 jobs at the plant. The plant in Spain will remain the key production facility for 2.0L engines for vehicles sold in Europe, according to Ford.

The 2.0L EcoBoost engine is currently available in the Explorer, Edge, all-new Escape, all-new Fusion, the Focus ST, the Taurus, and the new Lincoln MKZ and MKT Livery models. In 2013, Ford expects to sell more than 500,000 vehicles equipped with EcoBoost engines, which would be a major increase over the 334,364 EcoBoost vehicles Ford said it sold in 2012. The company said its EcoBoost engine technology will be available on more than 90% of its North American nameplates in 2013 and on 95% of them by 2015.

Ford said production of the 2.0L EcoBoost engine will begin at the Cleveland plant in late 2014. The Cleveland plant currently builds Ford's 3.5L EcoBoost engine and the 3.7L V-6. The facility employs roughly 1,300 people, according to the company.

Black Book Expects Pickup Truck Resale Values to Remain High Despite Arrival of New Models

Automotive Fleet, By Greg Basich

With auto show season in full swing, new-vehicle introductions mean eventual changes in used-vehicle values and often in fleets' remarketing strategies. Automotive Fleet spoke with Black Book's Ricky Beggs, senior analyst for the company, about the effect models introduced at the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit will have on used-vehicle values in the future.

With fleets using pickup trucks as core workhorse vehicles, new vehicle introductions can mean major changes in resale values depending on the number in the marketplace and new features on upcoming models. At NAIAS, Chrysler's Ram 1500 received the Truck of the Year award, General Motors brought its all-new upcoming Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra trucks, and Ford showed a new concept vehicle, the Atlas Concept, which hints at what the automaker is planning for its F-Series pickups in the years to come. With all these new trucks arriving, or scheduled to arrive, in the marketplace, what's going to happen to their resale values? According to Beggs, demand should remain strong.

Beggs noted that over a three-month period, pickup truck values only depreciated 7/10ths of a percent, looking at 2010-MY vehicles, a model-year that many fleets are remarketing right now. In addition, when looking at the time period of Feb. 1, 2012 through May 1, 2012, pickup truck values actually increased 1.7%. He said that although the market won't likely see pickup truck values increase by that large a percentage during the Feb. through May period in 2013, he said there could be an uptick, especially due to funds available from the federal government for rebuilding post Hurricane Sandy.

Other segments that Beggs commented on include compact cars, the values of which have held up fairly well compared to previous years. **Beggs said that depreciation for 2012 was only a drop of 10.6 percent, which is still well below the drop this segment has traditionally experienced (15% to 18%).** Still, many vehicles in the mid-size car segment have improved fuel economy and creature comforts compared to previous model-years. Also, fuel economy in this segment is comparable to vehicles in the compact segment. These factors could reduce the resale value of compact cars in the future, according to Beggs.

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Toyota, Lexus Are No. 1 and 2 in Kelley Blue Book's Latest Shopper Loyalty Rankings

Toyota.com

Lexus' loyalty rating increased 9.2 percentage points year-over-year in Kelley Blue Book's new-car shopper survey for the fourth quarter of 2012, making it No. 1 among luxury auto brands and No. 2 overall. Toyota was again No. 1 overall for the fifth consecutive quarter.

KBB.com said Lexus was 10 percentage points ahead of the next highest ranking luxury brand, Audi, which was ninth overall. "One year ago," it added, "there were only 2 percentage points separating the two brands, so interest in Lexus has significantly increased among new-car shoppers on kbb.com in the last year."

The website attributed much of Lexus' gain in shopper interest to the redesign of the GS, ES, RX and LS models. "Lexus has moved in a bold new direction with its vehicle styling, even creating a signature feature with its unique 'spindle grille,' while also catering to financial-minded shoppers for winning the prestigious title of Best Resale Value: Luxury Brand in Kelley Blue Book's Resale Value Awards," said Akshay Anand, KBB.com's market intelligence Web analyst.

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Ford Posts Net Income of \$5.7 Billion for 2012

Automotive Fleet

Ford Motor Co. posted a full-year, pre-tax profit of \$8 billion and net income of \$5.7 billion. The automaker said these profits are due to the strength of record sales results from North America and "solid performance" from Ford Credit. Ford said it ended 2012 with automotive business segment gross cash of \$24.3 billion, exceeding its debt by \$10 billion, and a liquidity position of \$34.5 billion, which is an increase of \$2.1 billion over 2011. Ford said that pre-tax profits and operating margins in North America were both records, and that volume and revenue were higher.

In 2013, Ford said expects strong performance in North America to continue, and that pre-tax profits will be higher than 2012, with an operating margin of roughly 10%. Europe continues to be a challenge for the company, with Ford saying that it will incur higher costs associated with necessary restructuring in the region. For 2013, Ford Europe expects a loss of \$2 billion compared, similar to its losses in 2012. That said, Ford expects breakeven results in 2013 in South America and its Asia Pacific region.

Production-wise, in 2012, Ford said it produced a total of 5.7 million units, which is up 54,000 from a year ago. The automaker said it expects first-quarter 2013 production to be about 1.6 million units, which is up 160,000 units from a year ago, which reflects higher volumes in all regions save for Europe. Compared with the fourth quarter of 2012, first quarter production is up 72,000 units.

Ford said that due to its financial performance, it plans to make profit sharing payments to approximately 45,800 eligible U.S. hourly employees on March 14, 2013. As part of the collective bargaining agreement that Ford has with its United Auto Workers employees, the automaker's pre-tax profits of \$8.3 billion results in profit sharing of approximately \$8,300 per eligible employee, which will vary based on an employee's compensated hours, according to Ford.

In addition to profit sharing, the automaker said it made \$3.4 billion in cash contributions in 2012 to its worldwide funded pension plans in order to de-risk its pension obligations. This amount is \$2.3 billion more than in 2011. In 2012, Ford settled \$1.2 billion of its pension obligations as part of its voluntary lump sum payout program for salaried retirees. This program began in the second half of 2012 and Ford said will continue through 2013. Ford said it expects to contribute \$5 billion in cash contributions to its pension obligations globally in 2013.

Chrysler Reveals 2014 Ram ProMaster Full-Size Van in Chicago



Automotive Fleet

Chrysler unveiled its 2014-MY Ram ProMaster commercial van at the 2013 Chicago Auto Show. This vehicle is based on the European Fiat Ducato and Chrysler said this is Ram Truck brand's first collaboration with Fiat Professional, Fiat's commercial vehicle brand. The 2014-MY Ram ProMaster will come in two roof heights, three wheelbases, and four body lengths, plus a cutaway model, for a total of 13 different configurations.

Performance

Performance-wise, the ProMaster features a front-wheel-drive system and Ram Truck will offer two engine and two transmission choices. The engine choices include an inline four-cylinder 3.0L EcoDiesel engine and a 3.6L Pentastar V-6. The EcoDiesel can generate 174 hp and 295 lb.-ft. of torque. Chrysler said an oil-level sensor sets the oil change schedule to every 18,500 miles for this engine. The Pentastar V-6 is rated at 200 hp and 260 lb.-ft. of torque, and the oil change schedule for this engine is every 10,000 miles (an oil-service system will alert the driver when a change is needed).

For transmission choices, Ram Truck offers the 62TE six-speed automatic or an automated six-speed manual transmission. Chrysler said the manual transmission features software that responds to road conditions. The six-speed automatic transmission is standard with the Pentastar V-6. The automaker hasn't yet announced fuel economy estimates for this vehicle. The powertrain warranty is five years/100,000 miles.

Chrysler's Ram Truck brand said the ProMaster has a best-in-class payload capacity of up to 5,145 lbs. and a maximum towing capacity of up to 5,100 lbs. The ProMaster's combined weight rating (GCWR) when equipped with the Pentastar V-6 is 11,500 lbs. With the inline four-cylinder EcoDiesel, GCWR is 12,500 lbs.

Exterior

The Ram ProMaster features a unibody frame, which the automaker said provides better strength and stability. Up front, it has a three-piece, modular, wraparound bumper and twin-reflector headlamp clusters. The front bumper also features a step built into the corners on each side, which are designed to make it easier to clean the windshield. The cab-forward design helps elevate passenger seating positions and provide better visibility, according to the automaker. Power side-view mirrors are adjustable and include wide-angle mirror sections.

reflect market conditions.**Advanced Steels Being Used in Wide Range of Upcoming Vehicles***Automotive Fleet*

The Steel Market Development Institute recently issued a report that noted that advanced lightweight steels continue to see significant use in new vehicle manufacturing, with a number of automakers incorporating advanced high-strength steel (AHSS) into their latest designs. This was evident at the North American International Auto Show, where automakers from BMW, Chrysler, and Kia to GM and Mercedes are using AHSS in their latest products.

Models using AHSS include the North American Car and Truck, and Utility, of the Year award winners, the 2013 Ram 1500 and the Cadillac ATS. The upcoming 2014 Jeep Grand Cherokee incorporates AHSS. The upcoming 2014 MY Chevrolet Silverado uses AHSS in its main rails and crossmembers in order to reduce mass and improve strength. Other models using AHSS include the Cadillac ELR, the Mercedes-Benz E-Class, the Hyundai HCD-14 Genesis concept, and the all-new BMW 320i.

According to consulting company Mega Associates, steel usage levels have remained constant during the last six years, staying between 58% and 62% of vehicle content.

2013 Toyota Avalon to Offer Wireless In-Car Charging for Mobile Devices*Business Fleet*

Toyota said its 2013-MY Avalon will be the first vehicle in the world to offer in-console wireless charging for mobile phones and other devices capable of charging via the "Qi" system.

This feature will be available as part of the sedan's Technology Package, which Toyota offers for the gasoline and hybrid versions of the Avalon Limited. The Technology Package also includes dynamic radar cruise control, automatic high beams and a pre-collision safety system.

The wireless charging pad is integrated into the "ebin," which is located in the sedan's center console. The driver or a passenger can place a Qi-equipped mobile device onto or near the ebin lid's surface in the console that provides wireless charging.

A user can turn on the Qi wireless charging system using a switch beneath the ebin's lid. DENSO supplies Toyota with the Avalon's wireless charging system.

The Qi wireless charging feature is now available in 34 mobile phone models, including the LG Google Nexus 4, the Nokia Lumia

In the back, the rear clamshell doors open up to 260 degrees and can lock in place. On the sides, a sliding door on the right side is standard and a sliding door on the left side is available as an option. Its step-in height is 21 inches, and the vehicle comes with a rear access step constructed from non-slip material.

Interior

Inside the ProMaster, Ram Truck said the vehicle features seats with ergonomic padding and a range of adjustment options, including heating. The interior is matte black and accent colors come in chrome and silver. The overhead area in the van is light grey.

For its controls, the four-spoke steering wheel can be ordered with optional controls for a Chrysler Uconnect system, for hands-free phone access, for speed control, and for the audio system. The steering column telescopes to adjust for different drivers. The gear lever is next to the instrument panel to the left of the console. A switch bank on the console has switches for electronic stability control, door lock and unlock, plus two auxiliary switches for operating functions added via upfitting. HVAC controls are oversized for ease of use when vehicle occupants are wearing gloves.

Cargo space

The Ram ProMaster has two available roof heights, either 90 or 101 inches. The sliding door openings' sizes depend on the vehicle's roof height. For the low-roof model, the door openings are 49 x 60 inches. For the high-roof model, the doors are 49 x 70 inches.

Connectivity

Chrysler's Ram Truck brand offers the company's Uconnect infotainment system in the ProMaster. The system provides hands-free calling via Bluetooth and a hands-free text reply feature. The system's color, five-inch touchscreen is available with GPS-based navigation.

Safety

The ProMaster offers more than 35 safety features, according to the automaker. They include standard side-curtain airbags; a ParkView rear-view camera; and ParkSense, which emits an audible warning if the van is about to collide with something while parking; electronic stability control; Hill Start Assist; anti-lock brakes; a panic brake assist feature; a brake lock differential; drift compensation; roll mitigation; and autonomous brake lamp activation. Seat belts are height adjustable.

Availability

The all-new vehicle will be available during the third quarter of 2013, according to the automaker. The vehicle is built at the automaker's Saltillo Van Assembly Plant in Saltillo, Mexico.

Ready to Talk about Fleet Management Yet?

\$2175 per car. That is the average savings Doering provided per vehicle in 2012. It's worth your time and attention.

You deserve to understand best practices in fleet management and see the savings and value proposition fleet management provides.

Still thinking? Did we mention - Doering Fleet Management has sold clients' used cars on average 30-40% over popular car valuation tool values, translating to thousands of dollars back to your company, not lining the pockets of dealers.

IIHS Awards New 'Top Safety+' Recognition to 13 Cars*Business Fleet*

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) awarded a new safety recognition level, Top Safety Pick+, to 13 cars from the 2013-MY. To earn this new safety recognition level, all these vehicles have earned "good" or "acceptable" scores in IIHS' new small overlap frontal crash test and top ratings in IIHS' other safety tests.

The winners include:

Acura TL
Dodge Avenger
Chrysler 200 four-door
Ford Fusion
Honda Accord two-door and four-door
Kia Optima
Nissan Altima four-door
Subaru Legacy and Outback
Suzuki Kizashi
Volkswagen Passat
Volvo S60

IIHS introduced the new small overlap frontal crash test in 2012. The test is designed to simulate what occurs when a car's front corner collides with another vehicle or object.

In the actual test, a quarter of the vehicle's front end, on the driver's side, collides with a five-foot-tall rigid barrier at 40 mph. IIHS belts a Hybrid III male crash test dummy into the driver's seat. The organization said it first evaluated luxury mid-size cars and then mid-size moderately priced cars. IIHS plans to release results for small SUVs in the spring.

According to IIHS, a number of automakers made changes to their

920, and the HTC Windows Phone 8X.

Gas Prices Increasing Earlier This Year Due to Earlier Summer Blend Switch and Higher Oil Prices

Automotive Fleet

Despite predictions of lower gasoline prices later this year, they're still rising nationwide, with an average price for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline at \$3.75 on Feb. 19, according to AAA's latest Fuel Gauge Report. The report added that this is the highest price on record for that calendar day.

The company said one reason for the jump is due to U.S. refineries performing maintenance and switching to summer blend gasoline earlier in the year, though AAA noted that this shift is the choice of refiners and not due to a change in the deadline to complete the switch to summer blend fuels. Maintenance and the switch mean refineries are offline, which can affect fuel supplies. AAA added that this year higher oil prices are driving up prices as is positive economic news.

Although prices are higher now, AAA expects the peak retail gasoline price to arrive earlier in the year and that the peak price will be lower than the peak price last year.

Prices in all 50 U.S. states increased. The states with the largest increases include Tennessee, up 22 cents; Arkansas, also up 22 cents; South Carolina, up 21 cents; and Mississippi, also up 21 cents. The top five highest average prices on Feb. 19 were in Hawaii; at \$4.27, California, at \$4.05; New York, at \$3.93; Connecticut, at \$3.91; and Alaska, at \$3.80.

Toyota Leads in U.S. Clean-Energy Patent

Toyota.com

Many companies talk about being innovative, but Toyota is also walking the talk. For the third straight quarter, Toyota received more U.S. clean-energy patents than any other company. The U.S. Patent & Trademark Office granted Toyota 71 of these patents in the third quarter of 2012, or almost 10 percent of the record total of 798 for one quarter. General Electric was second and General Motors was third, with Honda and Samsung filling out the top five.

Top 15 Fleet Maintenance Trends in 2013 & Beyond

Automotive Fleet

Vehicle quality continues to improve and extended powertrain warranties have covered some expensive repairs at high mileage. Although quality has increased, vehicles are becoming more complex, especially with the proliferation of new onboard technologies. In this context, here are the top 15 maintenance trends

vehicles to improve safety. Ford and Nissan made structural changes to 2013 models in production. Subaru and Volkswagen changed the airbag control modules on the production line so the vehicles' side-curtain airbags would deploy so they provide additional head protection. Honda engineered its two Accord models to do well in the test as well, IIHS said.

In general, IIHS has tightened its Top Safety Pick criteria since it introduced its tests in 2006. IIHS made "good" rear crash tests results and electronic stability control availability requirements in 2007. **Stability control is no longer a distinguishing feature, though, since federal rules require that feature for 2012 and later models.** Good roof strength became an evaluation metric for 2010-MY vehicles.

Toyota and GM Take the Lead in J.D. Power's 2013 Vehicle Dependability Study

Business Fleet

J.D. Power recently released its 2013 Vehicle Dependability Study, which looks at the reliability of three-year-old models (MY-2010) by measuring the problems owners have experienced with their vehicles during the last 12 months. Overall, J.D. Power found that the long-term dependability of three-year-old models has improved year-over-year.

In 2013, the dependability of new or substantially redesigning models for MY-2010 averaged 116 problems per 100 vehicles (PP100), which is a 17 -point improvement over MY-2009 vehicles (a lower number indicates fewer problems reported). The study looks at cars, vans and pickup trucks.

J.D. Power added that this is the first year since 2009 that the total number of problems reported actually fell for all-new or redesigned models compared with the number of problems reported for carryover models. **Domestic nameplates averaged 133 PP100 whereas imports averaged 123 PP100.**

In this year's study, nameplates that came out ahead included Lexus, with its RX receiving the fewest number of problems reported and a PP100 score of 57. The Lexus nameplate's overall PP100 score was 71.

The other top five nameplates with the fewest number of reported problems included Porsche, at 84, Lincoln, at 112, Toyota, at 112 and Mercedes-Benz, at 115. Chrysler saw the greatest year-over-year improvement with 52 fewer problems per 100 vehicles reported for its MY-2010 vehicles. Its PP100 score was 153.

Toyota received the most awards for long-term dependability, for the Lexus ES 350; the Lexus RX; the Scion xB; the Scion xD; the Toyota Prius; the Toyota Sienna; and the Toyota RAV4. General Motors received four awards for the Buick Lucerne; the Chevrolet Camaro; the Chevrolet Tahoe; and the GMC Sierra HD. Honda received two awards for the Acura RDX and Honda Crosstour. Other vehicles and brands that received model-year awards included the Audi A6, the Ford Ranger, the Hyundai Sonata, the Mazda MX-5 Miata, and the Nissan Z.

J.D. Power said it fielded the 2013 Vehicle Dependability Study between Oct. and Dec. 2012 and received responses from more than 37,000 owners of 2010-MY vehicles who had owned their respective vehicle(s) for three years.

GreenRoad Report Details Most Common Risky or Inefficient Maneuvers Fleet Drivers Make

GreenRoad US Driver Safety Score Event Composition 2012



Automotive Fleet

A new report from driver performance management services company GreenRoad provided new data about fleet drivers' safety records and driving habits. The company's 2012 Fleet Driver Performance Data Benchmark Report, analyzed safety performance data for more than 70,000 drivers worldwide.

To start, the report said the risky or inefficient driving events drivers most commonly make include corner handling (29%), harsh braking (26%), and speeding (26%). This is a change from 2011, where drivers' most common risky maneuver was speeding, at 40% of the total. GreenRoad attributes this change to use of its smartphone app, which provides immediate feedback.

Next, the report found that although there aren't any seasonal variations in driver performance, there are variations depending on the time of day. Safety scores show small numbers (and safer driving) during the early morning, with scores as low as 2 (anything under 20 is considered "safe" driving), and as high as 9 during peak, rush-hour periods.

GreenRoad's report also showed that drivers using GreenRoad's service (the 70,000 drivers the company has data for) showed Safety Score

facing commercial fleet managers in 2013 and beyond:

1. Escalating Cost of Replacement Tires
2. Larger Diameter Tires
3. Shortage of Replacement Tire Inventory
4. Extended PM Intervals
5. Higher Cost of Motor Oils
6. Increased Use of Synthetic Motor Oils
7. Use of Re-refined Oil and "Recycled" Lubricants
8. Higher Cost of Replacement Parts
9. Increased Back Orders for Replacement Parts
10. Uptick in Labor Costs
11. National Account Vendors Step-Up Training and Acquire New Diagnostic Equipment
12. OEMs to Remain Stringent with Post-Warranty Recovery Dollars
13. NHTSA-Mandated Safety Equipment
14. Non-Warranty Hybrid Repairs
15. Enhancing the Driver Repair Visit Experience

An important point to remember: Two-thirds of all fleet maintenance expenses are PM-related or the replacement of wear items, such as belts and tires. **Most component failures result from not performing scheduled maintenance.**

improvements going from 29 to 21 in 2012, which is a 28% improvement. Also, GreenRoad said the drivers it's monitoring improved their Safety Scores by nearly 50% within six months.

GreenRoad calculates its Safety Score based on driver performance in five categories, including braking, acceleration, corner handling, lane handling, and speeding.

IIHS Data Details Motor Vehicle Fatalities and Causes in 2011

Business Fleet

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) posted new data on motor vehicle crash fatalities from 2011. In 2011, a total of 32,367 people died in motor vehicle crashes, which is down 30% from 1975.

The majority of these fatalities occurred in passenger vehicle collisions, which represented 66% of fatalities, a total of 21,347 in 2011. This figure is 3% less than in 2010. Out of this total, 59% of those killed were driving cars, 21% were driving pickup trucks, and 18% were driving SUVs.

In terms of the types of collisions where the highest number of fatalities occurred, frontal impacts accounted for 41% of passenger vehicle occupant deaths in 2011 and side impacts accounted for 25%. Rollover crashes made up 35% of passenger vehicle occupant deaths, of which 55% involved single-vehicle crashes and 13% involved multiple vehicles.

Inside the vehicle, 9% of occupant fatalities involved those sitting in the second or third rows, and out of that percentage, 26% was under the age of 13.

Out of the total number of passenger vehicle fatalities, 45% occurred in single-vehicle crashes and 55% occurred in collisions involving multiple vehicles. For vehicles other than cars, however, single-vehicle crashes accounted for 63% of SUV occupant deaths and 64% of pickup truck occupant deaths.

By truck type, 76% of deaths in large truck collisions in 2011 involved tractor-trailers and 25% involved single-unit trucks.

In collisions involving large trucks, 98% of occupants killed when a passenger vehicle and a large truck collide were in the passenger vehicle.

New Illinois Traffic Laws That Went Into Effect in January, 2013

Automotive Fleet

At the beginning of the year a number of new traffic laws went into effect in the state of Illinois, two of them regarding the use of cell phones while driving and a third regarding proper safety procedures following an accident that results in only damage to a vehicle (rather than occupants).

The first new law prohibits cell phone use in construction or maintenance speed zones regardless of the speed limit in those zones. According to the Illinois Department of Transportation, motorists can operate a cell phone via voice-activation (including the use of a headset or cell phones used with single-button activation).

The next law prohibits texting or using a hand-held cell phone while driving a commercial vehicle and makes this a serious traffic violation, making the new law in accord with the Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (MCSR) law that prohibits texting and cell phone use by commercial motor vehicle drivers.

The third law allows the driver of a vehicle that was involved in a motor vehicle crash that resulted only in damage to a vehicle to move the vehicle off the highway to the nearest safe location. Possible safe locations include an exit ramp shoulder, a frontage road, the nearest suitable cross street, or other locations that won't block traffic. The law states that the driver should remain at the safe location until he or she has fulfilled requirements concerning the duty to give information and provide aid.

According to the Illinois DOT, the previous statute said "Every such stop shall be made without obstructing traffic more than is necessary," and the change clarifies the language in the statute.

All of these laws went into effect on Jan. 1, 2013.

If this newsletter was useful to you and imparted knowledge and ideas as it was intended to do, it was a success. If it did not, please provide the much-needed feedback.

This eZine provided by Doering Leasing Co. and Doering Fleet Management.

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Sincerely,

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