



Silent Boards Send Loud Signals: Getting Your Board Onboard with Fundraising

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Trusted Expertise for Nonprofit Impact

Poll: When it comes to Boards & Fundraising...

Recently I conducted an 'unscientific' industry poll across 3 different social media groups on 2 different platforms, asking leaders 4 questions to uncover what they really face when it comes to getting board members involved in fundraising.

#1 - Some boards are fully in the trenches, others are hands-off. When it comes to fundraising, how engaged is your board?

- 1 – Not Engaged at All
- 2 – Rarely Engaged (close)
- 3 – Somewhat Engaged (distant)
- 4 – Fully Engaged (distant)

Poll: When it comes to Boards & Fundraising...

#2 - Every nonprofit board can have barriers holding them back from helping with fundraising. Which barrier hurts your board's fundraising the most?

- 1 – No Clear Expectations for Board Members to Fundraise
- 2 – Discomfort Conversing About Money (distant)
- 3 – Fear of Rejection from a Donor (distant)
- 4 – Lack of Training How to Fundraise (distant)

Poll: When it comes to Boards & Fundraising...

#3 - Getting board members involved in fundraising is one of the hardest challenges leaders face. What's the #1 reason your board hesitates with fundraising?

- 1 – Don't Want to Ask Others to Give (tied)
- 1 – They Say It Isn't Their Job (tied)
- 3 – They Don't Know What to Do to Help (distant)
- 4 – They Say They Don't Have Time (distant)

Poll: When it comes to Boards & Fundraising...

#4 - Imagine your board growing stronger in just one area of fundraising, and the positive difference that could make! If your board could improve ONE thing about their fundraising efforts, what should it be?

- 1 – Help with Fundraising Events (tied)
- 1 – Serve on Board Dev Comm (tied)
- 3 – Ask Others to Give (distant)
- 4 – Personally Give to Your Org (distant)

Crossroads Freedom Center Update...

 **Dusty Ralph Rhodes**
March 14 · 🌐

GETTING THE BOARD ON BOARD

It was a vigorous discussion!

First a dinner together and a presentation of nonprofit board best practices. Practices ranged from 'governance' being the only hat directors wear, to board members also wearing a 'volunteer' hat to start helping fundraise for their faith-based Mission!

We then walked through a questionnaire to help each director discover, based on their own unique combination of skills, gifts and talents, which fundraising role they might see themselves serving in:

Connector
Storyteller
Visionary
Closer

This led to an unexpected and higher discussion of current board members comparing their own skill sets to what this organization may need differently to succeed going forward.

I commend each board member, the Founder, and the CEO for having that open and honest discussion!



  Bill Montgomery, Lori Lewis and 32 others 3 comments

 Like  Comment  Share

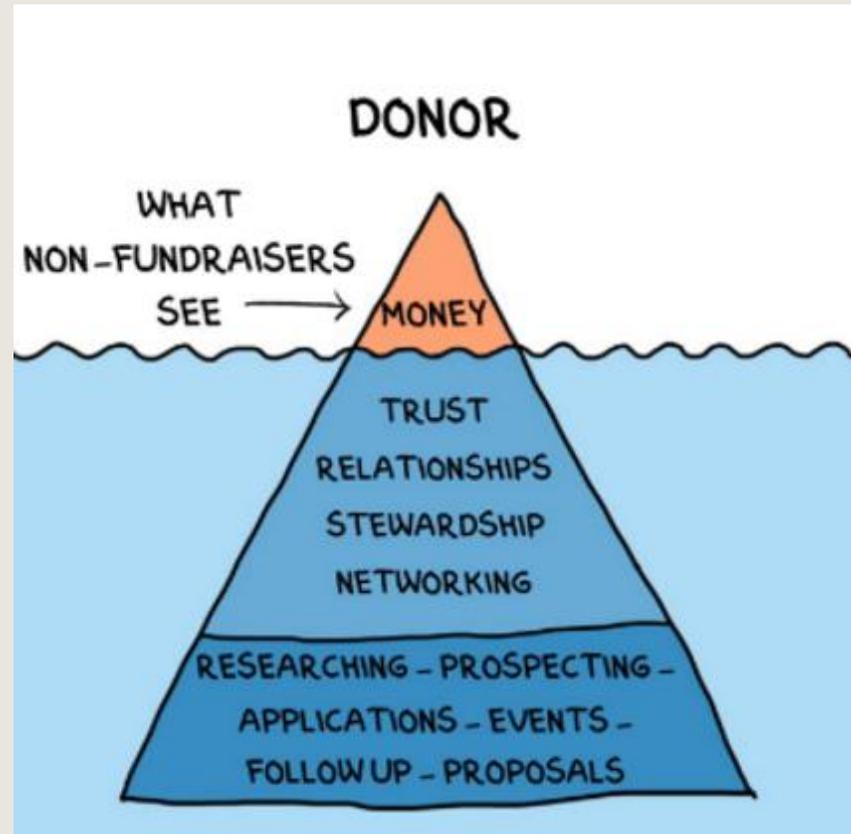
Fast forward to today, Founder/CEO Joe and wife/COO Maria say their Governance board members...

- Walked through a board fundraising role exercise together: 5 Visionaries, 3 Storytellers, 1 Connector, 1 Closer
- Board members are personally giving
- They formed a Board Development Committee

Board Blind Spot

Board members bring expertise, influence, and passion that can greatly strengthen your ministry's fundraising results and mission impact, IF there are known expectations, clear communication, and staff support to help equip them to fulfill their roles.

One of the blind spots that undermines fundraising potential, even among boards where fundraising is expected, is an honest misunderstanding about fundraising.



...Isn't this the *Leadership Summit*?

Raising funds is a leadership trait - a practical and direct manifestation of a leader's core skills in inspiration, influence, and connection. It requires more than just asking for funds; it involves building trust and motivating people to invest in a shared vision...to articulate a worthy cause so effectively that it resonates with and activates their community.

Raising funds is a ministry - *as spiritual as giving a sermon, entering a time of prayer, visiting the sick, or feeding the hungry. It is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in what we believe God is doing through our mission and vision.*

- Henri Nouwen, *The Spirituality of Fundraising*



Board Best Practices

5 Models for Nonprofit Board Governance

Board as Staff	Board as Managers	Board as Directors	Board as Governors	Board as Advisors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board spends most of its time <i>doing</i> the work of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board spends most of its time <i>supervising</i> the work of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board spends most of its time <i>directing</i> the work of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board spends most of its time <i>governing</i> the work of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board spends most of its time <i>affirming</i> the work of the organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary board output is <i>labor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary board output is <i>coordination</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary board output is <i>direction</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary board output is <i>accountability</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary board output is <i>endorsement</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal responsibility resides with the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal responsibility resides with the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal responsibility resides with the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal responsibility resides with the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal responsibility resides with the board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for organization to exist are determined by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for organization to exist are determined by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for organization to exist are determined by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for organization to exist are determined by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for organization to exist are determined by the CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational goals and objectives are set by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational goals and objectives are set by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational goals and objectives are set by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational goals and objectives are set by the CEO in annual dynamic plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational goals and objectives are set by the CEO in annual dynamic plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to achieve organizational objectives are developed by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to achieve organizational objectives are developed by the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to achieve organizational objectives are developed by the CEO and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to achieve organizational objectives are developed by the CEO and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to achieve organizational objectives are developed by the CEO and staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day operational authority rests with the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day operational authority rests with the CEO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day operational authority rests with the CEO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day operational authority rests with the CEO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day-to-day operational authority rests with the CEO

White indicates Board responsibilities. Gray indicates CEO responsibilities. This two-page chart is adapted from a template created by R. Terrence Jackson. It was adapted for the GTP Board by President & CEO, Gary G. Hoag on 15 August 2019. Draft revised 15 October 2019.

Board Best Practices

Sources: BoardSource, ECFA and AFP

Governance, Mission, Legal, Financial, Leadership, Fundraising

- **Governance** - fulfill fiduciary responsibilities managing the org according to its Articles, By-Laws and policies, and in the best interest of its constituents both ethically and missionally.
- **Mission** – ensure organization is aligned overall to fulfill its mission.
- **Legal** – maintain adherence to laws and its own by-laws, including policy reviews & approvals.
- **Financial** – review/approve budgets, major transactions, investments and designated funds.
- **Leadership** – manage top executive leadership including review & approval of compensation.
- **Fundraising** – ensure the org has the resources necessary to fulfill the mission, including personal participation as volunteers, ambassadors and solicitors.
- **Accountability** – maintain voluntary transparency with the public.

Board Members Have *7 Ways To Fundraise* Without Asking Others for a Gift

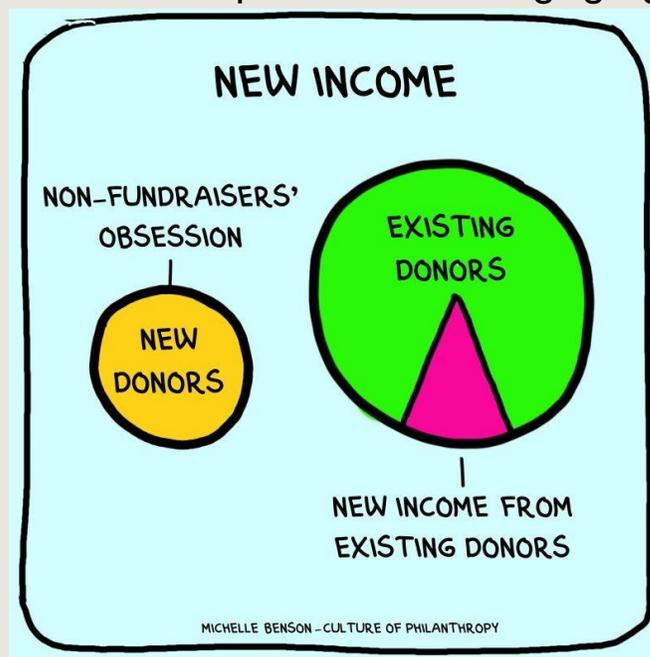
1. Make their own personal gift and/or include your ministry in their estate planning, and tell others.
2. Make phone calls to personally thank donors who gave gifts.*
3. Participate in the ministry's visionary strategic planning & the funding model to pay for it.
4. Host a small, intimate gathering of peers in their home where leadership can meet guests, share vision and begin new relationships.
5. Keep 1 story handy that is powerful and personally meaningful and be ready to share it.
6. Write personal 'thank you' notes and/or sign letters to select donors.
7. Invite prospects/donors to station VIP events & introduce the artist and staff to them.

*In a study by Penelope Burk (*Donor Centered Fundraising*) donors who received a 'thank you' call from a board member within 24 hours of making their gift, gave 39% more. 14 months later those same donors were giving 42% more than donors who didn't get the call, plus those same donors had a 70% retention rate (vs. national average approx 50%)!

Stop Doing & Start Doing...

In Time for Year End Fundraising

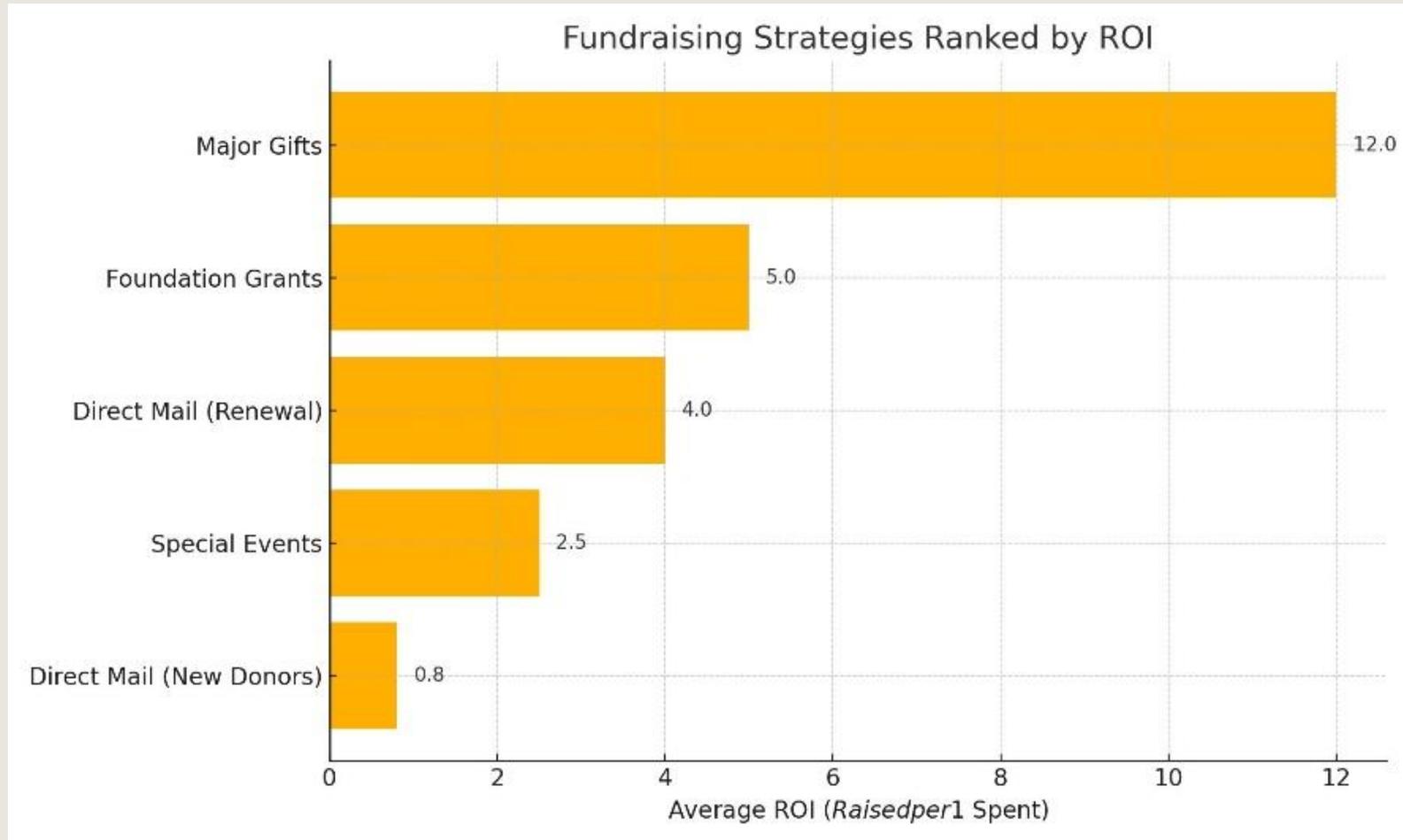
- **STOP** expecting each board member to fundraise the same way.
- **STOP** repeating fundraising initiatives just because they are on the fundraising calendar.
- **STOP** obsessing over new donors at the expense of re-engaging current donors.



- **START** automating routine fundraising tasks, especially when serving mass donors
- **START** improving how you serve your major gift donors.
- **START** re-engaging current, lapsing and lapsed donors.
- **START** re-examining donor diversification efforts.

Stop Doing & Start Doing...

In Time for Year End Fundraising



Stop Doing & Start Doing...

In Time for Year End Fundraising

\$592.50 billion

In 2024, Americans gave \$592.50 billion to charity, growing 6.3% over 2023. When adjusted for inflation, total giving grew by 3.3%.

Where did the generosity come from?

Contributions by source

By percentage of the total

66% \$392.45 billion

Giving by Individuals

↑ increased 8.2% from 2023

19% \$109.81 billion

Giving by Foundations

↑ increased 2.4% from 2023

8% \$45.84 billion

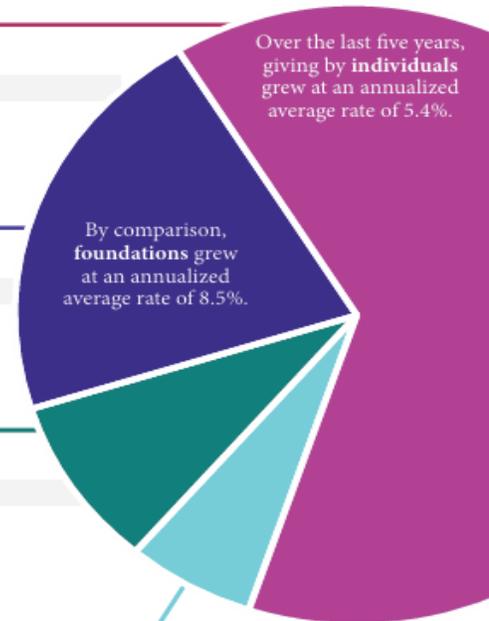
Giving by Bequest

↓ declined 1.6% from 2023

7% \$44.40 billion

Giving by Corporations

↑ increased 9.1% from 2023



*All figures on this infographic are reported in current dollars unless otherwise noted. The inflation rate in 2024 stood at 2.9%, and results may differ when adjusted for inflation. Learn more in the chapters.

Partner Effectively with your Board

	Type	Activity
Connector	Connectors are board members with amazing networks. They enjoy connecting the network with their passion and could easily fill an event table or bring friends in for a site tour. Their network is comprised of the right prospects (corporate, foundation, city, county, church and individual) and they can open doors when needed. However, just because they know the right people does not mean Connectors feel comfortable asking for gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a group for a site tour • Host a table (or two) at your event • Call and thank donors for their gift • Write personal 'thank you' notes • Launch a social media fundraiser • Host a gathering at their home • Chair an event • Review prospect lists • Make introductions for development • Serve on the Board Development Committee
Storyteller	Storyteller board members can articulate the mission and its impact beautifully. They have great enthusiasm and can tailor their messages based on their audience. They bring listeners along a vulnerable, truthful, and trustworthy journey. Although they can move others emotionally, Storytellers do not always feel comfortable asking for gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak at an event (large or small) • Review print/digital solicitations • Film a video for the website • Go on a cultivation visit (no Ask) • Write a newsletter article or blog • Attend site tours and offer commentary • Call and thank donors for their gift • Write personal 'thank you' notes • Serve on the Board Development Committee
Visionary	Visionary board members help you see what the future of the organization could look like. They bring creativity, imagination and wisdom, and should be engaged when it comes to strategic planning and capital campaign discussions. They might provide helpful feedback to your fundraising plan. This type is gifted at thinking about the organization's future, yet Visionaries may not be comfortable asking for gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in strategic planning • Review the fundraising plan • Review stewardship marketing pieces • Help write print/digital solicitations • Serve on the Board Development Committee
Closer	Closers are your solicitors! They do not shy away from the 'Ask' and can be taken on solicitations. They are influential. They like meeting new people and can have deep, meaningful conversations that demonstrate their connection to the organization. If they personally give to the ministry, Closers can speak firsthand as to why they give.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend solicitation appointments • Review donor prospect lists • Solicit corporate sponsorships • Make the 'Ask' at an event • Sign solicitation letters • Serve on the Board Development Committee

There are many ways board members can help fundraise for a ministry without ever asking others for a gift!

Success will come as staff members support board members by helping them discover their unique set of skills, talents and giftings using

The Board Fundraising Role Exercise
(handout)

Thank you!



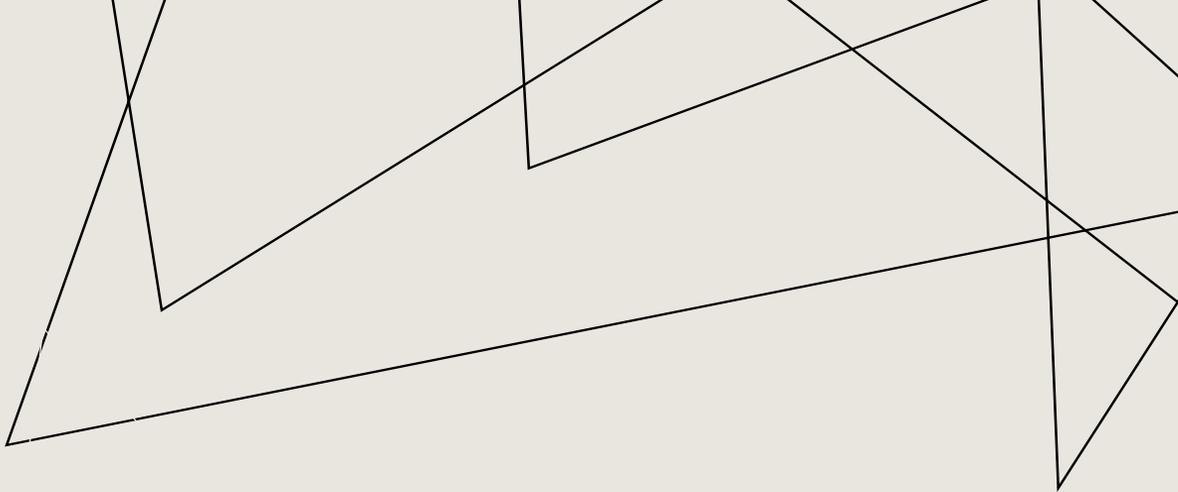
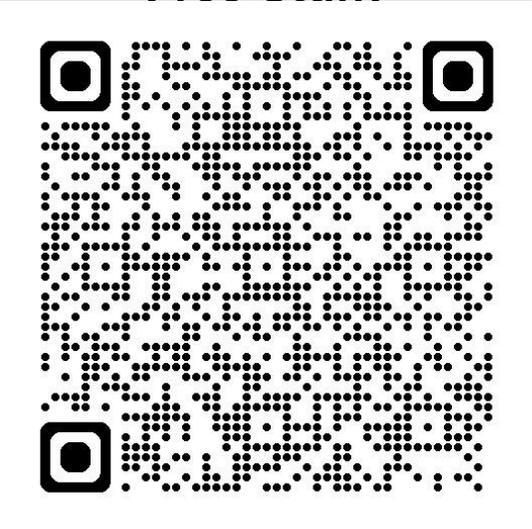
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Free Stuff!



Q & A





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