



SAVANNAH
CONVENTION CENTER

25 STRONG

SAVANNAH CONVENTION CENTER

THE FUTURE IN FOCUS

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

SAVANNAH-GEORGIA CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

SAVANNAH-GEORGIA CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARK SMITH, CHAIRMAN
Water Utility Management, LLC

JOSEPH MARINELLI, VICE CHAIRMAN
Visit Savannah

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Retired

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Chatham County Commission

MARTIN MILLER
Alcove Properties, LLC

BENJAMIN POLOTE JR.
The Polote Corporation

ANNE SCHEER
Scheer, Montgomery & Call P.C

PRITPAL SINGH
Left Lane Development

TRIP TOLLISON
Savannah Economic Development Authority

ANSLEY WILLIAMS
Live Oak Restaurants



VISION

TO BE THE PREMIERE EVENT DESTINATION,
DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AND
CREATING MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES.

MISSION

TO BE THE EVENT VENUE OF CHOICE,
DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND
SHOWCASING THE UNIQUENESS OF
SAVANNAH, CHATHAM COUNTY, AND
THE STATE OF GEORGIA.

LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

REP. JESSE PETREA
House District 166

REP. RON STEPHENS
House District 164

REP. EDNA JACKSON
House District 165

SEN. BEN WATSON
District 1

SEN. DEREK MALLOW
District 2

REP. CARL GILLARD
House District 162

REP. BILL HITCHENS
House District 161

**REP. ANNE ALLEN
WESTBROOK**

House District 163

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



GREETINGS FROM THE GOVERNOR



Greetings,

On behalf of the State of Georgia, I want to congratulate the Savannah Convention Center on another year of progress and success.

In April of 2025, I had the privilege of attending the ribbon cutting for the latest expansion of this world-class facility. This project was not just about more space. It was about opening doors for new businesses, attracting more visitors, and supporting good jobs for Georgians. We also celebrated the groundbreaking of the new hotel that will one day connect to the Convention Center, providing another facility that will set the center and Savannah apart as a premier destination for both business and leisure travelers.

The growth of the Savannah Convention Center is another success story in Georgia's approach to partnering with all levels of government and with the private sector to create mutual prosperity. When we work together on projects like this, we're not just creating one success story, but countless others in surrounding communities like this one.

In closing, I want to thank everyone at the Savannah Convention Center for their efforts to support this facility, community, and our entire state. As we continue to reach new milestones for economic opportunity, Savannah is playing a key role in driving growth for our entire state, and the Savannah Convention Center plays a critical role in the story of Savannah. Together, we will keep building in that success for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B.P.K." in a stylized, cursive font.

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Fiscal year 2025 was a tremendous year for the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority. The highlight of the year was the opening of our \$276 million expansion, which more than doubled the size of the Savannah Convention Center and significantly strengthened our ability to serve the region. I would like to thank the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission for overseeing construction and for continuing to manage the punch list and post-opening items.

Another major focus for our Authority was the final design, pricing, and financing of the Signia by Hilton Savannah headquarter hotel now under construction next door. This hotel will be a critical asset for our expanded Center, enabling us to accommodate more and larger conventions. As promised, the hotel is privately financed and poses no financial risk to the taxpayers of Chatham County or the State of Georgia.

I would like to thank the Georgia World Congress Center Authority, particularly Frank Poe and Kevin Duvall, as well as developers David Songy and Todd Nocerini of Songy Highroads, for helping shepherd this project from development into construction. Work is now underway, and we look forward to opening this 444-room hotel in the second quarter of 2028.

These accomplishments required the dedicated and professional effort of our entire staff, led by our industry-veteran Senior Vice President & General Manager, Kelvin Moore. Since joining us in January 2024, Kelvin has guided the organization through complex challenges and positioned our operations for long-term success. Thank you to Kelvin and the entire team for their exceptional work. We particularly recognize Director of Food & Beverage Jamie Parks upon his retirement after 25 years of dedicated service. Jamie has been instrumental to the success of our center.

The performance of our Center continues to accelerate in fiscal year 2026, and we expect to complete a remarkable year this June. As we look ahead, there is much to be excited about: future bookings are strong and growing, new hotels and restaurants are opening, visitation is rising, and the tourism industry continues to create hundreds of jobs across our region.

All of this points directly to the fulfillment of our mission: to further economic development and expand opportunity throughout the region.

In the years ahead we look forward to maximizing the investment that Chatham County and the State of Georgia have made in the Savannah Convention Center.

Excitedly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark V. Smith" in a cursive font.

Mark Smith
Chairman, Savannah-Georgia
Convention Center Authority



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

2025 marks a milestone year for the Savannah Convention Center. 25 years of hosting world-class events, fostering partnerships, and contributing to the growth of Savannah's meetings and tourism industry. This anniversary is a moment to honor the Center's past achievements, celebrate the dedication of its staff and leadership, and reflect on the milestones that have defined its journey. From its opening to the recent expansion, the Center has continually evolved to meet the needs of clients, attendees, and the community.

2004

Savannah and the Trade Center hosted the Press Core for the G8 Summit, which was held at Sea Island. The convention center hosted 2000 journalists for six days: The event included eight heads of state from Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Canada and the President of the United States. President George W. Bush conducted a press conference at the Trade Center. Japan's Prime Minister Kwaizumi asks for an extra trip on the water ferry to look at Savannah's skyline. Russia's President Putin compliments the donuts prepared hot and fresh in Krispy Kreme's mobile store in Tomochichi Square. Center attendance figures rise to 129,117 with 83,000 hotel room nights, and the Southern Women's Show says "Savannah has set the bar—best staff, best first show in a new city, ever!"

2001

In 2001, The State gave the County \$3 million for the purchase of parcel 7 and slip 1, adjacent to the convention center. The county leased the parcel to the convention center for 50 years. This track has great potential to aid the convention center's mission by providing a site for another hotel and related development. The center hosts 173 events and 129,915 attendees in its first full year, generating 39,404 overnight hotel stays.

2000

Pursuant to studies by the Trade Center Authority, the Trade Center becomes the first and only convention center in the nation to operate its own passenger ferry service. In February, the Trade Center's first event, the National Asphalt Pavers Association, kicks off without a hitch, while construction of the roof over the River Concourse continues with the project finally complete. The Grand Opening follows in May. In August, the Executive Director of the Georgia Society of Association Executives says "you must go to Savannah's new Trade Center to experience the best of the best!" And in October, the Trade Center hosts the International Convention Center Conference, proudly showing off to hundreds of its peers.

1998

Construction begins for the Convention/Trade Center occurs in July 1998 while construction continues at the adjacent resort.

1997

County voters handily approve \$15 million in additional Trade Center funding in a special SPLOST election, and Philadelphia-based SMG is hired to ensure pre-opening facility design, programming and marketing.

1996

The County approves an \$82 million development budget for the Trade Center, and decides to begin work despite funding delays with the adjacent hotel.

1995

The Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority is formed by act of the Georgia Assembly; and elects Arthur Gignilliat, head of Savannah Electric, as its first Chairman. The County approves a joint agreement with CSX for development of the Trade Center and resort hotel; and to extend roads and other services to the development site. A new county-wide 1% Hotel Motel tax provides stable funding for Trade Center operations and capital improvements.

1993

Governor Zell Miller announced a commitment from the State of Georgia for the project. Voters by a 2-to-1 margin approve \$37 million in SPLOST funding for a new Trade Center.

1912

Hutchinson Island is the heart of the Port of Savannah.

2007

The Authority solicits proposals from hotel transaction consultants and engages a full market study for a potential new hotel. Nissan, Volvo and Toyota Industries all bring dealer-product launches to the Trade Center. The Army's famed Ranger Regiment throws a birthday party and the thundering Champboat Racing Series roils the Savannah riverfront.

2016

The Authority solicits proposals to develop a minimum 300-room hotel next to the Trade Center.

2017

The Georgia General Assembly approves \$3M for planning an extension to the Savannah Convention Center.

2018

The Georgia General Assembly approved an additional \$6.3 million to continue the design and engineering process. We accepted the schematic and development designs. In addition, a construction manager - Clark Construction was hired by GSFIC (Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission).

2019

Georgia Governor Brian Kemp signed a bill creating the new Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority to oversee the expansion's operations. \$13.7 million was approved to complete the design and pre-construction.

2020

Georgia Governor Brian Kemp signed FY 2021 budget which included \$70 million in funding for the Savannah Convention Center Expansion

2021

Additional \$90M in funding allocated, the official groundbreaking takes place on March 17th. Work begins with soil and sediment controls, the installation of construction trailers, and site utility work. Earthwork and foundations are completed, and the above grade structure begins.

2022

Subcontracts are awarded to more than thirty Georgia based companies. Generally, the foundations, the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in are completed. The building envelope begins. In the East Concourse, demolition, pile installation, foundations and structural concrete are completed. In the Convention Center, pile installation, structural steel and decking, and the slab on the metal deck are completed. In the Exhibit Hall, concrete slab on grade and the curtain wall structure are completed. In the Parking Garage the foundations, structural concrete, precast installation, and the west wall rough-in are completed. And in The West Concourse under slab utilities are installed and in the Main Concourse 80% of the steel has been erected.

2025

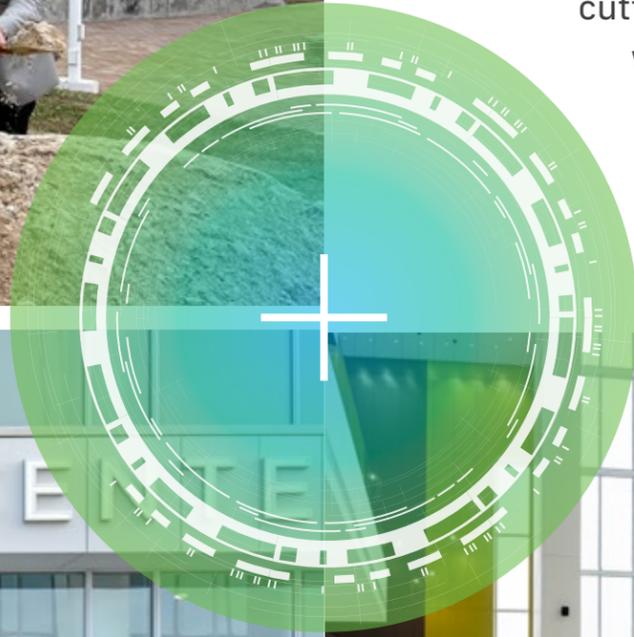
The Savannah Convention Center expansion ribbon cutting and grand opening was held in April. In October, the Authority breaks ground on a 444-room Signia by Hilton hotel set to open Summer 2028.





NEW SPACE. NEW ENERGY. NEW POSSIBILITIES.

The completion of the expansion represents one of the most significant milestones in the Center's 25-year history. From groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting to the features that now elevate our capacity and capabilities. With increased space, enhanced technology, and redesigned guest experiences, the expanded facility opens doors to bigger events, broader markets, and new opportunities. It stands as a testament to growth and vision.



MESSAGE FROM THE GWCCA CEO

As we reflect on the past year, the Savannah Convention Center stands at an extraordinary moment in its history. The completion of the expansion project not only enhances the Center's capabilities but also helps Savannah to compete on a new national stage. This achievement represents the culmination of years of planning, collaboration, and determination. This is a true testament to the strength of our team, partners, and community.

Celebrating the Center's 25th anniversary reminds us just how far we've come. From its beginnings along the riverfront to its transformation into a premier destination for major conventions and exhibitions, the Center has remained committed to delivering exceptional experiences while driving economic impact for the region. This year's milestones reflect both that proud legacy and the momentum carrying us into the future.

A key driver of this success is the continued seamless collaboration between Georgia World Congress Center Authority and Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority. Working in lockstep through our GWCCA team members on the ground, we bring a shared commitment to excellence that makes our partnership both effective and enduring.

We are aligning strategy, resources, and experience to deliver a world-class facility supported by world-class service. This collaboration ensures the Savannah Convention Center continues to grow not only in size, but in capability, innovation and reach

With increased capacity, new technologies, and state of the art amenities, the Savannah Convention Center is prepared to welcome larger events, attract new markets, and elevate the experience for every guest who walks through its doors.

The future ahead is full of promise as we remain focused on operational excellence and fiscal responsibility while expanding the Center's impact across Georgia.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, the leadership of the State of Georgia, our partners across the city, and the many clients who continue to trust us with their vision. Together, we are shaping the next chapter of the Savannah Convention Center.



Kevin Duvall, CEO
Georgia World Congress Center Authority



MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR VP & GENERAL MANAGER

When we look back at fiscal year 2025, one word comes to mind: transformation.

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the Savannah Convention Center — a quarter century of serving as Savannah's front door to the world, driving economic growth, creating jobs, and welcoming millions of visitors to our city and state. And what a consequential anniversary it has been.

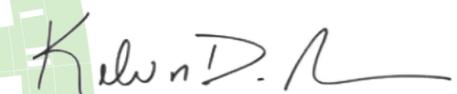
In February, we cut the ribbon on our \$276 million expansion that doubled our size, giving Savannah the capacity to host larger, more simultaneous, and more impactful events. The impact was immediate: during our opening weekend, we welcomed 14,000 young athletes and their families for the Nike Savannah Showdown. That moment underscored that the expansion was not only a milestone of how far we've come, but also a springboard for what lies ahead.

Just as meaningful was October's groundbreaking for the 444-room Signia by Hilton Savannah headquarters hotel. At \$396 million, this investment is more than bricks and mortar; it's a game-changer. It will create the walkable room block national planners demand, elevate Savannah's profile on the national stage, and multiply the returns from our expansion.

This year was also one of strategic investment in our operations — preparing the Savannah Convention Center to meet the needs of an evolving clientele while preserving the charm our longtime customers have come to appreciate. We modernized systems, strengthened processes, and invested in our people, all while maintaining the highest standards of service. Those efforts were reflected in our customer satisfaction rating of 96.1%, a clear affirmation that our commitment to excellence is recognized by the clients and guests we proudly serve.

Looking ahead, we remain unwavering in our core mission: to be the event venue of choice, driving economic growth, and showcasing the uniqueness of Savannah, Chatham County, and the state of Georgia. That mission has guided the Convention Center for 25 years, and it will continue to be the foundation of everything we do. At the same time, we hold ourselves to an internal goal — to be recognized among the very best convention centers in the world, not only for the caliber of our facilities, but for the excellence of the experiences we deliver. The Savannah Convention Center's future is bright, and together, we will continue driving growth and creating opportunity for our community.

Rooted in purpose, reaching for excellence — Savannah sets the pace.



Kelvin D. Moore, CMP
Senior Vice President & General Manager

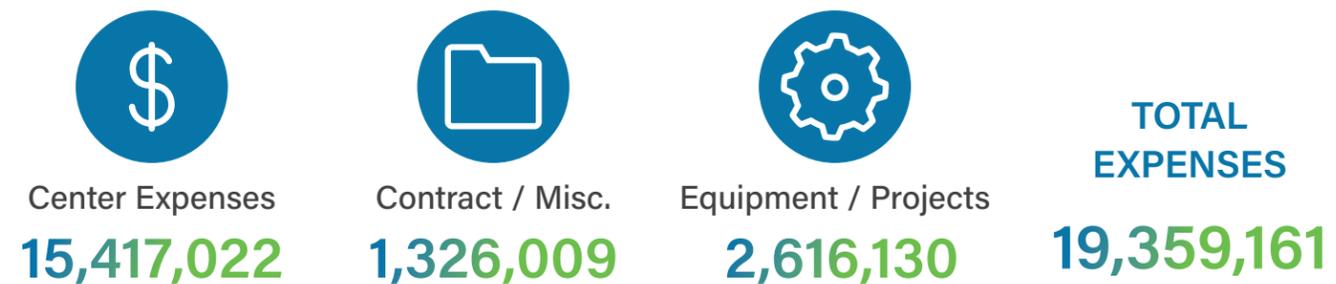


FINANCIAL UPDATE

REVENUES



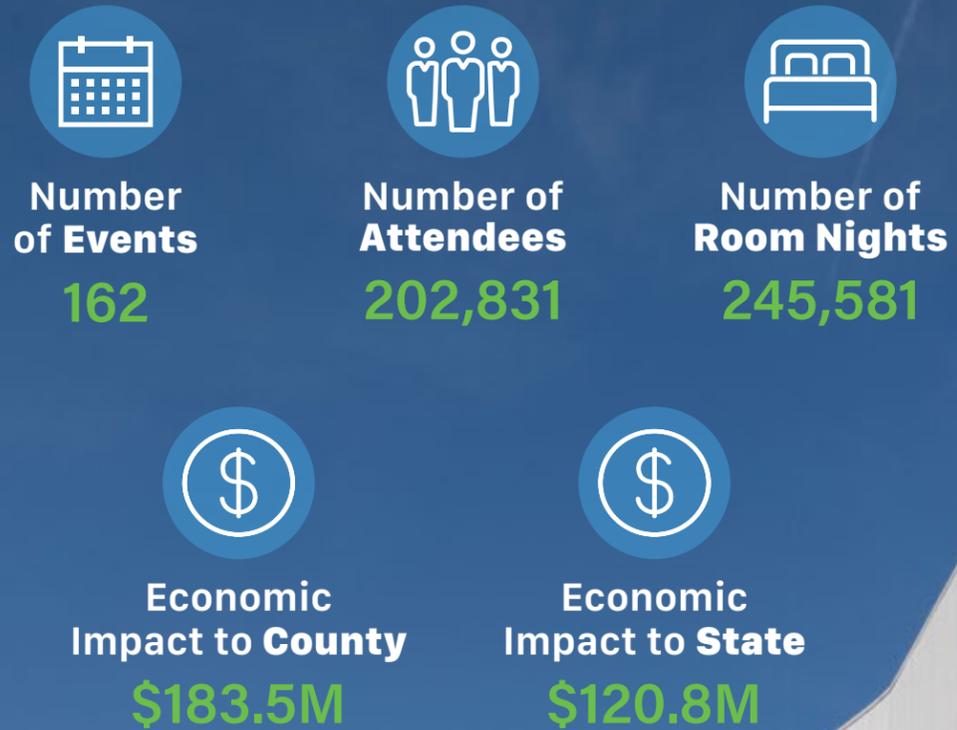
EXPENSES



NET INCOME

Net income before depreciation and capital	3,001,685
Depreciation	650,679
Capital projects	6,436,443
Net income after depreciation and capital	(4,085,438)

ECONOMIC IMPACT



SALES THAT LEAD THE WAY

Stronger relationships with clients and partners fueled significant sales momentum throughout the year. New market outreach, major bookings, and deeper collaboration with Visit Savannah created a robust pipeline aligned with the expanded facility. Lead generation, contracts, and conversion results demonstrate strong positioning for the years ahead. These connections continue to open new doors for growth.

NUMBERS



503

Proposals



71

Site Visits



\$1,936,362

Total Rental



\$3,214,170

F&B Minimum

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS



161

Events Total



400

Event Days



202,333

Attendees



96.1%

Customer Satisfaction Rating



PEOPLE. PURPOSE. PROGRESS.

Our commitment to people began with our team. Throughout the year, focused investments in leadership development, workforce training, and culture-building strengthened our employees and supported them through a period of significant growth and transformation. Beyond our organization, meaningful community partnerships, volunteer initiatives, and outreach efforts reinforced our role as an engaged and responsible civic partner across Savannah. Together, these efforts reflect a sustained dedication to people, purpose, and long-term impact.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Robert W. Gadsden Elementary school
- Sol C. Johnson High School
- Goodwill
- EOA Savannah
(Economic Opportunity Authority for Savannah-Chatham County)
- Savannah Technical College
- Gulfstream's Student Leadership Program
- Union Mission

STAFF PROMOTIONS

Our people are the heart of the Savannah Convention Center, and this year we proudly celebrated their achievements and growth. From well-deserved promotions to outstanding contributions across departments, these accomplishments highlight the dedication, talent, and leadership that drive our success. Recognizing and honoring our team not only celebrates individual milestones but also reflects the collective strength and spirit that make the Center exceptional.



Gail Terrell

Director of Human Resources



Jackie Mitchell

Director of Event Services



Staci Stover

Senior National Sales Manager



Jared Whitehead

Senior Public Safety Manager



Jason Touchberry

Senior F&B Manager



Ansley Cribbs

Senior Staff Accountant



Penny Evans



ELEVATED TASTE AND EXPERIENCE

Innovation and creativity guided menu development, service enhancements, and sustainability initiatives across the culinary program. Strategic partnerships with local vendors and imaginative culinary concepts elevated every guest experience, meeting the expectations of a new level of clientele drawn by the expanded facility. These achievements reflect the Savannah Convention Center's commitment to exceptional service, elevated food quality, and memorable dining, continually raising the standard for hospitality excellence.

RETIREMENT

After 25 years of dedicated service, our F&B Director Jamie Parks decided that 2025 would be his final full year with the SCC with a planned retirement in early 2026. Throughout his career, he helped define the Center's culinary standards, built strong relationships with local partners and vendors, and mentored countless members of the hospitality team. His leadership and commitment to excellence played a vital role in the success of thousands of events and elevated the guest experience across the facility. His legacy will continue to influence both our culture and our service for years to come. Jamie, we thank you for 25 years of dedicated service!



TELLING OUR STORY

This year marked a powerful acceleration in how the Savannah Convention Center shared its story with the world. Through strategic campaigns, storytelling tied to the expansion, and targeted media engagement, the Center generated 1,801 earned media mentions, reached an audience of more than 2.6 billion, and achieved an estimated \$41.6 million in publicity value. Major press moments including a VIP media tour in February, the expansion ribbon cutting in April, and the hotel groundbreaking in October positioned the Center as a national point of interest for innovation, growth, and opportunity.

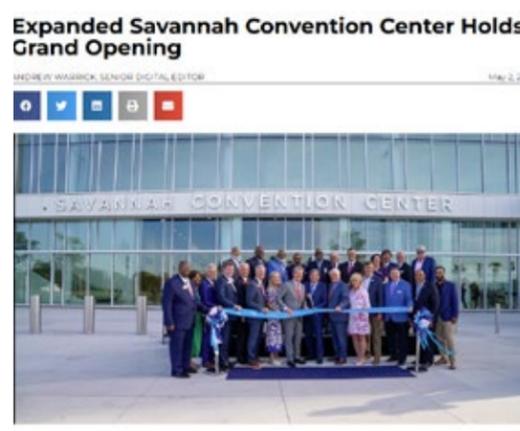
In parallel, refreshed visuals, messaging, and content reinforced a bold, future-focused identity across platforms. A chart highlighting social media growth reflects the expanding digital reach and engagement driven by these efforts. Together, these moments and metrics signal a new chapter in brand visibility, one built on momentum, clarity, and a stronger connection to audiences near and far.



1,739
Press Mentions

2.7 Billion
Views

\$42,797,531
Earned Media Value





LOOKING AHEAD

As the Savannah Convention Center completes a milestone year, the momentum built in 2025 sets the stage for an exciting future. The expansion has strengthened the Center's capacity, capabilities, and reputation, while operational enhancements, team growth, and community engagement have laid a strong foundation for continued success.

Looking forward, the focus turns to new opportunities and strategic growth, including the planned addition of a hotel connected to the Center. This development will enhance the guest experience, increase event draw, and strengthen Savannah's position as a premier meetings and convention destination.

The Center remains committed to excellence in service, innovation, and collaboration, ensuring every event, partnership, and initiative contributes to a thriving future. With a talented team, strong partnerships, and a clear vision, the Savannah Convention Center is ready to embrace the next chapter continuing to deliver exceptional experiences and driving growth for the community and region.





SAVANNAH
CONVENTION CENTER



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