

to park downtown. One wag at the conference noted to me that the Vice Mayor of San Jose hadn't learned anything about parking (or economics, for that matter) since she was 18 years old. I had to concur.

However, she had learned a lot about politics. The Vice Mayor said that parking was the "third rail" of local politics. (Maybe that's what's going on in San Francisco.)

Do you think that if a commercial operator had been present, he might have pointed out why they close the lots at sundown? Could it be that there was no money in charging for parking when the city was giving it away for free?

A Solution in Search of a Problem

I have always had a lot of respect for Cooper Marcus and his Spark Parking; they are starting to roll out their system in Northern California. However, that too is another story. He was talking about parking reservations. He said it was neat, but felt that it was a "solution in search of a problem."

I have been saying this for years but not quite as eloquently. How often have you been unable to find a parking space, really? How many lots and garages are regularly marked as "full?" I never have.

When I'm in a town and looking for an address, I find the address, then look around for parking. I usually find a space either on- or off-street within a couple of minutes, if not seconds.

Why would I want to be forced to park in a certain lot I had reserved days earlier when a closer, cheaper, more convenient spot might be available when I arrive?

OK, airports fill up two or three days a year. It's hard to get a spot at the mall on the day after Thanksgiving or Christmas. But to set up a complex reservation program for these couple of days is attempting to use technology to solve a problem that doesn't exist.

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Circle #27 on Reader Service Card

Jerry Brown Said, 'Small Is Beautiful'; Would Your Senior Management Agree?



BY JOHN VAN HORN

A one-time governor of California who had a Plymouth as his limo, slept on a mat, ate bean sprouts and ran around with a pop star made the statement that “small is beautiful.” He wasn’t talking about parking, however; he was referring to government.

Many large companies lose money, or at least they don’t make as much as they could if they were smaller. By reducing their size, they increased their bottom line. What about parking?

We were reviewing a garage in the Northwest. It had an operation with a bunch of valets. The valets were costly, but garage management felt that the valet assist was necessary to handle the customers, and to keep the numbers up.

When the P and L was reviewed, we noticed that the valets were indeed expensive. We did some quick numbers on the outcome if valet parking were dropped and found that even though we would lose about 200 monthly accounts, we would get more than the loss back in reduction in costs.

So, we did it.

And sure ’nuff, although we dropped about 200 customers, our bottom line went up. The reduction in the cost of the valets, HR costs, overtime and taxes actually raised the profit of the location. Plus, there were much fewer headaches and a lower liability (valet vs. park-and-lock).

We also had an immediate waiting list of 200 monthlies, which we filled over the next couple of months through attrition and just a bit of oversell. Had this operator understood his “vacancy/oversell” factor that we had discussed a couple of months before, he wouldn’t have lost a single account.

As you recall, last month PT ran an article about a medical center in Century City California. It had a ton of valets and was parking 2,000 cars a day in 700 spaces. Of course, this plan wouldn’t work there. The medical center needed to provide the space for the tenants in the building and for a nearby private hospital. It would never think of reducing the valet service.

So when you decide to cut valet service, you have to take into consideration the facility you support. If you are a stand-alone garage that is being run simply as a business, the bottom line may be all that counts. However, if the garage is an amenity to another business, “whatever it takes” is the answer to the parking situation.

I could say that in the last instance “profit be damned,” but I won’t. The extremely well-run valet operation at the Century City (CA) Medical Center was profitable, and was so due to diligent management, simply shoehorning every possible vehicle into the



garage, and being in a location that offered no other parking in the area. Its office building and hospital had more than 1,000 parkers – but some were on shift work – and more than 1,200 dailies who visited doctors’ offices or the hospital every day. According to the owner, they were happy parking “the more the merrier.”

Jerry Brown, the second Brown to govern the state of California and current mayor of Oakland, pleaded for smaller government, contending that the smaller an organization, the better it ran. Frankly, I tend to

agree. I will say, however, that large and efficient aren’t mutually exclusive.

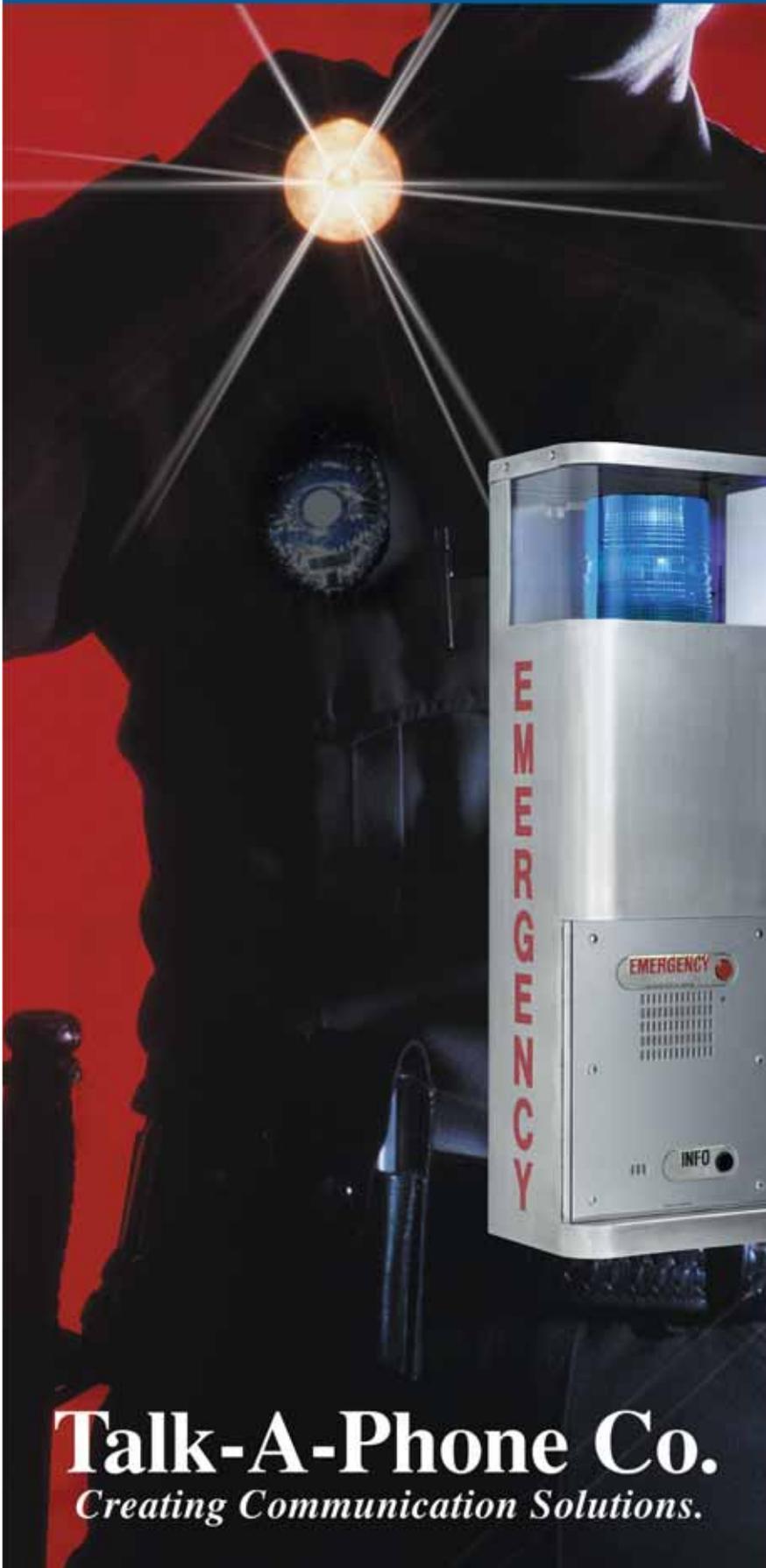
Think about McDonalds – it delivers billions of burgers each day, and every one is exactly the same. You may not like the taste, but you can’t argue with the delivery.

The difference in the parking business is that we don’t get to pick our location or the type of business we support. Stand-alone garages are one thing, but a garage that supports a hospital, university or airport must be able to take the business it receives. If the theater has a screening at 10 p.m., you can’t close at 8, even if keeping the garage open cost you a buck or two.

Woof!

We dropped about 200 customers, and our bottom line went up.

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PIE is the most convenient and cost effective event this year. We are adjacent to Chicago's O'Hare airport. Take the hotel shuttle. It's FREE! We have an incredible \$130 room rate. Our Prices – \$395 (if you act now) haven't changed in nearly a decade.

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Over 100 companies will have the leading edge technology on display for you to peruse. With over 13 hours of exhibit time over three days, you'll have ample opportunity. Plus, we don't close the hall on you. From the time it opens until the end of the day, you can meet with vendors without interruption.

We have been called the "intimate" trade show. The vendors don't overwhelm you with flash and dash, but bring knowledgeable people who can answer your questions and provide information you can use.

You will meet not only the "big guns" from the vendors' headquarters, but also be introduced to the people who will be your contacts when you go home. PIE helps you form your network of support.

Boot Camp – There are three different ones this year!!

Boot Camp – There are three different ones this year!! This year it's different! Boot Camp is designed for "newbies" in the parking industry. Don't be afraid to admit it. We all started somewhere, and most of the time we're left groping for solutions. In the past, Boot Camp has been held on one day. This year we have expanded it into three sections, **The Profession** (The Industry, terms, resources, legal, management), **Delivery of Services** (On Street and Off Street Parking), **The Business** (Revenue Control, Rate Setting, Auditing). Each two and a half hour session will focus on the basics of its title topic. If you have less than five years in parking, Boot Camp is for you.

The Senior Seminar

Five Senior Parking Executives from a commercial operator, city, university, airport, and developer discuss parking and its future. Here's the place to discover where parking is going and who is going to take it there. Want to be sure your organization is ready for the rest of the decade? Attend this very "hot" session. Check PT's web site for details.

The Opening Session – Don Shoup and the “High Cost of Free Parking”

Known as the number one parking academic, UCLA's Dr. Donald Shoup will present his sometimes controversial theories on parking planning, charging, and distribution of the revenues. Has parking policy really been the destroyer of our cities? Shoup thinks so. Here he will show you how minor changes in laws can relieve congestion in our cities, and give the parking industry, commercial and public, an even bigger piece of the action. Broadcasted by CCTV at PIE II in LA.

Networking – What this event is all about

Lets face it, no one has all the answers, but many of us have the same issues and problems. What we try to do at PIE is connect people with questions with people with answers. We do it with seminars and presentations, and there will be some this year. However, we also do it by putting you together with people who are on the front lines just like you.

Seen speed dating? This is speed networking. You will have time to meet people who have solved problems you have, and talk a bit – but mostly to connect. So you can go into depth later. You will build your own personal network. Yes, here's the chance to really meet people and develop a professional relationship.

We'll keep this up until you have met and have the names of enough people to solve your problems for the next year. You can then catch up with them at the next PIE.

AND – we'll have our “issues boards.” When you register you will receive a group of cards. Put an issue on the card and tack it on the board. Check back later – your answer will be there, with someone to contact for the details. Or maybe you will have an answer for someone else.

PIE 2006 will be the place to network... and get solutions.

The Airport Seminar

It's an entire day for airports. If you run an airport – we will be contacting you separately, but the day will cover rate elasticity (should you raise 'em or not?), construction planning, technology from avi to PARCS to lot counts, and that pesky valet program.

Check PT's web site for more details.

The Technical Seminars

Yes, two hours devoted to garage technology AND two hours devoted to off street tech information. This is where the tables are turned. You will have the manufacturers on stage and ready for your questions. Be general or specific. We'll be there to keep it from turning into a sales presentation, but we don't guarantee that there won't be a few sharp words. When you ask a vendor about a problem, they had better have the answer.

Check the Thursday and Friday schedules for these hot seminars.

The Workshops

They will include Personnel Vetting, Maximizing Lighting, Rate Setting, Problem Customers, Parking Ops in Small Towns and Higher Ed.

These topics need one-on-one discussion and the workshops are the place to have them. Small groups, an expert in the field, and you have solutions. You will come away from these with ideas, but more importantly, a place to go with future questions.

THE SEMINARS

The ADA

Americans with Disability Act. Mary Smith, the parking industry's foremost expert on the ADA will bring us up to speed. It affects everyone in the room, from vendors to those responsible for enforcement. It is the new law – find out what it means.

On Street – A Comparison of Technologies

Jon Martens brings an indepth discussion of P and D, P by Space, Meters, and the enforcement options 2006 technology has brought us. If you are a city, a university, or an operator, this seminar is for you.

Hotel and Hospital Parking

Valets, staff, visitors, transportation and your guests or patients – they are all part of the hotel/hospital mix. A panel from all the disciplines will discuss each area, and then answer your questions.

Payment Options

Cash, Card, Cell, Debit, Credit, or leave your spare tire – this discussion gets into the details.

Double Your Capacity with Technology

Rob Bailey brings the mechanical (stacker) and automated systems into perspective. An inexpensive way to increase your capacity.

Funding

A banker, a consultant, and a developer all talk about how to fund everything from shuttles to revenue equipment to garages. This is for both private and public institutions.

The Numbers

Researcher Dale Denda takes us through the 2006 version. How many of us are there? How much do we gross? How many new garages will be built? Oh, and how much do we pay? Want a sneak preview into your opposite number's pay packet? Hear the results of PT's survey here first.

21 Networking, Training, and Informational Events

These are for every level of manager in the parking industry from newbie to the seasoned veteran. The Parking Conference and Parking Industry Exhibition is an investment in your future. Spend three days immersed in parking. You will not regret a second.

Notice: The schedule will expand and change as new seminars are added. Check PT's web site for the most up to date information: www.parkingtoday.com/pie



PIE II in Los Angeles

Wednesday August 23

Campus of the University of Southern California

PIE II will be held in conjunction with the Parking Conference in Chicago. The one day event will have six seminars, including two that will be seen in Chicago – The Don Shoup presentation and Jon Marten's on "On Street Technology." A closed circuit TV setup will connect the two events, with Shoup presenting from Los Angeles and Marten from Chicago.

Four other seminars, lunch, and a small PIE II exhibition will round out the one day event.

See www.parkingtoday.com/pie for more details.

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tion, the terminals feature multiple payment options, on-line credit card authorization, and solar power. Our fully hosted Parking Management service, Parkfolio® Neo, offers around the clock information from any Internet connection with real time reporting and pro-active maintenance.

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W.S. Tyler's Multi-Barrette architectural woven-wire cloth offers a distinctive design, plus it's very strong and rigid in one direction and highly flexible in the other. When used as a facade covering, it

creates a light, transparent skin, due to its open area. Tyler's Multi-Barrette also is well-suited for exterior applications where a degree of security is required. In addition, it provides a clean, attractive finish to any structure.

Architectural woven-wire cloth offers a unique ornamental mesh design, and in many applications serves functional requirements as well. Woven in stainless steel, aluminum and other metals, it is available in a variety of styles, designs and materials. Multi-Barrette is just one of many styles manufactured by W.S. Tyler and Haver & Boecker. Together, they have been leaders in the production of woven-wire cloth products worldwide, dating to the 1800s.

For more information, log on to www.parkingtoday.com/epip

LIFTMASTER UPGRADES SLIDE GATE OPERATOR LINE



The Chamberlain Group has made several enhancements to its LiftMaster models SL570, SL580 and SL590 heavy-duty slide gate operators. The enhancements are designed to offer greater simplicity during installation and ease of retrofitting applications. The enhanced models –

SL575, SL585 and SL595 – will replace the existing line. All operators come standard with a built-in radio receiver for use with DIP switch and Security+ remote controls.

Upgraded features exclusive to the SL575 and SL585 models include a large accessory tray that provides a convenient location to mount various accessories, as well as knockouts for running power and control wiring. Also, a universal footprint simplifies retrofit applications by adapting pre-existing mounting pads.

New features for the entire line include a larger control box for easier access to major components, with improved terminal strip labeling for easier, time-saving installation. An integrated three-button control station features open/close/stop buttons that speed installation and troubleshooting by eliminating the need for additional wiring to set the open and close limits for the gate.

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RUUD'S NEW WALL PACK PROVIDES CONTROLLED ILLUMINATION



Ruud's new Full Cutoff EZ Wall Pack (GWC Series) is an excellent alternative to a traditional refractor wall pack in applications where glare or spill light is a concern. It provides excellent cutoff illumination, ease of installation and serviceability.

With the efficiency of vertical lamp operation and specially designed optical system and shrouded housing, the new Full Cutoff EZ Wall Pack provides excellent controlled forward-throw illumination without the potential for glare or light spill. The wide distribution ensures wide fixture spacing and maximum light levels. The GWC Series achieves IES Full Cutoff Classification and meets local anti-glare lighting ordinances.

The copper-free, die-cast aluminum housing is standard with our exclusive Colorfast DeltaGuard finish, featuring an E-coat epoxy primer with bronze ultra-durable powder topcoat. All fixtures are standard with a high-power-factor ballast; most are supplied with a multi-volt ballast.

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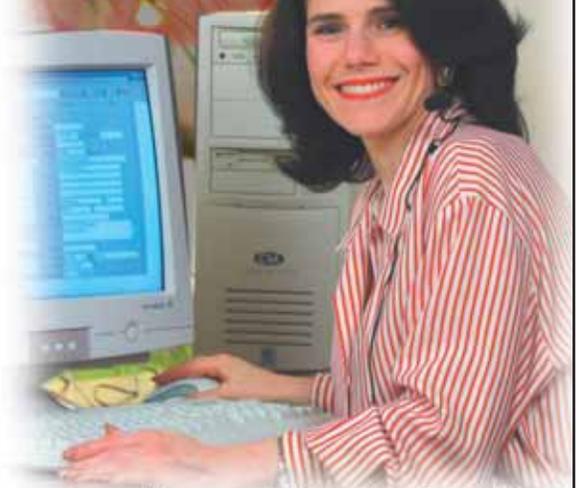
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Industrial Scientific's GasBadge Plus single gas detector has received a third-party certified ingress protection (IP) rating of 66/67 and a number of agency approvals. The IP rating indicates

that the two-year, maintenance-free monitor was tested to be dust-tight and resistant to water ingress from water jets and immersion. This test certification further demonstrates the gas detector's ability to perform reliably in the harshest industrial environments.

Agencies that have recently approved the GasBadge Plus include United Laboratories (UL) for the International Electrochemical Commission. The single gas detector has passed the certification tests for intrinsic safety and now carries the marking code for IEC T4 hazardous locations.

For more information, log on to www.parkingtoday.com/epip

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Talk-A-Phone's Solar-Powered Emergency Tower, Model ETP-MT/R OPT, is designed to integrate with a cellular or radio frequency (RF), including VoIP-RF, to provide a reliable, completely wireless emergency phone station for locations where local power is not available.

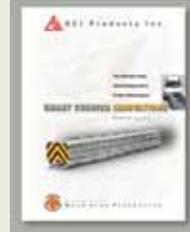
The system operates completely off of a solar-powered battery that is attached to a solar panel. It works by powering the system throughout the night and recharging throughout the day.

The solar tower is perfect for securing a facility's outside perimeters and remote locations, such as parking lots, walking paths and bicycle lanes.

The ETP-MT/R OPT solar tower is built of 1/4-inch steel with multiple layers of rust-inhibitive coating; it stands 10-foot-4-inches tall and weighs in at 410 pounds. Talk-A-Phone offers the solar tower in a number of colors and lettering.

For more information, log on to www.parkingtoday.com/epip

WORK AREA PROTECTION OFFERS INFO ON SCI CRASH ATTENUATOR



Work Area Protection Corp. has a new catalog on its Smart Cushion Innovations (SCI) crash attenuator, the only speed-dependent attenuator on the market.

The SCI crash attenuator is used to stop vehicle resistance during an impact. It allows lighter and slower-moving vehicles to have longer ride-down distances and lower ride-down G forces, while ramping up for heavier and faster-moving vehicles. It is designed to be reusable after impact and have maximum durability before, during and after an impact.

Two models of the SCI crash attenuator – SCI70GM and SCI100GM – are available. They can withstand impacts of 45 mph and 62 mph, respectively.

Designed for maximum safety, durability and reusability, the SCI crash attenuator comes fully assembled for pick-and-set installation in just 60 to 90 minutes. Resets take less than 30 minutes for an experienced crew. In most cases, the only needed replacement parts are shear bolts.

For more information, log on to www.parkingtoday.com/epip

PT

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BY JVH

The She-Wolf and I Meet Again ...

As semi-retired PI Paul Manning and his son were following up on a shooting in their office, he got a call. It was the voice of an old adversary, Maria LaFlonza: "So, Mr. Paul Manning, you are sticking your nose into my business again. This time, you and your son – Paul Junior, isn't it? – won't be so lucky." Paul Junior had stirred up trouble when he asked a few questions in a parking structure where their wounded client, Grace Lundquist, had seen some strange activity. They spoke to Betty Beeson, the protagonist in Paul Senior's first real case, who knew everything about parking in L.A., and were told that a good place to start was with the "owner" of AB Parking, William Francis Smith. However, just 30 minutes after Junior mentioned LaFlonza's name to Smith, his dad got a call from the LAPD to back off. He had barely hung up the phone when the outer office door opened and two men walked in. They identified themselves as members of the state board that licenses private detectives. There had been a number of complaints about the firm's activities, they said, and until it was straightened out, its licenses would be pulled. For all intents and purposes, Paul Manning and Son Investigations was out of business.

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It was obvious Paulo's meeting with William Francis Smith had stepped on some pretty big toes. And they belonged to people not only in City Hall, but also in Sacramento. What the heck was going on here? This was just a friggin' parking lot.

There couldn't be an amount of money involved to interest folks at that altitude. Or could there?

I figured it was time to get some more information from Betty. She had been in the parking business for 30 years. If anyone knew about parking, it was Betty. When my wife and assistant Shirley returned from making the phone call, she had a funny look on her face.

"Betty wasn't too forthcoming. She sounded frightened. She told me she was very busy and couldn't afford the time to talk to us. I think someone got to her. She did say, however, that perhaps we might want to talk to Marilyn North. She is an auditor and a former parking operator who works out of Seattle. Betty did give me her number. When I called, I found that she was actually here in L.A. working on a job. She'll be here in an hour."

"Wow," I said. "That's a lot in just two phone calls. We have to be careful. We don't want it to look like we are 'investigating' anything. This has to be just a social call. It might be better if we met her at Paulo's. The office may be under some kind of surveillance."

"Right, I'll call her back."

I thought it best if only Paulo and I met with North. That way, only our licenses were in jeopardy. Our major operative, Jim Walsh, was planning to continue to follow up with his contacts in the LAPD. I told him to go home and await develop-

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