A Review of Importance and Analysis Method of Stakeholder Collaboration for Festival Management as an Urban Strategy

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Abstract

Festival as a cultural activity could lead to the building of a creative community that is necessary for the formation of a cultural capital and the success of a creative city. In order to develop a festival that could create a positive impact on locals, the collaboration of stakeholders from all sectors is significant in determining the format of the festival that is suitable for the development goals and identity of the city. In addition, social network analysis could help to understand festival stakeholders within the network, as well as their roles and relationships, and to provide guidelines that are appropriate to further use festivals as an urban strategy. Currently, in Thailand, there is the term Festival Economy, which is an idea to drive the economy through the festivals, established to be a tool to attract tourists and develop the economy of the city through the festival. Thus, this paper aims to gather ideas, theories, and mechanisms that could lead to a collaboration of stakeholders to use festivals as an urban strategy and provide guidelines regarding forms of the collaborative development process that are suitable for Thailand.

Keywords: Stakeholder, Festivals, Collaboration, Social Network Analysis, Urban Strategy, Thailand

Introduction

Festival is described as an event, a social phenomenon, encountered in virtually all human cultures (Falassi, n.d.: 1), which could lead to the building of a creative community that is necessary for the formation of a cultural capital and the success of a creative city. Festivals can be considered as a form of social, artistic, and promotional activity as well, leading to a phenomenon called festivalization of urban space and policies defined by Karpinska-Krakowiak (2009). Festivalization is defined as specific mechanisms of organization and formation of urban space and society activities and a way of entertaining city residents and tourists by increasing the quantity and quality of festivals (Zherdev, 2014: 12). Furthermore, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) mentioned in the Economy Report (2010) that demand for visits to cultural heritage sites, festivals, museums and galleries, music, dance, theater, and opera performances contributes to the cultural sector to tourism and lead to the growth of industries, including creative goods and cultural services (UNCTAD, 2010: 21). In Southeast Asia, some festivals are a form of creative economy that elaborate and produce in the sectors of the creative economy, examples are fashion, craft, and film festivals, and some other festivals also interact with the tourism industry, which is cultural tourism, and connect to the creative economy through the elaboration of urban spaces and cultural heritage (British Council Indonesia, 2022: 16).

In the context of Thailand, there is the term called Festival Economy which is an idea to drive the economy through the festivals of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) that has realized the importance of developing and preserving the culture, traditions, and way of life of each city and community which creates an economic heritage with festivals for cities and communities. Festival Economy aims to emphasize the use of the city's identity (City DNA) and the design of activities (Experience Design) to create a new ecosystem to develop the city's economy through the festival. It is expected to be a tool to attract quality travelers or tourists with high purchasing power to travel and develop the economy of the city and community through the festival (TCEB, n.d.). Besides, the Creative Economy Agency (CEA) stated that festivals can be considered as cultural products that stimulate the local economy and generate revenue. If the festival is managed well and the story is presented interestingly, it could develop into a world-class festival and a new destination that attracts tourists to experience the festival (CEA, n.d.).

The cooperation of stakeholders from all sectors is significant and needed in order to develop a festival that could create a positive impact on locals. The process should include all central and provincial government, local government organizations, as well as the private sector, and people in the area should cooperate to discuss, plan, build consensus, and participate in developing the festival to bring about concrete results. Therefore, all stakeholders are important in determining the format of the festival that is suitable for the development goals and identity of the city (Nattapong Punnoi et al., 2022: 23). Festivals and stakeholders could be considered in relation to their power and influence, which can be defined in relation to their roles and the success of festivals and events (Presenza & Iocca, 2012: 27-28). Quinn (2013b)

also mentioned that collaboration between festival stakeholders is essential because festivals consist of various actors and different relationships, and collaboration of multiple stakeholders is required (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2460).

This paper aims to gather ideas, theories, and mechanisms that could lead to a collaboration of stakeholders and to use festivals as an urban strategy. The objectives are to explore the significance of collaboration in festival development, examine the pattern of collaboration in festival development, and provide a guideline for collaboration development that is suitable for Thailand. Also, to answer the research question, which is how the guideline should be to understand a collaboration process in festival management. The paper will be divided into three main sections. The first section is the introduction, which explains the overview of this article. The second section will be a literature review, which focuses on festivals as an urban strategy, stakeholder collaboration in developing festivals as an urban strategy, and stakeholder collaboration analysis. Then, the last section, which is part of the conclusion and future research, will focus on the current situation of the study on stakeholder collaboration analysis in Thailand and forms of the collaborative development process that is suitable for Thailand.

Literature Review

Festivals as an Urban Strategy

Festival is the term derived from festum in Latin, which means feast (Quinn, 2013a: 48). Some of the existing festivals appeared hundreds of years ago, then developed in the context of social and economic changes, and increased after World War II. The factors of rapid festival development are related to the development of forms of spending free time, such as theater, opera, cinema, and tourist trips (Cudny, 2014: 640-641). Other factors are economy and tourism, are also significant in festival development. In terms of economic factors, it was found that increasing earnings allows people to spend more on visiting or supporting festivals. The festival management also improved due to the development of specialized institutions, as well as university centers that are involved in research and personnel training. In many countries, the development of cultural activities leads to specialized professional groups dealing with art, creative industries, and the organization of art-related events, which are called culturpreneurs. Another significant development was the establishment of institutions dealing with culture, festivals, and tourism. Also, the quality of services offered during festivals, such as the standard of facilities, transportation, hotel, and gastronomic services, are elements that attract visitors and increase the attractiveness of the event as well. In terms of the tourism factor, Cudny (2014) illustrated that cultural tourism could be defined as the commercialized manifestation of the human desire to see how others live in an authentic environment and to view the physical manifestations of lives as expressed in arts and crafts, music, literature, dance, food and drink, play, handicrafts, language and ritual. Moreover, after World War II, people also traveled for

shorter trips but were more varied and individualized, which included local cultural activities or cultural tourism (Cudny, 2014: 647-648).

Festivals could create products, revitalize a destination and attractions, and present the authentic culture of a place (Quinn, 2013a: 49). It was highlighted that a festival as a cultural activity has potential to incorporate people in the city and lead to the building of a creative community that is necessary for cultural capital formation. Festival is also a specific form of social, artistic, and promotional activity which makes it a phenomenon called the festivalization of urban space and policies (Zherdev, 2014: 12). Festivalization is explained as the process that cultural activity is reconfigured to form a new event and is used to describe the process in which cultural institutions orient part of the program around one or more themes or events concentrated in space and time (Négrier, 2014: 1). Moreover, it is also able to be a policy of mega-events leading to economic growth and investment attraction, as well as being a process of urban transformation that makes the cultural environment of the city to be more attractive, producing a positive image of the festivalized space (Zherdev, 2014: 13). According to Zherdev (2014), there are several aspects that make festivals and festivalization a full-fledged strategy within the creative city paradigm. The first aspect is that the tendency of festival movement is growing, and some official festival plans and strategies are issued as a prominent part of cultural development plans. The second aspect is festivals and other cultural events are place-bound from both production and consumption perspectives, in which festivalization as a continuous or routine phenomenon leads to the experience of production and consumption in a particular area and forces people to spend more time, giving the advantage to place brand, as well as lead to economic benefits. And the third aspect is related to the deep reconsideration of top-down and bottom-up initiatives. On the one hand, top-down initiatives are driven by policymakers, while bottom-up initiatives lead by individual and collective artists (Zherdev, 2014: 14-15).

Festivals can be used as a local development strategy that could lead to the achievement of several development goals. First, festivals can create economic value for the city as the festival is an activity that could generate income, create economic value, and increase the employment rate. Second, festivals could develop a value-driven economy in which festivals promote tourism and allow locals to showcase products and services. Festivals also help create city brands and supporters or fanbases, as well as add value to local products and services that can be a starting point for the development of the creative economy. Third, festivals lead to the development of public service in the city and community since organizing a festival requires preparation of public spaces, transportation systems, waste management systems, and other public services in order to provide services to local residents and visitors of the festival (Nattapong Punnoi et al., 2022: 9). According to Engblom (2010), events leave both physical and social legacies and also contribute to the cultural, economic, and social well-being of a community (Engblom, 2010: 39-41). Some positive impacts of festivals mentioned are economic impacts, social impacts, and environmental impacts. Economic impacts are increased income and economic value, developing new

businesses and industries, attracting investment, and creating of economic opportunities. Social impacts are the conservation and development of cultural heritage, community participation, and pride of local people that are promoted. And environmental impacts are creating awareness for environmental protection, leading to the development of an environmental management service system and experimentation of utilities to protect the environment (Nattapong Punnoi et al., 2022: 12).

Stakeholder Collaboration in Developing Festivals as an Urban Strategy

Stakeholders are defined by Freeman (1984) as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives (Andersson & Getz, 2008: 201) and influence, or are influenced by, the workings of an organization, such as a festival or an event which are highly dependent on the involvement of stakeholders (Quinn, 2013b: 141). Collaboration is considered an objective-oriented process, and organizations will have to interact in order to achieve some objective that could only be achieved through collaboration (Yaghmour & Scott, 2009: 121). Gray (1990) illustrated that collaboration is the process in that stakeholders come together to solve a problem and also help reduce the tendency for an impasse, leading to a collective acceptance of a solution, strengthening bonds between stakeholders, offering a platform for future relationships, as well as be a process of negotiation that create order among stakeholders (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2459). Collaboration among stakeholders can be divided into exploratory, advisory, confederative, and contractual. First, exploratory is when stakeholders build trust and define issues with the view to resolving differences. Second, advisory, in which a problem is examined to provide a solution to one or all parties. Third is confederative, in which a draft agreement between parties is often the intended outcome. Fourth, contractual, in which some sort of legal agreement is anticipated (Adongo, 2017: 7). The result of collaboration may be at both individual and collaborative levels; in which Yaghmour and Scott (2009) suggested that the former may include learning, socio-political responsibility, efficiency, risk reduction, legitimacy, and resources, and the latter may include goal attainment, social capital, shared meaning, network development, and power (Quinn, 2013b: 142).

In festival management, collaboration is a complex process due to the reason that it involves various stakeholders at different levels (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2460). The process of festivals and events requires the collaboration of multiple stakeholders in which various sectors, such as government, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, as well as employees, volunteers, residents, and tourists, should be included (Quinn, 2013b: 141). Through strong collaborations, it will help to prepare for shortcomings and create opportunities that could make a significant impact. There are several benefits of a collaborative style of event management, including sharing expertise, saving time, reducing the workload, and saving money. To elaborate, sharing might establish a platform for sharing knowledge and expertise. Next, saving time, in which collaboration leads to a well-designed plan which makes it easier to delegate the work on the basis of specialization and also helps to get things done efficiently. Then, reducing the workload, which helps in

delegating and distributing work when people from different fields of expertise are involved. And saving money, in which collaboration helps to save money from unnecessary expenditures. Thus, the collaboration will help stakeholders to help each other and be the key factor in the success of the event since it could lead to better opportunities, encourage innovation, and also sharing of knowledge (Teami School of New, 2021). Furthermore, five key characteristics of the collaboration process were outlined by Gray, which consist of the stakeholders being independent, solutions emerging by dealing constructively with differences, joint ownership of decisions involved, the stakeholders assuming collective responsibility for the ongoing direction of the domain, and collaboration is an emergent process where collaborative initiatives can be understood as emergent organizational arrangements through which organizations collectively cope with the growing complexity of their environments (Jamal & Getz, 1995: 189).

In terms of the problem and limitation of developing the festival as a strategy relating to stakeholders, Jamal and Getz (2000) stated that one of the challenges, in order to achieve collaboration is building trust between participants and recognizing a shared problem. Thus, Lesley and Simpson (2000) suggested that sincerity and trust are important factors for the success of collaboration in the long term (Waayers et al., 2012: 675). Moreover, case studies suggested that owners of private-sector festivals will not carry them for very long if there is no profit. Nevertheless, nonprofit organizations seem to possess social capital through networks and charitable status so that they can continue to raise money, produce events, and sell tickets even when finances are weak. However, when a festival becomes popular and supported, the dependence between the festival and stakeholders will turn mutual (Getz et al., 2007: 120). According to Why Festival Fails by Getz (2002), finance is another critical issue since dependence on external resources is very high. Corporate sponsorship has stimulated an expansion of the festival sector and resulted in many other events having to compete due to dependence on government or agency grants. Festivals that are not able to attract interest and support from the host community because of cultural differences, a lack of key contacts, or internal management deficiencies might have a higher rate of failure as resources are needed in order to survive. Therefore, dependence on fewer resource suppliers will lead to higher risk due to the reason that if suppliers withdraw their support, it could leave the festival vulnerable (Getz, 2002: 213). In addition, when festivals operate in isolation, their scope might be limited, so stronger networking among festivals and between festivals and both institutions and corporations should be fostered (Getz & Andersson, 2010: 547). Thus, in order to overcome the limitations of developing the festival as a strategy in terms of stakeholders, the ecosystem of the festival should facilitate the strengthening of collaboration among the stakeholders.

Stakeholder Collaboration Analysis

Organizing the festival is considered a preparatory process for the development of local stakeholders. The process of festival development can be a starting point for networking among stakeholders which would help to establish goals and strategies for local development, as well as a stimulus for preserving and developing resources and values (Nattapong Punnoi et al., 2022: 241). The production and delivery of festivals and events usually rely on networks of individuals and organizations. Galaskiewicz and Ebers (1997) suggested that if more than two organizations are linked through networking relationships, an inter-organizational network will be constituted. It was found that festivals cooperated with stakeholders who had multiple roles and engaged in processes of giving and taking that are seen to be mutually beneficial for the stakeholders that are involved (Quinn, 2013b: 141). Festival and event stakeholder groups may be considered in relation to the power and influence that they are perceived to have within a festival or event organization, and this can be defined by their roles and the success of festivals and events as well (Presenza & Iocca, 2012: 27-28). Stakeholder relationships in a festival are formed for reasons such as to obtain financial benefits, information, and resources, and some decisions cannot be made by a single stakeholder. Interaction between stakeholders also involves some degree of risk, including financial risk in which stakeholders with higher stakes in a festival might take higher risks. Furthermore, the strength of a stakeholder relationship is influenced by the degree of direct interaction or networking in which these interactions are also linked toward positive outcomes (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2462). As noted by Watt (1998), partners may be beneficial because of their special skills, the resources they have, or the funding they can attract to the event. Also, some stakeholders engage in the festival every year, while some engage occasionally or only once (Getz et al., 2007: 106).

In order to analyze the relationships of stakeholders, festivals can be used to examine concepts such as the centrality, type, and structure of networks and the degree and frequency of interaction between stakeholders. Previous research on festivals suggested that social network analysis helps to illustrate the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships, explain the interconnectedness of stakeholders, and establish the most central stakeholders in the network. The festival network is the network in which central actors play a crucial role, and stakeholders are linked to others (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2461). The aims of social network analysis are to understand a community by mapping the relationships that connect them as a network and draw out key individuals and groups within the network and associations between individuals (Home Office, 2016: 3). Social networks consist of a set of nodes that are connected through some type of relations. Nodes in social network analysis are used to represent actors, and relations between nodes can be multidimensional, as well as able to include a whole array of different relationship types (Yang, et al., 2017: 5). In social network analysis views, inter-organizational networks are seen as a set of linkages, such as resource, friendship, and informational ties, among a set of actors. It also offers algorithms designed to

describe and analyze the positions of nodes and structural properties of inter-organizational networks. In addition, social network analysis suggests two broad ways in which overall structural features of social networks influence actors' behavior. First, particular network structures and positions have implications for the information that is available to actors and shape their decision-making and behavior. Second, particular network structures and positions in various ways invest actors with, or deprive them of, power to exert control over other actors. Those powers could be from utilizing informational advantages, privileged access to other actors, invoking obligations associated with particular relations, or being able to mobilize sanctions by third parties (Ebers, 2015: 622-623).

Previous studies on stakeholder collaboration analysis suggested social network analysis could help to explain the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships, the interconnectedness of stakeholders, and the most central stakeholders in the network (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2461). Network analysis could lead to the understanding of the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships and the benefit of organizations contributing to the production of an event, as well as reveal that stakeholders also take multiple roles (Adongo, 2017: 55). Based on the research of Adongo and Kim (2018), which examined the extent of collaboration and networking between local festival stakeholders, the study found that festival stakeholders are related to each other, in which the festival network is the network that central actors play a crucial role and are links to other stakeholders. Festivals tend to demonstrate networks in which there is one central actor, as opposed to networks in which actors are linked together without a central actor. Also, most stakeholders in a local festival are likely to interact with local residents more than other stakeholders (Adongo & Kim, 2018: 2475). Furthermore, the investigation of Karlsen and Nordström (2009) on how these festivals cooperated with actors in their surroundings suggested that, first, the festivals cooperated with multiple stakeholders who assumed multiple roles, which may be since the beginning or developed over time, and a strategy might be applied to strengthen and multiply the number of links among festival and stakeholders to be more sustainable. Second, sometimes the festivals and their stakeholders enter into a state of symbiosis and a state of mutual dependency in which they would cooperate in mutually beneficial ways and become interdependent. Third, the festivals were seen to engage in long-stretched, loose, and glocal networks, in which the actors were not necessarily known to each other or were connected in other ways. The benefits of participating in glocal networks are also something that can be shared with and distributed among the festival's stakeholders (Karlsen & Nordström, 2009: 137-140). Significantly, the study on the importance of strategic stakeholder management in the tourism sector also pointed out that in the tourism sector, stakeholders should be considered as the main actors in achieving success and gaining competitive advantage in which managers should be able to take all interests of stakeholders into consideration in decision-making processes (Yilmaz & Gunel, 2009: 106).

Conclusion and Future Research

In Thailand's context, British Council Indonesia (2022) revealed that most festivals are considered as an important factor in the growth and development of the creative economy, in which collaboration between public and private sectors is also significant to the accomplishment to grow the creative economy and cultural capacity. In the past five years, many festivals in Thailand have been initiated in line with the government's policy on the creative economy and changing lifestyles of people. Most of the festivals are privately owned by non-commercial collectives or individuals; however, festivals that are owned by the government are more successful in which festivals are more recognized, and can reach more audiences. Results of the survey indicate that most festivals in Thailand are part of other local or regional networks, as well as national or international networks of festivals and events. The purposes of networking are financial support, collaborations between professional teams in order to develop ideas and concepts for the festival, collaboration projects between artists, creatives, and local people, recognition international, support for young artists and arts students to present their works on public platforms and to have new experiences and sustainable creative communities of artists and local people. Nevertheless, the survey revealed that there are many stand-alone festivals in Thailand without networking at any level (British Council Indonesia, 2022: 48-53). Two festivals in Thailand will be used to highlight the significance of collaboration and networking among the stakeholders. First is Bangkok Design Week, which is a creative and design festival organized by Creative Economy Agency which is a public organization, in collaboration with over 60 state agencies, public organizations, academia, international institutions, designers, and creative businesses. Bangkok Design Week has been presenting new possibilities and significant potential for creators, entrepreneurs, public and private sectors, educational institutes, as well as various cooperation agencies, both domestic and international (Bangkok Design Week, 2023). Second, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), Chiang Mai Province, Northern Thai Hotels Association, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, and the Chiang Mai Creative Design Center are collaborating to create a network and develop a flower festival to attract tourists called Chiang Mai Blooms. The administration of the festival focuses on building a network in the business sector, supported by TCEB and the associations, as well as facilitated by the Chiang Mai Province in accordance with the government policy framework. Furthermore, the network also provides an opportunity for interested businesses to join Chiang Mai Blooms, and the festival functions as a public relations and marketing to attract tourists to visit and spend on products and services (Chiang Mai Blooms, 2022). These two festivals show that the strong collaboration and networking of stakeholders are needed and are significant factors that lead to the success of festivals, as well as lead the positive impacts of festivals on the city in various aspects. In addition, Stakeholder Management for Tourism Businesses: The Case of Thailand by Nimit Soonsan (2017) elaborated that the inclusion of stakeholders is one of the keys that could lead to the sustainable development of tourism, and stakeholder management also helps businesses to achieve success. In this study, it is illustrated that the framework of policy and

tourism planning in Thailand consists of many factors that are related to marketing, creative economy, and tourism business and become a key in stakeholder management. This article explained the perspectives of stakeholders which support strategic management planning in order to enhance the cooperation among stakeholders that are involved in the tourism business of Thailand. Moreover, strategic planners need to focus on each type of stakeholder's perspectives because the characteristics and needs of each stakeholder are different and have an impact on business both directly and indirectly. Accordingly, it is expected that future research relating to tourism from the stakeholders' perspective will further help and benefit the tourism business (Nimit Soonsan, 2017: 108-118).

This article reviews ideas, theories, and previous studies related to festivals as an urban strategy, festivals as a development strategy in Thailand, and the significance of stakeholder collaboration in festivals development as an urban strategy, aiming to explore the significance of collaboration in festival development, examine the pattern of collaboration in festival development, and provide a guideline for festival stakeholder collaboration development that is suitable for the context of Thailand. Based on the current situation and previous studies, this article suggests that collaboration and networking among stakeholders, as well as using of social network analysis, should be considered in order to provide a guideline to understand a collaboration process in festival management and to establish the forms of stakeholder collaboration in terms of using festivals as an urban strategy that is suitable for Thailand. First, collaboration among stakeholders of festivals is essential; in which it was found that festivals consist of various stakeholders who play multiple roles and have an influence on the success of festivals. Stakeholders might gain some benefits from building relationships with others in terms of special skills, resources, and funding. According to the survey by British Council Indonesia (2022), most festivals in Thailand are owned by non-commercial collectives or individuals but festivals that are more recognized by the public and able to reach more audiences are owned by the government, and funding festivals in Thailand is mostly from sponsors or donors, then from government funding, and ticket or other sales, respectively. In addition, Getz (2002) stated that finance is a critical issue for festivals due to high dependence on external resources, in which grants, subsidies, and sponsorship from other organizations are needed to avoid the failure of festivals. Thus, the guideline will have to consider that collaboration of stakeholders is significant in every process of festivals, due to the reason that it could strengthen bonds between stakeholders and lead to a sharing of interests, collective acceptance of a decision and solution, offer a platform for future relationships, and negotiation among stakeholders. Also, it could provide benefits such as sharing expertise, saving time, reducing the workload, and saving money. Second, the networking of festival stakeholders is considered a significant factor in the success and positive impact of festivals. It is pointed out that the production and delivery of festivals and events usually rely on networks, and organizing the festival is a preparatory process for the development of stakeholders, as well as a starting point for networking among stakeholders that could establish goals and strategies for development and a stimulus for preserving and

developing resources and values. British Council Indonesia (2022) reported that most festivals in Thailand are part of other local or regional networks, as well as national or international networks of festivals and events; on the other hand, there are many stand-alone festivals in Thailand without networking at any level. Therefore, social network analysis is the tool that illustrates the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships, explains the interconnectedness of stakeholders in the network, and also reveals that stakeholders usually take multiple roles. By using social network analysis in festival management, it will help to understand festival stakeholders within the network, including the type and characteristics of stakeholders, their roles, their relationships, their perspectives, as well as the needs of each stakeholder, which are different. This article suggests that social network analysis will be the tool that helps a lot to provide a guideline for festival stakeholder collaboration development that is appropriate to each festival network, as well as to further use festivals as an urban strategy.

In conclusion, it was pointed out that most festivals in Thailand are owned by non-commercial collectives or individuals, but festivals that are owned by the government are more known by the public. In addition, funding of festivals is mostly from sponsors or donors, government funding, and ticket or other sales, as well, as even most festivals are part of other local or regional networks and national or international networks of festivals and events, but there are also many stand-alone festivals without networking at any level. These factors lead to the significance of collaboration and networking among stakeholders that should be considered and analyzed due to the reason that both could help to understand characteristics of collaboration among festival stakeholders who play multiple roles and also to understand festival stakeholders within the network. Nevertheless, research on festivals as an urban strategy and stakeholder collaboration analysis in festivals development in Thailand is still limited. In order to establish suitable forms of collaboration for festival stakeholders to develop festivals as an urban strategy, future research will need to explore how social network analysis and stakeholder analysis relating to festival management would help in developing festivals as an urban strategy in the context of Thailand.

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