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### PUBLISHER'S Note

Giselle Bernard
Publisher

I love our Country and firmly believe that the backbone of our country was built on small business. As most of you know, I pride myself in working with locally owned, small business owners and their sales professionals in driving and building business with trackable results.

My passion, as the owner of The Metropolitan Builder, is and has always been to work hand in hand with the builders, remodelers, interior designers, and their vendors, in building relationships and business through networking,



marketing, and sales representation.

In order to better serve the our featured building professionals and the vendors that I represent, I've created the Community Home Guide "digital directory." We've made it easy for consumers to search and find the best of our local small businesses. They can search from any device. connect with qualified companies and view valuable information about their business including photos, hours of operation, testimonials and more. They can make contact right from their listing. And best of all, The Metropolitan Builder is the proud sponsor of this website. Check it out www.communityhomeguide.com. Let me know what you think!



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# Construction as Simple as Choosing Black and White

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Choosing an exceptional contractor to build a custom home or remodel a home can be as simple as black and white, thanks to the quality workmanship and top-notch customer service provided by Greg Simmons' Black and White Construction.

"We've been around so long that our experience sets us apart from other builders. We've done everything at this point," Simmons, who has 36 years of hands-on experience, said. He oversees a crew of employees that ranges between five and 10 skilled tradesmen in addition to experienced subcontractors.

"In our remodeling jobs, the homeowners see the same crew of my guys every day, mixed in with our long-term subs. The homeowners become familiar and friendly with the crews and that lowers their anxiety about having

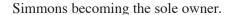
strangers in their home. My people obviously know what they're doing. All that leads to a sense of trustworthiness towards my company and the people it employs."

In his role as owner, Simmons orders materials, prepares bids, coordinates the subcontractors' schedules and handles sales. "I have my hands in everything," he admitted. "Sometimes I jump in and do handwork because I can do most things and I enjoy it, but I'm losing money those days," he explained with a chuckle.

The company, which Simmons co-founded in 2006, specializes in custom home building, new construction, home and office renovations, home and office additions and large structure repairs, in addition to kitchen and bath remodeling. The company reorganized in 2008, with







"By choice, we do one or two smaller commercial projects, such as offices, each year, too," Simmons added. He cited an unusual project where the walls were 17.5" thick to block the traffic noise on a busy road.

"I'm a bit of a micromanager. I rotate around our five to seven job sites daily, which never gives me enough office time," Greg admitted. "But as the owner I'm not just handing it [the supervision] off to somebody. I want to be able to answer customers' questions relatively fast.

"I'm always aiming for great customer service. We do our best to meet customers' needs," he summarized. "We do an exceptional job of keeping our construction out of the homeowners' daily surroundings, taking care to be



respectful of our customers' needs and privacy."

Simmons can point to two notable awards as examples of fulfilling customers' needs. Angie's List recognized Black and White with its Super Service Award seven years in a row, in addition to Best of Houzz recognizing the company with its 2019 and 2020 Service Award. He mentioned that 80 percent of the company's work comes from word-ofmouth referrals or from repeat customers.

"We work with each customer, making them a part of our team, developing ideas and solutions that take their project to the next level. We give them choices on materials and textures. We tend not to do entry-level work. We tend to do more creative work for our customers who can afford it

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#### Continued from page 5

"We approach every project with an artistic eye. We don't charge for the design in our remodeling projects, which allows them to save a lot of money. People have come to expect some pretty amazing outcomes from us, even museum-quality work. Our pricing is incredibly fair for what people want. My understanding from when we're bidding out against other high-end builders is that we're very reasonable.

"But we want to make sure at the end of the day that customers get what they wanted. We feel we are not just there to put up walls but to keep their vision at the forefront."

Because 80 percent of Black and White Construction's work comes from remodeling, Simmons said he has a good grasp of the materials that will endure Houston's weather because he sees how they held up when he takes apart walls when remodeling.

He builds each structure using the best quality of products within the customers' budgets. He puts special emphasis on "green" or sustainable building, using healthier and more resource-efficient methods during construction, renovation, operation, maintenance and demolition. In addition, its homes' energy consumption is substantially lower and produces a smaller energy footprint than most others.

To offset its carbon footprint in building new homes, Black and White has donated funds, often in its customers' names, to plant more than 30,000 trees within the United States, including Texas, through the American Forests organization, which has been protecting and restoring forests for more than 140 years. An average new home construction consumes more than 20 trees.

Black and White's market area tends to be inside the 610 loop on the west, including the area along the 10 to Katy and along the 290. It will also leap up to Spring and The Woodlands on the north side of Houston, Greg said.

He said that there's no niche for his customer; they are from the legal, medical, engineering, business and oil and gas business fields -- "we have all of them."

The most difficult part of being a builder these days is navigating the industry, Simmons offered. In addition to dealing with deliveries that don't arrive on time, he likened the coordination of the mix of people involved in a building project to being a football coach of a team comprised of a basketball player, a soccer player, a baseball player, a tennis player, etc. A mix of disparate personalities and skill sets that are not necessarily compatible. It's up to the coach (or builder) to create a team that somehow wins a championship, that is, creates a product that leaves the homeowners smiling at the end.

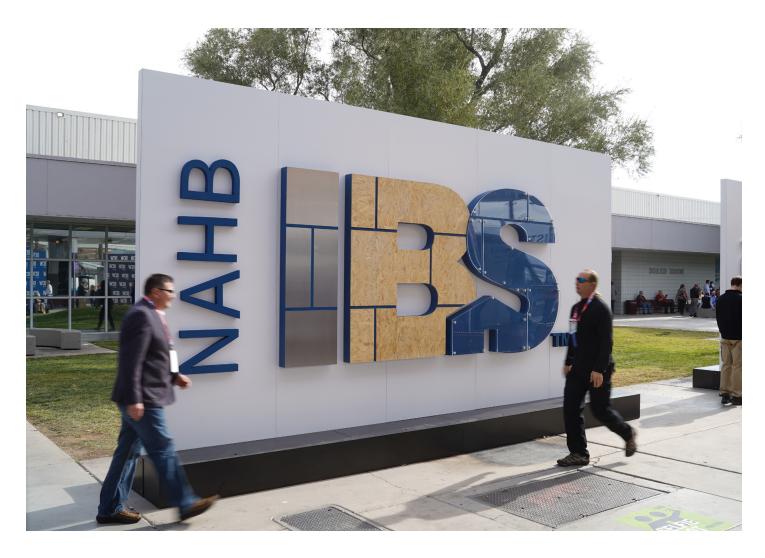




Although he's been in construction since he was a teenager in California, Simmons still loves his work. "It's such a neat feeling for your work to be tactile, to build something that didn't exist. And to see a customer who's so happy about it. You don't get that with a lot of jobs."

To contact Black and White Construction, call Greg Simmons at 832-764-1049 (office) or 832-309-9108 (cell) or email him at info@bawcon.com or by visiting the company website, www.bawcon.com. The office mailing address is P.O. Box 8225, The Woodlands, TX 77387.





## NAHB International Builders' Show Returns to Orlando in 2022

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) officially opened online registration today for the 2022 NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS), the largest annual light construction trade show in the world.

IBS will take place in person at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 8-10, where it will again co-locate with the National Kitchen & Bath Association's (NKBA) Kitchen & Bath Industry Show® (KBIS) for Design & Construction Week® (DCW). The two shows are expected to host more than 1,000 exhibiting brands spanning over 800,000 net square feet of exhibit space, for the largest annual gathering of the residential design and construction industry.

"We look forward to welcoming our attendees back to Orlando for the housing industry's premier event," said NAHB Chairman Chuck Fowke, a custom builder from Tampa, Fla. "This show offers all the top products, connections and education opportunities in one place. IBS 2022 gives attendees a front seat to the latest trends, business solutions and industry connections and is an event that you won't want to miss."

Attendees with an All-Access Pass registration will have



## Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS)

Orlando, Fla., February. 8-10, 2022 · 2022 Registration Now Open

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) today opened registration for the 2022 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS): Where the Future is Defined. The annual event, owned by the NKBA and produced by Emerald Expositions, is the largest North American trade expo and networking opportunity for kitchen and bath industry professionals.

Building on the success of a nine-year partnership with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) International Builders' Show (IBS) to create Design & Construction Week® (DCW), KBIS and IBS will colocate at the Orange County Convention Center (OCCC) in Orlando, Fla., from Feb. 8 -10, 2022. The two shows are expected to feature over 800,000 net square feet of exhibit space and showcase more than 1,000 design and construction brands.

#### **Creating a Safe Environment**

The NKBA and Emerald Expositions are committed to creating an event experience where customers, partners, and employees can safely and effectively conduct business in person. As a result, we will be following the CDC

COVID-19 health and safety measures and protocols. A detailed list of precautionary measures being implemented for KBIS 2022 can be found in the KBIS Health & Safety Plan here.

The health and safety of all who engage with us during KBIS 2022 is our number-one priority and, as such, we are continually monitoring the status of COVID-19 Delta variant and CDC guidelines. We will communicate any updates should policies change.

In addition, the host site of KBIS 2022, the OCCC, was one of the first facilities in the country to receive the Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC) Star™ accreditation on outbreak prevention, response and recovery. Since receiving this distinction, the OCCC has instituted the industry's highest standards for cleaning and disinfecting.

#### **KBIS: More Diverse and Substantial**

The KBIS 2022 expo will include over 380,500 NSF and feature an expected 450 exhibitors, including legacy brands like GE Appliances, Kohler and SKS. Additionally,

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BATHS OF AMERICA opened its doors in January 2005 when brothers Ali and Zeeshan Sultanali decided to start selling plumbing and tiles to the Houston market. Baths of America focuses on customer service and partners only with brands offering quality products and customer service. In addition to plumbing, Baths of America now offers door and cabinet hardware, major appliances, cabinetry, and countertops. It has turned into a one-stop shop for designers, builders, and architects, offering the latest designs and trends in the market.

This month BATHS OF AMERICA speaks with Missy Stewart of Missy Stewart Designs, an award-winning designer based in Houston, Texas, with more than 25 years of experience and countless homes and spaces designed. Missy designs homes where memories will be made for years to come and has a great time along the way. She prides herself on creating spaces that are contemporary, modern, and personalized to each client by combining interior, exterior, and outdoor design to ensure a cohesive aesthetic. Her goal is simple: to help clients design and execute a space that is uniquely their own.

Having co-owned a construction firm for over 25 years,

Missy understands the importance and art of working with contractors and designing for a variety of finishes and home types. Over the years, she has built professional relationships with a variety of trusted vendors and craftsmen. This is imperative to create a complete space. She works with them to deliver a finished product that is not only beautiful but well built. Simply put, working with Missy means working with an entire team of home improvement professionals who cater to you. I'm thankful for vendors like Baths of America. They have a beautiful showroom that my clients love. Their staff is very knowledgeable. They have experts in each department. I appreciate that. They are prompt to reply and get quotes out. That is saying something in this busy market.

### BATHS OF AMERICA: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?

*Missy Stewart:* I have been drawn to interior design even as a child. I was lucky to have parents who fostered this. I was allowed to change my room often. They would let me paint whatever I wanted and even changed my furniture out more often than most parents would. I was amazed at how the feeling of a room could change a person's spirit.



BATHS OF AMERICA: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

Missy Stewart: I graduated with a degree in early childhood education. I did not get a design degree. I came to this business by way of being in the construction business. I owned a construction company, and we built spec homes, homes for custom clients, as well as a house that my family and I would live in for two years before we sold and built another one for us. I was only making selections for the construction company and clients of the construction company for quite a long time. At some point, others wanted to hire me to design for them. I branched out, and exclusive became a designer, and was no longer in the construction business. I taught myself Auto CAD, and the design business was just what I needed to fulfill my career passions.

The most significant way I think the field has changed is that clients are much more educated coming to the table. Designers brought the information to the clients. The clients now have spent hours looking at images and get to know their styles. It is a win-win for everyone.

BATHS OF AMERICA: How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?

Missy Stewart: An experienced designer should make the builder's job easier and work as part of the project's team. The designer will be aware of the builder's schedule and budget. The designer will create architectural drawings (including tile design layouts) and job site documents available to the trades. An experienced designer knows





things come up and should be available to the builder and their team. A builder and a designer who trust each other is an amazing team. I also like to think that designers help builders keep their work up to date.

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### BATHS OF AMERICA: What sets you apart from other designers?

*Missy Stewart:* The fact that I learned to design from a construction perspective is unique. I have been on construction sites for over 30 years. I enjoy the process and enjoy being on the job site.

### BATHS OF AMERICA: What has been your most challenging project and why?

Missy Stewart: I have a project that has been going on for seven years. It is not complete yet. I designed, and the first-floor entry, living room, dining room, office, and powder room was remodeled. Right after we were done, my clients flooded with Harvey. They then had to repair what had just been done and more. We then remodeled the kitchen, primary bedroom, primary bathroom, and family room as well. The clients are still waiting to finish the primary bathroom. They did not have flood insurance. It should all be done soon, and I will be so happy for them to be enjoying the beautiful home they remodeled. I will also be glad to get photos of it. It is one of my favorite projects, and I wish I had the images to show on my website.

### BATHS OF AMERICA: How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients

Missy Stewart: I like to start the design process with a discovery meeting. I like for clients to have a least a few photos to show me what they like. Clients may have a hard time verbalizing what they want, but they can look at a picture and tell you if they like it. Once I have a feel for what they like, I take over. I let them know if what they are drawn to is dated. I try not to influence them too much. If I show them how we can achieve their vision in an up-to-date version. Some clients know exactly what they want and are pretty on point.

I also like to connect with the builder to confirm his process. Some builders pass on their discounts to clients and bill directly, and others make it up. It is imperative to make sure I understand how the builder is billing the client so as I do not interrupt their process.

### BATHS OF AMERICA: What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?

Missy Stewart: I'm not sure if it is a mistake, but I do think they do not think outside of the box as a designer does. You may not just want one chandelier in the dining room. I love using two chandeliers in a dining room. I just completed entry lighting that had three pendants hung at different heights. That is just an example. Designers see so many things and have such amazing imaginations.



Missy Stewart Designs (713) 936-4265 design@missystewartdesigns.com www.missystewartdesigns.com

'I believe luxury is living in a space that lifts your spirits, and I want to make yours soar.' - Missy

#### Continued from page 8

access to 110+ education sessions led by renowned experts on a wide range of industry topics. For a deeper dive into specific industry topics, attendees can participate in Pre-Show Master Workshops, in-depth, 3-hour intensive programs held on Feb. 7, the day before the show officially kicks off. These workshops are part of pre-show education and will be open to all registered attendees for an additional fee.

IBS attendees will have the opportunity to experience new show floor destinations, including the New Product Zone, featuring the latest products and cutting-edge market solutions; the Home Tech Zone, featuring in-demand tech products and interactive demos; and innovative emerging solutions in the IBS Start-Up Zone. Attendee favorites, the High Performance Building Zone, the IBS Jobsite Safety Zone and the IBS Home Technology Solutions Pavilion in collaboration with CEDIA will return in 2022.

The 2022 show will kick off on the morning of Feb. 8 with Opening Ceremonies and that evening will host the Official IBS House Party. Other events throughout the week include the Young Pro Party Wednesday night at Ole Red, followed by the IBS Closing Concert Thursday night.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to tour NAHB's official IBS show homes, The New American Home® (TNAH) and The New American Remodel® (TNAR). The homes are designed to showcase innovative building technologies, emerging design trends and the latest building products. The showcase products in the homes are provided by members of the NAHB Leading Suppliers Council, and Professional Builder and Professional Remodeler magazines will once again serve as the media sponsors of the 2022 show homes.

The NAHB International Builders' Show is not open to the general public. Building industry professionals and their affiliates are invited to register by visiting the show's website at BuildersShow.com.

For the latest health and safety guidelines, please visit Buildersshow.com/health.











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## Classically Chic

By Linda Jennings

Welcome to the Classics Revisited! Timeless designs pulled from the archives that elude timeless charm, staples of great design.

Here are a few of the top classic products in home

design that have enduring popularity! From amber crystal knobs to Parisian freestanding tubs these looks will never go out of style!



Grandeur Hardware's Baguette Amber Crystal Knob

#### **Amber Alert**

Inspired by vibrant foliage and abundant harvests, the color palette of Grandeur Hardware's Baguette Amber Crystal Knob is perfect for autumn home décor. Crafted of 24% lead crystal, Grandeur's crystal knobs are remarkable for their clarity and exceptional beauty. The knobs are beveled at the top and bottom to fit the hand for easy turning. Available in interior and exterior sets, they can be paired with a wide range of solid brass backplates and rosettes for a custom look. Offered in a variety of finishes, the Baguette Amber Crystal Knobs look stunning in Timeless Bronze or a distinctive Vintage Brass.

#### **English Charm**

The Heated Washstand from Sterlingham Company Ltd. brings the luxury of a warm towel right to your fingertips. With an English Edwardian style, the Heated Washstands are crafted from solid brass and come in either a wall-mount two leg Washstand with two heated towel warmer



The Heated Washstand from Sterlingham Company Ltd

rails or a wall-mount four leg Washstand with three heated towel warmer rails. Standard finishes include polished brass, polished chrome, polished or matte nickel, antique gold, copper, and various shades of bronze with optional distressing. An unflagging commitment to quality is an important part of the company's culture, which is manifested by the two-year full replacement guarantee that comes with each warmer.

#### **Perfectly Parisian**

With its singular mix of vintage inspiration and modern aesthetics, the Parisian tub's exterior is bold and beautiful. Available as a soaker or air bath, the Parisian can be ordered with a number of options such as MTI's Radiance, a heating system or add the therapeutic benefits of chromatherapy, for a more complete, holistic experience. Available only in white, this new style may be ordered in two sizes. As part of the brand's Designer Series, it is crafted from high-gloss cross-linked cast acrylic that has



#### Parisian Tub by MTI Baths

been reinforced for added strength and insulation. The finished tub has a non-porous surface that is amazingly durable, highly resistant to scratches and stains, and easy to clean and sanitize. As with all MTI products, Parisian tubs are made with pride in the USA.

#### **Elevated Farmhouse**

Icera captures the essence of life at the seashore with a beautiful Ocean Gray finish option on one of their newest vanities, the Malibu. This elegant color is cool and serene, a perfect contrast to an all-white bathroom and a dramatic focal point. A great way to refresh the bath with this serene shade of greenish-blue. The Malibu vanity is crafted in a modern farmhouse style with a simple silhouette and slim



One of Icera's newest vanities, the Malibu.

legs. Four drawers and one cabinet provide ample storage. Icera builds furniture-quality vanities with solid hardwood construction without the use of MDF or particleboard. Other thoughtful touches include dovetail drawer joinery, soft- close doors and drawers, stylish Satin Nickel hardware, and a coordinating mirror.

#### **A New Stone Age**

Known for their beautiful sinks, Lenova mixes modern convenience with classic style in their Apron Front Ledge Prep Sink Collection. Notable for its sleek design and

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Lenova's Apron Front Ledge Prep Sink Collection





Laminate



W.R. Watson's State-of-the-Art Granite & Quartz Fabrication Plant Utilizes Computerized Saws, Edge Profilers, Crane and Vacuum Lifts

Quartz



Continued from page 9
more than 40 new exhibitors
such as Lefroy Brooks and
CopperSmith will occupy
nearly 20,000 NSF. More
than 85 global brands from
Germany, Italy, Turkey, Spain,
Taiwan, China, Mexico, and
Poland will also be present,

showcasing unique and unusual products not typically found at the event.

"We are very much looking forward to getting the industry back together at the start of the new year," said Suzie Williford, NKBA EVP & CSO. "KBIS is not only a place for old friends and colleagues to have the chance to catch up, but also a chance for new faces to become part of this talented and inclusive community."

"We've had such a great turnout in Orlando in past years and are excited to host this much-anticipated event in person again," said Jason McGraw, CAE, CTS, Group Vice President, KBIS and CEDIA Expo, Emerald. "KBIS 2022 is slated to be one of the most impactful events of the industry, filled with the latest innovative products and programming. We strongly recommend attendees register early to take advantage of discounted registration and hotel rates."

#### **Expo Only**

Oct. 1- Dec. 10: Early Bird Rates — \$50 for NKBA members, \$100 for non-members.

Dec. 11-Feb. 7: Advance Rates — \$100 for NKBA members, \$175 for non-members.

Feb. 8-10: Onsite Rates - \$150 for NKBA members, \$225 for non-members.

#### Continued from page 15

extreme functionality, this perennial favorite promises to be a stand-out in the kitchen. The NovaGranite Composite Sink is crafted from a proprietary mix of 85% crushed granite. It gives it a high heat tolerance and makes the sink extraordinarily durable and resistant to scratches, chips, and stains. In addition, the NovaGranite Composite Sink offers the flexible design options of Lenova's award-winning Ledge Series with an engineered platform ledge that converts easily into a food prep center with an array of usefull accessories such as strainers and rolling grid drains.

For more information visit:
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#### **Expo + VFTI Conference**

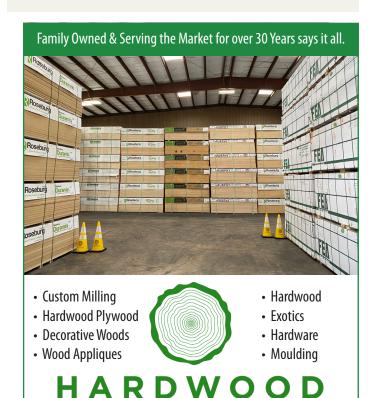
Expo and 3-day VFTI pass (access to all sessions plus on-demand program): \$350 for NKBA members, \$525 for non-members.

Pricing and package details for KBIS and the NKBA conference are available now.

About the National Kitchen & Bath Association and the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) is the not-for-profit trade association that owns the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show® (KBIS), as part of Design & Construction Week ® (DCW). With nearly 50,000 members in all segments of the kitchen and bath design and remodeling industry, the NKBA has educated and led the industry since the association's founding in 1963. The NKBA envisions a world where everyone enjoys safe, beautiful, and functional kitchen and bath spaces. The mission of the NKBA is to inspire, lead and empower the kitchen and bath industry through the creation of certifications, specialty badges, marketplaces, and networks.

For more information, visit www.nkba.org or call 1-800-THE-NKBA (843-6522).



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#### 5 Increase Brand Awareness

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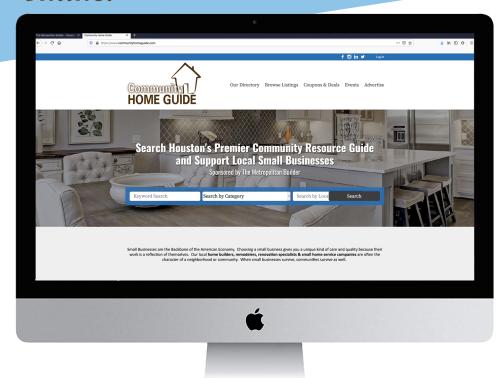
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If you're still on the fence about advertising on our directory website, consider this one very important fact: your competitors are doing it. Each day that passes when you're not taking advantage of advertising on our site is another day you're losing market share to someone else.

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