



**POLARIS**  
Laboratories



## BRIDGING THE GAP: FILTER DEBRIS ANALYSIS

Henry Neicamp | 5.22.19

## About the Speaker

# HENRY NEICAMP | POLARIS LABORATORIES®



**Henry Neicamp**

*Technical Business  
Consultant*

### Industry Experience

- B.S. General Engineering/Mining Engineering University of Illinois
- More than 35 years technical sales, engineering and management experience in the petroleum industry and lubricants marketplace
- Well Logging Engineer with Seismograph Service Corporation and Dresser Industries
- Sales Engineer and Technical Services Manager with Pennzoil-Quaker State Company
- Sales/Technical Engineer with Warren Oil Company
- Field Services Manager; Midwest Territory Sales Manager; Technical Business Consultant with POLARIS Laboratories®
- CLS/OMA certified by STLE

# FILTER DEBRIS ANALYSIS

Detect failure at  
it's earliest stages!

**Detect failure at its earliest stages**

**Equipment and Filter Information**

The Data Analyst's evaluation provides a roadmap to the report's most important information. Any actions that need to be taken are listed first in order of severity. Justifications for recommending those actions immediately follow.

Metals analysis of particles present in the oil measuring less than 8 - 10µm is done by ICP. Acid Digestion is used to identify larger particles that have accumulated in the filter. Both results are reported in parts per million (ppm).

Digital images of analytical ferrographs with qualitative descriptions of the wear particles present are included. Powerful magnets trap the ferrous particles while non-ferrous and other wear debris particles are deposited randomly on slides for microscopic analysis.



**Filter Debris Analysis**

Report Date: 2-1-2010  
Account #: 123456 0000 0000  
Company Name: Coal Mine  
Address: RR 1, Box 1234  
City, State Zip: Indianapolis, IN 46268

Unit ID	Secondary ID	Unit Type	Mfr	Model
B-614	7372814	Caterpillar		637 E
Filter Mfr	Filter Number	Equip. Hrs	Oil Hrs	Filter Hrs
Reetguard	LT 3363	N/A	500	500

**Report severity is based on an overall evaluation of the analyst's observations and is represented by a sliding scale.**

0	1	2	3	4
NORMAL		ABNORMAL		CRITICAL
Lab#	782335	Analyst	MDM	
Solids (µg/ml)	121			

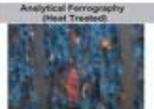
**Wear is categorized by size and type then assigned a severity level.**

**Digital images of micropatch tests are also included. The sample is passed through a 0.8µm absolute filter. Residual particles are then examined through a microscope.**

**Evaluation**  
Moderate levels of Abrasives and Coal particles. Moderate levels of ferrous lamellar and rubbing wear of low tensile steel. Minor level of small lead particles from bearings. Minor amount of Spheres and Fatigue wear. One large Sliding wear particle of aluminum, most likely from piston. White debris collected from filter is somewhat significant, it is not unexpected due to environment and duty cycle. Recommend continue to use engine in its normal duty cycle and send next filter and oil sample in 500 hours for analysis.

Method (ppm)	Iron	Chromium	Nickel	Titanium	Manganese	Copper	Lead	Tin	Aluminum	Silicon
ICP Oil	23	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	2	3
Acid Digestion / ICP	41792	804	339	0	520	8375	22423	60	1740	140

Particle Size	Ferrous	Non-Ferrous	Cutting	Fatigue	Spheres	Sliding	Lead Oxides	Black Oxides	Dirty	Coal
2-5µm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	
5-10µm	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
10-25µm	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
25-50µm	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
50-100µm	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
100-200µm	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2

Oil Ferrography	Analytical Ferrography (Heat Treated)	Micropatch	Micropatch
			
Large steel severer flakes and coal particles	Moderate levels of Ferrous lamellar and rubbing wear	Polarized light shows abrasives (dirt/silicon) with moderate levels of visible wear particles	Polarized light showing small abrasives, light particles and coal dust, dark particles
			
Fatigue (spiral) particles	Long 700µm strong wear particle of aluminum from piston	Polarized light shows abrasives (dirt/silicon), light particles, and coal dust, dark particles	Coal dust and abrasives, dirt

Evaluation of data and images is advisory only and assume sample data submitted is valid. No warranty expressed or implied.

# WHAT IS FILTER DEBRIS ANALYSIS (FDA)?

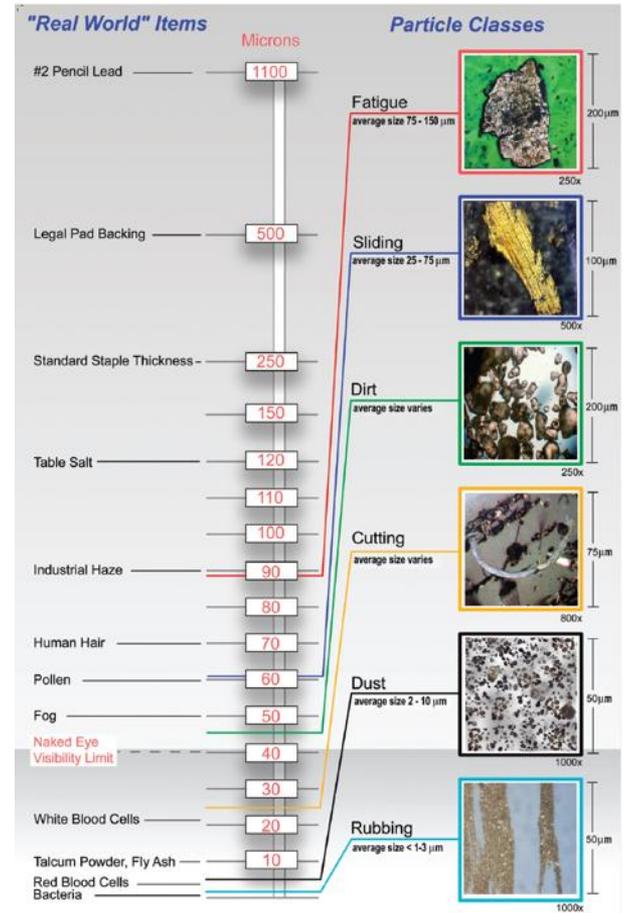


- FDA is a way to determine what particles (data) are being captured by the filters
- Filters by nature capture all large particles so these particles are excluded from routine oil analysis
- FDA on large particles provides valuable insight on how the machine is functioning
- Originated in the mining industry
  - Estimate equipment life expectancy, monitor wear

# WHY DO FILTER DEBRIS ANALYSIS (FDA)?

- **Your filter can tell you things your oil can't!**
  - Filter Debris Analysis (FDA) identifies “MISSING DATA”, such as contaminants and wear mechanisms not detected by traditional elemental analysis

# WHAT PARTICLES ARE BEING CAUGHT BY YOUR FILTER?



# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?



- Detects early stages of component failure
- Bridges gap between elemental analysis & Particle Count (PC) / Particle Quantifier (PQ)
- Determines particle size, type & wear mechanism
- Tell you what is causing filter plugging
- Facilitates root cause analysis

# FIELD TESTING

- Mechanics have been cutting filters for years
- When doing this, you may observe abnormal wear particles
- Now what?

# WHAT FILTERS CAN BE TESTED?

YES

NO

Spin-On Filter



Canister Filter



Up to 8" in diameter and 6-21 inches long

Filters that have been cut



# HOW IS FDA PERFORMED?

1

Filter is received and prepared for flushing

2

Filter is installed in flushing apparatus & flushed w/solvent

3

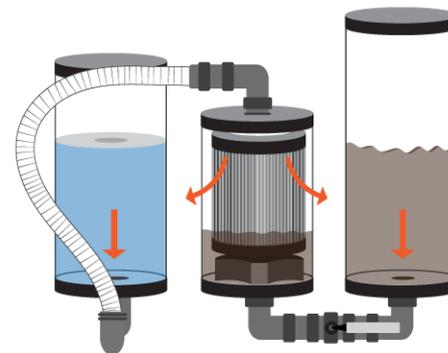
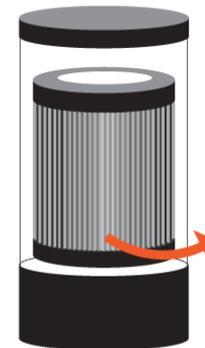
Flushed solvent is collected and prepared for:  
acid digestion and microscope analysis

4

Spectral analysis is preformed on prepared fluid then  
microscopic analysis is performed

5

Report is generated with data analyst's observation and  
sent to the customer



# HOW IS FDA PERFORMED?

## Filter Flushing

Agitated and Separated

Sample A

Centrifuge

Micropatch

Acid Digestion -- ICP



Sample B

Micropatch

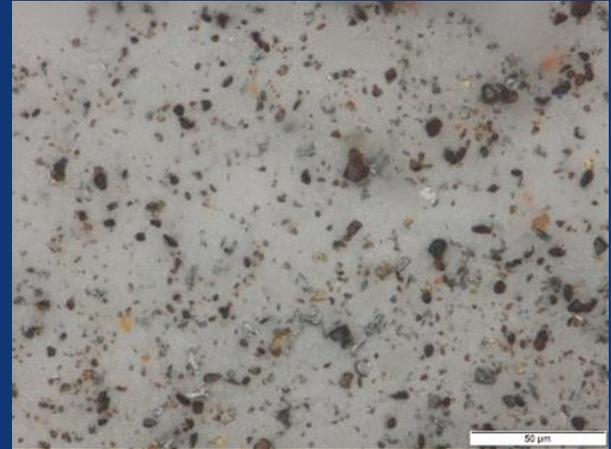
# FDA TESTS PERFORMED

- Elemental Analysis by ICP, if applicable (oil from filter)
- Acid Digestion Elemental Analysis (filter flushing fluid)
- Analytical Ferrography
- Micropatch

# FDA WEAR DEBRIS



**ANALYTICAL FERROGRAPHY**

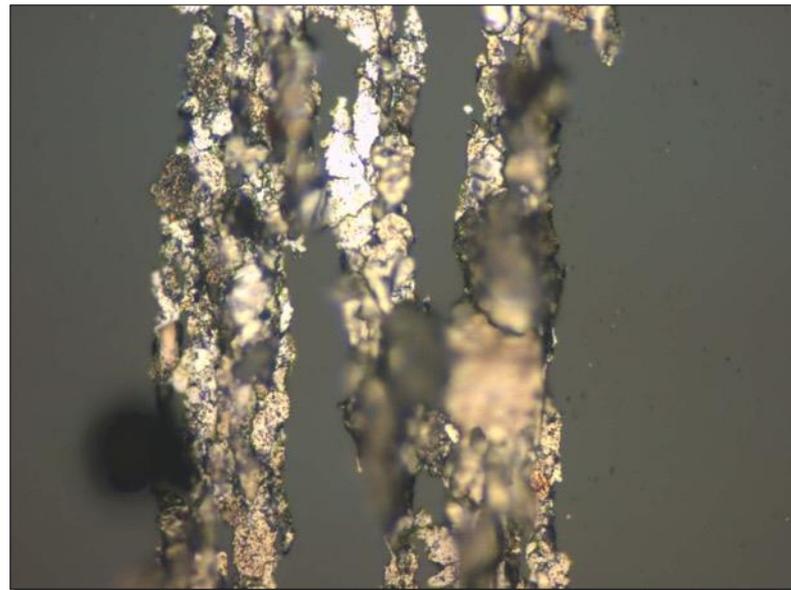


**MICROPATCH**

# WHAT CAN FDA IDENTIFY THAT STANDARD TESTING CANNOT?

## Analytical Ferrography

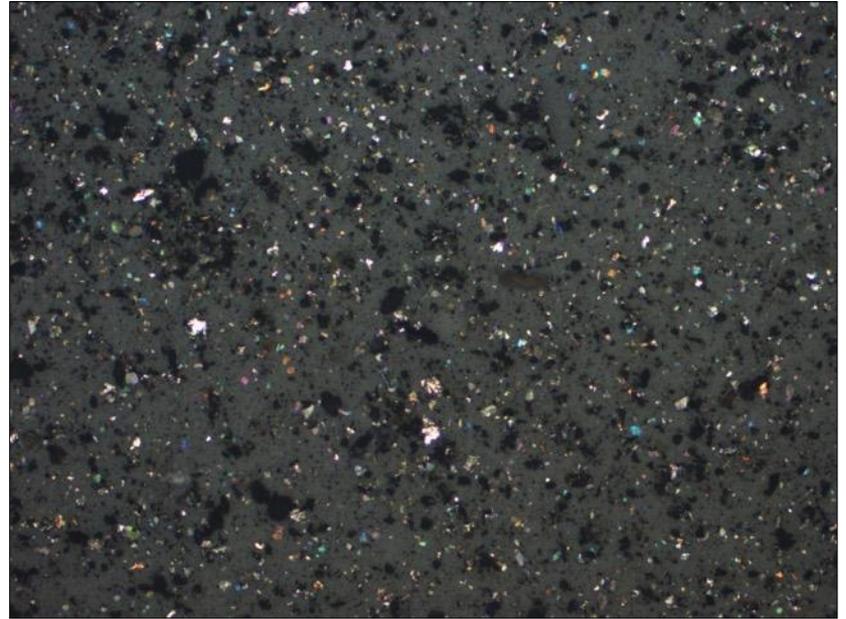
- Ferrous metals
- Type of wear
- How much
- How large
- Typically for boundary lubrication



# WHAT CAN FDA IDENTIFY THAT STANDARD TESTING CANNOT?

## Micropatch

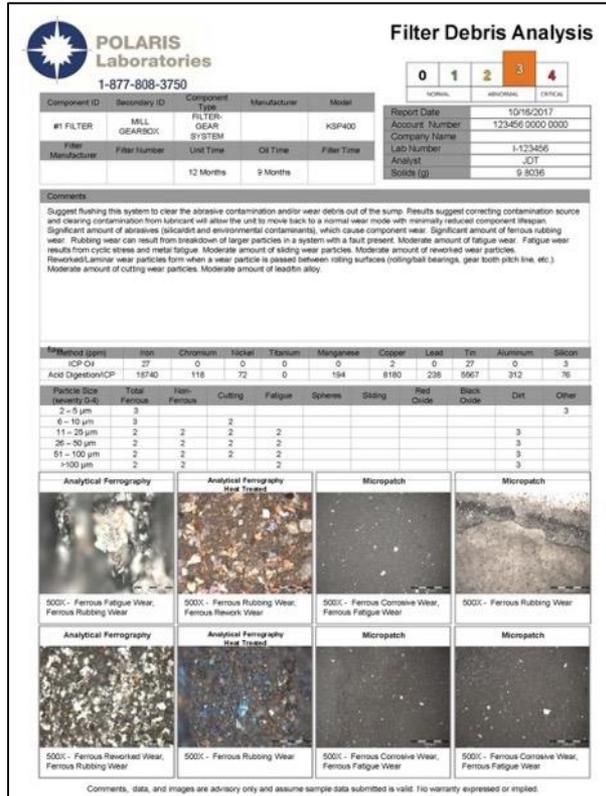
- Non-Ferrous metals
  - Bronze
  - Lead
- Soot agglomerations
- Metallic debris
- Dirt
- Black oxides
- Red (rust) oxides



# OIL SAMPLING VS. FDA

Testing provides	Routine Oil Analysis	Filter Debris Analysis
Particle wear up to 10 micron	●	●
Particle wear greater than 10 micron		●
Provide information on type of wear		●
Maintenance recommendations	●	●
Lubricant additive information	●	
Detailed photographs of magnified wear particles		●
Detect and identify contamination outside of the standard / routine 24 element spectroscopy		●

# INTERPRETING A REPORT



# INTERPETING A REPORT



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1-877-808-3750

Component ID	Secondary ID	Component Type	Manufacturer	Model
#1 FILTER	MILL GEARBOX	FILTER-GEAR SYSTEM		KSP400
Filter Manufacturer	Filter Number	Unit Time	Oil Time	Filter Time
		12 Months	9 Months	

## Filter Debris Analysis

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
NORMAL		ABNORMAL		CRITICAL

Report Date	10/16/2017
Account Number	000-000-000
Company Name	
Lab Number	I-123456
Analyst	JDT
Solids (g)	9.8036



# INTERPETING A REPORT

## Evaluation

With the lubricant change and repair previously done, no corrective action is suggested. There is no wear debris present that suggests this unit is having a progressive failure event. Significant amount of aluminum alloy. Suspect this is residual from the contamination ingestion event mentioned on the phone causing cylinder region wear, specifically the piston. Moderate amount of ferrous rubbing wear. Rubbing wear is from normal sliding contact of surfaces. Moderate amount of sliding wear particles, which potentially indicates the components were subjected to excessive load or speed. Moderate amount of abrasives (silica/dirt and environmental contaminants). Moderate amount of soot. Soot is a normal byproduct of the combustion process.

Method (ppm)	Iron	Chrome	Nickel	Titanium	Manganese	Copper	Lead	Tin	Aluminum	Silicon
ICP Oil	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES
Acid Digestion / ICP	213910	900	2823	0	866	2163	0	0	4210	0
Particle Size	Ferrous	Non-Ferrous	Cutting	Fatigue	Spheres	Sliding	Red	Black	Dirt	Soot
2-5µm	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
5-10µm	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
11-25µm	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
25-50µm	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
51-100µm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>100µm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Elemental analysis of the oil from the filter if applicable**

**Elemental of the debris flushed from the filter after Acid Digestion**

# INTERPETING A REPORT

## Evaluation

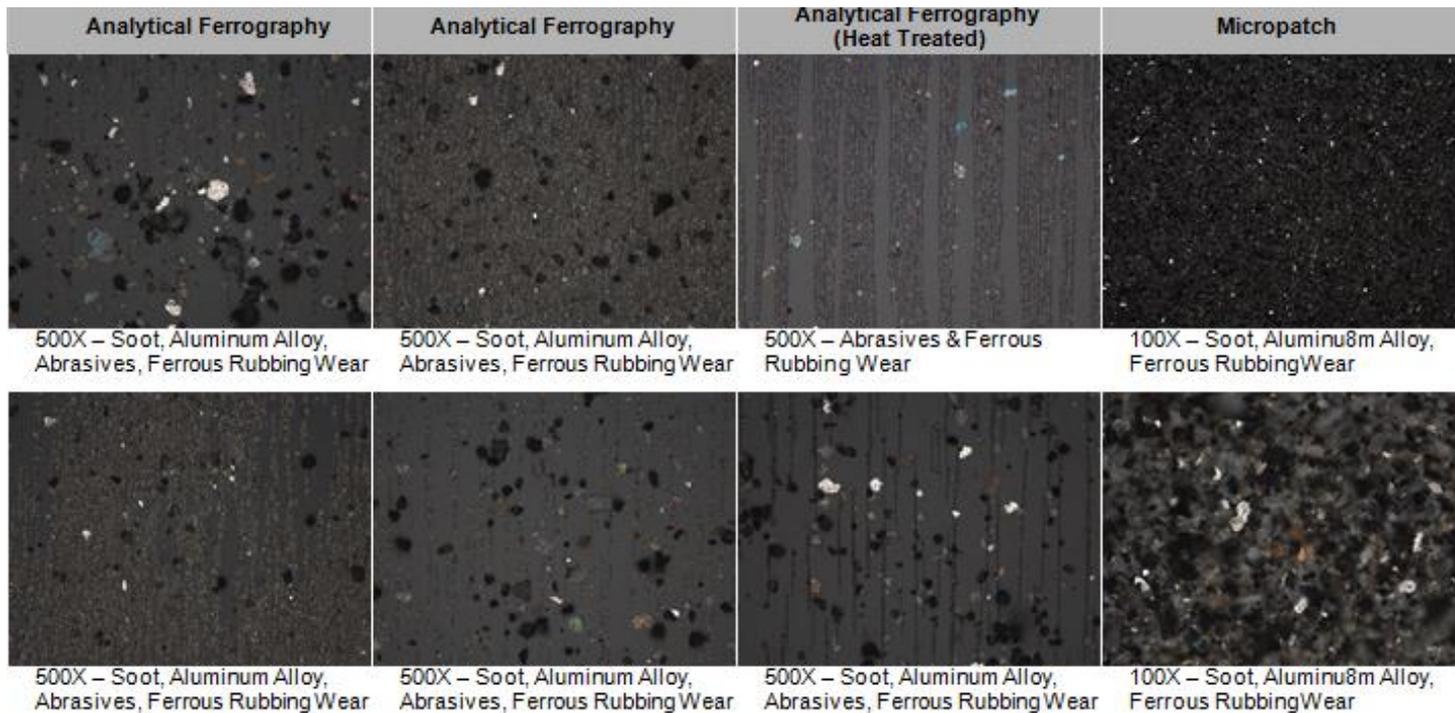
With the lubricant change and repair previously done, no corrective action is suggested having a progressive failure event. Significant amount of aluminum alloy. Suspensions mentioned on the phone causing cylinder region wear, specifically the piston. The normal sliding contact of surfaces. Moderate amount of sliding wear particles, which is due to excessive load or speed. Moderate amount of abrasives (silica/dirt and environmental byproduct of the combustion process).

**Microscope analysis of the debris flushed from the filter by Type and Wear Mechanism**

**Microscope analysis sizing of the debris flushed from the filter by severity**

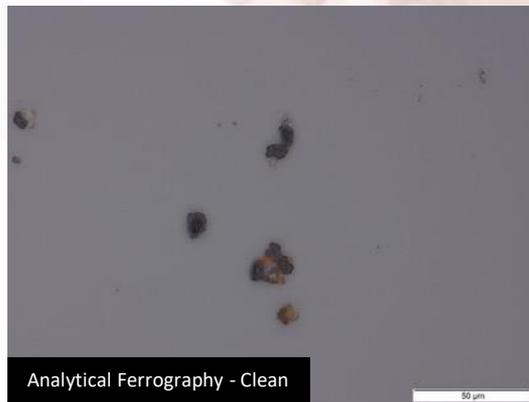
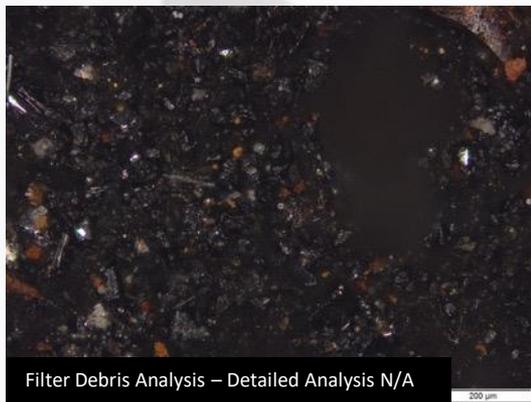
Method (ppm)	Iron	Chrome	Nickel	Titanium	Manganese	Aluminum	Copper	Silica	Lead	Zinc
ICP Oil	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES	NES
Acid Digestion / ICP	213910	866	2823	0	866	2163	0	0	4210	0
Particle Size	Ferrous	Non-Ferrous	Cutting	Fatigue	Spheres	Sliding	Red Oxides	Black Oxides	Dirt	Soot
2-5µm	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
5-10µm	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
11-25µm	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
25-50µm	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
51-100µm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>100µm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# DEBRIS: MICROSCOPE PHOTOS



# SUCCESS STORY

- ABC Company with large expensive gearbox(s) was experiencing failures
- FDA – Detailed Analysis Impossible; AF – Clean; Micropatch – Severe Varnish
- Company is flushing gearboxes and switching to an oil with better oxidative stability
- Gearbox(s) costs \$250K apiece and the company has many of these gearbox(s)



# QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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# THANK YOU!



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