

## The 'Quiet Luxury' Effect in Marketing Strategies: Between Exclusivity and Modern Consumer Appeal

Septia Sakalini Dioh<sup>1</sup>, Taqwa Sultan<sup>2</sup>, Margeretha Sartien Kabanga

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Politkenik Negeri Kupang

Email: [septiasakalinidioh@gmail.com](mailto:septiasakalinidioh@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the effect of quiet luxury in modern marketing strategies, particularly the relationship between brand exclusivity and contemporary consumer appeal. The phenomenon of quiet luxury represents a shift in the meaning of luxury from conspicuous status symbols toward a more subtle, elegant, and intrinsically quality-oriented form of luxury. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a library research method. Data were collected from scientific journals, academic books, industry reports, and other reliable sources related to consumer behavior, branding, and premium marketing. The data were analyzed through content analysis by classifying them into key themes, including the transformation of luxury concepts, brand differentiation, consumer perceived value, brand exclusivity, and the influence of digital media. The findings indicate that quiet luxury has become an effective marketing strategy as it enhances consumer perceived value through dimensions of quality, comfort, implicit status, and personal identity. Furthermore, this strategy strengthens brand positioning through product quality, minimalist design, limited distribution, and exclusive customer experiences. The attractiveness of quiet luxury continues to grow alongside the changing characteristics of modern consumers who are more rational, value-conscious, and sustainability-oriented. However, its implementation also faces challenges such as imitation risks, the dilemma between exclusivity and market expansion, and the demand for long-term quality consistency. This study concludes that quiet luxury is not merely an aesthetic trend, but an adaptive branding strategy highly relevant to the contemporary premium market.*

**Keywords:** Quiet luxury, marketing strategy, brand exclusivity, consumer behavior, premium branding

### PENDAHULUAN

Changes in global market dynamics have driven significant transformations in marketing strategies, particularly in sectors focused on brand image and consumer experience. In recent decades, the concept of luxury is no longer narrowly understood as a symbol of grandeur, high prices, or flashy brand displays. Instead, luxury has been redefined toward a more subtle, elegant form rooted in intrinsic quality (Ombuh et al., 2025). One concept that has rapidly gained traction in this context is "quiet luxury." This term refers to a representation of luxury that emphasizes material quality, minimalist design, craftsmanship, exclusivity, and understated aesthetic value. Products in this category generally do not feature large logos or explicit status symbols, yet they still hold high prestige in the eyes of certain consumers (Reswari & Ardha, 2025).



The “quiet luxury” phenomenon has become a key focus in contemporary marketing research because it reflects shifts in modern consumer behavior. Whereas in the past, the consumption of luxury goods was often associated with conspicuous consumption that is, consumption aimed at openly displaying social status today, many consumers are shifting toward a more personal and understated form of consumption (Djaruma et al., 2024). Consumers no longer seek social recognition solely through brand visibility but also value quality, authenticity, comfort, and the long-term value of a product. This shift indicates that consumer preferences are becoming increasingly complex and cannot be explained solely through traditional economic approaches (Sugiyanto et al., 2024).

From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, purchasing decisions are influenced by a combination of functional, emotional, social, and symbolic factors. Quiet luxury products offer advantages across all four of these dimensions. Functionally, these products are designed with premium quality and high durability. Emotionally, consumers derive satisfaction from the experience of using elegant and exclusive products. Socially, product ownership serves as a status symbol recognized only by groups with specific brand literacy. Symbolically, the products reflect a mature, self-assured identity that does not require external validation. Therefore, quiet luxury has become a relevant form of consumption for modern consumers who are increasingly selective (Kusnawan, 2025).

Advances in digital technology and social media have further accelerated the popularity of this phenomenon. Social media initially fostered a culture of visual consumption that emphasized overt luxury, glamorous lifestyles, and easily recognizable status symbols (Karimalely, 2024). However, as fatigue with this culture of ostentation grew, a new preference emerged for a more authentic and refined lifestyle. Many public figures, executives, and influencers began to project an image of luxury that was simpler yet of high value. This trend subsequently shaped a new perception that true luxury need not be ostentatious, but rather is reflected through quality, taste, and consistency in lifestyle. Thus, digital media has become a key channel in the dissemination of the “quiet luxury” ethos (Siregar, 2025).

For companies, this phenomenon presents strategic opportunities to build a premium brand positioning. A marketing strategy based on quiet luxury enables companies to differentiate themselves through narratives of quality, heritage, exclusivity, and customer experience (Hidayati et al., 2025). This approach differs from mass marketing, which relies on aggressive promotions, discounts, and broad reach. In the context of quiet luxury, companies tend to use more selective communication, minimalist visuals, personalized service, and limited distribution to maintain a perception of exclusivity. This strategy not only enhances brand value but also allows companies to maintain higher profit margins through premium pricing (Erwin et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, implementing a quiet luxury strategy is not without its challenges. First, an exclusive image cannot be built overnight, as it requires consistent quality and a long-term reputation. Second, the modern market is highly competitive, leading many brands to adopt a minimalist aesthetic without the necessary quality to back it up. This situation risks creating a negative perception when consumers perceive the company as merely following trends without substance. Third, companies must balance maintaining exclusivity with remaining relevant to new consumer segments (Ramadhan, 2025). If a brand is too exclusive, it risks losing potential market share; conversely, if it is too open, its premium value may diminish. Research on quiet luxury is also important in an academic context because it remains relatively limited compared to research on luxury branding in general. Most previous studies have focused on traditional luxury consumption behavior, the influence of brand logos, celebrity endorsements, or flashy

visual communication strategies. Meanwhile, the shift in consumer preferences toward a quieter and more understated form of luxury has not been explored in depth, particularly in the context of developing countries and Asian markets. In fact, consumer characteristics in this region indicate significant growth in the upper-middle class, increased digital literacy, and lifestyle changes that could influence the adoption of the quiet luxury trend (Wijaya et al., 2025).

Furthermore, this concept is relevant for analysis through the lens of customer perceived value theory and social identity theory. In customer perceived value theory, purchasing decisions are determined not only by utilitarian benefits but also by emotional, social, and epistemic benefits. Quiet luxury products offer a combination of these values simultaneously. Meanwhile, in social identity theory, consumers use certain products to represent their desired social group. In this context, quiet luxury serves as a symbol of social class membership that is not displayed in a vulgar manner, but rather through more subtle cultural codes (Sulistiyowati et al., 2025).

Based on the above discussion, there is a need to examine how the concept of quiet luxury is applied in modern marketing strategies, particularly in creating brand exclusivity and enhancing consumer appeal. This research is important to clarify the extent to which the concept of quiet luxury shapes perceptions of value, customer loyalty, and purchasing decisions in the era of contemporary consumption. Furthermore, the findings are expected to provide practical implications for companies in designing branding strategies that adapt to shifting market preferences.

Thus, this article aims to analyze the effects of quiet luxury in marketing strategies: between exclusivity and modern consumer appeal. The primary focus of the research is on the relationship between the image of subtle luxury, perceptions of quality, new status symbols, and consumer responses to premium brands. The findings of this study are expected to enrich marketing literature and serve as a strategic reference for business practitioners in navigating the evolution of the luxury market in the modern era.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using library research to analyze the phenomenon of quiet luxury in modern marketing strategies. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand the concept, meaning, and social dynamics underlying the emergence of the quiet luxury trend as a strategy for establishing brand exclusivity and consumer appeal. A descriptive method is used to systematically describe the characteristics of the phenomenon under study based on various scientific sources and relevant secondary data. The type of data used in this study is secondary data, obtained from national and international journal articles, academic books, industry reports, market research institute publications, and other reliable sources related to consumer behavior, branding, luxury marketing, and modern consumption trends. The selected literature focuses on publications discussing changes in consumer preferences for premium products, the concept of modern luxury, brand differentiation strategies, and the influence of digital media on the formation of value perceptions.

Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation and literature review. The researcher identified, classified, and selected sources relevant to the research topic using keywords such as quiet luxury, luxury branding, consumer behavior, premium marketing strategy, and modern consumers. Priority was given to sources from reputable publications, including both nationally and internationally indexed journals, to ensure data quality and academic accountability. Data analysis employed content analysis and a descriptive-interpretive approach. In the initial stage, the collected data

was reduced by selecting information directly related to the research focus. Subsequently, the data is categorized into several main themes, namely: (1) the concept and characteristics of quiet luxury, (2) marketing strategies based on exclusivity, (3) changes in modern consumer behavior, and (4) implications for brand positioning. Following the categorization process, the researcher conducts an interpretation to explain the relationships between concepts and draw conclusions relevant to the research objectives. To ensure data validity, this study employs source triangulation, which involves comparing information from various references to achieve a consistent and objective understanding. Additionally, the researcher utilizes the most recent sources to ensure that the discussion aligns with current market trends and consumer behavior. Through this method, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of how the “quiet luxury” phenomenon has evolved as a contemporary marketing strategy, as well as how this concept influences perceptions of exclusivity and modern consumers’ interest in a brand.

## **RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS**

### **1. The Evolution of the Concept of Luxury in the Modern Market**

The research findings indicate that the concept of luxury has undergone a structural and multidimensional transformation. These changes are influenced not only by economic factors but also by social dynamics, advancements in digital technology, and rising global consumer literacy. In previous phases, luxury was generally associated with visual and demonstrative attributes, such as the use of large logos, striking designs, and easily recognizable status symbols. This phenomenon aligns with the theory of conspicuous consumption proposed by Veblen (1899), which explains that consumption serves as a means to openly display one’s social status.

However, the findings of this study indicate a significant shift toward a more subtle and reflective form of luxury. Modern consumers tend to avoid overly explicit expressions of luxury and are shifting toward forms of consumption that emphasize quality, authenticity, and alignment with personal identity. This suggests that luxury no longer functions solely as a tool for social differentiation based on visibility, but rather as a medium for a more internal form of self-expression.

This transformation can be understood as a response to growing fatigue with mass consumer culture and hyper-commercialization (Ibrahim & Akhmad, 2014). In the digital age, consumers are intensely exposed to various forms of promotion and status symbols, leading to resistance against overly aggressive marketing strategies. Consequently, a preference has emerged for a more understated form of luxury, which has come to be known as “quiet luxury.” Theoretically, this phenomenon is also related to the concept of post-materialism (Inglehart, 1997), in which individuals who have achieved economic stability tend to value non-material values such as quality of life, experiences, and personal meaning. Thus, modern luxury is no longer oriented toward “having more,” but toward “having what is more meaningful.”

### **2. Quiet Luxury as a Brand Differentiation Strategy**

Within the framework of strategic marketing, quiet luxury can be understood as an evolution of differentiation strategies that no longer rely on symbolic visibility, but rather on the construction of implicit value based on intrinsic quality (Arifin et al., 2025). Drawing on Porter (1985), differentiation essentially aims to create uniqueness that holds value for consumers. However, in the context of contemporary markets characterized by symbolic saturation and hyper-commercialization, explicit forms of differentiation have actually seen a decline in effectiveness. In this situation, quiet luxury

emerges as a form of post-visual differentiation, where value is not communicated through conspicuous expressions, but through subtlety, consistent quality, and depth of meaning that can only be recognized by consumers with a certain level of literacy.

Research findings indicate that the construction of differentiation within quiet luxury is not singular in nature, but rather emerges through the integration of several mutually reinforcing strategic dimensions. Premium product quality serves as the primary foundation that ensures substantive value, thereby ensuring that differentiation does not remain merely at the symbolic level. In this context, quality is understood not only as a functional attribute but also as a form of value legitimization that enables the brand to maintain its credibility over the long term. Furthermore, minimalist and timeless design represents a strategy of resistance against rapid trend cycles, while also reflecting a long-term orientation that contrasts with the logic of planned obsolescence in the mass consumption industry. Such design functions not only aesthetically but also as a mechanism to maintain symbolic relevance across time.

An authentic brand narrative plays a crucial role in building meaning-based differentiation. Drawing on the concept of brand authenticity (Lusianti, 2025), authenticity is not merely constructed through communication, but through consistency between a company's claimed values and its actual practices. In the context of quiet luxury, storytelling about craftsmanship, heritage, and design philosophy serves as a tool to build depth of meaning while creating emotional resonance with consumers. Additionally, exclusive customer experiences reinforce differentiation by fostering more personal and limited relationships, ensuring that interactions between the brand and consumers are relational rather than transactional.

Theoretically, this strategy can also be understood through the perspective of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), where consumption no longer functions solely as a tool for economic demonstration but as a means of differentiation based on knowledge, taste, and symbolic competence. In this context, quiet luxury operates as a more subtle mechanism of distinction, where the value of a product can only be accessed and appreciated by specific consumer groups. Thus, differentiation occurs not only at the product level but also at the level of interpretation and meaning.

However, from a critical perspective, the "quiet luxury" strategy contains a number of inherent paradoxes. First, differentiation based on exclusivity and subtlety risks erosion as this concept begins to be widely adopted by various brands, including those in more mass-market segments. This diffusion process can lead to symbolic dilution, where the exclusive meaning that was previously a source of advantage weakens due to overexposure. Second, reliance on high quality and long-term consistency means this strategy has high barriers to entry as well as significant operational risks. Not all companies are able to maintain stable quality standards without compromising on cost efficiency (Hamsal, 2025).

In addition, there are limitations in terms of scalability. A focus on limited distribution and specific market segmentation can restrict growth potential, leaving companies faced with a dilemma between maintaining exclusivity and achieving market expansion. From a critical perspective, this reflects the tension between the logic of capitalism, which drives growth, and the logic of exclusivity, which demands restrictions. Thus, quiet luxury cannot be understood merely as a conventional differentiation strategy, but rather as a more complex form of repositioning, involving the reconstruction of the very meaning of luxury itself. Its success depends not only on product attributes but also on the brand's ability to manage perceptions, maintain authenticity, and uphold a balance between visibility and exclusivity within an increasingly dynamic and competitive market landscape (Tiarapuspa et al., 2025).

### 3. The Influence of Quiet Luxury on Consumers' Perception of Value

One of the key findings of this study is that quiet luxury has a significant influence on the formation of consumers' perceived value. According to the theory proposed by Sheth et al. (1991), consumers' perceived value consists of several dimensions: functional, emotional, social, and symbolic.

**Table 1. Dimensions of Perceived Value in Quiet Luxury**

<b>Dimensions of Value</b>	<b>Characteristics of Quiet Luxury</b>	<b>Implications for Consumers</b>
Functional	High quality, durable, premium materials	Perceived as a long-term investment
Emotional	Providing satisfaction, comfort, and confidence	Enhancing the personalized consumer experience
Social	Implicit status, non-demonstrative	Status based on taste and knowledge
Symbolic	Representation of self-identity	Reflecting maturity and authenticity

From a functional perspective, consumers view the product as a high-quality item that offers optimal durability and utility. This reinforces the perception that the product is not merely a fleeting purchase but a long-term investment. From an emotional perspective, using the product provides intrinsic satisfaction and a sense of self-confidence. Consumers feel that the products they use align with their lifestyle standards and aesthetic preferences. This aligns with Holbrook's (1999) view that the value of consumption is subjective and experiential.

In the social sphere, quiet luxury creates a new form of status that is not based on visibility. Status is built through the ability to recognize quality and good taste, which are closely linked to the concept of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984). However, critically, this phenomenon also has the potential to create new forms of social exclusion. Consumers who lack the knowledge or access to quiet luxury products may be marginalized within this symbolic structure.

### 4. Quiet Luxury and the Creation of Brand Exclusivity

Exclusivity is a core element of the quiet luxury strategy. Research findings indicate that exclusivity is built not only through pricing, but through a combination of scarcity, quality, limited distribution, and brand image consistency.

**Table 2. Factors Contributing to the Exclusivity of Quiet Luxury**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Impact on Perception</b>
Shortage	Limited production	Enhancing perceived value
Quality	High and consistent standards	Building trust
Limited distribution	Not widely available	Enhancing exclusivity
Brand image	Consistent and elegant	Building prestige

This phenomenon aligns with the scarcity effect theory (Cialdini, 2009), which states that objects that are difficult to obtain tend to have greater value. However, there is an interesting paradox. As quiet luxury becomes increasingly popular and widely adopted, its exclusivity may potentially diminish. This highlights a dilemma between market expansion and the preservation of an exclusive image.

### **5. The Appeal of Quiet Luxury to Modern Consumers**

The appeal of “quiet luxury” is inextricably linked to the evolving characteristics of modern consumers, who are becoming increasingly discerning, rational, and value-oriented. In this context, consumers particularly young professionals and upper-middle-income groups no longer view brands solely as status symbols to be explicitly displayed, but rather as a more subtle and authentic representation of personal identity. Preferences for products are not only based on brand popularity or visibility, but also on accountable quality whether in terms of materials, production processes, or durability. This indicates a shift from image-based consumption toward meaning-driven consumption (Bourdieu, 2019).

In addition, growing awareness of sustainability issues has further bolstered the appeal of quiet luxury. Modern consumers are increasingly considering the long-term impact of their consumption decisions, so products that are timeless, durable, and not tied to the fast-fashion cycle are viewed as more ethical and responsible choices. From this perspective, quiet luxury serves not only as a symbol of luxury but also as a more reflective and sustainable form of consumption, aligned with the values of conscious consumption.

From a psychological perspective, quiet luxury also fulfills the need for self-actualization as described in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943). Consumption is no longer viewed as a means to obtain external social validation, but rather as a medium for expressing one’s identity, aesthetic preferences, and individual standard of living. The use of quiet luxury products provides personal, intrinsic satisfaction, where consumers feel comfortable and confident without having to excessively display their status. Thus, the value derived is more internal and emotional rather than external and demonstrative. Furthermore, the appeal of quiet luxury is also influenced by consumer fatigue toward aggressive marketing exposure and a fast-paced consumer culture. In an environment saturated with advertisements, promotions, and ever-changing trends, quiet luxury offers an alternative characterized by visual tranquility, simplicity, and a more profound consumption experience. This makes quiet luxury not merely a style choice but also a form of resistance against hyper-commercialization in the modern market (Triana, 2024).

However, it must be critically acknowledged that the appeal of quiet luxury is segment-specific and not universal. Not all consumers have the preferences, knowledge, or economic means to appreciate the value it offers. For certain market segments, explicit status symbols are still considered more relevant and appealing. Therefore, the effectiveness of the quiet luxury strategy depends heavily on the accuracy of segmentation and the company's ability to identify and understand consumer groups whose value orientation aligns with this concept.

## **6. The Role of Social Media and Digital Culture**

Social media plays an increasingly significant role in shaping, disseminating, and reproducing the meaning of quiet luxury within the context of contemporary digital culture. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest serve not only as marketing communication channels but also as spaces for visual curation that shape consumers' aesthetic preferences. Within this ecosystem, quiet luxury is represented through visuals that emphasize simplicity, neutral color palettes, high-quality material details, and a lifestyle that appears elegant yet understated. These representations create a new aesthetic standard that indirectly influences consumers' perceptions of modern luxury, where value is no longer associated with explicit opulence but rather with subtlety and visual balance (Teguh et al., 2025).

Social media also plays a role in accelerating the diffusion of the concept of quiet luxury through mechanisms of social validation and aspirational consumption. Content showcasing a refined and understated lifestyle is often constructed as a symbol of success and maturity, thereby encouraging the audience to internalize these values. In this context, quiet luxury is not merely a consumption choice but also a component of the digital identity individuals seek to project in virtual public spaces. This demonstrates that digital culture contributes to reshaping the definition of luxury through massive processes of representation and imitation (Radjaguguk & Andriani, 2025).

However, there is a fundamental contradiction inherent in this phenomenon. The exclusivity that lies at the heart of quiet luxury is actually at risk of being diminished when it is widely and continuously shared on social media. As minimalist and understated aesthetics become a global trend adopted on a massive scale, the line between authenticity and imitation grows increasingly blurred. This situation leads to what can be termed the paradox of visibility, where efforts to maintain exclusivity are actually undermined by high levels of exposure. Consequently, the differentiation that was once the primary strength of quiet luxury may weaken as more market players adopt similar visual symbols without necessarily delivering commensurate quality and value.

Furthermore, digital culture also drives the simplification of meaning, where "quiet luxury" risks being reduced to mere visual style, detached from the dimensions of quality, craftsmanship, and the philosophical values that underpin it. This phenomenon demonstrates that in the age of social media, symbols can be easily replicated, but deeper meanings are not always fully conveyed. Therefore, in this context, quiet luxury can be understood not only as a marketing strategy but also as part of a dynamic digital cultural construction, where the meaning of luxury is continuously negotiated, reproduced, and even debated by various actors within the virtual space (Fitra et al., 2025).

Critically, this requires companies to exercise greater caution when utilizing social media. Rather than adopting a mass promotional approach, brands need to develop selective, curative, and storytelling-based communication strategies to maintain a balance between visibility and exclusivity. In this way, social media becomes not only a tool for message distribution but also a strategic medium for building and sustaining the concept of "quiet luxury" amid an increasingly complex digital cultural landscape.

## **7. Challenges in Implementing the Quiet Luxury Strategy**

The implementation of the quiet luxury strategy is not without its share of complex structural challenges, particularly because this strategy demands far higher standards than conventional marketing approaches. One of the main challenges lies in the extremely high quality requirements, where products must not only meet functional expectations but also consistently embody premium value. In this context, quality is not merely an additional attribute but the primary foundation that determines a brand's legitimacy. Failure to maintain consistent quality risks undermining perceptions of exclusivity and eroding the differentiation that has been established (Wahono et al., 2025).

In addition, the quiet luxury strategy also demands long-term consistency across various aspects, including design, brand communication, and the customer experience. Unlike trend-based strategies that allow for high flexibility, quiet luxury relies on the stability of brand identity. This presents a unique challenge, as companies must be able to maintain relevance without losing their core character. In practice, maintaining a balance between consistency and adaptation to market changes is a complex process that requires strong managerial capabilities. The next challenge relates to relatively narrow market segmentation. Quiet luxury inherently targets consumers with a high level of awareness regarding quality, design, and symbolic value. Consequently, not all market segments can be effectively reached. This condition limits expansion potential and requires companies to be more selective in determining their target markets. From a strategic perspective, this limitation creates a dilemma between maintaining exclusivity and achieving sustainable business growth.

On the other hand, the risks of imitation and market saturation are also becoming increasingly relevant challenges. As the popularity of the "quiet luxury" concept grows, many brands are beginning to adopt a minimalist aesthetic without matching it with authentic quality and value. This phenomenon has the potential to create market dilution, where the meaning of quiet luxury becomes blurred and loses its uniqueness. When too many brands claim the same position, differentiation becomes increasingly difficult to maintain, and consumers may become confused in distinguishing the true value. Crucially, all these challenges boil down to one main issue: how companies can maintain a balance between exclusivity and accessibility. Excessive exclusivity can limit market reach and hinder growth, while overly broad accessibility risks diluting the premium image and weakening the brand's symbolic value. Therefore, the successful implementation of quiet luxury hinges on a company's ability to strategically manage this paradox, while maintaining authenticity, quality, and differentiation amidst the ever-evolving market dynamics.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that quiet luxury represents a new transformation in premium marketing strategies that emphasizes quality, elegant simplicity, and a sense of exclusivity that is not overly displayed. This shift indicates that modern consumers are no longer solely interested in flashy status symbols, but rather value authentic quality, comfort, personal identity, and product sustainability. The quiet luxury strategy has proven effective in enhancing consumer value perception across functional, emotional, social, and symbolic dimensions. Furthermore, this approach strengthens brand positioning through consistent quality, timeless design, selective distribution, and personalized customer experiences. In the context of the modern market, quiet luxury serves as an effective differentiation strategy amid consumer fatigue with aggressive promotions and mass consumption culture. However, implementing this

strategy requires a strong commitment to quality and authenticity, as well as the ability to maintain a balance between exclusivity and market growth. If not managed properly, the popularity of quiet luxury can actually diminish its exclusivity through mass imitation. Thus, quiet luxury is not merely a passing trend, but a reflection of a shift in the modern consumption paradigm. Companies that can consistently integrate the values of quality, meaning, and exclusivity will have a greater chance of succeeding in the competitive premium market of the future.

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