

# Integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria

Ekanem B. E. Eyo<sup>1</sup>, CLN and \*Godwin B. Afebende, Ph.D<sup>2</sup>, CLN

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Library and Information Science, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Cross River State – Nigeria

Email: ekanemeyo45@yahoo.com<sup>1</sup>

\*Corresponding author email: godwinafebende@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>



\*Corresponding Author

Godwin B. Afebende, Ph.D, CLN

Department of Library and Information Science, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Cross River State – Nigeria

\*Corresponding Author Email: godwinafebende@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Social media is integrated into university library services with ultimate goal of enhancing library services and reaching to users in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Thus, users who did not visit libraries regularly to use the physical library and its resources due to discontent in traditional library services are brought back to libraries. The paper investigated integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. The paper also determined types of social media integrated into library services and problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries under study. The survey design of correlational type was adopted. The study involved 110 librarians working in five public universities in South-south, Nigeria. The total enumeration was adopted as the sampling technique. The instrument used to collect data for analysis was a questionnaire. The research instrument was validated, to consider its suitability for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Significant relationship ( $r = 0.397$ ) existed between integration of social media into library services and its impacts on public university libraries. Findings showed that public university libraries under study never used social media with mean scores below 2.50 criterion benchmark. Findings also revealed that problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries were enormous, insufficient library personnel with ICT/technical skills for social media services 74 (94.9%) had the highest scores, followed by general lack of awareness of use of social media in library services 70 (89.7%) and inadequate training opportunities to use social media 70 (89.7%) respectively, other opinions include: poor funding 68 (87.2%) as well as poor telecommunications infrastructure 68 (87.2%), lack of knowledge on how to use social media to promote services 64 (82.1%), lack of adequate knowledge regarding the integration of social media in marketing library resources 62 (79.5%) as well as lack of Internet connection 60 (76.9%) and electricity failure 60 (76.9%) respectively, while respondents opinions strongly disagreed with lack of knowledge of what content to post to social media accounts 60 (76.9%). The paper concluded that through integration of social media into library services, public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria could market, advertise their products and services by alerting their users of new arrivals, events, promote brands of library images among others. The paper recommended that the state government, university authorities and library management must take drastic steps to tackle the problems of funding, infrastructural facilities, irregular power supply, investment in staff training and re-training, among others for efficient and high level of integration of social media into library services for provision of library services to users.

Keywords: Impact; Integration; Library services; Public university libraries; Social media; South-south, Nigeria

## Introduction

University libraries in Nigeria are hubs around which academic activities of universities revolved. They are academic hearts of universities and most essential units in the universities. Undoubtedly, it is observed that, nowadays, due to rising tide of discontent in traditional libraries, irregular visits and use of the physical library and resources by users, university library activities now moved from use of manually operated activities to use of social media tools to serve users with ultimate goal of enhancing library services and their reach to users, as such, social media has come to stay. There is clearly work to be done, by overturning some outdated perceptions of library users to persuade them of the value of library services and its ongoing relevance.

Social media is a powerful new form of communication which the world of librarianship is drifting toward in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century to promote and market services and different events offered manually by libraries. Nowadays, 21<sup>st</sup> Century librarians in Nigeria are not expected to stay in the building to promote library services. They are expected to strategies and key into current trend by actively being where users are, making their presence felt by users in the web, keeping library's image alive and fresh in minds of users, and posting library resources and events regularly into social media account. They are expected to use latest trends to connect with library users to market their products and services and promote brands of library images, through social media. It, therefore, implied that libraries are now working in a much more competitive environment. However, social media tools can be used by university libraries to interact with faculty members, staff and students creating awareness of importance of libraries.

Social media provides another vein in which to market new library products and initiatives (Wellman, 2012). In the same vein, through conversations and creating relationships with users on social media, libraries may understand their users' needs and serve them better. Social media opens up a whole new world of communication where the user is the focus (Oriedi, 2011). Social media encompasses Facebook, Blogs, Wikis, Twitter, YouTube, RSS, Flickr, SlideShare, LinkedIn, Google Plus (g<sup>+</sup>), MySpace, WhatsApp, Social marks, Podcasting, Mash-up, Tag Cloud, Folksonomy, among others. Social media, in the library context, is new service models, methods and technologies that can now be adapted to improve library services. University libraries can make a difference by creating a new idea for university libraries beyond books (not that there is anything bad about "books" per se, but a library does have a lot more to offer). That is, ensuring that however and wherever the library service is accessed, it is clear that the library provides it.

Integration of social media into library services is a way of advertising and branding products and services. Integration of social media into library services goes a long way towards developing a dynamic and interactive library, brings visibility to the library, its collection, and enhances its services and their reach, along with these benefits, it also brings responsibilities too. But, these

services demand commitment, awareness and understanding of current technological trends, regular monitoring of user needs and expectations and marketing of the services or products. Social media is important in public university libraries for libraries to partake in users' conversation in delivering library services. Where social media is lacking in Nigeria university libraries, this may negatively affect the library.

The study had added to the scarce literature in library science from Nigeria, therefore, bridging the gap in literature on integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

## Purpose/Problem statement

Studies have shown that despite the use and benefits derived from social media by Nigeria librarians, generally, and those in university libraries, particularly, these have not been well documented. However, evidence from studies and preliminary investigation of some public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria revealed that most libraries are yet to integrate social media into their library services. These could have negative impact on public university libraries. Furthermore, studies have shown that no study has been carried out in relationship to integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the study investigated integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

## Research objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. find out types of social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria;
2. identify problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.
3. determine the relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

## Research questions

1. What are types of social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria?
2. What are problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria?

## Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between integration of social media into library services

and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

## Literature Review

Twenty-first century libraries integrate social media into their services to deliver services to users (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012; Mabawonku, 2017). Thereby showing significant changes in 21<sup>st</sup> Century libraries. Social media, according to Mabawonku (2017), differs from traditional media in terms of quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and permanence. In fact, integration of social media into library activities allowed direct and intimate relationship between libraries and users, thereby promoting library activities. Libraries in developed and developing countries use latest trends to market their services. For example, library of Congress and U.S. libraries increasingly use social media tools to connect with users making library programmes and services accessible (ALA, 2001). Furthermore, Khan and Bhatti (2012) study found that respondents agreed that social media is important tool for marketing and promoting library products and services among online information users, build discussion groups and collaborative work.

Generally, Canty (2013) asserted that libraries do not have stipulated social media that should be used by all libraries, but adopt multifaceted approach suitable for their library services. Kemrajh (2013) revealed that Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Tumblr, Vimeo, Pinterest, Wikipedia, Instagram, Sound cloud, among others are some social media tools used in library services. Mutula (2011) study found that most popular social media in Kenya's libraries is Facebook, followed by Twitter, RSS, SlideShare, YouTube, Flickr and blogs in that order. Braziel (2009) stated that Blogging, Flickr, YouTube, Social Networking, iTunes and Twitter are used for different services. Facebook is used to inform library users about major events, activities and recent acquisitions through the posting of photos, videos and links to resources about the library. YouTube is used for sharing videos of many events held at the library. Presentations and talks organised on different topics by libraries are disseminated via podcasts (NLA, 2010).

On purposes of using social media in libraries, Hendrix and Zafron (2009) found that Facebook is used to market the library, push out announcements to library users, for promotional purpose, to have a presence in the social network, by posting photos and providing chat reference service. Some purposes observed by Canty (2013) include library marketing and reference services. O'Shea (2008) report in Ezeani and Igwesi (2012), asserted that academic libraries used RSS Feeds for syndicating blog content (on web sites – including Facebook, into online courseware, and so on), for creating OPML packages for library patrons, for subject guides, for RSS feeds from the ILS, for new books feeds, search feeds, feeds of checked-out books and holds.

Santosh (2016) study of new media technologies in selected Indian Universities showed that Facebook is most used technology attracting 80.26%, Wikipedia attracted 67.11%, blogs attracted 59.21%, while YouTube attracted 55.26% of the respondents.

Mwantimwa and Nkhoma-Wamunza (2016) study on adoption and applying new media technologies in selected academic libraries in Tanzania revealed that, 33 (82.5) respondents use new media technologies. 16 (40%) used it for library operations, while 5 (26.3%) do not use it. Furthermore, Madu, Idoko, Dirisu and Emerole (2017) study on adoption of web 2.0 tools for information service delivery revealed that web 2.0 tools such as Facebook, YouTube, instant messaging, blogs and twitter, vodcast, chart, among others, were frequently used in university libraries under study with mean score of 3.36, which was greater than the criterion mean of 3.00.

Similarly, Okonedo, Azubuike and Adeyoyin (2013) studied usage of web 2.0 tools by Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals in selected university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria, they found that blogs were used by 65.8%, wikis were used by 56.0%, instant messaging were used by 69.3%, social networking sites such as Facebook, Hi5, twitter, and linkedIn were used by 70.9% respondents respectively. The above statements are in line with Mabawonku (2017) statement that statistics of the most popular social networks worldwide gives a clear picture with Facebook reigning supreme with over 1,590 million active users; more than it closest competitor, WhatsApp.

On contrary, Adamu, Babalola and Saka (2018) study on influence of utilisation of new media on information service delivery in university libraries in Taraba State, Nigeria reported that new media were underutilised in the studied university libraries. However, their study revealed a significant positive relationship between utilisation of new media and information service delivery. Okonedo, Azubuike and Adeyoyin (2013) study revealed that web 2.0 tools such as podcast, webcast, vodcast, with 33.8%, RSS feeds with 36.0%, social bookmarking with 32.0%, media sharing such as Flickr, YouTube, Slideshare, library thing and virtual worlds with 29.8% were not used by librarians in the libraries under study. Madu, Idoko, Dirisu and Emerole's (2017) study concluded that some web 2.0 tools were never used at all. However, Adeyinka and Akinboro (2015) observed that limited libraries adopt social networking sites to render services to patrons and these results in limited patronage and response from users.

Unfortunately, integration of social media into library services is without challenges. Some challenges faced by university libraries in integrating social media into their services are enormous (Eyo, 2017). Eyo (2017) stated that Nigerian university libraries suffer poor funding, insufficient librarians that have ICT/technical skills to carry out social media services, inadequate training opportunities, general lack of awareness, electricity failure, poor telecommunications infrastructure, lack of Internet connection, low bandwidth, slow network, among others. Adeyoyin (2005) and Haliso (2007) stressed that majority of library personnel in Nigeria lack various forms of technical/ICT skills needed to run social platforms hence find it difficult in keying into this modern library marketing trend.

Khan and Bhatti (2012) study inquired from participants, problems that hinder social media usage in libraries, majority strongly agreed that electricity failure is

the greatest problem in using social media for marketing library services. Their study further revealed respondents' agreement on lack of time to use social media, privacy and identity theft, too many social media tools to learn, lack of knowledge on how to use it, meager resources of libraries, insufficient awareness and slow and inadequate training opportunities as major problems in using social media.

Moreover, problems of integrating social media into university library services, according to Multichips Technologies (2018), include growing their social audience, lack of enough time and resources, technical difficulties, measuring their social media efforts, money spent is a major challenge for librarians to use social media just like other professionals, and privacy concerns. Brian (2011) asserted that librarians are so busy that social media becomes an afterthought, perhaps even a chore, rather than a major interactive channel. Brian further conducted a very informal, unscientific, non-generalisable study reviewing social media sites of many academic libraries, he felt somewhat disappointed.

Regrettably, Umar (2018) stated that funding of library services has been a long standing problem for several decades in Nigeria. This is in line with Simisaye, Salisu and Awodoyin (2018) statement that, inadequate funding support to Nigerian libraries hampered abilities of libraries to invest in human capital development needed for delivery of library services. The researchers opined that although social media is underutilised and in some cases never used in university libraries in Nigeria due to challenges, it is, therefore, a veritable tool to market library products, services to users and brand the library's images in minds of users.

## Research design/Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design of correlational type. The study population consists of one hundred and ten (110) librarians working in five public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. The public university libraries are: Akwa Ibom State University library, Ikot Akpaden, Akwa Ibom State, Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH) library, Calabar, Cross River State, Rivers State University of Science and Technology library, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Rivers State, University of Calabar library, Calabar, Cross River State and University of Uyo library, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. A total enumeration was adopted as sampling technique. Instrument used to collect data for analysis was a questionnaire. The research instrument was subjected to face validity. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by involving librarians who were not included in the population of the study. A pre-test was conducted to ascertain the content validity. The research instrument was considered reliable and suitable for the study. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse data generated from the research questions raised. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to establish a relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## Findings

**Table 1:** Questionnaire distribution and response rate

S/N	Name of institution	No. of questionnaire administered	No. of questionnaire returned	Response rate (%)
1	Akwa Ibom State University, Ikot-Akpaden, Mkpata Enin LGA	18	12	15.4
2	Cross River University of Technology, Calabar	15	13	16.7
3	Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Nkpolu Oroworukwo, Rivers State.	20	11	14.1
4	University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State.	23	14	17.9
5	University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.	34	28	35.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

**N = 78 (70.9%)**

Table 1 showed that out of 110 questionnaires distributed to respondents, only 78 usable questionnaires were completed and returned. This accounted for 70.9%. The

study investigated social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria

S/N	Types of social media	HU 4	U 3	LU 2	NU 1	Mean	SD
1	Facebook	-	2 (2.6%)	6 (7.7%)	70 (89.7%)	1.12	0.40
2	Twitter	-	4 (5.1%)	-	74 (94.9%)	1.10	0.44
3	YouTube	5 (6.4%)	5 (6.4%)	60 (76.9%)	8 (10.3%)	2.08	0.64
4	Flickr	2 (2.6)	4 (5.1%)	10 (12.8%)	62 (79.5%)	1.30	0.68
5	WhatsApp	6 (7.7%)	2 (2.6%)	70 (89.7%)	-	2.17	0.55
6	LinkedIn	10 (12.8%)	4 (5.1%)	62 (79.5%)	2 (2.6%)	2.28	0.71
7	Google+	4 (5.1%)	10 (12.8%)	64 (82.1%)	-	2.23	0.53
8	Blogs	5 (6.4%)	5 (6.4%)	8 (10.3%)	60 (76.9%)	1.42	0.87
9	RSS feeds	-	2 (2.6%)	6 (7.7%)	70 (89.7%)	1.12	0.40
10	SlideShare	-	4 (5.1%)	68 (87.2%)	6 (7.7%)	1.97	0.35
<b>Weighted mean</b>						<b>2.50</b>	
		<b>High Usage (HU) = 4</b>	<b>Usage (U) = 3</b>	<b>Low Usage (LU) = 2</b>	<b>No Usage (NU) = 1</b>		

Table 2 shows 10 types of social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. The findings from table 2 revealed that all the ten (10) types of social media listed, Facebook (x = 1.12), Twitter (x = 1.10), YouTube (x = 2.08), Flickr (x = 1.30), WhatsApp (x = 2.17), LinkedIn (x = 2.28), Google+ (x = 2.23), Blogs (x = 1.42), RSS feeds (x = 1.12) and SlideShare (x = 1.97) had mean (x) score less than 2.50 criterion benchmark which is below average. It can

therefore be inferred that none of the social media was highly used or used for provision of library services to users in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria as depicted by mean scores, which was less than the weighted mean of 2.50.

The study further seeks respondents' opinions on problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria

S/N	Problems	SA	A	D	SD
1	Poor funding of my library.	6 (7.7%)	68 (87.2%)	4 (5.1%)	-
2	General lack of awareness of use of social media in library services.	70 (89.7%)	6 (7.7%)	2 (2.6%)	-
3	Insufficient library personnel with ICT/technical skills to carry out social media services in my library.	74 (94.9%)	4 (5.1%)	-	-
4	There is lack of Internet connection in my library.	8 (10.3%)	60 (76.9%)	5 (6.4%)	5 (6.4%)
5	Electricity failure.	10 (12.8%)	60 (76.9%)	2 (2.6%)	6 (7.7%)
6	There is lack of adequate knowledge regarding the integration of social media in marketing library resources.	62 (79.5%)	4 (5.1%)	2 (2.6%)	10 (12.8%)
7	There is lack of knowledge on how to use social media to promote and market library products and services to users.	64 (82.1%)	10 (12.8%)	4 (5.1%)	-
8	There is lack of knowledge of what contents to post to social media accounts.	5 (6.4%)	5 (6.4%)	8 (10.3%)	60 (76.9)
9	Inadequate training opportunities to use social media to market library resources to users.	70 (89.7%)	6 (7.7%)	2 (2.6%)	-
10	Poor telecommunications infrastructure.	68 (87.2%)	4 (5.1%)	6 (7.7%)	-

**Strongly Agree (SA) = 4   Agree (A) = 3   Disagree (D) = 2   Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1**

Table 3 shows problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. Respondents indicated the following problems: poor funding 68 (87.2%), general

lack of awareness of use of social media in library services 70 (89.7%), insufficient library personnel with ICT/technical skills for social media services 74 (94.9%), lack of Internet connection 60 (76.9%), electricity failure

60 (76.9%), lack of adequate knowledge regarding the integration of social media in marketing library resources 62 (79.5%), lack of knowledge on how to use social media to promote services 64 (82.1%), inadequate training opportunities to use social media 70 (89.7%) and poor telecommunications infrastructure 68 (87.2%), respondents also disagreed with statement on lack of knowledge of what content to post to social media

accounts 60 (76.9%). Responses from respondents, therefore, showed that the problems are enormous.

### Testing of research hypothesis

**Hypothesis one:** There is no significant relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria

**Table 4:** Relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r - value	Sig.
Integration of social media into library services	78	16.87	2.03	0.397	.000
Impact of social media on public university libraries	78	13.12	1.73		

**\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 76; Critical r value = 0.098**

The result in Table 4 shows that calculated r – value of 0.397\* is greater than critical value r - value of 0.098 at 0.05 level of significance with 76 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implied that, there was significant relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. This, therefore, showed that social media is a veritable tool in marketing and promoting library products and services in public university libraries. The integration of social media into library services also enhanced the provision and delivery of library services to users in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

### Discussion

Findings on types of social media integrated into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria revealed that all the ten (10) types of social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Google+, Blogs, RSS feeds and SlideShare) listed had mean (x) scores less than 2.50 criterion benchmark which is below average. Therefore, the participants' responses attracted high no usage of the ten types of social media in provision and marketing of library services to users in libraries under study. This is in line with Okonedo, Azubuiké and Adeyoyin (2013) report that social media tools like Flickr, YouTube, SlideShare, RSS, among others were not used by librarians in selected university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria. In the same vein, Madu, Idoko, Dirisu and Emerole's (2017) study concluded that some social media tools were never used at all.

Findings on problems that hindered integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria showed that the problems are enormous. Among the ten problems listed, participants' responses on insufficient library personnel with ICT/technical skills for social media services had the highest scores, followed by general lack of awareness of

use of social media in library services and inadequate training opportunities to use social media respectively. Other responses from participants include: poor funding as well as poor telecommunications infrastructure, lack of knowledge on how to use social media to promote services, lack of adequate knowledge regarding the integration of social media, lack of Internet connection and electricity failure, while participants strongly disagreed with lack of knowledge of what contents to post to social media accounts

This study confirms Eyo's (2017) report that Nigerian university libraries suffer poor funding, insufficient librarians that have ICT/technical skills to carry out social media services, inadequate training opportunities, general lack of awareness, electricity failure, poor telecommunications infrastructure, lack of Internet connection, low bandwidth, slow network, among others. In the same vein, Adeyoyin (2005) and Haliso (2007) stressed that many library personnel in Nigeria still lack various forms of technical/ICT skills needed to run social platforms hence finds it difficult to key into the library modern marketing trend. Furthermore, Khan and Bhatti (2012) study strongly agreed that electricity failure, lack of knowledge on how to use it, meager resources of libraries, insufficient awareness and slow and inadequate training opportunities are the major problems in using social media.

However, findings also established significant relationship ( $r = 0.397$ ) between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. The finding is in line with Adamu, Babalola and Saka (2018) report that positive relationship exists between utilisation of new media and information service delivery.

## Conclusion

The paper concluded that through integration of social media into library services, public university libraries could market, advertise their products and services by alerting their users of new arrivals, events, promoting brands of library images, among others, as opposed to manual search which is slow, frustrating and tedious. It could also enhance provision and delivery of library services to users in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. Generally, there is no stipulated social media that should be used by libraries, only those suitable for their library services could be adopted. It is, therefore, inevitable that librarians need to learn the use of these tools to keep abreast with ever growing sophisticated library users in public university libraries. Librarians, therefore, need to understand what needs to be done and how it should be done. However, when social media is used correctly and consistently, it can be truly powerful tool for cultivating communities.

The study established significant relationship between integration of social media into library services and its impact on public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria. Therefore, librarians in public university libraries cannot afford to ignore this technology. Library users will find libraries which have not embraced social media in near future as insensitive, archaic and largely unusable. If library ever ceases to be growing organism, then it really will become extinct. It is therefore important that librarians take active role in integrating social media into library services in Nigeria public university libraries.

## Recommendations

Significantly, integration of social media into library services in public universities is anchored on improved funding, constant power supply, Internet connectivity, adequate personnel with ICT/technical skills, infrastructure, among others. Therefore, for effective integration of social media into library services in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria, stakeholders (state government, university authorities and library management) must take drastic steps to tackle problems that hinder integration of social media into library services in public universities. Specifically, the present level of funding (budgetary allocation), infrastructural facilities, irregular power supply and investment in staff training and re-training, among others should be improved to encourage efficient and high level of integration of social media into library services for provision of services to users in public university libraries in South-south, Nigeria.

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