

Social Marketing: An Advocacy Empirical Analysis of Service Objects of Public Welfare Organizations

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Abstract: The ultimate goal of social marketing is to change the behavior, attitude, concept, and so on of target audiences. For the public welfare organization, the basis of its service project design is the organization's mission and location. The key to achieve the organizational mission is to be able to lock the service objects and respond to the needs of service objects effectively. This research is based on the theoretical framework of social marketing and based on the questionnaire survey and analysis of the advocacy effectiveness and problems of service objects of the 327 public service organizations in China. Using the Delphi method and the entropy method, the 6P model of social marketing for service objects advocacy in the field of domestic public welfare practice is concise, and a new operational mechanism for service objects advocacy of public welfare organizations is proposed to implement the mission and value of public welfare organizations and contribute to the change of service objects.

Key words: social marketing, public welfare organizations, service objects, advocacy

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0 Introduction

From the report of the 17th National Congress putting forward that “paying great attention to the construction and management of social organizations” to the report of the 18th National Congress emphasizing that “accelerating the formation of a modern social organization system with separation of government and society, clear powers and responsibilities, and legal autonomy” and then to the “Charity Act” promulgated, China’s social organizations has ushered in an opportunity for rapid development. As an important part of social organizations, public welfare organizations play a very important role in social development. The service projects involved also cover children and adolescents, environmental protection, public welfare industry support, peo-

ple with disabilities, services for the elderly and so on. For public welfare organizations and service objects, service projects are the link between the two. Precise positioning and attracting service objects have become the basis for service projects operation of public welfare groups. The “advocate” is an encouragement and appeal for the interests of the case owner or the people, whether it is for individuals or systems, cases or classes. In direct service work, advocacy is usually a part of the case owner’s support and agency and may include the case owner's self-advocacy. The design foundation of service projects in public welfare organizations is the mission and positioning of organizations. The key how to achieve organizations’ mission lies in being able to lock service objects and to advocate for service objects, so as to attract service objects to actively participate in service projects and effectively respond to service objects demand. In this process, the organization's own mission and purpose are practiced. This study focuses on service projects of public welfare organizations and building a theoretical framework of local social marketing to guide public welfare organizations how to enhance the relationship with service objects in projects. In the process of service projects, the “change” of service objects can truly reflect the significance of the project itself.

1 Research design

The concept of the public welfare organization originates from the west. Salamon (1995)^[1], Zhu jiangang (2012)^[2], Wang Ming (2013)^[3] and other scholars have defined the nature and service scope of public welfare organizations. This study also uses the concept of “public welfare organization” to define it. In the actual research and operation, it limits the scope of public welfare organizations to grassroots nonprofit organizations with unofficial background.

This research starts from the traditional 4P theory¹

¹Specifically, four analysis dimensions of Product, Price, Place
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foundation of social marketing, and designs questionnaires based on service projects design, survey and evaluation of service objects demand, service objects promotion and advocacy, service promotion, and service objects maintenance in the operation of service projects of public welfare organizations to systematically understand the effectiveness and problems of service objects advocacy of domestic public welfare organizations. From September 1, 2014 to November 1, 2014, a total of 327 questionnaires were collected through the QQ groups of public welfare organizations in East China, Southern China and the East. Meanwhile, based on the survey results, the Delphy method² (the expert group method) is applied to analyze the 9 elements³ of social marketing in the operation of national public welfare organizations, that include Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Public Relationship, Politics, People, Process, Performance, and the factors that should be emphasized in the interaction between the public organization and the service objects should be placed in order of importance. A total of 16 valid questionnaires were collected to understand the opinions of experts in various fields on these 9 social marketing elements. Finally, the entropy weight model⁴ is used to condense the social marketing elements of service objects advocacy of public welfare organizations, and the optimization strategy is put forward.

2 Analysis of advocacy effectiveness of public welfare organizations' service objects

This study finds that in terms of service objects covered by service projects of existing public welfare organizations, the current service objects of public welfare organizations in China are young people and children, persons with disabilities and special populations, poor people, and old people as the main groups, respectively occupying 60.9%, 38.0%, 33.0%, 32.6% of the overall sample of public welfare organizations. These four types of groups have become the main beneficiaries of design projects of public welfare organizations. At present, service objects of domestic public welfare organizations are still in accordance with the current situation of our country from the distribution scope. Young children, disabled persons and special groups, poor people and

and Promotion.

²In an anonymous way, the method to seek a group of experts' respective forecasting opinions and finally carry out a comprehensive analysis by the host to determine the survey results.

³10P strategy integrating the latest social marketing elements, namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, public relationship, Politics, People, Process, Program, Performance. For service projects operation of public welfare organizations, the element of project is eliminated so as to constitute nine major factors.

⁴The entropy method is a special method of empowerment.

elderly people are the relatively large disadvantaged groups in China's real society. The positioning of service projects by public welfare organizations is not only a powerful response to China's actual social issues, but also the best way for public welfare organizations to perform their mission and highlight their own public welfare values.

Table 1 Service Objects Distribution of Service Projects of Public Welfare Organizations

	Number	Percentage	Percentage of Cases
Teenagers and children, students	199	29.60%	60.90%
Female	20	3.00%	6.10%
The poor	92	13.70%	28.10%
The old	91	13.50%	27.80%
Disabled persons and Special groups	106	15.80%	32.40%
Mind, Virtue	27	4.00%	8.30%
Life, Health	50	7.40%	15.30%
Ecologic environment	47	7.00%	14.40%
Plants and animals	5	0.70%	1.50%
Other	35	5.20%	10.70%

At present, the demand urgency of service objects is the main basis for the design of service projects of public welfare organizations. "Demand" plays an important role in the operation of service projects, which is the foundation of project operation of public welfare organizations. Only when service objects with specific needs are clearly defined, can public welfare organizations effectively integrate the public service resources to provide targeted service for service objects, so as to realize the mission and value of organizations themselves.⁵The research shows that many domestic public welfare organizations initially have the project design idea of "demand-based" for service objects. In

⁵With regard to the definition of "demand", Ponsioen (1962) defined it as a standard level that no one should be below; Maslow (1954) defines demand in a hierarchical way. It considers that demand includes survival and psychological needs, safety needs, social needs, self esteem needs, and self actualization needs. Before dealing with high-level needs, low level needs must be meet. Bradshaw (1972) believes that demand can be measured in four different ways, namely, normative demand, receptive demand, expressive demand, and relative demand.

the demand assessment and service development of service objects, the process includes the following three stages: the needs investigation of potential service objects in early stage, the propaganda and promotion of service objects, and the targeted needs assessment of project service objects. And in these links, the elements of social marketing core strategies, such as service products, service prices, and service promotions, are initially integrated.

2.1 Demand survey and project target design of potential service objects

The demand survey is the basis of the goal design and the specific service product design of service projects of public welfare organizations. From the commonness of cases in the region, the common needs of these groups are derived, and the individual needs of service objects can be paid more attention to. The research finds that the demand investigation consciousness of potential service objects of domestic public welfare organizations is still strong. Before carrying out the service project design, public welfare organizations have different levels of potential service object research foundation, which provides basis for subsequent project service goals and service content design, so as to enhance the pertinence of project design.

Kotler believes that the purpose of social marketing refers to the special behavior that the planners expect to affect the acceptance, adjustment, abandonment or rejection of target audiences. ^[4]Specifically, in terms of service project design, the change of potential service objects is the core product of the project, and also the core goal of the project design.

From the above table, we can see that the project with the main goal of “improving the survival and development capabilities of service objects (such as employment ability enhancement services)” has taken the lead. Of the 327 public welfare organizations involved in the survey, 138 (46.8%) chose this. The goal of improving the intrinsic development capability of the service objects is taken as the dominant factor, and the concept of project objectives is designed to meet the concept of social marketing to change the target of audience behavior. At the same time, 31 (9.5%) public welfare organizations choose the project’s leading targets as “Advertise and motivate service objects to receive certain expertise knowledge”. 19 (5.8%) public welfare organizations chose to “Establish public welfare values for service objects” (5.8%), and 15 (4.6%) public welfare organizations chose to “change the bad behavior of service objects”. In addition, 124 (37.9%) public welfare organizations have selected above two or more project objectives. From this, we can find that the goal of service projects of our country’s public welfare organizations is relatively clear.

2.2 Advocacy channel selection for service objects

In the process of social marketing, on the one hand, promotion refers to creating promotional information, and on the other hand, selecting the appropriate media^[5]. “Promotion” has become one of the four core strategies. Through a certain promotion strategy, the information of the project is transmitted to service objects, and the degree of awareness, recognition and participation of the service object to the service item are enhanced. In the operation course of the entire service project, the public welfare organization shall publicize and advocate potential service targets according to the actual situation, so as to stimulate the active awareness of service objects to participate in service projects and promote its acceptance of the service. The research finds that domestic public welfare organizations have carried out project "promotion" through various channels for potential service objects, which is manifested as project propaganda and promotion for potential service objects. In the actual survey, we find that the offline propaganda is still the main channel for the promotion of public welfare organizations. In the following table, one-to-one exchanges with the service objects and that holding on-site public welfare publicity activities account for 37.6% and 51.5% of the individual cases. At the same time, we can also see that among the online promotional channels, new media such as official WeChat, official Weibo, QQ,

Table 2 Design of Project Objective

	Number of organizations	Percentage
Change the bad behavior of service objects	15	4.6
Improving the survival and development abilities of service objects	138	42.2
Advertise and motivate service objects to receive certain expertise knowledge	31	9.5
Establish public welfare values for service objects	19	5.8
Contains two or more service targets above	124	37.9

MSN, and other instant messaging tools are the main channels for online promotion, occupying 38.2%, 36.1% and 32.1% of the cases respectively. The proportion of traditional media such as telephones, text messages, television, newspapers and so on is the lowest, which is 29.1% and 27.5% respectively. From the overall table, we can clearly see that the change of the publicity channel of the public welfare organization project presents a situation that two ends are large and the middle is small. This also indicates that traditional media gradually fade away in the public welfare organization project activities, and the development of information technology will lead the new trend of new media dissemination in the public welfare field.

Table 3 Publicizing and Advocating Channels for Service Objects

	Number	Percentage	Percentage of cases
Telephone, message and other means of communication	95	11.00%	29.10%
Official micro-blog	118	13.70%	36.10%
Official WeChat	125	14.50%	38.20%
email	21	2.40%	6.40%
QQ, MSN and other instant messaging tools	105	12.20%	32.10%
Promote through traditional media such as TV and newspaper	90	10.40%	27.50%
One-to-one communication of service objects	123	14.30%	37.60%
Organize public welfare publicity activities	167	19.40%	51.10%
other	18	2.10%	5.50%

2.3 Price design of service objects advocacy

In the specific implementation of the service process, service objects should be able to “change” in a modest manner, that is, to change the current status of their own, or to improve their survival skills, or to change their attitudes and behaviors that are not conducive to themselves and society. In order to achieve project goals, public welfare organizations will consider reducing the “cost” of service objects in service projects to attract service objects to participate in projects and regulate the

behavior of service objects^[6]. In the actual service project operation, service objects need to work hard, spend time and energy to participate in the project, etc., which is the cost of service objects. In view of current project operation practice, few projects involve monetary cost of service objects, mainly involving time, energy, potential risks and other non-monetary costs. At the same time, while reducing the time and energy cost of the service objects, public welfare organizations also gradually start to promote the service objects to further participate in the service projects and enhance the ability of service objects.

3 Analysis of existing problems of service objects advocacy of public organizations

The study finds that in the process of project design and management and in the assessment of service object needs, advocacy of service objects, etc., there are still many deficiencies in the design of public welfare organizations in project objectives and specific service products, information and channel selection for project promotion and promotion, and cost design of service objects as well as the selection of service locations.

The goal of the service project of public welfare organization is to “change”, and many public welfare organizations have not accurately positioned the service objects at present. If the service projects lack the precise positioning of service objects and lack the scientific evaluation of the needs of service objects, the project design and operation will be lack of the foundation, such as some public welfare projects, for example, poverty alleviation. Due to the lack of clear positioning of service objects and the difficulty of grasping the needs of service objects, the effect of many poverty alleviation is not very obvious. Instead, it helps some poor groups to grow lazy. As a result, they are getting poorer and it is difficult to achieve the goal of the project.

The project goal design is derived from the requirement survey and requirement evaluation of service objects. At present, the demand survey and demand evaluation of service projects of public welfare organization still lack scientificity and preciseness. First, there is a lack of standardization in the demand survey process. Some face-to-face and small-scale demand surveys have limited the generalization of the demand of service objects, which makes it difficult for public organizations to accurately grasp the universality of project requirements. Second, the evaluation of service objects needs is not scientific. Due to the lack of organizational talents and lack of experience in project

management personnel responsible for the limited resources, it is difficult for public welfare organizations to conduct in-depth analysis of the needs of the survey data and cannot draw much more needs from the questionnaires and interviews. The demand analysis is too shallow to stay on a more macro level, and it is difficult to look directly to the urgent needs of the service object. Therefore, in the project design, it is difficult to design a service project that effectively responds to the wide and urgent needs of service objects according to the advantages of the organization itself. In terms of propaganda and promotion of service items for service objects, public welfare organizations still lack the awareness of the channel combination of the project “promotion” in combination with the main characteristics of the service object and the convenience of the service object's access to information channels. In the consideration of the cost of service objects, there is still a lack of awareness and ability to reduce the time, energy, social risks and other cost of service objects from the perspective of convenience and contact of service objects. With regard to the choice of service location, from the perspective of the interviewed non-profit organizations, it is difficult for public welfare organizations to effectively integrate the “aggregation service” and “one-to-one service” of project services. To some extent, limited human resources and material resources are difficult to play the accumulation of public benefit effect, and the service object can hardly meet the requirements of the project.

4 Advocacy mechanism optimization of service objects of public welfare organizations from perspective of social marketing

In the operation of service projects, the concept of social marketing is introduced into the advocacy links of service objects, so as to change the existing concept of project operation, adjust the relationship between original public welfare organizations and service objects, and turn from “giving relationship” to “service relationship”. Based on the original social marketing 4P strategy, the nine major social marketing elements that affect public welfare projects are reconstructed and integrated. Based on the index determination of evaluation weight of the entropy method, the research data is weighted and refined and the six elements that affect the service objects are refined from the nine elements (see Table 4).

Table 4 Entropy Weight Table of Social Marketing Elements of Service objects⁶

Elements	Entropy	Rank
Product	0	1
Price	0.5	2
Place	0.800102	4
Promotion	0.969417	6
public relationship	0.981359	7
Politics	1	9
People	0.530096	3
Process	0.986117	8
Performance	0.932404	5

4.1 People-guarantee the effective operation of service projects

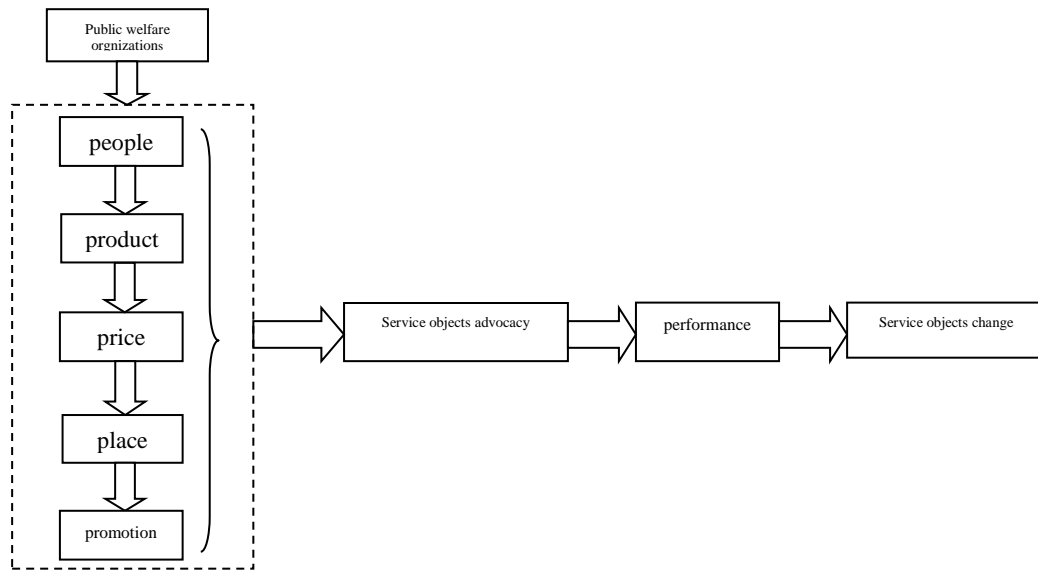
Since traditional charity is an unconditional effort, employees in commonweal organizations generally have lower salaries, and it is difficult to attract high-level public welfare personnel. At the same time, the existing employees' competence and literacy are generally weak, and there is an urgent need for professional supervision teams and standardized training systems to give more support to the public welfare practitioners. It is the key to guarantee the development of public welfare organizations to provide "spiritual reward" to attract and retain public talents by using social marketing concept to convey employees' public interest values to employees. The specific level mainly includes three links: value identification, ability training, supervision and tracking support. (1) Value identification. Public service is usually created by employees, and the two are inseparable. In the service project operation, project employees and service objects are always in an interactive process, so it is very important for project executives to shape the concept of charity value. First of all, it is necessary to organize the “internal marketing” so that the employees can clearly know the mission and positioning of the organization and agree with the concept of the organization's public welfare value. Secondly, to make the employees identify the "demand-based" concept of public welfare, and to create a wider space for survival and development with service as the medium for service objects. (2) Ability training. A qualified public welfare talent should be a compound talent, not only to have a public charity feeling, but also to have the

⁶In the empowerment of the entropy method, the greater of the entropy, the less influence.

ability of project management. In the process of advocating and serving service objects, the public welfare organization needs to provide targeted professional skills training for the project personnel so that they can effectively respond to the needs of service objects. (3) Supervision and follow-up support. The organization should supervise the entire service process of project executives through professional supervision. On the one hand, it provides professional support for employees,

enhances their enthusiasm and initiative, stimulates their creativity in project implementation and reduces their powerlessness. On the other hand, it should supervise and guide the employees to establish relatively stable service relationship with their service objects through supervision, so as to enhance the adhesion between service and service objects and ensure project performance.

Fig. 1 Diagram of Advocacy Operation Mechanism of Service Objects



4.2 Product -- increasing the actual utility of service projects

In the social marketing activities, the product mainly refers to the promotion of things, that is, the target behavior and the benefits brought by the behavior for the target audience. This product can contain both tangible and intangible products. Tangible products are direct services and help provided to the target audience. They can include both real products and extended products. The intangible product has the gradual benefit, which mainly focuses on the change of the target audience behavior, namely the core product. In the operation of service projects, the design of public welfare products is an important link in the advocacy and service of service objects. In the specific project design and implementation, from the perspective of project performance evaluation, the organization’s mission and advantages are combined through scientific and standardized service object needs assessment to carry out the combination design of public products. The output of public service should be concretely embodied, and the invisible public service can be visualized by displaying the professionalism of organization and employee services and

creating a good service environment. And the intangible services are hierarchical, and service items should provide different levels of products for service objects. For example, the core product (intangible product) advocates indirect impact on people's real income through changes in the way people behave. Realistic products and extended products (tangible products) are activities aimed at the practical problems of service objects, enhancing the attraction of products to service objects and achieving the goal of project services. At the same time, service objects are timely guided so that service objects can understand and perceive the benefits of service projects to enable them to actively accept and participate in project services and maximize the service object's revenue.

4.3 Price -- reasonably reducing the cost of service objects

The price of a social marketing product is the cost that the target audience pays for the implementation of new way of behavior^[8]. In terms of the reality of project operation, the cost of the service object when participating in the project is mostly the cost in non-monetary form, which is mainly about time, energy,

physical strength or some social risks. In terms of reducing the cost of service objects, most of current public service project strategies for attracting service targets are to take free participation and give partial concessions or subsidies, and to issue small gifts to attract service targets to participate in public welfare projects. In view of price positioning strategy of service objects, several principles should be grasped: (1) clearly define the scope of service objects. Generally speaking, for public welfare projects of the disadvantaged groups, the money input of service objects is very small, mostly for non-monetary input, while for public services, there may be double standards of money and non-money. (2) reduce the cost of service objects to participate in projects. For service projects for the vulnerable groups, the non-monetary cost of participating projects should be reduced as much as possible on the premise of guaranteeing the maximization of its income. For example, lowering the threshold for service objects to participate in projects, setting the service location within the convenient range of service objects, the service time is flexible, and strive to cooperate with an authoritative organization within the service to reduce the risk of service objects. (3) improve the benefits of service objects. For example, for public welfare programs for the education of poor children, the investment of poor children and their families may be time and energy, while the charity products provided by public welfare organizations are relatively stable financial support for education and precious learning opportunities. Public welfare organizations should try to make the service objects perceive the benefits of public goods, and the organization itself should provide more professional services for employees, so as to improve the profits of the service objects.

4.4 Place -- improving the accessibility of service objects

The “place” in social marketing refers to the time and place for the target market to implement the target behavior, to obtain relevant tangible products, to accept related services. Place strategy is also very important in the process of advocacy and service for service objects. Effective service projects will take into account the characteristics and needs of the service object group. In the selection of service time and place, it is based on the needs of service objects, providing convenience for service objects to attract service objects to participate in project services. Therefore, starting from the needs and personality characteristics of service objects, such as age, gender, education level, physical condition and occupation, it is particularly important to choose the

appropriate time and place to carry out project publicity and service to improve the performance of service projects. From the perspective of social marketing, the selection principles of project locations should be in the order of the convenience of service objects, the convenience of project implementation, and the degree of project resource supply. In the operation of specific service projects, the public welfare organization should make the service location closer to the target of service; implement flexible service time and duration according to the characteristics of service objects; improve the service environment to make service location more attractive; and reduce the difficulty of the service target to participate in the project; in the project's operation, pay attention to the timely communication between employees and service objects. The combination of these strategies provides a more appropriate service place for service objects to enhance the performance of the project.

4.5 Promotion -- expand the promotion path of service projects

As far as social marketing is concerned, promotion is a persuasive way of communication, enabling target customers to understand what they offer, believing that they will accept the interests advocated and act on them. Promotion includes two parts of information and media. Information is what it wants to convey and the media is the time, place, and communicator that sends information^[10]. The promotion of service objects is one of the powerful ways to guarantee the performance of projects. The promotion design for service objects is mainly carried out from two aspects of information and media selection. In information, how to let service objects know more about the project information is a key to the success of projects. Only if the service object is fully aware of the project information, it is necessary to consider whether to participate in the public welfare project in combination with its own needs. The brief and accurate design of information content is very important in the case of numerous public welfare information, good and bad, true and false. In effective space, it is necessary to accurately display the key information of organizational information, project goals, project benefits, project advantages, interest commitments and other key information to enhance the trust degree of service objects to service items. In the media selection, the new media, such as micro-blog and WeChat, have become an effective means for the dissemination of public welfare organizations. Public welfare organizations can fully integrate the WeChat, micro-blog, or other

media resources of public welfare network platforms to further enhance the interaction with the service objects. A variety of channels are used to promote project promotion, to stimulate the motivation of service objects to participate in the service projects and to improve the performance of the project.

4.6 Performance -- effectively respond to service object requirements

Performance measurement refers to the completion progress of the continued return service scheme, especially the output (efficiency), quality, and results (effectiveness) of the service scheme^[11]. For service projects, performance mainly refers to changes made by organizations, communities or service objects through service projects, and the focus on performance should be consistent throughout the service project. For the public organization itself, focusing on performance means to focusing on what changes projects has made to service objects. At the beginning of project design, the public welfare organization should base on mission and value to conduct scientific and standardized assessment of the needs of potential service objects and design service items combined with organizational advantages to respond to some needs of service objects. During the operation of the project, the non-profit organization shall have employees to perform a phased assessment of the dynamic demand satisfaction of service objects so that the service project can timely respond to the needs of the service target according to the project objectives and make immediate service adjustments to ensure that limited public service resources can be fully applied to the urgent needs of service providers. For the external evaluation party of service projects, the key to the performance evaluation of service projects is to design a reasonable evaluation index. For evaluation indicators of public welfare organization service projects, project performance should not be measured simply by input-output ratio. More attention should be paid to the positive impact of the project on the change of service objects, and the comprehensive measure of the input and output ratio of projects and the social effects of projects in terms of the scope of the existing service objects, service contents, service frequency, and service influ-

ence.

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