

Live Streaming Social Commerce: Transforming Consumer Purchase Intention in the Digital Age

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Abstract

The study investigates consumers' purchase intentions regarding products available on live-streaming social commerce platforms. Utilizing a sample of 322 responses gathered through snowball sampling, the study employed "Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)" to empirically analyze the data. Our findings support hypotheses H1, H2, and H3, confirming that interactivity, authenticity, and vividness significantly influence purchase intentions. However, hypothesis H4, immediacy, was not supported. Additionally, the moderating role of personal innovativeness was confirmed, indicating that consumers with higher levels of innovativeness are more likely to be influenced by the identified factors. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior in live-streaming social commerce, offering valuable implications for marketers aiming to enhance consumer engagement and drive sales on these platforms. Future research should consider a broader geographic area and longitudinal design to further validate and expand upon these findings.

Keywords: Social commerce, Live streaming, PLS-SEM, Snowball sampling, Consumer

1. Introduction

In recent years, the emergence of live-streaming social commerce platforms has significantly transformed the landscape of e-commerce. These platforms integrate live video broadcasting with traditional e-commerce functionalities, allowing consumers to interact with hosts in real-time while making purchasing decisions (Saffanah et al., 2023). This innovative model enhances engagement and shapes consumer behaviors and purchase intentions in novel ways. Live streaming social commerce platforms enable real-time interaction between sellers and consumers. These interactions can include product demonstrations, Q&A sessions, and real-time feedback, all contributing to a dynamic shopping experience (Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020). Unlike traditional e-commerce, where product information is static and often lacks personal interaction, live-streaming social commerce bridges the gap by offering a more immersive and interactive environment.

The market for live-streaming social commerce has experienced rapid growth globally. Due to the high level of participation on social media, customers frequently want to participate in word-of-mouth (WOM) communication by sharing details about their past purchases and suggestions with new customers (Sun et al., 2019). The revenue generated by social commerce is anticipated to reach approximately US \$992 billion in 2022 and reach US \$8.5 trillion by 2030 as these platforms continue to acquire popularity (Chevalier, 2023). This research aims to investigate the factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions on live-streaming social commerce platforms, focusing on the moderating role of personal innovativeness. Firstly, the study identifies and analyzes the key factors such as interactivity, authenticity, vividness, and immediacy that influence consumers' purchase intentions on live-streaming social commerce platforms. Later, it utilizes "Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)" to analyze data collected from consumers who have previous interactive experience with live streaming platforms.

This study contributes to the existing literature in several significant ways. Firstly, while previous research has explored various aspects of live-streaming social commerce, there remains a gap in understanding how personal innovativeness influences consumer behavior in this context. By investigating this moderating role, the study offers insights into how early adopters and more innovation-prone consumers differ in their purchasing decisions on live-streaming platforms. Secondly, the study expands on theoretical frameworks by adapting them to the unique dynamics of live-streaming social commerce. By examining factors like interactivity, authenticity, vividness, and immediacy within this framework, the research enhances our understanding of how these factors collectively shape consumer perceptions and behaviors. Thirdly, the study helps in understanding the important factors that drive purchase intentions in live-streaming social commerce, which will result in the practical implications of this research being significant for marketers and platform operators, providing them with valuable insights to enhance their strategies and operations.

This paper is structured as follows: following this introduction, the literature review discusses theoretical perspectives and findings related to live-streaming social commerce. The methodology section outlines the research design, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, and analytical techniques used. Results and findings from the data analysis are presented and discussed in the subsequent sections. Finally, conclusions are drawn, and implications for theory, practice, and future research directions are discussed.

2. Literature Review

Live streaming social commerce has emerged as a dynamic and interactive approach to online shopping, blending real-time video streaming with e-commerce functionalities. This innovative model leverages the immediacy and engagement of live broadcasts to create a compelling shopping experience that transcends traditional online retail (Sun et al., 2019). By integrating social interaction and instant feedback into the purchasing process, live-streaming social commerce offers a unique value proposition, fostering a sense of community and trust between consumers and sellers. The interactive nature of live streaming allows for direct communication between hosts and viewers, enhancing the authenticity of the shopping experience (Shi et al., 2023). Hosts can demonstrate products, answer questions in real time, and provide personalized recommendations, significantly influencing consumer purchase intentions. Moreover, the vividness and richness of live video content enable a more immersive shopping experience, making it easier for consumers to assess product quality and suitability (Hsu and Hu, 2023). Some critical studies have been shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Review of Literature

AUTHORS	THEORY/MODEL	ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE	SAMPLING	VARIABLES
Zheng (2024)	Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory (S-O-R)	SEM	260 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV- Immediacy, Interactivity, vividness, Authenticity MV- Consumer Trust, Sense of Presence DV- Travel Intention
Wen <i>et al.</i> (2024)	TAM Model and Initial Trust Theory	SEM and Linear Regression	393 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV- Communication skills, Influence, Authenticity, Expertise MV- Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Initial trust beliefs, Initial trust intention DV- Purchase

				intention MODV - Gender
Shi <i>et al.</i> (2023)	S-O-R Theory	SEM	367 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV - Information cues, Navigation cues, Design cues, Interactive cues MV - Social presence DV - Impulse buying behaviors
Liu <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Information Foraging Theory	SEM and fsQCA	486 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV - Perceived Product Fit, Attractiveness Vividness, Price Value, Mutuality MV - Perceived Serendipity, Perceived Enjoyment, Perceived Diagnosticity DV - Purchase Intention, Continuous Watching Intention
Lin <i>et al.</i> (2023)	S-O-R Theory	PLS-SEM	335 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV - Demand, Convenience, Interactivity, Playfulness MV - Perceived Enjoyment DV - Impulsive Buying Intention
Shah <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Cognitive Emotion Theory (CET) and Theory of Pleasure- Arousal-Dominance (PAD).	SEM	430 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV - Content, Interactivity, Vividness, Arousal, Pleasure MV - Positive emotion, Negative Emotion, Urge to Consume Impulsively DV - Impulse Hotel Consumption MODV - Impulsive Consumption Tendency
Gupta et al. (2023)	Theory of Consumption Behaviour	PLS-SEM	285 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV - Conditional Value, Emotional Value, Epistemic Value, Social Value, Functional Value, Monetary Value, Perceived Trust, Perceived Risks

				MV- Behavioural Intention DV- Actual Usage MODV- Personal Innovativeness
Guo and Li (2022)	S-O-R Theory	PLS-SEM	514 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV- Interactivity, Recommendations, Feedback MV- Utilitarian Value, Hedonic Value DV- Repurchase Intention
Friedrich <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Media Richness Theory	PLS-SEM	237 (Experiment)	IDV- Social Commerce Feature Richness MV- Social Support, Social Presence, Social Influence DV- Buying Intention
Rashid <i>et al.</i> (2020)	N.S.	PLS-SEM, IPMA	303 valid responses using questionnaires	IDV- Social Support, Commitment, Satisfaction, Trust, Service Quality MV- Enjoyment, Social Presence, Relationship Quality DV- Purchase Intention MODV- Mooring Effects (Conformity, Personal Experience)

Source: Self development

3. Hypothesis Development

The study used the identified factors from the literature to study the purchase intention towards products on live-streaming social commerce. Hypotheses were formed based on existing relationships in the literature, as shown through a research model in Figure 1.

3.1 Interactivity

“Interactivity refers to how users perceive their experience during interactions” (Wu, 2005). Research highlights that perceived interactivity enhances users’ social presence in online experiences and strengthens customer relationships through parasocial interactions (Mollen and Wilson, 2010). In live-streaming social commerce, this interactivity allows consumers to engage with hosts and other viewers via comments and likes, fostering a shared experience (Zheng, 2024). Such interactions increase the sense of presence and trust in hosts, ultimately enhancing consumer engagement and purchase intentions. Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

H1: Interactivity has a significant positive influence on social presence.

3.2 Authenticity

Wang (1999) defines “authenticity through three perspectives: objective, constructive, and existential”. Authenticity is crucial in consumer experiences, enhancing perceived value and trust. In live-streaming social commerce, higher perceived authenticity leads to more immersive and engaging experiences, which increase purchase intentions (Kim et al., 2020). When products showcased in live streams are perceived as authentic, consumers are more likely to trust the sellers and believe in the product’s quality, reducing the perceived risk of fraud and enhancing their overall shopping experience (Zheng, 2024). Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

H2: Authenticity has a significant positive influence on social presence.

3.3 Vividness

“Vividness, as a technological characteristic, significantly influences consumer attitudes” (Jiang and Benbasat, 2003). Vivid presentations convey rich information and stimulate multiple sensory channels, leading to a stronger sense of presence in virtual environments. In live-streaming social commerce, vividness enhances consumers’ understanding of products and their perceptions of realism (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007). Vivid information is perceived as more credible and memorable, enhancing audience engagement and presence in live streams. Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

H3: Vividness has a significant positive influence on social presence.

3.4 Immediacy

“Immediacy refers to the psychological closeness in space or time between communicators and their targets” (Wiener and Mehrabian, 1968). In live-streaming social commerce, immediacy is crucial, as it enhances the immersive consumer experience and drives satisfaction and purchase intentions (Parise et al., 2016). In live streaming, immediacy enables real-time communication between hosts and viewers, creating a stronger sense of presence and engagement. Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

H4: Immediacy has a significant positive influence on social presence.

3.5 Social Presence and Purchase Intention

“Sense of presence significantly influences consumer behavior in online purchasing” (Suntornpithug and Khamalah, 2010). In live-streaming social commerce, hosts achieve a strong sense of presence through immersive and realistic presentations. Real-time interactions and vivid demonstrations in live streams enhance the social presence, making the shopping experience more engaging and convincing for viewers and ultimately driving higher purchase intentions (Zheng, 2024). Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

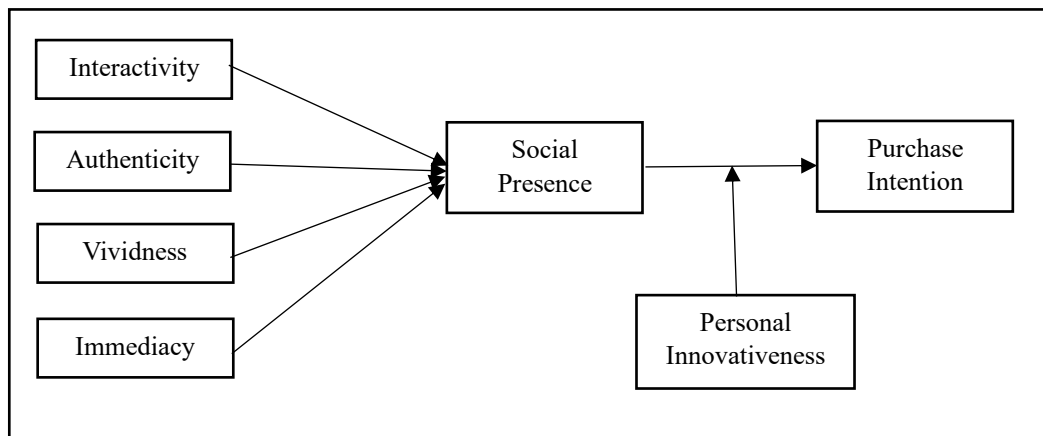
H5: Social presence has a significant positive influence on purchase intention.

3.6 Personal Innovativeness

The literature on technology adoption highlights the crucial role of personal innovativeness in predicting consumer adoption behavior. “Personal innovativeness is defined as the degree to which an individual is receptive to new ideas and adopts innovations earlier than others” (Agarwal and Prasad, 1998). Individuals who are more curious and willing to take risks tend to be more innovative and accept technology sooner. Previous studies have used personal innovativeness as a moderator in various contexts (Abubakre et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2023). This research examines the moderating impact of personal innovativeness on consumers' purchase intentions and behavior in live-streaming social commerce. Therefore, we pose this hypothesis:

H6: Personal innovativeness moderated the relationship between social presence and purchase intention.

Figure 1: Research Model



Source: Self development

4. Methodology

This section outlines the research methodology to examine the factors influencing purchase intentions towards products on live-streaming social commerce platforms. The research adopts a quantitative approach, employing a structured questionnaire to gather data from respondents, consisting of items measured on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates “Strongly Disagree”, and 5 indicates “Strongly Agree”. The questionnaire is designed based on a thorough literature review to identify relevant factors affecting purchase intention in live-streaming social commerce. Verifying with the experts establishes the questionnaire's face validity. The sample size is determined based on the total item multiple by 10 (Chuah and Cham, 2020), which is 280 for the study. The study used a snowball sampling technique to reach potential respondents across India. Initially, 500 individuals were approached, of which 322 valid responses were collected. The criteria for participation included prior experience with live streaming on social commerce platforms. The demographic breakdown of the respondents is shown in Table 2. The collected data was analyzed using “Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)”, a statistical technique for exploring complex relationships among identified variables (Hair Jr et al., 2022). SmartPLS4 software was used for this purpose due to its ability to handle small to medium sample sizes and its effectiveness in research.

Table 2: Respondent’s Demographics (n = 322)

Characteristics	Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	178	55.28
	Female	144	44.72
Age	15 - 20	46	14.28
	21 - 26	143	44.42
	27 - 32	103	31.98
	33 and above	30	9.32
Employment Status	Employed	213	66.14
	Unemployed	109	22.86
Education	Diploma	37	11.50
	Bachelor's degree	124	38.50
	Master's degree	96	29.82
	Doctoral degree	48	14.90
	Other	17	5.28

Source: Self development

5. Findings

5.1 Measurement Model Assessment (MMA)

The initial analysis involves assessing Factor Loading, Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (ρ_c), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Discriminant Validity of the measurement model, displayed in Tables 3 and 4. The internal consistency of the Factor Loadings of all the items falls between (0.751 - 0.907), Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (ρ_c) of all the constructs falls between (0.841 – 0.918), all of which are above the 0.70 criterion (Hair Jr et al., 2022). Convergent validity is shown by the AVE values of all the constructs, which range from (0.675 – 0.736), which is over the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017). The Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) criteria are used to evaluate the discriminant validity of every construct. Establishing discriminant validity is accomplished by the fact that the value of each of the constructs is lower than the threshold value of 0.85 (Hair et al., 2019). In order to determine the common method bias (CMB), the Inner Value Inflation factor (VIF) is used. The study does not suffer from common method bias because all VIF values are within the range of 1.426 to 1.908, which is lower than the 3.33 threshold value (Kock, 2015), shown in Table 5.

Table 3: MMA

Constructs and Items	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability (CR) (ρ_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Interactivity (IN)		0.874	0.913	0.726
IN1	0.868			
IN2	0.871			
IN3	0.888			
IN4	0.775			
Authenticity (AU)		0.878	0.916	0.732
AU1	0.842			
AU2	0.879			
AU3	0.848			
AU4	0.855			
Vividness (VV)		0.881	0.918	0.736
VV1	0.871			
VV2	0.864			
VV3	0.837			
VV4	0.876			
Immediacy (IM)		0.845	0.894	0.678
IM1	0.813			
IM2	0.784			
IM3	0.838			
IM4	0.857			
Social Presence (SP)		0.864	0.907	0.710
SP1	0.907			
SP2	0.853			
SP3	0.875			
SP4	0.794			
Purchase Intention (PI)		0.846	0.897	0.686
PI1	0.751			
PI2	0.880			
PI3	0.839			
PI4	0.837			
Personal Innovativeness (PIN)		0.841	0.893	0.675

PIN1	0.835			
PIN2	0.814			
PIN3	0.847			
PIN4	0.790			

Source: Self development

Table 4: HTMT

	AU	IM	IN	PI	PIN	SP	VV
AU							
IM	0.452						
IN	0.612	0.383					
PI	0.722	0.460	0.732				
PIN	0.548	0.451	0.728	0.727			
SP	0.613	0.411	0.735	0.744	0.770		
VV	0.340	0.729	0.394	0.478	0.433	0.447	

Source: Self development

5.2 Structural Model Assessment (SMA)

The findings of the structural model analysis, which used beta value, stdev, t statistics, and path coefficients to test the hypothesis, are displayed in Table 5. The data was examined using bootstrapping approach involving 10,000 samples at a significance level of 0.05 in SmartPLS 4 (Hair Jr et al., 2022). The findings indicate that the interactivity ($\beta=0.453$, $p<0.000$), authenticity ($\beta=0.237$, $p<0.000$), and vividness ($\beta=0.161$, $p<0.004$) positively impacts social presence, hence H1, H2, and H3 are supported. However, immediacy ($\beta=0.024$, $p<0.737$) is shown to be insignificant, so hypothesis H4 is not supported. The study found that social presence ($\beta=0.374$, $p<0.000$), have a positive impact on purchase intention, hence H5 is supported. The results also supported that personal innovativeness ($\beta=0.328$, $p<0.000$) has a moderating effect on the relationship between social presence and purchase intention (H6 supported).

The value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) between the independent and dependent variables is displayed in the findings. The model accounts for 49.3% of the variability in social presence and 49.1% in purchase intention towards products on live-streaming social commerce platforms. The effect size (f^2) value is determined to assess the role of independent factors in explaining the variation of dependent variables. The table displays values categorized as low (ranging from 0.02 to 0.15), medium (ranging from 0.15 to 0.35), and large (0.35 and beyond) (Hair et al., 2019). Given that the threshold value of Q^2 must be larger than 0, the model's predictive relevance is evaluated using the Q^2 value, which is 0.473 for social presence and 0.513 for purchase intention. This suggests that the suggested model has good predictive relevance. Also, the overall model fit is indicated by the "standardized root-mean-square residual" (SRMR), which is 0.066, below the cutoff value of 0.80 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5: SMA

Hypothesis	H1: IN -> SP	H2: AU-> SP	H3: VV -> SP	H4: IM -> SP	H5: SP -> PI	H6: PIN -> PI
RESULTS WITHOUT MODERATION						
VIFs	1.481	1.528	1.686	1.772	1.000	
Beta (β)	0.453	0.237	0.161	0.024	0.643	

STDEV	0.054	0.056	0.055	0.062	0.044	
T statistics	8.396	4.248	2.907	0.338	14.618	
P Values	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.736	0.000	
f ²	0.277	0.072	0.029	0.000	0.697	
Q ²	0.473				0.441	
R ²	0.487				0.409	
Supported	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
RESULTS WITHOUT MODERATION						
VIFs	1.481	1.528	1.686	1.772	1.887	1.908
Beta (β)	0.453	0.237	0.161	0.024	0.374	0.328
STDEV	0.054	0.056	0.055	0.062	0.056	0.052
T statistics	8.396	4.248	2.908	0.336	6.710	6.231
P Values	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.737	0.000	0.000
f ²	0.277	0.072	0.030	0.000	0.145	0.109
Q ²	0.473				0.513	
R ²	0.493				0.491	
Supported	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
SRMR					0.066	

Source: Self development

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The current study explored the factors influencing purchase intention on live-streaming social commerce platforms. Using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4, the structural model analysis provided significant insights into the determinants of purchase intention. The findings indicate that interactivity ($\beta=0.453$, $p<0.000$), authenticity ($\beta=0.237$, $p<0.000$), and vividness ($\beta=0.161$, $p<0.004$) have a positive impact on social presence, supporting hypotheses H1, H2, and H3. These results suggest that the more interactive, authentic, and vivid the live-streaming content is, the stronger the sense of social presence experienced by viewers. Interactivity facilitates direct engagement between the host and viewers, authenticity builds trust, and vividness enhances the immersive experience (Sun et al., 2019; Zheng, 2024). These elements are crucial in creating a compelling and engaging environment for potential buyers.

Contrary to expectations, immediacy ($\beta=0.024$, $p<0.737$) was found to be insignificant, leading to the rejection of hypothesis H4. This finding implies that the promptness of interactions in live streaming does not significantly influence the social presence felt by viewers (Parise et al., 2016). This could be due to the nature of live streaming platforms where the expectation for instant responses is already normalized, or it might suggest that viewers prioritize other aspects of the streaming experience over immediacy. Social presence ($\beta=0.374$, $p<0.000$) was shown to have a positive impact on purchase intention, supporting hypothesis H5. This result underscores the importance of creating a strong sense of presence in live-streaming environments to boost consumer purchase intentions (Zheng, 2024). When viewers feel a strong connection and presence within the live stream, they are more likely to trust the content and make a purchase.

The study also found that personal innovativeness ($\beta=0.328$, $p<0.000$) moderates the relationship between social presence and purchase intention, supporting hypothesis H6. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of personal innovativeness are more likely to convert social presence into purchase intentions. Innovative consumers are typically more open to new experiences and technologies (Gupta et al., 2023), making them more susceptible to the influences of social presence in a live-streaming context. The research provides valuable insights into the factors affecting purchase intentions on live-streaming social commerce platforms. The results highlight the importance of interactivity, authenticity, and vividness in enhancing social presence and positively influencing purchase intentions. While immediacy was not a significant factor, the moderating role of personal innovativeness suggests that individual differences play a crucial role in the purchase decision-making process.

7. Implications

7.1 Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of purchase intentions within live-streaming social commerce platforms. The research highlights the significant roles of interactivity, authenticity, and vividness in enhancing social presence and positively influencing purchase intentions. This study also introduces the concept of personal innovativeness as a moderating factor, providing new insights into how individual differences influence the effectiveness of social presence in driving purchase behavior. By integrating these elements, the study offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the psychological and experiential factors that drive consumer behavior in live-streaming social commerce, paving the way for future research to explore additional variables and contexts.

7.2 Practical Implications

The practical implications of this study are particularly relevant for marketers, content creators, and platform developers in the realm of social commerce. The findings suggest that enhancing interactivity, authenticity, and vividness in live-streaming content is crucial for creating a strong sense of social presence, which significantly boosts purchase intentions. Marketers should focus on interactive features such as real-time chats, polls, and direct viewer engagement to foster a more dynamic and engaging live streaming experience. Authenticity can be enhanced by using genuine, relatable hosts who build trust with the audience. Vividness can be achieved through high-quality visuals, immersive storytelling, and rich multimedia content. Furthermore, understanding the role of personal innovativeness implies that marketing strategies should be tailored to target more innovative and tech-savvy consumers, who are more likely to be influenced by the enhanced social presence in live streams. By leveraging these insights, businesses can design more effective live-streaming strategies that attract viewers and convert them into loyal customers, thereby maximizing the potential of live-streaming social commerce platforms.

8. Limitations and Future Research

The study has several limitations. Firstly, it focused exclusively on respondents from India, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include other cultural and geographical contexts that would enhance the generalizability of the results. Secondly, the study's cross-sectional nature is a limitation, as it captures data at a single point in time and does not account for potential changes in consumer behavior over time. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how consumer behaviors and attitudes towards live-streaming social commerce evolve, offering a more dynamic understanding of purchase intentions. Additionally, the study analyzed vital factors such as interactivity, authenticity, vividness, and immediacy. Future studies should explore other variables that may impact purchase intentions. Investigating the interplay between these factors and those identified in this study could provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer engagement and purchasing behavior.

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