STUDY ON THE IMPACTS OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING AND CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION BASED ON RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

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Abstract

As the competition in the present marketing is hotter and hotter and purchasing power is gradually rising customers are not only satisfied with the perfect product provided by companies. One more significant thing for customers is the perfect consumer experience offered by companies (Turner, 2001).

This paper makes use of relationship quality as the disturbance variable and makes research on the impacts of experiential marketing on customers' satisfaction. The study object is customers of Costco Wholesale Corporation and the data collection method used here is questionnaire. （Questionnaires are recovered then used SPSS 14.0 to factor analysis, reliability & validity analysis, hierarchical regression analysis respectively).

Hoping the results and findings of the research will be helpful to companies in the application of experiential marketing.

Keywords: Experience marketing, Relationship quality, Customers' satisfaction.

Introduction

As it is pointed by Pine & Gilmore (1999), economic development is entering into a new stage experience arena, which surpasses the traditional sales methods focusing on product sales and service offering. The new revised well-design stage experience shortens the distance between customers and products so that a close relationship is to be established and customers have a memorable impression. Traditionally, Market Share is the significant factor on the determination of success or failure of products. Nowadays, the determination factor highlights attitude-shown Mind Share, where the product must present. Mind Share rate gradually becomes not only the key determination point in product sales, but also the new direction which brand marketing should pay attention to (Liu Wei-gong, 2007). Mind Share is the support degree that the spiritual appeal gets from customers. Mind refers to the attitude towards products, living philosophy or value.

Experiential marketing is a kind of face-to-face communication method, which mainly raises customers' physical and emotional feelings (Urquhart Ross, 2002) so that customers expect to be relevant and interactive to some brands and to feel and experience wholehearted (Robin, 2001). The researches on TV ads and many marketing methods show that more and more ads no longer stress on product functions. Instead, ads stress on customers emotion experience, such as, the ads of National Electronics adopt comfortable marketing methods offering emotional experience to customers and action experience by way of installment. Ellwood points that the transfer of the present world economic model causes the great chance in the content and level of customers' needs (Ellwood 2000). The traditional inner implicit rational needs become outer apparent emotional needs and sublimate to experience level now.

Literature Review

The essay first researches the variable basic dimension include experiential marketing, brand equity, customers' satisfaction and so on. Secondly, the relationship among variables is discussed and then the research assumption of the essay is introduced.

Experiential Marketing

Schmitt (1999) points that the experiential marketing architecture is divided into 2 parts: strategic experiential modules (SEMs). The five strategic experiential models proposed by Schmitt create different experiential forms for customers (Schmitt, 1999). As the basis of the marketing, the details are as follow:

(1) Sensory experience: the sensory experience of customers towards experiential media includes visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile response results. (2) Emotional experience: the inner emotion and sense of customers raised by experience media. (3) Thinking experience: customers' thoughts on the surprise and enlightenment provoked by experience media. (4) Action experience: by experience media, customers are linked so that they can acquire social identity and belonging sense. (5) Related experience for customers through the experience of media production links, and to social recognition or a social belongs.

Experiential marketing is consisted of five strategic models which are sensory, emotion, thinking, action and relevance. The research is based on the evaluation items of experiential marketing and uses these five experiential models as variable evaluation dimensions.

Relationship Quality

Relationship quality makes reference on Smith's method (1998), which is consisted of satisfaction, trust and commitment dimensions. The strong and weakness of relationship quality have influence on the attitude adopted by customers. If good relationship quality may reduce the uncertainty and have influence on the expectation of future lasting interaction(Crosby, Evans and cowls, 1990), thus, it is known that the strong and weakness of relationship quality will influence customers cognitive value. As relationship quality is the accumulation cognitive value towards every specific event, therefore, relationship quality will influence customer's satisfaction. Wray et al. (1994), Bejou et al. (1996) all agree that relationship quality is consisted of at least two dimensions, trust and satisfaction dimensions. Though Storbacka, Strandvid & Gronroos (1994) do not define relationship quality directly, their model proposes that relationship quality involves four factors which are customers' satisfaction, relationship strength, relationship lifespan and relationship acquire power. Besides, Kumar, Scheer, and Steenkamp (1995) hold that relationship quality among enterprises reflects that trust, commitment and conflicts expects on lasting and investment will. Roberts, Varki, and Brodie (2003) hold that relationship quality among service providers and in which should include trust, satisfaction and emotion commitment.

Customers' Satisfaction

Fornell points that customers' satisfaction is customers' overall evaluation towards the whole buying experience on products and service (Fornell, 1992). The overall purchasing experience is the measure and evaluation basis for customers' satisfaction. Hempel defines that customers' satisfaction depends on realization degree of expected product advantages. This reflects on the degree of consistency between

expectation and actual results (Hempel, 1997). Miller holds that satisfaction is caused by interaction between customers' expectation degree and recognition effects. He holds that expectation and ideal are both the standards for product performance and are used to evaluate the degree of product actual performance which leads to satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Miller, 1997). Oliver holds that satisfaction is an emotional statement, which is the response towards products and service (Oliver, 1981). Lai Rong-zong holds that four variables are used for evaluate customer's satisfaction evaluation, product quality, staff quality, service content and real entity so that one can know customers' satisfaction (Lai Rong-zong, 2000). The essay also uses these four variables as evaluation items to customers' satisfaction evaluation dimensions.

Relationship Between Experiential Marketing and Customers' Satisfaction

In 2003, Yuan Yi-hua (2003) discusses that the research on experiential marketing, experiential value and customers' satisfaction is made on the study of three companies which are Eslite Bookstore, Starbucks Coffee and IKEA, where experiential marketing works well. The research results show that these three companies use emotion value by the method of emotion sensation to influence customers' satisfaction, service quality by the method of emotion value to influence customers' satisfaction, service quality by the method of function value to influence customers' satisfaction as well as by emotion function and function value to influence customers' satisfaction. In Fan Wen-jia's (2003) paper *"Study on the Relationship between Customer participation, Emotion experience and Customer Satisfaction - Case Study on Starbucks Coffee",* the essay makes research on the trilateral relationship among customers' involvement, emotion experience and customers' satisfaction (Fan Wen-jia, 2003). One of the research results is

that there is positive relationship between emotion experience and customers'

satisfaction. Thus, the experience on experiential marketing does improve customers'

satisfaction on consumption. Thus, with the combination of the above, the research gets

the following assumption:

Hypothesis 1(H1)：Experiential marketing has significantly positive effect on customers'
satisfaction.

Relationship Between Relationship Quality and Experimental Marketing

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) consider that relationship quality is helpful for

creation and enhancement of experiential marketing. Petromilli and Michalczyk (1999)

hold that by way of different kinds of behavioral interaction, every customer forges

experiential marketing. Meanwhile, relationship quality will enhance experiential

marketing. Gao Ming-yi (2004) discusses the relationship between experiential marketing

and relationship quality. The results show that there is obvious positive relationship

between experiential marketing dimensions (which are sensory, emotion, thinking, action

and relevance) and relationship quality. Wang Fang-cen (2003) finds out that sensory

experience positively relates to trust of customers. Ho Yung-ching, etc. (2004) hold that

sensory experience, emotion experience, thinking experience, action experience,

relevance experience and customer trust, emotion commitment are positively related.

Thus, with the combination of the above, the research gets the following assumption:

Hypothesis 2 (H2)：Relationship quality has significantly positive effect
on experiential marketing.

Relationship between Relationship Quality and Customers' Satisfaction

Crosby et al. (1990) point out relationship quality has obvious influence on future interaction expectation in article "Relationship Quality in Services Selling：An Interpersonal Influence Perspective". Kumar et al. (1995) said that relationship quality is a kind of high level concept. This concept implies that good relationship quality may reduce conflict between customers and enterprises, improve customers' trust and committeemen on the enterprises and boost willingness on continuous trade and investment. On the satisfaction dimension of customers, the so-called continuing trade is a kind of action satisfaction. Besides in, in his article "Research on Relationship between Relationship quality and Loyalty - Case Study on ADSL Customers of Chung hwa Telecom", Chen Kang-zhuang (2003)made research on ADSL Customers of Chung hwa Telecom and adopts four dimensions, including professional knowledge, relationship sales behavior, net quality and service recovery as influence factors of relationship quality. The essay further discusses the influence of relationship quality on satisfaction of customers. The research results show that relationship quality is apparently positively related to satisfaction of customers. Thus, with the combination of the above, the research gets the following assumption:

Hypothesis 3 (H3)：Relationship quality has significantly positive effect on customers' satisfaction.

Whether Relationship Quality Has Apparent Interferences On Experiential Marketing On Satisfaction Of Customers.

he purpose of the research is to study experiential influences on customers' satisfaction, and whether relationship quality is the cause. Thus, the assumption of the research is as followings:

Hypothesis 4 (H4) ：*Relationship quality has a moderation effect on the experiential marketing effects to the satisfaction of customers.*

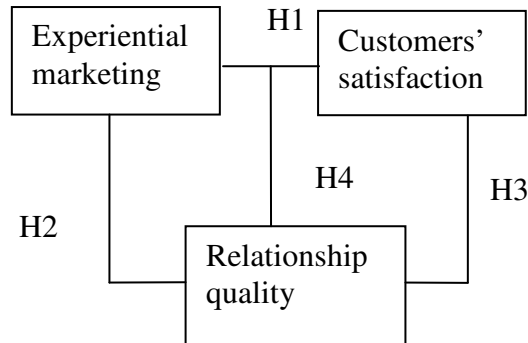## Methodology

Research Frame

Figure 1. Research Design

(1). Research sample

By the method of random selection of samples, the research makes uses of on-spot distribution and collection of questionnaires. The sample focuses on Kobayashi Optical city authority, service industry personnel and customers. Totally 500 pieces of questionnaires have been distributed focusing on 100 companies. After elimination the repeat-counting, closed and relocated companies, there are totally 285 pieces of responsive questionnaires, among which 30 pieces are not fully completed. Thus, there are 255 pieces of valid questionnaires, valid responsive rate is 51％, who will fill in the experiential marketing questionnaires.

Each piece of fill-in questionnaire represents valid samples of agreed experiential marketing, which is consisted of Kobayashi Optical city authority, service industry personnel and customers. Thus, it is in line with the research, whose study purpose is to

discuss experiential marketing influence on customers' satisfaction based on relationship quality.

（2）. Development of Research Tools

This research uses questionnaire method. Questionnaire make as a research tool to be collect data. Questionnaires source from reference information are revised as fitting this one. The contents are made up for five parts, assessed by a 6-point Likert scale and it is anonymous. The interviewees choose from 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'agree somewhat', 'disagree somewhat', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. In the six items, the scores are 6 points for 'strongly agree' and 1 point for 'strongly disagree', and so forth.

3. Experiential Marketing Scale

The scale is proposed based on the dimensions and questionnaires put forward by Zhao Bi-xiao. After analysis on factors, question entities are made up of five dimensions .Individual dimensions' Cronbach α reliability is: 0.88 (sensory), 0.82 (emotion), 0.84 (thinking), 0.78 (action), and 0.76 (relevance).The research uses answers of sample questionnaires as the main factors, which are to be analyzed as main factors. After oblique rotation, 90% amount of explainable variability is to be released. The factors analysis is shown in Table 3-1.

4. Relationship Quality Scale

The scale mainly focuses on five-question entities. These five questions are mainly based on related questionnaires proposed by Tung in 1982. From the analysis on factors, this measure table gets the result that the amount of explainable variance is 88%, the reliability coefficient Cronbach α is 0.80.

Table 3-1. Experiential Marketing Scale

Question items	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Explained variance %	Accumulate variance %	Cronbach α
Experience provider	0.902	3.541	33.842	33.842	0.88
Reaction results	0.886				
Individual intrinsic	0.833				
Media touch	0.802				
Stimulate trigger	0.886	2.314	22.468	56.31	0.82
Edification thinking	0.861				
Surprise message	0.842				
Body Action	0.811				
Lifestyle	0.834	1.861	15.438	71.748	0.84
Personal life	0.816				
Style changes	0.791				
Affected individuals	0.773				
Create link	0.875	1.164	10.667	82.415	0.78
Social Recognition	0.802				
Sense of belonging	0.766				
Individual touch	0.783	0.982	8.120	90.535	0.76
Affection & emotion	0. 753				
Intrinsic emotion	0. 722				

Table 3-2.   Relationship Quality Scale

	Average	Standard deviation	Analysis each number
Expected sustain interaction	3.62	1.264	742
Affect perceived customer value	3.78	1.259	742
Cumulative particular event perceived value	3.70	1.261	742
Maintaining expectations of trust, commitment & conflict	3.66	1.259	742
Trust, satisfaction & affective commitment	3.74	1.246	742
Total average	3.70		
Total explained variation	88%		
Cronbach α	80%		

5. Customers' Satisfaction Scale

The scale is divided into product quality, staff qualities, service content, entities present, which mainly based on relationship dimensions and questionnaires proposed by Li Min-Jae in 1993. From the analysis on factors, this measure table gets the result that the amount of explainable variability is 78%, the reliability coefficient Cronbach α is 0.86.

Conclusion and Hypothesis Test

1. Hypothesis 1: Positive Relates between Experiential Marketing and Customers Satisfaction.

As is shown in Table 4-1, the five dimensions of experiential marketing is positive related to the four factor dimensions of customers' satisfaction. Thus, H1 assumption is supported.

After the discussion on the reference and with the empirical study by way of questionnaire, the relevance among experiential marketing dimension, relationship

quality dimension, customers' satisfaction dimension is known. The research result

shows that experiential marketing emotion has positive relevance with four dimensions,

customers' satisfaction on products, staff quality, service content and entities

present（0.175* 、0.182** 、0.188** 、0.164*）(* behind numbers means obvious

relevance, the more *, the more obvious).The sensory of experiential marketing has

positive relevance with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction which are products

quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present（0.136* 、0.125* 、0.144** 、0.129*). The thinking of experiential marketing

has positive relevance with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction which are

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present（0.222** 、0.174* 、0.233** 、0.216**）. The action of experiential marketing

has positive relevance with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction which are

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present（0.211** 、0.213** 、0.199** 、0.204**）.The sensory of experiential

marketing has positive relevance with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction

which are product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present（0.183** 、0.192** 、0.186** 、0.201**）. Thus, experiential marketing has

positive relevance influence on satisfaction of customers. The point is that products and

service can create the whole experience, by the method of senses and influential, creative

relevance experience. And the consumption process has influence on satisfaction of

customers. Therefore, experiential marketing has positive relevance on satisfaction of

customers.

Hypothesis 2: Positive Relevance between Relationship Quality and Experiential Marketing

As is shown in Table 4-1, Relationship quality is positive related to the five dimensions of experiential marketing(0.188** 、0.152* 、0.226** 、0.202** 、0.177*). Thus, H2 assumption is supported.

On the relationship quality and experiential marketing perspectives, relationship quality has positive relevance with five dimensions which include emotion, sensory, thinking, action and relevance (0.188** 、0.152* 、0.226** 、0.202** 、0.177*). Each customer forges experiential marketing by way of different kinds of action experience so that customers have the sense of relationship quality and loyalty. Therefore, relationship quality will enhance experiential marketing. Thus, relationship quality is positive related to experiential marketing.

Hypothesis 3: Positive Relevance between Relationship Quality and Customers' Satisfaction

Relationship quality is positive related to customers' satisfaction (0.303** 、0.312** 、0.306** 、0.316**). Thus, H3 assumption is supported.

On the relationship quality and customers' satisfaction perspectives, relationship quality has apparently positive relevance with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction which include staff quality, service content and entity present (0.303** 、0.312** 、0.306** 、0.316**). Relationship quality is a high-level concept, which implies that better relationship quality may reduce the conflicts between costumers and enterprises, improve customers trust and commitment on emprises and enhance the will of lasting trade and investment. Assuming that customers have low quality

recognition towards a specific event, but customers may have comparatively high

relationship quality. This is because that the satisfaction in the relationship is

accumulated satisfaction on many specific events and the dissatisfaction on one specific

thins will not cut down the relationship. Hypothesis 4: The Compromise Effects of

Relationship Quality on Experiential Marketing and Customers' Satisfaction

H4.a: Relationship quality will enhance emotion dimension, which has positive relevance respectively with product quality, staff quality, service contents and entities present.

In all the samples forms, t value which emotion dimension has respectively on

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

(3.529、4.587、3.221、2.983). In the satisfaction forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（2.438、3.426、3.581、2.119). In the trust forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（1.324、2.283、1.756、1.447）. In the commitment forms, t value which

emotion dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and

entities present is（2.416、2.732、1.192、1.233）. Thus, in the satisfaction model, t

values of emotion dimension and service contents are higher than the whole samples t

value. Therefore, the assumption of H4.a is partly supported.

H4.b: Relationship quality will enhance sensory dimension and has positive relevance respectively with product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present.

In all the samples forms, t value which sensory dimension has respectively on

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

Table 4-1. Pearson's Correlation Analysis of Variables

	Emotion	Sensory	Thinking	Action	Relevance	Relationship quality
Emotion dimension	1	0.196**	-0.022	-0.123*	0.018	0.188**
P value		0.000	0.334	0.014	0.582	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Sensory dimension	0.152*	1	-0.036	-0.106*	-0.033	0.152*
P value	0.000		0.028	0.000	0.185	0.002
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Thinking dimension	-0.016	-0.017	1	-0.038	0.033	0.226**
P value	0.134	0.055		0.325	0.284	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Action dimension	-0.022	-0.264**	0.42	1	0.036	0.202**
P value	0.002	0.000	0.224		0.622	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Relevance dimension	0.028	-0.042	0.072	0.002	1	0.177*
P value	0.122	0.076	0.014	0.486		0.001
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Relationship quality	0.188**	0.152*	0.226**	0.202**	0.177*	1
P value	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.001	
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Product quality	0.175*	0.136*	0.222**	0.211**	0.183**	0.303**
P value	0.012	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Staff qualities	0.182**	0.125*	0.174*	0.213**	0.192**	0.312**
P value	0.000	0.038	0.018	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Staff qualities	0.188**	0.144*	0.233**	0.199**	0.186**	0.306**
P value	0.000	0.033	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255
Entities present	0.164*	0.129*	0.216**	0.204**	0.201**	0.316**
P value	0.022	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sample amount	255	255	255	255	255	255

（2.733、3.334、3.529、2.638）. In the satisfaction forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（1.694、1.362、2.112、1.360）. In the trust forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（1.283、1.425、2.037、1.627）. In the commitment forms, t value which

emotion dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and

entities present is（1.114、1.329、1.5289、1.073）. Thus, It is seen that in forms of

satisfaction, trust, commitment and management training, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is lower than the whole samples t value. Therefore, the assumption of H4.b is not

supported.

H4.c: Relationship quality will enhance thinking dimension and has positive relevance
respectively with product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present.

In all the samples forms, t value which thinking dimension has respectively on

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

（1.628、2.042、1.533、1.729）. In the satisfaction forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（0.981、1.028、0.267、0.314）. In the trust forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（0.762、0.991、0.138、0.306）. In the commitment forms, t value which

emotion dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and

entities present is（0.866、1.035、0.522、0.537）. Thus, It is seen that in forms of

satisfaction, trust, commitment and management training, t value which thinking

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is lower than the whole samples t value. Therefore, the assumption of H4.c is not

supported.

H4.d: Relationship quality will enhance action dimension and has positive relevance respectively with product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present.

In all the samples forms, t value which action dimension has respectively on

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

（10.683、11.446、10.469、12.383）. In the satisfaction forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（8.468、7.339、8.615、9.423）. In the trust forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（6.642、7.351、6.823、6.992）. In the commitment forms, t value which

emotion dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and

entities present is（7.353、8.426、7.571、7.534）. Thus, It is seen that in forms of

satisfaction, trust, commitment and management training, t value which action dimension

has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

lower than the whole samples t value. Therefore, the assumption of H4.d is not supported.

H4.e: Relationship quality will enhance relevance dimension and has positive relevance respectively with product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present.

In all the samples forms, t value which relevance dimension has respectively on

product quality, staff quality, service content and entities present is

（5.733、6.429、6.732、7.446）. In the satisfaction forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（3.323、2.549、3.018、2.507）. In the trust forms, t value which emotion

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is（3.420、3.008、2.182、3.407）. In the commitment forms, t value which

emotion dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and

entities present is（2.883、2.963、2.877、2.915）. Thus, It is seen that in forms of

satisfaction, trust, commitment and management training, t value which relevance

dimension has respectively on product quality, staff quality, service content and entities

present is lower than the whole samples t value. Therefore, the assumption of H4.e is not

supported.

Among H4 assumptions, the research discusses on the whole samples are different

with satisfaction, trust, commitment, and training management, especially on the multiple

regression analysis. The results show that in the satisfaction form, apart from the

enhancement on the positive relevance between emotion dimension of experiential

marketing and service contents of customers' satisfaction (the original value is3.221 and

it is 3.581 in satisfaction form). The other four experiential marketing dimensions which

are sensory, thinking, action and relevance are not influenced by satisfaction, trust and

commitment. The reason may be that these four dimensions are over highly positive

related with the four dimensions of customers' satisfaction, which are product quality,

staff quality, service content and entities present.

Suggestions

Based on the above analysis results of the research, in order to fuse the findings of

the research and the practice, the research extends several strategic meanings and

practical suggestions from the research findings. Hoping these research results may offer

reference on practice and academy.

 (1) Design of Expediential Marketing

The strong relevance between product brands and certain culture or image can be

forged so that customers have the right recognition on the brand and think about the

brand at anytime. Thus, enterprise should think about people, ethnics, culture of the target

customers and how to make customers identify these ethnics or whether cultural groups

should promote the establishment of brand groups. Bedsides, by the method of

establishment of brand society or hold activities related with the brand image, the links

between customers and brands can be effectively enhanced.

(2) Strategies of Experiential Marketing Implement

Experiential marketing do improve customers' loyalty. In the implement of

experiential marketing strategies, it is necessary to think about whether the method can

effectively improve customers' experiential value at the same time. Thus, it is can be

used as the index for enterprises to introduce experiential marketing. Based on the

research, customers have obvious value on sensory, emotion, thinking, action and

relevance experience. Therefore, enterprises can more provoke customers' positive

emotion feeling experience when making marketing plan.

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