

2025 buyer's guide

IBM observability ↳ products



How to choose the right observability solutions for proactive—and even predictive—management of IT and applications



Contents



01

Why observability now?



81%

of surveyed executives and managers say reducing IT complexity creates competitive advantage.¹

Managing complex infrastructures, numerous applications and multiple clouds is a daily challenge. Technology complexity leads to reactive troubleshooting in response to incidents if you don't know where the issues are. Ensuring reliable operations while controlling costs only adds to the pressure of driving new business growth. And, as the adoption of generative AI (gen AI) increases, the complexity you manage will only increase.

Why observability now?

**What tech leaders need to understand now**

IT automation is the launchpad for business innovation. And gen AI is the enabler. 65% of tech leaders expect gen AI to automatically resolve IT issues with little to no human intervention²—liberating IT teams from reactive firefighting to focus proactively on strategic improvements that keep things running at peak performance.

**What tech leaders need to do now**

Break away from the “break-fix” model by modernizing all aspects of your IT estate to enable you to:

- Gain effortless full-stack observability to resolve application issues before users are impacted
- Continuously and automatically assure application performance at the lowest cost
- Manage application risk, compliance and resilience

**How observability can help**

Observability products can provide the kind of deep visibility into modern, distributed applications you need to achieve faster, automated problem identification and resolution—and make more value-aligned resource allocation decisions. Imagine being able to quickly identify issues, optimize resources and mitigate risks—while boosting performance across your entire tech landscape. Imagine transitioning from reactive to proactive—and even predictive—IT management.

Generative AI makes IT clairvoyant. AI systems already help IT teams accurately predict and prevent system failures and bottlenecks. But with gen AI, businesses can see even farther into the future.

[The CEO's Guide to Generative AI/IT Automation](#)

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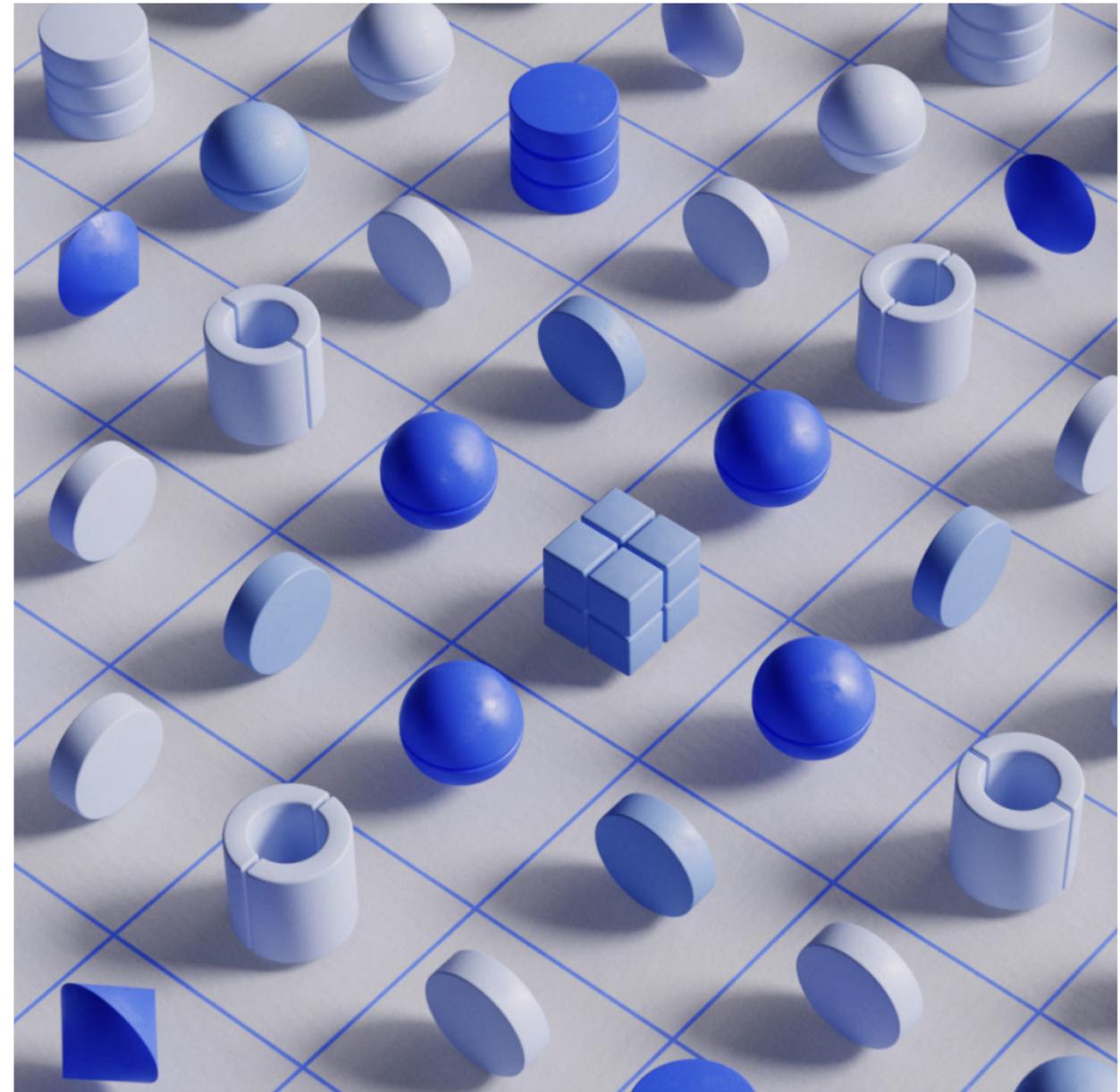
Approximately one billion cloud-native apps will be created by 2028—spread across multiple clouds and thousands of physical assets.

[IDC Research, 1 Billion New Logical Applications: More Background](#)

02

Which IBM observability product does what?

IBM observability products help businesses maximize operational resiliency and help assure the health of cloud-native applications using real-time, AI-powered insights for continuous observability, automated optimization actions and proactive management of IT and applications.



What is it?

IBM Instana

Enterprise observability software

By employing IBM Instana® software, users can automatically discover, map and monitor all services and infrastructure components—enabling complete, contextualized visibility across the application stack.

It's designed to help DevOps and site reliability engineering (SRE) teams simplify cloud complexity and maximize uptime by using AI-powered, automated observability to proactively resolve issues.

IBM Turbonomic

Application resource optimization software

By employing IBM® Turbonomic® software, users can precisely allocate resources to meet application demands—continuously and automatically.

It's designed to help ITOps, CloudOps and SRE teams perform automatic resource rightsizing actions in real time to meet application demands and reduce cost across hybrid multicloud environments.

IBM Concert

Application management software

By employing IBM Concert® software, users can discover the connections, dependencies, gaps and opportunities in their applications, giving prioritized recommendations for improvement based on the impact to their specific environment.

It's designed to help (SREs) and application owners maintain healthy application performance across critical functions, such as application resilience; risk related to vulnerabilities, such as common vulnerabilities and exposures (CVE); compliance issues; expiring certificates; package license and versioning issues; and more.

What problems does it help solve?

IBM Instana

- Data silos and lack of visibility across cloud ecosystem that make it hard to detect and address performance issues before they escalate
- Adoption of more microservices, containerization and hybrid cloud infrastructures that make it hard to monitor all components efficiently
- Slow incident response times that affect customer experiences
- IT teams that spend too much time firefighting versus focusing on proactive, strategic improvements
- Complex environments that make it harder to maintain peak application performance

IBM Turbonomic

- Siloed teams and disparate tools that prevent full visibility and insight into resource utilization across the stack, leading to cloud cost overruns, over-provisioned and under-provisioned resources, increased licenses and hardware requirements, and other unnecessary costs
- Overwhelmed ITOps, DevOps, CloudOps, and SRE teams that perform manual guess work on application demands, resource requirements and scaling in complex IT environments
- IT administrators who expend significant time configuring different tools and manually implementing changes

IBM Concert

- Siloed data from multiple tools that inhibit complete, holistic view of applications
- Lack of a consistent approach to application resiliency, with different teams using different tools
- Too many CVE—and uncertainty as it relates to prioritization
- Expired or misconfigured certificates that cause outages, disrupt continuity and expose security risks, such as man-in-the-middle attacks
- Months spent on compliance audits, gathering evidence
- Increased licensing and security risks due to managing multiple applications with various open-source or third-party libraries, or both

What 3 key things can it do?

IBM Instana

- Provides automated full-stack observability—automatically discovering, mapping and monitoring applications, services, infrastructure, web browsers, mobile applications, and more, with minimal manual intervention and rapid deployment
- Provides immediate contextual insight into how infrastructure and service dependencies interact, so you can see the broader impact of issues and manage rapid changes with precision
- Provides AI-powered incident remediation to help reduce downtime, enhance service reliability and accelerate incident resolution

IBM Turbonomic

- Connects to your existing infrastructure to get full-stack visibility into resource utilization across on-prem or hybrid multicloud environments
- Continuously generates rightsizing recommendations for resources to help maximize efficiency and performance of applications and infrastructure
- Continuously automates resource optimization actions in real time across hybrid and multicloud environments—so you can proactively deliver efficient resources across your stacks to reduce costs without impacting application performance

IBM Concert

- Connects to your existing supported applications and toolsets to automatically discover relevant data about your applications' operations—providing a holistic understanding of your app ecosystem from the start
- Reveals intricate connections, dependencies and opportunities using its AI engine to delve deep into your application architecture
- Provides recommendations on everything from where your applications are deployed to how they can be secured and triggers automated actions with recommendations guided by potential business impact

What business impacts are possible?

IBM Instana

[Enento](#) used IBM Instana to meet and exceed service-level agreements (SLAs) and deliver a reliable experience to customers.

99.99%
application availability

IBM commissioned [Forrester Consulting](#) to conduct the Total Economic Impact (TEI) study by interviewing 4 clients about the value of their investments in IBM Instana.

90%
reduction in developer time spent troubleshooting

70%
reduction in mean time to repair

Up to 60%
reduction in revenue-impacting incidents

219%
ROI achieved

IBM Turbonomic

[Rabobank](#) used IBM Turbonomic to achieve a hardware reduction and enhance its customer experience by reducing time to market and improving application response time.

15%–23%
hardware reduction

EUR 4 million
hardware cost avoidance

IBM commissioned [Forrester Consulting](#) to conduct the TEI study by interviewing a composite organization about the value of their investments in IBM Turbonomic.

35%
public cloud consumption cost savings

75%
reduction in app performance-related tickets

247%
ROI over 3 years

IBM Concert

[IBM's software development team](#) used IBM Concert to achieve better CVE management and faster development.

25%
faster CVE scans and better prioritization

4 days
saved in release cycle

[IBM's Software SRE team](#) used IBM Concert to automate CVE analysis and certificate inventory.

90%
faster CVE mitigation

98%
faster certificate inventory management

What are some top use cases?

IBM Instana

- **Cloud-native performance monitoring:** Need to ensure optimal performance of microservices and containerized applications, particularly those running in Kubernetes and hybrid cloud environments
- **Gen AI performance monitoring:** Need complete observability for AI and machine learning (ML) workloads to help ensure efficient performance of gen AI models in production environments
- **Automated full-stack observability:** Need to monitor applications, services, infrastructure and user experiences in real time—with automated insights—across your tech stack
- **Application incident remediation:** Need to automate incident response to quickly resolve application issues and maintain uptime
- **Digital experience monitoring:** Need to monitor the end-user experience in real time to help ensure fast response times and seamless digital interactions across applications

IBM Turbonomic

- **VMware optimization:** Need to maximize data center investments and enable longer infrastructure lifespan
- **Kubernetes optimization:** Need to automatically determine the right resourcing actions at the right time and help ensure mission-critical apps get exactly what they need to meet service-level objectives (SLOs)
- **AI workload optimization:** Need to maximize the efficiency of graphics processing unit (GPU) resources while preventing waste and assuring continuous performance
- **Cloud cost optimization:** Need to contain cloud spend while preserving application performance with automation
- **Sustainable IT:** Need to understand current energy use, execute sustainable actions and compare carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions

IBM Concert

- **Application vulnerability management:** Need to minimize application security risks and speed up resolution by eliminating false positives and duplicates, and prioritizing CVE based on impact
- **Application compliance management:** Need to streamline how security standards are managed as applications grow to minimize resource use and enhance security
- **Application certificate management:** Need to manage certificate renewals in a timely fashion to prevent operational disruption
- **Application resilience:** Need to standardize a reliable, consistent resilience posture and have a clear, complete view of resilience gaps across all applications
- **Software composition analysis:** Need to reduce software supply chain risks and open-source software (OSS) tainting in real time

03

What can IBM
observability products do
better than most others?

What can IBM observability products do better than most others?

IBM Instana

IBM Instana has been identified as a leader in Application Performance Monitoring (APM) by customers on G2. It has also been rated a top product by TrustRadius and awarded CRN Product of the Year for Application Performance/Observability.

Use this checklist to compare the top capabilities and differentiators of Instana® software against other tools you may be researching to help monitor and manage application performance.

Key capabilities and differentiators

Ease of use

- Automatically discovers all services and components across hybrid environments without manual setup or tuning
- Provides a streamlined user interface with contextual insights and a minimal learning curve for DevOps and SRE teams

Integration

- Provides out-of-the-box support for over 300 technologies, including AWS, Kubernetes and microservices
- Provides deep integrations with continuous integration continuous delivery (CICD) tools and cloud-native architectures for seamless observability

Flexibility

- Delivers real-time monitoring for containers, virtual machines (VMs) and bare metal across hybrid and multicloud environments
- Provides configurable AI-driven insights tailored to specific environments and use cases

Enterprise-ready

- Provides documented value in complex, large-scale environments with real-time accuracy and continuous updates

Price

- Offers a tailored pricing model that scales with infrastructure and supports cloud-native, pay-as-you-go environments
- Comes with fewer additional costs due to automated setup and monitoring

IBM Instana

Alternate APM solution



✓
✓

✓
✓

✓
✓

✓

✓
✓

“We’re using IBM Instana for monitoring [the] state of [the] Kubernetes cluster and VMs. Initially, whenever there was an issue, we had to look for metrics and log manually, which was very hectic. And it wasn’t consolidated. It used to become very tough tracking all apps in [a] single place. But with use of IBM Instana, it has become very easy for us. We can get all API details, error rate, number of pods, event change, alerts all from [a] single tool.”³

Mayank Bansal
Site Reliability Engineer
Adidas
(TrustRadius verified and incentivized user)

See [here](#) more reviews from other IBM Instana users.

What can IBM observability products do better than most others?

IBM Turbonomic

IBM Turbonomic has been named a leader in the 2025 G2 Winter Report. It has also been rated a top product in 2024 by TrustRadius.

Use this checklist to compare the top capabilities and differentiators of Turbonomic against other tools you may be researching to help optimize on-prem and cloud resource allocations.



Key capabilities and differentiators

Automated resource optimization

- Provides automated actions that help prevent resource congestion and cost overruns across hybrid multicloud environments—at scale

Full-stack visibility

- Provides complete visualization of your applications and infrastructure to help you know—instead of guess—what’s going on with performance

Integration

- Seamlessly integrates with your organization’s existing tools, providing rapid time to value

AI insights

- Provides AI-driven insights to help teams make informed decisions about efficiency and performance

Elasticity

- Sizes resources up or down based on application demand to maximize performance, reduce waste and save costs

Platform

- Optimizes all your resources: on-prem, public cloud, private cloud and multicloud
- Provides one platform to support cloud cost optimization across AWS, Google Cloud Platform (GCP), Azure, Kubernetes, RedHat® OpenShift® Platform and so on

IBM Turbonomic

Alternate solution

- Provides automated actions that help prevent resource congestion and cost overruns across hybrid multicloud environments—at scale

✓

- Provides complete visualization of your applications and infrastructure to help you know—instead of guess—what’s going on with performance

✓

- Seamlessly integrates with your organization’s existing tools, providing rapid time to value

✓

- Provides AI-driven insights to help teams make informed decisions about efficiency and performance

✓

- Sizes resources up or down based on application demand to maximize performance, reduce waste and save costs

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- Optimizes all your resources: on-prem, public cloud, private cloud and multicloud
- Provides one platform to support cloud cost optimization across AWS, Google Cloud Platform (GCP), Azure, Kubernetes, RedHat® OpenShift® Platform and so on

✓

✓

“Turbonomic: a game changer. It integrates with APIs to generate a comprehensive dependency map where we can connect any tech we use to optimize it. Turbonomic is good for identifying bottlenecks in our process that can give the status of performance, efficiency and the cost involved.”⁴

HARSH V.

Software engineer

Enterprise (> 1,000 employees)

(G2 validated and incentivized reviewer)

See [here](#) more reviews from other IBM Turbonomic users.

What can IBM observability products do better than most others?

IBM Concert

Use this checklist to compare the top capabilities and differentiators of IBM Concert® against other tools you may be researching to help manage your application lifecycle.

Key capabilities and differentiators	IBM Concert	Alternate solution
<p>Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrates seamlessly with your existing tools and data, from capture to automation – Uncovers hidden connections in previously siloed data to help you optimize your application’s operations 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	
<p>Automation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides the ability to take swift action on recommendations and automate tasks through connected tools – Uses gen AI to quickly act, for example, opening and prepopulating service tickets 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	
<p>AI insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Uses a “lens” approach to reveal application connections, dependencies and new insights—delivering recommendations and efficient remediation tips that help you focus on what matters most <p>Note: A “lens” gives businesses the ability to use their existing data and tools while adhering to industry best practices and standards—resulting in a prioritized, guided approach to driving transformation.</p>	<p>✓</p>	
<p>Ease of use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides the ability to view top insights visually in arena view or explore them with a natural language chatbot – Enhances insights with a gen AI chatbot, deep dives or visual dependency maps 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	

“Our SRE teams can ask questions that weren’t possible to answer before, like what our risk posture is across the organization. Concert gives me the ability to see specifically what’s really introducing risk—and how much.

And the biggest thing is the scalability it brings. It allows us to scale our resources and address more risk, more quickly in a way that we just couldn’t do otherwise. And that means our SREs can focus more on automation and coding to improve the reliability of our hosted services.”⁵

Marc Velasco
Site reliability engineer
IBM SaaS platform

04

What's the best way
to get started with
each product?

What's the best way to get started with each product?

	IBM Instana	IBM Turbonomic	IBM Concert
Step 01 Figure out which one you should start with	<p>If you need to make sure your business apps are performing optimally, start with Instana.</p> <p><i>Metaphor: Think of it as a Bloomberg terminal that can show you how all your investments are performing.</i></p>	<p>If you need to keep application resources and costs in check, start with Turbonomic.</p> <p><i>Metaphor: Think of it as a financial planning tool that can tell you when you're over-invested or under-invested in certain stocks, what it's costing you to hold those investments and how you can rightsize those investments based on current life demands.</i></p>	<p>If you need to understand your risk and resilience posture, start with Concert to make sure you can tie it all together.</p> <p><i>Metaphor: Think of it as an estate planner that can see across all your assets and liabilities to determine whether you can retire at 65 based on life goals.</i></p>
Step 02 Experience the product on your own	<p>Watch demo videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Real-time full stack observability with Instana → Instana incident remediation <p>Try it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Get a free 14-day trial with access to all Instana capabilities. <p>No credit card required.</p>	<p>Watch demo videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → IBM Turbonomic: Optimize performance and cost → IBM Turbonomic automation at scale <p>Try it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Get a free 30-day trial. <p>No credit card required.</p>	<p>Watch demo videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Overview → Managing application compliance → How to prioritize CVEs by application risk <p>Try it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Get a free 30-day trial. <p>No limits, no credit card required.</p>
Step 03 Connect with an expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Book a live demo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Book a live demo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Book a live demo
Step 04 Buy it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Go to our pricing page <p>See the latest plans, pricing and ROI estimators, and FAQs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Go to our pricing page <p>See price and ROI estimators.</p>	<p>Contact your IBM representative for current pricing.</p>

05

9 questions you
should ask any
observability
technology provider

To help sort through the many observability products available today, consider asking providers the following questions:

- 1. What important observability features does your product offer?** For example, ask the vendor if their solution provides important features, such as distributed tracing capabilities, automated resource optimization, real-time monitoring alerts, automated root cause analysis and anomaly detection using AI and ML, and full end-to-end visibility across the stack.
- 2. How does your product handle data ingestion and storage?** For example, inquire about the ability to handle data volume, retention and scalability.
- 3. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) your product tracks?** For example, make sure the product covers the essential KPIs for your organization, such as mean time to repair (MTTR), response time, peak load, requests served, CPU capacity, memory use, error rates and latency.
- 4. How does your product support integration with existing tools and systems?** For example, integration can sometimes require custom configurations or plug-ins. Ask about how the vendor's solution integrates with existing monitoring and application development tools. Ask about APIs, plug-ins and compatibility with your current tech stack.
- 5. What are the deployment options: on premises, cloud or hybrid?** For example, make sure the product aligns with your organization's infrastructure preferences. Does the vendor's solution just focus on specific cloud or on-prem environments, with less flexibility for hybrid and multicloud scenarios?
- 6. How does your product handle data security and compliance?** For example, inquire about encryption, access controls and compliance with relevant regulations.
- 7. What kind of support and documentation do you offer?** For example, ask about response times, available resources and the quality of documentation.
- 8. What are the pricing and licensing options?** For example, make sure the product fits within your budget and offers flexible licensing terms. Is pricing rigid, based on the number of nodes or applications? Does the vendor charge extra for additional features like real-time monitoring or extended data retention?
- 9. Is your product easy to use, supporting collaboration and teamwork?** For example, some UIs can be complex and not intuitive, requiring significant training and onboarding. Make sure the product's dashboards are customizable. Ask if the solution requires manual setup or configuration for new services or infrastructure components.

Simplify cloud complexity, maximize uptime, proactively solve issues and innovate faster with IBM Observability.



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1. Taming IT Complexity through Effective Strategies and Partnerships, Harvard Business Review research report <https://hbr.org/resources/pdfs/comm/broadcom/Taming-IT-Complexity-through-Effective-Strategies-and-Partnerships.pdf>
2. The CEO's Guide to Generative AI / IT Automation, IBM Institute for Business Value, 10 July 2024 <https://www.ibm.com/thought-leadership/institute-business-value/en-us/report/ceo-generative-ai/ceo-ai-it-automation>
3. IBM Instana review on TrustRadius <https://www.trustradius.com/reviews/ibm-instana-2023-08-17-19-19-28>
4. IBM Turbonomic review on G2 <https://www.g2.com/products/ibm-turbonomic/reviews/ibm-turbonomic-review-9858956>
5. Accelerating CVE management at scale with gen AI <https://www.ibm.com/case-studies/ibm-software-sre>

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