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Tiana Warner

Google (https://plus.google.com/+TianaWarneratSafe/?rel=author)

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About Data | January 20, 2015 | By Tiana Warner

6 Google Maps Engine Alternatives

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Google has announced that they're ending support for Google Maps Engine (https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/google-maps-engine-users/lfqS90d8f0A). If you've used Google Maps Engine to store your vector and raster data, you should be aware that **your GME data will disappear on January 29, 2016**.

No better time than the present to migrate your geographic data to a replacement Maps Engine solution. But where to go? What technology can give you everything GME did?

- A place to store your geographic data in a web-based environment.
- · Powerful visuals for inspecting and analyzing your data.
- Easy collaboration on maps.
- Real-time capabilities like dynamic rendering, alerts and notifications.

Let's look at a few of the alternatives we're aware of, and how you can migrate (http://www.safe.com/maps-engine/) your data there without losing anything important. Please add your own suggestions in the comments.

You might find that one solution suits your requirements better than the others. I'd suggest testing out as many alternatives as you can before making your own decision about which is best

Check out my follow-up post, How to Migrate your Google Maps Engine Data (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/migrate-google-maps-engine-data/), to see how to get your data into whatever system you choose.

1. ArcGIS Online



If you want everything you had in Maps Engine, then ArcGIS Online (http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis/arcgisonline) is probably your

solution of choice. It's made for creating interactive web maps and apps, and comes complete with all the analytical power and authoritative data you'd expect from an Esri product. Like GME, AGOL renders maps dynamically, which means it offers better visualization for data that's constantly being updated.

The 'apps' component is interesting: you can turn any of your feature services into apps (http://www.arcgis.com/home/gallery.html#c=esri&t=apps&o=modified&f=readytouse), adding a new level of power to your data. AGOL also has no quotas or rate limits, offering more to organizations with high data volumes. They also have ArcGIS Open Data (https://opendata.arcgis.com/about), which, if you've been using Google Map Gallery (https://maps.google.com/gallery/) with Maps Engine, is an equivalent public dataset collection and distribution platform.

Getting your data out of Google Maps Engine and into ArcGIS Online is a one-step process using FME (http://www.safe.com/maps-engine/). Note you don't need to have ArcGIS Desktop in order to use ArcGIS Online.

2. CartoDB



RartoDB (http://cartodb.com/) is also a full solution that would work nicely as a GME replacement. In fact, they've just published a blog

(http://blog.cartodb.com/gme-to-cartodb/) comparing the two and describing how easy it is to move your data from one to the other.

In CartoDB, the web-based environment and spatially aware database components are handled by PostGIS in the cloud, while the visualization, collaboration, and analysis aspects are presented simply and beautifully in a web interface.

I need to stress the ease-of-use here. Last week I needed CartoDB for a demo video, and was apprehensive about needing to learn how to use it first. I created an account, logged in, and -that was it. I already knew how to use it. The simplicity of importing data, creating a map, and choosing how to represent my data was immediately obvious. Kudos, CartoDB.

CartoDB also offers dynamic rendering and geo-temporal visualizations, giving you real-time maps and the ability to see data as it happens.

Again, you can extract your data from Google Maps Engine and load it into CartoDB in one step using FME.

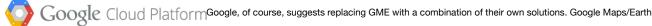
3. iSpatial



solution. From their website: "iSpatial is a web-based collaborative framework that leverages Google Earth and Maps in a flexible, task-based approach to solving complex problems." In addition to location-based inspection and analysis, it's set up for real-time reporting and alerts management.

This technology is based on Google Earth/Maps, so if it's the visual Google experience you're after, this could be your solution. It also leverages Postgres/PostGIS in the back end. And, yep, FME can extract your data from Google Maps Engine and put it into PostGIS in one step too.

4. A combination of Google products



(http://blog.safe.com/2015/04/how-to-convert-style-kml/) is obviously great for visualizing and creating maps, but what about the rest of what Maps Engine offered?

My Maps (https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/) is basically the map creation, visualization, and collaboration aspect of GME (up until a few months ago, it was actually called Google Maps Engine Lite). Storage, then, can be handled by migrating your data to Google Cloud SQL (https://cloud.google.com/sql/)—a MySQL database in the cloud. Great, so now we have the web-based environment and database storage aspects.

Next, to bridge the two. Once you get your data from Google Maps Engine into the cloud-hosted MySQL database, you'll have to follow their guide (https://support.google.com/mapsengine/answer/6147674) to build a spatial app using the Google Maps API. They've also provided an example vector data app (https://support.google.com/mapsengine/answer/6147673) and self-serve raster app (https://support.google.com/mapsengine/answer/6147655) for reference. Building stylized maps then involves a bit of JavaScript programming. Not an impossible migration, but not as straightforward as some of the solutions above, either.

If this is your solution, then guess what? You can extract your data from Google Maps Engine and put it into Google Cloud SQL in one step using FME. Google even published a page (https://support.google.com/mapsengine/answer/6147668) describing how.

5. Mapbox



Mapbox is a great way to publish your geographic data. It's scalable, cheap, and open source. This, however, is more of a "partial" GME

replacement, and will need to be combined with other technology if you want to have everything you knew and loved about Maps Engine. For instance, it lacks some of the powerful data management and analysis tools found in the solutions above.

Storage of your map tiles is handled by a SQLite database (which FME also migrates to). On the front end, Mapbox uses TileMill for creating interactive maps—a design environment that leverages the stunning cartographic abilities of Mapnik (http://mapnik.org/). Creating web map tiles with FME (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKrFuNFqDbQ) is a common scenario, and MBTiles (https://www.mapbox.com/guides/an-open-platform/#mbtiles) is on our radar for an upcoming release (potentially FME 2016).

6. Your own custom integration



In addition to those above, FME supports writing to many other cloud spatial data storage systems. If you're not afraid of writing a bit of

JavaScript, you can pick your favourite storage system (e.g. Amazon RDS (http://aws.amazon.com/rds/) or Aurora (http://aws.amazon.com/rds/aurora/)), your favourite map creation library/framework, and bridge the two using JavaScript.

Regardless of which technology you choose, rest assured you can easily migrate your data without losing anything. Google provided this page (https://support.google.com/mapsengine/answer/6147675) to walk you through exporting your stuff, where FME (http://www.safe.com/maps-engine/) is one of the recommended migration strategies.

Extracting your data from Maps Engine with FME is as simple as dropping down a reader and entering your credentials. From there, you can move it to any of 335+ (http://www.safe.com/fme/format-search/#!) alternate systems, including those listed above. FME also offers hundreds of data transformation and quality control options if you need to manipulate the content or structure before loading it into another system.

As always, don't hesitate to contact our most excellent support team (http://fmepedia.safe.com/knowledgeSubmitCase?) if you need help getting your data wherever it needs to go.

If you've been using Google Maps Engine for your geographical data, please share: What alternative solution do you plan on using? Can you suggest any others?

See also: How to Migrate your Google Maps Engine Data (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/migrate-google-maps-engine-data/)



(http://www.safe.com/maps-engine/) Export Google Maps Engine Data into Alternatives

Learn how to perform the above migrations and more with FME.

Download Free Trial (http://www.safe.com/maps-engine/)

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Let's be real for a second. If you're trying to load data into an earth browser, the KML Reference is [...]



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This is 99% Invisible. I'm Roman Mars. No, that's not actually me. But that is the opening line to my [...]



(http://blog.safe.com/2015/02/microsoft-hololens-aec-industry/)

What Microsoft's HoloLens Means to the AEC Industry

(http://blog.safe.com/2015/02/microsoft-hololens-aec-industry/)

Today's guest blogger is Greg Schleusner. Greg is an architect and the Director of buildingSMART Innovation at HOK, the largest US-based [...]

Comments

28 Responses to "6 Google Maps Engine Alternatives"

Mark W (http://AndroidApp) says:

January 20, 2015 at 4:13 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85584)

Not sure I understand the ramifications of Google Maps going away. If you are using Google Maps API in an Android mobile app, what is the best replacement with the same TERMS OF SERVICE? In other words, free for generally accessible to consumers.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85584#respond)

Tiana Warner (https://plus.google.com/+TianaWarneratSafe) says:

January 20, 2015 at 5:39 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85598)

Hi Mark,

Thankfully it's not Google Maps that's going away - just the Google Maps Engine (GME) product. Google Maps is continuing on, free and accessible as ever!

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85598#respond)

Chinarut (http://www.chinarut.com) says:

January 21, 2015 at 9:23 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85704)

Given the reputation Google has for killing off useful products, I actually wouldn't have been totally surprised if they announced the end of Maps - I'm actively reducing my dependency on Google in 2015 I've been kicked in the pants enough times!

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85704#respond)

Gary (http://www.ozarkswalkabout.com) says:

May 24, 2015 at 12:59 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-114588)

Ditto. I have hundreds of hours invested in Google Maps and it's all been trashed by these 'upgrades'. 😕

I am recommending and actively moving any customers using Google products away from Google. You cannot trust them not to drop or fundamentally change a product, and their level of QA testing is seemingly appalling.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=114588#respond)

ChrisInCambo (http://www.mangomap.com) says:

January 20, 2015 at 11:28 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85649)

Tiana, you missed out MangoMap 🈉 This announcement is going to have the biggest impact on non-coders who used Google Maps Engine to publish their maps.

All of the products in the list are great products, but most of them require coding against their API's to get the most out of them. MangoMap allows users to create awesome web map applications without writing a single line of code! Better yet you can get started on our free plan.

I've blogged about why MangoMap is a suitable alternative here: http://mangomap.com/blog/post/108714732336/mango-the-alternative-to-google-maps-engine (http://mangomap.com/blog/post/108714732336/mango-the-alternative-to-google-maps-engine)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85649#respond)

Tiana Warner says:

January 21, 2015 at 9:57 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85708)

Thanks for the info, Chris. The required level of technical knowledge is another big consideration for those looking to migrate. Some might want the option to integrate code, customize CSS styles, run SQL queries, etc., while others might want a purely visual interface for ease of use. MangoMap looks easy and aesthetic. It's good to know there's a solution out there that involves zero coding.

Tiana

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85708#respond)

Barbara H (http://www.giscloud.com/) says:

January 21, 2015 at 2:30 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85667)

Thanks for writing this post, has very valuable info. Don't forget GIS Cloud though. When it comes to real time and fast collaboration, that is cost effective and high quality... should definitely be mentioned on the list.

Barbara

Hi Tiana.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85667#respond)

Tiana Warner says:

January 21, 2015 at 10:16 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85710)

Thanks Barbara. GIS Cloud looks like another good option, and cost effective too. It's interesting how it offers the functionality through individual apps so organizations can choose exactly which components they want. Lots of flexibility there.

Tiana

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85710#respond)

4. Google stellt Maps Engine ein | ZDNet.de (http://www.zdnet.de/88216614/google-stellt-maps-engine-ein/) says:

January 21, 2015 at 4:39 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85682)

[...] wendet sich in einem Blogbeitrag direkt an Maps-Engine-Kunden. Ein Blogbeitrag auf safe.com zählt insgesamt sechs mögliche Vorgehensweisen für Maps-Engine-Nutzer [...]

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85682#respond)

5. Matt says:

January 21, 2015 at 1:58 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85746)

First Mile Geo is one option for this. It offers options not only for navigating/riltering/visualizing spatial data, but also for creating non-map dashboards, alerts, and notifications across an organization in multiple languages. You can also hookup new collection tools like Fulcrum (Mobile), FrontlineSMS (SMS), SurveyMonkey (WebSuryey) in order to link structured data collection directly the navigation and filtering.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85746#respond)

Tiana Warner says:

January 21, 2015 at 4:32 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85764)

Thanks Matt. First Mile Geo looks like a great solution for leveraging a variety of sources/protocols.

Tiana

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85764#respond)

Travis Kirstine says:

January 22, 2015 at 6:38 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85829)

Is FME cloud a viable option to GME at some level?

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85829#respond)

Stewart Harper says:

January 22, 2015 at 9:44 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85843)

Hi Travis. FME Cloud is definitely a viable option. In fact, the State of Arkansas just launched their new GeoStor open data platform which runs on top of FME Cloud:

http://www.geostor.arkansas.gov/ (http://www.geostor.arkansas.gov/)

They migrated from an premises solution to a cloud solution for technical and business reasons. Here is a outline of their architecture:

https://docs.google.com/a/safe.com/presentation/d/15FOgJIAa7uVJIXcIDiTBG-ABOhEXEU8M5OroL6TfGFU/edit#slide=id.p (https://docs.google.com/a/safe.com/presentation/d/15FOgJIAa7uVJIXcIDiTBG-ABOhEXEU8M5OroL6TfGFU/edit#slide=id.p)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85843#respond)

7. Say Goodbye to Google Maps Engine | SoCalGIS.org (http://socalgis.org/2015/01/22/say-goodbye-to-google-maps-engine/) says:

January 22, 2015 at 7:17 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85833)

[...] where can you migrate your data now? Safe Software has written an article listing some options that you have. Of course if you use their FME product, it's just a [...]

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85833#respond)

8. GISCafe.com - Mobile GIS & LBS - Is Google Getting out of the Mapping Game? (http://www10.giscafe.com/blogs/mobilegis/2015/01/23/is-google-getting-out-of-the-mapping-game/) says:

January 23, 2015 at 3:41 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-85988)

[...] map engine clears the way for ArcGIS Online, CartoDb and others. One can but speculate about Google's strategy, but its hard not to ask is Google [...]

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=85988#respond)

G.Buckley says:

February 4, 2015 at 1:11 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-89264) Nearmap is still free !!

https://us.nearmap.com/coverage (https://us.nearmap.com/coverage)

https://us.nearmap.com/login (https://us.nearmap.com/login)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=89264#respond)

10. The Google Maps Engine Deprecation Timeline and Some Alternatives | GISuser.com (http://gisuser.com/2015/02/the-google-maps-engine-deprecation-timeline-and-some-alternatives/) says:

February 4, 2015 at 3:34 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-89283)

[...] Recall, solution provider, Safe Software has solutions for customers of Ggoogle Maps Engine and Esri ArcGIS – keep an eye on them for updates and ideas! On Jan 20 the company offered up some fine suggestions for Google Maps Engine Alternatives [...]

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=89283#respond)

11. Ron Lake (http://www.galdosinc.com) says:

February 18, 2015 at 12:51 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-92885)

Here is another alternative to Google Earth Enterprise and one that offers much more powerful and easy to use data management functionality than GEE. It is called INdicio. INdicio readily integrates with background mapping solutions like MapLink, Cesium and Google Maps. Use FME to convert your data using INdicio harvesting framework. Synchronize data across wide area networks with INdicio dynamic pub-sub functionality. Exploit our powerful 3D rendering for city models. Manage any kind of data artifact.

For details see: http://www.galdosinc.com/archives/indicio-as-a-google-earth-enterprise-replacement (http://www.galdosinc.com/archives/indicio-as-a-google-earth-enterprise-replacement).

Use INdicio and accelerate your world.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=92885#respond)

Peter Batty (http://ubisensemyworld.com/ubisense-myworld-core-functionality/) says:

February 23, 2015 at 10:40 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-93903)

We have been getting good interest from enterprise users and other Google partners in our Ubisense myWorld product as an alternative to GME. This is focused on companies that manage infrastructure, like utilities and communications companies. myWorld uses the Google Maps JavaScript API but is not dependent on it – we switched to Leaflet as our primary JavaScript API a while back for a couple of reasons, partly to be able to run offline, but partly because open source stuff runs much less risk of being "discontinued". So we can still access Google base maps and street view etc out of the box, or other similar services from Mapbox or others, but we're not dependent on any single one, if any of these services went away in future we could just use an alternative from someone else.

You can see more details about myWorld at http://ubisensemyworld.com/ubisense-myworld-core-functionality/ (http://ubisensemyworld.com/ubisense-myworld-core-functionality/)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=93903#respond)

Dale (http://blog.safe.com) says:

February 23, 2015 at 12:52 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-93915)

Hi Peter, We've also seen Leaflet in the wild quite often and does seem like a good "insulating" choice that still allows use of whatever platform best fits the need. The "discontinued" word I think is going to be haunting many a decision maker as they plot technology direction moving forward, so insulating strategies are worth knowing about. Thanks for sharing.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=93915#respond)

13. Matt says:

February 24, 2015 at 12:47 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-94155)

ESRI is expensive and can be quite cumbersome on your network. I have Used Arcgis and to be honest i am still not impressed with 10.2.2. The program always crashes and freeze up. If you want to view a map that you made that another \$2,5000 down the drain. Esri will bleed you dry of your money, call for customer support for business, \$500.00. If Google would integrate API with maps and earth that would be amazing.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=94155#respond)

14. Nick (http://wpgmaps.com) says:

March 2, 2015 at 11:17 pm (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-95365)

If you're using wordpress, consider using this http://wpgmaps.com (http://wpgmaps.com) as a way to create custom maps with marker location data, directions, store locator and many other features.

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=95365#respond)

15. GISCafe.com - GISCafe Voice - What happens now: Google Enterprise products no longer supported by Google (http://www10.giscafe.com/blogs/gissusan/2015/03/05/what-happens-now-google-enterprise-products-no-longer-supported-by-google/) says:

March 5, 2015 at 7:18 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-95736)

[...] 6 Google Maps Engine Alternatives [...]

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=95736#respond)

16. Nick Ferguson (http://www.nmgroup.com) says:

March 11, 2015 at 11:34 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-97003)

Sector specific platforms are also an option here. Check out NM Group's Caydence system for electrical utilities. http://www.nmgroup.com/CAN/caydence-3/ (http://www.nmgroup.com/CAN/caydence-3/)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=97003#respond)

17. Adam Joseph (http://www.cartologic.com/cartoview) says:

 $March 31, 2015 \ at \ 1:28 \ pm \ (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/\#comment-102375)$

You can bring in a lot of web framework power with boundless opengo suite, add geonode and cartoview http://www.cartologic.com/cartoview (http://www.cartologic.com/cartoview) and you should have a geo web stack that can handle a lot of web mapping requirements,

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=102375#respond)

18. John Carter says:

April 25, 2015 at 11:26 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-106989)

Its nice. You can check mine too. Its regarding google maptags. Maptags shortens your address to your favourite word and makes sharing address as easy as sharing a word. Visit at mapta.gs/maptags/700110 (http://mapta.gs/maptags/700110)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=106989#respond)

19. Ryan Goodman (http://centigonsolutions.com) says:

May 10, 2015 at 10:30 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-110688)

If uploading data to the cloud not a key requirements but quickly and easily building Google Maps (especially if you own Google Maps for Work API) that are distributable for enterprise use: This solution is more focused on analytics, maps apps rather than just looking at geo-enriched data on a map. CMaps Analytics http://cmapsanalytics.com/designer (http://cmapsanalytics.com/designer)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=110688#respond)

20. Joe Gordon (http://www.skylinesoft.com/skylineglobe/corporate/news/pressreleasepage.aspx?id=GoogleAlt) says:

May 15, 2015 at 10:50 am (http://blog.safe.com/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/#comment-112128)

Skyline Software Systems, in Herndon, VA., is offering a one to one replacement for current GEE/Google Maps API users. Their software allows for streaming of large sets of 3D geospatial data over the web, while operating in both a connected and disconnected environment. We've used Skyline applications for years and they've been great, plus their mapping engine offers a fully open API. Check them out at (http://www.skylinesoft.com (http://www.skylinesoft.com)) and their GEE/Maps API press release as well (http://www.skylinesoft.com/skylineglobe/corporate/news/pressreleasepage.aspx?id=GoogleAlt (http://www.skylinesoft.com/skylineglobe/corporate/news/pressreleasepage.aspx?id=GoogleAlt (http://www.skylinesoft.com/skylineglobe/corporate/news/pressreleasepage.aspx?id=GoogleAlt))

info@skylineglobe.com (mailto:info@skylineglobe.com)

Reply (/2015/01/6-google-maps-engine-alternatives/?replytocom=112128#respond)

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