RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATION

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Abstract

Restaurants are now an essential aspect of a significant section of the populace. Recommendations for restaurants based on user preferences is something that is highly sought after by consumers. With the rapidly expanding food industry, there are innumerable choices to pick from and a recommendation system for this use case can be utilized to a large extent by the end users. Therefore a recommendation system is proposed utilizing machine learning on the yelp business dataset. This report illustrates a detailed walkthrough of the implementation, the exploratory findings, results and the potential issues or future scope associated with this project.

1. Introduction:

1.1. Background:

The restaurant industry has become a rapidly evolving domain, with innumerable choices being offered to customers. As society shifts from home cooked meals to a more luxurious lifestyle, and more restaurants are being utilized. From the customer point of view the variety of options can be overwhelming and a tedious task. Customers are always seeking the fastest possible options. Instead of having to painstakingly look up restaurants that suit their tastes, a simple, quick and accurate system to predict their likings will go a long way. Instead of having to ask other people for recommendations, we can make use of the reviews already provided by customers along with other information, combine these inputs with the users' preferences and easily locate suggestions using machine learning.

A customer will likely have multiple factors they consider before looking at a restaurant, including the reviews of the restaurant, the price range, ambience, location etc. These opinions or considerations form each customer's unique preferences. Based on these preferences, from reviews of other customers, and from previous history a recommendation system can be constructed either through collaborative or content-based filtering. Through this recommendation system we can enhance the user experience and provide a novel feature for food-based applications.

1.2. Business Understanding and Objective:

The food business is changing through the growth of restaurant technology and online ordering. In one study, 56% of 1,000 Americans responded that they typically ate out in a restaurant at least 2 to 3 times per week. In this same study, 10% of participants said that they ate out 4 to 6 times a week, and 6% of people stated that they ate out for at least one meal every single day. 90% of visitors research a restaurant online before going and 33% of diners refuse to eat at a restaurant with less than four stars. Reviews are dire for reaching future consumers. Around 92% of diners choose to read the reviews for a restaurant they plan to attend. For many people, if these reviews fall below a certain expectation, they write the entire location off and move on to finding somewhere else. While the growth rate of the food industry as a whole tends to grow by a steady 3.7%, the growth of online ordering has demonstrated an annual growth rate of 15% to 20%. With these enormous options of restaurants, finding individualized and personalized restaurants to the customers based on their interest is a challenge.

In our project, we are exploring various methods in building an efficient Restaurant Recommendation system using Yelp Data Set. Our main objective is to recommend similar restaurants to Yelp users based on factors like the user's own interest and similar user's interest, past purchase history, product ratings, etc with the help of restaurant recommender system

For more information: [45+ Must-Know US Restaurant Industry Statistics [2022]: How Many Restaurants Are In The US - Zippia]

1.3. Recommender System:

Recommendation system predicts the user ratings that the user may give to a product, those predictions are ranked and used to give recommendations for the users. Recommendation systems are classified into three methods, 1. Content based methods, 2. Collaborative based methods, 3. Hybrid Methods

Overview of Recommender Systems

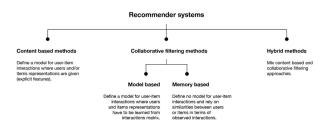


Fig 1. Overview of Recommendation system

Collaborative filtering - recommends products based on similarity measures of like-minded people or items Content based filtering - recommends products that have similar features to the products previously utilized by the user

Hybrid based filtering - combines both collaborative and content-based filtering to tackle the dynamic and ever-changing customer preferences.

Recommendation systems have economic benefits to businesses that offer the products or services and hence can play a vital role in bringing in a customer base. In our project, we construct both Content based and Collaborative based machine learning models.

1.4. Data Collection:

Yelp Dataset:

Yelp is the popular and comprehensive open-source dataset which is currently the most in-depth recording of restaurant's data. Yelp dataset contains a staggering amount of over 6.9 million restaurant reviews from 2 million users, for around 1.5 million different businesses and restaurants. Over 1.2 million business attributes like hours, parking, availability, and ambience.

Datasets we used for our recommender system are review.json(6.33 GB), user.json(3.27 GB), business.json(152.9 MB).

2. Components of Recommender system:

2.1. Pipeline:

Stage 1: Data Loading and Preprocessing – Creating new Database to loading the data files JSON format and converting to csv. Creating a workable dataset and then handling null values and datatypes. Applying basic preprocessing followed by feature engineering to cater to the use case.

Stage 2: EDA and Feature Selection - Exploring the relationships between the features in the datasets and selecting the features with the highest impact towards the use case.

Stage 3: Model implementation – Merging multiple datasets, Finding suitable models with the help of evaluations metrics, Train-Test data splitting, Parameter Tuning and Model fitting.

Stage 4: Experimental - Formulating possible future scope and expansion of this project.

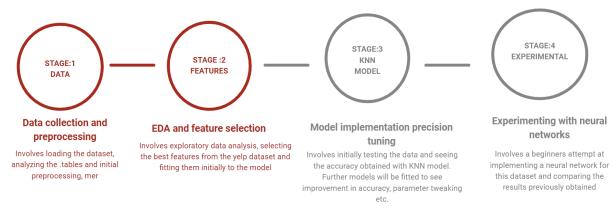


Fig 2. Machine Learning Pipeline

2.2. Data Loading:

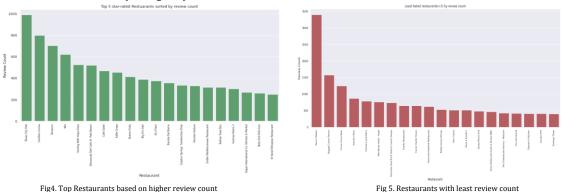
Yelp dataset size is too big to handle. So, we created a new database for Restaurant Recommendation dataset using SQLite3. Python provide Python SQLite3 interface, which is standardized DBI API 2.0 compliant interface for working with SQLite database. We opened database connection with sqlite3 for quick data loading. Figure 3 shows the table schema for User, Business and Review tables to be created in the database.



Fig 3. User, Business & Review Tables schema

2.2.1 Business data set:

Columns in business dataset: "business id", "name", "address", "city", "state", "postal code", "latitude", "longitude", "stars", "review count", "is open", "attributes", "categories", "hours". Figure 4 summarizes the Top restaurants in the yelp dataset with highest number of good reviews(ratings > 4) from users, "Blues City Deli" is the restaurant with higher number of user reviews. Figure 5 summarizes the restaurants with higher number of bad reviews(ratings < 3) from the user, "Geno's Steaks" is the least rated restaurant.



2.2.2 Review dataset:

Columns in Review dataset: "review id", "user id", "business id", "stars", "useful", "funny", "cool", "text" and "date" columns. 'stars' and 'text' are the primary features in the Review dataset, provided by the users. "user id" and "business id", are common features between the tables, used for merging the datasets.

EDA is performed more in depth to find the weight of each feature and the unnecessary features are dropped or modified. The text feature is left untouched in this section and further analysis on that will be performed in later sections

Figure 6 shows the review data table after loading and Figure 7 summarizes the 'useful' column from the review table to show the number of useful reviews over a period of 2004 to 2018. Figure 8shows average rating vs restaurants, from the graph we can understand that FIVE star and ONE-star reviews are flagged as most useful.



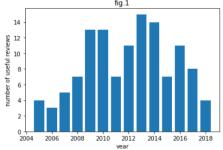


Fig. 6 Review dataset after loading

Fig. 7 Number of good reviews over years

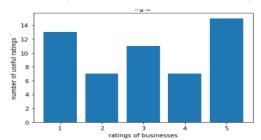


Fig 8 FIVE star and ONE star reviews are flagged as most useful

2.2.3 User dataset:

Columns in User dataset: 'user_id', 'name', 'review_count', 'yelping_since', 'useful', 'funny', 'cool', 'elite', 'friends', 'fans', 'average_stars', 'compliment_hot', 'compliment_more', 'compliment_profile', 'compliment_cute', 'compliment_list', 'compliment_note', 'compliment_plain', 'compliment_cool', 'compliment_funny', 'compliment_writer', 'compliment_photos'.

User dataset provides statistics of each user. From these statistics it is possible to obtain how influential a reviewer is. Extensive analysis has been performed to see the trends in these features. Columns like number of reviews, number of useful reviews, how funny, cool or impactful they were, number of fans each reviewer has etc.

For example fig.9 shows the number of useful reviews from the users, here Daniel and Jane gave more useful reviews, amongst five users selected.

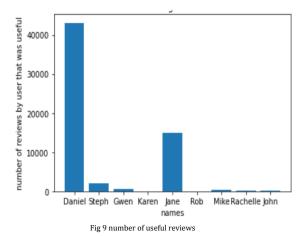


Figure 10 and 11 shows the in depth description of the features present in the three data tables and their relationship in the database.

Business		U	ser	Re	Review		
Attribute	Data Type	Attribute	Data Type	Attribute	Data Type		
business_id name address city state postal_code latitude longitude stars is_open categories	string string string string string string float float float integer string array	user_id name friends yelping_since useful funny cool fans	string string array timestamp integer integer integer integer integer	review_id user_id business_id stars date text useful funny cool	string string string integer timestamp string integer integer integer		

Fig. 10 Description of the features and datatypes in business user and review csv files



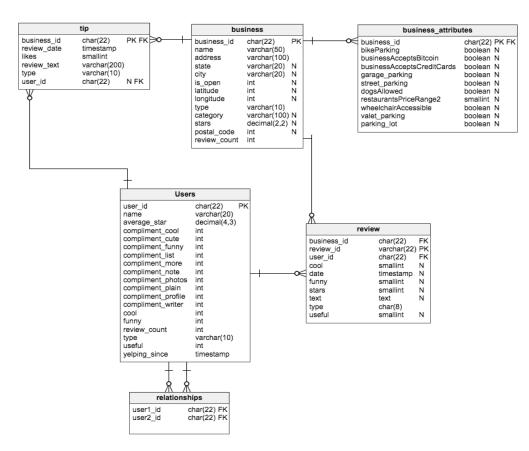


Fig.11 Data Schema of the data set used to feed the models with their specific features

3. Data Preprocessing and Feature Engineering:

3.1 Business data:

Yelp Business dataset has a lot of business information other than Restaurants, so we filtered out 'categories' fields with Restaurant. For filtering out restaurants alone, we created a new column name 'RESTAURANT and marked 'True' when the 'categories' column contains 'restaurant' value. For initial data analysis we focused only on restaurants. Since the original dataset is so large, we used limited columns "business id", "name", "stars", "review count", "attributes", "categories", from the business dataset to use in this project.

"Attributes" column contains more detailed information about the restaurants e.g. Parking information, Wifi, Accepts Credit cards, Delivery information etc. So we splitted Attributes column to 39 columns of features of Boolean variables and plotted for better understanding of data pattern. Figure 10 proves that restaurants with wifi connection have better ratings than the other. Figure 11 proves that restaurants with business parking have better ratings.

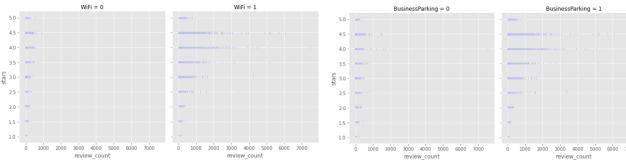


Fig 10 Restaurants with WIFI have higher review count

Fig 11 Restaurants with BusinessParking have higher review count

3.2 Review data:

'funny' and 'review_id' columns are irrelevant to our analysis so dropped. Created new column name 'year' retrieved from 'dates' columns and dropped 'dates' column with timestamp as it is not necessary for further analysis. There are no NULL values. Figure 12 shows the format of the Review dataset after preprocessing.



Fig. 12 review dataset after initial preprocessing

3.3 User data:

There are no null values in the User dataset except the 'elite' feature. So the 'elite' column was dropped as it is not useful for our analysis.

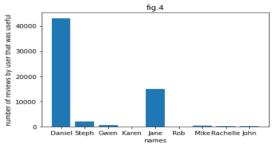


Fig 13 Daniel and Jane gave more useful reviews

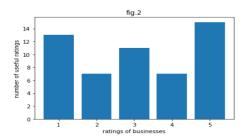


Fig 14 FIVE star and ONE star reviews are flagged as most useful

4.Exploratory Data Analysis:

4.1 Merging datasets:

'business_id' and 'stars' are common features for Review and Business datasets. So we used 'business_id' to merge the Business file with the Review file and created a new pandas dataframe called 'Ratings_data'. 'user_id' and 'Useful' are common features for Review and User datasets. So we used 'user_id' to merge Ratings_data and User data table. After merging all values to Ratings_data replace all missing values. In order to find the optimal data for training, filtered the merged dataset to only have users who gave more than 20 reviews, which results in data size as below:

ratings_data.shape
(5126276, 49)

Since the merged dataset is again larger than RAM size to handle, so filtered out 1000 users data.

4.2. Train-Test data splitting:

Merged dataset 'Ratings_data' split into two sets as Training data(75%) and Testing data(25%). Training data is used for Parameter tuning and model training. Finally tested the model predictions and performances with Testing data

5. Model Building and Performance Evaluation:

5.1 Technical Specifications:

Recommender system code is written in python programming language, and used standard python libraries such as

- o numpy To work with multi-dimensional arrays.
- o Pandas For data manipulation and analysis.
- scikit learn With the scikit learn library, we can straight away use multiple machine learning algorithms.
- o Surprise Surprise library helps to build rating based recommender system
- SQLite3 this library helps to create connections with sqlite databases for data loading.
- matplotlib and seaborn These libraries are utilized for the data preprocessing visualization and EDA.

Online coding environments like kaggle kernels and google colab were used for our project development which offers GPU access for free. Using the available resources, we were able to execute the code but due to the massive dataset the process was slow. A system with better GPU and processing would be able to handle this dataset much better.

5.2 Evaluation Metrics:

We used Root Mean Squared Error(RMSE) and Mean Absolute Error(MAE) to evaluate our model. These two metrics help us to find how accurate our model predictions are and their deviations from actual values. RMSE and MAE both are average of error which are calculated as follows,

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (y_i - y_p)^2}{n}}$$

$$MAE = \frac{|(y_i - y_p)|}{|(y_i - y_p)|}$$

 y_i = actual value

 y_p = predicted value

n = number of observations/rows

Lower value of MAE and RMSE means that the model makes less errors and also the model learned latent features of restaurants and users.

Different Model performances evaluated with the value of RMSE and MAE. Model with least RMSE and MAE is selected for our recommendation system for more accurate predictions.

5.3 KNN inspired algorithms:

5.3.1. KNNBasic algorithm with Cosine Similarity based prediction:

For prediction problem, rating r = f(u,v), where u is the feature vector for Users and v is the feature vector Restaurants/items. we expect that the final rating will be higher if the type of restaurant matches with user's interests, so we can say that the ratings prediction is a weighted combination of the user-restaurant "similarity" measure.

KNNBasic is a basic collaborative filtering algorithm. Prediction formulated as,

$$\hat{r}_{ui} = rac{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} \sin(u,v) \cdot r_{vi}}{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} \sin(u,v)} \qquad \qquad \hat{r}_{ui} = rac{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} \sin(i,j) \cdot r_{uj}}{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} \sin(i,j)}$$

For more information : [k-NN inspired algorithms — Surprise 1 documentation]

The hyperparameter tuning performed for parameter K number of neighbours with cosine similarity measure and cross validated with 5 splits to evaluate RMSE and MAE. We get the best K=3 with best RMSE = 1.3505. After cross validation we get average RMSE = 1.3665, average MAE = 1.1272

Evaluating RMSE, MAE of algorithm KNNBasic on 5 split(s).

	Fold 1	Fold 2	Fold 3	Fold 4	Fold 5	Mean	Std
RMSE (testset)	1.3848	1.3494	1.3410	1.4653	1.2919	1.3665	0.0576
MAE (testset)	1.1659	1.0985	1.1109	1.1883	1.0724	1.1272	0.0432
Fit time	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Test time	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

5.3.2. KNNWithMeans algorithm with Cosine Similarity based prediction:

KNNWithMeans collaborative algorithm takes mean ratings of user for predictions. Prediction formulated as,

$$\hat{r}_{ui} = \mu_u + rac{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} ext{sim}(u,v) \cdot (r_{vi} - \mu_v)}{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} ext{sim}(u,v)}$$
 or $\hat{r}_{ui} = \mu_i + rac{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} ext{sim}(i,j) \cdot (r_{uj} - \mu_j)}{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} ext{sim}(i,j)}$

For more information: [k-NN inspired algorithms — Surprise 1 documentation]

The hyperparameter tuning performed for parameter K number of numbers with similarity measure as Cosine and cross validated with 5 splits to evaluate RMSE and MAE. We get the best K=3 with best RMSE = 1.3218. After cross validation we get average RMSE = 1.3673, average MAE = 1.1291.

Evaluating RMSE, MAE of algorithm KNNWithMeans on 5 split(s).

	Fold 1	Fold 2	Fold 3	Fold 4	Fold 5	Mean	Std
RMSE (testset)	1.3094	1.3038	1.3865	1.4912	1.3454	1.3673	0.0687
MAE (testset)	1.0662	1.0972	1.1349	1.2330	1.1143	1.1291	0.0566
Fit time	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.00
Test time	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

5.3.3. KNNBaseline algorithm with Cosine Similarity based prediction:

KNNWithMeans collaborative algorithm takes baseline ratings of user for predictions. Prediction formulated as,

$$\hat{r}_{ui} = b_{ui} + rac{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} \sin(u,v) \cdot (r_{vi} - b_{vi})}{\sum\limits_{v \in N_i^k(u)} \sin(u,v)}$$
 or $\hat{r}_{ui} = b_{ui} + rac{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} \sin(i,j) \cdot (r_{uj} - b_{uj})}{\sum\limits_{j \in N_u^k(i)} \sin(i,j)}$

For more information : [k-NN inspired algorithms — Surprise 1 documentation]

The hyperparameter tuning performed for parameter K number of numbers with similarity measure as Cosine and cross validated with 5 splits to evaluate RMSE and MAE. We get the best K=3 with best RMSE = 1.3221. After cross validation we get average RMSE = 1.3626, average MAE = 1.1224.

Evaluating RMSE, MAE of algorithm KNNBaseline on 5 split(s).

	Fold 1	Fold 2	Fold 3	Fold 4	Fold 5	Mean	Std
RMSE (testset)	1.4674	1.3296	1.3151	1.3279	1.3732	1.3626	0.0559
MAE (testset)	1.2300	1.1215	1.0494	1.0855	1.1258	1.1224	0.0605
Fit time	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Test time	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

5.4 . Sentiment analysis models:

SVD model:

The Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) of a matrix is a factorization of that matrix into three matrices. Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) is a widely used technique to decompose a matrix into several component matrices, exposing many of the useful and interesting properties of the original matrix. This model has been utilized to perform sentiment analysis on the review dataset to classify review text as either positive or negative.

Naïve Bayes:

A Naive Bayes classifier is a probabilistic machine learning model that's used for classification tasks. The crux of the classifier is based on the Bayes theorem. This model has been implemented for sentiment analysis for accuracy comparison.

Bayes theorem:

$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(B|A)P(A)}{P(B)}$$

NLTK toolkit:

NLTK is a toolkit built for working with NLP in Python. It provides us various text processing libraries with a lot of test datasets. The stop words feature within this package has been used to extract the individual words from each review and then classified as positive or negative using the star reviews as basis

6. Experimental outcomes and summary:

Table 1 shows average RMSE, and MAE given by KNNBasic, KNNWithMeans, and KNNBaseline algorithms. KNNBaseline algorithm gives least average RMSE and MAE (less average errors) so we chose the same as our model for recommender system.

	KNN Algorithms	Average RMSE	Average MAE
2	KNNBaseline	1.366534	1.124847
0	KNNBasic	1.367798	1.128495
1	KNNWithMeans	1.369792	1.131022

Table.1 Average errors

Trained our model with training data from merged dataset and made predictions as below,

600 Termini Bros Bakery 603 Le Peep 604 Muriel's Jackson Square 605 Schlafly Bottleworks Name: Restaurant name, dtype: object Sentiment analysis has been performed on the text column in the review dataset by splitting each word and classifying them as positive or negative and then inputting into both SVD and Naive Bayes models to predict each text as either positive or negative. fig.13 shows the accuracy for each model with SVD outperforming the other. This model can be incorporated to predict each review in the business dataset as a binary positive or negative.

```
Calculated probability of a review being a positive or negative one
naive bayes mode:
efficiency of predicting positive reviews 90.87818696883852 efficiency of predicting negative reviews 76.16822429906543
SVM model:
[[ 244 54 20]
[ 46 186 109]
[ 42 87 1211]
                 precision
                                 recall f1-score
                                                         support
                                                0.56
                                                              341
                                                             1340
           5.0
                                                0.90
                                                             1999
     accuracy
                                                0.82
    nacro avg
weighted avg
                       0.82
                                   0.82
                                                0.82
                                                             1999
                                   The food was good but the drinks was bad
    test for sample text ::
Rating of our review [3.]
```

Fig,13 Results of sentiment analysis

7. Future scope:

The project holds multiple potential for future development. Some of the key areas that can be worked upon in the future are highlighted as below:

- 1. User dataset analysis has been performed and useful insights have been obtained from.
- 2. From the results it is clear that the dataset can be used to input the reviewer and the impact of their reviews. The dataset holds key information on how useful a reviewer's feedback was, the number of followers they have, and multiple other statistics. This information can be utilized for collaborative filtering.
- 3. Due to system restraints the computational speed of the system is on the lower end of the spectrum. Implementing this project with better system is a definitive way to improve the performance
- 4. A deep neural network with multiple mappings can be implemented to improve the metrics of this system.
- 5. An interactive and easy to use interface or front end can be developed to formulate this as a complete product for the end user.

8. Limitations:

We developed our recommender system with python using online platforms like Kaggle and Google colab. As the Data size is very huge and when the number of users in the platform rises, it automatically increases the difficulty to process the data and using traditional models takes huge time and training model becomes slow. Some big data frameworks like Spark helps parallelizing the computation the same way is not possible with python online platforms.

We tried to use SVD model for our recommender system, but SVD and Cosine Similarity based models complexity increase by n2, training these models become increasingly inefficient as the number of users and restaurants increases. Since the model develops recommendation for users, it is very difficult to test if the predictions were correct or not.

9. Related works:

Restaurant Recommendation System using Machine Learning - Ketan Mahajan et al june 2021 is a recent work on restaurant recommendation systems that was helpful in understanding the approach towards restaurant recommendations systems. Here they have utilized Hybrid filtering which is a combination of Content-based filtering (CBF) and Collaborative Filtering (CF).

Yelp Restaurant Recommender System - Si Gao et al - was instrumental in approaching the yelp dataset and the preprocessing associated with it. They compare popular collaborative filtering (CF) and content-based (CB) methods that consider user-business interactions, restaurant attributes and text mining of user reviews. Sentiment Analysis of Yelp's Ratings Based on Text Reviews - Yun Xu et al - was the paper for reference for sentiment analysis on the review dataset. The paper experiments with various feature selection and supervised learning algorithms to predict star ratings of the Yelp dataset using review text alone.

10. Conclusion:

The recommendation system so far built has performed well providing satisfactory results and accuracy. There remains scope for improvement in the areas highlighted in the previous section. A thorough exploratory analysis has been performed with a massive dataset like yelp and from this analysis was performed successfully. Databases were used successfully to handle the large dataset. Sentiment analysis has been performed for reviews and the datasets have been merged and fitted to the ML models successfully. Multiple models have been implemented at each stage for accuracy comparison and the results have been evaluated using the appropriate metrics.

11. Code links:

https://github.com/Megalajeyapal/Restaurant-Recommendation-system https://github.com/genesis1899/restaurant-recommendation/blob/main/ml project checkpoint 2.ipynb https://colab.research.google.com/drive/1PPzpRtoYFwDeiywtMj9YzrvopZQNEetW?usp=sharing

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