Technology-Enabled Learning at OCAD University will challenge students and faculty to be informed participants in digital culture, to teach and learn in diverse ways, and to connect with communities locally and globally.
Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) Strategy Summary

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Vision

The broad vision for technology-enabled learning at OCAD U is to utilize technology in teaching and learning to its fullest potential within the unique context of art and design education.

Purpose

Operating as a statement of shared understanding, the Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) Strategy will guide collaborative projects, program development and a five-year implementation plan in meeting OCAD U’s technology-enabled learning goals.

Background

The TEL Strategy arises from the goals, principles and priorities of the Academic Plan 2017-2022, with a focus on developing collaborations across Faculties, programs and academic support units to achieve these goals.

Broad Areas of Focus for the TEL strategy

- Enable the effective use of technologies that are designed specifically to facilitate student learning (such as Canvas)
- Build a broad knowledge of the technologies that all students need as learners, professionals and active members of society (such as the digital literacy, digital citizenship, data analysis, audio/visual communication, etc.)
- Support the adoption of discipline-specific technologies that students will use in their course work and professional practice (such as InDesign or Rhino)
## Priorities and Goals Summary

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Immediate Focus
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2. Develop a model to increase availability of Continuing Studies courses in technology for faculty and students, including the provision of just-in-time offerings that respond to emerging needs and align with course curriculum, while seeking to reduce barriers such as cost and timing
3. Support faculty in using technology, such as Canvas, for organizing their teaching and providing feedback to students
4. Create video and online resources for new and returning faculty on the use of classroom technology

Mid to Long-term Focus
5. Implement a badging or certificate program to acknowledge professional development in technology-enabled learning for faculty, TAs, technicians, staff and students
6. Develop a process and workflow for the creation of shared discipline-specific and interdisciplinary modules and open resources with broad applicability across multiple courses, such as research methodology and intellectual property modules
7. Develop shared platforms for repositories of resources, assignments and rubrics within disciplines or learning clusters

Immediate Focus
1. Provide resources to programs through curriculum development and quality assurance processes to assess, develop and implement digital, information and data literacy learning opportunities and relevant pedagogy in all programs
2. Make use of online tools to build connections and share open resources with educational or art and design focused institutions nationally and internationally

Mid to Long-term Focus
3. Enhance the ability of faculty and students to find and use resources available through the Library, Writing & Learning Centre and other academic support units
4. Support experiential initiatives, open source frameworks, student groups and community events that allow students to showcase or build their digital skills

Immediate Focus
1. Support and showcase faculty conducting pedagogical research in the area of technology-enabled learning
2. Foster sharing of TEL innovation across disciplines, through faculty roundtables, poster displays, symposiums, etc.

Mid to Long-term Focus
3. Collaborate with Research Services to recognize faculty who are conducting educational research with a focus on teaching with technology
4. Build links between faculty technology-based research and TEL, and support the creation of opportunities for students to participate in this research
Technology-Enabled Learning at OCAD University

will challenge students and faculty to be informed participants in digital culture, to teach and learn in diverse ways, and to connect with communities locally and globally.

**Purpose**

Operating as a statement of shared understanding, the Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) Strategy will guide collaborative projects, program development and a five-year implementation plan (with resource allocations, where applicable) in meeting OCAD University’s technology-enabled learning goals in alignment with the Academic Plan 2017-2022: Transforming Student Experience. The Technology Enabled Learning Committee (TELC), a working group of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), a Senate sub-committee, will guide and monitor the achievement of the goals outlined in the strategy and offer support to units and programs working to advance the goals. Additionally, the TEL Strategy will seek to remain responsive to OCAD U’s evolving institutional and curricular context, and the changing needs of its diverse faculty and student body, throughout the process of implementation.

While the use of technology is not a priority in itself, technology-based tools and processes can enhance teaching and learning by fostering student engagement and active learning, facilitating inclusive teaching strategies and improving access to education. The TEL Strategy provides a vehicle to mobilize and build upon our knowledge and experiences with technology in the context of art and design education to create a shared vision for teaching and learning about, with and through technology at OCAD U.

**Vision**

The broad vision for technology-enabled learning at OCAD U is to utilize technology in teaching and learning to its fullest potential within the unique context of art and design education. OCAD U’s rich educational environment includes course contexts that range from small studios and studio seminars to large classes – all taught by experts, innovators and thought leaders in diverse fields, in traditional and long-standing disciplines, as well as in new medias, technologies and processes. With an approach to technology-enabled learning that looks both to our past accomplishments and future innovations, we will prepare our students to participate and lead in a world marked by change, to create emergent forms of knowledge, and to engage with diverse communities through informed and responsible conversation.

All students, regardless of their academic and creative focus, will investigate the technologies affecting their lives and practices; while some will seek proficiency in various technologies to advance their disciplines and practice, others will engage technology to resist and disrupt hegemonic systems and advance social change. We will responsively engage diverse student interests and seek to provide information and communications on their preferred devices and formats, with technology platforms flexible enough to meet their individual needs. We commit to using the flexibility afforded by technology to engage in sustainable practices, to facilitate access and inclusion among marginalized communities, our growing international student body and differently-abled individuals, and to foster an engaging and evolving teaching and learning environment at OCAD U. Faculty will have access to tools to connect with each other, fellow researchers and their students. Faculty and academic staff will collaborate and share knowledge, best practices and tools to enhance teaching. Innovators in teaching with
technology will be supported and recognized for their leadership, enabling the larger community to benefit from their work.

**Background**

The TEL Strategy arises from the goals, principles and priorities of OCAD University’s Academic Plan: Transforming Student Experience 2017-2022, with a focus on developing collaborations across Faculties, programs and academic support units to achieve these goals. The OCAD U Academic Plan provides a broad vision for evolving student learning at OCAD U over the next five years. While several Academic Plan goals specifically include the use of technology in teaching and learning, in other priority areas, such as inclusivity, sustainability and collaboration, technology-enabled learning can be an important tool in realizing OCAD U’s academic vision.

This document also complements other relevant policy and strategy documents such as the OCAD U Digital Campus Strategy (2017-2022) and the work of the Creative City Campus Technology Advisory Group. While acknowledging that infrastructure, space and equipment are vitally important to our goals around teaching with technology, as well as the success of our programs, particularly those that rely heavily on digital technology and skills, the TEL Strategy focuses on building processes, collaborations, shared resources and learning opportunities to make the best use of an ever-evolving technology infrastructure. This emphasis on collaboration will allow for the sharing and pooling of current and future tools and resources to help achieve the goals expressed in the TEL Strategy, as well as help to identify priorities with respect to technology and teaching as resources become available. Notably, ongoing capital projects such as the Creative City Campus will also bring new technologies and spaces to OCAD U which will both address emerging infrastructure needs and support the attainment of the goals in the TEL Strategy.

The TEL Strategy has been guided by the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) and developed through on-going consultation with the Faculties and Graduate Studies, including faculty, academic administrators and academic support staff. It has been informed by a review of relevant institutional data and best practices in technology-enabled learning at other Canadian universities. Additionally, current educational research and literature such as the New Media Consortium Horizon Report provided a sense of emerging challenges and opportunities in the field of technology-enabled learning more broadly. The Technology-Enabled Learning Committee (TELC), a working group of the TLC comprised of representatives from units that support faculty and students in the use of technology, has also provided on-going input. Meetings were held with each Program Chair and Graduate Program Director in the development of the TEL Strategy, and many of the goals directly address faculty and program-level concerns and innovations. Some insights arising from this scan include:

1. There are lessons to be learned from other institutions, which must be considered in OCAD U’s unique context.
2. There is interest and excitement for teaching with technology, which is tempered for faculty members by time challenges.
3. There are many individuals and programs at OCAD U achieving successes in TEL, whose achievements and innovations could be communicated more broadly.
4. Faculty can make use of technology to build and strengthen connections with students and colleagues, when given the training and tools.

Importantly, this strategy recognizes that technology and online-based tools can have both positive and negative impacts on student and faculty well-being, as well as the well-being of those systems and environments within which the OCAD U community exists. For example, the potential for mobile devices and laptops to encourage distracted or disconnected behaviour is often cited as a pitfall of increased technology use. However, when used to create caring communities, online tools can also counteract the sense of isolation that may come with industrialized models of online learning. For example, online discussion tools can offer students a chance to participate in a more reflective setting than in-class discussions (Wang et al., 2015). The reflective pace afforded by online technology, when used towards this end, can also be an opportunity to engage students who are language learners, whose learning needs require it or who are culturally accustomed to a more moderated pace of discussion. Well-designed tools and processes can also help students, faculty and staff manage their time; indeed, the goal of technology use should be measured not in time spent, but in time well-spent (Harris, 2016).

On a physical level, e-waste and carbon emissions are a reality of technology use, but responsible use and well-designed processes can mitigate the negative impact on our ecosystem. Making use of online tools for meetings and collaborations, when appropriate, can reduce needs for transportation, while e-books, online course reserves or virtual labs can reduce resource demands. Incorporating responsible digital citizenship into curricular and co-curricular activities can help students to build habits to support their own health and that of the environment.

The process of developing the TEL Strategy has been dialogical and iterative; the approach to technology-enabled learning described in this document proceeds from a scan of promising practices currently being used at OCAD U, as well as an identification of gaps and areas for further development and collaboration. The following overview of these practices, as well as key services and resources currently available through academic support units engaged in technology-enabled learning, provides an understanding of the context in which the TEL Strategy goals will ultimately be realized.

**Context**

**TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING IN THE FACULTIES AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

The consultation process with faculty, Program Chairs and Associate Deans revealed similar needs for shared resources and learning opportunities, but also highlighted differences in the use of discipline-specific technologies and plans for future program development. There are currently hybrid and online courses in each of the Faculties at OCAD U; however, with the focus on studio-based learning, the number of online courses is small compared to comprehensive universities in Ontario. This strategy seeks to respond to OCAD U’s unique learning environment by broadening our goals beyond online courses to focus on ways that technology can enhance teaching and learning in face to face contexts.

The Faculty and Graduate Studies offices are the first and primary contact for faculty and each office provides support and direction specific to the needs of its faculty, offering templates, guidelines and referral to OCAD U resources. The offices also collaborate with ITS and FCDC to support faculty with questions about the Canvas learning management system and other TEL
tools. While OCAD U has a high rate of adoption of the Canvas LMS (over 95%), many common uses of Canvas relate to classroom administration and grading. This suggests that there is significant potential to expand pedagogical uses of Canvas.

Program Chairs and Graduate Program Directors play a crucial role in the development and coordination of discipline-specific technology-enabled learning in relation to the curricular needs of OCAD U programs. Input from the Chairs and Graduate Program Directors formed the basis for many of the specific goals and priority areas of this strategy.

**TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING IN THE OFFICE OF CONTINUING STUDIES (OCS)**
The Office of Continuing Studies (OCS) relies on technology-enabled learning to fulfill its mandate of providing lifelong education opportunities for art and design professionals. Fifty percent of OCS courses focus on technology and media skills training, and currently there are 19 fully online OCS courses, representing around 14% of all OCS course offerings. The OCS is also committed to supporting the OCAD U community by offering low-cost professional development and software training courses to faculty and credit students.

**TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING IN ACADEMIC SUPPORT UNITS**
A variety of academic support units facilitate and engage in technology-enabled learning at OCAD U: IT Services, the Faculty & Curriculum Development Centre, the Library and the Office of the Registrar. While each of these units have mandates beyond technology-enabled learning, they all provide services and leadership that help shape an environment for innovation and support in bringing technology-enabled learning to OCAD U students.

IT Services works directly with both students and faculty on utilizing technology in their teaching, learning and research. One area of focus is improving digital literacy among the OCAD U community by connecting directly with students and faculty, as well as offering self-directed learning opportunities. IT Services and the FCDC collaborate to provide resources and professional development opportunities to faculty in areas such as the pedagogical uses of Canvas, online conferencing, video/audio resources and others. OCAD U’s Information and Communication Technology Governance (ICTG) Steering Committee will be providing strategic direction to IT Services for curricular, studio and research support as well as recommendations to institutional leadership for improving digital literacy and adoption, integration and investment in technology.

The Library endeavours to respond to the needs of students and faculty in its deployment of technology-enabled learning. Through regular consultation with its users, the Library works to implement cost-effective collaborative spaces, such as the Learning Zone, that are both virtual and physical, formal and informal, synchronous and asynchronous and that prioritize inclusivity. Course content in the form of digital text is offered through the Library in multiple formats; additionally, in person and online resources for improving information literacy are made available.

The Studio Management office oversees the safe and successful operation of all shops and studios at OCAD U which include a variety of technologies employed in teaching and learning. Additionally, the Studio Management service bureaus, such as Tool Loans and the Rapid Prototyping Centre, provide opportunities for creative outputs connecting to course projects and research. The technicians activate an important link between studio technology
and credit curriculum, working closely with faculty and students to facilitate learning through making.

The Faculty & Curriculum Development Centre (FCDC) shares best practices in the pedagogical use of technology and supports TEL-related professional learning and innovation through workshops, consultations, resource development and pedagogical research. The FCDC also collaborates with faculty on the development of hybrid and fully online courses and modules. One of the four areas of the FCDC mandate is to enrich art and design at OCAD U by guiding the development and implementation of a technology-enabled learning strategy. As such, the FCDC has facilitated the collaborative approach taken in the creation of this strategy and will continue to guide its implementation through the TELC and other university committees.

### 3 Broad Areas of Focus for the TEL Strategy

1. Enable the effective use of technologies that are designed specifically to help students learn (such as Canvas);
2. Build a broad knowledge of technologies that all students need as learners, professionals and active members of society (such as the digital literacy, digital citizenship, data analysis, audio/visual communication, etc.)
3. Support the adoption and use of discipline-specific technologies that students need to be successful in their programs and professional practice (such as InDesign or Rhino)

### Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the TEL Strategy closely align with the principles of the Academic Plan, and guide the goals and priorities of the TEL Strategy.

**Equity and Inclusivity** – *To better reach students at OCAD U, and potential students with barriers to attending*

**Focus on Faculty** – *Supporting faculty in developing and strengthening their teaching practices through technology*

**Interdisciplinary** – *Collaboratively working across programs, units and stakeholders*

**Sustainable** – *Adaptable strategies that benefit the most students and faculty possible while fostering a culture of ecological and cultural sustainability*

**Learning Centred** – *Pedagogically driven and grounded in the OCAD U context*

These principles emerged through dialogue and consultation in the development of the strategy, and inform the priorities and goals that follow.
Priorities and Goals

Priority 1: Broaden Access and Inclusivity
The OCAD U community is diverse in creative practice, culture, ability and opportunity; it is likewise diverse in learning needs and preferences. Technology has great potential to enhance the ability of faculty, Teaching Assistants, technicians and other instructional staff to meet the needs of a diverse and evolving student population. Using technology, we can expand our ability to connect with potential and current students. The use of digital, online and mobile technologies allows for more accessible connections and collaborations than ever before. Online resources making use of networks of information and inclusive practices allow students to individualize their learning and explore sources according to their own interests. Hybrid courses that utilize both the facilities of OCAD U’s campus and the flexibility of online learning can aid in addressing constraints to students’ time and mobility. Additionally, fully online courses, when designed according to curricular and student needs, can allow us to reach students across a variety of barriers.

Goals
Immediate Focus
1. Promote practices in technology-enabled learning that enhance the inclusivity and accessibility of all courses by employing multiple modes of engagement, assessment and content delivery
2. Discover and respond to student learning preferences and enhance the accessibility of courses through the use of learning analytics, registration and retention data and accessibility tracking
3. Make available online resources and content for Indigenous curriculum
4. Develop an evaluation process to support the approval of new online courses, structured methods for preparing and supporting faculty teaching online courses, and a process and cycle for evaluating and maintaining current online courses

Mid to Long-term Focus
5. Expand online courses to provide access for students who have barriers to attending OCAD U on campus by focusing on Indigenous and northern communities and by offering courses to students who will transfer or relocate to OCAD U and students in international exchange programs
6. Explore and develop, if appropriate, a model for connecting online Continuing Studies students with credit options, providing pathways to work toward OCAD U degrees
7. Implement use of technologies and digital tools that support independent language learning in personal and classroom contexts
8. Support the promotion of accessible materials in online and hybrid learning environments
**Priority 2: Foster Student Engagement**

The active learning experience characteristic of studio education represents the pedagogical foundation of OCAD U’s educational culture. Several aspects of studio learning, such as meaningful interaction between students and faculty, collaborative learning and high rates of feedback, have been shown to have a high impact on student engagement and in turn a positive impact on the educational experience of students (Kuh, 2008). Student engagement, defined as invested, concentrated, and energetic involvement in learning, is commonly seen as essential to academic success (Henrie et al., 2015).

Research has found that student engagement can be enhanced by online activities (Sun and Rueda, 2012). Technology-enabled learning tools and strategies, employed to foster student engagement, can build on and enhance the active teaching that takes place across all course types at OCAD U. Using online resources effectively to share content can open up more time for interaction and collaboration in the classroom, while group work can be enhanced through online collaborative tools. Innovative practices can enhance the connections between students, their teachers, their peers and their course content. The multiple pathways to communication enabled by technology, when employed effectively by faculty, TAs, technicians, Librarians and other instructional staff, can help build supportive and engaging learning environments.

**Goals**

**Immediate Focus**

1. Leverage online tools to maximize time spent in active and collaborative learning and support student success, such as supplemental video content in studio courses and student response systems and collaboration platforms in larger classes
2. Prioritize use of instructional technology to build and deepen connections between students, between students and faculty, and between students and their research
3. Develop models for digitally connecting students with speakers, artists, designers, remote collaborators and partnering institutions

**Mid to Long-term Focus**

4. Establish requirements for platforms that allow students to share and reflect on their learning and creative production, such as online portfolios, design journals and experiential learning reflection
5. Strengthen contact between graduate supervisors and advisees through online communication platforms and resources
6. Provide Continuing Studies and non-credit students with greater access to technology and online resources, such as library access and Lynda.com

**Priority 3: Expand TEL Teaching Practices**

As digital and information technologies continue to be integrated into our personal and professional lives, the academic and professional skills that students need to be successful continue to evolve. Likewise, the Academic Plan identifies digital, information and data literacies within its priorities for Transformative Education. As these areas are ever expanding, it is necessary for OCAD U to offer resources for faculty members to expand their teaching practices where desirable. Many faculty direct their own learning around technology to keep up with shifting trends or to incorporate new teaching practices. At the same time, feedback from the Laptop Program 2015 survey, Faculty Teaching with Technology 2017 Survey, SWEG and
the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative point to a need for greater professional development to support digital literacy proficiencies amongst faculty and students alike. While there can be significant learning involved in the adoption of new technologies, by following best practices in TEL the benefits can outweigh concerns over the value of time spent.

**Goals**

**Immediate Focus**

1. Establish a collaborative, comprehensive approach to faculty professional development in the areas of technology-enabled learning, digital literacy and information literacy, with FCDC, the Faculties, IT Services and the Library
2. Develop a model to increase availability of Continuing Studies courses in technology for faculty and students, including the provision of just-in-time offerings that respond to emerging needs and align with course curriculum, while seeking to reduce barriers such as cost and timing
3. Support faculty in using technology, such as Canvas, for organizing their teaching and providing feedback to students
4. Create video and online resources for new and returning faculty on the use of classroom technology

**Mid to Long-term Focus**

5. Implement a badging or certificate program to acknowledge professional development in technology-enabled learning for faculty, TAs, technicians, staff and students
6. Develop a process and workflow for the creation of shared discipline-specific and interdisciplinary modules and open resources with broad applicability across multiple courses, such as research methodology and intellectual property modules
7. Develop shared platforms for repositories of resources, assignments and rubrics within disciplines or learning clusters

**Priority 4: Promote Digital Literacy and Digital Citizenship**

OCAD U is committed to preparing students to participate and lead in a society and culture marked by change. Regardless of their discipline(s) of focus, all students should graduate with an understanding of the technologies affecting their lives, a sense of responsibility to use those technologies to engage with key social concerns, and an awareness of the limits of technology in addressing their interests and needs. We commit to evolving and supporting the use of technologies and media that convey and create knowledge through diverse means, providing opportunities for students to develop digital, visual, data and information literacies. We will provide students with opportunities to explore technology platforms, and engage with communities at OCAD U and beyond through informed and responsible conversation.

**Goals**

**Immediate Focus**

1. Provide resources to programs through curriculum development and quality assurance processes to assess, develop and implement digital, information and data literacy learning opportunities and relevant pedagogy in all programs
2. Make use of online tools to build connections and share open resources with educational or art and design focused institutions nationally and internationally
Mid to Long-term Focus
3. Enhance the ability of faculty and students to find and use resources available through the Library, Writing & Learning Centre and other academic support units
4. Support experiential initiatives, open source frameworks, student groups and community events that allow students to showcase or build their digital skills

Priority 5: Foster Innovative Practices and Research in TEL
OCAD U has long been recognized for its history of innovation in art and design education. This context provides a fertile ground to link innovation in art, design and other scholarly practices to faculty innovation in teaching with technology. Innovation and research has the greatest reach when it is shared and valued among a community. By supporting teaching practices that take risks or make use of emerging technologies, and by acknowledging leadership in technology-enabled learning, we can foster a culture of progressive technology-enabled learning in the context of studio-based art and design at OCAD U.

Goals
Immediate Focus
1. Support and showcase faculty conducting pedagogical research in the area of technology-enabled learning
2. Foster sharing of TEL innovation across disciplines, through faculty roundtables, poster displays, symposiums, etc.

Mid to Long-term Focus
3. Collaborate with Research Services to recognize faculty who are conducting educational research with a focus on teaching with technology
4. Build links between faculty technology-based research and TEL, and support the creation of opportunities for students to participate in this research
Glossary of Terms

**Digital Citizenship** – responsible participation in online and technology-based society

**Data Literacy** – the ability to find, interpret and build meaning from a variety of data sources and an understanding of the bias within those sources

**E-Learning** - Sometimes used interchangeably with Technology-Enabled Learning, but in general is used to describe fully online learning.

**Hybrid Course** – Courses that use both online and in person formats. Hybrid courses at OCAD U have reduced in class time and at least 30% of content delivered online.

**Information Literacy**- skills for accessing the variety of knowledge sources available and for responsibly using those sources

**Learning analytics** – data about students, collected and analyzed to better understand their learning and environments with the goal of optimizing teaching and learning practices.

**LMS** – Abbreviate for Learning Management System. At OCAD U, we use Canvas. Other include Blackboard, Desire to Learn and Moodle.

**Platform** – Individual or groups of software and apps that serve a function and generally integrate multiple tasks.

**Technology-Enabled Learning** – Refers to pedagogical uses of technology, both online or in classrooms and studios. Sometimes used interchangeably with Technology Enhanced Learning or E-Learning

**TEL** – Abbreviation for Technology Enabled Learning

OCAD U Consultation

Academic Administrators (Associate Deans, Chairs, Graduate Program Directors)
Curriculum & Innovation Committee of Faculty (CICOF), Faculty of Art
Deans Advisory Group (DAG), Faculty of Design
Faculty Council, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences and School of Interdisciplinary Studies
Facilities & Studio Services
Individual Faculty
IT Services (Chief Information Officer and Director of Academic Computing)
Library Council
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Sustainability Initiatives (ODESI)
Office of Continuing Studies
Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee (SUSC)
Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)
Senate Academic Policy and Planning Committee (SAPPC)
Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC)
Technology Enabled Learning Committee (TELC) Working Group
VPAP and Deans Meeting

TEL Strategies Reviewed

https://navigator.nscad.ca/wordpress/home/academicsadministration/research-services/research-academic-plans/


References


The TEL Strategy was developed and written by Travis Freeman, Educational Developer, in collaboration with Susan Ferguson, Acting Director, Faculty & Curriculum Development Centre and the Technology Enabled Learning Committee members: Chris Bennell, Chris Landry, Andrew McAllister, Emily Rostoks and Evan Tapper. Additional contributions and feedback by Carol Roderick, Director, FCDC, and FCDC colleagues Joe Lipsett and Cary DiPietro.

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