IBM Cognos Express

Breakthrough BI and planning for workgroups and midsize organizations

Highlights

- IBM Cognos Express delivers the essential reporting, analysis, dashboard, scorecard, planning, budgeting and forecasting capabilities that midsize businesses need at a price they can afford.

- You get everything you need in a pre-configured solution that is easy to install, easy to use and easy to buy.

- Everyone from beginners to advanced users can easily create and modify their own reports and analysis without relying on IT resources.

- Start small with the capabilities you need now and grow your BI and planning solution over time to meet your goals.

IBM® Cognos® Express is the first and only integrated business intelligence (BI) and planning solution purpose-built to meet the needs of midsize organizations. It delivers the essential reporting, analysis, dashboard, scorecard, planning, budgeting and forecasting capabilities that midsize organizations and workgroups require, at a price they can afford. Everything is included in a pre-configured solution that is easy to install, easy to use and easy to buy.

Cognos Express provides organizations with consistent, reliable information to answer three critical business questions: *How are we doing? Why?* and *What should we be doing?* With insights drawn from answering these questions, managers can make better, faster decisions to drive greater efficiencies, reduce costs and identify new growth opportunities.

For organizations of any size that are beginning to embark or expand on a BI and planning strategy, Cognos Express includes everything needed to get started right away. It offers powerful yet easy-to-use business analytics capabilities for both novices and advanced users to encourage broad adoption throughout a company.

The only integrated BI and planning solution purpose-built for midsize companies

To be agile and compete with larger rivals, managers and business users at midsize companies need targeted, timely and accurate information—information that can successfully drive strategic business decisions. Business intelligence and planning applications provide this information. They increase visibility into key metrics to improve business processes and decision-making throughout an organization.

Many midsize companies have been forced to cobble together bits and pieces of expensive and complex systems or resort to using spreadsheets to handle their BI and planning needs. Cognos Express offers a clear alternative to these approaches because it is designed to help organizations or workgroups with up to 100 users significantly improve performance. With Cognos Express, you can get powerful performance management capabilities at a lower cost and with less IT overhead than with solutions built for larger organizations.

Easy to install and deploy

Cognos Express includes the tools you need for immediate use in a preconfigured solution. It includes a powerful in-memory analytics server, a common web portal and tightly integrated security for fast, comprehensive and secure BI and planning. The software plugs into existing infrastructure with minimal impact and can be deployed in as little as an hour. A single, centralized web-based console manages all administrative aspects of installation, deployment and ongoing management, using only a few simple mouse clicks. There is no extra burden on IT staff and no additional investment in software infrastructure.

All the essential reporting, analysis and planning capabilities are available in one integrated solution from a single vendor. This simplicity eliminates the time and costs associated with more complicated, developer-centric implementations so you can be more productive right away. It also reduces the complexity of deployment and ongoing maintenance, which minimizes the IT resources required.
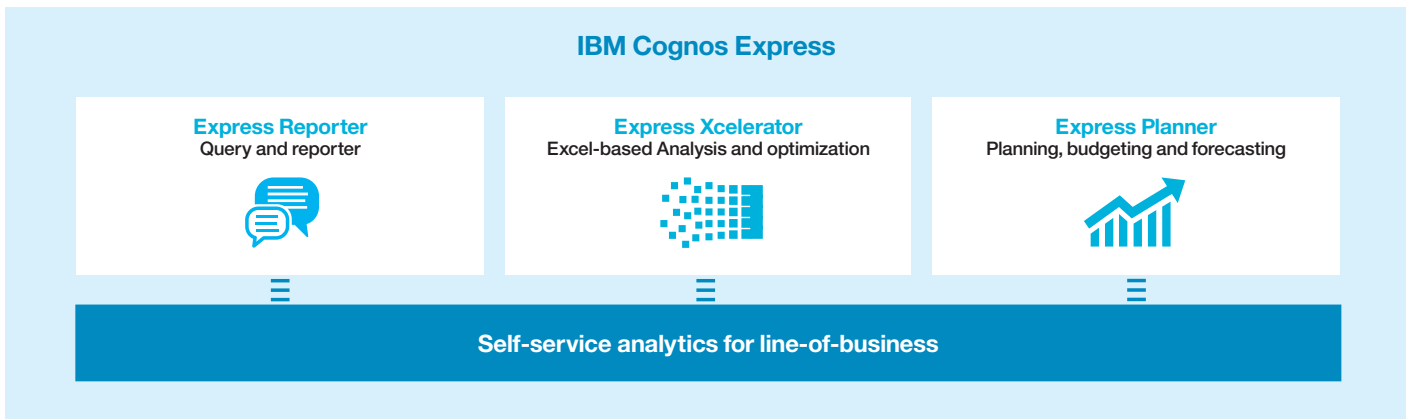

Figure 1: IBM Cognos Express offers a complete, integrated solution for the reporting, analysis and planning needs of workgroups and midsize organizations.

As your needs expand, Cognos Express provides a path to add capabilities using the same familiar software application. There is no extra training required nor additional demands on constrained technical resources.

Self-service access and ease of use

Cognos Express is easy to use and can be managed and operated by business users. Self-service access lets users work independently to access information quickly and create and modify their own reports and analysis without relying on IT resources.

Decision-makers can interact with information and get relevant insights wherever they are, and however they prefer to work—on the web, on iPad and Android, devices, or within a personalized workspace—even when they are disconnected from a network.

With Cognos Express, data is presented in a business context that business users understand while ensuring data accuracy and consistency throughout the organization. This allows executives and managers in different departments to spend more time analyzing data and less time arguing over what data is correct. Write-back capabilities allow these insights to be turned into specific plans and actions for better business outcomes—for example, to align the right resources to capitalize on new opportunities.
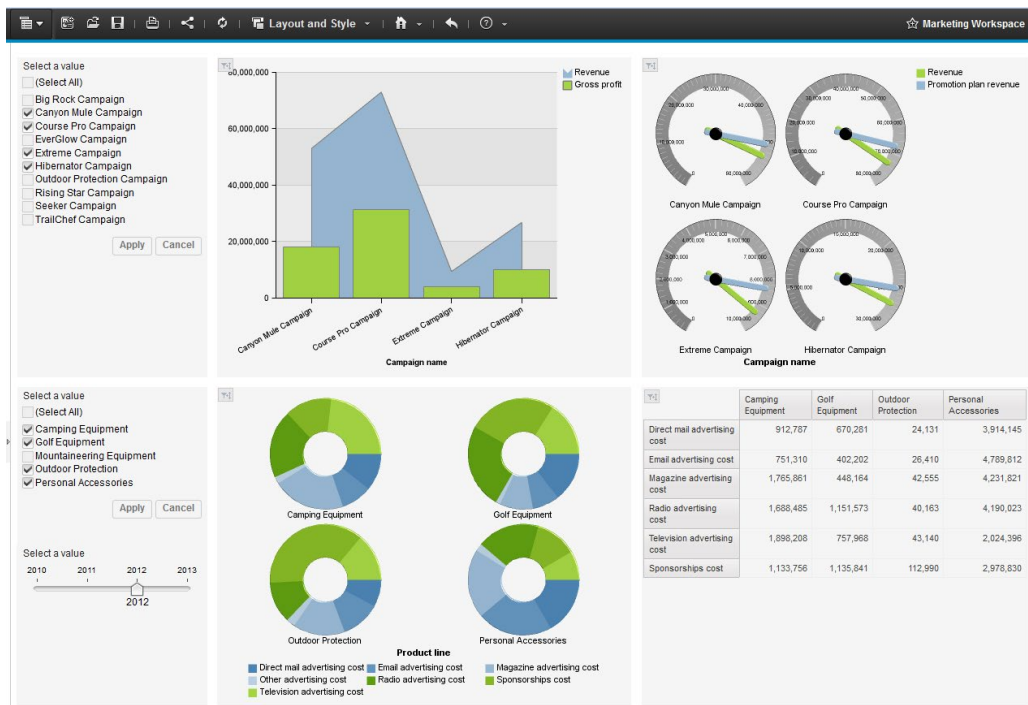

Figure 2: Cognos Express provides an interactive business intelligence experience that enables you to explore and analyze your data within a single personalized workspace.

While Cognos Express empowers users to be self-sufficient, it does so in a controlled way, providing the right interface for the right user. It uses common metadata models to ensure that everyone works with the same trusted information and consistent business rules and calculations. Simple, intuitive authoring capabilities support the needs of business users from the novice to the power user. Managers can spend more time analyzing data and formulating business strategy. They can adjust plans, budgets and forecasts to respond quickly and effectively to changing business conditions.

Integration with Microsoft Office enables users to work with Cognos Express content in the Microsoft Office applications they use every day. They can access Cognos Express content in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, where they can work with reports and use existing Excel spreadsheet macros. IBM Cognos Analysis for Microsoft Excel, available separately, allows access to BI packages and Cognos TM1 Excel-based analysis. Business intelligence content can also be imported into a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation or a Word document for presentation and distribution.

Priced right, for rapid ROI
Cognos Express is packaged and priced to let organizations start small with only the capabilities they need, gain immediate business value and expand their solution as they grow. Its affordable pricing includes everything you need to get started. There are no hidden fees for additional software often seen with other solutions.

Simple administration saves time and resources while delivering faster time to value. With no hidden costs and ease of use, Cognos Express delivers a rapid return on investment and a predictable cost of ownership.

One-stop reporting, analysis and planning
IBM Cognos Express offers a complete, integrated self-service solution for a midsize company's BI and planning needs. The following modules can be used separately or together:

- **IBM Cognos Express Reporter** for reporting and query
- **IBM Cognos Express Xcelerator** for Microsoft Excel-based business analysis and optimization
- **IBM Cognos Express Planner** for planning, budgeting and forecasting

You may purchase the full product with its reporting, analysis, dashboard, scorecard, planning, budgeting and forecasting capabilities, or you may start with the specific module or modules you need today, secure in an easy growth path for the future. This flexible approach gives you the freedom to "think big, but start small"—an effective strategy to match project and business needs with budget and resource constraints.

IBM Cognos Express Reporter

Often, the first step toward initiating or expanding a business intelligence strategy involves moving beyond the canned reports included with your corporate applications. You also need to build different types of reports that include easy-to-access visualizations which support the needs of users company wide.

Cognos Express Reporter delivers self-service reporting and query capabilities that enable business users to access, modify or author reports quickly and easily. It provides a consistent view of information throughout your company so users are never confused, misinformed or misaligned. This self-service design helps reduce the cost and time needed to share information throughout the organization. Reduced demands on IT help eliminate reporting backlogs that frustrate business users. The result: better decisions companywide.

Visualize your analysis for maximum insight

When you need maximum insight into your business, Cognos Express helps translate data into sophisticated analysis with rich visual presentations. In minutes, you can use simple and intuitive tools to create high-impact dashboards and presentations that communicate analytic results in the most meaningful way for decision-making. An intuitive web interface makes it easy to explore and customize data with interactive visuals that enable users to drill up or down for quick analysis of key areas. You can even control the appearance of your analysis and add visual appeal by choosing from a rich set of chart types and pre-defined design themes, and combine multiple views in a single screen or dashboard for interactive overviews of important business information.

The latest release of Cognos Express includes extensible visualizations that enable you to improve the user experience by creating interactive and animated charts in Active Reports. Choose from more than 30 types of visualizations for your general reporting needs—including heatmap, waterfall or network diagram—or integrate custom visualizations into your presentations and reports for even greater impact.

Cognos Express Reporter delivers:

- Easy, quick access to more than 30 visualizations for all general reporting outputs in any workspace, with a library of the most commonly used visualizations
- Introduction of native and web applications for Android and IOS to support a broader range of mobile devices
- Intuitive drag-and-drop authoring capabilities that are easily accessible from a web browser for self-service reporting by any user, from novice to expert
- A common metadata model that presents information to users in business terms that they understand, so they can be productive right away

- Access to all corporate data in any combination, including relational, analytical OLAP or even desktop files for comprehensive, accurate reporting
- Broad report coverage to meet the needs of different users, including financial, production, operational, transactional, managed or ad hoc reports
- Flexible report delivery that includes the ability to write once and immediately publish reports to the web, PDF files, Excel spreadsheets, email messages and the Cognos Express web portal
- Interactive dashboards that can be shared companywide to support collaborative decision making
- The ability to easily maintain and update a report throughout its lifecycle using a common, shared interface that can be accessed by all business users

Figure 3: An intuitive, easy-to-use interface provides complete, self-service access to reports and analysis. Users can receive and interact with business insights on their PCs and mobile devices for greater mobility and flexibility.

Optimize your plans with "what-if"analysis

To fully understand your business, you need to go beyond just discovering insights from historical data. "What-if" scenario modeling lets you analyze and optimize your plans based on different assumptions that take into account ever-changing market conditions. Cognos Express gives you the ability to model best-case, worst-case and most-likely outcomes based on your key business drivers. It includes a set of advanced rules and provides the flexibility to create custom rules you can use to automatically perform comparisons or calculations.

IBM Cognos Express Xcelerator

Many financial and business analysts are skilled spreadsheet users who don't want to give up this tool. Yet, most companies recognize the significant risk in spreadsheet-only business processes. With spreadsheets, it is difficult to control access to key financial and operational data and to audit changes. Information is locked in silos and different people can modify information using inconsistent calculations and rules. In addition, spreadsheets lack the ability to slice and dice large sets of data across multiple dimensions.

Cognos Express Xcelerator extends and transforms common spreadsheets for real-time business analysis and optimization. Users can work within an Excel environment to create custom analysis and build their own "what-if" business scenarios. This approach allows business users to use existing Excel skills and investments while overcoming the risks and limitations of spreadsheet-only processes. Its centrally managed data, business hierarchies, rules and calculations eliminate data silos and inconsistencies throughout the organization. A powerful in-memory analytics engine delivers fast, multidimensional analysis that can lead to greater operating efficiencies, enabling a new level of insight and action, as well as speed.

Business users can build and test scenarios with powerful "what-if" modeling capabilities and then update plans immediately using write-back capabilities to align the right resources to capitalize on new opportunities. This closed-loop process enables midsize companies to take full advantage of trusted insights gained through analysis and immediately apply those insights to critical operational areas, such as workforce management, inventory management and expense planning, for better business optimization. Business users can create sophisticated and customized analysis targeted to their business needs. No programming skills or IT support are required.

Cognos Express Xcelerator delivers:

- An Excel or web-based interface that allows business users to easily contribute data using familiar Excel-authored reports and applications with no "coding" skills required
- Streamlined and continuous integration and aggregation of data for fast information analysis and retrieval so business users can focus their attention on effectively operating their business
- Centrally managed data, business hierarchies, rules and calculations to eliminate data silos and inconsistencies throughout the organization – all powered by an in-memory analytics server
- Pre-built blueprints for key business optimization tasks, such as expense and capital planning, workforce management and profitability analysis
- Role-based security, structured workflows and clear audit trails to improve accountability and accuracy
- Write-back capabilities that link "what-if" modeling results with specific actions that lead to better business outcomes

IBM Cognos Express Planner

IBM Cognos Express Planner delivers a structured planning process that is easy to deploy and use. It transforms a company's planning processes, enabling business users to react quickly to changing conditions and to grow their business effectively. It replaces slow, cumbersome manual planning processes with automated daily, weekly or monthly planning tools using the latest, accurate business data.

Cognos Express Planner streamlines information gathering, aggregation and analysis for continuous planning, budgeting and forecasting. Administrators can build planning and analysis models using a a graphical user interface that makes modeling more efficient and intuitive. A managed contribution model is used to collect input from systems and staff in any division or location. This managed contribution component has an easy-to-use web-based interface that can handle large numbers of participants while using the in-memory analytics server for speedy processing. Managers can quickly assemble and deploy planning solutions while monitoring the status of every participant in the planning process.

Cognos Express Planner provides an intuitive planning environment that blends a managed workflow with personalized analysis for improved business agility. Users not only contribute their own data into planning templates, they can also create their own personalized hierarchies and dimensions. They can roll up data to suit their own business needs, such as adding a new department structure, modifying a product mix or removing a territory. Because they can create and test a variety of scenarios and write ad hoc changes back to operational systems or data warehouses, teams can realize immediate business impact with timely revisions to plans. Complete audit trails are included to satisfy regulatory compliance requirements.

Cognos Express Planner delivers:

- Improved access to and integration with key performance metrics and the underlying data, enabling users to build and deploy scorecards more easily, and improving user confidence through a common source for plan, actual and metrics data that syncs in real time
- A flexible, accurate planning environment that blends a structured, managed workflow with personalized analysis for improved business agility
- Streamlined and continuous planning, budgeting and forecasting to react quickly to changing business conditions

- An easy-to-use interface that allows finance and non-finance users to create plans, contribute plan data and view current plans with no "coding" skills required
- Role-based security to ensure that business users see only those portions of the plan that are relevant to them
- Advanced filtering features, such as hierarchy leveling, attribute values, element names (with aliases) and spelling patterns, for more finely grained simulations
- Driver-based planning support with features such as pick lists, undo/redo, multi-pane docking and color-coded data changes to focus on key business drivers
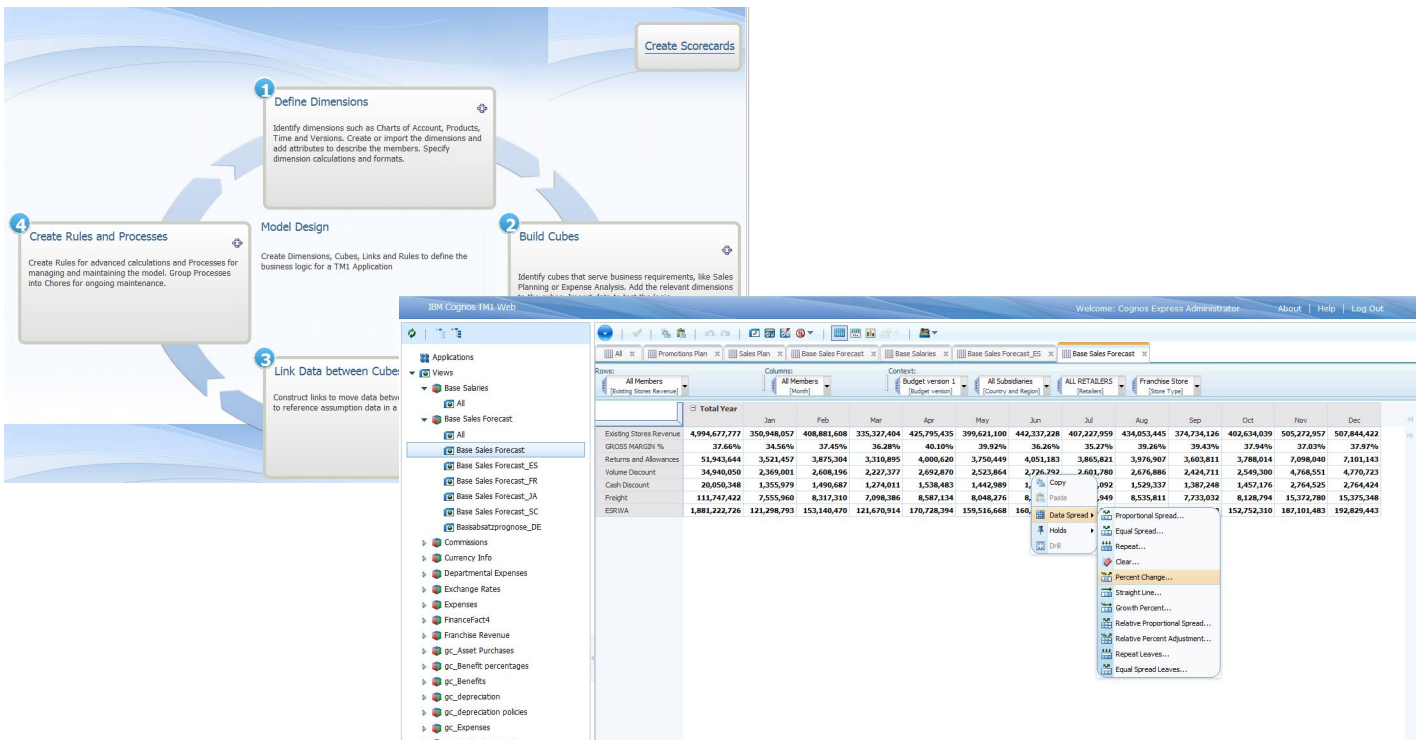- Complex analysis on the fly, with the ability to drill down, sort, link and chart data

Figure 4: An intuitive planning environment blends a structured, managed workflow with personalized analysis for improved business agility.

A single and powerful foundation

Cognos Express is based on a set of integrated core capabilities.

- **Powerful in-memory analytics server** – enables lightning fast queries and on-the-fly calculations regardless of the size or complexity of the dataset.
- **Flexible data access** – provides access to relational, OLAP and local data sources in any combination through the use of centrally managed data models and metadata.

- **Common web portal** – enables users to publish reports and create compelling dashboards using any Cognos Express module to deliver a single, shared view of the business.
- **Tight security** – uses role-based access with a single sign-on.
- **Single management console** – offers push-button installation, configuration and operation to manage the entire solution.

This shared foundation enables you to add new Cognos Express capabilities with ease.
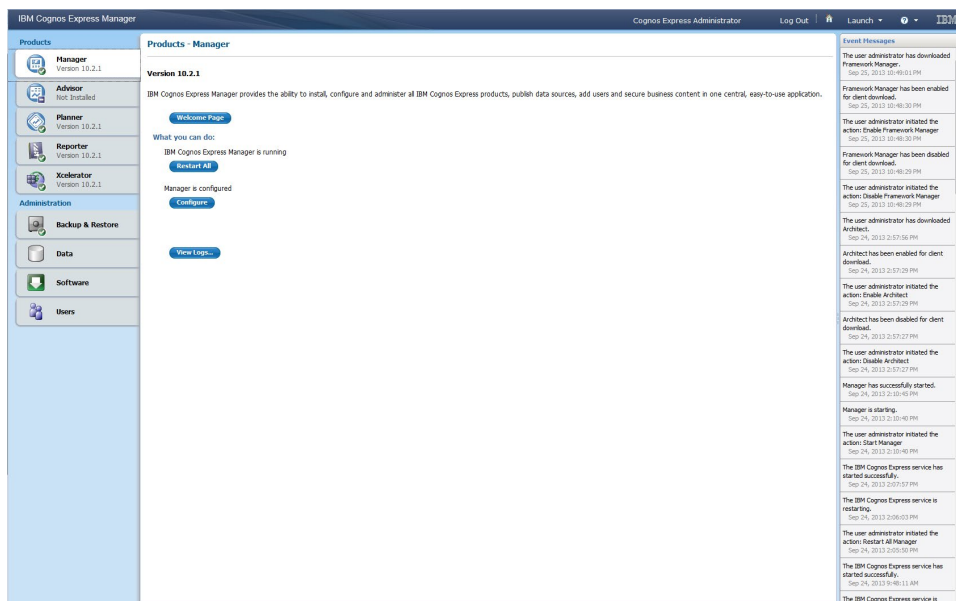
Figure 5: A web-based console makes it easy for users to manage administrative aspects of installation, deployment and maintenance.

Think BIG. Start small.

You have a vision for an information-driven business culture that ties insight to action in all areas of a company – from sales and marketing to finance, operations and human resources. By linking the insights gained through business intelligence and planning processes, organizations drive the information agenda that fuels business optimization and drives growth.

Cognos Express is member of the Cognos 10 family of products, which delivers the essential foundation for Business Intelligence, Performance Management and Business Analytics solutions. These products are designed to work together to help individuals, workgroups and entire organizations gain value from applying analytics to every business decision.

Cognos 10 products are right-sized for your organization and integrated so you can start addressing your most pressing needs with the confidence that you can grow your solution to meet future requirements. For example:

- Initial deployments can address the needs of individuals by instantly deploying the desktop capabilities of IBM Cognos Insight for data discovery and planning.
- Workgroups or departments can grow to share that insight through a server, add reports on larger data sets and interact with them on mobile devices with Cognos Express.
- Organizations can combine those insights with real-time and corporate information, place them on scorecards and deploy broadly with IBM Cognos Enterprise.

About IBM Business Analytics

IBM Business Analytics software delivers data-driven insights that help organizations work smarter and outperform their peers. This comprehensive portfolio includes solutions for business intelligence, predictive analytics and decision management, performance management, and risk management.

Business Analytics solutions enable companies to identify and visualize trends and patterns in areas, such as customer analytics, that can have a profound effect on business performance. They can compare scenarios, anticipate potential threats and opportunities, better plan, budget and forecast resources, balance risks against expected returns and work to meet regulatory requirements. By making analytics widely available, organizations can align tactical and strategic decision-making to achieve business goals. For further information please visit **ibm.com**/business-analytics

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