
2017 Digital & Content Marketing Predictions for Southeast Asia



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Anticipating Audiences Needs in 2017 (and Beyond)

The digital landscape in Asia Pacific is constantly shifting. Finding creative ways to skirt ad blocking and engage online buyers can keep any CMO awake at night. So it's no surprise that content marketing is picking up the pace in globally as a solution given its audience-focused merits.

Unfortunately, companies in Southeast Asia have been slow to adopt content marketing. This is partly due to the conflict between instant gratification over ROI and the “slow burn” associated with a content marketing approach. Another hurdle is a lack of homogeneity across audiences in Asia. There's no one-size-fits-all when you're reaching people from Indonesia to Hong Kong. These challenges are tough, but they are not isolated to content marketing – they are part of everything digital marketers do.

As we move into 2017, it's time to reflect on trends impacting digital marketing in the region. For your brand to succeed, it's no longer a matter of staying ahead of your competition. Your focus should be on anticipating audience needs instead – which content marketing is well suited to meet.

At LinkedIn, we believe marketers across Southeast Asia (and beyond) will push themselves in 2017 to meet audience expectations in new ways. Content marketing, combined with savvy digital distribution tactics, will be a big part of winning strategies in the coming year.

Whether you're a seasoned content marketer, or you're starting to feel left behind, we analysed the trends and created this guide as a highlights reel to help inform your plans for 2017.

Please have a read, discuss with your teams and peers, and build an unbeatable 2017 strategy.

Kind Regards,

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We want to know what you think content marketing will look like in 2017. Share your thoughts on LinkedIn with the hashtag **#2017ContentTrends**

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PREDICTION ONE:

Businesses will hire people with content marketing skill sets.

Businesses in APAC increased their production of content in 2016 - whether it was for personalisation, ABM, demand generation, or brand awareness. These demands were placed on employees who believed their use of content marketing was limited-to-basic.

Western businesses are succeeding with content marketing because it has become a staple part of their strategy over the past few years. By contrast, content marketing in Southeast Asia is still nascent. Companies will look for talent who have “content marketing” experience in 2017.



63%
OF BUSINESS
planned to
increase content
production in 2016



70%
OF MARKETERS
felt their content
marketing efforts
were **limited or basic**



PREDICTION TWO:

Marketers will include upper-funnel metrics to measure content marketing effectiveness.

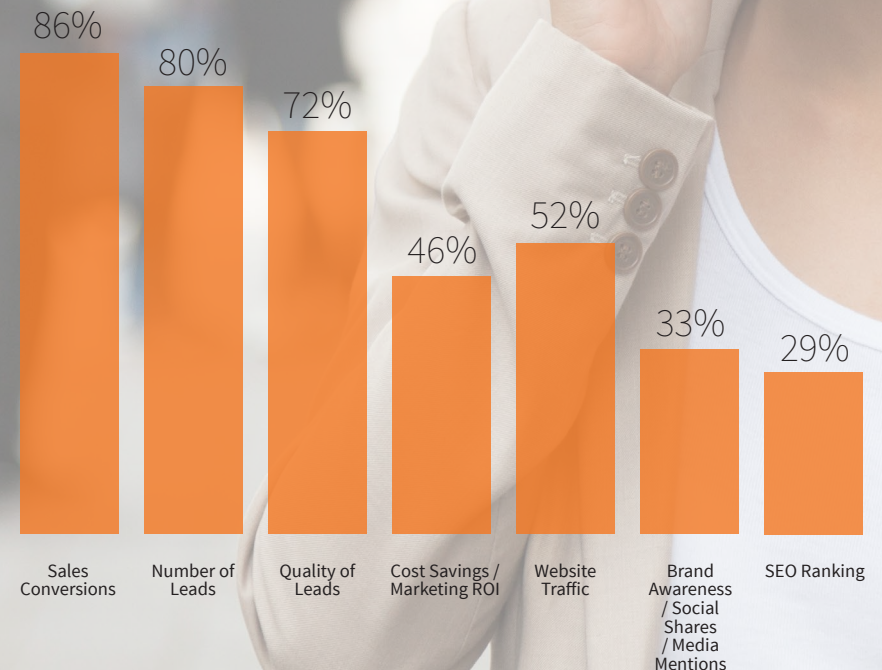
While marketers around the world are incorporating content to address audience needs throughout the buyer's journey, measuring its effectiveness continues to elude many. This is due to misalignment between objectives and measurement.

As an example, The Content Marketing Institute cited that 72% of marketers are solving for engagement with branded content in markets like Australia, where content marketing has become a staple. At the same time, when marketers are asked what is used to measure success of efforts in other studies, we see only 33% of them are looking at social metrics. This pales in comparison to using sales conversions as a barometer for success.

A misalignment on measurement could make the difference in telling your board that you're exceeding goals or missing them. Set up for success by pairing the right metrics with your primary objectives at the start of your planning cycle.

Content Marketing in Australia 2017: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends, The Content Marketing Institute, November 2016

Content Marketing Performance Metrics Used by B2B Marketing Professionals Worldwide




Source: Starfleet Media, "The 2015 Benchmark Report on B2B Content Marketing and Lead Generation," May 21, 2015 (eMarketer)

PREDICTION THREE:

B2B marketers will invest in multi-touch attribution models.

Marketers already know that they need sophisticated attribution instead of relying on site traffic and search rankings. Frighteningly, many brands do not have any attribution tracking.

56% 
of SEA marketers **do not use**
any attribution models

For marketers using attribution today, first-click is by far the most popular (47%). First-click attribution poses challenges that are unique for B2B brands, who often have a long and complicated buyer's journey. For B2B, investment in custom or multi-touch attribution models would more accurately weight marketing effectiveness and inform campaign optimisation.



Top Three Reasons Preventing Adoption of Attribution Tracking by Asia Pacific Companies



55%

Lack of knowledge



45%

Lack of time



39%

Technology limitations

PREDICTION FOUR:

Video content will be tailored to fit the buyer's journey.

The production cost of video content is one of the most expensive formats for brands. While video is widely popular with audiences, consumption. This makes it difficult when deciding how much to invest in video.

Marketers across Southeast Asia report varying levels of success with video ads on a country level. As a whole, objectives like Brand Engagement and Finding Deals were not effective. The best results were found in Triggering Product Interest, Purchase Intent and Search/Discovery.

Most Effective Video Ad Types by Buyer's Journey Stage

	Search & Discover	Trigger Product Interest	Trigger Purchase Intent
Hong Kong	63%	-	23%
Singapore	-	25%	-
Indonesia	-	56%	57%
Malaysia	37%	-	40%



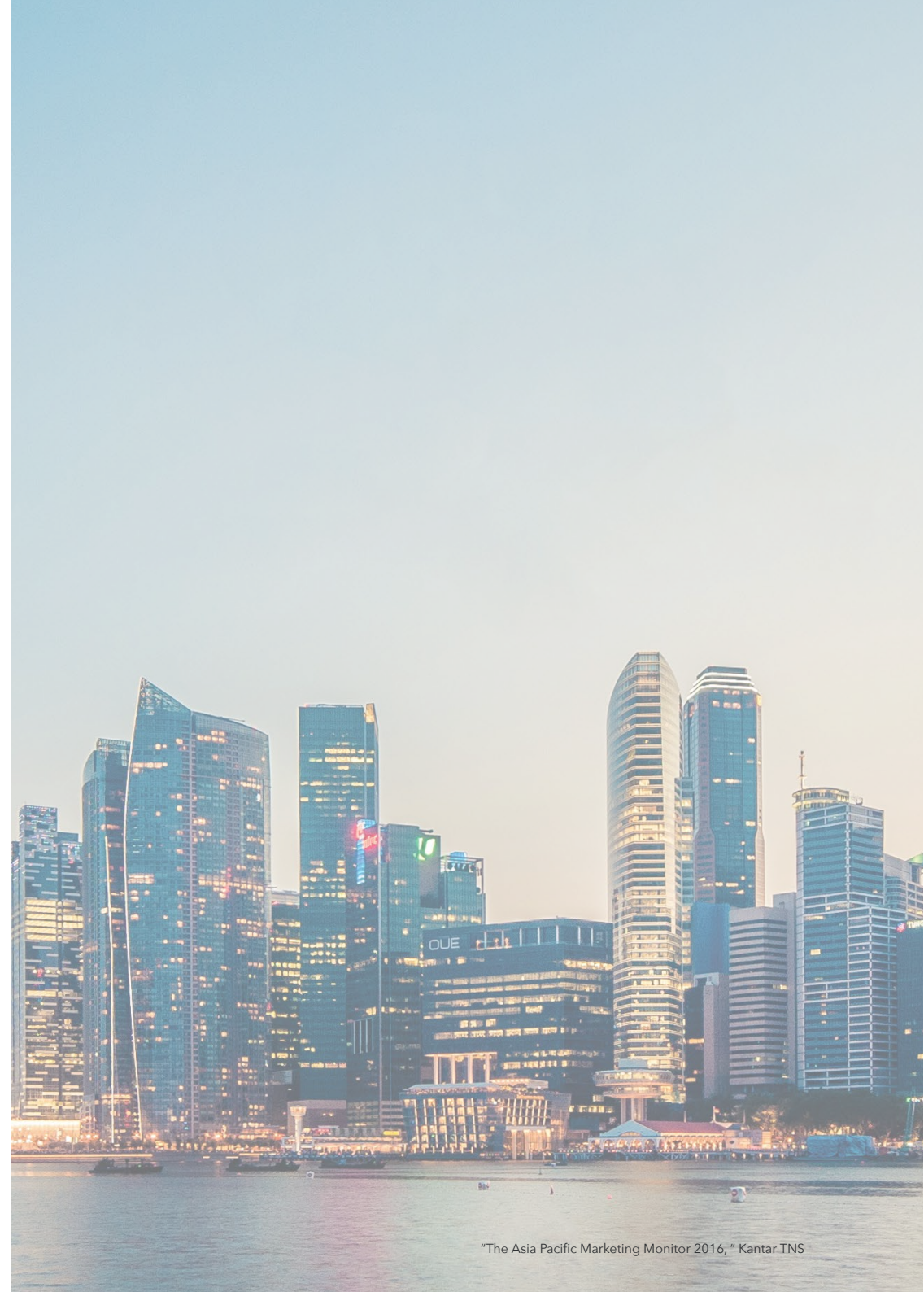
PREDICTION **FIVE:**

Marketers will gain control of customer engagement with social channels.

Across Asia, the media landscape is fragmenting as audiences have more options for information. Marketers are struggling with the increased touchpoints in the buyer's journey. In fact, only one in three believe they have control of customer engagement.

The solution will be social and content. As user adoption of social platforms increases in emerging Southeast Asian markets, this will create more homogeneity for marketers. The result will be process efficiencies in customer engagement.

Only
1 in 3 
marketers feel in control of customer touchpoints



PREDICTION SIX:

Snapchat will change the way B2B marketers create content.

Adoption rates of Snapchat in Southeast Asia are still low but they have doubled in the past two years. With geo-specific features, amusing selfie filters, and disappearing content, it's predominately popular with Millennials and Gen Z age groups – meaning it's a prime playground for B2C marketers.

For B2B brands, inserting messaging into Snapchat is probably the wrong context (#awkward). However, this is a critical space to watch because other social platforms have begun to mimic Snapchats features - like Instagram Stories. So the way B2B marketers think about creating content and distributing it via social will likely be impacted over time.

Snapchat Trends Shaping Content Production in the Future



Exclusive, visible in-the-moment, temporary content



Micro-storytelling



Hybrid user-generated content and brand messaging



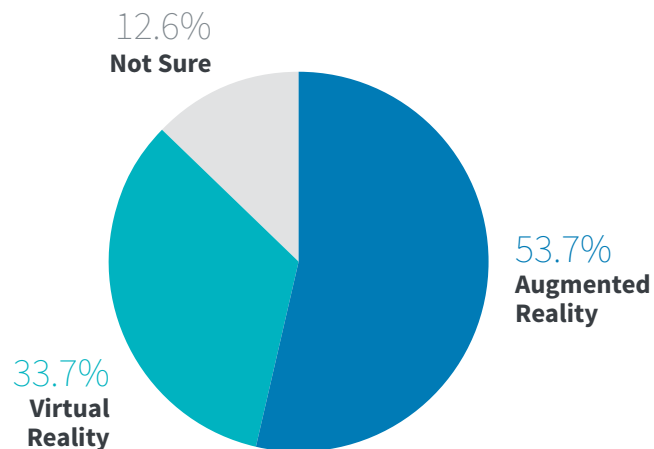
Encouraging audience self-expression

PREDICTION SEVEN:

53% of marketers are optimistic about the future of augmented reality.

With the success of popular augmented reality games, like *Pokémon Go*, marketers are keenly watching this space to see how it can be applied to content marketing. There is a general consensus that consumers are quickly embracing augmented reality. However, the high cost of production is a major barrier for 40% of product developers.

Product Developers who are more optimistic about the long-term future of augmented vs. virtual reality

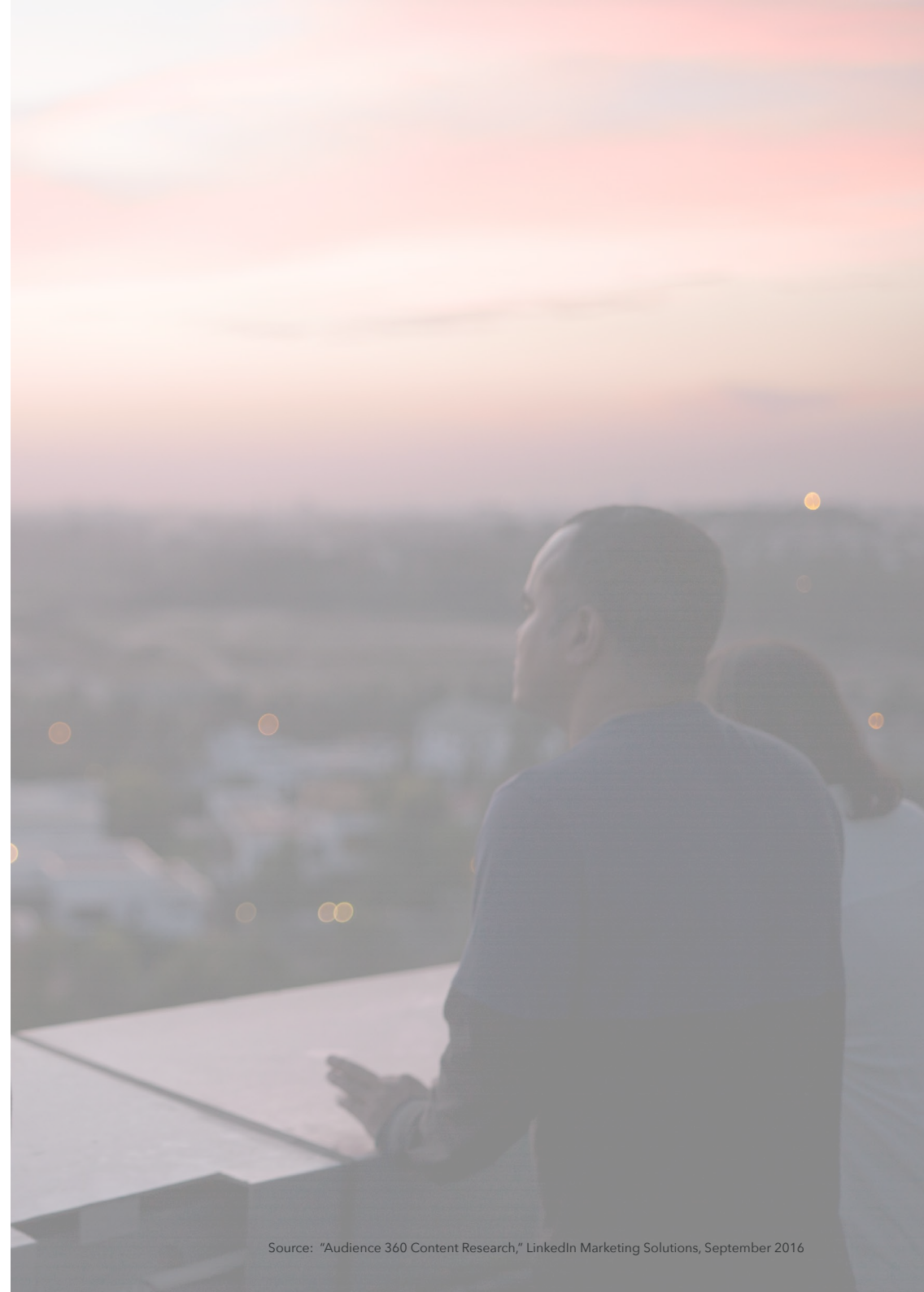


PREDICTION EIGHT:

B2B brands will increase visual storytelling, specifically via infographics.

B2B marketers often rely on data to gain the trust of prospects. Marketers will continue to leverage data within messaging, but will experiment with the format used to make statistics meaningful. This will lead to an increase in visual storytelling.

LinkedIn Member Likelihood To Engage With Infographics

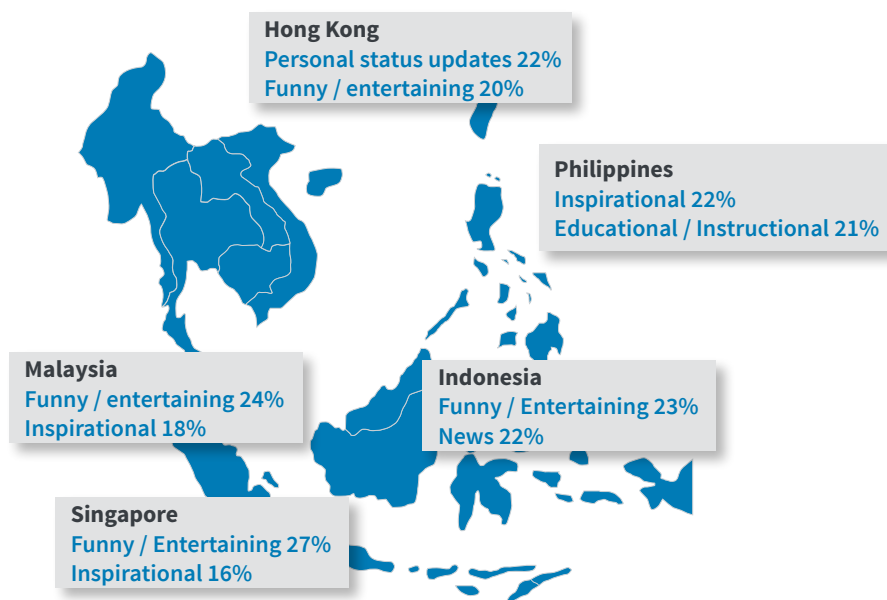


PREDICTION NINE:

B2B brand messaging will feel more authentic and less intrusive.

Sophisticated marketers realise that no one starts their day wondering what a brand will share in their newsfeed. B2B marketers will focus on user behaviour to identify what will resonate with their target audience. Appealing to professionals requires speaking to them in the ways they want to be spoken to – and that can vary across Southeast Asia. Avoid being intrusive by testing a tone that feels natural by region.

Top Types of Content Shared on Social Channels by Country





PREDICTION TEN:

Personalised distribution tactics will increase the need for content.

Today, audiences primarily notice personalisation on email, social media, SMS, social chat and mobile apps. As we move into 2017, brands will increase their use of personalisation on owned websites and e-commerce. Publish or Perish has predicted the increased personalisation will have a downstream impact on marketing teams to create more content to feed these audiences.

Internet users who receive personalised marketing content by channel

	 Email	 Social Media
Hong Kong	81%	74%
Singapore	80%	59%
Indonesia	70%	71%
Malaysia	70%	75%
Thailand	61%	68%



Checklist for Developing 2017 Marketing Strategies

We asked our team to share lessons they learned over years of creating marketing strategy that delivers ROI. Here are their top tips planning:

LESSON 1

Start the process early so you have time to circulate your plan with cross-functional teams, especially with sales leadership, and to iterate based on business needs. On average, give yourself at least three months.

LESSON 2

Involve business operations and map marketing objectives back to the sales and product goals. Make sure you are aligned with revenue projections and the product roadmap.

LESSON 3

Review previous campaign performance. Look for opportunities to improve and for trend lines to predict future performance or messaging fatigue.

LESSON 4

Don't make assumptions. Become an expert on the competitive landscape and conduct customer research.

LESSON 5

All objectives must have a measurable way to determine success.

LESSON 6

Plan for pivots and be ready to change.

LESSON 7

Line up vendors or experts to help create content.

LESSON 8

Have a "venture bet" to insure your team is not doing the same thing each year – this could be something as simple as testing video content or bigger like launching your business in a new market.



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