

2010: CROSSING BOUNDARIES TO CREATE 'HYBRID HR'

2010 WILL BE THE YEAR THAT HYBRID HR TRANSLATES FROM RHETORIC INTO REALITY, DRIVEN BY THESE TRENDS:

TREND #1 – FADING BOUNDARIES OF TIME AND PLACE

TREND #2 – ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYEES

TREND #3 – FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE

TREND #4 – HYBRID TALENT MANAGEMENT

TREND #5 – ACCOMMODATING MULTIPLE GENERATIONS

TREND #6 – GEOGRAPHICAL DISTANCES

TREND #7 – THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL

PREFACE

The recession has redrawn the blueprints of the business world, and nowhere more so have these changes been felt than in the HR department. A new flexible 'hybrid HR' approach is crucial for HR to succeed in this new decade.

Traditional HR models offered the choice between OnPremise, OnDemand and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO). Hybrid HR combines every available delivery option to provide HR services in real-time and to allow for maximum flexibility – HR services can be delivered to anyone, anywhere, via any device at any time.

By reading this white paper, you will learn how a company needs to be shaped to be ready for the future HR and business challenges.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

For HR executives, 2009 was an extremely turbulent year, in which they faced tough challenges and difficult decisions. As business executives, HR leaders focus on constantly strengthening and growing their organizations. But last year, things were radically different. HR attention had to focus on helping companies survive. We've faced raging debates on unemployment, climate change and massive government deficits. Unemployment was up and rising, customers were putting enormous price pressures on products and services - if they bought them at all - and companies were struggling to streamline their business in an effort to meet customers own pressures. And even though a degree of stability returned to financial markets at the end of the year and the broad economy has now begun to show signs of recovery, the system remains stressed and no one can be sure what will happen next.

It's become painfully clear that in today's world there's no such thing as "business as usual" anymore. The workplace is not only being upended by the global financial crisis, but also by advancements in technology, and a generational shift in workplace attitudes. The economic downturn has accelerated corporate cost cutting, forcing organizations to rework their business models and scrutinize every aspect of business.

Several studies show that CEOs and CFOs are more concerned about economic development than ever before. To address this insecurity, they focus on business solutions that allow for flexibility, as well as considering alliances and joint ventures, shared services and outsourcing. The low hanging fruits have been picked and it is now time for more serious measures that increase the flexibility of an organization, such as partnering and outsourcing. This is a logical step, as both risk and investment cost can be split over multiple parties. At the same time, we are witnessing the demand for greater simplicity across all levels of the organization. CFOs are trying to move fixed assets (e.g. human resources, real estate) to variable assets, as agility is the only way to guarantee sustainability in the long run. If costs are variable, it is possible to shift them up or down quickly, based on your company's current situation. Long-term capital investments are much riskier than they were in the past, and alternative onDemand models, where organizations (and individuals) pay only for what they use, when they use it, are becoming more attractive.

In addition, there are global workforce trends to contend with:

- Less than half of consumers across 17 countries are satisfied with their work-life balance. Various commitments and demands from work and personal/family life have contributed to this feeling of time-deprivation. People are looking for speed, convenience and anything that allows them to feel more in control of time¹.
- The "freelance class" has been growing in markets across the globe. In the U.S., freelancers now account for about a quarter of the workforce, up from 19 per cent in 2006². The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that as many as four in ten American workers will be freelance in another decade. Roughly 28 per cent of India's 459 million workers are contract employees. In Japan as much as 35 per cent of the workforce is made up of temporary or contract employees³.

¹ Datamonitor consumer survey in April/May 2009

² HR Survey by Kelly Services , May 2009

³ Survey by the Japanese Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare

- By 2050, the number of adults (16 and above) globally will exceed the number of young (under 15) for the first time in history. Currently, the population over 65 represents 20 per cent, with 30 per cent of the population aged 20-64 in G7 countries. This figure will reach between 35 per cent and 50 per cent by 2030, and between 40 per cent and 70 per cent by 2050 if current trends continue. Several areas of the world such as Europe, Japan, Russia and China, are facing the most immediate impact of aging, and even the youngest regions, Latin America, Asia and Africa, will have substantial elderly populations⁴.
- As people grow older and enjoy better health, they remain in work longer than previous generations. The number of people in the labor force aged 65 and over is expected to grow about ten times faster than the total labor force⁵.
- Women outnumber men in worldwide university enrolments and graduation rates. In North America and Europe, a third more women than men are on campus. Latin America, the Caribbean and Central Asia also show high rates of female enrolments. Male and female enrolment ratios in the Arab States are almost identical, suggesting gender parity⁶.
- In July 2009, for the first time, women accounted for half (49.9 per cent) of all workers on U.S. payrolls. This is a vast change from the previous generation where, in 1969, women made up only a third of the workforce (35.3 per cent). Nearly four in ten mothers (39.3 per cent) are now the primary breadwinners, bringing home the majority of the family's earnings⁷.

The financial crisis is changing people's attitudes towards the role of work in their lives and has shaken their faith in their employers. People have started to realize that even the most stable companies can not guarantee jobs or income security, and are now finding alternative ways to make sure they have financial security. For many people, the economic downturn has fundamentally changed how they work and how much they work. Either they have been made redundant or they must now work longer or less hours. The global downturn has been a major accelerator of these current shifts in the workplace, and it demands the introduction of new workplace values and ideas about worker productivity.

VANISHING BOUNDARIES

Every crisis has a tendency to act as a catalyst and bring to the surface issues, which are in need of resolution. Crises bring uncertainty and disruption to the normal way of working, forcing people to be creative in how they look for solutions, either by utilizing what is already in place or combining existing solutions to form new ones. This can bring about rapid changes and improvements in working practices, delivering flexibility and useful new applications. For HR, this crisis is all about the disappearance of borders and boundaries, and the creation of a new hybrid HR delivery model.

In the external world, the shifting and blurring of borders and boundaries has been imminent for a while. We are now in the process of eliminating boundaries of all kinds:

BOUNDARIES OF TIME

The rapidly expanding online world has enabled us to relentlessly pursue our thirst for real-time information and communication. The Internet is always on

⁴ United Nations, World Population Ageing

⁵ US Bureau of Labor Statistics (Dec 31, 2009) & Pew Research Center

⁶ 2009 Global Education Digest, Unesco

⁷ US Bureau of Labor Statistics

and offers instant gratification. When we send an email, we expect people to answer it right away, not the day after. When we tweet, we expect immediate response. And since we do not want to wait any more, Generation Y-ers abandon email in favor of instant chat applications, allowing them to communicate in real-time. The digital world has become synonymous with immediacy: real-time news, real-time purchasing, real-time publishing, real-time search, real-time reviews, real-time conversations and more. Customer experience is more important than ever in a world where speed and convenience are king and queen.

BOUNDARIES OF SPACE

In 2005, “The world is flat⁸” described a world without borders. A few years later, we now know that this flattened world was probably somewhat optimistic. Cultural habits and national legislation are deeply ingrained in people: the flat world applies more to economic markets and technology than to human behavior. We use the same tools, but that does not mean we use them in the same way. Innovations in technology allow us to connect, work and communicate wherever we like, as long as we can access the Internet. This has a vast impact on mobility: in order to work for a company, you no longer have to reside close to headquarters or an office location; you do not even have to live in the same country. The first completely virtual companies have been established: they no longer have physical offices and rely heavily on communication and Internet technology to communicate and enable collaboration among employees.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL BOUNDARIES

The rapid advances in technology that allow us to work when and where we choose also influence external and internal company boundaries. Where we used to go to the office to carry out our assignments, we can now answer emails while watching TV, or finalize a presentation after the kids have gone to bed. Through technology, homes are becoming connected and integrated, with consumer content and technology crossing over into the workplace. In other words, pervasive connectivity and less expensive communication devices blur the lines between personal and professional technology. Work and life are becoming more intertwined, giving people more flexibility regarding working hours. There is, however, a downside to this, and that is the creation of an “always on” mentality, where people are expected to be available at all times to address important and less-important work-related issues.

At the same time we observe the creation of the extended enterprise, which consists of a business and its employees, customers, suppliers and partners. Who is and who isn't employed by a company is not as clear as before: employees are assigned to projects for fixed periods of time and missing skill sets are catered for with external hires, while partners and customers collaborate in the development of products and services. As certain skills are in high demand, many employees go out on their own, offering their services to any company that needs them on a temporary base. Boundaries between the internal and external network are becoming blurred, in favor of a more integrated approach. The structure of an organization is constantly shifting and is no longer limited solely to employees on the payroll.

⁸ Thomas L. Friedman (2005). The World is Flat - A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century. Farrar, Straus and Giroux

BOUNDARIES BETWEEN SUPPLY AND DEMAND

It wasn't long ago that consumers went to a shop and chose from the products on the shelves. Since the emergence of the Internet however, barriers between suppliers and buyers have become blurred. Suppliers set up communities to actively engage customers in the creation of products and services. Products are offered as building blocks, so customers can create individual solutions tailored to suit their unique needs. Especially when offering services, you do not need a large investment to start a business: anyone with a good idea can start a marketplace and reach millions online. Suppliers factor the active participation of buyers into the success of their products: just think of the iPhone, which has become so successful largely due to the thousands of "Apps" supplied by the worldwide community of developers, or the AppExchange belonging to Salesforce.com.

The bottom line: while the appeal and influence of 'now' has been building for years, societal attitudes, customer expectations and new technologies are currently converging so quickly that you have no choice but to "go real-time": on your website, when offering customer service, in your business intelligence processes, your distribution, your sales and marketing departments. And it is no different when it comes to HR services. Real-time is setting employee expectations over what HR must offer too. Is your department offering easy to use self-service options yet? Many HR organizations have delayed the introduction of self-service applications out of fear that employees will not be happy doing things themselves and even consider it a lack of service. However, in the external world, they do everything themselves online, and as long as they can do that real-time, they consider that to be great customer-service. The moment has come to embrace the advancements of the external world and create a real-time, integrated HR offering.

CROSSING BOUNDARIES: HYBRID HR

A new business operating environment is emerging, and amid the shifting borders and changing boundaries, HR is moving to a new frontier. Just as we have seen that boundaries between corporations and the outside world are blurring, over the past years boundaries between HR and other corporate functions have slowly broken down, leading to a more integrated, business-oriented role for HR, focusing on adding demonstrable value to the business. It is now time to go one step beyond and implement Hybrid HR.

The term "Hybrid" refers to a composite of mixed origins, the result of combining different varieties or species. Hybrid HR is therefore the result of integrating different aspects of business and technology into human resources, in order to maximize workforce results and in turn, corporate returns. Hybrid HR is all about crossing boundaries and combining every available delivery option – HR outsourcing being one of them – to provide HR services real-time, allowing for maximum flexibility. Hybrid HR is cost-effective and standardized, allowing HR services and applications to be delivered to anyone, anywhere, any device and at any time, and the service is seamless, reliable and secure. Hybrid HR provides a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to large organizational issues, provides integrated thinking while eliminating silos, in order to arrive at integrative solutions and more effective outcomes.

When moving to Hybrid HR, one thing is clear: you must have a reliable and solid foundation to build from. HR must make sure that the administrative, transactional processes are run as efficiently and smoothly as possible while maintaining high levels of service. Self-service must be integrated and personalized, bringing HR services closer to the people who matter most: managers and employees. Basic HR must cross internal and external

boundaries by providing integrated OnPremise, BPO and OnDemand services.

When this HR service delivery foundation is solid, HR will have time and business support to firmly establish talent strategies. Sooner or later the recession will end and once we reach that point, companies will want to expand their workforce, whether that's through permanent staff, contractors or other forms of labor. HR must be fully prepared: which skill set does the company need on what basis and where can these skills be found for the right price? Talent strategies must cross geographical or corporate boundaries: skills can be found anywhere in the world.

In the next few years, a new kind of workplace will gradually develop. HR must devise ways of supporting multiple generations in the workplace, ensuring company and team effectiveness. And because the nature of labor contracts and working relationships is fundamentally changing, a cross-functional approach will be required, drawing on many business aspects to find solutions. Hybrid HR is crucial in finding ways to employ people at different stages in their lives and create the workplace of the future.

GET HR BASICS IN ORDER

The optimistic belief that globalization will lead to unlimited growth has come to an end. As has been mentioned above, the world is somewhat flat, but not as flat as we initially assumed. Legislation, cultural and religious differences determine and influence how we live our lives in different parts of the world, sometimes even in a country, in a phenomenon termed *Glocalization*. It refers to the creation or distribution of products and services intended for a global or regional market, but customized to suit local laws, flavors or cultures.

Glocalization is critically relevant to HR. Enterprises that operate worldwide are looking to standardize their core HR systems globally. But even though they design global standards and procedures at the corporate level, often HR policies must remain region or even country specific as a result of legislation. Many organizations struggle to find a global service delivery model that serves their needs when it comes to HR and benefits programs. Instead of adopting a variety of best-of-breed programs, they require an integrated global solution that delivers seamless HR services, while imposing global corporate standards integrated to adhere to local demands and responsibilities. In addition, these solutions must offer self-service to control or reduce costs and improve transactional accuracy.

In recent years, we have seen the emergence of cloud computing and Software-as-a-Service, meaning the location of technology systems is now irrelevant. Cloud computing enables businesses to move to an IT model where they use computing resources (network, server, storage) OnDemand and where applications are centrally served. Cloud computing-based solutions are based on a variable compensation scheme, highly automated IT architecture and virtual IT infrastructure to deliver services and therefore are uniquely suited to support HR. The cloud is enabling HR to be more agile, more productive and more flexible when designing OnDemand support systems.

With companies focusing on cost-efficiencies and scalable, flexible solutions, a growing demand for HR outsourcing across the globe can be seen. Since its inception around a decade ago, HR outsourcing has been steadily evolving, and many companies are now familiar with this concept. They are starting to use HR outsourcing as an integral part of their HR service delivery

strategy, integrating OnDemand, OnPremise and BPO to suit their unique business needs while allowing for flexibility:

- OnPremise – Traditionally companies bought software licenses, procured a server, then installed, configured, maintained and patched the software themselves. In this model, software is installed, made available through a network and runs exclusively for one company. Custom solutions, control and personalization are its key benefits.
- Business Process Outsourcing – In this model, companies shift the responsibilities for transactional HR processes to an external service provider. This frees up HR staff to concentrate on more strategic tasks and allows the company to focus on the core of the business – without having to think about IT maintenance or HR administration.
- OnDemand – Also known as Software-as-a-Service or ‘cloud computing’, this model delivers functionality without in-company IT implementations. Companies don’t buy the software or the infrastructure – all they need is a web browser to access the software remotely, and they pay a subscription fee. This model is often chosen for the short roll-out time and high flexibility it offers. OnDemand software is installed centrally and offers similar but configurable functionality to all subscribers, from a standardized, scalable, multi-tenant application environment.

When implementing Hybrid HR, companies don’t commit to a single deployment model, but combine different delivery models, designed to perfectly match their HR, IT and business needs. A combination of models brings the added advantage that past investments in OnPremise solutions are not lost: they can be incorporated into the Hybrid HR service model. In addition, the model also ensures that companies can rely on the in-depth knowledge pool of service providers for areas in which they are not as knowledgeable themselves, or to which they do not want to dedicate internal resources. As specialized OnDemand service providers can usually spread these costs over more customers, this creates a very effective model.

A hybrid service delivery model is not complete without integrated self-service to bring HR closer to employees. People increasingly perform their transactions via the web and are comfortable with entering personal data online in real-time. When you think of it, booking your flights online is not very different from browsing a training catalogue and signing up for a class. However, successful adoption requires a personalized user interface and minimal hurdles (or clicks) to perform HR transactions. Information, tools, and actions must be presented based upon a user’s role, preferences and priorities. Getting a spotless user interface into place is a key requirement, especially with users that are used to RIA (rich Internet applications), Google-simplicity, and iPhone-like interfaces. The Hybrid HR service model ensures that managers and employees have a central place to go for easy access to the resources they specifically need to manage their personal and workforce data.

GET YOUR TALENT STRATEGIES STRAIGHT

Managing talent in the workplace is not an easy task during an economic downturn. Most companies focus more on survival strategies and cost efficiencies than on expansion and growth. As a consequence, HR has been working on redundancies, social plans and exit strategies, while salary increases and training budgets have been slashed. Talent management might seem like a far-fetched option in dire times, but nevertheless it remains and will remain one of the most important focal points for the HR professional in order to preserve talent for the future growth of the organization.

HR professionals must think about how to deploy staff once their organization gets out of the recession. Some companies have taken a beating in their employer branding as a consequence of redundancy programs, and that must be dealt with before starting new recruitment campaigns. Surely some companies will continue as before and hire new staff, but many will not want to enter into long-term commitments until they are relatively sure the crisis is over. This means that they will gravitate towards contractors and temporary arrangements with fixed-term assignments and a performance result, on which part of the rewards rely, thus maintaining flexibility in the make-up of their workforce. The introduction of new legislation around executive rewards, stock option plans and bonus schemes leads to different reward plans, especially in the financial sector. At the same time more people will freelance, and negotiate result-based rewards per project, thus ending the bonus discussion. HR must accommodate these changes and design new contract terms and reward policies.

Organizational development centers on getting the right employee with the right skills at the right time and place, while personal development focuses on employees developing themselves based on their ambition and interests. Both are part of HR's responsibilities and by successfully combining them, talent management has become a corporate competency. In the past, organizations tended to set up expertise centers on subjects like performance management, recruitment or leadership development, but also in this area we observe a more hybrid approach, combining all of these talent-related subjects into an integrated talent management strategy. As part of Hybrid HR, the focus of talent management lies on integrating the organizational and personnel life cycle: recruit and staff, manage performance, plan succession, learn and develop, reward and recognize in order to create maximum value for both business and employee.

The new HR professional must therefore not only possess a good understanding of the talent management processes, but combine this with an in-depth understanding of the strategy and (changing) business model of the enterprise. Fortunately, more providers are offering IT solutions that support talent management processes and thus create a consistent approach that can be measured and evaluated. It is therefore important to ensure that in addition to the basic HR processes, talent processes are also supported by the right combination of OnPremise, BPO and OnDemand functionality. A sound decision making process based on thorough analysis must be part of each talent management strategy in order to demonstrate tangible results. Only by combining all aspects of the business and translating them into an effective talent management strategy will the HR professional will be able to attract, develop and retain the right people at the right time.

GENERATIONS AT WORK: FLEXIBILITY IS KEY

For the first time in history, four generations will participate in the workplace at the same time. And although the integration of these generations can happen smoothly, for many companies this poses significant challenges. There is, however, one common denominator between these widely varied groups: they are all looking for flexibility at work.

Due to the recession, many baby boomers have been forced to delay their retirements, albeit temporarily. Baby boomers still want to play an active role, but do so on their own terms, so flexibility is still the key demand. A survey of employees in the G7 countries conducted by the AARP⁹ shows that many

⁹ AARP (2007) Perspectives of Employers, Workers and Policymakers in the G7 Countries on the New Demographic Realities

baby boomers have a new view of retirement that includes continuing to work in some capacity after exiting their primary careers as a result of better health and longer life expectancy. They want to work part time, as coaches and consultants for example, to stay active, connected, and engaged. The social dimensions of work as much as financial considerations motivate them.

The Millennials, people born around the 21st Century, have a more liberal attitude towards the workplace and believe that flexibility is a not a luxury, but a right. They are not concerned with boundaries, having grown up in a digital world that is always connected and where help is just a mouse-click away. They live in large networks, and expect fast and easy access to anyone in the company. In return they show their commitment and engagement by offering opinions and advice to colleagues at all levels. The Millennials have adopted a 2.0 mentality: they perform best when working in teams and within flatter hierarchical structures. They define success not in terms of seniority or title, but in who can supply the right knowledge and what matters to them personally. Millennials will push companies to embrace internal use of Web 2.0 tools such as wikis and social networks, which encourage collaboration, give employees a greater voice and flatten hierarchies.

Companies already are hiring short-term independent contractors and consultants and fewer traditional employees because these forms of labor are cheaper and more flexible. Having multiple generations in the workplace allows companies to create a flexible workforce that is not so interested in moving up, but views the career ladder as a lattice that accommodates their lifestyle. Millennials drive this trend, demanding a better work-life balance, but also young parents with children and baby boomers who look to ease gradually towards retirement. New job profiles must be designed, that allow employees to move laterally into a new role – changes that may come with a pay cut. These jobs focus on results, however that happens best, in a three-day week, at night, from the office or at a local coffee house. Studies¹⁰ show that result-only work environments result in an increase in productivity. Flexibility therefore is a compelling workforce strategy that HR must put into practice, and design tools and strategies to accurately define and measure results.

As an HR professional, you must prepare for this. You will manage a diverse population, ranging from younger workers to older workers and everyone in between, working all over the world. What can be troublesome is the unprecedented differences in everything from work ethic, and communication styles, to behavior and work-life expectations. You need to be pro-active in devising new strategies to accommodate these diversities, like wellness programs, education and ergonomics that allow people to be productive and avoid workplace accidents.

As businesses become more flexible and the economy begins to grow once again, the workplace will change, becoming increasingly decentralized and geographically dispersed. People that work together in teams may seldom if ever interact face to face, as they are scattered all over the globe. The tools that are collectively known as Enterprise 2.0 – blogs, wikis, and social networks, support the more flexible, faster nature of business. They allow for collaboration and social networking and help to capture and preserve knowledge from workers, which is important in a business environment with loose, flexible labor contracts. As the lines between professional and personal communications become increasingly blurred, HR leaders will need to incorporate enterprise social networking into their overall unified communication and collaboration strategy and policies.

¹⁰ University of Minnesota, Flexible Work and Well-Being Study (ongoing)

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF HR IS HYBRID

The final quarter of 2009 showed more optimism and growth in several areas. In many countries the economy is now slowly turning around. It is common belief that we will not return to the growth levels of previous years any time soon, and if we experience any economic growth, it will remain relatively low. Many governments are in debt, as they borrowed heavily to keep financial institutions from collapsing and stimulate their economy, and citizens are now forced to pay off these loans over the coming decades. There are signs of a recovery, but initial indications are that it is not yet as strong as anticipated.

2010 will be a year of economic transition and transformation, a more sober year, with a focus on value for money, cost efficiencies and preparing for a new period of growth. Even though the global economy is expected to rebound in 2010 – the International Monetary Fund anticipates 3.1 per cent growth – consumers will save, not spend their money and employers are likely to continue their cost-saving initiatives. Reengaging demoralized employees who remain in the organization will be critical for restoring faith, before 'better opportunities' surface. The skills shortage is far from over and an increasing demand for top talent will hit much quicker than people realize.

So what must HR do? Continue to tread the familiar path, or take a look at all developments and reinvent itself in order to be prepared for the influx of new generations with very different attitudes towards work? Though unemployment is at a record high and may get even higher, work will eventually return and new jobs will be created. But they won't look the same as those that existed before. The workplace will be more flexible, more freelance, more collaborative and far less secure. It will be run by a generation with new values, where women will increasingly be at the controls.

In a flexible ever-connected world without boundaries, working relationships will become fluid. People work for companies on various projects in different teams for fixed periods of time as long as they feel that the exchange is beneficial to both parties. During this time, HR must be the linking pin that makes it all happen: supporting these new working relationships with labor contracts and reward schemes based on performance, and ensuring that there are plenty of the required skill sets at the right time.

In order to be successful, this effort requires crossing or breaking down traditional boundaries and using all available knowledge within the organization. HR must establish an effective employer brand using techniques from marketing and communications. It must procure the right skill sets based on supply and demand models, implement training using serious gaming, provide insightful reports using business intelligence and apply CRM to create lasting relationships with current and future employees while keeping them loyal and engaged. Also, HR must ask their customers to rate their services using customer services techniques, all supported by a truly integrated combination of OnPremise, BPO and OnDemand services. To step up to this challenge, HR must become truly hybrid, integrating functions, knowledge, service delivery models and technologies to achieve maximum results.

It will be interesting to see if this change is only for the new companies on the block, and whether the large global organizations can adopt Hybrid HR too. Even though technology has eliminated a number of barriers, other barriers remain, for people of all ages, and cultures. The results will translate into new workplace values and new ideas about worker productivity. When adopting a hybrid approach, HR will be uniquely positioned to connect people – and therefore knowledge, expertise and possibilities – across an organization and beyond.

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