Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI)

ANZSI NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, number 4, May 2006

From the President

The ANZSI Committee is very aware of the need to ensure that our members provide good quality indexing services to clients. In many professions, there is a prerequisite course of academic study which ensures a basic level of skill, and which therefore acts as a form of 'accreditation' for graduates.

Unfortunately indexing (and allied professions like editing and technical writing) are only lightly touched on in Australian tertiary courses. Our members tend to rely on self-education through reading texts written by other indexers and attending training courses offered by other indexers. We are therefore always interested in models used by professional bodies for accrediting their members.

If we as a Society decide to go down the path of accreditation, the Editors' model is certainly one that ANZSI should consider.

The indexing profession itself offers a few such models. The British Society of Indexers has various 'levels' of membership, based initially on success in completing the Society's course of study and later on various levels of experience. Our own Society has a peer review system for book indexing which grants 'registration' to successful applicants. The American Society of Indexers uses neither registration nor accreditation, but there are many more indexing courses available to prospective professionals through tertiary institutions, government departments and recently via the Society itself.

For the past few years, Australian editors have also vexed over the question of accreditation. Until recently, professional editors' organisations were state-based bodies which interacted through a Council of Australian Societies of Editing, CASE. In the past year there has been the formal establishment of a new national body, the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd). One of the key issues addressed by this body has been a model for professional accreditation. In the latest issue of *The Canberra Editor* (vol 15 no 3 April 2006, pp 1,3), Louise Forster, a member of the Accreditation Board (and a member of ANZSI as well) presented an overview of IPEd's proposed accreditation model which I would like to share with you.

Most accreditation models are tied in some way to a course of study. The Australian accreditation model for editors differs from English and Canadian models in that it is evidence based. Editors will need to provide evidence of their experience and skills by submitting a portfolio of material. Examples of suitable documents and other evidence include letters to clients, edited texts, stylesheets, timelines, references and testimonials, and explanatory notes. Accreditation is meant to be within the reach of any competent working editor, so there is only one level of assessment for accreditation: basic editing competencies. These basic competencies have been identified in a set of written Standards for Editors produced by IPEd, and accreditation assessment will be tied to the criterion from each section of the standards.

Each applicant for editing accreditation will be assessed by an assessor from another state or territory. Assessors and applicants will be anonymous; and there will be no contact between them. The purpose is to ensure that there are the same levels of editing skills expected across the country – and this also ensures 'portability' of one's accreditation status.

Accreditors are distinguished editors from around the country, nominated by each of the state-based editing societies. The initial round of accreditors were chosen because they were endorsed by their societies, accomplished and respected by their peers, were ethical, professional and active supporters of editing standards. Many were honorary life members of their state societies. It is

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It is *your* newsletter, and we are totally dependent on contributions, both large and small, from members. Please contact the editor if you have any questions about the suitability of items for publication. The editor reserves the right to edit or abridge contributions.

Please send files via email in MS Word Rich Text Format or plain text (ASCII). Do not embed footnotes in Word files.

Next deadline
31 May for the June 2006 issue.

Graphics
Image files can be accepted in most common formats. Do not embed images in text files. Camera-ready art and photos can be scanned by the editor. Note that photos need to be clear, sharp and contrasty if they are to copy well in black and white.

Advertising charges
Full page A$175; half page A$90; quarter page A$35; full year 10 for the price of 8.

Membership charges
A$55 per year; A$30 half year (Jan to June).
Student member A$30.
Subscriptions to the Newsletter A$40 p.a.

The Indexer
(international indexing journal)
Maureen MacGlashan, Executive Editor
<editor@theindexer.org>
Cost: A$35 for ANZSI members.
ANZSI Corresponding Member,
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Indexers Available
<www.aussi.org/IndexersAvailable>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

ANZSI 'Official delegate' – expressions of interest

Are you attending either of these international conferences? If so, would you like to be the ANZSI official delegate? The ANZSI Committee offers financial assistance towards the conference registration fee fot its official delegates. If you may be interested, please contact the Secretary at <secretary@aussi.org>.

American Society of Indexers (ASI)
Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada (IASC/SCAD)
Joint Annual Meeting and Conference
15-17 June 2006 in Toronto, Canada

Full details are available at <www.asindexing.org>.

Society of Indexers Annual Conference
7-9 July 2006 at St Aidan's College, Durham, England
The ABC of Indexing

Full details are available at <www.indexers.org.uk>.

NZ Branch news

Our branch library is now up and running. We have a number of books and publications available, including:

August Indexer: proceedings from the 1999 International Conference

Australian/New Zealand Standard. AS/NZS 999:1999. Information and documentation

Booth, Pat F. 2001. *Indexing: the manual of good practice.*

Browne, Glenda and Jon Jermey. 2004. *Website indexing: enhancing access to information within websites.* 2nd edition

Mulvany, Nancy C. 2005. *Indexing books*. 2nd edition

Selected issues of *Key Words*, newsletter of the American Society of Indexers

Training in Wellington has been postponed until September because we still haven't found a suitable venue. Any help with this would be greatly appreciated.

Tordis Flath
NZ Branch President

ANZSI 2007 conference

'The Indexing Life', Melbourne, 16–17 March 2007

Topics will cover a variety of issues of professional concern to indexers, including:

Book publishing / production
Indexing and Abstract Databases
Web indexing / Information Architecture
Technical issues for book indexing
Indexing electronic documents
Historical and retrospective materials
Language and culture of indexing.

Keynote speakers are Geraldine Beare, Freelance Indexer, UK, and Professor Pam Peters, Director of the Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University, and Editor of *Australian Style* magazine.

There will be workshops on Thursday 15 March.

Are you interested in presenting a paper at the conference or attending the conference? If so, contact the Conference Committee at <conference@aussi.org>.

Further details will be available on the ANZSI web site shortly.

Margaret Findlay

(From the President, continued from page 1)

expected that in the future, any accredited editor will be eligible to become an accreditor.

Accreditation is not for life; editors will be re-accredited regularly (proposed for every five years) although this will not require a full re-application. Editors will have to demonstrate that their skills and knowledge are current.

There are many aspects of this evidence-based model that are appealing, particularly for our profession where we do not have a standard universal course of study. I personally like the fact that it could be applied to all types of indexing and thus might alleviate our current problem of not being able to offer registration to database or online indexers. I also applaud the idea of regular re-accreditation to ensure that skills and knowledge remain current. If we as a Society decide to go down the path of accreditation, this model is certainly an option that ANZSI should investigate.

It is obvious that our editing colleagues have thought long and hard about their model. ANZSI wishes them well with it, and we will watch its progress with interest.

Lynn Farkas, ANZSI President

ANZSI medal 2006

ANZSI is again offering its Medal for the most outstanding index to a book or periodical compiled in Australia or New Zealand. The Medal will be presented to the indexer responsible for the best work submitted and the publisher will be presented with a certificate.

To be eligible for the award, the index must be in print and must have been first published after 2002. It must have been compiled in Australia or New Zealand even though the text to which it refers may have originated elsewhere.

For the award, indexes are judged at the level of outstanding professional achievement, thus sufficient material is required, both in quality and quantity, for appraisal. The index should be substantial in size, the subject matter should be complex, and the language, form and structure of the index should demonstrate the indexer's expertise as well as serving the needs of the text and the reader.

Publishers, indexers and all interested persons are invited to nominate indexes which meet the above criteria, and which they regard as worthy of consideration. Indexers are encouraged to nominate their own works.

Please send recommendations, with bibliographic details, together with a copy of the book (which will be returned if requested) to:

John Simkin,
Australian Society of Indexers Medal Competition,
PO Box 680,
Belgrave, Victoria, 3160

as soon as possible but no later than Monday 3 July 2006.
For further information, please contact John Simkin at the above address or by e-mail to:

<simmo27au@yahoo.com.au>

ANZSI calendar of forthcoming activities

We've talked about it – now ACT Region Branch has sent in an actual example of how it might look. Thank you, Edyth Binkowski, and other branches please note!

Branch activities

Date of activity	Organiser	Name of activity	Venue & time	Contact details
26 May 2006	ACT Region	Introductory B-o-B indexing training	Nat Archives 9.00–4.00 pm	Geraldine Triffitt gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au
27 May 2006	ACT Region	Birthday banquet	Asian Cafe, 7.00 pm	Geraldine Triffitt gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au
29 May 2006	ACT Region	Intermediate B-o-B indexing training	Old Holder H.S. 9.00–4.00 pm	Geraldine Triffitt gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au
24 June 2006	ACT Region	Annual Reports indexing training	Griffin Centre 9.00–4.00 pm	Edyth Binkowski geoffb@webone.com.au

National/international activities of interest

Date of activity	Organiser	Name of activity	Venue & time	Contact details
16/17 March 2007	ANZSI Vic Branch	ANZSI Conference, Melbourne	Rydge's Riverwalk, Richmond	Margaret Findlay mafind@bigpond.net.au

From the literature and other thoughts

Survey of book publishing in New Zealand

The *Survey of Book Publishing in New Zealand* (Version 1, November 2005) published by the Book Publishing Association of New Zealand has filled a gap in the available statistics, providing useful background information for people working in the industry. It is available as a word document at the bottom left of <www.bpanz.org.nz/newsandinfo.html>.

The survey results were grouped by size of the company (small, medium and large). Small publishers make up the majority of the industry, with 44% employing one or less staff members, and only 18% employing more than seven people. The industry as a whole employed 994 people in 2005. 44% of publishers say their business is growing, while 8% say it is declining. Education is the biggest publishing category.

Thanks to Kathryn Mercer for telling me about this document.

Nancy Mulvany's blog

Nancy Mulvany has a new blog at <nmulvany.blogspot.com>. When mentioning it on Index-L, Jochen Fassbender asked whether it was the first blog by an indexer. The South African society (ASAIB) also has a blog <www.saindexers.blogspot.com/>, which they can update more quickly than they can update their website.

Vocabulary clarification

Taxonomies and other vocabulary management tools can also be valuable tools for clarifying the terminology in an area, and showing the 'white space' or gaps within definitions. A Montague Institute Review article (2004) discusses the concept of white space with respect to the term *mobility* in the sustainable development environment. Encouraging connections across the white space should encourage organisational innovation.

Graef, Jean L. 2004. 'Linguistic tools for knowledge discovery' *Montague Institute Review*, March. Introduction available at <www.montague.com/abstracts/discovery.htm>; full paper available to members only.

Online Currents

Sadly, *Online Currents* ceased publication in December 2005. It is now freely available through Pandora at the National Library of Australia. Go to <pandora.nla.gov.au/index.html> and search for 'Online Currents'. Ignore messages that say 'This title is no longer being archived' – this just means that no more issues are being added. When you get to the *Online Currents* section, click on 'Fulltext journal' and then select the issue of interest. Issues are available in .pdf and HTML formats. You will find a range of interesting topics on issues of relevance to librarians and indexers.Google thinking for us

A Google search for 'creatinine kinase' returned three hits for this search phrase, separated by a thin line from a note 'See results for: *creatine* kinase' with a further four hits. This was an interesting result as I was searching to confirm that the book I was indexing was using 'creatinine' and 'creatine' appropriately. It was as if Google had foreseen the problem and provided the answer ready-made.

Guess-the-Google

Guess-the-Google is a fun site that shows you a montage of images from Google Image Search, and lets you guess what the keyword was that retrieved them <grant.robinson.name/projects/guess-the-google>. You need Flash 8 or higher.

Academic and Scholar

The beta version of Google Scholar <scholar.google.com> has been joined by a test version of Microsoft's Windows Live Academic Search <academic.live.com> as sites for focused searching of the academic literature. Phase one of the beta version concentrates on computer science, electrical engineering, and physics. Searches for 'book indexing', 'website indexing' and so on bring up an interesting collection of articles, most of them not the ones we are likely to have read. One of the top hits was 'Syntactic approaches to automatic book indexing' by Gerard Salton (1988), a pioneer in a range of automatic indexing processes <portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=982048&dl=>.

The future of indexing - positive

Seth Maislin writes optimistically in 'The indexing revival' (<taxonomist.tripod.com>), about the future of indexing, particularly in the broader sense in which he includes metadata and taxonomy creation.

Jan Wright, in 'The Future of Indexing', quotes Seth's paper at <www.winwriters.com/articles/indexing_future/index.html> and also discusses decisions by Microsoft not to have an index for their Longhorn Help system and by Apple to add more indexing back into their Help engine, in the form of synonym rings. She says Microsoft's decision is not surprising as their mainstream products have not had true indexes for years (although their book editors apparently pay a lot of attention to indexing).

The future of indexing – negative

In the last few months of 2005, *Online Currents* noted the closure of two long-standing indexes – *InfoQuick*, an index to the *Sydney Morning Herald* created by the State Library of NSW, and the ALISA (Australian Library and Information Science Abstracts), which has been run as a not-for-profit service by the Australian Clearing House for Library and Information Science at the University of South Australia since 1982. The service relied on regular donations of publications and the supply of these had been dwindling. Concerns about the economics of database indexing were aired as early as 1995 by Lynn Farkas at the AusSI 'Partners in Publishing' conference.

Australian Style *June 2005*

Dr Robert Eagleson, a Plain English consultant, argues the case for representing all numbers mentioned in texts as figures, not words ('Figuring out numbers', pp.1-2). Pointing out inconsistencies in the application of existing rules, he shows many situations where numbers are used effectively throughout texts, including at the beginning of sentences. Consistency in the use of figures in texts could make consistent indexing of numbers easier, removing the desire of some to

spell even those numbers written by the author as figures, as if they were written as words. People who responded to his article (December 2005) pointed out that misspelt words are less likely to lead to error than misspelt mumbers. Some used both letters and figures in their professional practice: an engineer used both together, e.g., '5 (five) while a writer of patchwork instructions uses words and figures for different parts of the instructions, e.g., 'four strips, 12 x 4, eight strips 8 x 2'.

Multiple multiple indexes

PDR for herbal medicines (3rd ed. Thomson/PDR, 2004. Senior index editors Noel Deloughery and Shannon Reilly) has no fewer than 9 indexes! Perhaps the indexes are being used in the same way as tables within the text might be used.

- alphabetical index (scientific and common names found in the herbal monographs)
- therapeutic category index, e.g., ADJUNCT ANTINEOPLASTIC THERAPY
- indications index, e.g., ABDOMINAL CRAMPS
- homeopathic indications index (many of the same indications, with homeopathic remedies listed)
- Asian indications index
- side effects index, e.g., ABDOMINAL BLOATING
- manufacturer's index
- drug/herb interactions guide (under each bold-face drug or herb entry you find a list of the herbs or drugs with which the agent may interact, along with a description of the interaction's effect)
- safety guide (not for use during pregnancy, not for use while nursing, for use only under supervision).

Variant name index

Drugs and controlled substances: information for students (Blachford, Stacey L. and Krapp, Kristine, eds. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2003) has an index (by Linda Mamassian) that contains *just* variant names, with *see* references to the preferred terms, which are in another index. Presumably this was done so that the preferred terms are not swamped by the vast number of slang terms. A small sample follows:

A-bomb *see* Marijuana
Abyssinian tea *see* Catha edulis
Acapulco gold *see* *Marijuana*
Ace *see* *Marijuana*
Acetazolaminde *see* *Diuretics*
Acid *see* *LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide)*
Actiq *see* *Fentanyl*

Glenda Browne

Thesaurus Development Workshop

Lynn Farkas ran a very successful Thesaurus Development Workshop in Canberra on 8 April. Lynn is an experienced trainer and the workshop was a relaxed and useful learning session. Sixteen participants included one each from Melbourne and Brisbane, and several from government agencies such as Health and Ageing, and Centrelink. We were a mixed bunch, with varying expertise in thesaurus construction, from novices who were there to learn the basics, managers responsible for staff working on thesaurus projects who wanted to gain an overview of what was involved, to experienced thesaurus creators who were there for the opportunity to discuss thesaurus construction with other enthusiasts.

The morning session covered terminology, thesaurus basics, relationships, and rules and standards. For the terminology session, Lynn drew on an unpublished discussion paper by Prue Deacon '*Taxonomy: clarification of the terminology and some comments about working with clients*', from the ANZSI NSW Branch taxonomy seminar in March. Lynn discussed the meaning of terms such as taxonomy, classification, controlled vocabulary, ontology and information architecture, explaining the differences between these concepts and when each might be used.

The 'basics' session dealt with why you would use a thesaurus, different uses (such as indexing services, web and intranet indexing, and document management systems), what a thesaurus does, and the advantages and disadvantages of thesaurus use and management. Lynn pointed out that a thesaurus is built for a perceived subject area and for a perceived user group. Scoping the project – what you want to achieve with the thesaurus, who will use it, and who is the audience of the service which it supports – is very important.

We discussed the standard relationships – equivalence (USE/USED FOR), hierarchical (broad term [BT] , narrow term [NT]) and associative (related term [RT]), and the questions to ask to test the relationships and make sure that the logic is correct. We discussed 'word stock' – the basic list of terminology which the thesaurus constructor uses or compiles from authoritative sources. We practised building hierarchies – an exercise which lead into an interesting discussion of how terms are interpreted in different contexts and by different individuals, and how terms for processes, concepts and objects are dealt with in hierarchies.

After lunch Lynn gave an overview of the thesaurus standards promulgated by the International Standards Organisation, British Standards Institution and National Information Standards Organisation (NISO). A set of rules for thesaurus construction derived from the standards was provided for guidance.

We worked on a small thesaurus creation project in groups of four. This was fun – the topic was alternative medicine and there was considerable hilarity among the groups as we grappled with the concepts and definitions, shared our different interpretations of terms and tried to put them into consistent and logical hierarchical structures. Inevitably, discussion revealed quite different approaches and thesaurus frameworks among the groups.

This was a worthwhile workshop for participants – a very good overview of the thesaurus construction process, and I think everybody learned something. It was also fun. Part of the proceeds go to the re-development of the ANZSI website, so our association benefited as well.

Sherrey Quinn

INDEXING: technical, professional and business-related issues

The Victorian Branch of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers organised a panel discussion in March on the challenges, uncertainties, delights and vagaries of indexing and the indexing life. The panel members were freelance indexers Max McMaster, Michael Ramsden and Karen Gillen.

About 20 of us sat down for an informal discussion on a range of technical, professional and business-related issues. Members had come armed with queries and cautionary tales and shared their thoughts and experiences with the group. With four members of the audience new to indexing, care was taken to give examples and to explain the indexing process.

These notes cover the issues raised and the resulting general discussion.

Multiple authors using different terminology

Multiple authors sometimes use different terminology. Decide who is going to read the book, i.e. the audience, and use terms they would be familiar with. Qualify the terms in the index, eg Terminus (Railway); Terminus (Cablecar), and use *see* and/or *see also* links between terms. Be aware of regional terms (spelling variants) that mean the same thing, particularly if the authors come from different countries, eg. Great Britain / United Kingdom or fibre / fiber. A glossary may be useful in a student text, to define terms which have been used by the different authors. Discuss the issues with the editor. It was lamented that 'Less editing means more time spent indexing'.

Selecting indexing terms

Index references are pointers to further information, so passing mentions should not be indexed. A useful rule to remember – 'There needs to be more information on the page than in the index'. Example from old *Yellow Pages*, Aged persons, Older persons and Elderly were all used with different businesses underneath. Pick one term and use cross references. Another example, for a book on the history of railways don't put all the terms under Railways.

Making money

Can you make a fortune indexing? No, or as one member of the audience phrased it, 'To become a millionaire indexer – start as a billionaire indexer!' Work in a subject area you know about. It can take a long time to get a good reputation, but a short time to get a bad one.

Taking breaks

Time spent indexing before a coffee or lunch break depends on the type of text being indexed. 'When I would like to skip that page, it's time for a break.'

Feedback on index

Indexers do not get feedback as a rule, perhaps a query about a specific entry. In ten years one indexer has only received thanks from an author once.

Working with editors

After the initial contact, take the quoted time that the proofs will arrive 'with a grain of salt'. Editors have three parameters: length of time index will take to do, the quality of the index and the price. A good editor will check 50% of an author's index, 15% of an index by an indexer used for the first time and 5% for a known indexer. Indexing is unpaid proof reading! Tell the editor or author of errors or inconsistencies. Praise editors that have done a good job.

Working with authors

Working with authors is more difficult than working with editors. There is scope for misunderstanding if the author is not clear on the process. Thus, the author may expect certain terms to appear in the index, even if the term does not appear in the text ...

Indexing older material

A book published in 1898 on early Victorian history refers to Aborigines as Blacks. In 2006, this is not a politically correct term. While it was agreed the index would contain entries for Blacks and Aborigines, there were differing views on whether to place all index entries under Blacks or Aborigines.

Indexers may be required to do research to clarify names or book titles mentioned in the text. Always consider 'Who is the audience?' and whether there may be a need for several indexes, for example name, subject, and place indexes.

Ethical or political issues

If you don't like the politics or ethical issues of the book – don't take the job.

Other types of indexing

There are several other types of indexing for example Lists, Records, Archives, Genealogy etc. In 1891 about 28,000 signatures from Victorian women were collected in an effort to gain the right to vote. This list of names and addresses has been transcribed into an index as part of the Women's Suffrage Petition Project:

<www.parliament.vic.gov.au/womenspetition/>.

Other examples include Shipping lists; Records of Births, Marriages, Deaths etc.

Deadlines

Things happen. You can get sick, computers can crash, proofs can take extra time to arrive by mail. Tell the editor what has happened. Dates are flexible. A smart editor will have allowed a few days grace. Charge extra if forced to work weekends or if the index is urgent. Always make regular backups of index, and don't keep them on the computer.

Quoting

ANZSI recommended hourly rates are on the website. Suggestions on quoting included: ask for sample chapter and time yourself with it, before you quote; try not to quote – ask for their limit and give a ball park figure; give a range of costs based on page rates for that type of book; or give a maximum cost and wear any minor differences.

The Society of Editors (Tasmania) <www.tas-editors.org.au> has a tip sheet on pricing and quoting for freelancers. Little things, like phone calls and emails, soon add up – for some people it is about five billable hours spread over eight hours. If the job changes, eg. there are more photographs than expected, contact the editor and revise your quote.

Editing indexes

Remember to allow for editing time when quoting. Time spent editing an index varies, some indexers allow 50% of the total time, while others allow 10%.

Indexers often have to explain the publishing or indexing process to first time authors or editors.

Page ranges

There seems to be a trend, particularly in school texts, not to use page ranges. For example, 'term 1, 10, 13-17' is becoming 'term 1, 10, 13'. This is not a good trend and should be avoided.

Web indexing

This is book indexing without page numbers! Since you can't have cross references, you need to repeat links. Web indexing doesn't happen very much as companies are not prepared to pay for it.

Thank you to the panel members for leading this interesting and informative discussion and to Suellen Gosstray, Women's Health Victoria, for hosting the meeting. As usual the meeting adjourned to a nearby restaurant for dinner and further discussion.

Mary Russell

ACT Region Branch birthday banquet

Don't forget the banquet!

It's 30 years since the Australian Society of Indexers first met! Tthe ACT Region Branch is celebrating with a banquet dinner at the Asian Cafe, 32 West Row, Canberra City on Saturday 27 May at 7.00 pm. Cost $30 plus drinks. Interstate and New Zealand indexers will be with us.

We have booked the big room at great expense and we really need to fill it, so please bring your partners, family and friends! RSVP to Geraldine Triffitt by Monday 22 May, Ph +61 2 6231 4975 or email <gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au>.

And those training courses in May and June …

1. Back-of-book indexing courses, conducted by Max McMaster:

   Introductory on Friday 26 May, and Intermediate on Monday 29 May. Details in the April newsletter or contact Geraldine Triffitt, Ph +61 2 6231 4975, email <gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au>.

2. Annual reports indexing course, Saturday 24 June, conducted by Michael Harrington. Details in the April newsletter or contact Edyth Binkowski, Ph +61 2 6281 2484 or email <geoffb@webone.com.au>.

ANZSI Online – feedback required!

You will have read about ANZSI online in the April newsletter. The ANZSI membership database, incorporating *Indexers Available*, is now online and interactive. The ANZSI Committee would like to have some feedback from you, our members, about this new development. Please email your comments to <secretary@aussi.org>.

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