

AUTUMN 2007

# aspect

News, views and information from Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum



## WOMEN ROCK!

### this issue

**Clients Corner**  
The Miller's Arms  
George Noble

**Focus on Fraud**  
Tackling identity  
theft

**Dog World**  
Leading the way

**Inheritance Tax**  
Major changes

# Welcome

When we launched **Aspect**, a key element of our philosophy was to highlight 'untold' business success stories. This issue does exactly that and provides ample evidence of the flourishing business community in Hastings and Rother.

The prosperity of County Joinery and Managing Director, Roger Hodsoll, is to be celebrated. New employment, a strong order book and solid plans for growth all add up to a business in rude health. This fantastic news is the result of Roger committing his future to restoring the fortunes of a well known and respected Sussex company - and succeeding!

County Joinery is not alone in having plenty to smile about. Artemis Nursery and Dog World Magazine are also examples of clients that are breaking new ground and moving dynamically ahead in their respective sectors.

In addition to our focus on clients, I am delighted to welcome the contributions of professional friends and contacts. Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum have always supported clients by offering a fully comprehensive service. The expert articles in this issue reflect that determination and include specialist technical advice in a number of areas that we hope will prove useful.

Anyone who would like to contribute an article in the future is more than welcome to get in touch with their idea.

Our cover story is all about the way in which women are leading on a number of key and high profile initiatives at Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum. Little needs to be said about the Ashdown Hurrey Hastings & Rother Women in Business Lunch Club and the incredible success it has had. The launch of the Business Woman of the Year Award was a natural development from the event and it is very exciting that the first winner will soon be announced at the Christmas lunch club gathering on December 14.

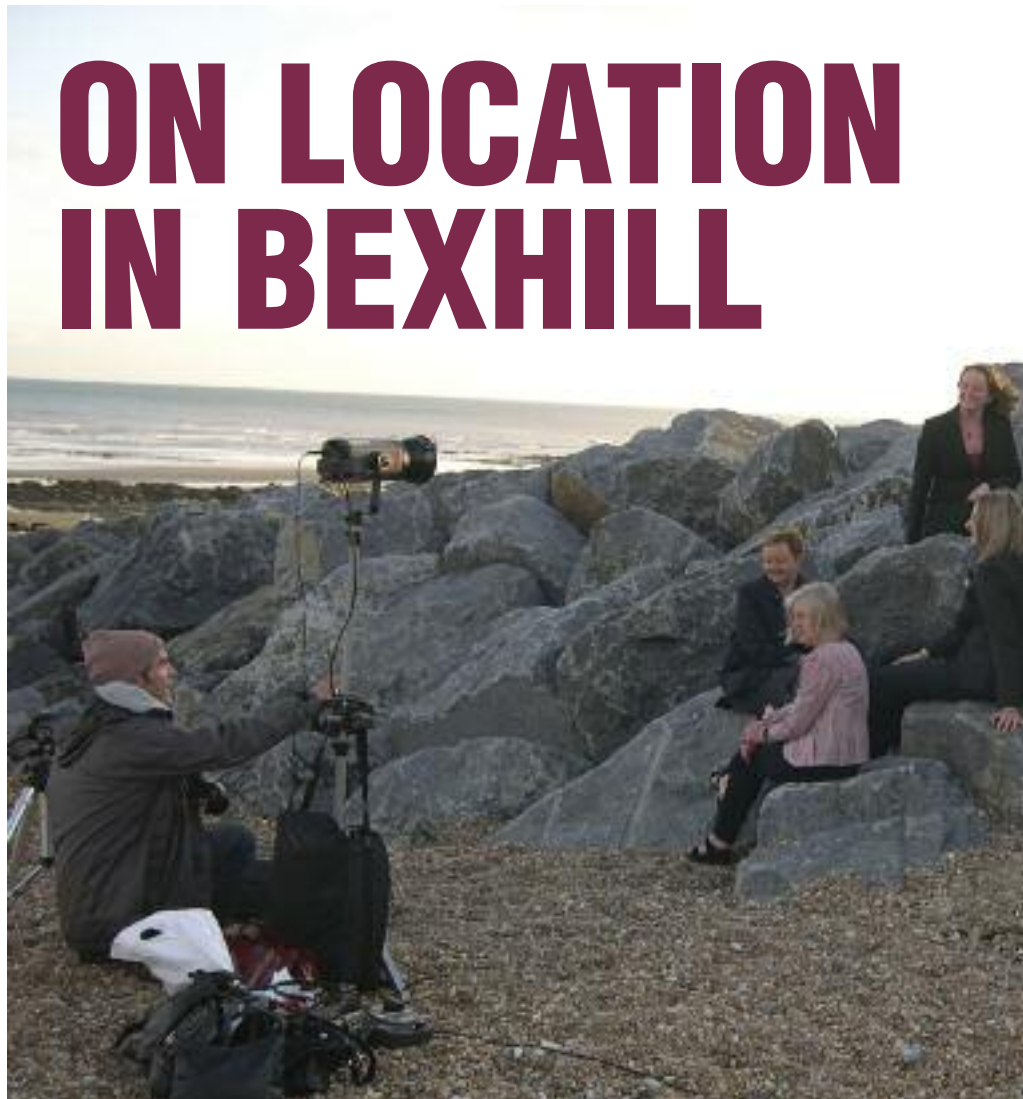
If you have any questions about **Aspect** please do not hesitate to contact one of the team at the Bexhill or Hastings office.

**Terry Weston** Marketing Partner



Partners; Paul Bradbury, Patrick Lee, Jeff Moore and Terry Weston

# ON LOCATION IN BEXHILL



# Kerry & Stuart

When you think of a national newspaper you may think of the *The Times* or the *Daily Mail*, but in a quiet corner of Ashford there is a different kind of national paper, one that delivers very specialist information to a devoted band of 60,000 readers every week.

DOG WORLD has been in existence in one form or another for more than 100 years. Its readers are passionate dog owners. Not just your average dog owner, because for the readers of DOG WORLD, dogs are their life.

The paper covers the UK dog show scene in huge detail. While everyone has heard of Crufts – the world's biggest dog show – few will have heard of the Driffield and Richmond championship shows, or Horley, Evesham or Salisbury and Wilts open shows.

Every weekend there are dozens of dog shows going on in every corner of the country and it's DOG WORLD's job to carry the results and photographs from all these events, as well as features and the latest news about all aspects of the world of dogs.



**A**s the cover picture shows the women at Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum are not shy retiring types. With over twenty female staff in roles across the business, the accountants, advisers, managers and secretarial staff are running a number of initiatives that are having a major impact across the region.

Much has been said about the flagship business event in Hastings and Rother, the Ashdown Hurrey Women in Business Lunch Club. Thanks to the efforts of Ann Grant and colleagues, the club enjoys unprecedented support and is a beacon for the regional business community.

Having established the foremost business club in the area, the women have now turned their attention to the introduction of a top business award.

The first winner of the Ashdown Hurrey Hastings & Rother Business Woman of the Year will be announced on December 14 at the Royal Victoria Hotel. The presentation will be made during the Christmas gathering of the lunch club and is guaranteed to draw a record number of guests.

Ann Grant said:

**“We wanted to introduce an award that befits the profile of the number one networking function in East Sussex and also reflected the key role women in business are playing in the area. We have received an excellent response and I’m delighted we will soon have our first winner.”**

The Business Woman of the Year will receive a magnificent trophy, coverage in the local media and a feature article in the next issue of Aspect.

**For more information contact Gemma at Ashdown Hurrey on 01424 720222.**

# take the lead

This summer Ashdown Hurrey partner Patrick Lee was instrumental in putting together a management buyout at DOG WORLD when managing director Kerry Williamson and editor Stuart Baillie bought the company which publishes the paper and the internationally renowned DOG WORLD Annual.

The pair have exciting and ambitious plans to take the paper to a new generation of readers. This will include employing the latest technology to ensure that all the news that DOG WORLD readers want is delivered to them as quickly as possible while retaining the high standards of accuracy and integrity for which the newspaper is renowned.

Patrick said:

**“I am delighted to have helped Kerry and Stuart during the buyout process. Under their stewardship the magazine has a very bright and positive future that is extremely exciting for all concerned. I know their ever growing readership will be delighted with the news that they will be enjoying DOG WORLD for many years to come.”**



# Protecting against HMRC Investigations

**In May 2007, HMRC reported that they are 'on course' to claw back an extra £3.5 billion from taxpayers every year to set against the revenue lost to tax avoidance and evasion. As a consequence, accountants are seeing a growing number of enquiries being launched.**

During October and November 2006, the tax evasion hotline received about 80,000 reports of potential tax evasion, some of them unfounded, some malicious, but all of them giving the tax authorities a reason to launch an enquiry. HMRC may also react to an entry on a tax return or something about your financial affairs that looks unusual. In addition many enquiries are generated completely randomly and it becomes obvious that every taxpayer is at risk.

Straight forward enquiries tend to last a year while more complex cases drag on for years. An average case will have fees of £2,000, whilst a more involved case will cost much more.

To guard against the financial shock of dealing with an enquiry, 'fee protection' schemes that were once seen as a luxury, have become a necessity.

Most accountants can recall instances where a client has settled with HMRC rather than fight their corner, purely because of the costs involved.

Ben Sallows, Associate at Ashdown Hurrey, said:

**"Fee protection allows us to do as much work as is necessary to get the best outcome for our client."**

The Ashdown Hurrey fee protection scheme is provided by the market leader, CCH Fee Protection, and is tailored to suit the needs of both private and business clients.



Ben added:

**"If clients are not already part of our fee protection scheme I would urge them strongly to consider it. It isn't expensive and it could save a lot of money and anxiety."**

For more information please contact Ben Sallows on 01424 720222 or e-mail [feeProtection@ashdownhurrey.co.uk](mailto:feeProtection@ashdownhurrey.co.uk)

## Fraudsters want to be you . . .

**Despite the growing number of newspaper and TV headlines about the perils and prevalence of identity theft, there is a belief that many people see it as yet another, 'it won't affect me' crime. But this laissez-faire attitude is leaving thousands of people every day with a long term headache.**

To counter the problem our various public and private institutions are employing ever more elaborate systems to block similarly sophisticated types of fraud and spending a huge amount of money in the process.

The majority of new financial arrangements will mean that a "money laundering" check is carried out by the organisation you are dealing with, and while not generally too difficult to cope with, it can delay the action you require. Part of the requirement will be to prove your identity, usually with one item of photographic evidence and one item confirming your address.

It is at this point in the checking procedure that the canny criminal can take advantage of anyone playing fast and loose with their own identity, making a 'new you' possible in the time it takes to rifle through your wheelie bin.

It is essential that you don't allow the fraudsters to have access to the kind of information which will make their job easier. Leaving personal details in your domestic rubbish puts you on a fast track to identity theft.

Partner at Ashdown Hurrey, Patrick Lee, said:

**"Buying a small home shredding machine is an increasingly cheap option if you want to be completely safe, but just ripping up the document will have the same effect. It's wise not to throw away any document which has your name and address on it, but utility bills, bank statements or other official documentation should never be left to chance."**

Regrettably, this fairly complex form of crime produces huge dividends for the criminal fraternity, meaning they will go to great lengths to achieve it – don't give them a big head-start by leaving the tools to do it in the bin!



# Joinery Top In County

When Roger Hodson was made redundant in the mid 90's he was far from optimistic about how his years of experience as a joiner, albeit highly skilled, were going to return him quickly to full time employment.

With opportunities in the sector few and far between, it was a well-timed meeting with the then owner of County Joinery that was to change the outlook for Roger altogether.

The family run firm wasn't enjoying the greatest success and was looking for a prospective buyer. Roger saw an opportunity and set forth on a mission to restore the fortunes of this East Sussex joinery business.



From left to right, Chris Addison, Financial Director, Roger Hodson, Managing Director and Tony Eggleston, Estimator at the County Joinery HQ.

On taking over in 1997 the indicators were not encouraging. The order book was empty and machines sat idle. However, by drawing on old contacts and some round the clock hard work, Roger turned an annual turnover of £97k, into one in 2007 of £190k every month.

County Joinery is now based on the Marley Lane Business Park, employs 22 staff and with a growing portfolio of clients has advanced plans to expand and maintain the rapid pace of growth following Roger's takeover.

Carl Read, Associate at Ashdown Hurrey, said:

**"Roger is proof positive that with determination, belief, hard work and the right advice, businesses can flourish and overcome challenging conditions that slowed their development in the past."**

# London commute leads to Hastings Nursery

The young children enjoying themselves at Artemis Nursery in St Leonard's have the slog of working lives in London to thank for their new day care.

Husband and wife Dominic and Lee Buggy, and Dominic's sister, Emma, decided to leave jobs in the capital and employ their skills and experience on an ambitious project of their own.

Like any good team the threesome has every base covered. Emma boasts an extensive background in teaching and wider education issues, Lee is the marketing expert and the financial plans are overseen by Dominic in liaison with Carl Read at Ashdown Hurrey.

After extensive research into local childcare needs and a successful search to find the right location, work started on turning a large 8 bedroom family home in Chapel Park Road, into a brilliantly colourful, secure and wonderfully equipped environment for all children aged 5 and under.

Emma said:

**"Our aim is to give all the children the best possible start by encouraging their natural curiosity in a nursery that caters for their every need. We are very proud of what we have created and delighted that parents and children are as pleased as we are with the level of care we are providing."**



## NEWS IN BRIEF

Kathy Baker has become an Associate with Ashdown Hurrey. The news comes shortly after Carl Read and Ben Sallows also celebrated promotions to Associate.

Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum have signed up to the St Michaels Hospice Patron Scheme.

The women in business lunch club dates for 2008 have now been confirmed: 14 March, 27 June, 12 September and 12 December.

## Pre-Budget Report

The recent pre-Budget report contained a major surprise in relation to capital gains tax reform to take effect for disposals on or after 6 April 2008. For individuals, trustees and personal representatives their gains liable to tax will be charged at a new single rate of 18%. Both taper relief and indexation allowance are to be withdrawn together with further measures to simplify rules relating to assets held at 31 March 1982.

Anyone considering making a disposal for capital gains tax purposes in the near future should consider the implications of the changes carefully, as it is possible that disposals after 5 April 2008, especially business assets, will incur a higher tax liability.

**For help and advice contact Patrick Lee on 01424 720222.**

Artemis opened at the end of August 2007 and has dedicated rooms for each age group, with the qualified staff offering the children a broad and balanced curriculum which follows 'Birth to Three Matters' and the 'Foundation Stage Curriculum'.

Carl Read said:

**"With various forms of financial support and incentives available from the Government quality pre school child care is now accessible to many more people. Since opening, the nursery has proved hugely popular with mums and dads and is a superb addition to this sector in the Hastings area."**

# Changes to Inheritance Tax...



**Experts in various fields make valuable contributions to Aspect. In this issue Antony Caulfield, Partner at Gaby Hardwicke, Solicitors, discusses some big changes that relate to a very hot topic!**

The rules for married couples and civil partners before the Chancellor's announcement on 9th October were relatively straightforward and can be summarised as follows:

On the first death if you left everything to your surviving spouse or civil partner there would be no inheritance tax payable. The first spouse or civil partner to die would not, however, have made use of their inheritance tax free band.

On the second death anything above the inheritance tax free band (currently £300,000 in the 2007/2008 tax year) would be subject to inheritance tax at 40%.

Married couples or civil partners can now transfer the unused element of their inheritance tax allowance to the survivor of them. This will only be possible, however, if the survivor dies on or after 9th October 2007.

For many couples, if they have left everything to the survivor of them, this change will effectively double the tax free amount they can leave to their

eventual beneficiaries on the survivor's death, meaning they could pass up to £600,000 free of inheritance tax.

In recent years discretionary will trusts have proved very popular as a way of mitigating inheritance tax by ensuring each spouse or civil partner took advantage of their inheritance tax allowance. Will trust arrangements remain potentially very useful and may be desirable in any one or more of the circumstances set out below:

Where a couple's combined estate is approaching or exceeds £600,000 a discretionary trust will ensure that any growth in value of the assets in the trust are not taxed as part of the survivor's estate on their death.

Where the first spouse to die owns any business or agricultural property. This will often qualify for business property relief or agricultural property relief at 100%.

Where there is a second marriage and either or both spouses have children from a previous

marriage. In this case the trust provides a safeguard to ensure the surviving spouse alone cannot simply make a decision to exclude those children from a previous marriage.

Where couples are concerned at the risk of the survivor remarrying and then leaving their estate to a new spouse.

Where couples are concerned at the possibility of the survivor entering long term care in the future and the first to die's assets being taken into account in order to pay nursing home fees.

For those who already have discretionary will trusts in place they will need to consider whether they now wish to simplify the arrangements under their wills or whether they wish to retain the flexibility that a discretionary will trust offers. It is important to remember that there is nothing to stop further changes to the law in this area in the future.

**For more information contact Antony on 01323 435964 or email [asc@gabyhardwicke.co.uk](mailto:asc@gabyhardwicke.co.uk)**

## Player Profile

**Mark Weeks-Pearson**

Manager



## ...gives it both barrels

**How long have you been with Ashdown Hurrey?**

6 years.

**What did you do before joining AH?**

Economics degree then worked in sales for an internet company that went bust (guess the sales team wasn't too good!) so took the opportunity to go travelling for 10 months in Asia, Australia and America. I came back and worked in recruitment before realising that I would prefer to be an Accountant rather than placing Accountants in work.

**What is your role in the Hastings office?**

Manager of Section 32.

**When not accounting what do you do in your spare time?**

5-aside. Doesn't mean I'm any good, my colleagues will confirm this!

DIY and fixing up my house.

Walking the dog.

Soon won't have spare time as I am an expectant father.

**Your likes and dislikes about Hastings?**

Likes – love the sea and Hastings has a lot of character.

Dislikes – A21, takes ages to go anywhere else.

**Your ambitions?**

Do the London Marathon.

**Your ideal office companion?**

Sir Alan Sugar, he doesn't beat around the bush with what he thinks and would keep me entertained.

**Favourite film?**

Airplane – Leslie Nielsen makes me laugh whatever mood I'm in.

**Last book read – not just the cover!?!**

Dan Brown – Fallen Angels.

**If you could make one decision that would change the world, what would it be?**

That's a lot of responsibility – pass.

**Worst habit?**

I'm not admitting anything.

**Best habit?**

Fidgeting, it keeps me slim.

**Proudest moment?**

Finding out I was going to be a Dad.

# The only country pub in town!

At first glance The Miller's Arms in Hastings looks like a fairly typical pub in a typical busy street. Shoulder to shoulder with a row of terraced houses and not far from various super stores, you would be forgiven for thinking that the beer garden environment will be more urban jungle, than eye catching flora and fauna!

But how wrong you would be... tall hedges, a lush lawn and far reaching views across treetops and distant hills, belies the townscape at the front.

Any thirsty passer-by is recommended to pop in and see for themselves. But the garden oasis was not the only surprise that was highlighted at The Miller's Arms.

George Noble is the landlord and has been working in the pub industry in Hastings for over 20 years.

14 years ago George set up the Hastings & Bexhill branch of the Charlton Athletic Supporters Club.

Charlton are well known for their commitment to community projects and doing all they can to encourage new and existing fans to attend games. Initially, George and other supporters started a humble car sharing scheme, but word quickly spread and soon the football club showed an interest too.

Charlton decided to make transport and tickets available and it wasn't long before a convoy of coaches were picking up supporters across East Sussex and travelling up the A21.

George said:

**"Charlton have been brilliant by subsidising the trips and making tickets available. The whole idea is to get supporters to the games for as little as possible and the Valley Express offers a return fare for just £5."**

Mark Weeks-Pearson looks after the accounts for George at Ashdown Hurrey and is full of praise for his work in the community.

**"Watching professional football is an expensive business and out of reach for many people who would love to see their favourite team and players. The Valley Express scheme is a superb initiative and George has been instrumental in making it available in this area."**

For more information about the Valley Express call George on 01424 439075.



George Noble

## Enterprising students set to puzzle shoppers

The well known and highly successful Young Enterprise scheme is thriving in East Sussex and Mark Weeks-Pearson is playing a key role.



Mark (pictured with the students) is working with budding entrepreneurs from Filsham Valley School who have designed and developed an ingenious puzzle that they hope can take advantage of the rush for Christmas gifts.

From initial concept to product sales, the students are responsible for every step in the process with Mark providing expert advice on all areas of running a business.

He said:

**"The students are very enthusiastic and learning all about what it takes to turn a good idea into healthy profits. Like any business, they have to buy in supplies and they even pay over tax to Young Enterprise on profits they make. Some schemes are so successful that they carry on after the students have left school."**

To find out more about Young Enterprise and perhaps become a volunteer adviser, contact Mark on 01424 720222.



David Lakin

# The Loan Arranger

## Which way for the housing market?

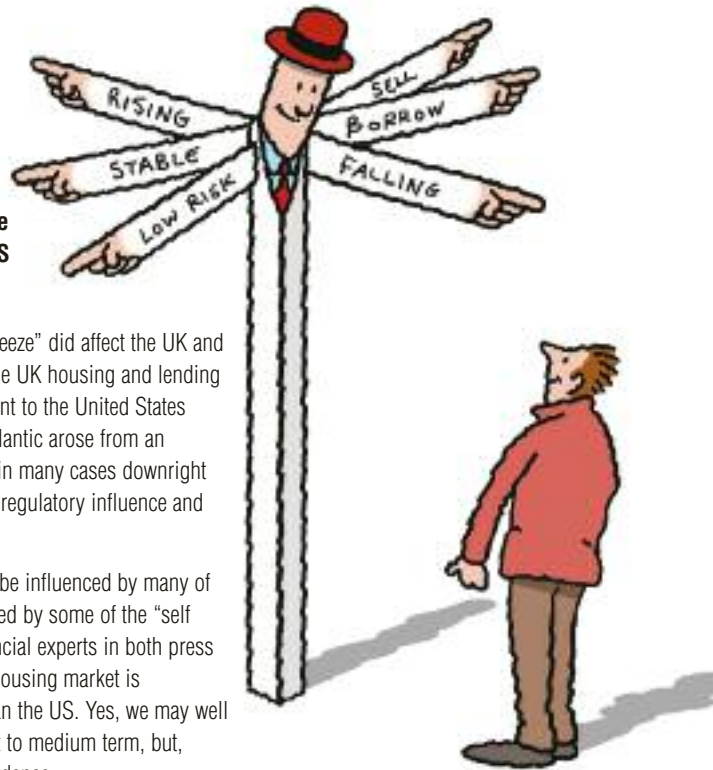
**What an interesting, and at times turbulent, Autumn it has been following the problems in the US finance and mortgage markets which resulted in many US lenders either going bust or requiring financial help from the authorities.**

Suddenly, the talk of the next movement in UK interest rates was down and not up and we witnessed a sight not seen in the UK for decades – namely, depositors queuing to withdraw their savings from a leading UK bank. Suddenly faith, in not only financial institutions but also the housing market, plummeted and words such as trust and confidence which so many had taken for granted for so long, evaporated.

Happily, with various reassurances and guarantees regarding savers funds, trust and confidence seem to be slowly returning, although being realistic, the property market could well be, at best, sluggish for some time to come.

Remember, whilst the US “sneeze” did affect the UK and European funding markets, the UK housing and lending market is substantially different to the United States market. Problems over the Atlantic arose from an over-supply of property, lax (in many cases downright negligent) lending, very little regulatory influence and finally a weak US economy.

As a consequence, try not to be influenced by many of the hysterical headlines created by some of the “self taught” and opinionated financial experts in both press and TV. The outlook for our housing market is considered much brighter than the US. Yes, we may well suffer some blips in the short to medium term, but, in the longer term, have confidence.



**Call David Lakin on 01424 739222 or email: [davidl@spectrumfs.co.uk](mailto:davidl@spectrumfs.co.uk)**



**Since the last edition of Aspect when we highlighted the new web sites for Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum, lots of new pages have been added that we hope people will find helpful.**

As technology is playing an increasingly important role in wealth management advice, Spectrum has embraced the concept of wrap services. Such services provide administrative systems to help manage portfolios on behalf of clients, who are now able to view all their investments on line and have up to the minute valuations of their assets however they might be held.

This includes PEPs, ISAs, pensions and single premium insurance bonds. In addition, any holdings of unit trusts and other collective investments, as well as direct holdings of stocks and shares, can be viewed on the system.

Clients can track all transactions that take place on their portfolios from receipt of dividends to interest earned on cash holdings and see the record of purchases and sales. At the end of each tax year Transact provides a summary of all income and gains in a form suitable for tax returns.

This automation enables advisers to spend less time chasing providers for information and frees up time to manage investments and discuss future plans with clients.

  
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