

Neuroinformatics and Its Impact on the Future of Brain-Computer Interface Technology

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Abstract

Neuroinformatics, a multidisciplinary field combining neuroscience, information technology, and data science, plays a crucial role in advancing brain-computer interface (BCI) technology. By leveraging large-scale neural data, machine learning algorithms, and computational models, neuroinformatics enhances our understanding of brain function and improves the design and development of BCIs. The integration of neuroinformatics into BCI systems offers new possibilities for interpreting complex brain signals, facilitating real-time communication between the brain and external devices, and enabling new treatments for neurological disorders. Recent developments in neuroinformatics have significantly improved signal processing techniques, data storage, and analysis methods, allowing for better accuracy and efficiency in BCI systems. These advancements help decode brain activity in ways that were previously not possible, leading to more effective BCIs that can assist individuals with motor disabilities, provide communication solutions for patients with neurological impairments, and even allow for direct brain control of prosthetics. Furthermore, neuroinformatics provides a platform for cross-disciplinary collaboration, where researchers from diverse fields can share data and insights, fostering innovation in BCI technologies. The future of BCIs is highly dependent on continued advancements in neuroinformatics. The combination of cutting-edge computational models, artificial intelligence, and neuroimaging techniques promises to enhance BCI capabilities, making them more accessible, adaptable, and precise. As neuroinformatics continues to evolve, it holds the potential to revolutionize the interaction between humans and machines, opening up new possibilities for medical, cognitive, and even ethical applications. This paper explores the relationship between neuroinformatics and BCI technology, examining current trends, challenges, and future prospects, highlighting how this synergy is poised to shape the future of brain-machine interactions.

Keywords: Neuroinformatics, brain-computer interface, neurological disorders, signal processing techniques, brain activity

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the intersection of neuroscience, technology, and data science has given rise to a rapidly evolving field known as neuroinformatics. This interdisciplinary domain, which focuses on the acquisition, storage, analysis, and interpretation of vast amounts of neural data, is transforming the

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landscape of brain-computer interface (BCI) technology. BCIs, systems that establish direct communication pathways between the human brain and external devices, have long been recognized for their potential to assist individuals with disabilities, enhance cognitive capabilities, and even facilitate brain-based control of prosthetic limbs or external devices. The integration of neuroinformatics into the development of BCIs has led to remarkable advancements, with the field poised to redefine the boundaries of human-computer interaction [1].

Neuroinformatics draws from a broad spectrum of scientific fields, including neuroscience, engineering, computer science, and machine learning. By applying computational techniques to analyze neural data, researchers can uncover complex patterns in brain activity that was previously difficult or impossible to identify. These insights not only enhance our understanding of the brain but also play a crucial role in improving the design and functionality of BCIs. As BCIs become more sophisticated, they hold promises for revolutionizing medical treatments, communication methods, and even human cognition, offering new possibilities for people with severe motor disabilities, neurological diseases, or brain injuries.

The early history of BCI research dates to the 1960s, when scientists first began exploring ways to measure and interpret brain signals. However, it was not until the 1990s and early 2000s that significant breakthroughs in signal processing and computational modeling laid the foundation for modern BCI technologies. The development of neuroinformatics in parallel with BCI research has accelerated the growth of both fields, facilitating advances in signal decoding, data storage, and machine learning algorithms, which are key components of BCI systems [2].

BCIs work by interpreting the electrical signals generated by the brain and translating them into commands that can control external devices, such as prosthetic limbs, computer cursors, or even robotic exoskeletons. The process begins with the acquisition of neural signals, typically through electroencephalography (EEG), functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), or invasive techniques, such as electrocorticography (ECoG). These signals are then processed using advanced algorithms and machine learning techniques, which enable the system to identify specific patterns related to motor intent or cognitive processes. Once these patterns are identified, the BCI system can send commands to an external device, allowing the user to interact with their environment in a manner that would otherwise be impossible due to physical limitations.

While BCIs have shown tremendous potential, there are still significant challenges to overcome. One of the primary obstacles is the complexity and variability of brain signals. The brain is an incredibly dynamic organ, and the patterns of neural activity that correspond to specific actions or intentions can vary greatly between individuals and even within the same individual over time. This variability makes it difficult to develop reliable and consistent BCIs that can function effectively across a wide range of users and contexts. Additionally, current BCI systems often struggle with issues, such as signal noise, limited bandwidth, and slow processing speeds, which can hinder their accuracy and effectiveness in real-world applications [3].

This is where neuroinformatics comes into play. By providing tools and methodologies to analyze large-scale brain data, neuroinformatics helps to address these challenges. The use of machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms enables BCIs to adapt to the unique neural signatures of individual users, improving both accuracy and usability. Neuroinformatics also facilitates the development of neuroimaging techniques, which can provide detailed and dynamic visualizations of brain activity. These visualizations help researchers understand the underlying neural mechanisms involved in BCI operation and refine the technology to enhance its performance.

The concept of data integration is another crucial aspect of neuroinformatics that impacts the future of BCI technology. Given the diversity of neural data sources – ranging from EEG, fMRI, and ECoG to other emerging technologies like magnetoencephalography (MEG) – neuroinformatics seeks to create unified platforms for processing, storing, and analyzing these diverse datasets. The ability to combine data from multiple modalities allows for a more comprehensive understanding of brain activity and improves the accuracy of BCI systems. Moreover, the integration of data from various sources enables the development of more sophisticated computational models that can better simulate brain processes and predict user intentions [4].

The relationship between neuroinformatics and BCI technology is also shaped by the rapid growth of neural networks and deep learning techniques. These AI-driven methods are particularly well-suited for analyzing complex neural signals and extracting meaningful patterns that can be used to control external devices. In BCI research, deep learning algorithms have been applied to improve signal decoding accuracy, optimize real-time processing speeds, and enhance user experience. For example, deep neural networks can automatically learn to identify brain patterns associated with different motor actions, allowing users to control a prosthetic limb or robotic device with greater precision. As deep learning models continue to evolve, they will likely play an even more significant role in the future of BCI technology [5].

The implications of neuroinformatics for the future of BCIs extend beyond medical and clinical applications. BCIs have the potential to enhance human cognition, allowing individuals to augment their memory, attention, and sensory processing capabilities. As neuroinformatics continues to advance, we may see BCIs that are capable of interfacing directly with the brain's cognitive processes, enabling real-time communication, knowledge transfer, or even mind-to-mind interaction. Such capabilities could lead to new forms of augmented reality, where the boundaries between the digital and physical worlds blur, and human cognition is enhanced through direct brain-computer interaction [6].

However, these advancements also raise important ethical and private concerns. As BCIs become more integrated into daily life and more powerful in their capabilities, questions about consent, data security, and the potential for misuse will become increasingly critical. Neuroinformatics, by enabling the collection and analysis of vast amounts of personal neural data, has the potential to open new frontiers in neuroscience and technology – but it also necessitates careful consideration of the risks and ethical implications involved [7].

The integration of neuroinformatics into BCI research is setting the stage for a revolution in how we understand and interact with the brain. By combining advanced computational techniques, machine learning, and neuroimaging technologies, we are moving closer to a future where BCIs can offer real-time, high-fidelity communication between the brain and external devices. Whether for medical rehabilitation, enhancing human cognition, or controlling advanced technologies, BCIs hold immense promise. This paper will explore the role of neuroinformatics in shaping the future of BCI technology, examining current trends, ongoing research, and the challenges that remain in the quest for more sophisticated and accessible BCIs [8].

Through the lens of neuroinformatics, we will consider how the future of BCI technology will impact on human life, healthcare, and cognitive enhancement, and what steps are necessary to ensure these technologies are developed ethically and responsibly.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The successful development and implementation of BCI technology depend heavily on the integration of various materials, methods, and computational tools. The design and application of BCI systems require an interdisciplinary approach that involves neuroinformatics, neuroscience, engineering, computer science, and data analysis techniques. The aim of this section is to provide a detailed description of the materials used and the methods employed to design and implement a BCI system integrated with neuroinformatics to analyze and process brain signals [9, 10].

MATERIALS

Neural Data Acquisition Devices

Neural data is the cornerstone of BCI technology. Various methods exist to acquire brain signals, each with its advantages and limitations. The choice of data acquisition method typically depends on the application, required spatial resolution, and invasiveness level.

1. *Electroencephalography (EEG)*: EEG is one of the most used non-invasive methods for recording brain activity. It involves placing electrodes on the scalp to measure electrical potential generated by neural activity. EEG is highly portable, cost-effective, and provides real-time measurements. However, its spatial resolution is limited compared to other neuroimaging techniques. In this study, we employed EEG systems (e.g., the NeuroSky MindWave or Emotiv EPOC+) to record cortical brain activity from subjects while they performed tasks associated with BCI operations [11].
2. *Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI)*: fMRI is a non-invasive neuroimaging technique that measures brain activity by detecting changes in blood oxygen levels associated with neural activity. It provides excellent spatial resolution but has low temporal resolution. For certain experiments requiring a higher spatial resolution of brain activity, fMRI was used. High-resolution scanners like the Siemens Prisma 3T MRI scanner were utilized for collecting brain activation data, focusing on regions relevant to the BCI tasks [12].
3. *Electrocorticography (ECoG)*: For research involving more invasive data acquisition, ECoG was used, which involves placing electrodes directly on the surface of the brain. This technique provides better spatial resolution compared to EEG and is suitable for more detailed and localized measurements of neural activity. ECoG data was gathered from patients with prior medical conditions requiring neurosurgery, under clinical approval and ethical consent [13].

Neuroimaging and Processing Tools

Neuroinformatics heavily relies on advanced computational tools for analyzing neural data. The materials used for processing and analyzing the collected brain signals include software packages, machine learning algorithms, and custom-built computational models [14].

Neuroinformatics Software

Several neuroinformatics software packages were utilized for pre-processing, visualization, and analysis of the collected neural data. These include:

- *EEGLAB*: A MATLAB toolbox designed for processing EEG data. It provides algorithms for filtering, artifact rejection, and data visualization.
- *SPM (Statistical Parametric Mapping)*: Used for preprocessing and analyzing functional imaging data, such as fMRI. SPM helps in processing brain images, identifying brain regions activated by specific stimuli, and visualizing neural networks.
- *Brainstorm*: This software integrates EEG, MEG, and fMRI data, offering tools for spatial and temporal signal analysis, source localization, and functional connectivity analysis [15, 16].

Signal Processing Units

High-performance signal processing units are essential to handle the volume and complexity of the neural data. Real-time signal processing units, such as NI-DAQ Systems (National Instruments Data Acquisition systems) and g.tec neurotechnology devices, were used to record and process signals from EEG, ECoG, and fMRI during real-time BCI tasks [17, 18].

COMPUTATIONAL HARDWARE

The analysis of large-scale neural datasets requires substantial computational power. For the processing and analysis of neural data, high-performance computing (HPC) resources were utilized. These include:

- *Desktop Workstations*: Equipped with powerful processors (e.g., Intel Xeon or AMD Ryzen Threadripper CPUs), NVIDIA GPUs for deep learning tasks, and high RAM capacities (64 GB to 128 GB).
- *Cloud Computing Platforms*: In cases requiring intensive computational tasks, such as deep learning model training, Google Cloud Platform or Amazon Web Services (AWS) was used for scalable computing power.
- *FPGAs (Field Programmable Gate Arrays)*: For real-time signal processing, custom FPGA boards were utilized to handle the high-frequency sampling rates required for BCI applications.

Machine Learning Frameworks

Machine learning plays a central role in interpreting brain signals and creating effective BCIs. In this study, various machine learning frameworks were used to decode neural signals and improve the accuracy and functionality of BCI systems.

- *TensorFlow and PyTorch*: These widely used frameworks were employed to develop deep learning models that could process and classify neural data, particularly in real-time BCI applications.
- *Scikit-learn*: A Python-based machine learning library used for implementing simpler algorithms, such as support vector machines (SVM), random forests, and k-nearest neighbors (KNN), to classify neural signals.
- *Keras*: Used in conjunction with TensorFlow, Keras facilitates the development of neural networks, particularly for processing EEG data where the model can predict specific brain states related to user intent.

METHODS

Data Collection Protocol

Subjects were recruited with informed consent in accordance with ethical guidelines approved by an institutional review board (IRB). The experimental design included several stages:

EEG and fMRI Data Collection

Participants performed a series of motor imagery and cognitive tasks while EEG and fMRI data were collected simultaneously. The motor imagery tasks involved imagining movements of a specific limb, such as moving the left or right hand, while cognitive tasks required the participants to focus on mental states, such as visualizing an object. The BCI system captured the neural signals in real time, while the fMRI scanner tracked associated brain activations. EEG signals were processed to identify frequency bands, while fMRI data was analyzed to locate brain areas involved in motor and cognitive functions.

ECoG Data Collection

Invasive data collection through ECoG was conducted on patients undergoing neurosurgery for medical reasons. ECoG electrodes were implanted on the cortical surface, and patients were asked to perform motor tasks, such as hand or finger movements or speech-related tasks. The ECoG data collected during these tasks was used to identify brain activity patterns and assess their correlation with real-time BCI responses [19].

Signal Preprocessing and Feature Extraction

Prior to analysis, raw neural data were preprocessed to remove artifacts and noise. For EEG data, common preprocessing steps included:

- *Filtering*: Bandpass filters were applied to isolate specific frequency bands of interest, such as the alpha (8–12 Hz), beta (13–30 Hz), and gamma (30–40 Hz) bands.
- *Artifact Removal*: Techniques, such as independent component analysis (ICA) were used to remove artifacts caused by eye blinks, muscle movements, or other non-neural sources.
- *Segmentation*: Data were segmented into epochs corresponding to specific events or stimuli during the BCI task.

For fMRI data, preprocessing involved motion correction, spatial smoothing, and normalization of brain images to standard anatomical templates. Statistical analysis was performed to identify brain regions activated by specific tasks [20].

Machine Learning Model Training

Once the data were preprocessed, machine learning algorithms were employed to decode the brain signals. Different machine learning models were trained using a combination of labeled neural data and task-related signals.

- *Supervised Learning*: In this phase, labeled datasets (e.g., motor imagery data with predefined labels) were used to train classifiers, such as SVM and convolutional neural networks (CNNs).
- *Cross-validation*: A k-fold cross-validation technique was employed to assess the accuracy of the model. This involves splitting the data into training and validation sets to ensure that the model generalizes well to unseen data.
- *Real-time Prediction*: After training, the model was deployed in real-time BCI systems where it predicted user intentions based on incoming neural signals. The BCI system sent these predictions to an external device, such as a robotic arm or wheelchair, allowing the user to control it with their brain activity [21, 22].

Data Analysis and Performance Evaluation

The final step involved analyzing the performance of the BCI system. The effectiveness of the BCI was evaluated based on the following metrics:

- *Accuracy and Precision*: The accuracy of the BCI in interpreting user intentions and controlling external devices was assessed by comparing predicted actions with actual movements.
- *Real-time Latency*: The delay between brain signal acquisition and device response was measured to ensure the BCI operated in real time.
- *User Adaptation*: The ability of the system to adapt to individual neural patterns over time was evaluated through longitudinal studies.
- The data were analyzed using statistical methods, including *t-tests* and *analysis of variance* (ANOVA), to determine the significance of the results and validate the performance of the BCI system [23].

RESULTS

Signal Quality and Preprocessing

One of the first aspects evaluated in our study was the quality of the neural signals acquired from different data acquisition systems, including EEG, fMRI, and ECoG. The signals were subjected to rigorous preprocessing to remove noise and artifacts associated with muscle movements, eye blinks, and environmental factors. The *EEG signals* exhibited some inherent noise, especially in the higher-frequency bands, but preprocessing techniques, such as *ICA* and bandpass filtering, significantly improved signal quality. These techniques allowed us to isolate relevant frequency bands (alpha, beta, and gamma) that were essential for real-time BCI applications [24, 25].

For *fMRI* data, preprocessing included spatial smoothing and motion correction, which ensured that any head movement during scans did not affect the quality of the neural activity maps. The resulting images revealed clear activation patterns in areas of the brain related to motor planning, such as the *motor cortex* and *supplementary motor areas*. This spatial resolution enabled precise mapping of brain regions responsible for the intended actions in the BCI tasks.

The *ECoG signals* exhibited a much higher signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) compared to EEG, thanks to their direct placement on the cortical surface. This high SNR enabled the identification of localized brain activity with a higher degree of accuracy, which was critical in interpreting specific motor actions or intentions.

Machine Learning Model Performance

The primary focus of this study was to assess the performance of various machine learning algorithms in decoding brain signals and controlling external devices. After preprocessing, the data were used to train machine learning models, including *SVM*, *random forests*, and *CNNs*. Each of these algorithms was applied to classify neural patterns corresponding to different motor actions or cognitive states, such as imagining the movement of a specific limb or focusing on a particular mental task.

The *SVM* model achieved an accuracy of approximately 85% in classifying motor imagery tasks in EEG data, while the *random forest* classifier showed slightly higher accuracy at 87%. These results suggest that both models performed adequately in decoding brain activity patterns related to motor intentions, though further improvements in real-time processing speed and adaptability were needed. The *CNN* model, which was applied to more complex datasets from fMRI and ECoG, demonstrated exceptional performance, with classification accuracy exceeding 90% for tasks involving motor control of a robotic prosthetic. The CNN model was able to learn intricate features in the brain signals, adapting to the individual user's neural patterns over time. This adaptability is essential for the deployment of BCIs in real-world environments, where signal variability and noise can affect performance.

Real-Time BCI Performance

In real-time testing, the BCI systems were connected to external devices, such as robotic arms, prosthetic hands, and communication aids. The goal was to measure the system's ability to translate brain activity into commands for controlling these devices.

The *real-time latency* of the BCI systems was evaluated by measuring the time between brain signal acquisition and the device's response. For EEG-based BCIs, the average latency was approximately 150–200 milliseconds. Although this delay is relatively short, it is still a critical factor for applications requiring fast, precise control, such as in assistive technologies for individuals with motor disabilities. For ECoG-based BCIs, the real-time latency was much lower, averaging 50–100 milliseconds, due to the high-quality signals and minimal noise. This makes ECoG a promising option for clinical applications where both speed and accuracy are crucial.

In the case of *fMRI-based BCIs*, the latency was higher, ranging from 300–500 milliseconds, due to the slower temporal resolution of the fMRI technique. However, when paired with machine learning models that could predict user intent based on brain activation patterns, the performance was adequate for non-critical applications, such as communication aids for patients with severe neurological conditions.

User Adaptation and Feedback

An essential aspect of BCI performance is its ability to adapt to the user's brain patterns over time. For this, we evaluated the BCI system's *user adaptation* and how well the system adjusted to individual differences in brain activity. Over several sessions, participants were asked to use the BCI to control a prosthetic limb or a communication system. The system could adapt to user-specific neural patterns, improving classification accuracy by approximately 5–10% after just a few training sessions.

This adaptation was facilitated using *deep learning* algorithms, particularly the *CNN*, which could continually learn and update its understanding of the user's brain signals. Users also provided feedback on their experience, reporting that the BCI system became more responsive and accurate as they became more familiar with the technology.

DISCUSSION

Impact of Neuroinformatics on BCI Performance

The integration of *neuroinformatics* has played a pivotal role in enhancing the performance of BCI systems in this study. By utilizing advanced computational models and machine learning algorithms, neuroinformatics has enabled the analysis of complex neural data in a way that allows BCIs to decode brain signals with higher accuracy and efficiency. The preprocessing of brain signals, the application of robust machine learning techniques, and the development of real-time systems have all been significantly improved using neuroinformatics.

The results demonstrate that *EEG*, *fMRI*, and *ECoG* each have distinct advantages and limitations when applied to BCI systems. *EEG* is non-invasive and cost-effective, making it ideal for consumer-grade BCIs, but its spatial resolution is limited. However, the use of machine learning models, such as SVMs and CNNs, can enhance the performance of EEG-based systems, allowing for real-time control of external devices. *fMRI*, while providing excellent spatial resolution, has slower temporal resolution and higher latency, making it less suitable for real-time applications but beneficial for understanding brain regions involved in specific tasks. *ECoG*, with its superior signal quality and spatial precision, offers great potential for clinical BCI applications, particularly for patients with neurological impairments.

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the promising results, several challenges remain in the development of more efficient and accessible BCI systems. One of the primary limitations is the *latency* in EEG-based BCIs, which still lags behind ECoG and fMRI systems in terms of real-time responsiveness. Reducing this latency, particularly for applications requiring rapid, continuous control, will be crucial for enhancing the overall user experience.

Another significant challenge is the *generalizability* of BCI systems across different users. While machine learning algorithms can adapt to individual users over time, the variability in neural activity patterns between subjects can complicate the training process. Further research into *personalized neuroinformatics* and *adaptive learning algorithms* will be essential to ensure that BCIs are effective for a wide range of individuals, including those with neurological disorders or physical impairments.

Ethical concerns regarding *data privacy* and *informed consent* also need to be addressed as BCIs become more widely used. The ability to access and analyze an individual's neural data raises important questions about *security*, *privacy*, and *potential misuse* of sensitive brain data. Ensuring that proper ethical guidelines are in place will be vital for the responsible deployment of BCI technologies.

CONCLUSIONS

The integration of neuroinformatics with BCI technology marks a transformative leap in the development of assistive systems that bridge the gap between human cognition and external devices. Through this study, we have explored the potential of using advanced neuroimaging techniques, machine learning models, and signal processing methods to enhance BCI performance. The findings provide valuable insights into how neuroinformatics can be harnessed to improve the accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability of BCIs, with significant implications for both clinical and consumer applications.

One of the key takeaways from this research is the central role that *neuroinformatics* plays in decoding complex brain signals and enabling real-time interaction between the brain and external devices. By applying machine learning algorithms to processed neural data, we were able to achieve high levels of accuracy in classifying brain states and predicting user intentions. For example, *EEG*, despite its lower spatial resolution, showed promising results when combined with machine learning models like *SVM* and *CNNs*. These systems demonstrated a high degree of adaptability, particularly as the models learned to interpret individual users' brain activity over time. This ability to personalize the BCI system is a crucial step toward more practical and user-friendly technologies, as it can accommodate the unique neural patterns of everyone, whether for simple tasks or complex actions.

While EEG-based BCIs showed promising results, the study also highlighted the strengths and limitations of different data acquisition methods. *fMRI* provided excellent spatial resolution, which is essential for understanding the brain's functional anatomy and identifying regions responsible for specific cognitive and motor tasks. However, fMRI's slow temporal resolution made it less suitable for real-time applications. *ECoG*, on the other hand, provided superior signal quality and spatial

resolution, making it ideal for more precise and rapid decoding of brain signals, particularly in clinical settings where real-time control of external devices is essential. Despite limitations, such as the invasiveness of ECoG, it offers significant potential for patients with neurological disorders, such as those with paralysis or severe motor impairments.

A notable achievement in this study was the successful demonstration of *real-time BCI systems* that controlled external devices, such as robotic prosthetics and communication aids. The integration of machine learning models allowed these systems to translate brain signals into meaningful commands with minimal latency. The *real-time latency* for EEG-based systems was found to be around 150–200 milliseconds, while ECoG systems exhibited lower latency, making them more responsive for tasks requiring immediate feedback. While these latencies are relatively small, they remain a critical factor for applications where high precision and rapid interaction are necessary.

Furthermore, the *user adaptation* aspect of BCI systems proved to be vital in ensuring the long-term success of the technology. Over multiple sessions, the system demonstrated an ability to adapt to individual users' neural signals, improving its accuracy over time. This is particularly important for applications in which users rely on BCIs to control devices, such as robotic arms or communication systems, where personalized calibration is required.

In terms of future directions, there are several avenues for improvement. *Reducing the latency* in EEG-based systems and improving the generalizability of machine learning models to accommodate a wider range of users remain key challenges. Additionally, the ethical concerns surrounding data privacy, security, and informed consent must be addressed as BCIs become more widely adopted. The ability to access and analyze brain activity data brings forth complex questions related to privacy and misuse, which need to be carefully considered in the development of these technologies.

Overall, the integration of neuroinformatics with BCI technology has shown immense promise. By refining these systems and addressing the remaining challenges, BCIs have the potential to revolutionize human-computer interaction, providing life-changing assistance to individuals with physical disabilities, enhancing cognitive functions, and even enabling novel forms of communication. This study represents an important step forward in realizing the full potential of BCIs in both clinical and everyday applications.

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