

the official newsletter of the pcma capital chapter

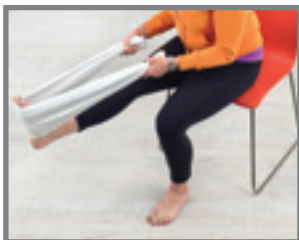
Travel Fitness with Hotel Towels

No time or too tired to go the hotel gym early morning or at the end of your workday? No room to pack your workout clothing? The good news is that you don't have to go to the gym to reap some of the benefits of resistance training and stretching. Grab a towel in your hotel room and let's begin!

Stretches

Hamstring Stretch

Stiff legs from being on your feet all day? Here's a great hamstring and calf stretch that you can do sitting in a chair. Place your right leg forward and flex your foot upward with a bath towel. Keep your right leg straight. With a straight back lean forward into the stretch. Hold the stretch for 15-30 seconds before switching legs.



Shoulder Stretch



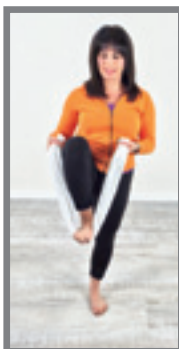
Let's loosen up the shoulders that inevitably become stiff from sitting or standing with a slouched posture. This shoulder flexibility exercise is great for ladies who find it challenging to zip up their dress from behind.

Make a wide V shape with your arms while holding the towel. Keep your arms as straight as you are able while rotating your arms backward and forward over your head five times.

Strengthening Exercises

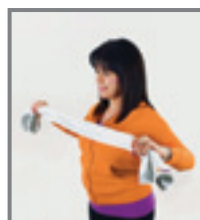
Bicep Curls

Here's a great exercise that strengthens your biceps while improving your hip mobility. Hold each end of the bath towel and anchor your foot in the middle. Keep your elbows close to your sides. Use your foot to apply continuous resistance as you pull up on the towel as hard and high as you can. Continue to apply pressure to the towel with your foot while lowering your forearms downward. Do five repetitions at maximum effort.



Upper Back Squeezes

This is a great isometric exercise for your upper back. Hold the towel at shoulder height and shoulder distance apart in front of your body. Pull outwards on the towel while contracting your back muscles. Hold the contraction for 10 seconds and release. Repeat five times. Remember to breathe regularly.



Lat Pull Downs

Start by holding the towel over your head with your arms in a wide V. Keeping a continuous resistance, bending your elbows, lower the towel to your chest, exhale and then raise your arms back over your head. Repeat this exercise 10 times.

Oblique Stretch & Crunch

Hold the towel over your head with your arms in a wide V. Keeping your back straight and looking forward, stretch from side to side to work your waistline.



Using towels to stretch and strengthen can change the way travelers think about exercise – by making it easy to integrate basic fitness into the busy travel day. •

— by Dr. Kim
President & Chief Exercise Officer, Exercise Bytes, Inc.



The PCMA Capital Chapter is where “You Belong”!

Mission: The mission of PCMA and the Chapter is to be the leading organization for meeting and event professionals by delivering superior and innovative education and promoting the value of professional convention management.

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If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to write an article for The Chatter, email: PCMAchatter@gmail.com



Message from the Board

Diane Kovats, CMP

Executive Director

International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB)



At times, I feel as though I am a warrior of the road, running from one plane to the next, and counting the number of country stamps on my passport. Finding the answer to the perfect life-work balance has been near impossible. How on earth is it possible to stay healthy while on the road, running a convention, or conducting sales meetings and visits?

After becoming the Executive Director of ISCB and facing a challenging first two years (while adding 15 pounds to my waistline), I knew it was imperative for me to try to find some easy routine or plan to keep me on a healthy track while traveling. Here are three small changes I've made to my busy lifestyle.

- Workout ten minutes a day! There are great YouTube videos for short workouts that really get your blood pumping – no equipment needed. I also switched from carrying a shoulder bag to a backpack while traveling so I can walk laps in the airport between flights.
- Be conscious of what I am eating. Diet is 80% of the equation for a healthy lifestyle. Hello, calorie tracking app! I try to always carry some almonds, cheese sticks, or apples with me so the chocolate bar does not cause temptation.
- Drink lemon water. I start my day with a nice, tall glass of water with lemon juice. It gives me a boost of hydration and tastes good too! Drinking enough water while traveling is a challenge for me. I try to drink at least one glass of water for every other beverage, two for coffee.

This issue of the Chatter is filled with lots of other tips and suggestions on how to stay healthy on the road. Thank you to the authors and enjoy! •



Connecting with the Capital Chapter is not just about tracking what we are up to. We want to see what you are up to as well.



@PCMACC

PCMA Capital Chapter has become the first PCMA chapter to have an Instagram account because we believe in being creative and having fun with our communication. However, it is only as good as our members make it, so start shooting and posting today!



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Travel Wellness for the Well-Traveled

Meeting planners are known for their road-savvy expertise and real-life experience when it comes to a wide array of topics. Considering travel wellness, it's no surprise that our industry colleagues offer a wealth of information and advice on best practices from lessons learned. However, wellness is beyond just staying in shape while traveling. Caring for yourself as a traveler, your team as a leader, and your attendees as a planner, can be a tall order.

As planners, we often influence the level of healthy activity that our attendees will experience through our programming and menu choices. In recent years, we have seen a dramatic increase in special dietary needs, as well as the expectation to have those needs accommodated. Krystal Bushell, an independent meeting professional based in Redlands, CA, has advice on how to meet the wellness needs of your attendees at conferences. "It's vital to capture your registrants' dietary needs at the point of registration, and to carry that information forward to your hotel contacts while planning your menus." Krystal admits that the capture of that information is only as good as what is done with it. "You need to form a strategy with your food and beverage provider to ensure that the people who have self-identified as having specific nutritional needs are delivered the correct meal." This can be accomplished by a system of colored cards on the table, having attendees identify their needs to their servers, or by moving to an assigned-seating model for meal functions. What matters most is that everyone understands the plan.

Supporting attendee wellness is not just about meal functions. In her work for the American College of Nurse-Midwives Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Krystal has coordinated group yoga sessions on the peak mornings of the conference. When it comes to group exercise, she felt that yoga was a better choice than a group Zumba class, which she teaches in her personal time when she is not managing events. "Yoga is a good choice because it is low impact, and stretches those important muscles that often remain dormant during long hours in education sessions. A major benefit is that effort can be adjusted to meet attendee needs, so all levels of experience can participate." And the attendees are loving it. Participation is growing each year and the organization has to secure larger space with each conference. But it's not just the physical wellness, Krystal adds. "It's a nice icebreaker, too. As you start the day you meet new contacts and when you run into your fellow attendees throughout the conference, you've already bonded and have shared a healthy experience."

As long as there are meetings and events to work, we will find ourselves on the road seeking to stay well despite an unpredictable schedule and limited healthy options to choose from. Paying attention to our own wellness as well as that of our attendees increases engagement, a sense of success, and keeps all stakeholders at their best. •

by Mark Harvey, CGMP, CMP, CMM, Director of Meetings & Operations, SGMP

For the Fitness of It...

Routine is important to me. Some would say too important, so on occasion, I like to "mix it up." The structured routineness of my life includes my commitment to exercise – even while traveling. Is it fitness? Is it stress management? Is it vanity? For me, it's definitely a combination of all the above. It depends on where I am in my life and the season. Truly! Through the years, I have found some hotels with great gyms, for which I have been grateful.

Here are my Top Three:

1. **JW Marriott Indianapolis** - This 4,000 square foot state of the art fitness center is proof that size matters – when it comes to a great gym. Because the JW Indy gym provides a variety of cardio and weight options, along with an excellent stretching area, I am able to get a complete workout.
2. **Hyatt Regency Baltimore** - This multi-level gym is not your average hotel gym. What I enjoyed most about the gym (when I had the occasion to enjoy it) was that it had its regulars, as it was open for membership. Thus, on top of the great space and a variety of equipment, great attention was paid to the upkeep. Outdoor tennis courts and a running track provided unique aspects to a downtown hotel.
3. **Aria Resort & Casino** - Since what happens in Vegas rarely stays in Vegas (at least for me), I most often go alone. This allows me to make time for the gym, in between my hours at the card table. This gym is my favorite in Sin City. With mirrors everywhere, it's easy to remember why I'm there and get an occasional (not so obvious) glance at good "eye candy."



Perhaps, one day there will be nothing routine about my life. However, I am sure that fitness, for whatever reason, will always be a part of who I am. I know for sure that exercise on and off the road have made a difference in all aspects of my wonderful, routine life. •

by Kenneth m. Hemsley, Jr., National Sales Manager, DC Office, Visit Indy.

Adding a “Fun Run” to Your Meeting

Too often, conventions are so focused on producing high quality education, networking & tradeshow events inside the hotel and convention center that they forget there are benefits to getting outside over the course of the meeting. Studies have shown that getting outside for light exercise, fresh air & sunshine increase memory retention, energy levels & attention spans which are behaviors that can ultimately improve what you are trying to accomplish inside the hotel. To discuss planners adding a “fun run” component to their meeting, I chatted with Nathan Smurdon, a 15-year hospitality industry veteran and Chief Exploration Officer of ActiveIndy Tours & Events - a company that produces walking, bicycling and running tours & events for leisure guests, company wellness & teambuilding outings, meetings & conventions.



1. What does it typically cost an organization to incorporate a fun run into its meeting for attendees?

The logistics that go into producing a timed fun run cost anywhere from \$2,000 to \$10,000 depending on the number of participants and the amount of customization & production desired by the client. Nearly all of our clients obtain sponsorship to cover the hard costs of the event and then donate the participant's registration fee to the group's foundation or another philanthropy.

2. What kinds of items are customizable to enhance the fun run experience?

This is where we love to get creative with our clients. Different colored t-shirts for teams, finisher medals, bib numbers, fun fact signage marking the course, glow necklaces for early morning events - the list is endless and can provide value in the packages our clients successfully pitch to sponsors that are looking to be affiliated with a networking outing that is different and healthy.

3. What is the common percentage of members that planners should expect to register for a 5k event?

Participation rates typically hover around 20-30%. Building the event around a philanthropic beneficiary, creating early bird registration benefits, promoting it as a networking event more so than a competition & keeping registration open on site so the peer pressure effect can kick in are all tactics our clients have used to increase participation.

4. What is the most important advice you can give to an event organizer who is doing this for the first time?

We recommend starting with the CVB to get their input on a local race organizer or a DMC that has expertise in doing these events - specifically for conventions. Though when looking to use a race organizer, make sure that they are used to producing events for conventions vs. only competitive events. This should allow you to focus more on creating this unique & healthy networking outing. •

— by Ryan Barth, CMP
Global Account Executive, ConferenceDirect

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Healthy Travel: Taking Wellness Beyond Fitness and Dining Options

While many workplaces are implementing wellness strategies for employees, today's business traveler can expect to find healthier menu options and a reasonable exercise facility at most hotels. Although these basic elements of healthy hospitality are sufficient, are they enough to satisfy the wellness-focused traveler?

As a worksite wellness consultancy, we look at six categories of influence affecting health: Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Community, Environmental, and Spiritual. Considered together, these PIECES® provide a comprehensive framework to help businesses understand what they can do to improve employee health and wellness through specific and tangible means. When this same discovery process is applied to a meeting, the attendee benefits from an experience that is both productive and aligned with the health goals of most companies.

Planners can provide meaningful, health-focused opportunities for their attendees by fusing simple health/wellness strategies into their events. Organizations like the Institute for Healthy Destination Accreditation (travelhealthy.org) provide specific information about health-focused amenities, programs, services, facilities and personnel. Free resources through the CDC and Health.gov provide excellent health/wellness tools and ideas.

Consider this three-step process to take wellness beyond fitness and dining options at your next event.

- **ANTICIPATE:** Get to know the health/wellness needs and interests of your attendees. Ask questions or take surveys to get more information. Consider health issues that may be of interest to your attendee population, such as diabetes or obesity.
- **ACCOMMODATE:** Prepare a list of attendee dietary preferences, food allergies or other health concerns. Add particular exercise or wellness interests expressed on surveys. Try to seamlessly build these elements into the meeting and throughout the program schedule.
- **ALLOCATE:** Use free resources or be willing to budget funds to provide quality wellness opportunities. Schedule prompts throughout the conference, such as quiet pauses between speakers, placing water or healthy snacks on session tables, introducing short and fun exercise breaks, or providing stress buster activities.

By anticipating needs, accommodating requests, allocating funds, and utilizing wellness resources already offered by destinations, you may discover that reaching beyond typical fitness and dining options will provide welcome flourishes to your meetings while creating a health benefit bonus for your attendees! •

by Mary Ellen Rose, Ph.D., President, PIECES for Life

Running on the Road

As traveling professionals, deep down we all know that keeping up a workout or training plan when on the road is a 50/50 split of planning and determination. Here are a few ways to up your planning game to give you less room for your will power to waffle on getting it done.

1. Always pack your running shoes and something to work out in. While a few hotels have programs to help you out when you forget; convincing yourself to get up and work out really is easier when you know you have everything you need.
2. Before you leave for the airport, when you have free wifi at home, download one of these apps: WalkJogRun or MapMyRun. They are both GPS running trackers. Allows individuals to save and share routes, so you can pick up a route when you arrive in town.
3. Upon check-in, talk to the front desk about the hotel workout facilities if the treadmill calls your name. Otherwise, ask for running route suggestions from the front desk and/or from the concierge...you are in their hood after all. Some hotels have even created a running concierge that will take guests on runs at set times.
4. Schedule run and rest days into your calendar. When you're on the road it can be hard to find the time, but scheduling something on your calendar can help you stick with it. Make sure to know how you're feeling when kicking off your workout and know that something is better than nothing. Keep in mind that a mile takes between 5-15 minutes depending on the person, so set your time out running with that in mind.
5. If running alone, just stay aware of your surroundings. Go without tunes, or just use one earbud so you can hear around you. Always have a little bit of cash and your phone if you find yourself in need of a different way back to your hotel.
6. If you have sore muscles stretching and more importantly foam rolling can be a life saver. Check out a packable option, the Foam Roller Stick on Amazon for \$25-\$35. And <http://www.bodyspex.com/Exercises.aspx> includes videos of how to foam roll each and every muscle.
7. Pat yourself on the back for staying the course then repeat. •



by Shannon Burke, CMAP, Director of Conference and Meetings, National Association for College Admission Counseling

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Guide to the Crossfit Box: Tabatas Required

"CrossFit begins with a belief in fitness." – Crossfit.com. As one of the newest and most popular forms of physical fitness, Crossfit has entered the arena of limit pushing exercise across the United States and internationally. Unlike the ever popular "Sweatin' to the Oldies" by Richard Simmons, Crossfit incorporates circular, short burst, high impact positions and physical mechanics to deliver visible results. Crossfit is not for the faint of heart and requires mental strength.

Crossfire originated back in 2000 in the beach city of Santa Cruz, CA by Greg Gassman and Lauren Jenai. It is there that the combination of aerobic exercise, body weight exercises, and Olympic weight lifting grow into a multi million dollar venture that has over 10,000 official and privately owned Crossfit Gyms, or "Boxes" in official lingo, across the country. Participants are instructed by officially trained coaches in WODs or "Work-Outs-of-the-Day" and warmups using their own body weight or equipment like barbells, pull-up bars, ropes, kettle bells and plyo boxes. The WOD activities are broken down into segments or "Tabatas" where the exercise/ reps are repeated as many times in 20 seconds, followed by a rest period of 10 seconds. This combination is then repeated 8 times until it totals 4 minutes. The participant then moves onto the next station and repeats the "tabata", focusing on another exercise. The goal is to increase the amount of reps per activity over time which results in overall complete fitness!

To become a member of a Crossfit box, each person must attend 10-12 Foundation class series to learn the proper form and technique for each major exercise group. These classes create the base that you build from and can decrease your chance of injury as you progress in your fitness goals.

Great news for the hospitality industry! As a member of a Box, participants have the ability to travel around the country and still attend classes. It is best to research the destination and call ahead to the box to make sure that there is room and that out-of-towners can be accommodated and if there are any fees. Most Crossfit affiliates welcome new comers and enjoys the sense of community that it brings.

If attending a class at an official "box" is not in the cards, "Crossfitters" can use a tablet or a smartphone, log onto Crossfit.com. The site posts a daily WOD on the homepage of the website. Participants can also modify the WOD by substituting similar exercises by using the available hotel gym equipment or just their own body weight in their hotel rooms. Crossfit.com also has a forum of exercises that can be good substitutes if a participant does not have access to the suggested equipment. •

Commit Today and Create a Lasting Impression on Tomorrow's Leaders

The PCMA Capital Chapter Mentoring Program is the perfect way to give back to the industry and connect with the next generation of meeting professionals. By volunteering to become a mentor, you agree to devote your expertise, passion and a manageable amount of time to your assigned "protégé". We also encourage any professional that is new to the industry, just graduated from college or are looking to learn more about the industry to also contact us to sign up as a protégé! It's a fantastic arrangement for both parties involved and it will not disappoint!

To sign up as a mentor or protégé or to ask a question, please contact Samantha Moore at mentorship@generationmeet.com or by calling 301-514-1218.



Ways to Eat Healthy and Mindfully While on Business Travel

Meeting professionals travel extensively and while traveling they are enticed by many new and often complementary food options at receptions, working dinners and events they plan. Additionally, they work long hours, eat at irregular hours, and don't always make healthy choices when on the run.

Here are some ways to eat healthy and stay energized throughout your travels and long workdays:

Departure Day:

- Front load your day with a healthy breakfast of fiber and protein (e.g. hot cereal with Greek yogurt, chia seeds and fruit) to enhance mental alertness.
- Pack 2 different fruit and vegetable snacks to keep your blood sugar steady during the day.
- Pack non-perishable foods in your briefcase (apples, bananas, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, protein powder).
- Remain fueled during the day with lunch (no meal skipping).

At the airport:

- If you are unable to pack snacks, coffee shops typically have bananas and apples.
- Look for yogurt, individually wrapped cheese, vegetables and dip, small packs of nuts, fruit and nut bars (e.g., Laraba, Kind and Quest bars).
- Have a fruit smoothie made with yogurt or a soymilk latte.

On the airplane:

- Dried fruit mix
- Whole grain crackers and cheese or hummus
- Fruit or vegetable and cheese plate
- Almonds
- Dark chocolate
- Chicken or turkey wrap



During the Workday:

- When we're busy, we often skip meals, drink lots of coffee and snack throughout the day as quick "pick-me-ups." Simple carbs (sugars, sodas, white flours, snack foods) are absorbed into the bloodstream very quickly causing blood sugars to spike and then drop. The result: mental fatigue and brain foginess. Here are some ways to stay energized throughout the day:
 - Eat every 3-4 hours, even if you are in meetings all day.
 - Go whole with whole grains (brown breads, cereals, pasta, rice) instead of white sugar and flour energy zappers.
 - Drink 8 cups of water to keep hydrated throughout the day.
 - Moderate coffee – drink herbal tea and water instead.
 - Fit fiber (beans, lentils, fruits and vegetables) into your snacks and meals to keep blood sugars steady.
 - Pack in protein (fish, chicken, eggs, legumes) throughout your day to boost memory and concentration.
 - Savor superfoods (blueberries, asparagus, broccoli, sweet potato, low fat dairy, dark chocolate) to boost memory and alertness.
 - Integrate unsaturated ("good") fats (nuts, seeds, avocados, salmon) to build healthy brains and sharp minds.

At working dinners:

- Order an appetizer size main course or share a main course serving.
- Keep the dinner meal equal in size to breakfast and lunch rather than feasting like a king or queen before bedtime.
- Be particular when ordering. Don't be afraid to ask for substitutions (vegetables instead of fries).
- Follow your usual eating pattern. Don't sway from your healthy habits just because you're away from home.
- Moderate alcohol or substitute for water with a slice of lemon or lime.
- Skip dessert or take only a bite (or two) to savor your sweet tooth before setting the plate aside.

Room Service:

- Order a fruit and cheese plate or a chicken or turkey wrap.
- Trouble falling asleep at the end of the day? Try whole grains with small amounts of protein and calcium to improve sleep (e.g., Greek yogurt with almonds, cheese and crackers).

by Dr. Kim, President & Chief Exercise Officer, Exercise Bytes, Inc.



Member Spotlights

Spotlight on a Planner

*Sheila Varner, CMP
Senior Project Director
Meeting Management Services*



Sheila Varner started out planning events running her own wedding business! That segued into meeting planning. “I had a knack for working with venue and vendor staff and enjoyed the planning portion of the event,” she says. She joined Meeting Management Services in 2000 as part of the registration department. By 2004, she joined the logistics department, where she is now a Senior Project Director, managing meetings for 4 to 6 clients each year. She likes the fact that working for a third-party meeting planning company allows her to interact with various clients, and develop strong working relationships. “I am able to clearly understand their meeting goals and objectives. Once the big picture is established, I enjoy pulling all of the components together, paying attention to details and trying to stay under budget! I enjoy working with CVB reps, hotel staff and vendors.” Her membership in PCMA (she joined in 2002) has helped her network.

Sheila is a DC native who is married to a man she met in elementary school! Her favorite hobby is reading; presently, she is engrossed in *Mayor for Life: The Incredible Story of Marion Barry, Jr.* Sheila’s ideal vacation is going to the beach and reading close by the water. She is active in her church, where she directs the choir and plans church functions.

How does Sheila balance her busy personal and professional life? “I work hard during the day so that I don’t take work home. When I am in crunch mode, I make sure to leave some time to relax.” •

*by Sara Torrence, CMP
President - Sara Torrence & Associates*

Spotlight on a Supplier

*Liz Dane
Regional Director - MidAtlantic
Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater CVB*



Liz has a remarkable story on her entrance into the hospitality industry. She graduated from college in 1982 as a theater major. She fully intended to have her parents support her in New York for many years while she tried her chops at acting. Sadly, her mother became ill when she was a senior in college, so she came home to DC to take care of her. She quickly got a job managing a restaurant in Alexandria. Her father owned a travel agency and one of his clients was Woodrow (Woody) Marriott. He was one of the Marriott brothers who was not as involved in the family business. Her dad asked him if he could have someone send her an application. Within two days, she was being interviewed for the Marriott Training Program. She has held positions as a Reservations agent, Convention Service Manager, Sales Manager for Hilton and National Sales positions with Omni and Adam’s Mark Hotels. She also has worked for the DC Convention Bureau, Fort Myers VCB and now Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater, her career now spans over 33 years in the industry!

Liz has been a member of PCMA off and on for about 20 years. She spent many years on the Sponsorship Committee, became chair of that committee and then served two years on the board. She loves to discount shop (so much so that her dream job would be a host on QVC) and travel in her spare time. She owns a vacation home with a friend in Berkley Springs, WV.

Liz has such a love and passion for this industry. “I think we have an exceptional community of kind and smart people. You are always meeting new people and can enjoy the support that this industry brings.” •

*by Ryan Barth, CMP
Global Account Executive, ConferenceDirect*



News Bytes

Email your news: PCMAchatter+news@gmail.com

DORI JENSEN IS NOW SENIOR DIRECTOR OF MEETING & CONVENTION SALES AT THE DISCOVER THE PALM BEACHES

KAREN STAPLES IS NOW MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT THE TALLEY MANAGEMENT

DONNA DEL GALLO IS NOW DIRECTOR OF CITYWIDE ACCOUNTS AT THE SAN FRANCISCO TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

CARLY BUSHONG, CMP IS NOW SENIOR ASSOCIATE AT THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE



Mark Your Calendar

CAPITAL CONNECTION Please join us for these upcoming events. Visit our chapter website for details and to register: www.pcma.org/connect-and-grow/chapters/capital

4/16 North America Meetings Industry Day (NAMID)
Education Program: 2:30pm – 4:30pm
Rally & Reception: 4:30pm -5:30pm

5/27 Quest for Talent
Education Program: 3:00pm - 5:00pm ET
Networking Reception: 5:00pm - 6:30 pm ET
Marriott Washington Wardman Park

7/30 Half-day Education Program
Education Program: 1:00pm – 5:00pm
Reception: 5:00pm – 7:00pm
Walter E. Washington Convention Center
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