



# Relationship of Work Quality, Quantity, Timeliness, Effectiveness, and Independence on Public Service Performance in Kampong Trabaek District Administration, Prey Veng Province, Cambodia

Mardy Serey<sup>1\*</sup>, Michael J. Girao<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Svay Rieng University, Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia

<sup>2</sup>Sandigan Colleges, Inc., Maguindanao Del Sur, Philippines

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\* Corresponding author;  
[sereymardy@gmail.com](mailto:sereymardy@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

This study looks into the variables affecting public service performance (PSP) in Kampong Trabaek District Administration, Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. Although district-level public service delivery is essential to good governance, it continues to face obstacles like inefficiency, corruption, and a lack of funding. Work quality (WQ), work quantity (WT), timeliness (TI), effectiveness (EF), and independence (ID) are the five main dimensions that are examined in this study along with how they interact with PSP. This study aims to explore the current status of PSP in Kampong Trabaek District Administration and to investigate the relationship between WQ, WT, TI, EF, and ID in shaping PSP within Kampong Trabaek District Administration, Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. To systematically investigate these relationships, data were gathered from 91 district administration stakeholders and employees using a quantitative research design with descriptive and correlational analysis. The questionnaire in the form of Likert scale was the instrument used in this study. The results provide subtle insights into the roles that each dimension plays in PSP. Timeliness and independence showed a strong positive relationship with work quality, underscoring the value of high standards in encouraging responsiveness and accountability. Effectiveness and work quantity were found to be significantly correlated, highlighting the need for a balance between productivity and reaching desired results. Timeliness was found to be a crucial component that was closely related to every other aspect, highlighting its function in boosting public trust in government. Effectiveness was essential to guaranteeing fair service distribution and flexibility in times of emergency, while independence allowed local leaders to develop context-sensitive solutions but also revealed weaknesses in supervision and resource distribution. To sum up, this study emphasizes how crucial it is to take a comprehensive approach to PSP, balance operational aspects, and promote collaborative governance models in order to attain long-lasting enhancements in Kampong Trabaek District Administration's public service delivery.



## INTRODUCTION

Effective governance hinges on public service performance (PSP), particularly at the district level where citizens engage most directly with state institutions. In Cambodia, persistent challenges such as inefficiency, corruption, and inadequate funding have undermined local PSP, limiting the capacity of administrations to meet public expectations (World Bank, 2019; Toda & Higuchi, 2021). The Kampong Trabaek District Administration in Prey Veng Province exemplifies these systemic shortcomings, struggling to reconcile growing citizen demands with constrained administrative resources. Strengthening PSP is essential for fostering institutional trust, promoting social equity, and supporting sustainable development—functions critically dependent on timely, effective, and high-quality service delivery.

Public service performance encompasses multiple interrelated dimensions: effectiveness, timeliness, work quantity, quality, and institutional independence (Andrews, 2020; Grindle, 2021). These elements collectively determine the efficiency and legitimacy of public administration. While each dimension has been studied individually, limited empirical attention has been given to how their interplay shapes PSP in rural, resource-constrained settings like Kampong Trabaek District Administration. This study addresses a key research gap: the lack of context-specific analysis on how PSP dimensions interact within subnational administrations facing infrastructural deficits, low digital literacy, and geographic barriers. At the same time, such areas may benefit from robust community networks that support participatory governance. By examining the influence of work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and institutional independence on PSP in Kampong Trabaek District Administration, this research aims to generate actionable insights into optimizing service delivery under structural constraints. The findings will contribute to broader debates on decentralization and public sector reform in post-conflict and developing contexts. This study aims to explore the current status of PSP in Kampong Trabaek District Administration and to investigate the relationship between work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence in shaping PSP within Kampong Trabaek District Administration, Prey Veng Province, Cambodia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of work quality in influencing public service performance has been repeatedly shown by empirical research. Research from a variety of settings shows how professionalism, attention to detail, and standard-setting directly affect public satisfaction and confidence in government agencies. Van Ryzin (2004), for example, discovered that positive interactions between citizens and public servants greatly improved perceptions of competence and fairness, which in turn raised trust in administrative procedures. Due to limited staffing levels and conflicting demands, employees in rural districts typically struggle to strike a balance between quality and quantity, according to a 2016 Asian Development Bank (ADB) report on public administration in Southeast Asia. Even though it causes temporary delays, research by Meier and O'Toole (2006) showed that putting quality above speed frequently produces better long-term results. Furthermore, in recent years, there has been increased interest in the connection between independence and the quality of one's work. According to a study by Andrews et al. (2011), giving workers the freedom to decide within their areas of expertise encourages a sense of accountability and ownership, which results in higher-quality outputs.

Numerous studies have examined the role of work quantity in public service performance, especially as it relates to productivity, workload distribution, and service coverage. Rainey (2009) conducted a groundbreaking study that looked at the connection between the amount of work and the results of public service in local governments in developing nations. Another important factor affecting the amount of work and overall performance is the distribution of the workload. Significant differences in workload distribution among district-level employees were noted in a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2018) report on decentralized governance in Cambodia. Redistributing tasks according to availability and skill sets increased productivity and morale in public sector organizations, according to a 2010 study by Moynihan and Pandey. Accessibility and inclusivity in the provision of public services have been connected to service coverage, another important measure of the volume of work. According to research by Grindle (2017), attaining equitable



development requires broadening the range of services available to marginalized groups. Excessive workloads frequently result in delays because workers find it difficult to balance conflicting priorities within limited timeframes, according to a 2017 study by Pollitt and Bouckaert.

A crucial aspect of public service performance is timeliness, which has a direct impact on public satisfaction, institutional trust, and the general effectiveness of administrative procedures. Van Ryzin (2011) conducted a seminal study that examined the connection between timeliness and citizens' opinions of the quality of public services in various administrative contexts. Even when other aspects, like quality and effectiveness, were satisfactory, the results showed that delays in service delivery severely damaged trust and satisfaction. According to a study by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017), excessive workloads frequently result in bottlenecks that slow down task completion and lower overall productivity. The significance of quick reaction times in handling pressing circumstances, like natural disasters or public health emergencies, was highlighted by research conducted by Comfort et al. (2010).

A key component of public service performance is effectiveness, which measures how well services accomplish their objectives and improve the lives of citizens and communities. Boyne et al. (2003) conducted a thorough investigation into the factors that influence effectiveness in public organizations, stressing the significance of precise goals and quantifiable results. Ineffective use of financial and human resources frequently reduces the impact of public services, according to a 2019 World Bank report on public administration in Cambodia.

The level of autonomy given to staff members and departments in terms of decision-making, problem-solving, and operational execution is referred to as independence in public service performance. The dual-edged nature of independence has been repeatedly emphasized by empirical research: while it encourages responsiveness, creativity, and accountability, too much autonomy without sufficient supervision can result in inconsistent practices and decreased accountability. Andrews et al. (2011) conducted a groundbreaking study that investigated the connection between public service outcomes and independence in decentralized governance systems. The results showed that giving local administrators more autonomy greatly improved their capacity to customize solutions to particular community needs, encouraging accountability and ownership. According to a study by Meier and O'Toole (2006), efficiency and responsiveness were enhanced when employees were given the freedom to distribute resources within predetermined boundaries.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper uses components of descriptive and correlational analysis in a quantitative research approach. The quantitative method is selected to methodically assess and examine the links between the independent variables—work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence—and the dependent variable PSP. Descriptive statistics will also help to highlight important data features; correlation studies will investigate the strength and kind of correlations among the variables. The target population comprises all district officials employed in the public service sector at Kampong Trabaek District Administration, Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. This covers district officers, district administrative staff, district governors, and district council. Using a purposive sampling approach, 91 respondents will be chosen to guarantee representation across various offices and levels of seniority. The independent variables—work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence—and the dependent variable—PSP—will be measured using a structured questionnaire. Closed-ended questions will be on a Likert scale (1–5) whereas open-ended questions will provide qualitative analysis. The degree and direction of the correlations between the independent variables—work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence—and the dependent variable (PSP) will be examined using Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Based on the research objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. H1: There is a positive relationship between work quality and PSP.
2. H2: There is a positive relationship between work quantity and PSP.
3. H3: There is a positive relationship between timeliness and PSP.



4. H4: There is a positive relationship between effectiveness and PSP.
5. H5: There is a positive relationship between independence and PSP.
6. H6: The combination of work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence significantly predicts PSP.

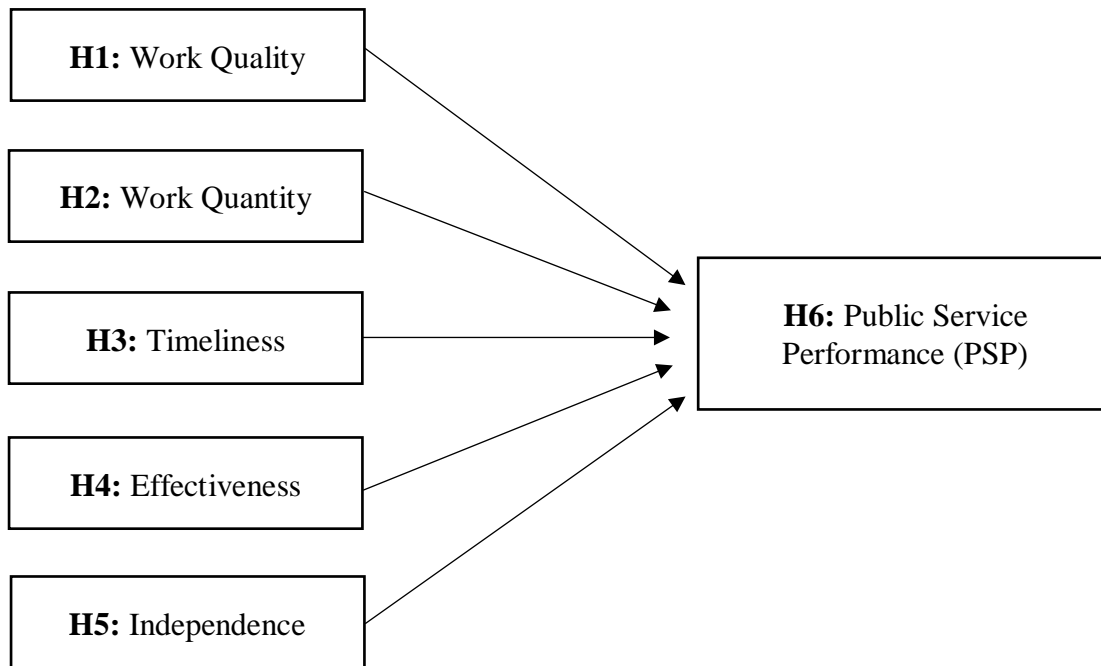


Fig 1. Conceptual framework diagram

In this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct measured by the questionnaire. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the entire scale was 0.81, indicating good internal consistency. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha values for individual constructs were as follows:

- Work quality:  $\alpha=0.81$
- Work quantity:  $\alpha=0.81$
- Timeliness:  $\alpha=0.79$
- Effectiveness:  $\alpha=0.82$
- Independence:  $\alpha=0.84$

These results suggest that the questionnaire demonstrated good to excellent internal consistency across all constructs, supporting its reliability for the purpose of this study. Validity, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Current Status of PSP in Kampong Trabaek District Administration

Kampong Trabaek District is situated in the southeast of Prey Veng Province, 56 kilometers from the provincial capital, along National Road No. 1. It is one of the 13 major districts in the province. The performance of public services in this district is essential for the enhancement of the quality of life for its residents, the promotion of economic development, and the guarantee of equitable access to essential resources. Effective governance and public administration are strongly correlated with the quality of public services in Kampong



Trabaek District. Although some progress has been achieved, systemic inefficiencies persist in the delivery of services in sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education. Nevertheless, the current state of public service performance in Kampong Trabaek District is a reflection of both progress and persistent challenges. Although there have been significant advancements in specific areas, such as increased enrollment in schools and expanded health coverage, systemic issues persist in impeding overall progress. Sustained investment in infrastructure, human resources, and governance reforms, as well as increased collaboration among the government, civil society, and international partners, will be necessary to address these challenges. In summary, the governance and public administration of the Kampong Trabaek District Administration are confronted with substantial obstacles, such as corruption, inefficient service delivery, low civic engagement, and limited institutional capacity. Nevertheless, there are optimistic opportunities to enhance public services and fortify governance systems through ongoing reforms and initiatives. Kampong Trabaek can achieve more inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance outcomes by addressing these challenges through targeted interventions and collaborative efforts.

### The relationship between work quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence in shaping PSP in Kampong Trabaek District Administration

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between work quality (WQ), work quantity (WT), timeliness (TI), effectiveness (EF), and independence (ID) among a sample of 91 participants on public service performance (PSP). Table 1 below presents the correlation coefficients (r) and their corresponding significance levels.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Matrix for Work-Related Variables (N = 91)

Correlation Matrix		WQ	WT	TI	EF	ID
<b>WQ</b>	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
<b>WT</b>	Pearson's r	0.280**	—			
	p-value	0.007	—			
<b>TI</b>	Pearson's r	0.424***	0.254*	—		
	p-value	<.001	0.015	—		
<b>EF</b>	Pearson's r	0.169	0.406***	0.264*	—	
	p-value	0.110	<.001	0.012	—	
<b>ID</b>	Pearson's r	0.372***	0.170	0.418***	0.090	—
	p-value	<.001	0.108	<.001	0.395	—

Note. \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001





- a. Work Quality (WQ):
  - WQ exhibited a significant positive correlation with work time (WT) ( $r = 0.280, p = 0.007$ ), indicating that higher work quality is associated with increased work time.
  - WQ also showed a strong positive correlation with timeliness (TI) ( $r = 0.424, p < .001$ ) and independence (ID) ( $r = 0.372, p < .001$ ), suggesting that higher work quality is linked to better adherence to deadlines and greater autonomy.
  - The correlation between WQ and effectiveness (EF) was not statistically significant ( $r = 0.169, p = 0.110$ ).
- b. Work Quantity (WT):
  - WT demonstrated a significant positive correlation with effectiveness (EF) ( $r = 0.406, p < .001$ ), indicating that longer work hours are associated with higher perceived effectiveness.
  - WT showed no significant correlation with independence (ID) ( $r = 0.170, p = 0.108$ ).
  - As noted above WT also had a significant positive correlation with WQ.
- c. Timeliness:
  - TI displayed significant positive correlations with WQ ( $r = 0.424, p < .001$ ), WT ( $r = 0.254, p = 0.015$ ), EF ( $r = 0.264, p = 0.012$ ), and ID ( $r = 0.418, p < .001$ ), highlighting its strong association with various work-related factors.
- d. Effectiveness:
  - EF showed significant positive correlations with WT ( $r = 0.406, p < .001$ ) and TI ( $r = 0.264, p = 0.012$ ), indicating that higher effectiveness is linked to longer work hours and better timeliness.
  - As noted above EF had no significant correlation with WQ or ID.
- e. Independence:
  - ID revealed significant positive correlations with WQ ( $r = 0.372, p < .001$ ) and TI ( $r = 0.418, p < .001$ ), suggesting that greater autonomy is associated with higher work quality and better timeliness.
  - As noted above, ID had no significant correlation with WT or EF.

The correlation analysis revealed several noteworthy relationships between work-related variables. A particularly prominent finding is the significant role of timeliness (TI). Its strong positive correlations with work quality (WQ), work time (WT), effectiveness (EF), and independence (ID) suggest that meeting deadlines and adhering to schedules is crucial for various aspects of work performance. This highlights the importance of effective time management and organizational skills in the workplace. The significant positive correlations between work quality (WQ) and both independence (ID) and timeliness (TI) suggest that employees who have greater autonomy and are able to manage their time effectively tend to produce higher quality work. This finding aligns with theories emphasizing the importance of autonomy and control in enhancing job satisfaction and performance.

The positive association between work time (WT) and effectiveness (EF) indicates that longer work hours are perceived to contribute to higher effectiveness. However, it is essential to consider potential confounding factors, such as work efficiency and work-life balance. The lack of significant correlation between effectiveness (EF) and independence (ID), and WQ and EF, warrants further investigation. It is possible that the relationship between these variables is complex and may be influenced by other factors not included in this analysis.



### Results of Hypothesis Testing on Public Service Performance

The table below summarizes the results of hypothesis testing for five different hypotheses (H1 to H5). Below is a detailed explanation, analysis, and interpretation of the results:

Table 4.14: Hypothesis Testing of Five Variables on PSP

Hypothesis	Significant Value	Statistically Significant
H1	0.041 (*)	Supported
H2	0.5	Rejected
H3	0.004 (**)	Supported
H4	0.109	Rejected
H5	0.091 (*)	Supported

Five hypotheses were tested using statistical methods, and the results are summarized below:

1. H1: The null hypothesis was rejected ( $p = 0.041$ , \*), providing evidence in favor of the alternative hypothesis.
2. H2: The null hypothesis was not rejected ( $p = 0.5$ ), indicating no significant evidence against it.
3. H3: The null hypothesis was strongly rejected ( $p = 0.004$ , \*\*), providing strong evidence for the alternative hypothesis.
4. H4: The null hypothesis was not rejected ( $p = 0.109$ ), indicating no significant evidence against it.
5. H5: The null hypothesis was marginally rejected ( $p = 0.091$ , \*), suggesting potential evidence for the alternative hypothesis, though further investigation may be needed.

Based on the hypothesis tests, significant evidence was found to support the alternative hypotheses for H1, H3, and marginally for H5. No significant evidence was found to reject the null hypotheses for H2 and H4.

### DISCUSSION

The results of this investigation underscore a substantial positive correlation between the character of work in district public administration and the performance of public services. This is consistent with prior research that indicates that the efficiency, professionalism, and accountability of public administrators have a direct impact on the outcomes of service delivery (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). The capacity of public institutions to satisfy the requirements of citizens is improved by the implementation of high-quality work, which is defined by effective resource management, ethical standards, and competence (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

The complex dynamics of productivity, resource allocation, and service delivery in local governance are underscored by the correlation between work quantity and public service performance within the Kampong Trabaek District Administration. The district administration in Kampong Trabaek has been observed to prioritize high assignments as a method of demonstrating productivity and accountability to higher authorities. While an increase in the quantity of work can result in a higher output in terms of processed applications, resolved complaints, or implemented projects, it does not necessarily translate into enhanced public service performance. The quality-of-service delivery may be neglected as a consequence of an excessive emphasis on quantity, which may result in errors, delays, or superficial solutions that do not adequately address the requirements of citizens (Boyne et al., 2003).

The relationship between public service performance and timeliness in the Kampong Trabaek District Administration underscores a critical aspect of governance that directly affects citizen satisfaction and trust in public institutions. The district administration's dedication to fulfilling public expectations is evident in its capacity to promptly process permit applications, resolve disputes, and provide emergency assistance in Kampong Trabaek. However, obstacles to attaining timeliness persist, frequently resulting from systemic issues



such as resource constraints, bureaucratic red tape, and insufficient staffing. Due to inadequate financial resources and antiquated administrative procedures, the Kampong Trabaek District Administration encounters substantial obstacles in guaranteeing punctual service delivery. These obstacles are in accordance with the conclusions of Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017), who contend that inefficiencies in public service delivery are frequently the result of structural deficiencies rather than individual deficiencies. In order to mitigate these obstacles, the administration must implement innovative strategies, including the digitization of administrative processes and the optimization of procedures, to enhance turnaround times and reduce bottlenecks.

The Kampong Trabaek District Administration's relationship between public service performance and efficacy provides critical insights into the ways in which governance structures, resource allocation, and community engagement affect outcomes. In Kampong Trabaek, effective leaders have been observed to encourage collaboration among stakeholders, such as local councils, non-governmental organizations, and community groups. Public service performance can be considerably improved by leadership that prioritizes accountability and transparency, as it ensures that resources are utilized efficiently and equitably, as per North et al. (2009). Nevertheless, the district administration has occasionally encountered bureaucratic inertia and resistance to change, which implies that additional reforms may be required to establish a culture of continuous improvement.

One of the primary conclusions of the examination of Kampong Trabaek District administrative practices is that public service performance can be improved by independence when it enables local officials to respond promptly and effectively to community-specific issues. For instance, the district administration has demonstrated success in the implementation of localized development projects, including the enhancement of agricultural extension services and the improvement of rural water supply systems. These initiatives were enabled by the autonomy that district-level officials were granted to allocate resources and prioritize activities in accordance with ground-level assessments (Smith & Johnson, 2019). This is consistent with the argument made by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017) that operational independence at the local level is essential for the effective delivery of public services, as it promotes responsiveness and innovation.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the current state of public service performance in the Kampong Trabaek District Administration is characterized by significant advancements in areas such as civil registration, expanded health coverage, and increased school enrollment. Nevertheless, systemic inefficiencies continue to exist, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, healthcare, and education. Sustained investment in infrastructure development, human resources, and governance reforms, as well as increased collaboration among the government, civil society, and international partners, will be necessary to address these challenges.

The Kampong Trabaek District Administration's public service performance (PSP) is influenced by a multifaceted and interdependent relationship between work quality (WQ), work quantity (WT), timeliness (TI), effectiveness (EF), and independence (ID). In order to effectively address the changing requirements of its population, the Kampong Trabaek District Administration must implement a comprehensive strategy that incorporates these dimensions. In order to optimize the advantages and mitigate the risks associated with each factor, strategic interventions and collaborative governance models will be essential. To improve public service performance in Kampong Trabaek District Administration, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a. Enhance Work Quality (WQ) by investing in training and development programs to enhance administrative competence and ensure high-quality work; implementing clear performance metrics and oversight mechanisms to maintain transparency and accountability; and addressing systemic inefficiencies through adequate funding and policy support to complement high work quality.
- b. Manage Work Quantity (WT) by balancing workloads to prevent burnout and ensure sustained productivity. This includes setting realistic expectations and providing adequate support systems; developing interdepartmental coordination initiatives and leverage technology to manage high work





- volumes effectively; and considering broader contextual factors such as financial and human resources when planning workload distribution.
- c. Improve Timeliness (TI) by adopting innovative strategies such as digitizing administrative processes and streamlining workflows to reduce bottlenecks and improve turnaround times; establishing robust feedback mechanisms to engage citizens and stakeholders actively, ensuring their concerns are addressed promptly; fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement focused on timely service delivery.
  - d. Strengthen Effectiveness (EF) by enhancing governance frameworks by building technical capacity and adaptive capabilities to respond to local needs; prioritizing equitable service distribution and tangible community improvements to build trust and address social disparities; leveraging technology and foster a culture of innovation to experiment with new solutions tailored to local contexts.
  - e. Optimize Independence (ID) by granting appropriate levels of independence to local officials while maintaining standardized guidelines and oversight to ensure consistency; encouraging localized development projects and empower district-level officials to allocate resources based on ground-level assessments; fostering political dynamics and stakeholder engagement to leverage independence for better public service outcomes.

By adopting these recommendations, Kampong Trabaek District Administration can move closer to achieving its goal of providing equitable, efficient, and responsive public services to all residents. Sustained investment in infrastructure, human resources, and governance reforms, along with leveraging technology and fostering citizen engagement, will be pivotal for enhancing overall public service performance in this district as well as all districts in Prey Veng province, Cambodia.

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