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(54) **Title:** METHOD FOR TESTING A WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK INCLUDING A STATION AND AN ACCESS POINT

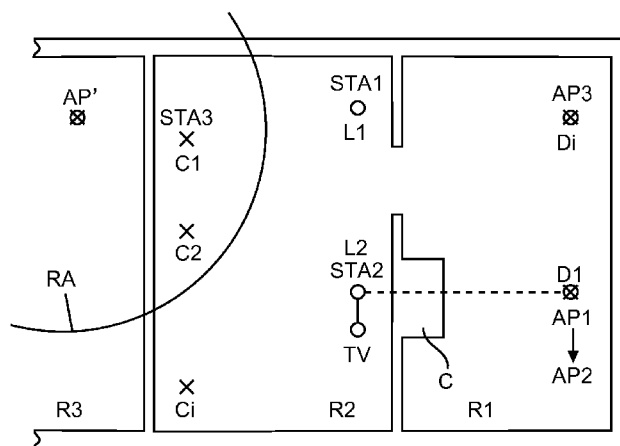


Fig. 2

(57) **Abstract:** The method for testing a wireless communications network including a station (STA3) and an access point (AP3) comprises the steps of sending broadcast packets from the station to the access point in a lower frequency band and waiting for confirmation, calculating a packet loss in the lower frequency band based on the number of sent and confirmed broadcast packets, and calculating a packet loss for a higher frequency band by taking into account the calculated packet loss of the lower frequency band and by using a correlation function between the lower frequency and the higher frequency band. The wireless communications network is in particular a communications network according to one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations and the broadcast packets are in particular address resolution protocol packets.

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**METHOD FOR TESTING A WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK
INCLUDING A STATION AND AN ACCESS POINT**

TECHNICAL FIELD

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The invention relates to a method for testing a wireless communications network including a station and an access point, in particular to a method for calculating a packet loss between the station and the access point for
10 determining a video quality.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Wireless transmission for local area networks (WLAN) is in
15 the meanwhile a well established technology for end users. An essential part of a local area network is a residential gateway connecting the local area network to the Internet. A mechanism for connecting wireless devices to a local area network is called Wi-Fi, which is a brand name for devices
20 using the IEEE 802.11 family of standards for wireless transmission. The IEEE 802.11 standards, also called recommendations, define a residential gateway as a wireless access point, and a wireless device connected to the residential gateway is called a station. The IEEE 802.11
25 standards are defined such that wireless devices distributed all over a home can be connected to the residential gateway without requiring any data cables.

The IEEE 802.11b and 802.11g standards use the 2,4 GHZ ISM
30 band, wherein the later developed 802.11g standard allows a data rate of up to 54 Mbit/s, which is even sufficient in principle for providing high quality video streaming for real time applications. But the Wi-Fi technology has become victim of its own success: even though there are several
35 non-overlapping frequency channels that can be chosen for data transmission (four in Europe, three in US),

interference from neighbouring Wi-Fi devices has become a serious problem in urban areas. In addition, there are also other devices using the 2.4 GHz ISM band, for example Bluetooth devices, microwave ovens, babyphones and others.

5

It is therefore a consensus in the industry that video streaming over the 2.4 GHz ISM band will not work reliably, and that the 5 GHz U-NII band has to be used for avoiding interference. Further, the present 802.11g wireless devices
10 are designed for data transport and do not have high quality video transmission in mind. They operate with a maximum physical layer bit rate of 54 Mbit/s, which provides about 22 Mbit/s average data throughput. In the meanwhile first companies producing Wi-Fi devices have
15 started to work on dedicated 5 GHz Wi-Fi solutions, tuned specifically for video applications in accordance with the new IEEE 802.11n standard, which allow to specify a sufficient throughput and packet loss for a given radio frequency path in the 5 GHz band.

20

But for a user interested in such an application there is still the remaining problem, that he does not have any information about the RF path loss between a station and an access point intended for video transmission in his home.
25 There exists also no reliable model to calculate the RF path loss based on the distance between the station and the access point including additional path loss by walls, cabinets or other obstacles. For example, the attenuation caused by a conventional concrete floor can be about 5dB,
30 but may be as well as 25dB in case the concrete floor contains metallic screed reinforcement mesh, which is not visible to the user.

A user owns for example a Wi-Fi access point AP operating
35 in the 2,4 GHz band in a room R1 of his home and a station STA1 in a room R2 at a location L1, e.g. a computer, as

shown in Fig. 1. But he wishes to replace the current access point AP by an advanced 5 GHz video over Wi-Fi access point AP2, a residential gateway operating in the 5 GHz U-NII band, and use it with a 5 GHz video over Wi-Fi set-top box STA2 at a location L2. The set-top box STA2 has to be located close to a television set TV in the room R2.

Although the documentation of the new 5 GHz access point AP2 promises that it can guaranty a data throughput of 40 Mb/s and a packet loss below 10-16 packets/sec up to a path loss of 90 db, which allows viewing and recording of two different high resolution movies simultaneously, the user has no information whether the solution would actually work sufficiently in his house at the locations that he envisages for the residential gateway AP2 and the set-top box STA2. In the room R1, there may exist for example a chimney or a large cabinet C in the direct line between the residential gateway AP2 and the set-top box STA2. So the only way to find out would be either to buy the equipment in a store and hope that it operates at the wanted locations, or to have a site service conducted by the company offering the new access point AP2, if possible.

US 7,317,419 describes a method for estimating a position of a target device emitting a radio frequency signal based on data pertaining to strength of an emission received from the target device. The position of the target device is estimated based on receive signal strength data associated with received emissions from the target device and from reference devices. The target device can be for example a device emitting energy that interferes with the operation of IEEE 802.11 WLAN devices, e.g. a microwave oven, a Bluetooth device or a cordless telephone. The method uses multiple path loss models, e.g. a path loss model for areas with low obstruction densities, and another path loss model

for high obstruction densities. The specific coefficients for the path loss models can be found empirically.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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The invention describes a method for testing a wireless communications network including a station and an access point, the method comprising the steps of sending broadcast packets from the station to the access point in a lower frequency band and waiting for confirmation, calculating a packet loss in the lower frequency band based on the number of sent and confirmed broadcast packets, and calculating a packet loss for a higher frequency band by taking into account the calculated packet loss of the lower frequency band and by using a correlation function between the lower frequency and the higher frequency band.

The wireless communications network is in particular a communications network in accordance with one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations, and the broadcast packets are sent without retransmissions with the lowest recommended modulation rate according to one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations, for example with a modulation rate being within a range of 1 and 5 MHz.

25

In a further aspect of the invention, the method comprises the step of sending a unicast response message in response to a received broadcast packet for calculating a packet loss for the lower frequency band and converting the packet loss data into the lower frequency band by means of the correlation function for determining a video performance for the lower frequency band, wherein the broadcast packets are in particular address resolution protocol packets.

35 The station according to the invention utilizes the method for example by using computer executable program code

included within the station. The computer executable program code for performing the method may be included within the station as a software program or may be stored within the station by copying the computer executable program code from a computer readable storage medium comprising the computer executable program code.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Preferred embodiments of the invention are explained in more detail below by way of example with reference to schematic drawings, which show:

Fig. 1 a wireless communications network including a station and an access point arranged in a home of an end-user, and

Fig. 2 a scenario for determining a packet loss in a 5 GHz band for a site as described with regard to Fig. 1.

20

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

It is to be understood that the figures and the description of the present invention have been simplified to illustrate elements that are relevant for a clear understanding of the present invention, while eliminating, for purposes of clarity, many other elements found in typical wireless delivery methods and systems. However, because such elements are well known in the art, a detailed discussion of such elements is not provided herein. The disclosure herein is directed to all such variations and modifications known to those skilled in the art. The exemplary embodiment comes within the framework of IEEE 802.11, but the invention is not limited to this particular environment and may be applied also within other wireless frameworks utilizing other frequencies.

The method of the present invention for testing a wireless communications network includes a station and an access point and uses broadcast packets for calculating a packet loss in a lower frequency band. Then, a packet loss is calculated for a higher frequency band by taking into account the calculated packet loss in the lower frequency band and by using a correlation function between the lower frequency and the higher frequency band. The wireless communications network is in particular a wireless network in accordance with one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations and the lower frequency band the 2.4 GHz band and the higher frequency band the 5 GHz band.

The method for testing a wireless communications network is illustrated now with regard to Fig. 2 showing an access point AP3 and a station STA3 for testing the site as described with regard to Fig. 1. The access point AP3 can be any old Wi-Fi access point and the station STA3 any old laptop having 2.4 GHz Wi-Fi in accordance with any one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations, to test the radio path for determining the path loss and in particular a packet loss between envisaged locations for the new residential gateway AP2 and the new set-top box STA2 as described with regard to Fig. 1.

The method for testing a wireless communications network is provided for example as an application which can be installed on the station STA3, e.g. a laptop, a netbook or even a smartphone equipped with Wi-Fi, to determine the path loss for the radio path between the access point AP2 and the set-top box STA2. The station STA3 is moved around in the room R2 and all locations can be tested, which are interesting for a use of the set-top box STA2. Therefore, a multitude of measurements is made at locations C_i of the room R2 with the station STA3 in the 2.4 GHz band, for

determining packet loss data for each location C_i .
Corresponding measurements may be made also at several
locations D_i with the access point AP3.

- 5 The method for testing the wireless communications network
has to be as much as possible independent of any existing
interference in the 2,4 GHz band, which may be caused for
example by a neighbour using an access point AP' in his
apartment in a room R3. The range RA of the access point
10 AP' is indicated in a simplified manner as a circle and
covers a part of the room R2. The result for the path loss
obtained in the 2,4 GHz band is then converted into a path
loss in the 5 GHz band due to the good correlation for path
loss between 2,4 and 5 GHz. By using broadcast packets, the
15 solution is therefore independent of Wi-Fi interference in
the 2,4 GHz band, but not of non-Wi-Fi interference. In
that respect, the test will yield a pessimistic result in
terms of predicted performance for the 5 GHz band.
- 20 The method for determining the path loss between the old
residential gateway AP and the station STA3 is dependent on
the radiated power of the station STA3 and the receive
sensitivity of the access point AP, but is independent on
implementation choices with regard to the algorithms
25 effecting Wi-Fi performance, e.g. rate adaption and
wireless retransmission algorithm. For the 5 GHz
performance, the calculation will assume maximum legally
allowed radiated power of the new access point AP2 and
state of the art receive sensitivity of the new set-top
30 STA2. The correlation between 5 GHz and the 2.4 GHz test
results with state-of-the-art 2.4 GHz solution, obtained
with the 2.4 GHz access point AP3 and the 2.4 GHz station
STA3, at various locations having various radio paths, will
allow to predict (in a pessimistic way) whether the 5 GHz
35 solution will work sufficiently between two given

locations, e.g. for the location of the new access point AP2 and the new set-top box STA2.

In more detail, the old 2,4 GHz access point AP3 can be of
5 any model, no control over implementation or functionality
is required. The access point AP3 can be for example even
an old residential gateway in accordance with IEEE 802 11b.
For the station STA3, e.g. a laptop, a netbook or a
smartphone can be used, on which the test application is
10 running. The test application can be downloaded from an
Internet web page for example or can be provided via a
service DVD.

Because of possible interferences in the 2.4 GHz band, the
15 test method cannot make use of throughput tests or of round
trip times. Also, because of the desire to limit
constraints on the 2.4 GHz access point AP3 and the 2.4 GHz
station STA3, the test method cannot make use of received
signal strength indication (RSSI) values. The test method
20 is based advantageously only on packet loss. The test
method does not require to control the rate set used by the
access point AP3 and the station STA3 and does not require
a control over retransmission and retransmission limits,
which have a huge impact on packet loss. The test method
25 uses advantageously broadcast packets, e.g. address
resolution protocol (ARP) packets, which are always sent at
the lowest Wi-Fi modulation rate, e.g. the lowest IEEE
802.11b or 802.11g modulation rate, without
retransmissions. The test method uses broadcast packets,
30 which are selected such that confirmation or
acknowledgement of receipt is fed back automatically to the
sending station STA3.

The address resolution protocol is a telecommunications
35 protocol used for resolution of network layer addresses
into link layer addresses. The address resolution protocol

defines a simple message format that uses one broadcast address resolution request and a unicast response from the sought-after receiving device back to the sender.

5 The station STA3 at a location C_i sends for example 2.4 GHz ARP broadcast packets to the access point AP3, and the access point AP3 sends a reply. Because the reply is a unicast message and therefore subject to retransmissions, the sending of the broadcast packets will be predominant
10 for the packet loss, independent of the retransmission behavior of the access point AP3. From the number of sent broadcast packets and the number of receive messages, a packet loss in percent can be calculated for the location C_i .

15

The test application includes a correlation function which transforms in a next step the packet loss from the 2.4 GHz range to the 5 GHz range to provide an estimation about the 5 GHz Video Performance. First, the correlation function
20 needs to be defined between a multitude of packet loss values 2.4RefAP3 and 2.4RefSTA3 at 2.4 GHz obtained at various locations C_i or/and D_i and the 5 GHz packet loss values: The 2.4GHz Prediction Test Result(2.4RefAP3 @ Location C_i ; 2.4RefSTA3 @ Location D_i) yields a $Y_i\%$ packet
25 loss, and the VideoPerformance (5GHzAP2 @ Location D_i ; 5GHzSTA2 @ Location C_i) will result in Z_i Arbitrary Units. From the area (Y_i, Z_i) , the correlation function can be fitted such that Z_i can be approximated by Correlation Function (Y_i) .

30

When the user performs the 2.4 GHz prediction test in his house with his old equipment on the envisaged locations, he obtains a 2.4 GHz prediction test result, which is $X\%$ packet loss for the access point AP2 at the location D_1 and
35 the station STA2 at location L_2 . From the above, it can be reliably deduced that the video performance for the 5 GHz

solution on the envisaged locations, the video performance for the 5 GHz access point AP2 at location D1 and the 5 GHz station STA2 at location L2 will be equal to or better than the correlation function (X).

5

This method has the advantage, that a user has a first estimation, whether a video transmission between an access point AP2 and a new station STA2 will work and where it will work, before he buys a new equipment. This test can be performed already with his old equipment, which can be any Wi-Fi certified 2.4 GHz residential gateway and any Wi-Fi certified laptop or netbook. No trial and error is required with the new equipment, and no on-site visit with special test equipment is necessary.

15

Reference numerals appearing in the claims are by way of illustration only and shall have no limiting effect on the scope of the claims. Features disclosed in the description, the claims and the drawings may be provided independently or in any appropriate combination, and may be implemented, were appropriate, in hardware, software or a combination of both. Also other embodiments of the invention may be utilized by one skilled in the art without departing from the scope of the present invention. The invention resides therefore in the claims herein after appended.

25

Claims

1. A method for testing a wireless communications network including a station (STA3) and an access point (AP3),
5 comprising the steps of
 sending broadcast packets from the station (STA3) to the access point (AP3) in a lower frequency band and waiting for confirmation,
 calculating a packet loss in the lower frequency
10 GHz band based on the number of sent and confirmed broadcast packets, and
 calculating a packet loss for a higher frequency band by taking into account the calculated packet loss in the lower frequency band and by using a correlation
15 function between the lower and the higher frequency band.
2. The method of claim 1, comprising the step of sending a unicast response message by the access point (AP3) as
20 the confirmation in response to a received broadcast packet.
3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein the broadcast packets are address resolution protocol packets.
25
4. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the wireless communications network is a communications network in accordance with one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations.
- 30 5. The method of claim 4, comprising the step of sending the broadcast packets without retransmission with the lowest recommended modulation rate according to one of the IEEE 802.11 recommendations.

6. The method of claim 4 or 5, comprising the step of sending the broadcast packets with a modulation rate being within a range of 1 and 5 MHz.
- 5 7. The method of one of the preceding claims, wherein the lower frequency band is a 2,4 GHz ISM band and the higher frequency band is a 5 GHz U-NII band.
8. The method of one of the preceding claims, comprising
10 the step of determining a video performance for the higher frequency band from the correlation function.
9. A station (STA3), utilizing a method according to one of the preceding claims.
- 15 10. Computer executable program code for application within a station (STA3), the computer executable program code performing the method steps according to one of the preceding claims 1-8 as subsequent program steps.
- 20 11. Computer readable storage medium, comprising computer executable program code for performing a method according to one of the preceding claims 1- 8.
- 25 12. A non-transitory program storage medium, readable by a computer, comprising computer executable program code in accordance with claim 10.

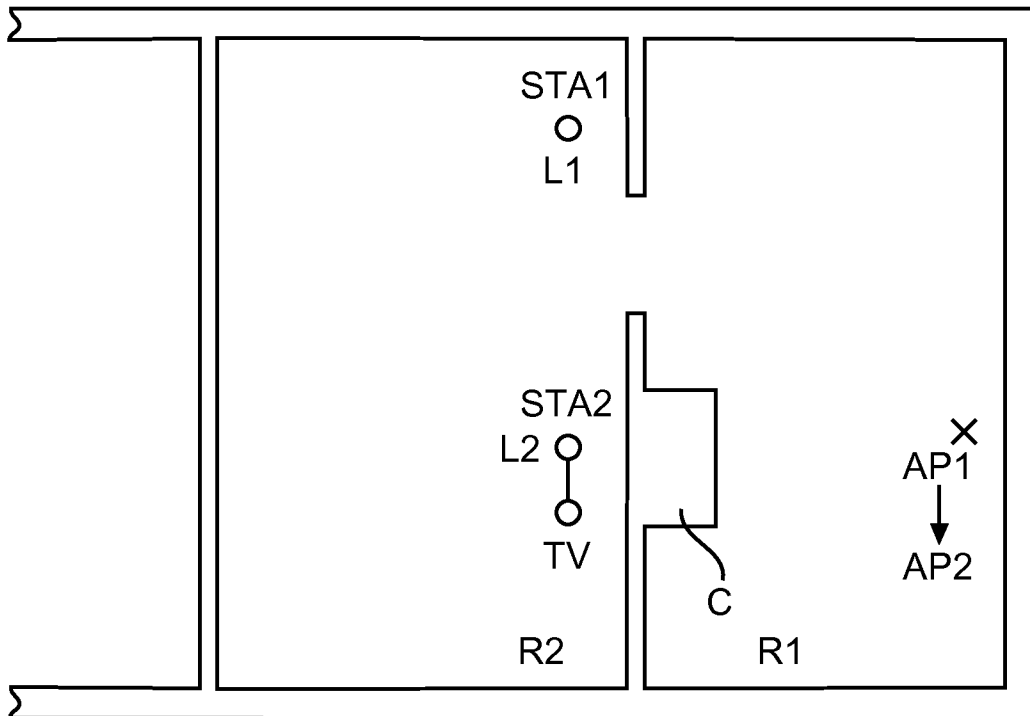


Fig. 1

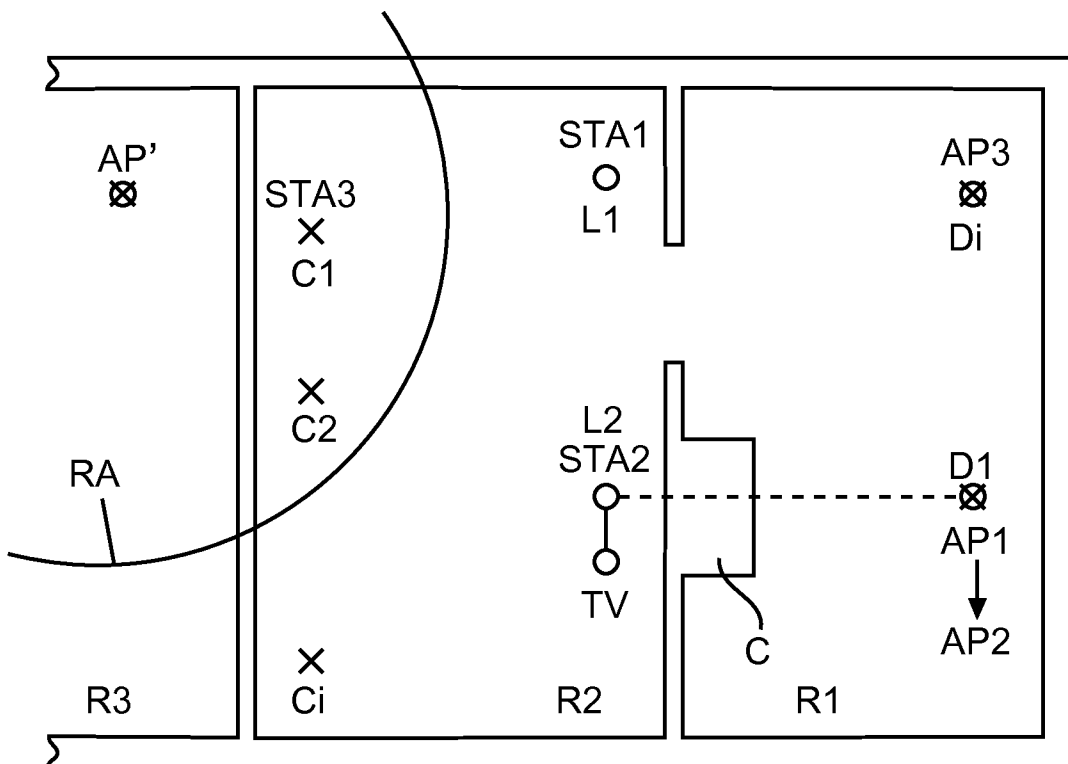


Fig. 2

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/EP2013/055275

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. H04W24/06
 ADD. H04W84/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 H04W

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
 EPO-Internal, INSPEC, PAJ, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 2003/161341 A1 (WU MILES [US] ET AL) 28 August 2003 (2003-08-28) paragraph [0042] - paragraph [0051] -----	1-12
A	US 2010/246416 A1 (SINHA AMIT [US] ET AL) 30 September 2010 (2010-09-30) paragraph [0033] - paragraph [0048] -----	1-12

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Hartweg, Norman
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/EP2013/055275

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