aws marketplace

CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform

Reviews, tips, and advice from real users

Contents

Product Recap

![ctera] CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform

CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform Recap

The CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform provides a cloud-native global file system over public and private object storage, revolutionizing the world of hybrid cloud data solutions. Enhanced by a rich data services ecosystem, CTERA enables enterprises to gain full control of their data for optimal edge performance, data insight, and governance. The platform focuses on security, providing features like data encryption, access controls, and ransomware protection. Centralized management tools enable efficient data control and monitoring. The platform is being used to replace legacy NAS and file servers, especially at remote locations, and simplify backup and disaster recovery of file data while providing the flexibility of multi-cloud deployments with infinite scalability. CTERA is at the core of hybrid cloud transformations of some of the world's largest banks, healthcare organizations, global media groups, and government agencies, in deployments that scale to tens of petabytes.

Valuable Features

Excerpts from real customer reviews on PeerSpot:

✔ "I like that the glass is always half full with CTERA file services. It keeps the data hot for users on location and then tiers off older data. If you need it, the stub is still there. You can click on it, and it's back on the device."

Verified user

Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a manufacturing company with 10,001+ employees

✔ "The features I find most valuable are in the gateways themselves. They have done a great job over the years of providing insight into what is happening with our products, with the batches that come through that are scanned. I enjoy that part of it, and it is fairly easy to use from our standpoint once we get to know the product."

James Lucas

Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+ employees

✔ "The solution provides substantial flexibility, allowing the separation of workloads across various hardware platforms without vendor lock-in. This flexibility makes it adaptable to future infrastructure changes."

Igal Muginstein

Engineering & Network Division Storage, Backup & Os Team Manager at a comms service provider with 5,001-10,000 employees

✔ "The best feature is the migration tool within CTERA."

Verified user

Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000 employees

✔ "The CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform is a hybrid solution that supports both on-premises and cloud environments."

Krishna Murthy S

Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

✔ "It is a three-in-one solution for us. It is a file-sharing platform, an archiving solution, and also a backup solution."

Verified user

System Administrator at a transportation company with 10,001+ employees

✔ "CTERA has been particularly capable of keeping all of our workstations backed up. That became a critical feature for us during the pandemic when computers were rarely in the office. Everybody went off-site with their computers, and we were accustomed to working with a centralized storage infrastructure where people would come to the office and connect to the server to use, create, and modify files. Everything was done directly to that server."

James Payne

Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

What users had to say about valuable features:

"The solution provides data eviction, where unused data is evicted from the local file, freeing up space. It also allows data to be rehydrated from the cloud when needed.

The scalability is good because the eviction policy can be changed easily to manage space.."

Verified user   Read full review ↗
Global Infrastructure Manager at a tech services company with 1,001-5,000 employees

"The CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform is a hybrid solution that supports both on-premises and cloud environments. This means we can use cloud storage, such as GCP or Azure buckets, as the backend while deploying services on-premises or in the cloud. Additionally, caching gateways can be placed at different remote locations to improve performance. A vital advantage of this platform is its instantaneous recovery capability, allowing seamless access to a secondary gateway if the primary one fails, a feature lacking in the previous solution.."

Krishna Murthy S   Read full review ↗
Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

"The best feature is the migration tool within CTERA.

It is easy to learn. I work as an infrastructure engineer, so I manage the storage. I manage the VMware infrastructure. I manage a little bit of cloud. I manage the compute as well, so for me, it was pretty easy. Once I understood the architecture, it was pretty easy. Currently, I am the primary engineer who provides all necessary support for all our users, and for me, it was pretty easy to understand. Once I understood the architecture, it was pretty easy to put all the pieces together and go about it.."

Verified user   Read full review ↗
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000
employees

"I like that the glass is always half full with CTERA file services. It keeps the data hot for users on location and then tiers off older data. If you need it, the stub is still there. You can click on it, and it's back on the device.

The replication and versioning work great. Users can self-serve basic restorations of one or two gigabytes, but administrators need to handle bigger restores of several gigabytes. CTERA has out-of-the-box data protection capabilities. It sends the data to the cloud.

As soon as something is written to the device, CTERA copies it to the cloud, where it's versioned with snapshots so we can recover it. We haven't used Ransom Protect, but we'll roll that out with the next firmware upgrade. ."

Verified user   Read full review ↗
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a manufacturing company with 10,001+
employees

"The features I find most valuable are in the gateways themselves. They have done a great job over the years of providing insight into what is happening with our products, with the batches that come through that are scanned. I enjoy that part of it, and it is fairly easy to use from our standpoint once we get to know the product.

For the technical side, they have done a very good job over the last couple of years. Joe, Mukesh, and Shannon have done a great job teaching our staff. Joe Scott comes across as almost like a professor when he is teaching. He is very good at it. Once you learn how the system works, it is fairly easy, but there are a lot of little things that can go wrong. There are a lot of moving parts within it, so a lot of things can happen. You can do all the right steps and follow the runbook that is provided by CTERA, but you still need CTERA to help you dig down deep when you find an issue because new ones happen all the time.."

James Lucas   Read full review ↗
Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+
employees

"CTERA has been particularly capable of keeping all of our workstations backed up. That became a critical feature for us during the pandemic when computers were rarely in the office. Everybody went off-site with their computers, and we were accustomed to working with a centralized storage infrastructure where people would come to the office and connect to the server to use, create, and modify files. Everything was done directly to that server.

When our staff was no longer coming to the office, some of the file creation was in jeopardy because they were no longer working directly off the file server. Those backups became crucial to keeping the data safe on their local drives. The ability to access our centralized data through a browser interface and an edge filer with SMB or NFS access has made it an excellent solution for us.."

James Payne
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

Read full review ↗

Other Solutions Considered

"It is not really an alternative, but we have used AFS, which is very good for production data that uses your file services. We have used things like OneDrive and SharePoint for production data. They are also not very practical.."

Verified user
Global Infrastructure Manager at a tech services company with 1,001-5,000 employees

Read full review ↗

"I previously used Hitachi Content Platform and NetApp for my data storage needs, but I have since transitioned to CTERA as it better aligns with my requirements. Due to its superior suitability, I am migrating my other platforms to the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform.."

Krishna Murthy S
Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

"We haven't used anything that would be a direct competitor because CTERA opened our minds to what could be done with hybrid cloud and on-prem storage. Previously, we used only separate on-prem or backup solutions. It's hard to say that I've worked with any product that offers the complete solution that CTERA does.

I've used Windows File-Sharing Service and Extreme ZIP, which bolts onto that. I've used some UNIX-based technologies a long time ago, but probably too long to be relevant.."

James Payne   Read full review ↗
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

ROI

Real user quotes about their ROI:

"We reduced our total ownership cost using CTERA. Adding SSD storage to Windows file servers is expensive, and we no longer need to back up those devices. The ability to store things in a back-end S3 bucket significantly reduces the cost. It's much cheaper per gig. ."

Verified user
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a manufacturing company with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

"We brought on a new technology we hadn't used before, so we spent more money to get the features. If we compare it to using Nasuni instead, I would say we have reduced the total cost of ownership. However, we're spending more than we were before. ."

James Payne
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

Read full review ↗

"We have not measured it, but there is probably a 10% to 15% time-saving. That will grow because we have been spending a lot of time migrating and setting things up, but that has put us in a better position to take advantage of the platform.."

Richard Saini
Lead Infrastructure Architect at a financial services firm with 501-1,000 employees

"I am positive that CTERA has helped reduce the total cost of ownership by eliminating the need for manual storage management and reducing storage service processes. Previously, whenever we needed storage, I had to carve out a LUN presented through HPE OneView. It was a process. Now, I do not have to worry about storage. This has definitely saved a great deal for the organization.."

Verified user
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000 employees

Use Case

"We use CTERA in almost every site we use. It is the platform for every commercial site that we have in the world. We have around 198 of their devices locally, and we also have CTERA devices in our central locations for each region.."

James Lucas   Read full review ↗
Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+
employees

"I primarily use the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform for SMB shares and object storage. To accommodate my growing needs, I plan to migrate the Hitachi Content Platform for archival purposes and expand to a broader platform.."

Krishna Murthy S   Read full review ↗
Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

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"Our use case varies because the product has a few modules. We use it as a backup agent for our endpoints and a centralized storage solution, providing an on-premise caching server that some organizations might call an edge filer. The master file copy lives in cloud storage. It's a complete hybrid storage solution for file management.."

James Payne   Read full review ↗
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

"It is our main production file share. Our main reason for going for this solution was the uncontrollable growth of file data. It was unsustainable on our previous platform or technology. We needed something scalable like CTERA, so it was the scalability that we required.."

Richard Saini

Lead Infrastructure Architect at a financial services firm with 501-1,000 employees

Read full review ↗

"We are using the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform in two areas. The first is as a platform for our customers, providing a modern infrastructure. The second, more sophisticated use case is for internal usage as our internal file server. We have a huge file system. Currently, it is used internally, but in the future, we might prepare the infrastructure or create applications that will be accessible via the Internet, beyond just internal use.."

Igal Muginstein

Engineering & Network Division Storage, Backup & Os Team Manager at a comms service provider with 5,001-10,000 employees

Read full review ↗

"We use it as a hosted cloud solution. We had initially tried Azure File Sync, but that did not work. Due to certain security concerns, I was tasked with researching alternatives. I evaluated several options, including Cohesity and Nasuni, before finding the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform to be the best fit for our needs. We performed a proof of concept with our applications director, and based on the positive results, I recommended the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform to senior management.."

Verified user   Read full review ↗

Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000 employees

Setup

The setup process involves configuring and preparing the product or service for use, which may include tasks such as installation, account creation, initial configuration, and troubleshooting any issues that may arise. Below you can find real user quotes about the setup process.

"The initial deployment was straightforward. CTERA assisted with deployment initially, but now I handle it by taking the latest image for new installations. Installation in the cloud only takes a couple of minutes.."

Krishna Murthy S   Read full review ↗

Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

"We have a hybrid deployment model. The initial setup was easy. It took us about eight months, but we had a lot of data. About 24 different facilities were migrated to one solution, so it was not CTERA. It was more related to our scheduling and doing it step-by-step rather than CTERA itself.

We were able to realize its benefits after a year of implementing it.

Its maintenance is done by CTERA. We schedule a time when to do an upgrade, and it is done by the technician.."

Verified user   Read full review ↗

System Administrator at a transportation company with 10,001+ employees

"We have a physical box on-premises, which then gets fed up to the central coast bucket or the Cloud Object Storage bucket.

The initial setup was easy. We had world-class support. Itay, our account director at the time, was excellent. He has been promoted since then, but he helped us at the time. We had a few others from the technical support team to make sure that it was a clean and smooth transition from our legacy hardware to the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform.

It took us about four months to get to a fully working condition. We had adopted a brand new product. It was operational within two weeks, but we had a few problems. They helped us to resolve them. All in all, it was a good experience, and it took about four months to get to the sweet spot where there were no problems.

It does not require any maintenance from our side.."

Verified user   Read full review [↗]

Global Infrastructure Manager at a tech services company with 1,001-5,000 employees

"It is easy to deploy. We have a team that helps set up the system before it goes live, and they have really got it down to an art at this point.

For one site, we can probably get it stood up with servers and other things that are needed within about two weeks. It is fairly simple. It also depends on the download it takes and how much data that you want to use. There are a lot of variables in there, but it would take about two weeks.

They are always looking to upgrade their versions, which is great. Most recently, they upgraded their version to help with an issue that we were having in CTERA. That was good. However, when I first got here, we were on so many different versions of CTERA that we committed ourselves to only upgrading once a year. They may have several versions or two other versions coming out throughout the year, but we only upgrade once. We have so many sites and so many places that we have to touch. We can only do it during downtime, which makes it very difficult for us, so we deploy the version at the beginning of the year and do not touch it for the rest of the year. ."

James Lucas   Read full review ⬈

Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+
employees

"It was not very easy or very complicated. We had an Azure engineer and CTERA support to help us out, so it was pretty easy. Once we understood the concepts and defined what exactly we needed, such as how many filers and failover devices were required, it was very easy. After we had the image, we provisioned the servers in the cloud, and it was not very difficult. It was pretty easy.

It was implemented by my coworker, who has since left. It probably took a couple of weeks, but we were not working on it every day and all the time. It was done based on the availability of the engineers and the availability on the CTERA side as well. It was a big project because we have tons of application servers and file services. We also had a hardware issue. We had various phases, such as defining the architecture, migration, testing, etc. It was tested at every level, and then it was finally put up in production.

In terms of maintenance, for the CTERA filer that is on a physical server, I had to get in touch with CTERA engineers to upgrade the CTERA firmware. I also had to do the HPE hardware firmware upgrade. I had to upgrade the drivers on the NIC cards. Such maintenance has to be done. ."

Verified user   Read full review ↗

Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000
employees

"When we implemented the solution, CTERA didn't have any training, so we had to work with their engineers to learn the solution and get the portal set up. It was a little challenging, but they were there to answer questions and show us best practices for deployment.

It took us around a month to set up the portal and work through the pieces to deploy the edge services. Once you deploy the edge device, you need to copy the old systems' data. That takes a little bit longer. It took about two months to get it to a place where we were comfortable. The deployment team consisted of one CTERA engineer, me, and another system administrator.

After deployment, CTERA requires some maintenance, primarily firmware upgrades. CTERA coordinates with us when new versions come out, and we work with their engineers to deploy them. A technical account manager manages those software versions to ensure we're not on the bleeding edge and causing more problems in our environment.

They do ESS upgrades on the hardware they deploy from and other care and feeding underneath the hood that we can't access. They have access to their gateways, which are locked down only for their admin use. We open tickets and work with them hand in hand to get things upgraded, tweaked, or troubleshooted.."

Verified user

Read full review [↗]

Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a manufacturing company with 10,001+ employees

Customer Service and Support

"Initially, I sought support often, but in recent years, I've been managing on my own. I have not needed to contact technical support as frequently as before.."

Krishna Murthy S
Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

"I rate CTERA support nine out of 10. Their support team is terrific, and their agent is highly available. He's enthusiastic about helping us solve any problem, large or small. ."

James Payne
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

Read full review ↗

"Their technical support is pretty good. They take ownership of the call, and I enjoy working with them. It is pretty easy.

They are excellent. They are available 24/7, and I have been able to contact them even at odd hours. They swiftly address concerns and take ownership of the call, providing a very satisfactory support experience.."

Verified user
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a performing arts with 501-1,000 employees

Read full review ⬈

"We hold weekly sessions to review new features and discuss open tickets. I sometimes work directly with CTERA's engineering team when we need new developments. They value our input, and customers like us can provide different perspectives.

Their support team is highly accessible, and they can connect directly to our system. When we need immediate assistance, they provide it promptly.I would rate them nine out of ten. One of CTERA's best features is its support and engineering teams.."

Igal Muginstein
Engineering & Network Division Storage, Backup & Os Team Manager at a comms service provider with 5,001-10,000 employees

Read full review ⬈

"We were early adopters of this solution. It was relatively new at the time. Within the first three to six months, there were some problems, but their support team was very helpful. They were a phone call away. Anytime we had a problem, we could make a call. They were very good. With the help from support, they all got resolved relatively quickly.

If I have any issues, I normally call our account manager. We should go through the service desk, but being an early adopter, we have a good relationship with CTERA, so they do not mind. They do have a route where you can go onto their portal and log a ticket, which we do if it is not an urgent issue. If something is mission-critical and needs a quick fix, we just pick up the phone and get someone on the phone pretty quickly.."

Verified user   Read full review [↗]
Global Infrastructure Manager at a tech services company with 1,001-5,000
employees

"We use the ticketing system regularly, and it works well. It has gotten better over time. When I first started, we would contact them a lot by phone for P1s or severity ones. I found that to be very cumbersome and less reliable, but since then, we have been able to work through those issues. By having Joe, Mukesh, and Shannon, we have been able to resolve some of those issues. If we supply a ticket, they are able to find a way to help us. We sometimes do call. We can now also get on the calendar and schedule time. That is a nice feature. When we first started out, everything was on call, and those people we were calling did not have a clue of what they were doing. That has changed a lot over the last four years.

They have also done a good job recently from the training aspect. Joe, Mukesh, and Shannon have done a good job with the relationship and the relationship building. They have been able to work with us even when we look at licensing and the amount of licenses that we have to purchase for all these devices. They have worked with us even on that. ."

James Lucas
Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

Other Advice

"I rate CTERA Enterprise File Services eight out of 10. My best advice is to trust the process. CTERA's support team will be by your side and help you figure out how to best use the tools. They're there to make sure you have a successful outcome.."

James Payne
Head of Technology at Glenn Davis Group Inc.

Read full review ↗

"I would rate the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform nine out of ten.

The latest version of the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform offers enhanced NFS support and object archival capabilities, including more flexible retention settings. Previous limitations have been addressed, resulting in significant improvements.

The stop file did not apply to on-prem NetApp or the other solutions. Users might need to adjust how they interact with data.."

Krishna Murthy S
Business Development Manager at a retailer with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

"I rate CTERA Enterprise File Services nine out of 10.

Before implementing CTERA, you must analyze the workload you're trying to put on the platform and test it. We're a big manufacturer doing a lot of automated

testing where we're writing thousands of files. At a point, it doesn't stop you from writing files, but the directory lookups become a little slower. It's critical to understand your workload before you put it there. The regular stuff works great, like Excel, Word, etc., but you want to check if it will be appropriate for your purposes if you are doing automated manufacturing or engineering.."

Verified user
Senior Infrastructure Engineer at a manufacturing company with 10,001+ employees

[Read full review ↗]

"To new users, I would advise leaning on the support team in case of any issues. They are very responsive and ensure customer success. They are not going to leave you behind. They would not say that they will get back to you and then do nothing for five or six days. They have got their fingers on the pulse when it comes to customer support and customer success. That is one of the key things that drives their business.

I would rate CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform a ten out of ten. Their support is fantastic.."

Verified user
Global Infrastructure Manager at a tech services company with 1,001-5,000 employees

[Read full review ↗]

"The biggest thing is to plan properly. Configure your shares properly and not put all your eggs into one basket. Separate your shares as much as possible. Careful planning is crucial initially.

We never had a situation for disaster recovery, but we have a disaster recovery plan by using a secondary gateway. We tested it but never used it because we never had to. We have two CTERA gateways, one in production and one in DR, and we can fail over anytime.

I would rate the CTERA Enterprise File Services Platform a ten out of ten.."

Verified user
System Administrator at a transportation company with 10,001+ employees

Read full review ↗

"Its benefits can be seen immediately. It is an edge filer that does well when it is operating at its most efficient. You can see its benefits immediately when the storage is correct, the latency is lower, and there is proper bandwidth and a good connection with Active Directory. You can go from a site that has no CTERA device and that was just sending over the wire because it was a smaller scanning site to begin with. After deploying a CTERA device, you can immediately get benefits from it.

There are so many moving parts of CTERA because you are connected not only to Active Directory; you have the network connections, routers, switches, etc. There are many things that it goes through to get to your central environment, including your overall bandwidth from the ISP. If everything is working and operating as it should, it is a good service. You do not need to touch it a lot. You need to have everything working, and that is no fault of CTERA. There are a lot of moving parts when you look at everything that goes into it.

I would rate it an eight out of ten. We have many third-party products that are not edge filers like CTERA. From a product standpoint, they compare well, but the support really lifts CTERA higher. The support aspect is very significant.."
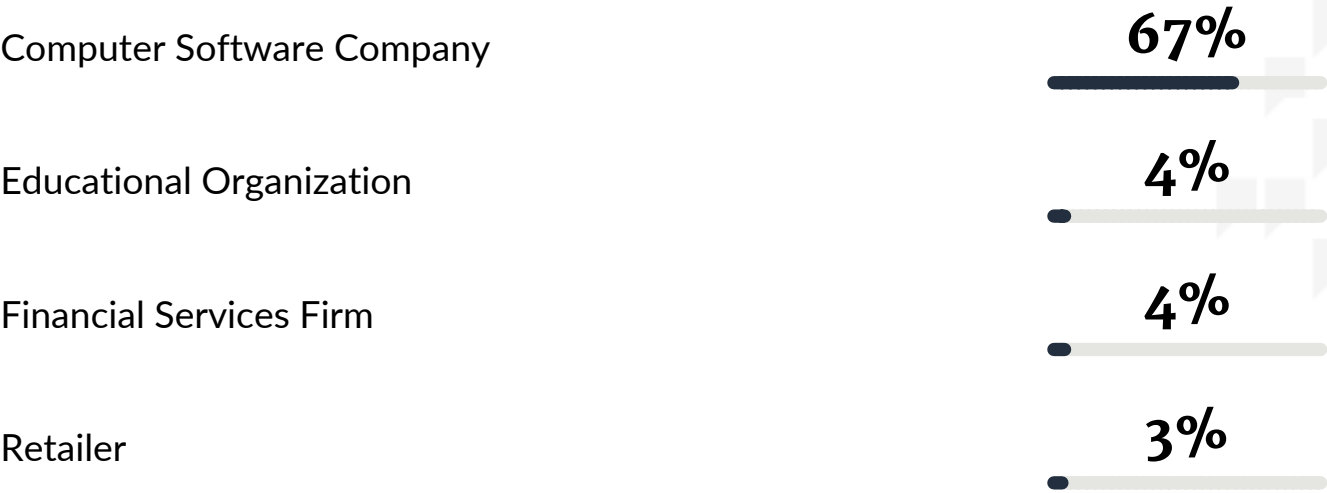
James Lucas
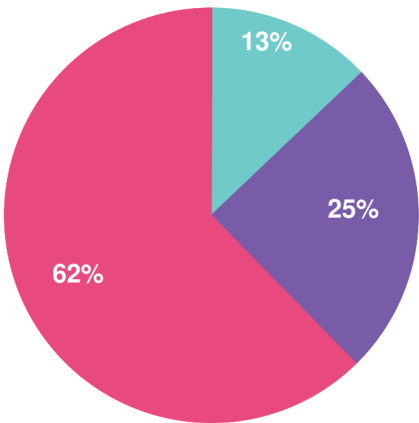Senior Manager of Global Support at a tech vendor with 10,001+ employees

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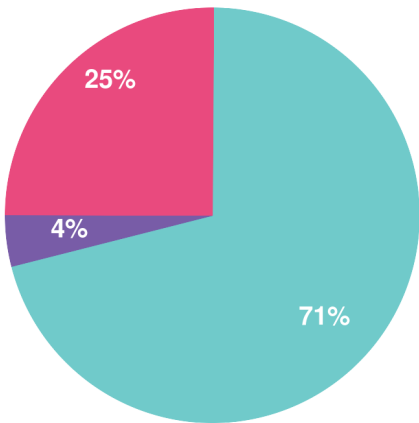
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25%
4%
71%

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