

Generating Success with Generation C



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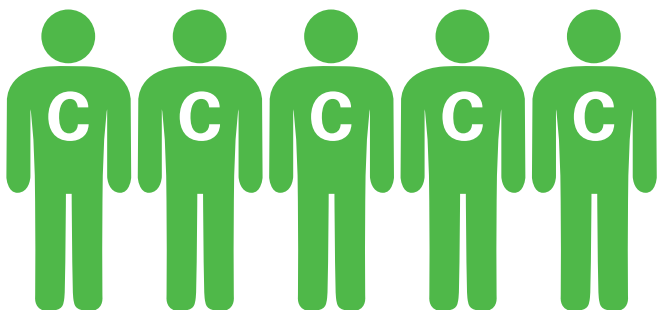
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1. INTRODUCTION

A new generation of people are entering the workplace, people who are defined by their behaviour and not their age.

These people are well connected and their approach to problem solving and innovation is completely different. These people are part of Generation C and odds are you're already working alongside them, or you might be one yourself.

Generation C can be a company's greatest asset or the competition's greatest strength.



This is the dawn of Generation C, where "C" represents a connected society based on interests and behaviour. Gen C is not an age group, it's a lifestyle. While social networks are the fabric of online relationships, it is how technology affects everyday activity. What's most important for you to understand is that Gen C is different.

They put the "me" in social media. They're always on. They rely on the shared experiences of strangers to guide their actions. And, they know that other Gen C'ers rely upon their shared experiences to find resolution.

Brian Solis, digital analyst, anthropologist, and futurist

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Because of the impact this new demographic is having on businesses, Infomentum wanted to understand more about Generation C.

The company commissioned independent research to find out their attitudes to workplace technology, how they look for and judge a potential employer, how employers can get the best out of them and how they behave online, both as consumers and at work.

The research, commissioned by Infomentum and carried out by Censuswide, surveyed 1002 UK desk-based office workers. Of those who responded, 54% were defined as Generation C, with 40% admitting that being online and connected doesn't dictate their life and 6% saying they only see technology as a means to an end.

Who are Generation C?

54% of respondents were defined as Gen C

56% of Gen C respondents were male

65% of Generation C respondents were between the ages of 16 and 24



The highest proportion of Gen C respondents were from Scotland, the North East, and London



How do we define Generation C?

The definition used for this report is that Generation C is a 'psychographic group' who share a similar state of mind including personality traits, values, attitudes, interests and lifestyle. They are not linked by a date of birth.

Generation C's members are 'digital natives' who are always connected, communicating, computerised, community-orientated and always clicking. In general, they are realists and materialists as well as being culturally liberal, politically progressive and upwardly mobile.

They own a plethora of devices including smartphones, tablets, laptops and smart TVs which are regularly updated and replaced. Our research found that two thirds purchase a new gadget every year, with nearly 80% admitting to buying the latest model even when the old one still works.

Generation C is completely au fait with the latest technologies. Our research found that 68% stream TV, 54% have a cloud storage solution and 55% use an instant messenger service. Generation C shops (88.1%), banks (87.5%), visits forums (57%) and solves problems (77%) online.

Not surprisingly, many of Generation C's social interactions take place online, where they feel free to express their opinions and

attitudes. 86% use social media in their personal lives, accessing tools such as Twitter and Facebook to share information and keep up to date with news and current affairs.

Being online is so important to Generation C that **over half** of those interviewed agreed that they **feel cut off** when they can't get connected online.

Generation C is bigger than any other demographic and growing all the time. As a result their importance cannot be underestimated.

3. GENERATION C AS CONSUMERS

Internet technologies have played a defining role within the lives of Generation C. They are the tools through which Gen C communicates, contributes, connects and creates. Without such technologies, Generation C would not exist.

The internet has engulfed every aspect of Gen C's lives, restructuring not only their personal, political, and social views, but also their very perceptions of themselves.

This complete immersion within web technologies is made clear by Gen C's internet usage habits. 88.1% said that they shop online, while a further 87.5% use online banking. Through these figures it is clear that Generation C is the first group to truly embrace the internet in their daily lives, existing both physically and digitally in equal measure.

But it is not just functional tasks that the internet has begun to absorb; Gen C's social habits have grown equally digitised.

Similarly, over two thirds of them rely on the internet to download entertainment via video streaming and catch-up TV services.

It is this complete social and functional integration within the digital environment, which has shaped Gen C throughout their entire existence. The internet is not a part of their lives... it is their lives.

This immersion goes far beyond continuous access to high speed information. In fact, such access is now seen as merely incidental, perceived by Gen C as little more than a minimum expectation.

The true definition of Generation C lies in their ongoing demand for two-way communication. If slumping radio and declining television viewerships have proven anything, it is that Gen C is not interested in being broadcast to. They have opinions of their own and - thanks to the internet - have more than enough channels through which to share them.

Yet despite this infinity of potential opportunities, the internet still fails to satisfy Generation C's endless quest for involvement. As information gets faster, the brief timespan between 'new and innovative' and 'out-dated and slow' begins to shrink. As a result, the amount of time we spend satisfied with a new story, device or company gets smaller every day.

When they are not working, shopping or banking online, **86%** of Gen C participants stated that they use **social networking sites** to connect with friends.

Generation C online

Only 1.5% of Generation C would describe themselves as truly satisfied by the features of websites. This leaves 98.5% of people annoyed or dissatisfied by some aspect of web functionality or design.

Five worst website features according to Generation C

1	Slow loading pages	(66.2%)
2	Pop ups	(57.8%)
3	Advertisements	(30%)
4	Broken links	(26.9%)
5	Auto-playing videos	(25.7%)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the issue that Generation C considered most irritating for internet users was slow loading times on web pages. 66.2% felt that this feature was more annoying than any other issue across the net. In some respects, this finding may prove predictable considering that Gen C has grown so accustomed to super-fast broadband speeds and instant access to information.

Recent research by Google suggests that modern internet users will be deterred from visiting a website if its load times are a mere 250 milliseconds more than its nearest competitor. It is this 'blink of an eye' decision making which has come to define Gen C's browsing habits and usage of the web.

When every aspect of an individual's life is being conducted almost exclusively online, issues such as buffering could be perceived as far more than just mere annoyances. For a few precious milliseconds, Gen C find themselves unable to work, unable to socialise, unable to communicate.

But it's not just about the customer...

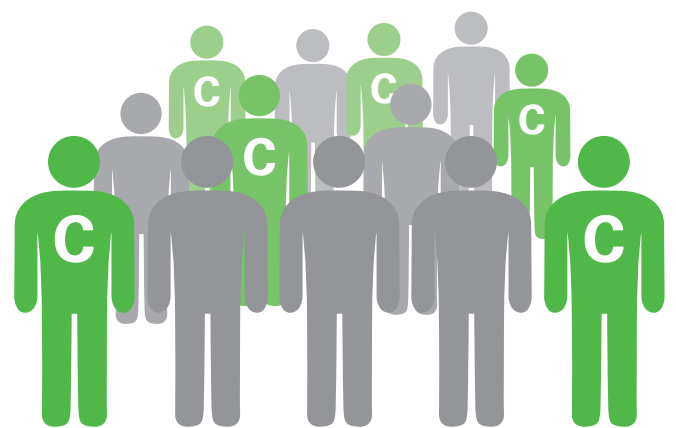
With so much focus being placed on the end consumer, it is easy to forget that a website is accessed by all of that company's stakeholder groups. One of these groups that will regularly access an organisation's site is the employees.

Unlike Generation X, Y or the Millennial, Gen C does not represent a specific demographic or consumer group. An organisation's workforce is just as likely to contain members of Generation C as its customer base. These employees will have the exact same high expectations of their organisation's technology as any other Gen C members.

Company websites are not merely tools for the consumer; they are also a first point of contact for new employees. Furthermore, many Gen C employees may quickly become disillusioned with their employers if company websites and IT policies do not accurately meet their high-speed, content-centric expectations.



Organisation's workforce



Customer base

4. GENERATION C AS EMPLOYEES

Our findings suggest that Generation C are invaluable employees; they are dynamic, energetic and self-motivated. They want the company they work for to succeed and will come up with new and innovative solutions to overcome any stumbling blocks.

The research revealed a distinct correlation between having to be always connected and online, and the desire to do a good job.

These findings illustrate the positive link between Gen C, an entrepreneurial spirit and enthusiasm in the workplace.

42% of Generation C describe themselves as **driven at work**, going the extra mile to help the organisation succeed.

Over half of those who describe themselves as 'not needing to be connected to the internet all the time' and not letting technology 'dictate their lives' would describe themselves as happiest when someone else is directing what they do at work.

Entrepreneurial

This was further backed up by the fact that people who see technology as little more than a means to an end are less likely to describe themselves as 'inventive: continually coming up with new ideas and different ways of approaching problems'; only 20% admitted they are the people who will challenge a brief and suggest alternative approaches.

That's how they roll

The study found that Gen C staff members thrive in a work environment that is collaborative, flexible and trusting.

They expect to work in a way that is appropriate to their specific needs and from a device of their own choosing. They were also shown to value a boss who trusts them, and the freedom to be creative much more than their non-Gen C counterparts.

Their co-workers don't have to be based in the same office or even country as them, as Gen C will happily use collaborative and communication tools to work along those that can help empower them to do their job better, regardless of where they are in the world.

According to UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), this positive attitude to working internationally will be key to helping Britain increase its exporting ability, "Companies of all sizes here in the UK are reaping the rewards of working across Europe, Asia, America and beyond. By embracing global working practices and encouraging international co-operation, British companies can boost trade and investment at home."

What do Generation C employees value?

Collaborative working

69%

Flexible working

73%

Freedom to be creative

75%

Using their own technology

55%

Generation C values the ability to find what they want, when they want as the most important factor in the workplace. They want access to the documents they need on the go (44% v 31%) and want to use online collaboration (33% v 21%).

Old-fashioned IT

IT systems were described as archaic, unreliable, slow and awkward by 20% of respondents. Nearly 60% said that their IT system is only ever updated occasionally, nearly 10% stated it was only upgraded when the system was broken and 3% admitted it was never updated. It is little wonder then, that Generation C, who buy new gadgets when the old still works, is frustrated by poor IT at work.

BYOD or 'bring your own device' would seem an obvious solution to meet the needs of Gen C

employees, i.e. where employees use their own devices for work purposes. But according to a recent report by Talk Talk, over half of UK organisations do not have networks that either permit or support this approach.

Generation C wants state-of-the-art IT systems at work. So much so that 45% of those interviewed agreed that they would judge a company as 'not innovative' if their technology was poor and almost 20% would consider leaving a company if the technology on offer was poor.

Wasted time

Looking for documents was one of the biggest bug bears for Gen C, with over two thirds of desk-based employees spending up to an hour a day looking for 'lost' documents.

Incredibly, this wasted
 time is **costing**
 British businesses up to a
 staggering **£15 billion**
 per year.

What's more, an additional 20% of respondents said that they had to waste additional time recreating documents from scratch, wasting time, money, resource and creating unnecessary frustration.

Problem solvers

If you had a problem at work ten years ago, then odds are you would have asked your colleagues first and, if you were still stuck, you'd call a friend or contact who might be able to help.

Generation C approaches things differently.

Collaborative working is key for Gen C, and this doesn't just mean working with fellow employees; this could mean turning to social networks and online communities.

Rather than ask colleagues, Gen C's first port of call will be online - either a simple search or asking their own network on social media. If that doesn't work then they understand how to do more complex searches on an internal server for the phrase that will answer their question.

For this approach to be successful, their network and IT needs to be able to respond quickly and the content and information management system needs to be easily searchable, ideally using semantics, with information stored in the right places.

As a result, it's no surprise that of the office workers we surveyed, those in Generation C were less likely to consider their work IT systems fit for purpose (33.6%) than those who only see technology as a means to an end or those who try and avoid tech where they can (42.2% - 54.1%).

A small light at the end of the tunnel

There is a glimmer of hope.

UK employers are waking up to the benefits of offering employees flexible hours and working from home. Our research found that 93.2% of bosses trust their employees not to skive while they are not working in the office. This is invaluable for Gen C staff who want to work where they want and when.

It's not surprising that the research shows the majority value access to information as the one thing that would help them to do their jobs better - and that was across all groups, not just Generation C. We live in an age of big data and mobility, and where we can pull information from hundreds or thousands of different sources - the challenge for employees and employers is managing and understanding this.

For employees, particularly those in the Generation C bracket, being able to find information and to find it quickly is an essential part of their jobs. Employers need to recognise this and consider how they store and manage content - is it set up to get the best from their own staff?

John Mancini, CEO, AIIM

5. A BUSINESS GUIDE TO GENERATION C

Our findings suggest that many UK businesses are not supporting Generation C as well as they should and, as a result, risk losing out to organisations that maximise the business asset that they can be.

Gen C employees will challenge a business - they won't just sit back and follow a brief if there's an easier or better way of solving a problem or responding to a brief. This approach means that they're much more likely to spot problems - often before they become customer service issues - and make the business more efficient and more productive. There is an obvious impact on the bottom line as a result.

2:3 of British bosses
**don't encourage
collaborative
working**

Taking advantage of the opportunity

The study paints a clear picture; Generation C doesn't feel catered for at work and they certainly don't feel that their workplace is set up to allow them to thrive. Our study found that nearly two thirds of British bosses do not encourage collaborative working - on top of the 60% who felt their IT systems were below par, it's no wonder that Generation C feels unloved in the workplace.

For IT managers and CIOs worrying about installing brand new IT infrastructure or buying the latest laptops and tablets, there is some good news. Gen C doesn't necessarily want the best or most expensive technology

or brand label, just a set-up that allows them to express their creativity and work in the way that brings the best out of them. Of the office workers we surveyed, those in Generation C value the freedom to be creative much more than any other group. Instead of hardware, for businesses this means making sure the tools and facilities are up to scratch.

It also means ensuring that staff can find documents and files when they need them, and from wherever that access is required. Generation C isn't demanding a brand new server or network, just the management policies that will allow them access to the information they need and an effective content and information management solution.

Targeting Gen C: Website best practice

When it comes to information, Generation C is ravenous. They want as much as possible as quickly as they can get it. If a company's website fails to meet those demands, it will be a matter of milliseconds before they switch their attention to an alternative.

Having grown accustomed to a world filled with co-creation, Gen C consumers are more empowered than any other customer group. The internet has provided them with more choice than ever before, pushing aside traditional notions of 'brand loyalty' to be replaced with higher demands for speed and quality.

However, this is not to say that brand loyalty no longer exists, but rather that organisations must go the extra mile in order to achieve it. Before they can attempt that jump, they must first work to meet the minimum requirements of Gen C internet users. It is these requirements that will be individually addressed next, helping to highlight how an organisation can build and maintain an effective web presence that appeals to Gen C.

Ads need to get smarter

Beyond the ever-growing need for high-speed online connections, a large proportion of Gen C also highlighted pop-ups (57.8%) and advertising (30%) as frequent sources of frustration.

Pop ups and banners ads are an infringement on the user experience

Rather than being blasted with advertising messages, social media has allowed Gen C to develop a two-way dialogue with brands. This is rapidly becoming an expectation, with pop-ups and banner ads being considered not only old fashioned, but also an infringement on the user's browsing experience.

The challenge for businesses, particularly social networks and online services developing a business model, is keeping the attention of Gen C without putting them off through intrusive advertising.

Does social matter?

While these annoyances provide an interesting insight into Generation C's browsing habits, they also help to highlight the various website features that Gen C is less likely to care about. As one example, only 1.5% of those surveyed listed a lack of social media integration as a source of frustration. Similarly, a mere 12% considered links to social media feeds an important feature within web design.

While this amount remains three times higher than those outside of Gen C, given the group's desire for continuous communication it still appears surprisingly low. With 86% of Generation C regularly using social networking sites, this lack of interest in social integration seems largely out of touch with the group's central values.

One possible explanation for this could be that Generation C has come to expect original and varied content across each individual channel. With continuous access to multiple platforms, Gen C users have no need to see social media content repeated across traditional sites.

Sites need to look good

There are a number of significant differences between the ways in which Generation C uses the internet compared to other online groups. For example, the research suggests that Gen C is 11% more likely to appreciate well-designed and aesthetically pleasing sites than their less-savvy counterparts.

As for those who see technology as just a means to an end, only 3.3% were bothered by the design of a site. This finding is especially interesting considering the growing demand for user-generated content (UGC) online.

As it becomes increasingly easy for users to publish their own content and to make it look good using simple sites, Gen C has grown ever more critical of low quality work.

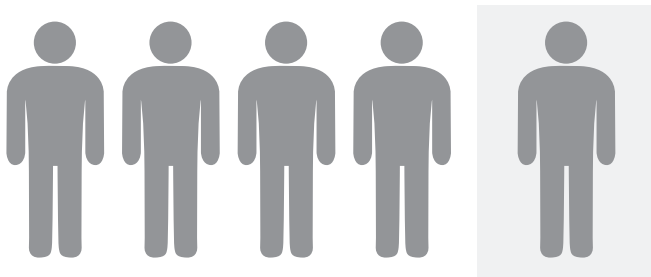
Gen C are **11% more likely** to appreciate a **well-designed** and **aesthetically pleasing site**

Overall these findings suggest that Generation C holds a complex and symbiotic relationship with the World Wide Web. They rely on its tools and instantly accessible information in order to construct nearly every aspect of their lives. Simultaneously, they grow ever more rapidly dissatisfied by its offerings, valuing only the very latest and best options available to them.

When considering such a fast-paced and easily dissatisfied group, the question must be raised as to how corporations can hope to compete. Static corporate websites simply won't be able to survive unless they learn to adapt to a mutual and content driven design strategy.

Interactivity

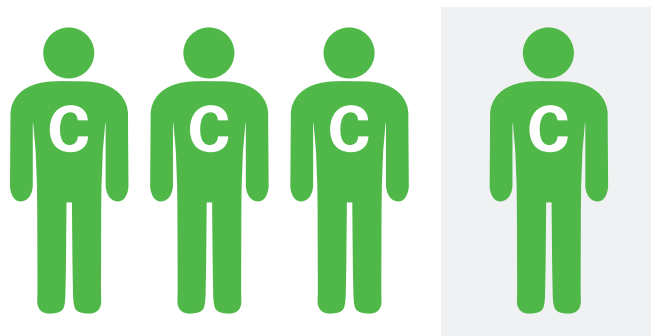
The survey results show that 1 in 5 people will judge an organisation based on its website, amongst Gen C this amount is even higher with almost 1 in 4 making the snap judgement. As a result, it is more important than ever for organisations to ensure that their web presence accurately reflects the quality of their brand.



1 in 5 people will judge an organisation based on its website

instead for simple, factual messaging as well as customer driven interactivity.

But it's not just websites that must be engaging. Interactivity should also extend to the use of social media as an additional point of contact with Gen C customers. While the research shows that Gen C has a limited interest in on-site social integration, 86% regularly use social media sites.



Almost 1 in 4 Gen C respondents will judge an organisation based on its website

A further **75.5%** listed 'being able to **contact a company easily** through different channels' as important to them. As such, the role of **social media** as a point of contact remains vital amongst **Generation C.**

Generation C is looking for a content driven experience that places them in control. As such, organisations should look to remove pop-ups and blatant sales copy from their sites, opting

Go mobile

With continuous access to information becoming an expected norm amongst Generation C, it is more important than ever for organisations to ensure that their content is easily available on portable devices.



This is often not as easy as it sounds, with content having to be developed dynamically in order to display correctly across multiple devices, screen sizes, and browsers. One example of a website which has embraced the use of portable-friendly web content is Cancer Research UK's 'Race for Life'.

Back in 2011, the Race for Life website had become out-dated and didn't have the flexibility, functionality or rich customer experience the charity needed to meet the increasingly sophisticated demands of consumers. Cancer Research realised that having an easy to use, interactive website would not only help encourage new participants, but would also support serial-runners who sign up every year.

Cancer Research UK
has now deployed a
variety of **intuitive
interfaces** with a
range of **responsive
designs** that ensured
the same **smooth
user experience**
whether accessing the
Race for Life website from
a **smartphone, a
tablet, a laptop
or a desktop
computer.**

Navigation is everything

Of those surveyed within Gen C, 89.6% considered clear navigation to be either 'important' or 'very important'. Similarly 77% felt that it was important to be able to easily find a specific webpage on a site. When describing their frustrations with websites, 1 in 5 Gen C members considered difficult navigation to be a source of annoyance.

Speed is vital to Generation C. With slow loading times the most frustrating website feature, organisations must do everything they can to increase the speed of their sites.

86.4%
felt that easy access to
information was
important to them.

While some aspects may come down to the specific technology and hosting companies, there is also an additional factor that organisations can attempt to control – their information management structures.

Ensuring that a site's back-end filing structure is optimised can significantly reduce loading times. Not only is this important for increasing

the speed of back-end processes, but also for improving front-end usability.

All of these statistics can be linked back to Generation C's growing demand for instant access information. They have grown to expect clear and simple navigation structures, which allow them to reach the information they need in a matter of milliseconds.

This further highlights the need for organisations to effectively manage their online information. By failing to do so, they are essentially closing themselves off to an entire market of affluent, engaged and highly influential Gen C internet users.

Lead from the front

Unlocking a competitive advantage that can have a significant impact on profitability is challenging.

Supporting the wants and needs of Generation C customers and employees will give businesses a powerful platform to meet KPIs and deliver a superior customer experience that will be hard to beat.

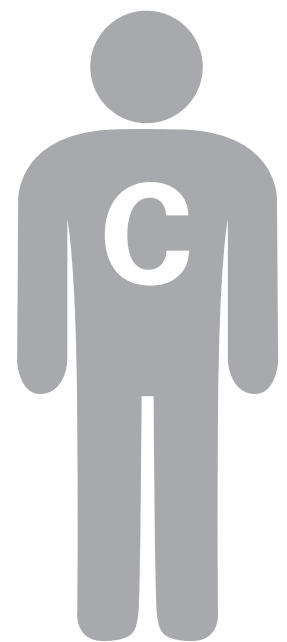
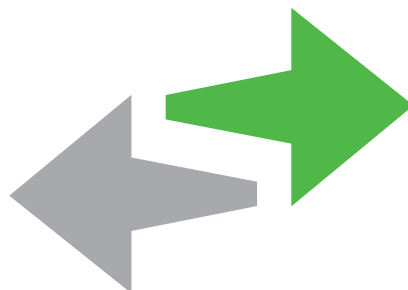
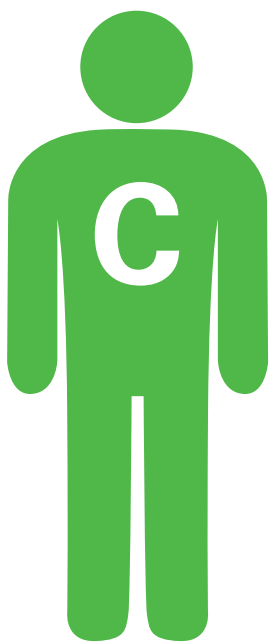
6. 10 TIPS FOR GETTING THE BEST FROM GENERATION C

As customers:

- Focus on the online customer experience and engaging with visitors
- Give visitors the information they are looking for quickly, through effective navigation and semantic search capabilities
- Remove website frustrations such as pop ups and auto-playing videos
- Strike a balance between profitability and intrusiveness; adverts shouldn't detract from the experience
- Optimise the page using a responsive design for different browsers and devices

As employees:

- Let staff work remotely and provide the capability and functionality to make it possible
- Implement or upgrade document management systems to make documents easy to find, from anywhere
- Structure company information and content to make it easily searchable
- Improve mobility capabilities or let staff use their own devices, and implement appropriate HR and IT policies so the network can cope
- Encourage collaborative working - letting people help each other across multiple projects through online tools



7. ABOUT INFOMENTUM

Infomentum enables organisations to evolve successfully through digital transformation.

We're here to help you achieve the innovation, cultural change and improved digital user experience you need to maintain your business momentum. Drawing on our deep business understanding, we use technology as an enabler to improve efficiency and

performance to optimise the way your people and information connect. From initial planning to final implementation and beyond, we can bridge the gap between technical understanding and business strategy. We're experts at making change work.

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Infomentum is a Platinum Partner and the first organisation in EMEA to be certified as specialized for both Oracle Enterprise Content Management and Oracle WebCenter, amongst other specializations. Infomentum has also been recognised as Oracle Middleware Partner of the Year 2015.

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