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**PRESENTER'S GUIDE**

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
*Performing Arts Management*

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

•• *Performing Groups* ••



Representing the finest in the performing arts from Brigham Young University, BYU's touring ensembles annually present concerts worldwide. They also perform for conventions, workshops, festivals, competitions, and other community outreach activities. Presenters include arts councils, civic clubs, schools, charitable and service organizations, and private groups.

Performing Arts Management is the managing agency for BYU's performing companies and functions in professional as well as educational circles. The touring program typically reaches 140 cities in 20 countries annually. With more than 400 performances each year, these professional-level ensembles delight and uplift hundreds of thousands worldwide and appear before millions on foreign and domestic television.

To prepare for a performance you should begin planning several months in advance. Promotion should begin at least six weeks before the concert. A presenter's checklist is included in this guide to help you in preparing for and promoting your event.

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This presenter's guide is designed to help organize the work to be done for a quality presentation. It is highly recommended that a committee be created so that the various responsibilities can be assigned for thorough completion.

This guide is divided into five detailed sections as follows:

- |                                 |                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Checklist</i> ·           | For your benefit, items in the checklist are coded with dots that correspond with sections of this guide. |
| 2. <i>Ticket Sales</i> ..       |                                                                                                           |
| 3. <i>Promotion</i> ...         |                                                                                                           |
| 4. <i>Public Relations</i> .... |                                                                                                           |
| 5. <i>Hospitality</i> .....     |                                                                                                           |

These sections provide a descriptive explanation of the steps you must take to prepare for a performance and include various ideas to consider in your planning.

This information is also available at the Performing Arts Management Web site, located at <http://pam.byu.edu> under Presenter's Resources.

We hope these suggestions will help make your presentation a success. We look forward to working with you.

—BYU Performing Arts Management

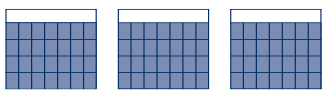
## PRESENTER'S GUIDE CHECKLIST

### *Steps Toward a Successful Presentation of a BYU Performing Ensemble*



AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

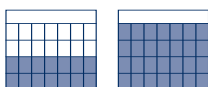
- Identify and reserve an appropriate performance venue; deliver BYU's technical rider to the performance site technical personnel; pay venue deposit; return the completed performance site questionnaire to BYU.
- Formulate the event budget, including estimates of all expenses and projected revenues. Use BYU's budget worksheet.



AT LEAST **12 WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

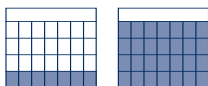
- Inform members of your presenting organization of the upcoming sponsorship.
- Upon receipt from BYU, complete and return the Performance Agreement.
- Select committee leaders to oversee sales, promotion, public relations, and hospitality:
  - *Ticket Sales*—Ticket pricing, creation, and sales
  - *Promotion*—News media coverage, advertising, interviews, and publicity
  - *Public Relations*—VIPs, show programs, and media guests
  - *Hospitality*—Performer meals, water, and overnight accommodations
- ○ Determine the admission prices and distribution method for ticket sales.
- ○ Decide if discounts will be offered for presales, groups, and families.
- ○ Outline plans regarding placement of posters, handbills, and flyers. Determine if pass-along card invitations will be used and how community announcements will be organized.
- ○ Prepare media kits and identify contacts at newspapers and radio/TV stations for coverage of the performance.
- ○ Determine if a program should be produced for the audience.

- .... ○ Identify community and government leaders, news reporters, and arts critics to invite to the performance.
- .... ○ Plan for ticket takers, ushers, and program distribution.
- .... ○ Outline where and how performer meals will be provided.
- .... ○ Plan overnight accommodations for the group.



**SIX WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- .. ○ Arrange for ticket printing; begin organizational ticket sales and distribution.
- .. ○ Prepare four or five different news releases and photos for newspapers; finish printing performance information on posters, handbills, and flyers and place them in the community; deliver public service announcements to radio/TV contacts; begin community announcements
- .... ○ Invite VIPs on your list to the performance (send tickets three weeks in advance).



**FIVE WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- .. ○ Begin box office sales; continue promoting group sales.
- .. ○ Deliver first news release and photo to newspapers (PSA and paid); place posters and handbills in the community



**FOUR WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- .. ○ Evaluate the number of tickets sold and promotional initiatives to pursue for a good audience.
- ... ○ Deliver second news release and photo to newspapers (PSA and paid); consider a telephone interview with a BYU group leader or performer with a local newspaper or radio station contact.
- .... ○ Obtain final program information from BYU; print programs if not provided by BYU.

- ○ Arrange for overnight accommodations (hotel or host homes) with at least two people per room in separate beds. Send the completed housing worksheet to BYU.
- ○ Make plans for the evening meal prior to the performance, preferably at the performance site (consider catering and other options).



**THREE WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- ○ Evaluate number of tickets sold; make a final push for group sales.
- ○ Deliver third news release and photo to newspapers (PSA and paid); consider arranging interviews with the cast and/or director when the group arrives. Begin distribution of pass-along card invitations.
- ○ Mail invitations and complimentary tickets to VIPs and news critics.



**TWO WEEKS** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- ○ Review total sales and determine if more promotion is needed; bring all unsold tickets to one central location.
- ○ Deliver fourth news release and photo to newspapers (PSA and paid); consider final distribution of flyers and other handout materials.
- ○ Ensure ushers and ticket takers are identified; set a time to meet with them early on the day of the performance.



**ONE WEEK** BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- ○ Determine if additional discounts or group promotions are warranted to maximize the audience; finalize preparations for ticket sales at the door.

- ... ○ Arrange last newspaper or radio/TV interviews (live or telephone) before the group arrives.
- .... ○ Confirm seating for VIPs and any reserved seating planned; ensure programs are ready for distribution; hold orientation for ushers and ticket takers; consider whether an emcee should greet the audience from the stage before the performance begins.
- ..... ○ Ensure that plans are final for the group's meal the day of the performance; inform the hotel (or host families) of the group's expected schedule; clarify if extra meals (box lunches, for example) are to be provided; ensure that a presenter representative will meet the group when it arrives.



#### **DAY** OF THE PERFORMANCE

- Meet the group when it arrives in your area.
- .... ○ Prepare the backstage area, including providing water for the performers.
- Check with the group to make sure it is prepared before you open the auditorium doors to the public.
- ..... ○ Assist host families in meeting their assigned ensemble members after the performance and clearing the stage. Ensure that all have a host home or hotel room to stay in.



#### **AFTER** THE PERFORMANCE

- Work with the performance venue to finalize rental charges and payment.
- Collect all proceeds; pay expenses; send the performance fee (as specified in the Performance Agreement with BYU) with a statement of expenses and income to Performing Arts Management, along with the Performance Evaluation. This is to be done within 10 days of the performance. If not possible, inform BYU of when you can provide this information and payment.
- Send copies of news clippings, advertisements, and program and ticket samples to Performing Arts Management.

## TICKET SALES GUIDELINES

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### TICKET PRICING

Determine the proper ticket price:

1. Collect the costs anticipated in your presentation, including performance site charges; ticket printing; poster, handbill, and flyer printing; other promotion; group meal; and BYU performance fee estimates. (A performance budget worksheet is available at <http://pam.byu.edu> under Presenter's Resources.)
2. Conservatively estimate projected sales and audience size.
3. Exclude complimentary tickets (see comments below).
4. Determine your break-even ticket price (anticipated expenses divided by estimated audience).
5. Set the appropriate ticket charge, which should at least be this break-even amount (but probably larger to convey production quality and professionalism).

Consider two things: the ability of your audience to pay and its expectations. Economically depressed areas may require a lower than usual price, but remember that price also reflects what you think the evening's entertainment is worth. BYU groups will be well worth the prices paid for other well-known talent recently in your area. Compare admission charges currently offered in the community for other stage events and school productions—or the cost of a typical night out for entertainment. Your event's admission should be neither the lowest nor the highest offered, but somewhere between.

### DISCOUNTS

Decide if any type of discount will be offered for large groups, for families, or for advance purchase. In many areas it is common to offer discounted tickets for senior citizens and children (under 12). Confirm your decisions with BYU to ensure your ticket prices are acceptable.

#### *Group Discounts*

Group ticket sales can be made to logically interested groups, such as choirs, dance groups, or community artists, or to service organizations, such as Rotary or Kiwanis Clubs. To further encourage purchases, a discounted price may be offered to those groups purchasing a given minimum number of tickets, for example, offering a \$10 ticket at \$8 if more than 20 tickets are sold to a particular group.

### *Family Discounts*

If family tickets are offered, a general rule to follow is to sell at an admission price no less than three and a half times the amount of an individual adult ticket. For example, if an individual adult ticket costs \$10, a family ticket would sell for at least \$35. Family discounts are only for immediate family members. A separate ticket should be given to each family member. This helps you track how many actual auditorium seats will be taken.

### *Advance Purchase Discounts*

To encourage advance ticket sales, a discounted admission price can be offered to those who purchase early, up to one week before the performance. Tickets purchased at the door will then be sold at the regular price.

## **PUBLIC TICKET SALES**

Sales from the venue and other ticket outlets are most advantageous, but be sure you understand the related costs for these services. As alternatives consider telephone approaches, as well as internal sales within your organization and to your personal contacts. Mail-order ticket sales and online sales through a specially created Web site are other possibilities to consider.

Personal solicitations are always effective, particularly when your organization's members invite friends, neighbors, and business associates to purchase. Local businesses (banks, shopping centers, stores, etc.) may also be willing to distribute tickets for your event as well as purchase blocks of tickets for their employees.

### *Telemarketing Tips*

If you operate a telephone campaign, consider the following rules to success:

- Invite only those you feel know of BYU and are interested in quality entertainment.
- Extend a personal invitation and help the patron obtain tickets.
- Keep accurate call records, including when to call back.
- Call back later if the contact is busy.
- Deliver the tickets as soon as possible to complete the transaction.

## **COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS**

Reserve some complimentary tickets for VIPs, the media, and host families. BYU also asks that 10 tickets be provided for the university's interests. These may be released back to you if not needed by BYU the week before the performance.

## **TIMING**

Set the dates your sales campaign will start and who will be involved. You will want ticket sellers to report regularly to a central location the number of tickets sold. Determine now when those weekly reports should be made. A date should also be set to return all unsold tickets to a central point for final sales at the performance site.

## **TICKET PRINTING**

Determine the information to be printed on each ticket and where tickets for the event will be printed (sample ticket formats can be viewed at <http://pam.byu.edu> under Presenter's Resources, Marketing Examples). Printing options include the following:

- A local printer can be hired.
- The venue management creates the tickets.
- BYU can print tickets at cost.

## **TARGETING SALES**

It is wise to identify target groups for ticket sales. Consider church groups, senior citizens, youth groups, drama clubs, dance schools, musical groups, service clubs, parent-teacher associations, school clubs and organizations, and business groups.

Visit each target group identified. Consider sending members of your group or neighborhood who belong to these organizations. Use the BYU-provided fact sheet and other group information to prepare those who promote to community groups.

## **COMMUNITY COSPONSORS**

It is sometimes advantageous to invite other groups to assist your ticket sales as a fund-raising project and/or a community service project. A local arts council may have a significant mailing list you could use. Local charities may have their own media and public contacts to promote their fund-raising events. If your event becomes one of their sources of income, the potential for your audience increases. Other examples of cosponsors include specialized care centers, the Red Cross, children's hospitals, and treatment centers.

## **AUDITORIUM TICKET SALES**

Check the venue's requirements for selling tickets at the door the day of the performance. Determine who will do door sales and where they will be located.

## PROMOTION GUIDELINES

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### MATERIALS PROVIDED BY BYU

An initial sample press kit will be sent from BYU, followed later by a full, updated kit for actual promotional use. Become familiar with this information so you can speak knowledgeably about the group. Kits may include the following:

- News release outlines
- Fact sheet
- Promotional photo CD
- Performance program listing
- Sample flyer
- Sample tickets
- Video DVD
- Audio CD
- Poster
- Handbill (mini-poster)
- *Encore* newsletter
- Brochures
- Technical rider
- Quotes
- Sample programs
- Budget worksheet
- Housing worksheet

Many of these materials are available for download or viewing on the Performing Arts Management Web site, <http://pam.byu.edu>, under Presenter's Resources. High resolution photos can also be downloaded from this Web site.

### NEWS RELEASES

Create a variety of news releases for use throughout the promotional campaign by adapting the BYU outlines to your own local situation and purpose for presenting. You may also want to vary these in length, so that if a newspaper cannot use a long article, it will have a shorter version to select. Remember, always talk about the most important points first because newspapers will shorten your articles if space requires.

(News release topics may include the performing group, BYU, the presenting institution's goals and its reason for promoting the performance, the director of the group, etc.)

In the top right-hand corner of your release, write the date on which you want the story to appear.

Example: FOR RELEASE: MARCH 15, 20XX.

## **MEDIA KITS FOR DISTRIBUTION**

Prepare kits for your media contacts. These could include your news releases, promotional material for the group, information about the presenter, promotional photos, CDs, and a promotional video.

## **LOCAL NEWSPAPERS**

Contact your local newspaper(s) to learn the requirements they have for news release submissions. Find out who will be responsible for placing your articles (probably the entertainment editor); become acquainted by helping this person understand the purpose of your sponsorship and the nature of the performing group. Request coverage in the entertainment section the week of the performance. Advance telephone interviews can be arranged (see below). Check with weekly events calendar listings. Investigate other types of submissions available to you.

This may also be the time to investigate the possibility of having your performance reviewed by the newspaper. Arrange for the reviewer to receive complimentary tickets.

Do not overlook any publication, including college, high school, and area newspapers and online services. Please collect a copy of any newspaper articles or advertisements for Performing Arts Management to use in our year-end review of the year's performances.

## **BUYING ADVERTISING SPACE**

Suburban, rural, and campus papers often offer bargain rates for advertising, and most newspapers will help you design your ads. Remember that newspaper ads on the day or two preceding the performance can remind patrons of the time and place of the event and can help sell last-minute tickets. Be aware of excessive costs related to buying advertising. (For budgetary reasons be sure to keep your committee coordinator aware of your planned expenditures.)

## **USE OF RADIO/TV**

If radio and television advertising is appropriate for your presentation, determine which stations should be contacted and by whom. Call the stations to find out when and where your announcement should be delivered. (Many BYU groups have a recording of their music you will want radio stations to use; for tv, BYU can also give you a broadcast-quality video.) You may also want to consider any local-access cable stations that might wish to air commercials or film the entire show for a later broadcast. Consider the community calendar displays found on many cable systems. Promotional photos of the group you are presenting could be used for these displays.

Some radio and TV stations will request tickets for giveaways during interviews and live broadcasts. Even if your stations are not providing interviews or live coverage, they may be interested in ticket giveaways, which will provide you with some extra advertising. Contact the stations and offer these ideas to them.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Meet with radio and TV public service directors to schedule public service announcements (PSAs). Often these professionals can help you design your message. However, you may want to do some advance planning concerning the message you want presented.

### **MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

You may be able to arrange a radio interview or television performance. A live interview with the artistic director or several of the performers or a short performance can usually be arranged for the day of the performance. Notify Performing Arts Management of any live interviews well in advance so these arrangements can be included in the tour itinerary.

### **TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS**

Sometimes an interview by telephone several days or weeks before the performance date is helpful. Contact Performing Arts Management to arrange a telephone interview with the artistic director of the group.

### **POSTER PLACEMENT**

BYU will provide you with up to 30 large posters (depending on availability) for the group you will be hosting. Make a list now where you will want these posters placed in the community, considering locations where large crowds pass by, such as:

- Businesses
- Schools
- Libraries
- Shopping malls
- Restaurants
- Places where dance or music lessons are taught
- Parks and recreation areas
- Laundromats
- Locations where tickets for the event will be sold

If you have a need for more posters, they may be purchased from BYU at the university's cost. Event information needs to be printed (not handwritten) on the bottom of the poster—or a printed sticker/label could be placed there.

### **HANDBILL PLACEMENT**

BYU provides you with up to 100 handbills, usually full-color miniatures of the poster, with space for printed information on the bottom. The reverse side gives ensemble information. Make the list now of where these mini-posters will be placed in the community. These items work well in areas where the larger posters are not appropriate. They are also useful for letters of invitation, group presentations, and displays. Consider placing them in selected businesses. The BYU handbills are of such quality that you will not want to put them on a car's windshield, as you would a flyer. If you have a need for more handbills, they may be purchased from BYU at the university's cost.

Event information needs to be printed on the bottom of the handbill (not handwritten), or a printed sticker/label could be placed there. Handbills will fit through a copy machine or printer. Templates and instructions for printing on these handbills are available under Presenter's Resources at <http://pam.byu.edu>.

### **FLYER PLACEMENT**

BYU Performing Arts Management can provide a master for a black and white flyer for most of its groups once you have given your show information to our office. You may prefer to create your own flyer from the press kit materials. The most inexpensive option for promoting the show, flyers are ideal for mass mailings, distribution at other community events, and general public dissemination. Make the list now of where to use your flyers.

### **OTHER PROMOTIONAL IDEAS**

Determine if additional promotional materials should be created, such as other flyers, bulletin board displays, collages, or pocket-sized pass-along card invitations. BYU will supply you with a number of promotional photographs you can use for these.

Examples of what other presenters have done are under Presenter's Resources on our Web site at <http://pam.byu.edu>.

### **SCHOOLS**

Consider approaching school choirs, orchestras, bands, and dance and drama departments. Also, consider promoting in local dance or music schools or in places where private lessons are taught.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS GUIDELINES**

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### **VIPS**

Identify VIPs who should be invited to the performance. These may be well-recognized individuals whose presence at your event will add prestige as well as importance to your presentation. People to consider would include the elected representatives of your city, county, state, or nation and heads of other important and influential organizations. The handbill provided by BYU might be an ideal way to introduce the group to the person invited. It could go with a special invitation or letter. Also, consult the ticket sales supervisor regarding tickets for VIPs. Presenters will sometimes host a reception for vips before the concert. Often the BYU tour leaders and several performers are available to attend.

### **NEWSPAPER REVIEWERS**

When considering vips to invite, remember to include those individuals who regularly review cultural events in your area. Your media promotion supervisor can extend a special invitation to these people. Good media reviews will result in better community support for your organization in the future.

### **PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS**

On extended tours, BYU will usually furnish a printed program for your patrons, typically provided for 50 to 60 percent of the house capacity. For regional performances, presenters print their own program based on a program list BYU provides. To reduce expenses, consider selling advertisements for inclusion in the program or contact printers who could donate the printing in exchange for printed recognition of their contribution.

### **USHERING**

Determine if ushering will be appropriate for the event and, if so, how it will be arranged. Where will your ushers come from, how many will you need, and how long will they be needed? Set an orientation meeting, probably on the day of the performance, to get everyone organized.

### **COURTESY ACTIVITIES**

Meeting the public at the doors of the auditorium is an important item to plan for. Consider now who will take tickets at the door, distribute programs, see VIPs to their seats, and otherwise assist the public in attending the event. If desired, determine who will sit near your VIPs as hosts during the event.

### **CONCERT EMCEE**

The presenter needs to designate a person to welcome the audience and give background about the group before the performance begins. Background information can be pulled from the BYU press kit or the printed program. Once the program begins, no other emcee involvement is needed.

## HOSPITALITY GUIDELINES

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### GROUP MEAL

Presenters are generally asked to provide an evening meal for the performers prior to the performance. Please consider the following:

1. This should be a group meal given in the performance facility or nearby.
2. As soon as possible, determine where the group meal will be held and what will be served.
3. If needed, reserve appropriate facilities and take the necessary steps to provide the meal.

A possible way to provide a group meal and good publicity at the same time is to arrange for a local restaurant to feed the group in exchange for a free advertisement in the performance program or a special thanks at the performance.

To provide the best type of meal, please consider the following:

- A meal served buffet style allows the performers to select their own portions.
- Warm entrees, fruits, salads, and plenty of juices to drink are best.
- Please do not serve carbonated drinks.
- BYU groups do not drink alcohol, coffee, or tea.
- Special dietary requirements are rare. Should there be any, BYU Performing Arts Management will notify you as soon as possible.

### WATER

Because setup and performance are so rigorous, it is important that the cast and crew have adequate access to water backstage. Usually presenters provide bottled water for each performer or large coolers and cups in the various backstage dressing rooms.

## LODGING

Presenters are asked to provide BYU groups with local hotel accommodations or arrange for performers to be hosted in the homes of community members. A breakdown of the group (single men and women and married couples) will be provided to you by BYU to make clear the number of rooms or homes required.

### HOTEL OR PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

If performers are to stay in a hotel, reserve the rooms as soon as possible, and please take note of the following:

- The location should be in a safe part of the city.
- Double occupancy arrangements are required as a minimum, with separate beds for each person.
- Private toilets and showers are preferred.
- BYU will make personnel assignments to each room in advance of arrival once the number of beds and bedrooms are known and communicated to Performing Arts Management. If desired, this rooming list can be communicated to the hotel before arrival.
- Towels, soap, and bedding are required (BYU groups do not travel with these items).
- Please send information about your designated hotel, including the number of rooms reserved, to Performing Arts Management at least four weeks prior to your performance date.

### HOST FAMILIES

If host homes are provided, please complete the BYU housing worksheet and follow its guidelines, listing host-family names, phone numbers, and information regarding the number and type of beds to be provided. You can obtain the worksheet from Performing Arts Management or via the Web site at <http://pam.byu.edu>, under Presenter's Resources. All fields in this worksheet should be completed with the host family names and information, and the worksheet should be sent to Performing Arts Management at least four weeks before your performance date so that BYU can make personnel assignments to each host home before the group departs. This completed housing list will then be shared with you as well as with leaders of the BYU group.

When performers stay with host families, please ensure that hosts understand the following:

- At least two ensemble members of the same sex will be assigned to each host home.
- Single women will not be sent to the homes of single male hosts, and single men will not be sent to the homes of single female hosts.
- Single men and single women will not be sent to the same host home.

- Separate beds are to be provided for single group members.
- Following the performance, ensemble members will be striking the set and packing the equipment truck for up to an hour before they can leave for the night.
- Host families and ensemble members normally meet each other once the performance ends and equipment and costume strike is completed.
- Host homes are requested near the performance site to avoid excessive travel.

The lodging coordinator should assist host families in meeting their assigned ensemble members after the performance and the strike. The coordinator ensures that all group members have a host family or hotel room for the night.

### **HOST FAMILIES AND PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE**

Every host family should be strongly encouraged to attend the performance and should receive at least two complimentary tickets. This way hosts become acquainted with the students through the performance and appreciate the reason the group is in their area and home.

### **BREAKFAST**

Generally presenters who provide overnight accommodations for a group are asked to provide breakfast the following morning.

- If families host the students, breakfast can most easily be served in the individual homes.
- If a hotel is provided, determine where the group will have breakfast, schedule the time, and plan the menu with the food provider.

### **LUNCH**

Often presenters are asked to provide lunches for the performers on the day of departure. Presenters may consider the following:

- Presenters could make their own arrangements to provide sack or box lunches.
- Presenters could ask the host families to provide sack lunches for the performers staying with them.

Provision of lunch on the departure day is a great help to the BYU group, permitting them to keep on schedule and reduce costs



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