



2025 Rhino Awards

Entry Information Pack

Congratulations!

You have taken the first step to participate in the 2025 Dubbo Real Estate Agency Rhino Awards. Entering the Awards is a valuable endeavour that can deliver great benefits to your organisation and your people.

This pack is designed to help you understand the entry process, as well as provide a step-by-step guide to completing your online entry.

This is the 29th year that the Rhino Awards have been held in Dubbo, and every year they get bigger and better!

In some categories, eligible winners will receive automatic entry into the 2026 Business NSW Regional Awards.

Entering your business or individuals into the 2025 Rhino Awards provides your business with an unparalleled opportunity to:

- Gain recognition at a local, regional, and state level
- Raise the profile of your business and showcase your business to a state-wide, countrywide, and global audience.
- Build a reputation for excellence inside and outside of your industry.
- Benchmark your business year on year and against other businesses in your area and industry.
- Improve employee engagement by involving your employees in the entry process.
- Boost staff morale through the recounting of successes and wins in your business.

All finalists and winners receive an official Business Awards FINALIST or WINNER logo that can be used on collateral, websites, business cards and signage.

Key dates

Please refer to our website to see all key dates for the 2025 Rhino Awards.

How to enter

All entries must be submitted online via: <https://dubbo.awardsplatform.com/>

If you have any questions about the 2025 Rhino Awards or your entry, please call the Chamber on 0457 844 883 or email executiveofficer@dubbochamber.com.au

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Business Award Categories

1. Excellence in Micro Business [less than 5 employees] *

The Excellence in Micro Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and can demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements in business excellence over the past 12 months at the time of entry. This category is open to businesses with fewer than five employees at the time of entry, that have been trading for more than 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has fewer than five employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding New Business, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the past 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, and projected future outcomes. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe what makes your product or service unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from its competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed their impact on your business's strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

2. Excellence in Small Business [5 - 20 employees] *

The Excellence in Small Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and can demonstrate the strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements in business excellence over the past 12 months. This category is open to businesses with five to 20 employees at the time of entry, who have been trading for more than 24 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has five to 20 employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding New Business, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the past 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, and projected future outcomes. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe what makes your product or service unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed their impact on your business's strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

3. Excellence in Large Business [21+ employees] *

The Excellence in Large Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and can demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements in business excellence over the past 12 months. This category is open to businesses with 21 or more employees at the time of entry, who have been trading for more than 24 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has 21 or more employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding New Business, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Small Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the past 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe what makes your product or service unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed their impact on your business's strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

4. Outstanding Community Organisation *

The Outstanding Community Organisation Award recognises an organisation that works to improve the social, cultural, or environmental wellbeing of the community.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to being an outstanding community organisation. This category is open to social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations that have been trading for a period of over 24 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two or more years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ The organisation has not entered the categories of Outstanding New Business, Excellence in Micro Business, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Large Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Explain the social purpose of your organisation and how it contributes to the social, cultural, or environmental wellbeing of the community. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of your organisation, including the product or service you deliver within the community. *Maximum word count: 200*
3. Provide an overview of the key features of your business development strategy and projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Demonstrate how your organisation contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Outline the key challenges your organisation has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed the impact of these challenges. *Maximum word count: 400*

5. Outstanding New Business *

The Outstanding New Business Award recognises a start-up that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate potential to achieve future success.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their commitment to being an outstanding start-up over the past 12 months. This category is open to businesses that have been trading for less than 24 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a period of less than two years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not been purchased or acquired and is not part of a franchise.
- ✓ The business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Excellence in Micro Business, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of your business, including the product or service you offer, how you identified the market need and who your target customers are. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business development strategy and projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe why your product or service offering is unique within your industry and differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Detail the measurable growth and key milestones you have achieved since launching your business. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced as a new business and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 400*

6. Excellence in Innovation *

The Excellence in Innovation Award recognises a business that has implemented innovative solutions for new and existing needs through the introduction or improvement of a product, technology, or application that impacts the wider community.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months at the time of entry across the key area of innovation.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two or more years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline the innovation implemented and how it has addressed a new or existing need.
Maximum word count: 400
2. Describe why the innovation is unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from its competitors. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe how the innovation was received by the market and external stakeholders.
Maximum word count: 300
4. Demonstrate how the innovation has or is likely to have a positive impact on business or the community. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Provide measurable evidence of how the innovation has improved the identified need, driven growth and contributed to the success of your business. *Maximum word count: 400*

7. Excellence in Sustainability *

The Excellence in Sustainability Award recognises a business that has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable business practices and is working to reduce the impact of its operations on the environment.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements in environmental sustainability over the past 12 months at time of entry. The category criteria are based on initiatives and projects within the business that are not related to its core offering.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline your business sustainability goals and objectives including measurable targets.
Maximum word count: 300
2. Outline the initiatives you have implemented to achieve sustainable practices within your business. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe your sustainability achievements over the past 12 months including environmental outcomes. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Describe how you involve your workforce and external stakeholders in your sustainability initiatives. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Detail measurable evidence explaining how your business sustainability practices have improved business operations, driven growth and/or contributed to the success of your business. *Maximum word count: 400*

8. Outstanding Employer of Choice *

The Employer of Choice Award recognises a business that has implemented strategies and initiatives to create a stimulating and supportive workplace environment.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key areas of employee recruitment, engagement, and retention. Category criteria are based on initiatives that have had a positive impact on both employees and the business.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. What are the initiatives you have undertaken to develop a positive workplace culture within your business? *Maximum word count: 400*
2. Describe how your business adopts inclusive practices and recognises the needs of a diverse workforce, including examples. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Excluding business growth or expansion, what percentage of staff turnover has your business experienced in the past 12 months and what are the reasons for this turnover? *Maximum word count: 300*
4. How does your business empower its workforce to develop their skills, contribute to a positive workplace culture and deepen their engagement with the business and the community? *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Provide measurable evidence that demonstrates how these initiatives make you an employer of choice. *Maximum word count: 400*

9. Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion *

The Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award recognises businesses that address the needs of a diverse community, including seniors, people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people with disability. An inclusive business facilitates the needs of all its employees and customers.

Entry Criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to address the needs of a diverse community. This category is open to businesses that have been trading continuously for two or more years.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two or more years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline your current staff level and diversity – including employees with disability, older people (over 55), women, young people (18-24 years), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from CALD backgrounds. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Identify and describe your positive and/or proactive inclusive practices within the business that go beyond regulatory compliance. *Maximum word count: 350*
3. Describe your HR and employment hiring practices that demonstrate your commitment to being an inclusive employer. *Maximum word count: 350*
4. Identify and describe how your business has created an accessible and inclusive environment that is welcoming for customers with a disability, seniors, and people from CALD backgrounds. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Explain why your business embarked on being more accessible and inclusive and describe what further actions you will take to become more accessible and inclusive to employees and customers. *Maximum word count: 400*

10. Outstanding Visitor Experience *

The Outstanding Visitor Experience award recognises a business that understands the importance of visitor engagement for a region's economy* and reputation. The business needs to articulate how they promote the region while as well a offering an exceptional visitor experience.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate how their business showcases the region/community and how their offering is unique within their industry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business & Tourism Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of your business and your target market/s. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Describe what makes your service offering unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe your customer service strategy and how your business implements this strategy to ensure visitor satisfaction. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Demonstrate how your business attracts and engages visitors to the region, including measurable targets. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Provide an overview of the key features of your strategy and plans for the visitor economy over the next 12 months. *Maximum word count: 400*

**The visitor economy encompasses the direct and indirect contributions to the economy resulting from a person (a visitor) travelling outside their normal place of residence (see [NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030](#)).*

11. Excellence in Agribusiness

The Excellence in Agribusiness award recognises a business that operates within or services the agribusiness sector and demonstrates outstanding performance, innovation, and contribution to the industry.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their leadership within the agriculture and agribusiness sector, showcasing exceptional performance and their contribution to the industry, while demonstrating how they have effectively utilised resources to achieve successful outcomes and drive innovation over the past 18 months. To be eligible for this category, entrants must demonstrate their performance and industry contributions over the past 12 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2025 Business & Tourism Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the past 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, and projected future outcomes. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe what makes your product or service unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the agribusiness industry, either directly or indirectly, to support the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed their impact on your business's strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

12. Gold Rhino Award for Business of the Year

The Gold Rhino Award for Business of the Year is open to all winners of the following categories:

- Employer of Choice
- Excellence in Innovation
- Outstanding Sustainability
- Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion
- Excellence in Micro Business
- Excellence in Small Business
- Excellence in Large Business

This award recognises a business that demonstrates achievements and excellence over and above all other entrants. This award will be judged by a panel of three judges, each of whom has not judged any other award entries.

Individual Categories

13. Outstanding Employee *

The Outstanding Employee Award recognises an inspirational employee who has demonstrated a passion for their role and a commitment to their workplace and the community.

Entry criteria

Employers are required to highlight their employees' commitment over the past 12 months to their workplace, the community, and to being an outstanding employee. To be eligible to enter this category, the employee must have been employed by their current employer for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Additional T&Cs

In addition to the general T&Cs, the following apply to this category:

Should the entrant leave the organisation before the Regional or State Gala event, they will not be eligible to receive an award.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The employee has been employed by their current employer for at least 18 months at the time of entry.
- ✓ The employee is not a Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW Business Chamber Limited.
- ✓ Neither I nor the employee have been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ Neither I nor the employee am a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide a brief profile, including their current role and scope of responsibilities.
Maximum word count: 200
2. Outline their measurable achievements and key milestones while with the business.
Maximum word count: 300
3. Outline how the employee demonstrates integrity and professionalism in the workplace.
Maximum word count: 300
4. Detail specific activities and initiatives they have undertaken that demonstrate a passion for their role and a commitment to the workplace and/or the community.
Maximum word count: 400
5. Outline the reasons why they are an outstanding employee. *Maximum word count: 400*

14. Outstanding Young Business Leader *

The Outstanding Young Business Leader Award recognises an inspirational business leader, aged 35 or under at the time of entry, who has demonstrated a commitment to their workplace, industry, and the community through leadership.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their ability to lead and inspire people, showcasing exceptional leadership skills, while demonstrating how they have effectively utilised resources to achieve successful outcomes and drive innovation over the past 18 months. To be eligible for this category, the individual must have held a senior management or executive-level position within their organisation for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ I am aged 35 years or under at the time of entry.
- ✓ I am not an employee, Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW Business Chamber Limited.
- ✓ I have not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ I am not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide a brief profile, including your current role and scope of responsibilities.
Maximum word count: 200
2. Detail specific activities and initiatives you have undertaken to reshape your workplace, industry, or community to create a smarter and more inclusive future, with examples of how you have demonstrated exceptional leadership, effectively utilised resources, and/or driven innovation. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young business leader and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Provide an overview of your five-year goals and strategies for business growth, detailing how you are working towards achieving them. *Maximum word count: 300*
5. Outline the reasons why you are an outstanding young business leader. *Maximum word count: 400*

15. Outstanding Business Leader *

The Outstanding Business Leader Award recognises an inspirational business leader, aged 36 years or over at the time of entry, who has demonstrated a commitment to their workplace, industry, and the community through leadership, while also providing mentorship to others.

Entry criteria

Entrants must demonstrate their ability to lead and inspire people, showcasing exceptional leadership skills, while demonstrating how they have effectively utilised resources to achieve successful outcomes and drive innovation over the past 18 months. To be eligible for this category, the individual must have held a senior management or executive-level position within their organisation for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ I am aged 36 or over years at the time of entry.
- ✓ I am not an employee, Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW Business Chamber Limited.
- ✓ I have not been a judge in this category in 2024.
- ✓ I am not a judge in the 2025 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide a brief profile, including your current role and scope of responsibilities.
Maximum word count: 200
2. Detail specific activities and initiatives you have undertaken to reshape your workplace, industry, or community to create a smarter and more inclusive future, with examples of how you have demonstrated exceptional leadership, effectively utilised resources, and/or driven innovation. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a business leader and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Provide an overview of your five-year goals and strategies for business growth, detailing how you are working towards achieving them. *Maximum word count: 300*
5. Outline the reasons why you are an outstanding business leader, including the ways in which you provide mentorship to others. *Maximum word count: 400*

16. Apprentice and Trainee of the Year

Awarded to an apprentice or trainee who has gone above and beyond the call of duty and made a valuable contribution to the success of the business they work for.

Employer Questions

1. What is the employee's most outstanding contribution to your organisation? *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Provide an example of the employee's attitude and teamwork. *Maximum word count: 200*
3. How does the employee's involvement in your business benefit both the business and your customers? *Maximum word count: 200*
4. Describe the employee's attitude and commitment to his or her profession, including examples that display initiative in the workplace. *Maximum word count: 500*

Questions to be answered by the apprentice or trainee.

1. Describe your apprentice or traineeship and why you chose the field of specialisation? *Maximum word count: 200*
2. What are your goals after completing your apprenticeship or traineeship? *Maximum word count: 200*
3. Briefly describe your achievements in the workplace and/or your field of specialisation. *Maximum word count: 500*
4. Describe how training has supported your career development. *Maximum word count: 300*

People's Choice Categories

Dubbo's Favourite Business

Awarded to Dubbo's most popular business, as voted by the public.

Dubbo's Favourite Tradie

Awarded to Dubbo's most popular trade-based business (i.e., electrician, plumber, builder, painter) as voted by the public.

Roll of Honour Award

Jean Emile Serisier Roll of Honour Award

Recognises those who demonstrate outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, strategic business direction and innovative ideas, whilst inspiring a new generation of upcoming business leaders.

Judging of the 2025 Rhino Awards

The 2025 Rhino Awards and the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards follow a rigorous judging process at both the regional and state levels.

Judges are selected from subject matter experts or practitioners in the area relating to the award category, academics in the field, award category sponsors and NSW Business Chamber representatives.

All our judges come from outside the region and must declare any conflict of interest.

Judging takes place online, which is why only online entries will be accepted into the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards.

Entries are judged individually. Scores are then collated and averaged, and weightings are applied to achieve a final score.

Due to the volume of entries across all regions, entrants will not receive feedback from the judges regarding their entry.

Finalists will be announced once judging is complete.

Conditions of Entry

- a) All entrants or nominees must operate in a postcode within Dubbo Regional Council's local government area.
- b) Businesses must have been operating for more than two years unless the guidelines for the category the business is applying to specifically state otherwise.
- c) The judging panel reserves the right to place your entry into a category it feels most appropriate. The judging panel reserves the right to create or delete categories based on the entries received.
- d) The applicant acknowledges that if they win an award, the award is personal to the winner and is not assignable.
- e) Awards presented will be to the organisation or person named on the application form.
- f) No alterations to applications will be permitted after the date of submission, although submissions may be withdrawn before announcement of winners.
- g) A representative must be present at the gala function on 21 November 2025.
- h) There is no entry fee.
- i) Your privacy is protected, and all entries are regarded as CONFIDENTIAL, and all individuals involved in the judging process are required to complete a Confidentiality Agreement.
- j) Entries must be submitted using the entry portal noted below. All required questions must be answered to be eligible.
- k) All entrants or nominations must be registered with the ATO as a business and hold a current ABN number.
- l) Eligible winners of the starred categories will receive automatic entry into the 2026 Western NSW Business Awards. To be eligible, a winner must be a member of the Dubbo Business Chamber and have subscribed to our alliance with the NSW Business Chamber; or be a member of the NSW Business Chamber.
- m) State category winners from 2024 cannot enter the same category in 2025 but can enter a different category or categories.
- n) The winner of the Gold Rhino award is selected by the judges.
- o) The Gold Rhino Award will be awarded to the business with the most points awarded across all the business categories.
- p) Where there is more than one business with the same total point balance, the winner will be determined by the business with the most points awarded in the general question section of their entry/ies.
- q) Sponsors may enter the award but may not enter the category that they are sponsoring.
- r) Entry is not open to office bearers of the Dubbo Business Chamber.

This entry information pack has been prepared on behalf of the Dubbo Business Chamber.

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