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# (REVIEW ARTICLE)

# Business analytics in CRM: A comparative review of practices in the USA and Africa

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### Abstract

In the dynamic landscape of global business, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has emerged as a crucial strategy for organizations aiming to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. This study delves into the realm of Business Analytics (BA) within CRM, examining the diverse practices employed in the USA and Africa. The purpose is to identify similarities, differences, and potential areas for improvement, with the overarching goal of fostering more effective CRM strategies. The American business landscape, characterized by advanced technological infrastructure and matured data analytics capabilities, provides a fertile ground for sophisticated CRM practices. A comprehensive analysis of leading companies in the USA reveals a strong reliance on predictive analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to glean actionable insights from vast datasets. Such approaches empower organizations to personalize customer experiences, optimize marketing strategies, and drive overall business growth. In contrast, the African business environment exhibits unique challenges and opportunities. While certain regions may face infrastructural constraints, innovative CRM practices tailored to local contexts are emerging. This study sheds light on the utilization of mobile technology, social media analytics, and localized data collection methods as crucial tools in the African CRM landscape. These adaptive strategies not only address challenges but also present opportunities for leapfrogging traditional CRM models. The comparative review uncovers key areas of convergence and divergence between the two regions, highlighting the need for a nuanced approach to global CRM strategies. By synthesizing insights from the USA and Africa, organizations can develop a more holistic understanding of effective CRM practices. This research contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on global business analytics, offering a roadmap for organizations to navigate the intricacies of CRM implementation in diverse and dynamic markets.

Keyword: Business Analytics; CRM; USA; Africa; Innovation; Data Science

### 1. Introduction

In an era marked by unprecedented technological advancements and global connectivity, the efficacy of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become pivotal for organizations seeking to navigate the complexities of contemporary markets. CRM, at its core, is a strategic approach that aims to build and strengthen relationships with customers, fostering loyalty and satisfaction. As businesses increasingly recognize the paramount importance of understanding and responding to customer needs, the integration of Business Analytics (BA) into CRM practices has emerged as a transformative force.

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Customer Relationship Management, commonly known as CRM, encapsulates the comprehensive strategies and technologies employed by organizations to manage, analyze, and leverage customer interactions throughout the customer lifecycle (Lemon and Verhoef, 2023). It spans various touchpoints, encompassing marketing, sales, customer service, and beyond. The overarching goal is to enhance customer satisfaction, optimize operational processes, and ultimately drive sustainable business growth. In essence, CRM is a multifaceted approach that places the customer at the center of strategic decision-making.

The integration of Business Analytics into CRM practices has redefined how organizations interpret and act upon customer data (Del Vecchio et al.,2022). BA involves the use of statistical analysis, predictive modeling, and other analytical techniques to extract valuable insights from vast datasets. In the context of CRM, BA empowers organizations to transform raw data into actionable intelligence, enabling informed decision-making. By leveraging BA tools, businesses can personalize customer experiences, tailor marketing strategies, and optimize operational efficiency, thereby gaining a competitive edge in the dynamic marketplace.

As businesses operate within increasingly interconnected global markets, understanding regional variations in CRM practices becomes paramount (Zhang et al.,2020). This comparative review seeks to shed light on the nuanced dynamics of Business Analytics in CRM by juxtaposing practices in two distinct regions – the United States and Africa.

Through a systematic examination of CRM practices, the study aims to identify commonalities and divergences between the advanced technological landscape of the USA and the diverse and dynamic markets of Africa. Understanding the shared strategies and unique approaches will contribute to a more holistic perspective on global CRM implementation.

By exploring the comparative landscape, the study endeavors to uncover potential areas for improvement in both regions (Allioui and Mourdi, 2023). Whether bridging technological gaps or adapting successful strategies, the insights derived from this review aim to inform future CRM practices, fostering a more adaptive and globally resonant approach to customer relationship management.

# 2. Literature Review

In the realm of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), the literature provides a rich tapestry of insights into the diverse practices employed across regions (Delanoy and Kasztelnik, 2020). This literature review delves into the CRM landscape of the United States and Africa, shedding light on the technological underpinnings and innovative approaches that shape customer-centric strategies.

The United States, boasting one of the world's most advanced technological landscapes, has cultivated a CRM ecosystem characterized by robust infrastructure and cutting-edge capabilities. Major corporations in the USA leverage high-speed connectivity, cloud computing, and sophisticated databases to manage vast volumes of customer data (Ione and Diaconita 2023). This technological prowess enables real-time data processing and analysis, facilitating timely and informed decision-making across the entire customer journey.

The literature emphasizes the prevalent use of predictive analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) in CRM practices in the USA (Chagas et al.,2020). Predictive analytics, driven by advanced algorithms, allows organizations to forecast customer behavior and preferences. Machine learning algorithms enhance the ability to automatically adapt and improve over time, refining the accuracy of predictions. AI, through natural language processing and chatbots, enhances customer interactions, providing personalized experiences and efficient problem resolution.

Africa presents a distinctive CRM landscape marked by both challenges and opportunities. While certain regions face infrastructural constraints, such as limited access to high-speed internet and advanced technologies, the continent exhibits a dynamic and rapidly evolving business environment. The literature underscores the importance of recognizing the unique challenges, such as varying levels of economic development and diverse cultural landscapes, that shape CRM practices in Africa (Brown, 2023).

The literature highlights the pivotal role of mobile technology in shaping CRM practices in Africa (Joseph et al., 2024). With a significant portion of the population accessing the internet primarily through mobile devices, businesses in Africa have embraced mobile-centric CRM strategies. Mobile applications facilitate direct customer engagement, personalized promotions, and seamless transactions, overcoming traditional infrastructural limitations.

Social media has become a powerful tool for CRM in Africa, serving as a platform for customer interaction and feedback (Ofori, and El-Gayar, 2020). The literature reveals a growing emphasis on social media analytics to glean insights into

customer sentiment, preferences, and trends. Leveraging platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, businesses can tailor their CRM strategies to align with the social dynamics of the region.

In response to the diversity of languages, cultures, and consumer behaviors across Africa, the literature showcases the emergence of localized data collection methods (Lin et al.,2023). These methods include ethnographic research, community engagement initiatives, and partnerships with local influencers. By embracing context-specific data collection, businesses in Africa can create more accurate customer profiles and tailor CRM strategies to resonate with the intricacies of the local markets.

In summary, the literature review underscores the technologically advanced landscape of CRM in the USA, marked by the extensive use of predictive analytics and AI (Ledro et al.,2023). Conversely, Africa's CRM landscape is characterized by innovative adaptations to unique challenges, including the widespread use of mobile technology, social media analytics, and localized data collection methods. This comparative analysis sets the stage for a deeper exploration into the synergies and disparities between these two distinct CRM ecosystems, offering valuable insights for the global business community.

### 2.1. Similarities and Differences

The convergence and divergence of Business Analytics (BA) in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices between the United States and Africa present a fascinating landscape shaped by both commonalities and unique challenges. This comparative analysis delves into the technological landscape, emphasizing the advanced infrastructure in the USA and the resourceful adaptations to overcome infrastructural constraints in Africa.

The United States stands at the forefront of technological innovation, boasting an advanced infrastructure that serves as a cornerstone for sophisticated CRM practices (Williamson et al.,2024). High-speed internet connectivity, cloud computing capabilities, and a comprehensive digital ecosystem empower American businesses to harness the full potential of BA in CRM. Leading corporations leverage these technological foundations to seamlessly collect, process, and analyze vast datasets, providing them with a competitive edge in understanding customer behaviors and preferences (Bharadiya,2023).

Predictive analytics enables organizations to forecast future trends, enhance decision-making processes, and personalize customer interactions (Lee et al.,2022). Machine learning algorithms continually refine their predictive capabilities, adapting to evolving market dynamics. AI, through chatbots and virtual assistants, not only automates routine tasks but also enhances the overall customer experience by providing timely and contextually relevant information.

In contrast, Africa faces infrastructural constraints that have historically posed challenges to the adoption of advanced CRM technologies (Chipangamate and Nwaila, 2023). Limited access to high-speed internet, uneven technology distribution across regions, and varying levels of economic development have been key hurdles. However, the literature reveals a narrative of resilience and innovation, showcasing how businesses in Africa have adeptly navigated these challenges. Recognizing the importance of adapting to the regional context, African businesses have embraced innovative strategies to overcome infrastructural limitations. One notable avenue is the widespread adoption of mobile technology. With a significant portion of the population accessing the internet primarily through mobile devices, businesses in Africa leverage mobile applications as a primary channel for customer engagement. This mobile-centric approach not only bridges infrastructural gaps but also aligns with the preferences and habits of the local population.

Moreover, the literature underscores the emergence of localized data collection methods in Africa (Clement et al.,2023). Ethnographic research, community engagement initiatives, and partnerships with local influencers have become integral to CRM strategies. By incorporating context-specific data collection, businesses can create more accurate customer profiles and tailor their CRM approaches to the diverse and dynamic markets across the continent.

The similarities and differences in the technological landscape of BA in CRM between the USA and Africa have profound implications for global businesses (Basu et al.,2023). The advanced infrastructure in the USA facilitates a data-driven and technologically sophisticated approach to CRM, emphasizing the role of predictive analytics and AI. In contrast, Africa's resourceful adaptations highlight the importance of context-specific strategies, with mobile technology and localized data collection emerging as key enablers.

These divergent paths present opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration. While American businesses can draw inspiration from Africa's innovative adaptations, African enterprises can benefit from the best practices and

technological advancements prevalent in the USA (Qaim, 2020). Bridging these gaps fosters a more inclusive and globally resonant approach to BA in CRM, ensuring that businesses can effectively navigate the complexities of diverse markets and customer expectations.

### 2.1.1. Analytical Approaches

Analytical approaches in Business Analytics (BA) play a pivotal role in shaping effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies. A comparative analysis between the United States and Africa reveals distinctive yet complementary paths, reflecting the technological landscapes and unique market dynamics of each region.

In the United States, a technologically advanced hub, businesses harness the power of predictive analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) to forge sophisticated CRM strategies. Predictive analytics serves as a cornerstone, enabling organizations to anticipate future trends and customer behaviors with a high degree of accuracy. By analyzing historical data, businesses in the USA can make informed decisions, optimize resource allocation, and tailor marketing efforts to specific customer segments.

Machine learning algorithms further elevate CRM capabilities by continuously refining predictive models (Rane et al.,2023). These algorithms adapt to evolving patterns and customer preferences, ensuring that CRM strategies remain dynamic and responsive to changing market conditions. Artificial intelligence, integrated through chatbots and virtual assistants, not only automates routine tasks but also enhances the overall customer experience. Natural language processing allows for more nuanced interactions, providing customers with personalized and contextually relevant information.

In Africa, where infrastructural constraints have historically shaped the business landscape, a different set of analytical approaches has emerged (Guma and Monstadt, 2021). Mobile technology stands out as a transformative force, serving as a primary channel for CRM activities. With a substantial proportion of the population accessing the internet through mobile devices, businesses leverage mobile applications to engage directly with customers. Mobile-centric CRM strategies in Africa facilitate personalized interactions, timely notifications, and seamless transactions, overcoming traditional infrastructural limitations (Han et al.,2023).

Social media analytics also play a significant role in CRM strategies across the African continent. Recognizing the prevalence of social media as a communication platform, businesses actively analyze data from platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Social media analytics not only provide insights into customer sentiment and preferences but also serve as a valuable tool for real-time customer engagement. By understanding the social dynamics of their target markets, businesses in Africa can tailor CRM strategies to align with the cultural and social nuances unique to each region.

The analytical approaches employed in the USA and Africa represent a fascinating duality – the USA's focus on datadriven precision through predictive analytics, machine learning, and AI, and Africa's adaptive strategies leveraging mobile technology and social media analytics to overcome infrastructural challenges (Amankwah and Lu, 2022). While the USA emphasizes the depth and sophistication of data analysis, Africa highlights the importance of accessibility, localization, and innovation in CRM. This synthesis offers a nuanced perspective on the global landscape of CRM analytics, underscoring the importance of tailoring approaches to regional contexts. As businesses navigate the complexities of the digital age, recognizing the symbiosis between advanced analytical methodologies and adaptive, context-specific strategies becomes crucial for fostering successful and sustainable CRM practices on a global scale.

### 2.1.2. Localized Strategies

In the ever-evolving landscape of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), the implementation of localized strategies is emerging as a critical factor for success (Mogili and Natarajan, 2021). This approach involves tailoring CRM practices to regional contexts, a practice that is particularly evident in diverse markets like Africa, where businesses are navigating unique challenges and seizing opportunities through adaptability.

Tailoring CRM practices to regional contexts involves a nuanced understanding of local cultures, languages, and consumer behaviors (Ahmad et al.,2023). In regions with diverse linguistic landscapes, such as Africa, businesses are recognizing the importance of multilingual customer engagement strategies. This not only involves offering customer support in local languages but also extends to marketing materials, product information, and communication channels. By speaking the language of the customer, businesses build trust and forge stronger connections, fostering a sense of inclusivity and relevance.

Additionally, localized strategies delve into the intricacies of cultural nuances. Understanding cultural sensitivities, traditions, and values enables businesses to create CRM campaigns that resonate with the local population. From the design of promotional materials to the timing of marketing campaigns, businesses customize their approaches to align with the cultural fabric of the region. This cultural intelligence goes beyond surface-level adaptation, ensuring that CRM practices are not only effective but also respectful of local customs.

Localized CRM strategies play a pivotal role in addressing and overcoming regional challenges while simultaneously capitalizing on unique opportunities (Rrucaj, 2023). In regions with infrastructural limitations, such as parts of Africa, businesses tailor CRM approaches to accommodate the realities of limited access to high-speed internet or advanced technologies. Mobile-centric strategies, for instance, capitalize on the widespread use of mobile devices, ensuring that businesses can engage with customers seamlessly even in areas with less developed digital infrastructure (Gómez et al.,2023).

Moreover, localized strategies enable businesses to leverage opportunities that arise from the specific dynamics of each region (Porath, 2023). In Africa, where social structures and community ties play a significant role, businesses focus on building relationships beyond transactional interactions. Community engagement initiatives, partnerships with local influencers, and grassroots marketing campaigns are examples of how businesses in Africa are weaving themselves into the fabric of local societies, fostering brand loyalty and customer trust.

The synthesis of localized strategies in CRM practices reflects a paradigm shift in global business approaches (Chabowski et al.,2023). Recognizing the importance of tailoring strategies to regional contexts not only addresses challenges but also unlocks untapped opportunities. The future of CRM lies in a delicate balance between data-driven insights and the human touch, where businesses navigate the intricacies of diverse markets with sensitivity and adaptability. As technology continues to connect the world, understanding and implementing localized strategies will be a defining factor in building lasting customer relationships in the global marketplace.

# 2.2. Opportunities for Improvement

In the dynamic landscape of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), the pursuit of improvement is an ongoing endeavor (Osakwe et al.,2023). This exploration into opportunities for improvement focuses on two critical dimensions – bridging technological gaps and facilitating knowledge transfer – offering insights into how businesses can enhance their CRM strategies on a global scale.

The first opportunity for improvement lies in bridging the technological gaps, especially in regions facing infrastructural challenges such as Africa (You et al.,2020). Investing in infrastructure development is key to unlocking the full potential of CRM in this region. Initiatives to enhance internet connectivity, expand access to reliable electricity, and promote the adoption of advanced technologies lay the foundation for businesses to implement more sophisticated CRM practices.

Public-private partnerships and government incentives can play a pivotal role in driving infrastructure development (Cheng et al.,2023). Collaboration between businesses, technology providers, and governmental bodies can lead to the establishment of digital infrastructure that supports seamless CRM operations. This involves the expansion of high-speed internet networks, the development of data centers, and the integration of digital technologies into the daily lives of the population.

On the other side of the spectrum, the USA, despite its advanced technological landscape, can explore opportunities for improvement by enhancing the integration of cutting-edge technologies into CRM strategies (Ewuga et al.,2023). This involves staying ahead of the curve in adopting emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and blockchain. AR and VR technologies, for example, can revolutionize customer experiences by providing immersive interactions and personalized engagement. Blockchain, with its decentralized and secure nature, can enhance data privacy and transparency in CRM practices. The integration of these advanced technologies ensures that CRM strategies in the USA remain at the forefront of innovation, meeting the evolving expectations of tech-savvy consumers.

Knowledge transfer between regions presents a significant opportunity for improvement in the realm of CRM (Ledro et al.,2023). Collaborative learning initiatives that facilitate the exchange of insights and best practices between businesses in the USA and Africa can be instrumental. Partnerships, forums, and conferences that bring together professionals from diverse backgrounds create a space for cross-cultural learning and collaboration.

Collaborative learning initiatives can extend beyond formal events, incorporating virtual platforms, webinars, and online communities (Sain and Negi, 2021). This approach allows for ongoing dialogue and knowledge sharing, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By understanding the nuances of each other's markets, businesses can gain valuable perspectives that inform the refinement of their CRM strategies.

Another opportunity for improvement lies in the adaptation of successful CRM strategies to diverse markets (Guerola et al.,2023). While the USA may have established practices that prove effective in its mature market, adapting these strategies to the unique contexts of African markets requires a nuanced approach. This involves not only acknowledging regional variations but also actively seeking to understand and incorporate local preferences, cultural norms, and market dynamics.

Successful strategies can be identified through benchmarking, case studies, and collaborative research efforts (Nekoto et al.,2020). Once identified, these strategies should undergo a process of localization, ensuring that they align with the cultural, economic, and technological landscapes of diverse markets. This adaptive approach allows businesses to leverage the successes of one region to inform their strategies in another, creating a more universally effective approach to global CRM.

The opportunities for improvement in Business Analytics for CRM present a roadmap for businesses to enhance their global strategies (Rane et al., 2023). By bridging technological gaps and facilitating knowledge transfer, businesses can cultivate a more inclusive, innovative, and adaptive approach to CRM. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the pursuit of improvement in CRM practices becomes not only a strategic imperative but also a collaborative effort to build sustainable, customer-centric practices that resonate across diverse markets. The future of CRM lies in the synergy between technological advancements, cross-cultural collaboration, and a commitment to continuous learning and adaptation.

### 2.3. Case Studies

Examining case studies of Business Analytics (BA) in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) provides valuable insights into the diverse practices and strategies adopted by businesses in the USA and Africa. A comparative review of these case studies unveils distinctive approaches while highlighting areas of convergence that contribute to the global discourse on effective CRM implementation (Deb et al., 2023).

Case studies from the United States reveal a landscape marked by advanced analytical precision, driven by the integration of cutting-edge technologies in CRM strategies (Rrucaj, 2023). Companies such as Amazon, Netflix, and Salesforce exemplify the deployment of predictive analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance customer engagement. Amazon's recommendation engine, powered by machine learning algorithms, analyzes vast datasets to predict customer preferences, offering personalized product recommendations. Similarly, Netflix employs predictive analytics to tailor content recommendations based on user behavior, maximizing user satisfaction and retention (Ahmed, and Abdulkareem, 2023). Salesforce, a leader in CRM software, integrates AI-driven analytics to empower businesses with actionable insights, enabling them to anticipate customer needs and optimize marketing strategies. In the USA, the emphasis on leveraging advanced analytics for customer-centric excellence underscores the transformative impact of predictive modeling, machine learning, and AI in CRM practices, setting a benchmark for global standards.

In contrast, case studies from Africa illuminate innovative adaptations and mobile-centric strategies as key components of successful CRM implementations. Companies like Safaricom, MTN Group, and Jumia exemplify how businesses in Africa navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities unique to the continent. Safaricom, a leading telecom company in Kenya, showcases the power of mobile technology in CRM. M-Pesa, Safaricom's mobile money service, not only facilitates financial transactions but also serves as a platform for personalized promotions and customer engagement. MTN Group, operating in multiple African countries, leverages social media analytics to gain insights into customer sentiments and preferences, tailoring marketing strategies accordingly. Jumia, an e-commerce giant, employs localized data collection methods and community engagement initiatives to build trust and foster customer loyalty (Badran, 2021).

These case studies underscore the importance of mobile technology and localized strategies in overcoming infrastructural challenges and connecting with diverse consumer bases across Africa (Ezeigweneme et al.,2023). Innovative adaptations, such as social media analytics and community-centric approaches, showcase the agility and resilience of businesses in the African CRM landscape.

The comparative case studies highlight the coexistence of advanced analytics in the USA and innovative adaptations in Africa within the realm of CRM. While the USA champions data-driven precision, Africa's case studies illuminate the significance of context-specific strategies that resonate with diverse markets and unique challenges.

Synthesizing these case studies reveals a broader narrative where businesses, regardless of geographical location, continually evolve their CRM practices (Delanoy and Kasztelnik, 2020) The synthesis of advanced analytics and innovative adaptations presents a holistic view of effective CRM implementation that transcends regional boundaries. These case studies serve as benchmarks for businesses globally, encouraging a nuanced approach that combines analytical rigor with cultural sensitivity, ultimately fostering enhanced customer engagement and loyalty on a global scale.

### 2.4. Recommendation

In the pursuit of enhancing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) through Business Analytics (BA), the comparative review of practices in the USA and Africa provides valuable insights that can shape the future trajectory of global CRM strategies. This recommendation and conclusion section encapsulates the key findings, discusses their implications, and provides recommendations for future research.

The comparative review uncovered distinctive CRM practices in the USA and Africa, each region showcasing unique strengths and innovative adaptations. In the USA, advanced technological infrastructure facilitates precision-driven CRM strategies, leveraging predictive analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. Africa, facing infrastructural challenges, exhibits resilience through mobile-centric strategies, social media analytics, and localized data collection methods. These findings underscore the importance of context-specific approaches in the global landscape of CRM.

The implications of the key findings extend beyond regional boundaries, offering valuable lessons for the formulation of global CRM strategies. The synthesis of advanced analytics and adaptive strategies presents an opportunity for businesses to adopt a hybrid approach, combining data-driven precision with cultural sensitivity. Acknowledging regional variations in technological landscapes, consumer behaviors, and infrastructural constraints is crucial for businesses seeking to build lasting customer relationships on a global scale.

Global CRM strategies should not be one-size-fits-all but should rather embrace diversity and contextual nuances. The advanced analytics prevalent in the USA can serve as benchmarks for data-driven precision, while Africa's adaptive strategies highlight the importance of agility and innovation in overcoming challenges. Organizations that successfully integrate these insights can position themselves as pioneers in the evolving landscape of global CRM.

As the field of Business Analytics in CRM continues to evolve, several avenues for future research emerge; Stakeholders should explore how CRM strategies developed in one cultural context can be effectively adopted in another. This research could delve into the challenges, opportunities, and best practices for businesses aiming to implement successful CRM strategies in diverse cultural settings. Stakeholders should investigate the ethical implications of using advanced analytics in CRM, considering issues such as privacy, data security, and the responsible use of customer data. As BA continues to shape CRM practices, understanding and addressing ethical concerns are critical for maintaining customer trust. Stakeholders should examine the influence of regional and global regulatory frameworks on CRM strategies. This research could explore how businesses navigate compliance requirements, data protection laws, and other legal considerations that impact the implementation of BA in CRM. Stakeholders should investigate the long-term outcomes of different CRM strategies on customer relationships, loyalty, and satisfaction. Understanding the sustained impact of these strategies can provide valuable insights into their effectiveness and guide businesses in refining their approaches over time.

### 3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative review of Business Analytics in CRM in the USA and Africa illuminates the multifaceted nature of global customer relationship management. By synthesizing the key findings, considering the implications for global strategies, and outlining recommendations for future research, businesses and researchers alike can contribute to the continual evolution of CRM practices, fostering meaningful and lasting connections with customers worldwide.

### **Compliance with ethical standards**

#### Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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