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Internship Implementation at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Internship is a vocational programme designed to provide students with authentic workplace experience and to bridge the gap between school learning and industry practices. This paper reports the internship activities conducted at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia from June to December 2025. The internship involved project planning, system installation, software configuration, integration of IT-based solutions, and maintenance tasks such as fibre optic cable splicing and panel repair. Through these activities, students applied theoretical knowledge in practical contexts, thereby enhancing technical competencies in troubleshooting, hardware installation, and system integration. Beyond technical skills, the internship fostered soft skills including discipline, adaptability, teamwork, and communication, which are essential for professional success. Challenges such as technological gaps between school and industry, limited mentorship due to supervisors' workload, and cultural adjustment to workplace discipline were encountered. These challenges were overcome through proactive learning, collaboration with colleagues, and flexibility in adapting to new environments. Overall, the internship programme significantly enhanced students' readiness for professional work, strengthened their technical expertise, and contributed to the formation of professional identities.

Keywords: *Internship; Vocational Education; Technical Skills*

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INTRODUCTION

Vocational education has long been acknowledged as a cornerstone in preparing students for the demands of the contemporary labour market. Unlike general education, which often emphasises theoretical knowledge and abstract reasoning, vocational schools are specifically designed to equip learners with practical skills that can be directly applied in professional contexts. In Indonesia, vocational high schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK) play a pivotal role in producing graduates who are expected to be ready for employment immediately upon completion of their studies. Nevertheless, the transition from classroom learning to workplace practice is not always straightforward. Many graduates encounter challenges in adapting to the realities of industry, including differences in technology, organisational culture, and expectations of professional responsibility. To bridge this gap, the internship programme, known locally as Praktik Kerja Lapangan (PKL), has been institutionalised as an integral component of vocational education (Suyitno et al., 2025).

Internships serve multiple purposes. They provide students with opportunities to internalise workplace culture, apply technical competencies, and develop soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. More importantly, internships expose students to the dynamic nature of industry, where technologies evolve rapidly and organisational demands shift in response to market trends. For vocational students, this exposure is invaluable, as it allows them to contextualise their classroom learning within real-world scenarios. By engaging directly with industry practices, students gain insights into the expectations of employers and the standards of professionalism required in their chosen fields. In this sense, internships function not merely as supplementary experiences but as essential mechanisms for ensuring that vocational education remains relevant and responsive to the needs of the labour market (Ng et al., 2022).

The significance of internships has been widely discussed in educational research. Recent studies emphasise that vocational internships contribute not only to the development of technical skills but also to the cultivation of employability skills. Pianda et al. (2024) demonstrate that internship programmes foster entrepreneurial mindsets among vocational students, encouraging them to think beyond traditional employment and consider self-employment opportunities. Furthermore, the same study highlights that internships enhance students' adaptability, enabling them to navigate complex workplace environments with greater confidence. These findings underscore the multifaceted benefits of internships, which extend beyond skill acquisition to include personal growth and professional maturity. The literature also indicates that internships play a crucial role in shaping students' professional identities by instilling values such as discipline, responsibility, and integrity—attributes that are indispensable for success in professional settings (Pianda et al., 2024).

Despite these benefits, challenges remain. One of the most pressing issues is the mismatch between the technologies used in schools and those employed in industries. Vocational schools often rely on outdated equipment due to budgetary constraints, while industries continuously adopt cutting-edge technologies to remain competitive. This discrepancy creates difficulties for students, who may struggle to understand or operate unfamiliar systems during their internships. Moreover, limited guidance from workplace mentors can exacerbate these challenges, leaving students to navigate complex tasks with minimal support. Such experiences, while daunting, also present opportunities for students to develop resilience and proactive learning strategies. The ability to adapt to new technologies and environments is increasingly recognised as a critical skill in the modern workforce, and internships provide a valuable context in which students can cultivate this adaptability (Hora et al., 2020).

The case of PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia provides a compelling example of how internships function in practice. As a company engaged in information technology and system integration, PT Xtend offers students exposure to advanced technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT), automation systems, and integrated security solutions. The internship programme at this company involves hands-on activities, including system installation, software configuration, and project implementation. These tasks require not only technical proficiency but also the ability to collaborate with colleagues, communicate effectively with clients, and adhere to organisational standards. For students, the experience is transformative, as it challenges them to apply their knowledge in unfamiliar contexts and adapt to the demands of a professional environment. The opportunity to participate in real projects provides students with a deeper understanding of industry practices and prepares them for the complexities of professional work (Ferns et al., 2019).

This paper seeks to document and analyse the internship experience at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia, focusing on three key objectives. First, it aims to describe the activities undertaken during the internship, providing a detailed account of the tasks and responsibilities assigned to students. Second, it seeks to identify the challenges encountered, including technological gaps, limited mentorship, and cultural adaptation. Third, it evaluates the strategies employed by students to overcome these challenges, highlighting the role of proactive learning, collaboration, and adaptability. By addressing these objectives, the paper contributes to the broader discourse on vocational education and underscores the importance of industry collaboration in preparing students for professional work (Putra et al., 2025).

The relevance of this study extends beyond the immediate context of PT Xtend. In an era characterised by rapid technological advancement and globalisation, vocational education must continuously adapt to ensure that graduates remain competitive. Internships serve as a critical mechanism for achieving this adaptation, as they provide students with first-hand experience of industry practices and expose them to emerging technologies. By analysing the internship experience at PT Xtend, this paper offers insights into how vocational programmes can be structured to maximise their impact on student development. It also highlights the need for stronger partnerships between schools and industries, ensuring that students receive adequate support and access to relevant technologies during their internships (Mesuwini & Mokoena, 2024).

Furthermore, the study contributes to the understanding of how internships shape students' professional identities. Beyond technical skills, internships instil values such as discipline, responsibility, and integrity. These attributes are essential for success in any professional field, as they influence how individuals interact with colleagues, clients, and supervisors. For vocational students, the development of such attributes is particularly important, as they often enter the workforce at a younger age and must quickly adapt to adult responsibilities. By documenting the experiences of students at PT Xtend, this paper sheds light on the processes through which professional identities are formed and the role of internships in facilitating this transformation (Smith et al., 2019).

The literature on vocational internships also emphasises the importance of reflection. Students are encouraged to critically evaluate their experiences, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Reflection not only enhances learning but also fosters self-awareness, enabling students to recognise their potential and set goals for future development. In the context of PT Xtend, reflection plays a vital role in helping students understand the complexities of system integration and the demands of client-oriented projects. By engaging in reflective practices, students can consolidate their learning and translate it into actionable insights for their future careers. Reflection also serves as a bridge between experience and theory, allowing students to connect practical tasks with broader academic concepts and frameworks (Mulyana et al., 2025).

In summary, the introduction establishes the rationale for studying internships in vocational education, situates the research within existing literature, and outlines the objectives of the paper. The internship programme at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia serves as a case study through which broader themes of skill development, adaptability, and professional identity are explored. By analysing this experience, the paper contributes to the ongoing efforts to strengthen vocational education in Indonesia and ensure that graduates are equipped to meet the challenges of the modern workforce. The introduction thus lays the foundation for a detailed examination of the internship activities, challenges, and strategies, providing a comprehensive understanding of the role of internships in vocational education (Gault et al., 2010)

METHODOLOGY

Internship Location and Duration

The internship was conducted at **PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia**, an organisation specialising in information technology, automation systems, and integrated security solutions. The company operates in a dynamic sector where technological innovation and system integration are central to its business model. This environment provided an ideal setting for vocational students to gain exposure to advanced technologies and professional practices.

The internship programme lasted for approximately **four and a half months**, beginning on **1 August 2025** and concluding on **20 December 2025**. During this period, students were scheduled to work five days a week, from **Monday to Friday**, with working hours structured into two sessions: **08:00–12:15 WIB** in the morning and **13:15–17:00 WIB** in the afternoon. This schedule mirrored the routine of full-time employees, thereby ensuring that students experienced the discipline and rhythm of professional work. The duration and structure of the internship were deliberately designed to provide sustained engagement with industry practices, allowing students to progress from initial observation to active participation in complex tasks.

Internship Activities

The internship programme encompassed a wide range of technical and operational tasks, which can be categorised into four main areas:

1. **Project Planning and Coordination**
   Students participated in project planning meetings where client requirements, technical specifications, and project timelines were discussed. These sessions introduced students to the organisational processes underpinning project management, including resource allocation, task delegation, and progress monitoring. By observing and contributing to these meetings, students gained insights into the importance of communication, documentation, and teamwork in achieving project objectives.
2. **System Installation and Configuration**
   A significant portion of the internship involved the installation of security and automation systems. Activities included:
   - **CCTV Surveillance Systems:** Students assisted in installing cameras, configuring angles, and ensuring coverage of critical areas.
   - **Access Control Devices:** Interns participated in setting up card readers and biometric systems to regulate entry and exit points.

- **Fire Detection Systems:** Students were involved in installing sensors and alarms to enhance workplace safety.
- **Time Attendance Solutions:** Interns assisted in configuring devices that recorded employee attendance, integrating them with organisational databases.

These tasks required precision in cabling, device placement, and system testing. Students were trained to follow **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** and comply with safety standards, reinforcing their technical discipline and professional responsibility.

3. **System Integration and Monitoring**
   Beyond installation, students engaged in configuring software platforms to integrate hardware with monitoring dashboards. They were introduced to **Internet of Things (IoT)** applications and automation controllers for smart offices and smart homes. This activity enhanced their understanding of how modern IT solutions are interconnected, how data flows across systems, and how automation can improve efficiency and security. Exposure to these advanced technologies broadened students' perspectives on the future of IT and the skills required to remain competitive in the industry.
4. **Maintenance and Troubleshooting**
   Students also participated in maintenance activities, including cable splicing, panel repairs, and system troubleshooting. These tasks required analytical thinking and problem-solving skills, as interns were often confronted with unexpected technical issues. By engaging in troubleshooting, students learned to diagnose problems systematically, propose solutions, and implement corrective measures.

Data Collection Methods

To document and analyse the internship experience, several methods were employed:

- **Observation:** Students observed daily operations, workflows, and interactions among employees. This method provided insights into organisational culture and professional practices.
- **Participation:** Direct involvement in technical tasks allowed students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and gain hands-on experience.
- **Documentation:** Notes, schedules, and reports were compiled to record activities and outcomes. These documents served as evidence of participation and facilitated reflection.
- **Interviews and Guidance:** Informal discussions with supervisors and mentors provided insights into workplace expectations, problem-solving strategies, and professional standards.

The combination of these methods ensured that the internship experience was comprehensively documented and analysed, capturing both technical activities and personal development.

Challenges and Adaptation Strategies

During the internship, students encountered several challenges:

- **Technological Gaps:** Differences between school equipment and industry-standard technologies required rapid adaptation.
- **Limited Mentorship:** Supervisors were often occupied with project deadlines, resulting in reduced guidance.
- **Cultural Adjustment:** Students needed time to adapt to workplace discipline, communication styles, and teamwork dynamics.

To overcome these challenges, students adopted proactive strategies:

- Seeking clarification and assistance during free time.
- Utilising self-learning resources to understand unfamiliar technologies.
- Demonstrating initiative and willingness to contribute to team tasks.

These strategies not only helped students overcome immediate challenges but also fostered resilience, independence, and adaptability—qualities essential for professional success.

Analytical Approach

The methodology emphasises a **qualitative descriptive approach**, focusing on documenting experiences, identifying challenges, and analysing strategies for adaptation. The data collected through observation, participation, and documentation were synthesised to provide a comprehensive understanding of the internship programme's impact on student development.

This approach is particularly suited to vocational education research, where the objective is not merely to measure outcomes quantitatively but to capture the richness of students' experiences. By employing qualitative methods, the study highlights the processes through which students acquire skills, adapt to challenges, and develop professional identities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and Discussion 1: Internship Activities and Achievements

The internship programme at **PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia** provided vocational students with a comprehensive opportunity to immerse themselves in the professional environment of an information technology organisation. The activities undertaken during the internship were diverse, ranging from project planning to system installation, integration, and maintenance. These activities were deliberately structured to simulate real project workflows, thereby enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts and to develop both technical and professional competencies.

Project Planning and Coordination

Students were actively involved in project planning sessions, where managers and engineers discussed technical requirements, client expectations, and project timelines. These sessions highlighted the importance of communication, documentation, and teamwork in ensuring project success. By observing and contributing to these meetings, students gained valuable insights into how professional organisations coordinate complex projects, manage resources, and align technical execution with client needs. This exposure to project management practices reinforced the significance of organisational discipline and strategic planning in professional contexts.

System Installation and Configuration

One of the core activities was the installation of security and automation systems. Students assisted in installing **CCTV surveillance systems**, configuring angles, and ensuring coverage of critical areas. They participated in setting up **access control devices**, including card readers and biometric systems, to regulate entry and exit points. Interns also contributed to the installation of **fire detection systems**, involving sensors and alarms to enhance workplace safety. Additionally, they assisted in configuring **time attendance solutions**, integrating devices with organisational databases to monitor employee attendance.

These tasks required precision in cabling, device placement, and system testing. Students were trained to follow **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** and comply with safety standards, reinforcing

their technical discipline and professional responsibility. The experience of handling real equipment allowed students to appreciate the differences between school-based laboratory practice and industry-standard technologies.

System Integration and Monitoring

Beyond installation, students engaged in configuring software platforms to integrate hardware with monitoring dashboards. They were introduced to **Internet of Things (IoT)** applications and automation controllers for smart offices and smart homes. This activity enhanced their understanding of how modern IT solutions are interconnected, how data flows across systems, and how automation can improve efficiency and security. Exposure to these advanced technologies broadened students' perspectives on the future of IT and the skills required to remain competitive in the industry.

Maintenance and Troubleshooting

Students also participated in maintenance activities, including **splicing fibre optic cables**, repairing panels, and troubleshooting system errors. These tasks required analytical thinking and problem-solving skills, as interns were often confronted with unexpected technical issues. By engaging in troubleshooting, students learned to diagnose problems systematically, propose solutions, and implement corrective measures. This experience reinforced the importance of resilience and adaptability in professional contexts.

Skill Development

The internship significantly improved students' technical competencies, including troubleshooting, software configuration, and hardware installation. At the same time, soft skills such as discipline, adaptability, teamwork, and communication were strengthened. Students reported increased confidence in applying classroom knowledge to real-world contexts and demonstrated readiness to take on professional responsibilities. The combination of technical and soft skill development illustrates the holistic impact of the internship programme, preparing students not only as technicians but also as professionals capable of contributing meaningfully to organisational goals.

In summary, the activities undertaken during the internship provided students with valuable opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, develop technical expertise, and cultivate professional attributes essential for workplace success.

Results and Discussion 2: Challenges and Adaptation Strategies

While the internship offered numerous benefits, students also encountered several challenges that tested their resilience and adaptability. These challenges reflect the realities of transitioning from a school-based environment to a professional workplace and highlight the areas where vocational education must continue to evolve.

Technological Gaps

The technologies used at PT Xtend, such as IoT-based automation and advanced security systems, were significantly more sophisticated than those available in school laboratories. Students initially struggled to understand these systems due to limited prior exposure. The gap between school facilities and industry standards created a steep learning curve, requiring students to quickly adapt to unfamiliar tools and processes. However, through hands-on practice, observation, and collaboration with colleagues, students gradually acquired new competencies and developed confidence in operating advanced technologies.

Limited Mentorship

Supervisors and mentors were often occupied with project deadlines, leaving limited time for direct guidance. This situation required students to be proactive in seeking help, clarifications, and feedback during available opportunities. While the lack of structured mentorship posed difficulties, it also encouraged students to develop independence and initiative. By learning to navigate tasks with minimal supervision, students cultivated resilience and problem-solving skills that are highly valued in professional contexts.

Cultural Adjustment

Adapting to workplace discipline, communication styles, and teamwork dynamics was another challenge. Students needed time to adjust to punctuality, responsibility, and professional etiquette expected in the company. The transition from a school environment, where expectations are often more flexible, to a professional workplace demanded significant behavioural changes. Over time, students learned to internalise workplace norms, demonstrating improved discipline, accountability, and collaboration.

Adaptation Strategies

To overcome these challenges, students employed several strategies:

- **Proactive Learning:** Interns utilised self-study resources, observed colleagues, and asked questions during free time to understand unfamiliar technologies. This approach fostered independence and self-directed learning.
- **Collaboration:** By building relationships with colleagues, students gained informal mentorship and practical insights that improved their performance. Peer support played a crucial role in helping students adapt to complex tasks.
- **Flexibility and Initiative:** Interns demonstrated willingness to contribute to tasks beyond their initial scope, showing adaptability and eagerness to learn. This proactive attitude not only enhanced their learning but also earned them recognition from supervisors.

Discussion (Theoretical Interpretation)

These findings align with previous research emphasising the importance of internships in fostering adaptability and resilience. The proactive strategies adopted by students highlight the value of self-directed learning in modern vocational education. Moreover, the challenges underscore the need for stronger collaboration between schools and industries. Schools must update curricula and facilities to reflect industry standards, while companies should provide structured mentorship to maximise the benefits of internships.

The case of PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia illustrates that internships are not merely opportunities for skill acquisition but also transformative experiences that shape students' professional identities. By confronting challenges and developing strategies to overcome them, students emerge from internships with enhanced technical expertise, improved adaptability, and a stronger sense of professional responsibility.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research highlighting the role of internships in strengthening vocational students' employability and readiness for work. Prior studies indicate that internship experiences significantly enhance not only technical competencies but also soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and adaptability, which are critical for navigating dynamic workplace environments (Musa et al., 2025). These findings reinforce the notion that internships function as an essential bridge between vocational education and industry demands.

In addition, the challenges related to technological gaps observed in this study echo concerns raised in earlier research. Vocational institutions often face limitations in updating equipment and facilities,

resulting in discrepancies between school-based learning environments and industry practices. Similar findings were reported by Sutiman et al. (2022), who emphasised that successful implementation of work-based learning requires closer alignment between educational institutions and industry partners, particularly in terms of technology and supervision.

The issue of limited mentorship during internships, as identified in this study, has also been documented in the literature. Irwin et al. (2019) noted that variations in the duration, type, and location of work experience can influence the quality of guidance received by students, which in turn affects their learning outcomes. Despite limited supervision, the present study demonstrates that students can still benefit substantially from internships by adopting proactive learning strategies and seeking informal support from colleagues.

Furthermore, the development of adaptability and self-directed learning observed among students aligns with research focusing on Generation Z learners in vocational education. Naufalin et al. (2024) found that internship programmes, when combined with digital literacy, significantly improve work readiness and adaptability among diploma students. This supports the findings of the current study, where students demonstrated increased confidence and independence in dealing with unfamiliar technologies and workplace expectations.

From a broader perspective, the results also support arguments that work-based learning plays a critical role in developing employability skills within Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Singh Thapa (2024) emphasised that work-based learning experiences contribute to the formation of professional attitudes, resilience, and lifelong learning skills. The internship at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia reflects this process, as students not only acquired technical expertise but also internalised professional values and work ethics.

Overall, the discussion confirms that internships are transformative learning experiences that foster technical competence, adaptability, and professional identity. By situating the findings within existing literature, this study strengthens the argument that well-structured internship programmes, supported by collaboration between schools and industries, are vital for enhancing the quality and relevance of vocational education.

Figure 1 CCTV Installation

Figure 1 Pulling Analog Cables and FO Cables

Figure 3 Splicing Cable of FO

Figure 4 Cable Repair on Panel

CONCLUSION

The internship programme conducted at **PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia** between August and December 2025 has provided vocational students with a transformative experience that bridges the gap between classroom learning and industry practice. The findings of this study demonstrate that internships serve as more than a mere extension of vocational education; they function as critical mechanisms for preparing students to meet the demands of the modern workforce. By engaging directly with professional environments, students acquire technical competencies, cultivate soft skills, and develop professional identities that are essential for long-term success.

One of the most significant outcomes of the internship was the enhancement of **technical skills**. Students were exposed to advanced technologies such as CCTV surveillance systems, access control devices, fire detection alarms, time attendance solutions, and Internet of Things (IoT)-based automation controllers. These experiences allowed them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts, reinforcing their understanding of system installation, configuration, integration, and troubleshooting. The opportunity to handle industry-standard equipment highlighted the differences between school laboratories and professional workplaces, thereby motivating students to adapt quickly and expand their technical expertise. This exposure is invaluable, as it equips students with the competencies required to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Equally important was the development of **soft skills**. Internships provided students with opportunities to internalise workplace culture, practise discipline, and enhance communication and teamwork. The necessity of adhering to organisational standards, meeting deadlines, and collaborating with colleagues fostered a sense of responsibility and accountability. These attributes are indispensable in professional contexts, as they influence how individuals interact with supervisors, clients, and peers. The cultivation of such skills ensures that students are not only technically proficient but also capable of functioning effectively within complex organisational structures.

The internship also contributed to the formation of **professional identities**. By confronting challenges such as technological gaps, limited mentorship, and cultural adjustment, students learned to navigate uncertainty and develop resilience. The strategies they employed—proactive learning, collaboration, and flexibility—demonstrated their capacity to adapt to new environments and to take initiative in overcoming obstacles. These experiences instilled values such as perseverance, independence, and integrity, which are fundamental to professional maturity. The process of identity formation is particularly significant for vocational students, who often enter the workforce at a younger age and must quickly assume adult responsibilities. Internships thus serve as a vital context in which students transition from learners to professionals.

The challenges encountered during the internship underscore the need for **continuous collaboration between schools and industries**. The technological gap between vocational schools and professional workplaces highlights the importance of updating curricula and investing in modern equipment. Without such updates, students risk being unprepared for the realities of industry, thereby limiting their employability. Similarly, the issue of limited mentorship suggests that companies must allocate sufficient resources to support interns, ensuring that they receive adequate guidance and feedback. Structured mentorship programmes can maximise the benefits of internships by providing students with clear learning objectives and opportunities for reflection. Collaboration between schools and industries is therefore essential to ensure that internships fulfil their potential as transformative educational experiences.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the broader discourse on vocational education by emphasising the multifaceted impact of internships. The findings align with existing literature, which highlights the role of internships in fostering adaptability, resilience, and employability skills. By documenting the experiences of students at PT Xtend, this paper provides empirical evidence of how internships function in practice and how they contribute to student development. The study also underscores the importance of reflection, as students are encouraged to critically evaluate their experiences, identify strengths and weaknesses, and set goals for future growth. Reflection enhances learning by enabling students to connect practical tasks with broader academic concepts, thereby consolidating their knowledge and preparing them for lifelong learning.

From a practical perspective, the study offers insights into how vocational programmes can be structured to maximise their impact. The case of PT Xtend demonstrates that internships are most effective when they provide sustained engagement with industry practices, expose students to advanced technologies, and challenge them to adapt to professional environments. Schools must therefore design internship programmes that are long enough to allow students to progress from observation to active participation, and companies must provide opportunities for interns to engage in meaningful tasks. By ensuring that internships are well-structured and adequately supported, stakeholders can enhance the employability of vocational graduates and contribute to the development of a skilled workforce.

In conclusion, the internship programme at PT Xtend Integrasi Indonesia significantly enhanced students' readiness for professional work. It strengthened their technical expertise, cultivated soft skills, and fostered professional identities. The challenges encountered during the internship were not merely obstacles but opportunities for growth, as students learned to adapt, collaborate, and persevere. The findings of this study highlight the transformative potential of internships and underscore their importance in vocational education. By bridging the gap between school and industry, internships prepare students to meet the challenges of the modern workforce and to contribute meaningfully to organisational goals.

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