

2024 CAREER GUIDE

for Administrative & Customer Support Professionals





2024 Career Guide

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE & CUSTOMER SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

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2024 Outlook

Heading into 2023, many were bracing for an almost certain recession. However, despite these concerns, the labor market simply maintained a slow, but steady pace of growth. This resilience has led to a more cautiously optimistic outlook: hope for a possible “soft landing” of reduced inflation without a recession and massive unemployment.

As of the publication of this guide, job growth is consistent, unemployment remains low, labor force participation rates are holding steady (or slightly increasing), and the rate of workers quitting is returning to pre-pandemic levels. We’re still keeping an eye on the possibility of a recession—after all, the full impact of Federal Reserve interest rate changes can take 6 to 12 months to ripple through the economy.

However, one thing remains certain: competition in today’s job market is fierce as ever, so showcasing your value and staying tuned in to market trends is paramount.

Our 2024 Guide for Administrative & Customer Support Professionals is designed to help you:

- ▶ Gain insights into Administrative & Customer Support roles, ensuring you’re well-informed and prepared.
- ▶ Boost your confidence in career discussions, knowing the unique value you bring to the negotiating table.
- ▶ Equip you with the knowledge and tools to make informed career decisions and develop strategies for long-term growth.



Trends to Watch

Temporary employment continues to trend down, declining by 242,000 since March 2022. In the past, dips in temp employment have been leading indicators of recessions. That being said, temp employment is still higher than (or on par with) pre-pandemic levels.

In 2023, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates to address inflation. This means that while there could be an initial rise in wages in 2024, the momentum of this wage growth will likely taper off as the year progresses.

The labor force participation rate hasn't fully bounced back to its pre-pandemic levels, possibly because many individuals aged 55 and older chose early retirement during the pandemic. However, it's interesting to note that the participation rates for those aged 25 to 54 have seen a significant uptick.

2024 Top In-Demand Jobs in Administration & Customer Service

Administrative Assistant

Day-to-Day: Handling office tasks, such as filing, generating reports, setting up meetings, managing calendars, and reordering supplies.

Skill Highlight: Multitasking, organizational skills, proficiency with office software.

Career Trajectory: Can lead to Senior Administrative Assistant, Executive Assistant, or Office Manager roles.

Average Salary Range: \$30,000 - \$45,000

Receptionist

Day-to-Day: Greeting visitors, answering phones, managing appointment bookings, and providing basic customer service.

Skill Highlight: Strong verbal communication, multitasking, and a friendly demeanor.

Career Trajectory: Can progress to Front Desk Manager or Administrative Assistant roles.

Average Salary Range: \$25,000 - \$40,000

Executive Assistant

Day-to-Day: Supporting high-level executives with tasks like calendar management, travel arrangements, and correspondence; often involved in confidential company matters.

Skill Highlight: Discretion, advanced organizational skills, and the ability to work under pressure.

Career Trajectory: Can lead to Senior Executive Assistant or even Chief of Staff roles in some organizations.

Average Salary Range: \$45,000 - \$70,000

Data Entry Clerk

Day-to-Day: Inputting data into digital systems, checking data for accuracy, and often using software to manage large data sets.

Skill Highlight: Attention to detail, speed, and proficiency with specific data management tools.

Career Trajectory: Can move into Data Analyst or Database Manager roles with additional training.

Average Salary Range: \$25,000 - \$40,000

Office Manager

Day-to-Day: Overseeing daily operations of the office, managing administrative staff, budgeting and office expenses, handling HR-related functions like recruiting and training, and coordinating with department heads.

Skill Highlight: Leadership, organizational skills, and proficiency with office software.

Career Trajectory: Can lead to roles such as Director of Operations or Facility Manager.

Average Salary Range: \$40,000 - \$65,000

Call Center Representative

Day-to-Day: Handle inbound and outbound calls of a lesser complexity that are primarily routine or basic in nature, evaluate problems and complaints of the callers and provide proper solutions to them, upsell products and services, make relevant notes from customer interactions.

Skill Highlight: Communication skills, customer service skills, and attention to detail.

Career Trajectory: Can lead to roles such as Call Center Manager or Customer Success Manager.

Average Salary Range: \$35,000 - \$50,000



▶ Administrative & Customer Support Careers

The roles of Administrative & Customer Support Professionals are changing rapidly thanks to greater remote and hybrid work options, as well as increasing automation of routine tasks, however those who embrace these and adapt to these changes are in high demand.

To help you understand the roles in high demand and the expectations for those roles, take a look at the following job descriptions and salary data for key Administrative & Customer Support positions.



Administrative Assistant

An Administrative Assistant is responsible for supporting an administrative professional to help them stay organized and complete tasks that allow them to focus on more advanced responsibilities.

The core duties and responsibilities of an Administrative Assistant revolve around supporting others. Their job duties can vary widely, not just from job to job, but from day to day at the same job. This role generally reports to a supervisor or manager.

Education Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 0-2 years of experience in the field or in a related area

Essential Skills

- Attention to detail
- Excellent communication skills
- Organizational skills
- Promptness

Roles & Responsibilities

- Aid management with administrative tasks such as tracking and compiling information of interest
- May handle confidential information
- Create and maintain filing systems, both electronic and physical
- Manage accounts and perform bookkeeping

Day-to-Day Duties

- Prepare various reports detailing the administrative information handled by the position
- Review and answer correspondence
- Coordinate travel for department or individuals
- Answer phones and greet visitors
- Schedule appointments and maintain calendars
- Prepare communications, such as memos, emails, invoices, reports and other correspondence

Receptionist

Receptionists are a fundamental part of nearly every office, as they perform many vital duties to ensure that the office runs smoothly and its professionals are supported. They typically sit in the main lobby area of an office and are the first person who guests see upon visiting the office space. Receptionists are responsible for several different tasks depending on the organization in which they work and they generally report to a supervisor or manager.

The role of a Receptionist varies, and depends on where they work. Someone who works for a company that sets several in-office appointments may spend much of their time scheduling appointments with clients, whereas Receptionists who work for companies that do not have many in-office appointments may spend their time doing other administrative tasks. Depending on their career path, a Receptionist can rise to become an Administrative Assistant, Administrative Supervisor, Office Manager and Executive Assistant.

Education Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 0-2 years of experience in the field or in a related area

Essential Skills

- Attention to detail
- Excellent communication skills
- Organizational skills
- Positive demeanor

Roles & Responsibilities

- Welcome office guests and direct them to the person or office they are visiting
- Answer phones and make phone calls on behalf of office employees
- Maintain office supplies and place orders when inventory is low
- Schedule appointments and meetings for employees and coordinate with clients regarding the meetings
- Keep office records up to date
- Arrange travel and accommodations for employees

Day-to-Day Duties

- Forward phone calls to appropriate recipients
- Send and reply to office emails
- Guide caller to destination
- Record name, time of call, nature of business and person called upon
- Arrange appointments
- Occasionally handle day-to-day office and supply management
- Send and receive mail and other correspondence
- Perform various other clerical tasks including faxing, transcribing and filing



Data Entry Clerk

A large portion of Data Entry centers on collecting data, maintaining records, and entering and updating information within company databases. Data Entry Clerks have a keen eye for accuracy, top-level typing skills, and an ability to thrive under deadlines.

Data Entry Clerks work in a wide range of industries including technology, customer service, human resources, government, and hospitality. This is often an entry level job that's supervised by a manager or senior administrator. In a smaller company, the duties of a Data Entry Clerk will spill into general receptionist duties, which include answering phones. In a larger company, they may have a very defined workflow with strict deadlines.

Education Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 0-2 years related experience
- Some roles may require the completion of a certificate program
- Some roles may require an associate's or bachelor's degree

Essential Skills

- Attention to detail
- Excellent typing and computer skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office and Excel
- Customer service skills
- The ability to use email in a professional setting

Roles & Responsibilities

- Enter text and figures into company spreadsheets and/or databases
- Handle confidential information and data
- Maintain database by entering new and updated customer and account information
- Establish entry priorities

Day-to-Day Duties

- Update, manage, and organize internal files and documents like handbooks, operations manuals, and reports
- Maintain customer accounts
- Scan and organize documents for filing purposes
- Process and update sales invoices
- Identify and correct data entry errors
- Perform general office duties like filing documents, answering phones, and ordering supplies

Office Manager

An Office Manager plays a pivotal role in ensuring an organization's operations run smoothly by overseeing a variety of administrative tasks. Their responsibilities often include managing office supplies, coordinating administrative staff, and handling day-to-day operations. Office Managers are essential in creating and maintaining an efficient work environment, as they organize schedules, meetings, and appointments, contributing to the overall productivity of the team. Additionally, they may be involved in budget management, facility maintenance, and liaising with vendors to ensure the office's operational needs are met.

Office Managers often serve as a point of contact between employees and upper management, addressing queries, disseminating information, and fostering effective communication within the workplace. Their versatile skill set combines elements of leadership, organization, and interpersonal communication, making them instrumental to the success of the organization.

Education Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- At least 2 years of experience in the field or in a related area
- Some roles may require an associate's or bachelor's degree

Essential Skills

- Strong organizational skills
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills
- The ability to identify problems and implement effective solutions
- Adaptable to change
- Proficiency in office management software

Roles & Responsibilities

- Oversee daily operations of the office
- Manage administrative staff, budgeting and office expenses
- Organize schedules, meetings and appointments
- Handle HR-related functions like recruiting and training and coordinating with department heads

Day-to-Day Duties

- Oversee the general maintenance, cleanliness, and security of the office space
- Schedule appointments, meetings, conferences, and sometimes travel
- Generate and maintain reports related to office operations and expenses
- Manage office supplies, equipment and inventory
- Provide administrative support to various departments and teams as needed



Project Manager

Project Managers are the glue that helps keep projects — and people — together. They are responsible for planning, organizing, managing and executing projects from beginning to end. The project scope can vary from single pieces of collateral to multifaceted, multichannel marketing campaigns.

These professionals commonly work under the direction of Brand Managers or Creative Directors from whom they collect project information — deadlines, objectives, budgets, etc. They also assign individuals or entire teams to tasks within the project, while creating and managing detailed schedules throughout the duration of the project. In some instances, Project Managers are responsible for budget management, as they are given a specific amount of money to work with and must complete the project in accordance with the stated budget.

Education Requirements

- Some businesses require formal education, while others prefer those with hands-on experience within their industry

Essential Skills

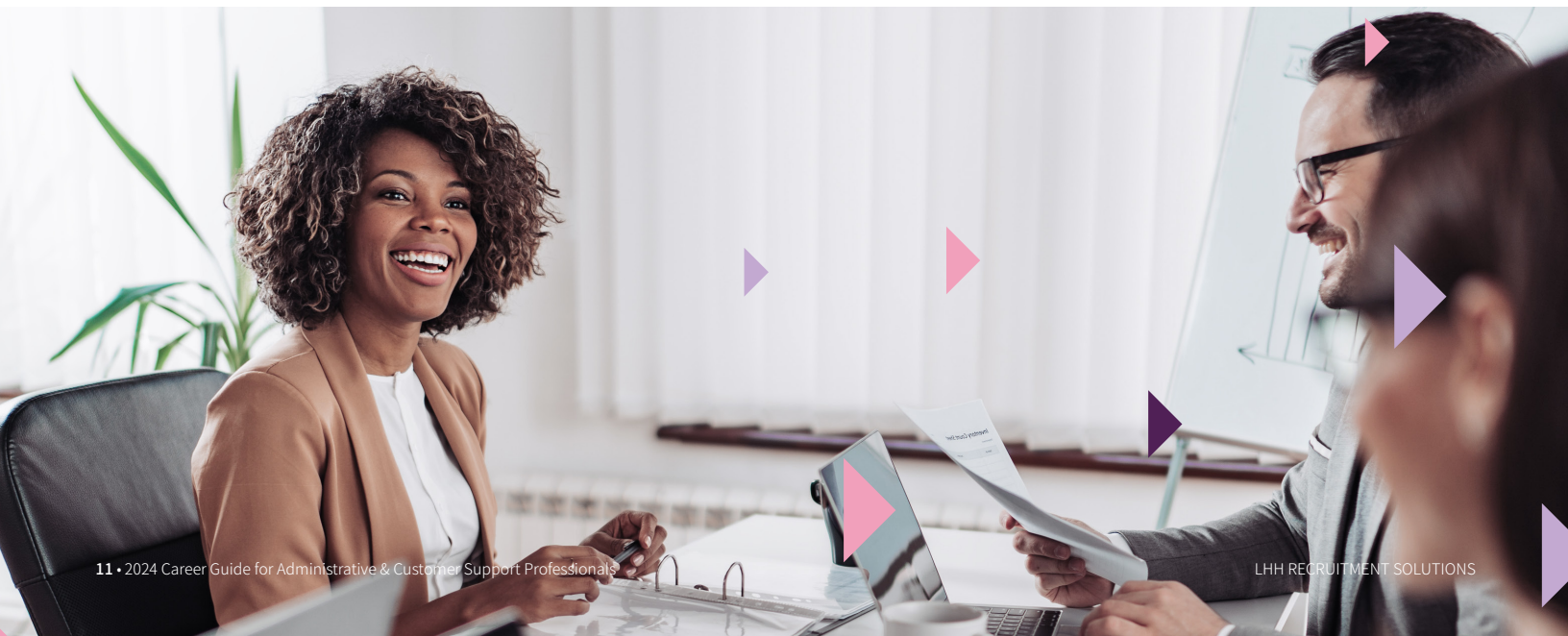
- Expert organizational skills
- Strong ability to multitask
- Outstanding communication skills
- Knowledge of project management processes, workflow and terminology
- Ability to function well in a fast paced (sometimes chaotic) environment under tight deadlines

Roles & Responsibilities

- Create long- and short-term plans, including setting targets for milestones and adhering to deadlines
- Delegate tasks on the project to employees best positioned to complete them
- Make effective decisions when presented with multiple options for how to progress with the project
- Serve as a point of contact for teams when multiple units are assigned to the same project to ensure team actions remain in synergy
- Communicating with executives or the board to keep the project aligned with their goals
- Perform quality control on the project throughout development to maintain the standards expected
- Adjust schedules and targets on the project as needs or financing for the project change

Day-to-Day Duties

- Gather requirements, deliverables, and timeframes from stakeholders
- Agree on priorities with clients
- Plan resources
- Create project plans
- Communicate key milestones
- Communicate the project plan internally and with the client
- Produce reports for management (e.g., performance metrics)
- Communicate frequently with sponsors and stakeholders
- Know the team's strengths and weaknesses, together and individually
- Plan around the team's skills to ensure end success
- Adhere to the critical path and have a plan to mitigate issues that invariably arise





Call Center Representative

A Call Center Representative handles inbound and outbound calls with the goal of increasing business, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. They are the friendly folks answering and placing most of the calls.

Representatives respond to incoming calls from the customers to take their orders, answer questions and inquiries, troubleshoot problems, provide information and handle complaints regarding the organization's products or services. Additionally, they are responsible for making outbound calls to set appointments and gather survey data. Depending on the type of call center (inbound or outbound), they may need to be an expert salesperson or a master problem-solver.

Education Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 0-2 years of experience in the field or in a related area

Essential Skills

- Superior communications skills
- Customer service skills
- Computer knowledge
- Detail oriented

Roles & Responsibilities

- Fundamental knowledge of or willingness to learn the company's customer information systems and/or order system
- Understand the company, its services and products
- Respond to the needs of customers and provide personalized service
- Manage and update customer databases

Day-to-Day Duties

- Handle inbound and outbound calls of a lesser complexity that are primarily routine or basic in nature
- Follow basic procedures and scripts
- Evaluate problems and complaints of the callers and provide proper solutions to them
- Upsell products and services
- Make relevant notes from customer interactions

Call Center Manager

Call Center Managers are responsible for staff in a call center, who they train, hire, monitor, and motivate. Their job is to make sure that the teams they oversee meet their company's goals and provide sufficient customer support, but there's a lot that goes into this process.

Overall, the Call Center Manager job description is a blend of analytics, team management, and human resource duties. They develop objectives for a call center's day-to-day operations and analyze call center statistics (like sales rates and customer service metrics) to ensure that these objectives are met. The main goal is productivity and efficiency, and managers must work with call center representatives, providing extra support and training, or developing new processes.

As part of successful Call Center Management, the person in this role strives to look at the big picture and spot potential improvements as they come. Since they're in charge of a company's efficiency, they have to be able to look intuitively at their team to catch potential problems before they arise.

Education Requirements

- Bachelor's degree
- 6 years of related experience
- Familiarity with telemarketing software

Essential Skills

- Problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
- Communication skills
- Analytical abilities
- Organizational and multitasking skills
- Strong leadership skills

Roles & Responsibilities

- Work with other management team members to develop call center objectives, keeping profitability and efficiency in mind
- Lead team meetings and coach and motivate team members
- Hire, onboard and train call center personnel
- Analyze call center data and prepare reports for upper management.
- Evaluate staff effectiveness and performance annually or on an as-needed basis

Day-to-Day Duties

- Hire, train, and manage a team of call center representatives
- Work with call center representatives to solve problems like difficult calls from angry customers
- Collect and analyze call center statistics and adjust processes to meet or exceed goals
- Create weekly reports

Customer Service Manager

A Customer Service Manager helps a company retain profitable customers by ensuring a five-star experience with the brand. To do so, the manager usually oversees a staff of customer service representatives and hires and trains new staff members. In addition to a supervisory role, the manager also audits the customer experience and suggests improvements to elevate customer satisfaction.

This role reports to a customer service director or an operational manager who looks at the manager's key performance indicators (KPIs) to grade success. Key performance indicators for customer service managers may include average handling time, customer satisfaction scores, average response times, and call resolution rates.

Education Requirements

- 10 years of customer service experience
- 4-5 years of supervisory experience
- Bachelor's degree in business administration

Essential Skills

- Administrative skills
- The ability to teach and train others
- Excellent verbal and communication skills
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Outlook, and customer service software

Roles & Responsibilities

- Create or improve customer service procedures and practices
- Set customer satisfaction goals and provide instruction on how to meet them
- Manage the department budget
- Curate reports and present them to supervisors on a regular basis
- Implement best practices in customer service management
- Research and implement new ways to improve the customer experience

Day-to-Day Duties

- Oversee operational duties of the customer service team
- Maintain records or tickets of all interactions with customers
- Hire and train new employees
- Maintain customer satisfaction by providing problem-solving resources
- Accomplish customer service human resource objectives by recruiting, selecting, training, and coaching employees

Top Certifications for Administrative & Customer Support Professionals

There are several administrative & customer support professional certifications worth pursuing, depending on your career goals and industry. Here are some of the most recognized and valued certifications in this field:

Certified Administrative Professional (CAP)

The CAP certification, offered by the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) is designed to validate the skills and knowledge of administrative and office support professionals. It covers areas such as office systems and technology, management, communication, and organizational behavior.

Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS)

While not specific to administrative & customer support professionals, MOS certifications validate proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, which are crucial for many administrative tasks.

Professional Administrative Certificate of Excellence (PACE)

Issued by the American Society of Administrative Professionals (ASAP), PACE certifications are designed for administrative professionals looking to enhance their skills in communication, organization, technology and management.

Certified Executive Administrative Professional (CEAP)

Provided by the Star Achievement Series, CEAP certification recognizes individuals who have attained a high level of proficiency and expertise in supporting executive leadership and focuses on advanced administrative skills.

Certified Customer Service Professional (CCSP)

The CCSP certification, offered by the Professional Association for Customer Engagement (PACE), recognizes individuals who have demonstrated proficiency in customer service practices, policies, and procedures. To qualify, you must have at least two years' professional experience in the field and pass an exam that is based on a study guide you can review at your own pace.

Certified Support Professional (CSP)

This certification, offered by the Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA), is designed for professionals who provide technical support to customers. It covers topics such as problem-solving, customer communication, and product knowledge.

Help Desk Institute (HDI) Support Center Analyst

This certification is designed for professionals who work in a help desk or support center environment. It covers topics such as customer service skills, incident management, and problem-solving. Obtaining this certification requires passing an exam within 12 weeks that is based on a 9-unit course.

Customer Experience Professional (CCXP)

The CCXP certification, offered by the Customer Experience Professionals Association (CXPA), recognizes professionals who have demonstrated proficiency in creating and managing customer experiences across all touchpoints. Obtaining this certification requires you to pursue 20 hours of professional development through CX-related conferences, trainings, or contributions to the CXPA.





Benefits of Working with a Recruiter

As an Administrative & Customer Support professional with the right mix of skills and experience, you're a hot commodity. The skills gap in the industry is fueling competition among employers, which means greater opportunities for candidates. Generous bonuses and greater professional development opportunities are more commonplace and working with a recruiter is more valuable than ever.

Employers are outsourcing hiring

Reviewing resumes and screening candidates is time-consuming, and the cost of making a bad hire can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. That's why more employers are trusting third-party recruiters to take care of their hiring. The initial interviewing and screening allow hiring managers to focus on their other priorities. Hiring managers are then exposed to only the most qualified candidates.

This means many of the best positions aren't found on a job board or a company's careers page. These positions are often only revealed when working with a recruiter. Specifically, by working with a recruiter who specializes in Administrative & Customer Support positions. Unless you're working with a well-connected recruiter, you might miss out on your dream job.

Recruiters know what employers want

Yes, there are career opportunities made possible by the skills gap, but employers still spend time, attention, and resources to avoid costly hiring mistakes. While presenting yourself as the ideal candidate, you may unknowingly sabotage yourself.

A recruiter can work with you to determine in which areas you excel. Recruiters also know how to clean up any areas that need a little polishing. They can get you feedback from interviews that you may otherwise not be privy to. This way, you'll know what the employer thinks you did well or where you fell short. This insight can be invaluable as it can help you avoid making the same mistakes in the next interview or how to adjust before you accept an offer.



Using a recruiter is a better use of your time

Job searching alone is time-consuming, particularly if you're currently working. On your own, you may be able to apply and talk to three companies a week. Working with a recruiter, you could reach ten times as many employers in the same amount of time. Since that's their full-time job, recruiters work 40+ hours a week to get candidates hired. It will save you time and as a candidate, it costs nothing. That's a pretty good return on investment.

Negotiate a higher salary, as well as better benefits and perks

While we are all for initiatives that reward loyalty, it must be said that switching jobs typically means a big boost in pay. If you've been with your current employer for a while, you've probably been receiving cost of living adjustments and promotions amounting to three to ten percent per year. But when you switch jobs, you could be looking at up to a 15 percent increase or more. If you're not up to date on current salary ranges and bonuses, you could end up leaving money on the table. A recruiter, on the other hand, is keenly aware of the going rate for your skill set and experience and can help negotiate to make sure you're paid what you are worth.

With the demand for talent outpacing supply, especially for experienced Administrative & Customer Support talent, candidates have a real opportunity to benefit from higher salaries and other perks. Working with an experienced, connected recruiter can help you take advantage of this job market by connecting you to excellent opportunities and competitive pay in far less time than it would take to conduct a job search on your own.

LHH is plugged in to the world of Administration & Customer Support and has offices all over the country, with recruiters specializing in your market. Visit [LHH.com](https://www.lhh.com) to get connected with a recruiter today!

At LHH, we exist to help people, teams and organizations find and prepare for what's next. Our end-to-end HR solutions future-proof organizations and careers all over the world. Through Career Transition & Mobility, Leadership Development and Recruitment Solutions, we enable transformation, and our job is never done because there's always another tomorrow to prepare for.

We make a difference to everyone we work with, and we do it with local expertise, backed by global infrastructure and industry-leading technology. LHH's over 8,000 colleagues and coaches span over 60 countries worldwide, working with more than 15,000 organizations, a majority of Fortune Global 500, and nearly 500,000 candidates each year. Together we address needs across the entire talent journey, helping organizations build their capabilities and individuals build brighter futures. There is a world of opportunity out there. Let's get to work.

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