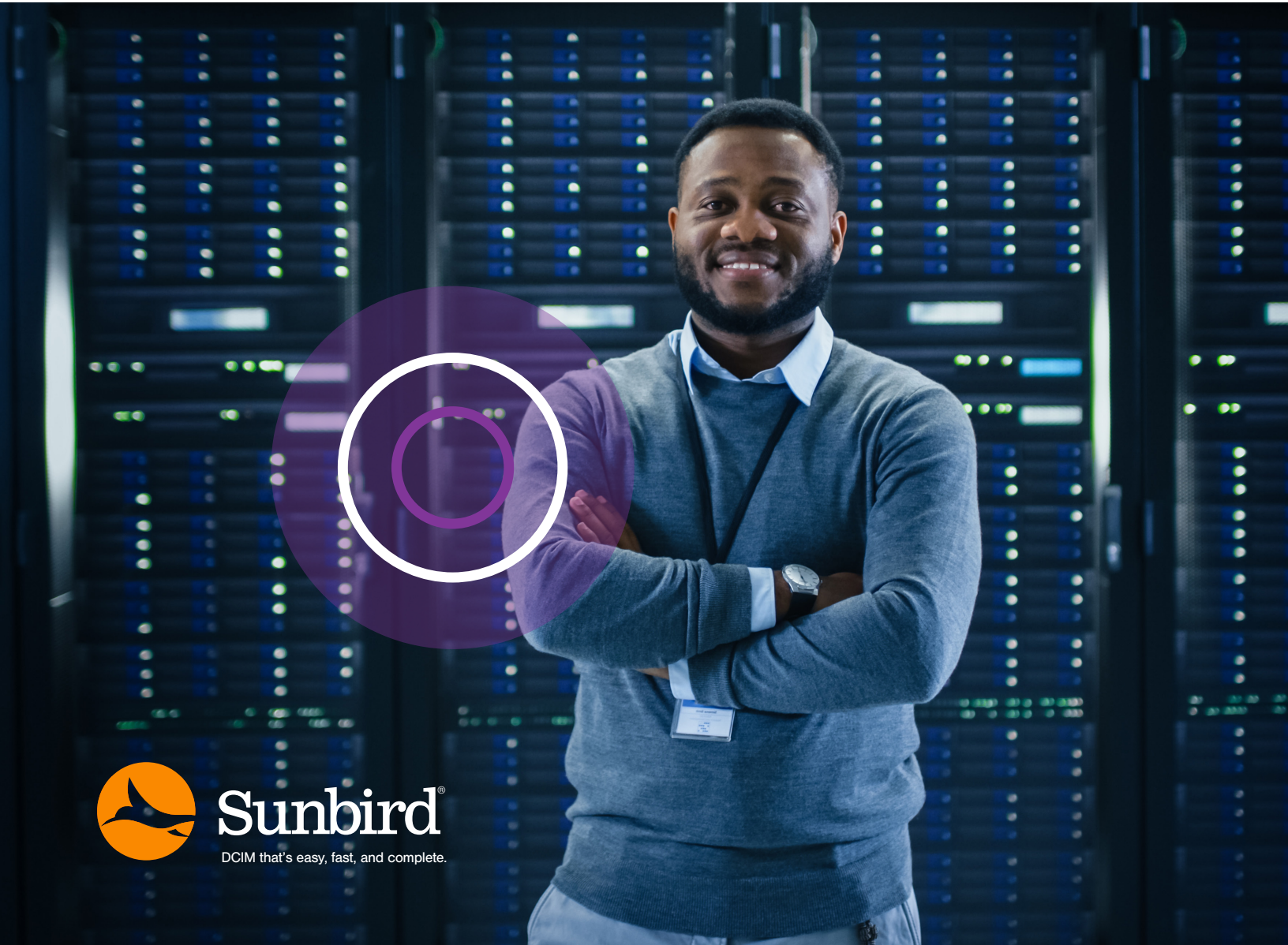EBOOK

Top 10 DCIM Software Customer Success Stories

Sunbird®
DCIM that's easy, fast, and complete.

Introduction

Managing a data center is not easy.

Today's data center professionals must maintain uptime, improve sustainability, increase the efficiency of capacity utilization, and boost the productivity of people in more complex and more distributed environments than ever before.

Legacy management tools like Excel, Visio, and homegrown systems no longer get the job done for the modern data center. They are hard to use, difficult to maintain, time-consuming, and error-prone.

First-generation Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM) software vendors marketed their products as a panacea to all data center problems, but their overhyped products did not deliver as promised. Because of the failures of these legacy DCIM products, some data center professionals still hold the belief that DCIM software is just smoke and mirrors.

However, the emergence of second-generation DCIM has changed everything, fulfilling the promises left unkept by first-generation counterparts. Innovative data center professionals are realizing the enormous potential of modern DCIM software and report high satisfaction ratings and fast ROI.

Rave reviews are now common, such as:

> "DCIM really is for us a source of truth for the tens of thousands of bare metal assets that we have in our global data centers."
>
> Tim Putney, Workday

> "I'm excited to get to work every day because I know I'm going to be working with dcTrack!"
>
> Dennis Hayslip, Lockheed Martin

> "A game changer for data center management."
>
> David O'Hara, MacStadium

In this eBook, we will highlight ten real-world enterprise customer stories of how modern data center managers are realizing enormous benefits and dramatic ROI with 2nd Gen DCIM software. You will learn how they gauge success and discover ways to optimize your data center you may have never dreamed of.

Top 10 DCIM Software Success Stories

Comcast unlocked 40% more capacity out of their facilities and power resources.

#1

Comcast is one of the largest internet service providers and cable companies in the US with 1,600 data center locations.

At their colocation sites, Comcast pays for power and space upfront. They realized opportunities to significantly reduce operating expenses by finding space and power resources that were not being leveraged to their full potential.

To achieve this, they use their DCIM tool to monitor and measure power usage at the device level in real-time. They can understand power utilization trends and capacity levels across their facilities' entire power paths including building meters, UPSs, floor PDUs, RPPs, busways, and rack PDUs.

Then, Comcast uses the Auto Power Budget feature of their DCIM to automatically calculate an accurate power budget number for each make and model instance of their servers based on the actual measured loads of those servers in their environments running their applications. This enables Comcast to find stranded power capacity and know the exact locations where assets can best take advantage of the available power to get the most out of their existing resources.

> "From an ROI perspective, it's massive for us. We're getting 40% more usage out of our facilities and power sources," said Michael Piers, Senior Manager DCIM/Tools, Comcast.
>
> "It's a big win to be able to see where we have space, as well as where we have more power that can be used by devices," said Piers. "[We know] exactly where assets should be connected, how they should be connected, what downstream devices are impacted, and how much power those pieces and parts will use."
>
> In addition to their cost savings due to automating device power budgeting, Comcast reports "huge time savings with regards to deployment and managing our data center."

Read the complete Comcast case study.

Workday automated provisioning, orchestration, and more.

#2

Workday is a leading provider of enterprise cloud applications for finance, HR, and planning designed for the world's largest companies, educational institutions, and government agencies.

Workday uses the bidirectional RESTful web service API of their DCIM tool to automate just about everything in their data center operations. Here's one example in which they automated provisioning and orchestration.

Before they deployed DCIM, Workday had a homegrown tool that they had begun integrating with other systems. Right away, they learned that unless they were able to do this in near real-time, they were going to have data integrity issues where their asset tool could report values that weren't accurate until a machine configuration was complete. This had the potential to create issues with operations, compliance, and credibility. To overcome this challenge, Workday created the concept of a "source of becoming," similar to the well-known "source of truth."

> "dcTrack plays a critical role in providing both information about the way things are and the way we want them to be," said Tony Lincoln, Principal DevOps Engineer, Workday. "We use DCIM lookups to determine which racks and hosts are ready to build based on their attributes. We write back to DCIM about the state of the given device as it moves through its lifecycle. Then, service teams can rely on DCIM to show which racks are ready to use."

Workday's automation capabilities, which also include virtual machine data management, device state tracking, and parts management, have earned them great recognition within the organization.

"Several years in, DCIM is a mature service here at Workday and contains a wealth of information that the business uses," said Lincoln. "We had a business analyst who recently saw all our data and called DCIM 'the hub' for asset data for our organization."

Watch Workday explain how they drive automation via integration.

Merck moved off spreadsheets to manage their parts and spares.

#3

Merck is a multinational pharmaceutical company ranked 71st on the 2022 Fortune 500 list.

Like many organizations, Merck used to use Excel spreadsheets to track their data center assets and parts inventory. According to Jeff Carlton, CTC Data Center Engineer/DCIM Global Data Center Engineering, Merck, this is "the old way of tracking our inventory at several different sites all managed by different people and different teams."

"We typically had two sections of our spreadsheets: the assets section and the parts section," said Carlton. "When we brought on DCIM, the assets section got taken care of with dcTrack, but the parts were still a problem and remained within the spreadsheets. This comprised of our memory, hard drives, power supplies, SFPs, and PCI cards."

When their DCIM vendor introduced a Parts Management feature, Merck was an early adopter, eager to resolve their pain points of manually managing multiple spreadsheets. They began by building their own parts library with customizable parts templates based on the data they already had on their spreadsheets. They also used custom fields to track any attribute about their parts that they wanted. By configuring thresholds on parts counts and enabling alerts so they are notified when thresholds are violated, Merck knows exactly when they are running low on a certain part and need to resupply.

> "We were able to take our list off our spreadsheets and generate the standardized library of all our different parts models," said Carlton. "Taking that data and applying it to the actual list, we're generating a large inventory of over 500 parts now between two data centers."

Finally, Merck can search, sort, and export an audit log of all their parts transactions to know everything that's happening with their parts. "Looking at the transaction for a part, we're able to keep up with who is consuming them for a project. It allows us to keep track of what's going on and align part usage better than what we had seen using a spreadsheet," said Carlton.

Watch Merck explain how they manage their parts inventory.

Paddy Power Betfair increased the number of users on their DCIM system by 900%.

#4

Paddy Power Betfair is one of the world's largest sports betting companies, facilitating online and retail betting through brands such as FanDuel, PokerStars, Full Tilt Poker, FOX Bet, and Sportsbet.

Paddy Power Betfair had a first-generation DCIM tool, but it was painful for them to use. To optimize the utilization of their data center resources, they wanted to better understand their existing capacity levels, trends, and future needs. It was also crucial for them to be able to easily create, schedule, and send targeted management reports from their DCIM. Their legacy DCIM tool could not keep up with their reporting needs.

After switching to a second-generation DCIM platform, Paddy Power Betfair has been able to significantly reduce complexity, improve their work product, and reduce downtime.

> "Sunbird has such a well-rounded product that other people outside of my team trust to feed into their reporting data as well," said Peter Giles, Senior Data Center Manager, Paddy Power Betfair. "With Nlyte, we would have maybe 5 to 10 active users of the product. Now, we have 80 to 100 on Sunbird, and I only have 7 team members."

With second-generation DCIM that provides "a holistic view at any point in time over the entire data center's state," Paddy Power Betfair's data center team is now in an elevated position in the organization. 900% more colleagues are using the highly accurate data from their current DCIM compared to their first-generation vendor. The data center team has proven that they are world-class and have the right tools and data to support many different facets of the business.

"We buy into a high degree of accuracy in everything that we do, and we like the tools and the products that we use to be at that level, too," said Giles.

Read the complete Paddy Power Betfair case study.

Vodafone dramatically increased their data center sustainability.

#5

Vodafone is a telecommunications company that's trusted by more than 300 million mobile customers, 28 million fixed network customers, 22 million television customers, and 6 million business customers around the world.

Vodafone has sustainability goals to reduce the carbon footprint of their data centers. They needed powerful and reliable DCIM software that would enable them to increase their energy efficiency and maximize the utilization of their existing facilities to defer building new ones.

> **"Sunbird provides the ability to measure, monitor, and document what is actually happening in our data centers. Then, we can implement things to keep the costs down,"** said Andrew Marsh, Senior Manager for Infrastructure and Data Centers, Vodafone United Kingdom. **"We can actually measure the individual temperatures in a cold aisle so we can see the Delta T. That allows us to raise the temperatures in the cold aisle which saves us a large amount of money."**

Second-generation DCIM also allows Vodafone to plan and manage their power, space, and cooling capacity more efficiently. By instantly finding available capacity, they can make smarter and faster deployment and management decisions
.
"Because we're getting real power readings, we don't have to go off of the device nameplate ratings," said Marsh. "We're getting better densification in our data centers which prevents us from having to build more facilities. In one room, we were able to do a 4-1 server consolidation exercise so we're saving 75% power. It's only by measuring things using Sunbird that we're able to do that."

Vodafone has a small data center team, but with their DCIM software they are able to keep up with demand, deploying 200-300 servers every couple of months.

"The solution is very intuitive, and support is always there when we need it," said Marsh.

Read the complete Vodafone case study.

UF Health increased their asset tracking efficiency by 50%.

#6

University of Florida Health (UF Health) is a premier health system with over 10,000 employees that serves communities in the southeast United States. It includes teaching hospitals, specialty hospitals, outpatient rehabilitation centers, home health agencies, and emergency rooms.

Before deploying DCIM software, UF Health used Excel spreadsheets and Visio diagrams to track their data center assets. When they became responsible for three more data centers, they realized that they would need a new tool to help answer what equipment was in each data center, exactly where each device was located, and what was connected to what.

> "Before we deployed dcTrack, it would mean a trip out onto the data center floor to confirm or deny that a server is in a certain location," said Joe Keena, Manager Data Center Operations, UF Health. "Now, we can just pull up the asset information on the dcTrack screen and see that server X is located in this rack, in this U, or see that it is no longer a physical server but is now a virtual server. Accurate asset records have given us a 50% gain in efficiency in terms of locating an asset's physical location within the data centers."

Other results UF Health have achieved with DCIM software include measuring Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE), troubleshooting and preventing problems more easily, performing moves, adds, and changes more efficiently, and projecting when they will run out of capacity to improve planning.

"We'll have a much more fluid and up-to-minute picture of our capacities in terms of power, space, and cooling and be able to provide that information on a regular basis to management to say, 'Here's how we're situated' and 'Here's how we've been trending.'"

Read the complete UF Health case study.

MacStadium automated back-office processing.

#7

MacStadium is a leading provider of enterprise-class solutions for cloud-based Mac and iOS app development. Their cloud solutions are trusted by iOS developers, quality assurance testers, and DevOps engineers from thousands of companies all over the world.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on mobile phone users' habits and app usage and demand significantly increased. As a result, MacStadium's solutions and services experienced dramatic growth. They needed a way to improve their online provisioning experience for customers and provide fast fulfillment while meeting or exceeding SLAs.

They deployed modern DCIM software and integrated it with their billing platform, customer portal, administration system, and accounting systems to automate back-office processing. This has reduced manual data entry and the possibility of human error.

MacStadium automatically assigns slots and compute devices to be ready on-demand for customers placing an order on their website. Their automation moves devices from a pre-staged account directly to their customers' accounts and updates all their internal systems to reflect the change.

"Using the API, we're able to poll our existing racks, see where we have space available, and assign that space automatically to a customer order via our website," said Robert Perkins, Lead Infrastructure Engineer/Architect, MacStadium.

MacStadium also enjoys time savings with real-time remote 3D visualization of the rack space and physical assets in any of their data centers around the world.

> "We save a lot of time because we don't have to bring together people in different time zones for off-hour meetings to make a decision," said Perkins. "If we want to figure out where to build our next set of racks or our next cold aisle, we can just look at the floor space right in dcTrack and make a decision at a higher level. Sunbird has definitely sped up the decision-making process."

Read the complete MacStadium case study or **watch them explain their automation.**

Kingfisher proactively responds to issues to maintain uptime.

#8

Kingfisher is an international home improvement company with approximately 1,490 stores supported by a team of over 80,000 staff. They use second-generation DCIM software to manage and monitor their two strategic data centers in the United Kingdom.

"We capacity plan for new installations and monitor power and environmental conditions," said Neil Cotmore, Data Centre Team Lead, Kingfisher.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kingfisher was able to manage their data centers remotely with their DCIM tool.

"Due to the current COVID challenges with restrictions being onsite, my team has been making good use of the remote functionality that these tools offer," said Cotmore. "For us, they ensure our IT equipment continues to operate to enable our home improvement stores to receive stock for the customers."

The ability to monitor the health of Kingfisher's data centers was critical as they were given early warnings of potential issues even when the team was working from home.

> "A recent issue where this proved invaluable was demonstrated in one of our main offices where an issue overnight resulted in the **loss of network connectivity**," said Cotmore. "It was highlighted on the health status page to our 24x7 ops team. They also were alerted via email, able to act upon it, and the issue was resolved overnight before the start of the working day so there was no downtime to any users turning up onsite the next day."

Downtime is expensive. It can result in lost sales, damaged brand reputation, reduced productivity, SLA payouts, and lost data. By using modern DCIM software, Kingfisher can resolve potential issues before they become serious problems.

"We just find the health display very simple to use," said Cotmore. "It's a good overview and it's a good early warning system."

Watch Kingfisher explain how they remotely manage their data center.

KPMG remotely manages their colocation data center.

#9

KPMG is a multinational professional services network and one of the Big Four accounting organizations.

They use a colocation data center to increase their floor space at a lower cost, provide greater scalability of power, increase the tier rating of their data center, and reduce the time and effort involved in managing and maintaining mechanical equipment so they can focus on the actual data center infrastructure.

To manage that infrastructure, they leverage DCIM software. This provides them with many benefits including easier and faster troubleshooting

> "When somebody is looking at this tool, I want them to be able to easily understand what they're going to see in the cabinet if they have to do any troubleshooting," said Tom Wysocki, Data Center Manager, KPMG. "Once they go in, they look at the tool and what they see now, they'll see exactly in the cabinet. It just makes it much easier troubleshooting going forward."

They also use DCIM to ensure redundancy and maintain uptime. "[DCIM software] shows me I have connectivity to each rack PDU and the rack PDUs are going to A and a B floor PDUs so I know I have that full layer of power redundancy," said Wysocki.

If a device fails, KPMG gets automatically notified via email that it has lost power. "I will know that device has lost power probably before the application team that owns that device," said Wysocki. "My team can go down and verify it and hopefully reset the power supply or report back that the power supply is dead."

Finally, KPMG can remotely secure all their cabinets and assets. "Once they open that door, [our DCIM] is going to alarm within the system and show that there is an active event. I'll actually get an immediate email telling me someone opened that door. I can go over to the camera system and say, 'I know I have nobody working onsite today. Who's in that row from the colo provider?' and question them, 'Why is somebody working in there?'" According to Wysocki, "Using a DCIM tool has been very beneficial in order to manage the site remotely."

Watch KPMG explain how they remotely manage their colocation data center.

Emerson spends 25% less time managing assets, locations, and connectivity.

#10

Emerson is a global manufacturing company committed to providing innovative and sustainable solutions for a wide range of industries.

They needed to track and manage their capacity utilization over time to better optimize the efficiency and performance of their enterprise and colocation data centers, but their legacy DCIM tool was restrictive in terms of data accessibility and reporting. Plus, they were charged fees for the use of those limited capabilities.

"It felt like our data was handcuffed," said Kyle Kohne, Data Center Technician & DCIM Application Technical Services Manager, Emerson. After switching to second-generation DCIM, Emerson's data center management capabilities greatly improved.

> "Now, we can see what's in our data centers without leaving our chairs," said Kohne. "My team can see exactly what's in our racks and how much power each rack is using. We can see each port for each server and where they connect to switches or any other device."

For Emerson, data accessibility and reporting went from a weakness to a strength.

"I create reports very quickly and provide them to upper-level management right when they're asking for it," said Kohne. "No delays. The reports are in their inbox in just a few minutes."

With greater visibility and better reporting, Emerson reported that their team of 8 saves about 25% of the time they used to spend managing and double-checking asset information, locations, and connectivity.

"Sunbird provides just the right information so that you can really manage very well, very easily," said Kohne. "It's definitely helped us make better, faster decisions. What might have taken us days to gather before is now right at our fingertips."

Read the complete Emerson case study.

Conclusion

Some of the largest and most sophisticated organizations in the world are seeing a serious return on their investment with second-generation DCIM software. The data center managers who championed deploying DCIM software are now superheroes in their organization for improving uptime, increasing efficiency, and boosting productivity.

We hope that their stories have inspired you to consider a modern DCIM tool to dramatically simplify how you manage your data center. Partner with a vendor that is focused on your success, and you will reap the same benefits.

Learn About Other DCIM Software Success Stories:

- **Metronom efficiently manages data centers around the globe**
- **eBay, MacStadium, and The University of Chicago drive data center automation**
- **Akamai and Comcast manage their edge infrastructure**
- **BJC Health, Comcast, and Promedica automate power capacity planning**
- **Argonne National Laboratory and F5 enable a single source of truth**
- **Delta Dental manages their data center from home**
- **KDDI enables complete remote monitoring of edge data centers**
- **Exponential-e enhances its SLAs and gains a competitive advantage**
- **Commander keeps tabs on energy usage and power capacity**
- **Choice Hotels remotely manages their lights-out colocation facility**
- **AOL reduces energy consumption and finds unused capacity**
- **British Airways manages assets, connectivity, power, and cooling**
- **F5 monitors power usage to ensure equipment is never overloaded**
- **Chevron manages a hybrid data center environment**
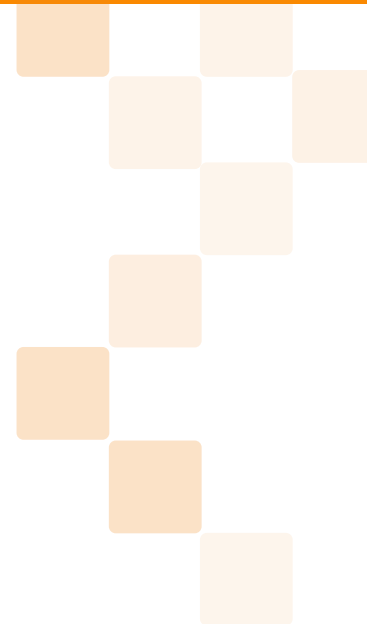
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DCIM Operations Online Demo
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Try it Free

DCIM Monitoring Online Demo
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Try it Free