



# 2014 Newsletter

## Welcome

What a great time to be involved in the Australian Sheep Industry!!!

Over the past 6 weeks I have attended the Best Wool /Best Lamb conference in Bendigo where I was a guest key note speaker, Hamilton Sheepvention, the Lambex conference in Adelaide and the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo. While I have learnt many things during these events the main one is that the future is incredibly exciting and optimistic for any farmers who have paddocks full of ewes. Even more so if they also have an open mind and are prepared to embrace new technologies to make them as productive as possible. The constant really positive take home message was that going forward world demand for lamb and mutton is virtually unlimited and regardless of potential higher price signals the potential of significant extra production of these commodities from any other country in the world is virtually zero.

Another observation I have made whilst attending these events is that the Australian sheep industry is splitting into two distinct groups – innovative and traditional.

This is best highlighted by my recent two visits to Bendigo and the vastly different usage of the wonderful shed and conference facilities that the Bendigo Show Society provided to two different sheep industry events. The first was the Best Wool/Best Lamb conference held at the end of June where over 300 sheep producers attended a day with an agenda targeting innovation and technology. Some of the subjects on the day included GPS tags and virtual fencing for sheep, practical benefits of genomics, using Breeding Values to enhance rates of genetic gain and the very latest in management practise to minimise drench resistant worms. The number of younger farmers in attendance was quiet staggering and the whole day had an atmosphere of positivity and excitement with a real focus on improving lambing percentages and meat production.

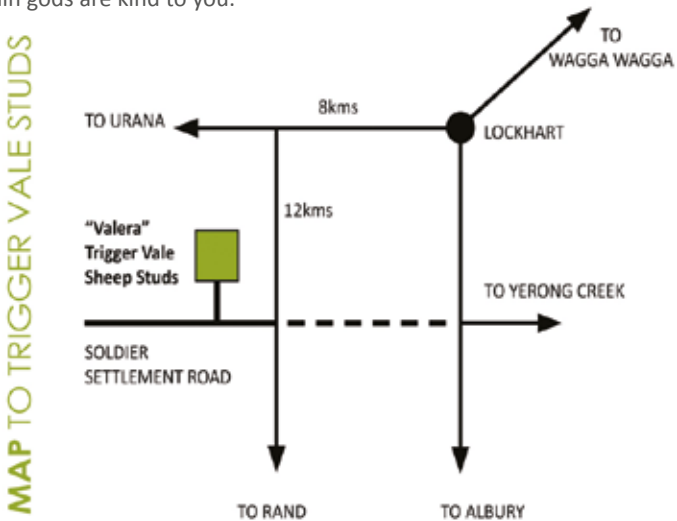
Three weeks later I attended the Australian Sheep and Wool show at the same facilities and as I walked through the very same shed I observed many studs competing in the show ring to win colourful pieces of felt. It's quiet amazing to witnessing such a different approach from another segment of the same industry with regards to benchmarking their product. There is no doubt that there was many magnificent animals on display but personally I have little faith in a process where a single persons visual opinion and ranking of a group of very well looked after animals is likely to single out the individual with the highest genetic merit to take the industry forward.

I don't seek to be controversial by writing the above and certainly acknowledge any individuals right to make a choice in their approach to breeding but I have certainly come to the view that in time the best way forward will not be decided by the stud principles of the industry but rather the grass root commercial producers. Over the past year I have sensed that the commercial producers (particularly driven by the younger generation) are starting to adopt technology and innovation at a greater rate and expect seed stock suppliers to move with the times and embrace Sheep Breeding Values, genomics and other objective measurement tools into their breeding programs.

As very early adopters in all of this technology balanced with strict visual structural standards we believe Trigger Vale is well placed to travel this very exciting journey of rapid productivity gain with our commercial clients.

On Friday 5th September Trigger Vale will be conducting our 37th Annual On-Property sale. Due to the strength and demand at last year's sale we have decided to further increase the number of Poll rams offered by 10 to 120. We believe that this will give clients a greater selection to fill their requirements while ensuring that individual budgets can be met. While the 2013 Poll ram sale averaged \$1930 it is important to note that 30 rams made under \$1200. These will be followed by 6 White Suffolk stud rams and a further 60 high indexed specially selected White Suffolk flock rams. Further information and sale catalogues can be found at [info@triggervalesheepstuds.com.au](mailto:info@triggervalesheepstuds.com.au)

Good luck with the remainder of your season and we hope the spring rain gods are kind to you.



**37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SALE - FRIDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014**

[www.triggervalesheepstuds.com.au](http://www.triggervalesheepstuds.com.au)

Andrew Bouffler: (02) 6920 7656 • Michael Elmes 0429 847 552 • Jim Bouffler (02) 6921 2135

## Poll News

### New Zealand Progeny Trial

At Trigger Vale we strongly believe that you need to benchmark your genetics in independently run trials to gauge the genetic merit of your animals. This is why over the years we have nominated many rams to participate in the sheep CRC nucleus flock and AMSEA Sire evaluation trails along with running our own AI based trials comparing our own bred sires with other industry leading genetics.



When the opportunity arose to have a Trigger Vale Poll ram participate in a very large scale trial in New Zealand we jumped at the chance. The trial was being run by The New Zealand Merino Company and was being coordinated by Mark Ferguson. Mark is an Australian sheep geneticist and researcher who is a leader in driving the necessary change required to bring the sheep industry (particularly wool breeds) into the 21st century. Mark has had a major role in developing the Life Time Ewe Management and Best Wool/ Best Lamb programs.

The initial challenge for us was to select rams that we thought would handle the high rainfall of between 750 and 1400 mls particularly in the areas of wool, feet and worms. We had semen collected in 3 rams and tested to allow exporting to New Zealand. This month we received the first raw data feedback from the trial 110839 is participating in with fantastic early results. Refer to Table 1.

In summary with the traits measured to date he has performed above average for growth rates, breech wrinkle and staple length and extremely well for WEC and foot score measurements. Trigger Vale 110839 sons feature very prominently in this year's sale team.

	Sire Average	Overall CTP Av	Sire Deviation From Overall CTP Average
Birth Weight (kg)	5.3	4.9	0.4
Weaning Weight (kg)	27.6	25.0	2.6
March Weight (kg)	33.7	31.5	2.2
June Weight (kg)	37.2	36.7	0.5
Wrinkle Score (1-5)	2.8	3.0	-0.2
Dag Score (1-5)	2.7	2.8	-0.1
Face Cover (1-5)	3.1	3.0	0.1
Breech Score (1-5)	3.1	3.3	-0.2
Fibre Diameter (micron)	18.9	18.6	0.2
Fibre Diameter CV	18.1	17.6	0.5
Fibre Diameter SD	3.4	3.3	0.1
Staple Length (mm)	79	73	6
Worm Egg Count (eggs per gram)	55	208	-154
% Footscore 4 or greater	62	83	-21

Table 1

**Sires which have had semen sent to New Zealand. They all have sons that feature in this year's sale team.**

	PWT	YWT	PFAT	PEMD	YGFW	YFD	YSL	YSS	YSC	NLW	EBWR	EBCOV
<b>TV 110839</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	4.5	0.1	<b>12.1</b>	0.4	<b>3.3</b>	7%	-0.2	<b>-0.2</b>
<b>TV 110744</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	-0.1	1.4	<b>13.5</b>	1.4	<b>2.2</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>TV110511</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>24.2</b>	1.8	<b>18.1</b>	3.1	<b>2.2</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-1.2</b>
<b>Merino Averages</b>	1.7	3.0	0.0	0.3	5.7	-1.1	4.2	0.3	0.7	0%	-0.1	0.0

*Shaded areas are top 10% for that trait in sheep genetics databases.*

## 2014 AMSEA Trial

As part of our policy to ensure we have a clear picture in what Trigger Vale genetics offer industry we have once again entered in the North East Victoria 2014 AMSEA Sire Evaluation. These are a great way of comparing your genetics as they measure all traits that drive commercial profitability (except fertility and maternal performance). These trials are far superior to traditional wether trails due to the fact that progeny are compared from birth meaning all environmental noise is removed from the comparison. Leading Trigger Vale stud sire TV110511 has been entered in the trial and we look forward to getting positive feedback over the next year.

### Genomics – what's it all mean?

I must admit that until recently I was wondering exactly the same thing. While we had been a part of the sheep CRC program with regards to DNA mapping for sheep via nominating rams for all of the different year drops of the nucleus flock. We have also taken blood samples in both breeds from the very earliest opportunity to obtain DNA based Research Breeding Values (RBV's) I had often wondered how would we incorporate the information into our breeding programs.

Basically once the genomic tests were developed the RBV's obtained from the DNA in an animal's blood sample gave us two things. The first was that you could add the results of the DNA test to the breeding values (BV's) for the traits that you already had as a result of our own measurement. Traits like weaning weights, wool cut, micron, fat and muscle levels are called easy to measure traits as they are easily observed and measured. By adding DNA information to these traits BV's you actually build accuracy in the genetic predictions being obtained. This means a BV with DNA information added can give the same level of prediction accuracy of genetic merit than an animal with actual measured data for the particular trait. Or in laymen's terms a day old lamb with full pedigree can be genomic tested to obtain a accuracy level on its breeding potential equal to if it was 12 months old and you had its actual measurements for weight, fat and muscle. This clearly has positive outcomes for greatly reducing generation intervals hence increasing rates of genetic gain.

The second benefit of DNA testing is to get a genetic estimate of the genetic merit of an individual on hard to measure traits. Examples of these are lean meat yields, intra muscular fat (juiciness) and shear force (tenderness). Before genomics the only way to get a measure on these traits for an individual was to kill him and measure them. This was quite expensive and unfortunately quite counterproductive because if you discovered that they



had superior genetic merit in these traits it was very difficult to breed from them as they were dead. Genomics allows us to get a prediction on how that animals progeny will perform in these traits from a blood sample while they are still very much alive.

While I always found this exciting and interesting, I always had reservations about how I would incorporate this information into my breeding objectives. I couldn't see the connect between these meat eating quality traits and my clients commercial profitability. Until Now !!!!

Dr Alex Ball gave a presentation at the Lambex conference in Adelaide which indicated that the processing industry has progressed to a stage where in 2 Australian abattoirs they have just begun trials whereby with new technology they will be able to measure these hard to measure meat eating quality traits in real time on an individual carcase basis while on the processing line. If this proves to be successful, this will allow them in conjunction with MLA to implement a Meat Standards Australia quality assurance program based on similar lines already introduced for beef.

I don't know if these trials will be successful and if they are whether the fall out will be a premium for lambs that achieve MSA standards or a discount for ones that don't. What I do know, however, is that whatever happens Trigger Vale clients will be well placed to either reap the rewards or dodge the penalties due to our involvement in the genomics program since its very beginning.





# trust TRIGGER VALE genetics

## Client News

### Our Most Important Benchmarking

While we pride ourselves at Trigger Vale for the huge amount of performance testing and benchmarking that we do to ensure that genetic gain is being achieved we never lose sight of the fact that by far the most important benchmark is feedback from clients. The single biggest factor that gives us confidence that our breeding objectives and direction is correct is the number of long term returning clients every year. With long term clients like Michael Gooden Family, Susan and Tony Porter, John and Josh Schirmer, Graham Hicks, Bryce Miller, Mark McMeekin, John and Phillip Lenehan it's not a case of years but rather decades that they have trusted Trigger Vale with their genetic direction and improvement.



There is nothing more satisfying as a seed stock supplier than getting positive feedback from clients about their successes and knowing that our hard work is reflected in their profitability. Some recent feedback that spring to mind include:

- Rusty and Barry Smith who topped the Wagga sale on the 31st July for new season suckers at \$140 for XBD lambs out of Trigger Vale blood Poll ewes sired by Trigger Vale White Suffolk rams. Interestingly the second top price was achieved by the McDonnell family from Urangeline with the same breeding base.
- Long term client Peter Forbes in a recent conversation commented that he has had the best lambing percentages ever this year averaging 110% from ALL ewes joined including maidens.
- The Moncrieff family from West Wyalong has had phone calls from their wool agent wondering how far away their wool is as he was sick of being questioned by wool buyers about when it was coming to market.
- Recently new clients Peter and Joy Thompson who's Trigger Vale White Suffolk sired lambs averaged \$186.20 through Griffith Saleyards for the entire drop.
- Dick and Jan Thompson from Yenda proudly offered the first pen of winter sucker lambs into the Griffith saleyards recently. They were sired by Trigger Vale White Suffolks.
- During a conversation with Gary Dickerson at Sheepvention he commented that his Trigger Vale Poll sired ewe Hoggets averaged nearly 30% higher lambing percentages than a group of more traditional Merino hoggets he had recently purchased. Gary farms south of Horsham in Victoria.







- David Alexander from Berrigan thinks that the initiative of shearing every six months is the biggest leap forward for his flocks productivity and easy care objectives. The staple length in his ewes due to the Trigger Vale Polls genetic influence makes this management tool possible.
- John Ryan from Lockhart can't believe the reduction in lambing problems and losses that have resulted since he has placed more emphasis on lower birth weight Breeding Values in his selection of Trigger Vale White Suffolk rams.
- Terry Goldworthy from Old Junee recently achieved lambing percentages from 156% to 180% in his twin bearing ewe mobs. Given industry benchmarks state only 120% is often achieved and 150% is a high result this is an outstanding effort.

For me personally the highlight for the year to date was over a 4 – 6 week period in Feb/March when Trigger Vale clients Rusty and Barry Smith, John and Josh Schirmer and Terry and Kerry Doig dominated the heavy lamb top prices at Wagga saleyards with their Poll wether lambs. They were often only \$2- \$4 from topping the whole market including crossbreds and \$30- \$40 dearer than the top priced Merino lambs quoted on the day.

While this is far from an exhausted list of client feedback and it's always dangerous to put together a list acknowledging anyone or anything for risk of offending someone who wasn't mentioned we feel it gives a cross section on the impact Trigger Vale is making at both an industry but more importantly individual level.

We always love to hear from clients and while good news stories are always welcomed we also encourage clients to inform us of any problems so we can get to work and fix them.

Wagga Livestock Marketing Centre LAMB & SHEEP SALE 13/03/2014			
LAMBS	Agents	No.	\$/HD
Glenhope P/C, Beckom	Delta/HLB	215	\$205.00
Maclure, R & D & Son, Tarcutta	Blakes	77	\$204.00
Glenhope P/C, Beckom	Delta/HLB	295	\$200.00
CW Mattiske & Co, Stockinbingal	RLA	76	\$199.00
JJJ Schirmer, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	40	\$198.00
JJJ Schirmer, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	40	\$198.00
Rm Carroll & sons Ganmain	Elders	64	\$196.00
K & T Doig, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	76	\$195.00
JB & CR Smith, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	13	\$195.00
K & T Doig, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	76	\$195.00
JB & CR Smith, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	13	\$195.00
SUCKERS			
S Risson, Tarcutta	H.Francis & Co	10	\$132.00
Burgess Hill Pastoral Co, Wagga Wagga	Landmark	60	\$116.00
Stewart, DC, Bombala	Landmark	13	\$114.00
MERINO LAMBS			
B Lane, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	98	\$148.00
B Lane, Lockhart	H.Francis & Co	98	\$148.00
LA & RL Tidd, Arianah Park	RLA	96	\$126.60
LA & RL Tidd, Arianah Park	RLA	77	\$111.00
Dew, HL & JL, Mangoplah	Blakes	71	\$108.00
Plahgoman enterprises, The Rock	Elders	85	\$96.00
Thomas Unit Trust, cobar	Elders	103	\$94.00
AM CA & KA Maher, Henty	Rockwells	113	\$90.20
Coghill Farming P/L, Urana	Elders	137	\$85.00





## White Suffolk News

With so much happening in the Trigger Vale Poll world it might be perceived that our White Suffolks have been taking a back seat. This is definitely not the case and our breeding objective of providing large drafts of structurally sound high performance based commercial rams is certainly being achieved. The reality is that due to our involvement in the Superwhite Young Sire Evaluation program it is significantly easier to ensure we make continuous genetic gain in the profit driving traits while at the same time establishing very good industry linkage. Over twenty of the most progressive White Suffolks stud breeders Australia wide are involved in the program, all with a similar desire to maximize the rate of genetic progress while maintaining genetic diversity within the breed.

In essence by being involved in Superwhites Trigger Vale has access not only to our own best young rams to use in our studs breeding program but also the very best young rams from all participating studs. Each year the participating studs nominate their best young rams and a committee including the Superwhite executive and independent representatives from Lambplan and MLA select a team of 10 young rams. These are selected on a combination of superior genetic merit and diversity and are randomly allocated to ensure each ram is represented in at least four member's flocks via their AI programs. A proven link sire is also selected and used in all flocks to ensure a common linkage for greater comparison and to improve accuracies.

The benefit of Trigger Vales participation in Superwhites has never been highlighted more than in our 2013 drop rams for sale this year. The link ram used for this drop was Ashmore 179 who is a very high indexed proven sire in the White Suffolk breed. He is also the sire of Polambi 120451 in which the Superwhites group purchased a large semen order in for its members. Having been involved in seed stock breeding for over 30 years I have come to the realistic understanding that genetic gain is fundamentally based on thorough performance testing and building on relatively small cumulatively steps. The exception to this is occasionally an individual animal is discovered who is a real curve bender and a major genetic leap is achieved.

I believe that Polambi 120451 is one of these exceptional industry changing sires and for Trigger Vale to have the foresight to use him as a ram lamb and to then use 3 of his sons extensively this year in our stud joining's will mean the benefits will flow through to clients sooner. Polambi 120451 and his sons are not just exceptional on the traditional traits like birth weight, growth, fat and muscle but are also the new meat eating quality traits obtained through genomics.



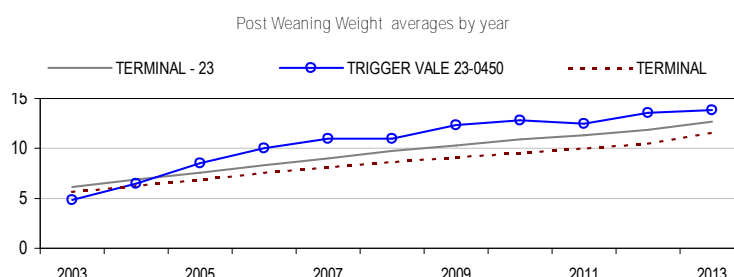
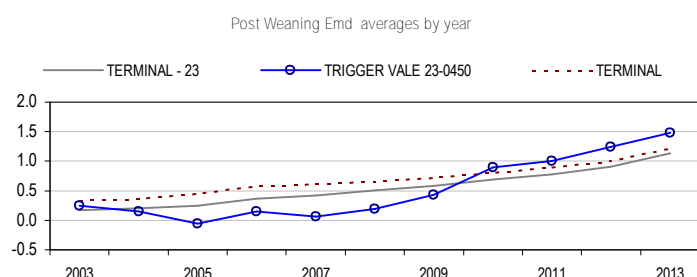
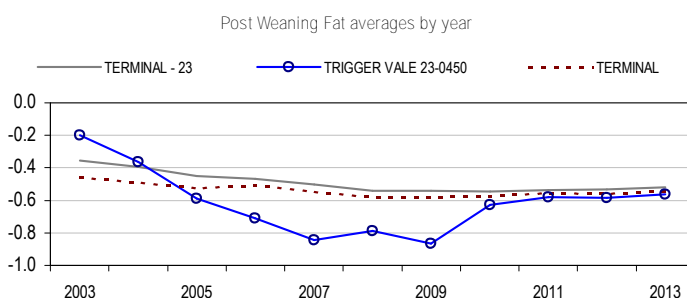
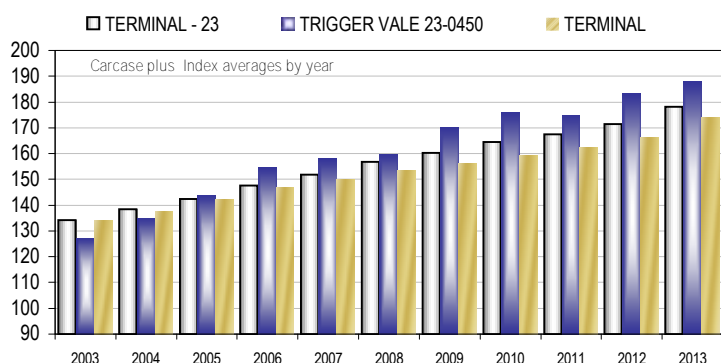
TV 130091 Keeper Sire (Semen Available)

### Semen Sales

	Bwt	Pwt	Pfat	Pemd	C+	Lamb 2020	LMY RBV	IMF RBV	SHEARF5 RBV
TV 130091	0.4	10.4	14.7	2.5	204	113.9	-0.75	0.41	-2.1



# TV White Suffolk Genetic Trends



## On A Lighter Note

What's orange and sounds like a parrot? A carrot.

A man is driving down a country road, when he spots a farmer standing in the middle of a huge field of grass. He pulls the car over to the side of the road and notices that the farmer is just standing there, doing nothing, looking at nothing. The man gets out of the car, walks all the way out to the farmer and asks him, "Ah excuse me mister, but what are you doing?" The farmer replies, "I'm trying to win a Nobel Prize." "How?" asks the man, puzzled. "Well, I heard they give the Nobel Prize . . . to people who are out standing in their field."

### Helping your father

A clergyman walking down a country lane and sees a young farmer struggling to load hay back onto a cart after it had fallen off.

"You look hot, my son," said the cleric. "why don't you rest a moment, and I'll give you a hand."

"No thanks," said the young man.

"My father wouldn't like it."

"Don't be silly," the minister said.

"Everyone is entitled to a break. Come and have a drink of water."

Again the young man protested that his father would be upset. Losing his patience, the clergyman said, "Your father must be a real slave driver. Tell me where I can find him and I'll give him a piece of my mind!"

"Well," replied the young farmer, "he's under the load of hay."

An Illinois man left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day. When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a

quick email. Unable to find the scrap of paper on which he had written her email address, he did his best to type it in from memory.

Unfortunately, he missed one letter and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife, whose husband had passed away only the day before. When the grieving widow checked her email, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream and fell to the floor in a dead faint. At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen:

**DEAREST WIFE: JUST GOT CHECKED IN. EVERYTHING PREPARED FOR YOUR ARRIVAL TOMORROW.**

**P.S. SURE IS HOT DOWN HERE.**

A couple is sitting on the porch sipping wine. The wife says, "I love you."

The husband says, "Is that you or the wine talking?"

The wife replies, "It's me, talking to the wine."

### You Don't Need to Be a Weatherman...

It was two o'clock in the morning and a husband and wife were asleep, when suddenly the phone rang.

The husband picked up the phone and said, "Hello? ... How the heck do I know? What am I, the weather man?" -- and promptly slammed the phone down.

His wife rolls over and asks, "Who was that?"

The husband replies, "I don't know. Some guy who wanted to know if the coast was clear."





Est. 1952

# Trigger Vale

## Polls & White Suffolks

### 37<sup>th</sup> Annual On-Property Auction

At "Valera" Lockhart on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 Inspections  
10.00am onwards, Poll Sale commencing at 1.30pm



**120 Poll Rams**

**6 Stud White Suffolk Rams**

**60 Specially Selected White Suffolk**



**Rabobank**



**Vendors:** Andrew & Mandi Bouffler 0427 207656

**Stud Classer:** Michael Elmes 0429 847 552

**Selling Agents:** H. Francis & Co Wagga (02) 6921-6366

In conjunction with Elders Ltd Wagga (02) 6923-4666

**3% rebate to outside agents introducing clients on day of Sale**

*Luncheon Available*

**Catalogue on-line two weeks before the Sale**



[www.triggervalesheepstuds.com.au](http://www.triggervalesheepstuds.com.au)

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