



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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The Year In Review

A VOICE FOR CRAFT DISTILLERS

We are thrilled to present the American Craft Spirits Association's 2019 Annual Report. Our growing industry reached a milestone in 2019, as there are now more than 2,000 operating craft producers in the U.S., as reported in our annual Craft Spirits Data Project (CSDP). This report includes more highlights from the CSDP, which gives you a comprehensive picture of the state of the craft spirits industry.

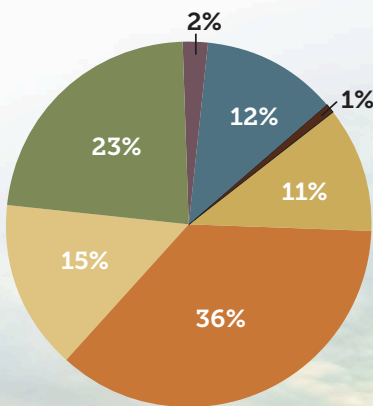
With members in all 50 states, ACSA maintained its efforts to fight for craft distillers in the halls of Congress, as we continued to fight to make the federal excise tax (FET) relief permanent. In addition to offering a wealth of educational opportunities through our convention, webinars and regional programs, we also launched *Craft Spirits* magazine and its companion website—craftspiritsmag.com—to provide in-depth insight and intelligence for the entire craft spirits universe.

We invite you to read the 2019 Annual Report and let us know what you think. Your insight is critical as we move forward as an organization and as an industry.

ACSA Membership Definition:

In the summer of 2019, we asked our members to weigh in on our membership definition. Based on this feedback, our Board of Directors voted to amend our membership definition in early 2020.

RESULTS FROM A MEMBER SURVEY



- **12%:** be owned 100% by a major supplier, such as Constellation, as long as the DSP maintains operating control
- **1%:** be owned 75% or greater but less than 100% by a major supplier, such as Constellation, as long as the DSP maintains operating control
- **11%:** be owned 50% or greater but less than 75% by a major supplier, such as Constellation, as long as the DSP maintains operating control
- **36%:** be owned 25% or greater but less than 50% by a major supplier, such as Constellation, as long as the DSP maintains operating control
- **15%:** be owned less than 25% by a major supplier, such as Constellation, as long as the DSP maintains operating control
- **23%:** not have any equity ownership by a major supplier, such as Constellation

Who We Are:

The American Craft Spirits Association is the only registered nonprofit trade group representing the U.S. craft spirits industry. Members vote for the 15 member-elected representatives who make up the Board of Directors, and this Board collectively works to govern the ACSA in a transparent and responsive manner, in accordance with our bylaws.

Member Owned:

Membership in ACSA is open to anyone, although voting members must be independent licensed distillers with a valid Distilled Spirits Permit (DSP), subscribe to ACSA's Code of Ethics, have more than a 50% equity stake of the DSP, and whose annual production of distilled spirits from all sources does not exceed 750,000 proof gallons removed from bond (the amount on which federal excise taxes are paid). In case terms, 750,000 proof gallons equals 315,451 9-liter cases (12,750 ml bottles) of 100 proof spirit. A DSP may not be a voting member if another producer of distilled spirits whose combined annual production of distilled spirits from all sources exceeds 750,000 proof gallons removed from bond and directly or indirectly holds an ownership interest of greater than 50% of the DSP.

THE ART, SCIENCE AND BUSINESS OF DISTILLING

ACSA launched *Craft Spirits* magazine and its companion website—craftspiritsmag.com. The bi-monthly digital magazine is the unparalleled resource for in-depth insight and intelligence for the entire craft spirits universe. The magazine features the information and analysis that small, independent spirits producers and allied businesses need to operate in today's complex craft beverage market.

We also bolstered our YouTube presence with the launch of *Craft Spirits TV*, a weekly video series highlighting member distilleries and distilling news.



Editorial Board

ACSA has assembled an Editorial Board of industry experts to advise and offer guidance and feedback on *Craft Spirits* magazine, craftspiritsmag.com and all associated properties, as well as suggest topics and coverage areas relevant to each board member's area of expertise or market sector. Board members include Eli Aguilera, Senior Vice President, Merchandising at Total Wine & More; renowned whiskey author Lew Bryson; spirits public relations professional Alexandra S. Clough, Gather PR; Sly Cosmopoulos, Corporate Mixologist, Trade Marketing for Republic National Distributing Co.; Dan Gasper, co-founder of Distill Ventures and founder of the Business Development Partnership; and Dr. Dawn Maskell, Director of the International Centre for Brewing & Distilling and professor at Heriot-Watt University's School of Engineering and Physical Sciences in Edinburgh, Scotland.

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AN FET EXTENSION AND A RENEWED FIGHT



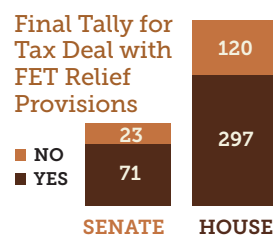
Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) and P.T. Wood (Wood's High Mountain Distillery)

On the evening of Dec. 20, 2019, the President signed into law a one-year extension for federal excise tax (FET) relief, following bi-partisan passage in the House and Senate earlier that same week. The extension was passed as part of a larger tax package that lawmakers acted on prior to their winter recess. The extension was passed nearly two years to the day of the passage of the 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act, which included the provisions of the Craft Beverage Modernization and Tax Reform Act (CBMTRA) that reduced distillers' FET burden to \$2.70 from \$13.50 per gallon on the first 100,000 proof gallons and gave craft spirits producers parity with their counterparts in beer and wine, that already had enjoyed a lower tax rate for many years. The original FET relief provisions, which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2018, would have expired on Dec. 31, 2019, if Congress and the President had not acted. Without the extension, the more-than 2,000 craft spirits producers in America would have experienced a 400% tax increase on January 1, 2020.

"In a political climate that is arguably more divided than ever, we applaud Congress for working together on both sides of the aisle to support our community of 2,000 small businesses and do what is vitally important to keep our industry growing," said ACSA CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman.

ACSA's goal has always been and continues to be permanent FET relief.

"Though FET permanence is critical to the long-term success of our industry and the peripheral industries we support, including U.S. agriculture and hospitality, today we celebrate a small but critical victory," Lehrman continued "But tomorrow, we will again shift gears to focus on permanent tax relief and long-term parity with our friends in craft beer and wine."



The one-year-extension—set to expire on December 31, 2020—is an incremental step in the right direction and would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of our craft spirits community. In 2019, ACSA members collectively walked hundreds of miles through the halls of Congress, urging lawmakers to support CBMTRA.

ACSA once again teamed up with the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS) for the annual Public Policy Conference last July, when more than 200 distillers, industry suppliers and allies from nearly 40 states converged on Capitol Hill to make a case for FET relief. During the conference, attendees heard from a number of legislators in support of CBMTRA's passage, including Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), who co-sponsored the Senate version, S.362, with Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO), Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) and Senator John Tester (D-MT).



Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH)

On Oct. 15, ACSA and other beverage alcohol trade groups led a "National Day of Action" when more than 2,000 individuals affiliated with the beverage alcohol industry called their members of Congress to urge support of CBMTRA.

On Dec. 11, just over a week before the Congressional recess, members of the ACSA Board of Directors took a break from their board retreat in Baltimore to head back to the Hill and make one last 11th-hour appeal to both chambers to act before the FET reduction expired at the end of that month. Ultimately, the tax bill that included the one-year extension passed with the support of about three-quarters of both the Senate and House. We cannot overstate the tireless work of the ACSA Legislative Affairs Committee, led by chair Mark Shilling, and the ACSA PAC, chaired by Stephen Johnson, to make this happen. The PAC held its first reception in 2019 to help raise the funds necessary to give us a seat at the table when lawmakers are deciding on the policies that directly affect every craft spirits producer in the country.

With the extension set to expire at the end of this year, ACSA is working hard throughout 2020 to make sure CBMTRA passes and FET relief is made permanent, once and for all.

"As President of ACSA and a craft spirits producer myself, I know firsthand the struggles we all face in forecasting our financial futures," said ACSA President and Co-Owner of Du Nord Craft Spirits in Minneapolis, Chris Montana. "This one year extension is a certain step in the right direction, but the need for permanent reform is evident as ever. Without the certainty of a longer-term reduction, it remains difficult to plan for growth and expand."

Trade War

FET relief hasn't been ACSA's only government affairs fight. Last fall, ACSA joined industry allies in calling for an end to the trade tariffs that have had a detrimental effect on the craft spirits industry. In October the U.S. announced a new 25% tariff on imports of Scotch whisky, liqueurs and cordials, as well as wines from certain European Union countries. The decision compounded the negative effects of the 25% retaliatory tariff on American whiskey announced in 2018 in response to U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum. The tariffs have resulted in significant revenue declines for craft spirits producers that export, forcing them to severely curtail their export plans.



6TH ANNUAL ACSA DISTILLERS' CONVENTION & VENDOR TRADE SHOW

THE WINTER WEATHER COULD NOT KEEP NEARLY 1,000 CRAFT SPIRITS INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS FROM 42 STATES AND NINE COUNTRIES FROM MINNEAPOLIS IN FEBRUARY 2019, WHEN ACSA HOSTED OUR 6TH ANNUAL DISTILLERS' CONVENTION & VENDOR TRADE SHOW. HERE'S A GLIMPSE AT LAST YEAR'S BIG EVENT. WE'D LIKE TO THANK ACSA CONVENTION CHAIR JAMES MONTERO AND EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE THE EVENT A HUGE SUCCESS.



On the first night of the convention Team Tails, led by ACSA President Chris Montana (Du Nord Craft Spirits), faced off against Paul Hletko's (FEW Spirits) Team Heads at Hockey on Ice, our first-ever competition pitting distillers against distillers at Minnesota Made Ice Center.



ACSA awarded the best brands in the business at the 6th Annual Judging of Craft Spirits awards dinner, sponsored by Total Wine & More. Gulch Distillers (Helena, Montana) was awarded Best in Show for its Burrone Fernet. Entries were submitted from 38 states and the District of Columbia, as well as one international location (Panama).



L to R: ACSA Treasurer Colin Keegan (Santa Fe Spirits), ACSA CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman, Solid Light President Cynthia Torp, ACSA Convention Chair James Montero (Dogfish Head), ACSA Vice President Maggie Campbell (Privateer Rum) and ACSA President Chris Montana (Du Nord Craft Spirits) officially open the trade show floor.



Following the awards dinner, attendees had the chance to taste (in glasses generously provided by Glencairn) all of the medaling products at a special after party, Sips & Sweets, at The Blaisdell, a local mansion whose history dates back more than 100 years.

On the final evening of the convention, attendees got to taste (again, in Glencairn glasses) the very best that the host state had to offer at the Minnesota Toast, a showcase of local spirits hosted in partnership with the Minnesota Distillers Guild and sponsored by NearestYou and GoDaddy Social. Attendees also bid on a variety of items donated by participating distilleries in a silent auction, with proceeds benefiting a local charity, Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry program.



The trade show featured 124 vendors offering equipment, packaging, ingredients, financial services and consulting solutions for the craft spirits market.

The conference program offered more than 30 hours of education during regular convention hours, plus more than 20 additional hours during two pre-convention master classes. The regular convention education program included two new tracks: Advanced Technical Track and Legal/Compliance Track.



In an effort to promote wellness within the industry, ACSA hosted early-morning fitness opportunities, including a yoga class sponsored by Gina Holman of J. Carver Distillery.



2019 HEARTLAND WHISKEY COMPETITION

ACSA was once again proud to partner with state corn marketing associations on the Heartland Whiskey Competition, open to craft whiskeys from all 50 states that incorporate corn in their mash bill. In this second, biannual blind judging event, whiskeys from 13 “heartland” states also competed for Best of Show and Best of State, and all entries competed in their select whiskey sub-categories. ACSA facilitated the judging process of the competition, which took place June 4 at CH Distillery in Chicago. ACSA Board of Directors President Chris Montana, owner of Du Nord Craft Spirits in Minneapolis, served as the Judging Director. Judges were selected by ACSA for their knowledge and experience specific to craft spirits. The 2019 competition saw significant growth in the number of participating states and entries with tougher competition for medals. Middle West Spirits of Columbus, Ohio, captured Best of Show honors for its OYO Sherry- Finished Bourbon, which also earned the top score in the Bourbon category. Only five whiskeys were awarded a gold medal, while 40 received silver and 22 bronze.

The Heartland team behind the scenes. Back row, L to R: ACSA President Chris Montana (Du Nord Craft Spirits), Jim Prendergast of the Kineo Group, Scott Kirkpatrick of Chicago Sports & Entertainment Partners. Front row, L to R: ACSA Operations Administrator Teresa McDaniel, ACSA Member Services and Social Media Coordinator Carason Lehmann and Bruce McDaniel, logistics.



ACSA MEMBERS POUR AT BAR CONVENT BROOKLYN

The second edition of Bar Convent Brooklyn proved to be bigger and livelier than the inaugural 2018 event—and so did ACSA's presence at year two of the U.S.-based edition of Europe's largest bar industry trade show. Everything was amped up in 2019—the energy, the attendance and the ACSA Craft Spirits Pavilion, where nine member distilleries greeted bartenders, bar owners and managers, restaurants, food and beverage managers and distributors from all over the country and other parts of the world. The 2019 lineup at the ACSA Pavilion included:

- Cardinal Spirits (Bloomington, Indiana)
- Copper & Kings American Brandy Company (Louisville, Kentucky)
- Golden Moon Distillery (Golden, Colorado)
- Gulch Distillers (Helena, Montana)
- Mad River Distillers (Warren, Vermont)
- Pennsylvania Pure Distilleries (Glenshaw, Pennsylvania)
- Round Turn Distilling (Biddeford, Maine)
- Wiggly Bridge Distillery (York, Maine)
- Wigle Whiskey/Pittsburgh Distilling Co. (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)



L to R: Vermont Spirits Distilling's Steve Johnson, ACSA PAC Chair; ACSA Member Services and Social Media Coordinator Carason Lehmann; ACSA Past President Mark Shilling, Shilling Crafted; and ACSA CEO Margie Lehrman.

ACSA TAKES GLOBAL STAGE AT BAR CONVENT BERLIN

In October, ACSA also expanded its profile on the global stage at Bar Convent Berlin, where CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman led a lively discussion on building and enhancing a spirits brand's overall identity and connection with consumers through the tasting room experience. “How do you make it happen, how do you make it work, how do you create not only that visitor's experience but translate that into loyal customers?” Lehrman asked the audience at Europe's largest bar and drinks industry expo in a conference session titled “A Sense of Place: Refining the Visitor's Experience.” The panel, part of Park Street's Business Forum at Bar Convent, included Westward Whiskey/House Spirits Distillery CEO and ACSA Founding President Tom Mooney; Guillermo Sauza, founder of Tequila Fortaleza; and Jason Dobson, business and creative director at U.K.-based drinks industry experiential marketing and design agency Contagious.



JUDGING FOR 2020 AWARDS

In late October 2019, a distinguished panel of more than 30 expert spirits judges traveled to Bloomington, Indiana, to judge more than 500 entries in ACSA's 7th Annual Judging of Craft Spirits Competition held at Cardinal Spirits. Judging categories include Vodka & Grain Spirits, Gin, Brandy, Rum, Whiskey, Specialty Spirits and, new this year, RTD cocktails. There's also a special Innovation Award recognizing remarkable spirits whose flavor profiles may stray from their categories' signature notes. We are grateful to ACSA Vice President Maggie Campbell (Privateer Rum), Colton Weinstein (Corsair Distillery), Jeff Wuslich (Cardinal Spirits) and all the volunteers who ensured a professionally run competition.





CRAFT SPIRITS ★ ★ ★ DATA PROJECT ★ ★ ★

ACSA has continued our partnership with Park Street and the IWSR to conduct the fourth annual Craft Spirits Data Project. We are grateful for the efforts of Park Street's Harry Kohlmann and IWSR's Adam Rogers and their teams, and for the assistance of the key organizations and agencies which enabled us to quantify the number, size and influence of craft spirits producers in the U.S.: U.S. Alcohol Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA), American Beverage Licensees (ABL) and the Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA). ACSA, Park Street and the IWSR unveiled the 2019 findings in March of 2020. The report defines a craft spirits producer as one that has not removed from bond more than 750,000 proof gallons, markets itself as craft, is not openly controlled by a large supplier and has no proven violation of the ACSA Code of Ethics.



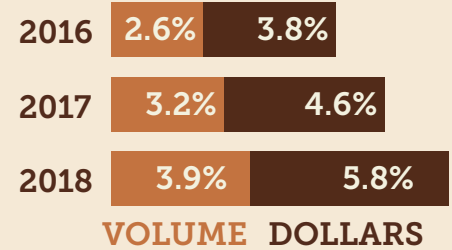
park  street

IWSR
drinks market analysis

CRAFT SPIRITS VOLUME TREND

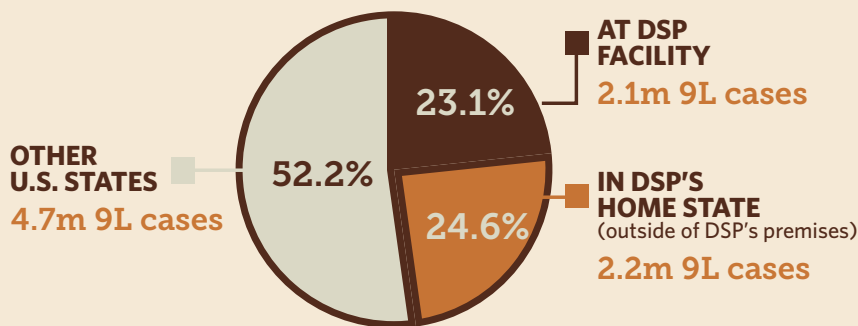


CRAFT SPIRITS MARKET SHARE



Craft share of total case volume rose 0.7 share points to 3.9% while revenue share increased by 1.2 share points.

SOURCE/LOCATION OF CRAFT SPIRITS SALES

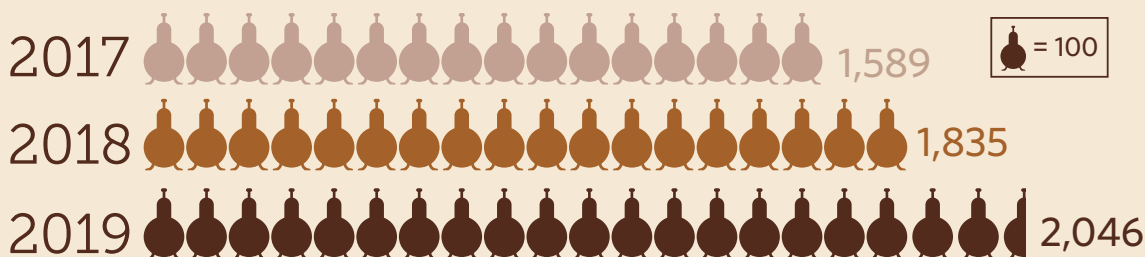


The share of spirits sold at the DSP ticked up a little bit, possibly due to states increasingly embracing laws friendlier to tasting rooms and on-site bottle sales

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC DATA TO OUR DISTILLERS AND LEGISLATORS, ACSA COMMISSIONED JOHN DUNHAM & ASSOCIATES TO CONDUCT A STUDY AT THE STATE LEVEL. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RELEASING THE REPORT SOON.

NUMBER OF ACTIVE CRAFT DISTILLERS

*As of August 2019



As of August 2019, there were 3,134 total licensed DSPs in the U.S. Of those, 206 were duplicate or multiple locations of single suppliers, 43 were leading suppliers, 118 were bottlers, 353 were not in operation or non-craft and 368 were still in planning. The remaining 2,046 were true, operational craft distillers.

CRAFT DISTILLERS SURPASS THE 2,000 MARK

CRAFT SPIRITS CLASSROOM WEBINARS: QUENCHING YOUR THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE

Under the guidance of Education Committee Chairs Jake Holshue, Courtney McKee and Amber Pollock, we continued to strengthen our education program with more than a dozen webinars on a range of topics relevant to a wide array of professional functions throughout the craft spirits industry. Some of this year's most popular webinars included:

- TTB Proposed Rules, presented by Mark Shilling and Nicole Austin
- Sobering Truth: A Drunk Driving Fatality Case Study, presented by Courtney McKee and Brian DeFoe
- Metal Heads: The Canned Cocktail Revolution, presented by Lee Hedgmon, Melissa Katrincic and Steve Garrett
- Why and How to Add Liqueurs as a Brand Extension, presented by Will Groves
- Dangers & Preventions: The Importance of Maintaining a Safe Boiler, presented by Marty Toth

All of our webinars are archived on the ACSA website. Find the "Education" link and toggle down to "Webinars."



943 The number of new people we educated in 2019 through our convention, webinars and regional programs.



ACSA's 2019 Safety Series

In 2019, ACSA made safety a priority through a series of OSHA 10 Certification Courses in partnership with Industrial Safety and Training Services of Louisville, Kentucky. Whether distilleries were just starting a safety program or looking to improve existing programs, the course was designed to help distillers:

- Recognize and prevent health and safety hazards in a DSP
- Evaluate facilities through the eyes of an OSHA inspector
- Have hands-on auditing practices in an actual distillery
- Receive an OSHA 10 Card from Eastern Kentucky University
- Take home the knowledge to ensure a safe workplace and prevent hefty fines for OSHA violations

Special thanks to Garrison Bros. and Philadelphia Distilling for hosting these courses.



2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT

The week before the House and Senate voted on the FET relief extension and it was signed into law, ACSA's Board of Directors made an 11th-hour push to make sure Congress acted before it expired on Dec. 31. The Capitol Hill visit was a core action item on the agenda for the Board's annual retreat in nearby Baltimore. Special thanks to Baltimore Spirits Co. and Sagamore Spirit for hosting Board members during the retreat.



STATEMENT OF ACSA FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

THREE-YEAR COMPARISON

change from 2017 *change from 2017*

| | \$ 2017 | \$ 2018 | \$ 2019 | \$ CHANGE | % CHANGE |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| REVENUE | | | | | |
| ALL PROGRAMS (CONVENTION, JUDGING, BCB, EDUCATION, PAC) | 881,582 | 754,732 | 706,401 | (175,181) | -20% |
| MEMBERSHIP | 225,800 | 325,250 | 316,168 | 90,368 | 40% |
| TOTAL REVENUE | 1,107,382 | 1,079,982 | 1,022,569 | (84,813) | -8% |
| EXPENSES | | | | | |
| CONVENTION, LOBBYING & EDUCATION | 564,478 | 443,310 | 513,865 | (50,613) | -9% |
| OPERATING | 375,828 | 349,121 | 461,025 | 85,197 | 23% |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 940,306 | 792,431 | 974,890 | 34,584 | 4% |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | 167,076 | 287,551 | 47,679 | (119,397) | -71% |

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our donors and sponsors, whose generous support enables us to move the craft spirits industry forward.

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Whiskey Systems
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A TOAST TO 2020


As we enter a new decade, ACSA is steadfast in its mission to elevate and advocate for the community of craft spirits producers. The unprecedented challenges already facing the craft spirits business are only serving to strengthen our resolve to continue to fight for you. In 2020, we will also continue to strengthen our educational programs. In addition, we will begin to implement a new strategic plan to help strengthen the craft spirits industry.

Here's to a spirited and successful 2020!





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