

# BOOKS

Rock legend tells it like it is  
in new biography

Randy Bachman: *Takin' Care Of Business*  
McArthur & Company  
527 pages, \$35.

BY FRANK KING  
Staff Writer

He's the elder statesman of Canadian rock 'n' roll — a Methusaleh-looking character who powered not one, but two, bands to the top of the charts with tunes most of us have heard at least a hundred times.

What most don't know, though, is that Randy Bachman learned his much-admired guitar skills at the hands of masters such as Chet Atkins and the late Lenny Breau. They also don't know that the man, now 57, is such a straight-laced, hard-assed businessman that he once turfed his own brother out of Bachman-Turner Overdrive.

Most of this can be found in *Takin' Care of Business*, the giant biography he has written with Canadian rock historian John Einarson.

For fans of BTO and the Guess Who, everything appears to be here: how each band started, what events took place to put them on the road to fame and riches — and why Bachman walked away from both.

*The piano playing was supplied by a pizza delivery guy who Bachman spent hours trying to track down after BTO's label decided it was too good to leave off the song's classic final mix.*

Among the notable tidbits, it's interesting to read how the Bachman-Burton Cummings collaboration No Sugar Tonight/New Mother Nature — one of the Guess Who's biggest hits — was spliced and only the first half (written by Bachman) was released as a single.

"To be honest, I thought No Sugar Tonight was a better song," is the quote Einarson has from Guess Who producer Jack Richardson.

Of course, that later became just one of the many Cummings' resentments against Bachman. In fact, at a Cummings concert about 12 years ago, he introduced the Bachman-penned Undun by saying "this next song is written by the world's prized jerk."

Then there's Bachman's tale of how *Takin' Care Of Business* started off as a mediocre Guess Who-era rip-off of the Beatles' Paperback Writer. The piano playing was supplied by a pizza delivery guy who Bachman spent hours trying to track down after BTO's label decided it was too

good to leave off the song's classic final mix.

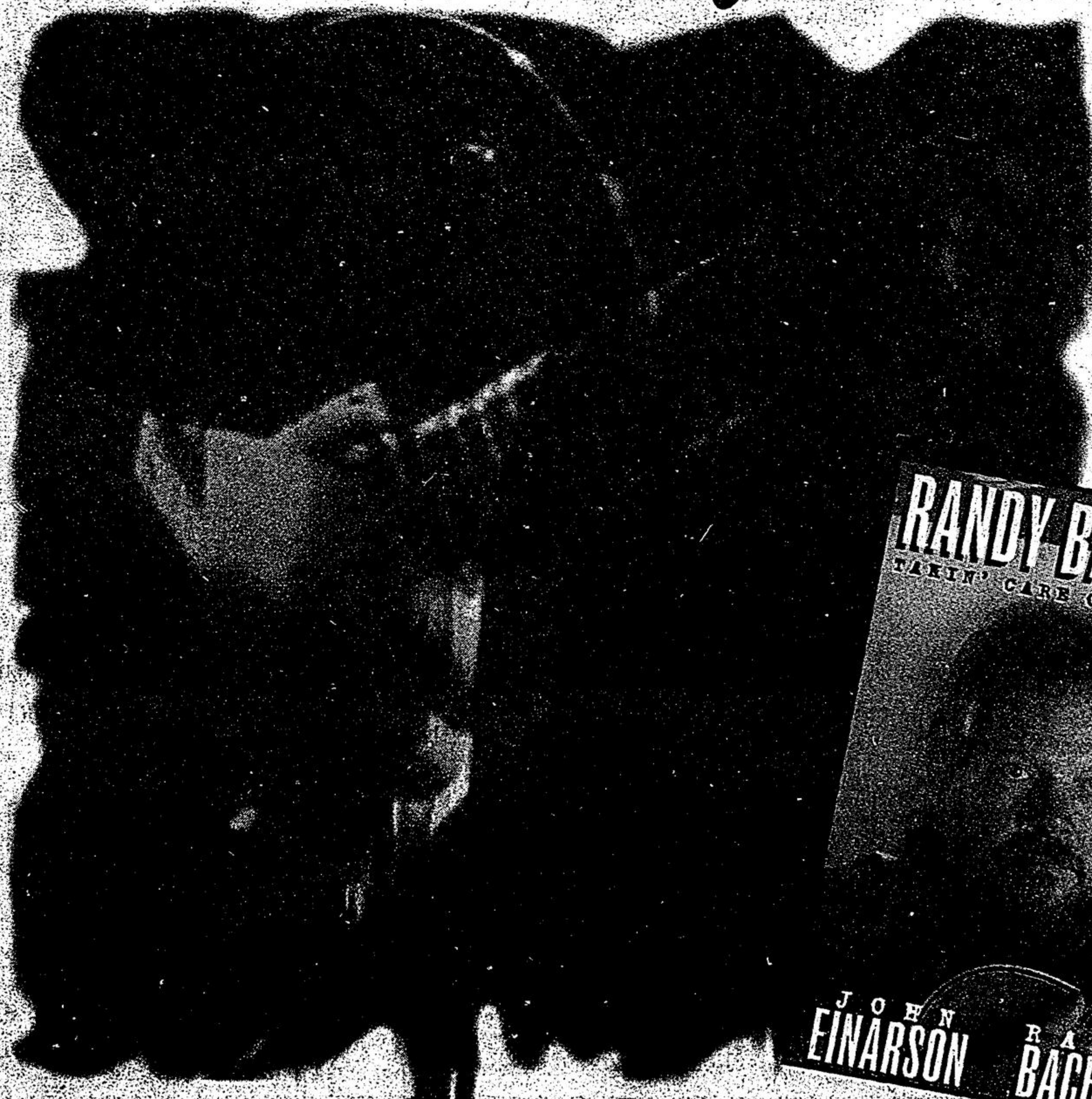
There's also plenty on the ugly breakdown of Bachman's first marriage, on his departure from the Guess Who in 1970 (Bachman finally admits he was booted out, rather than leaving on his own), on the two Guess Who reunions (last summer and in 1984), on his off-and-on feud with Cummings and on tour-

ing with Ringo Starr's band.

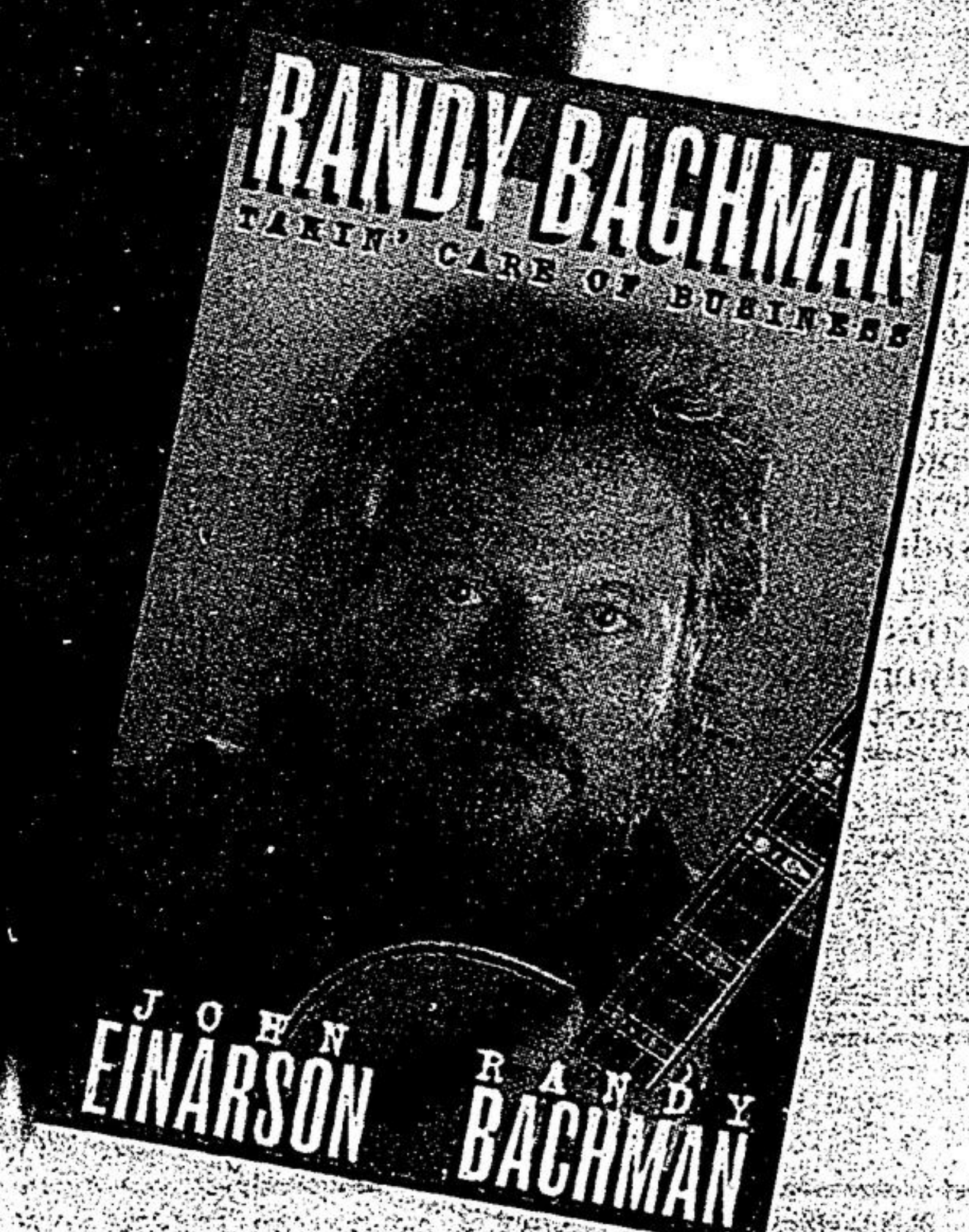
Einarson, who previously wrote a Guess Who biography, travelled with Bachman and used long interview snippets to break up his own narrative. For the

See BACHMAN'S, page 20.

# Takin' Care of Business



For fans of BTO and the Guess Who, *Takin' Care of Business* has it all — how each band started, what events took place to put them on the road to fame and riches — and why Bachman walked away from both.



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