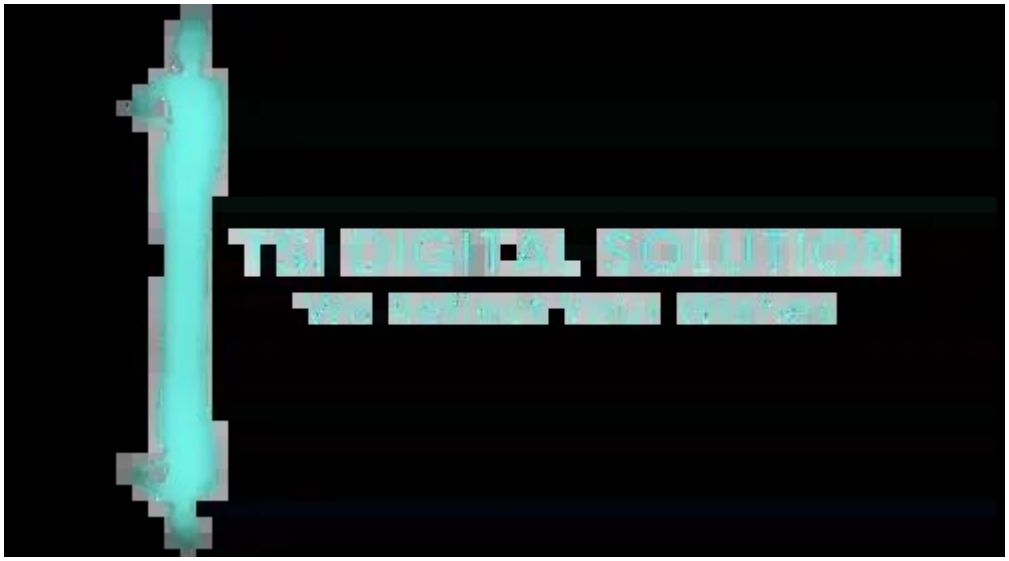
Beware the Template Trap: Risks & Remedies in Web Development

Category: Websites Blog
July 5, 2025





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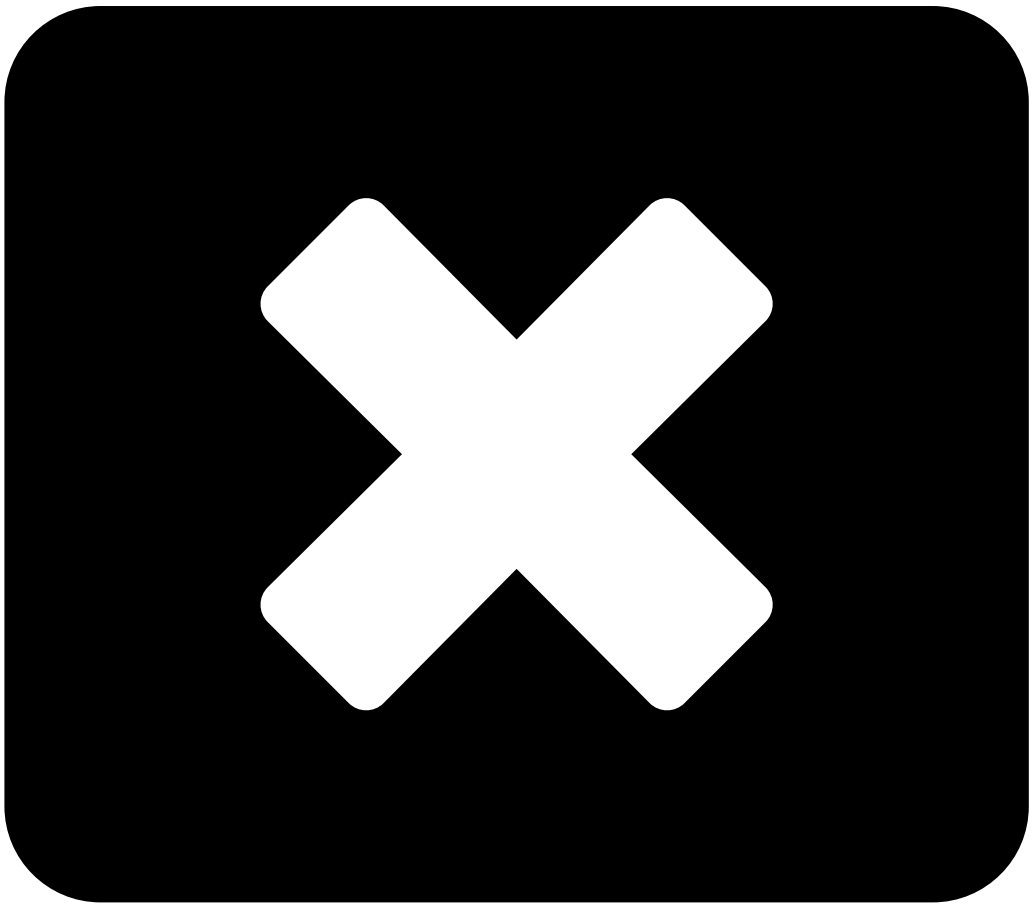

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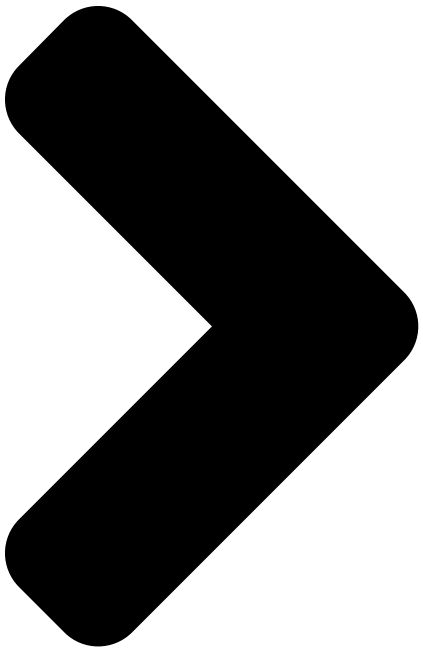

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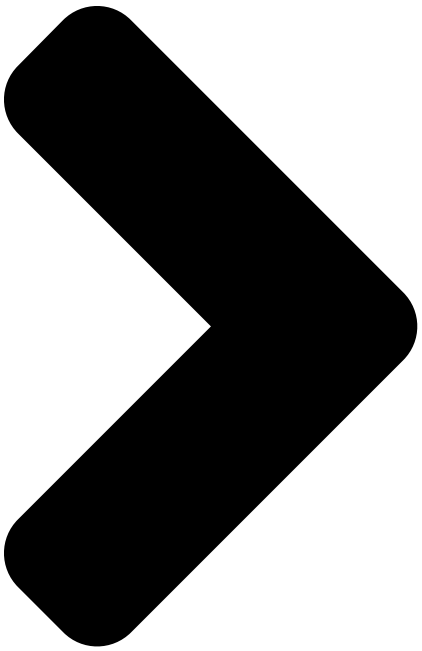

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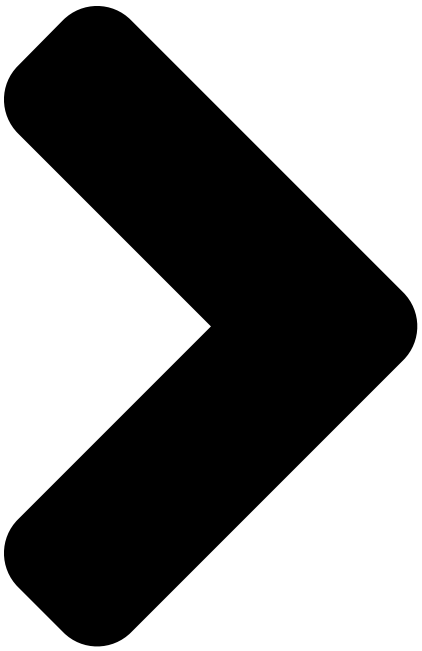

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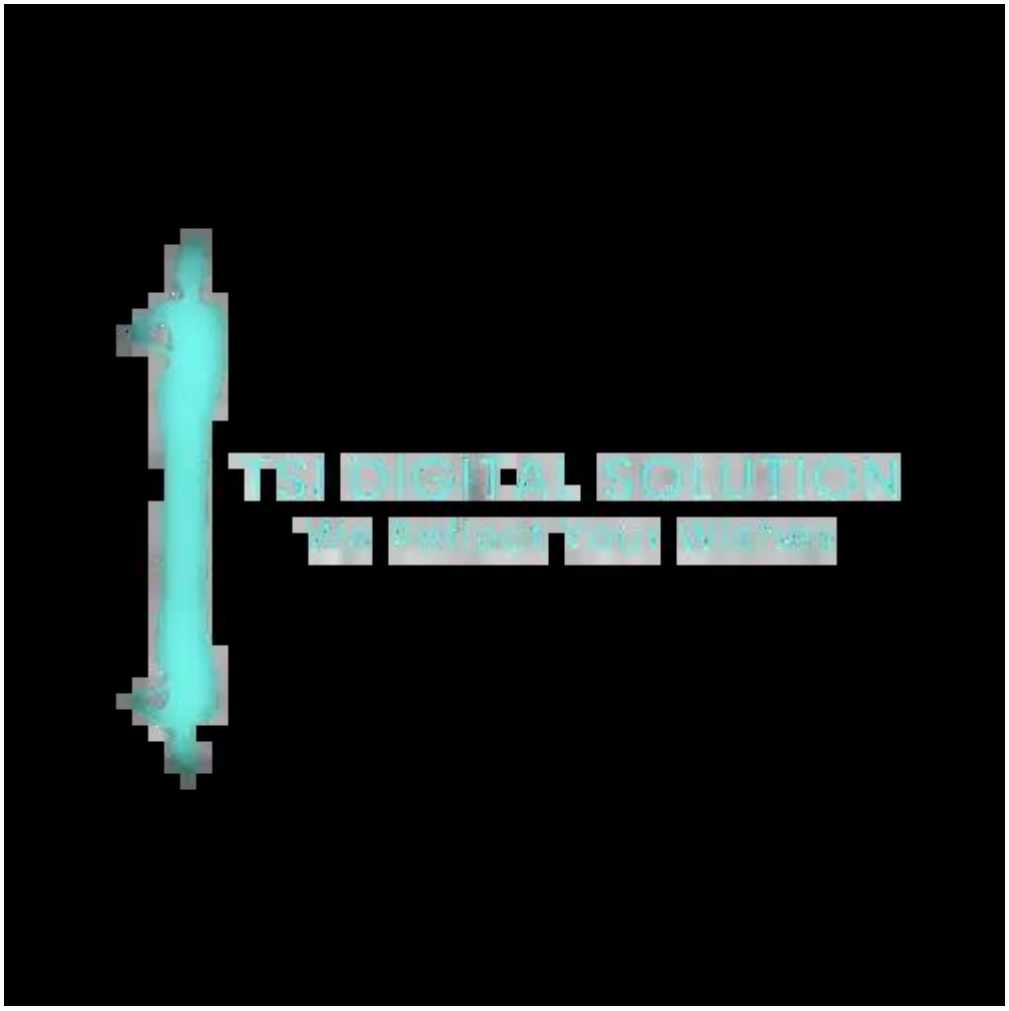
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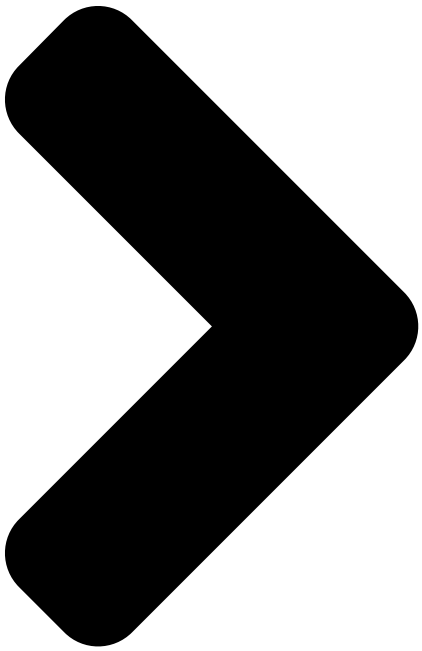

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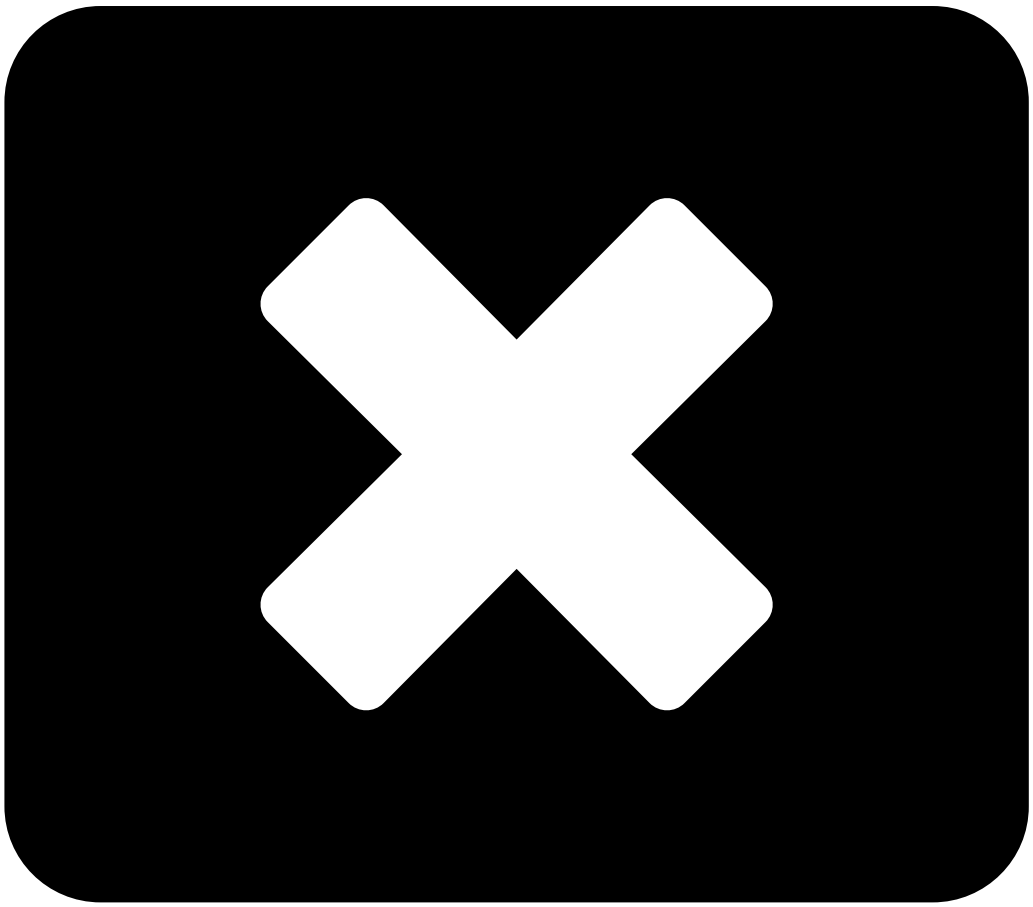

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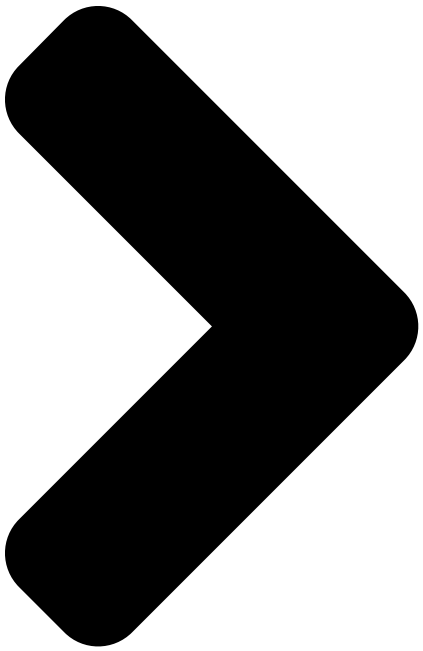

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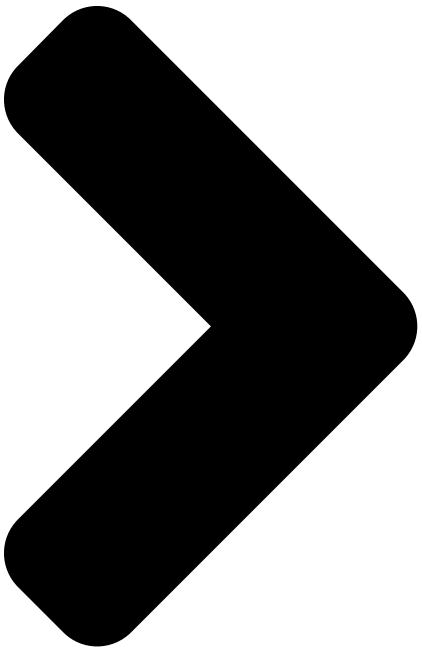
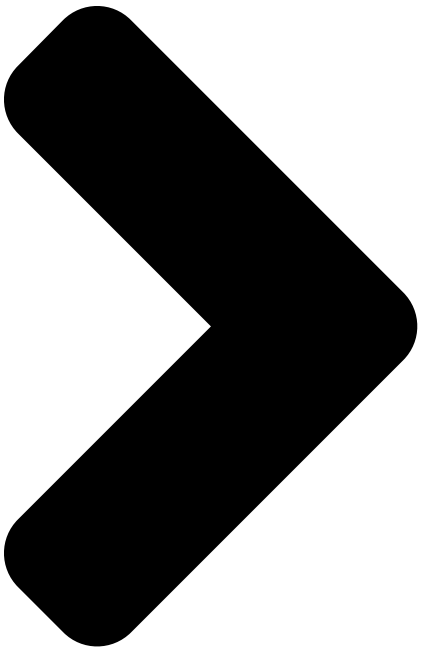


Web Design & Development



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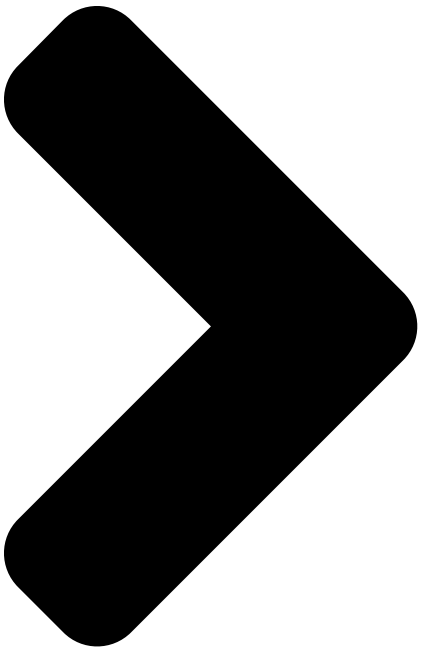

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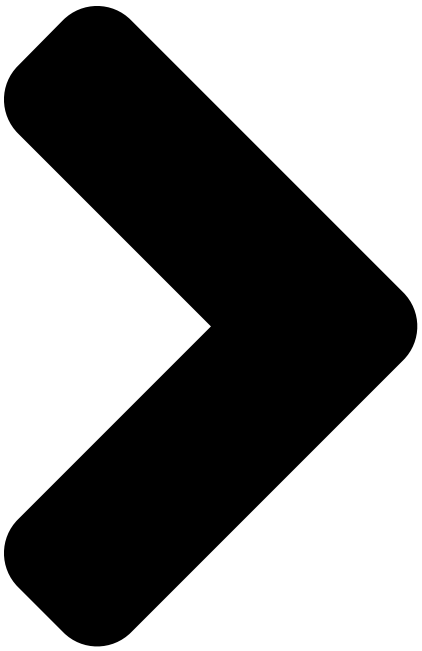

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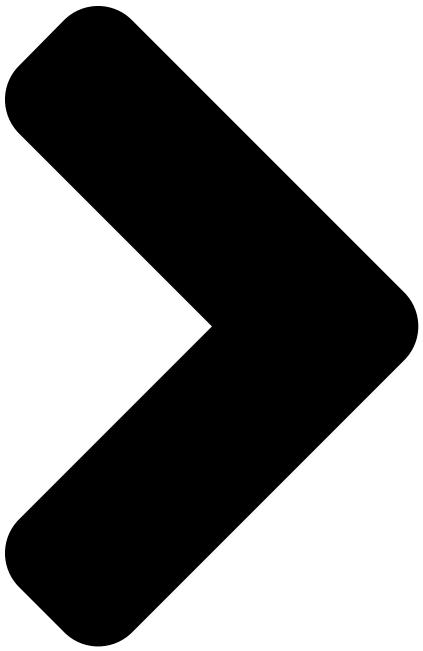

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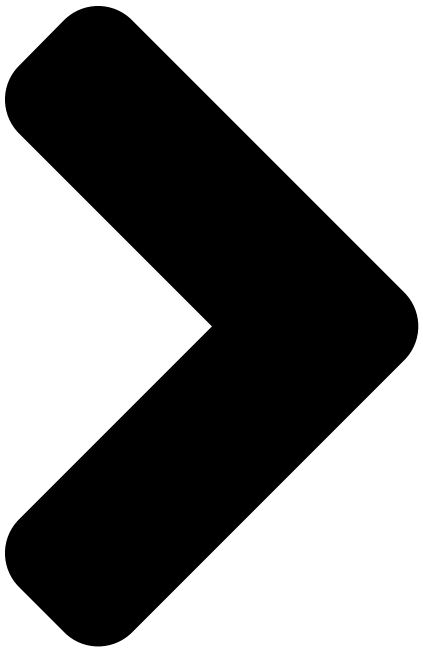

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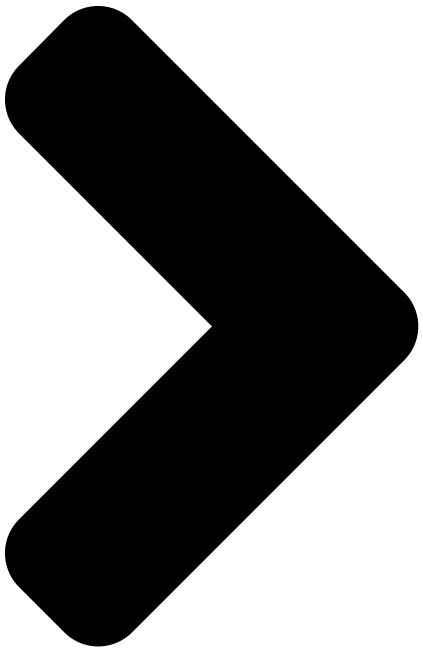
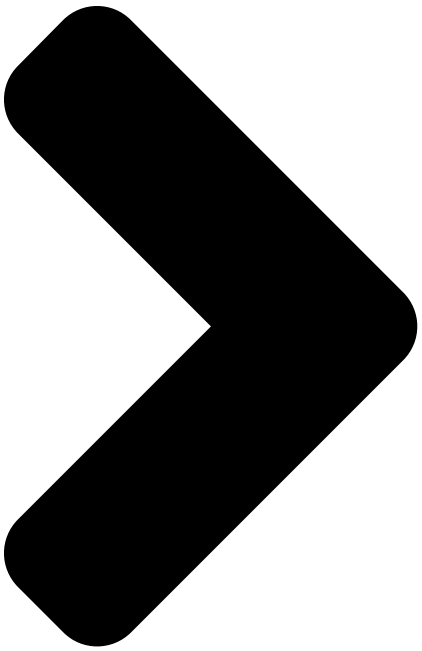
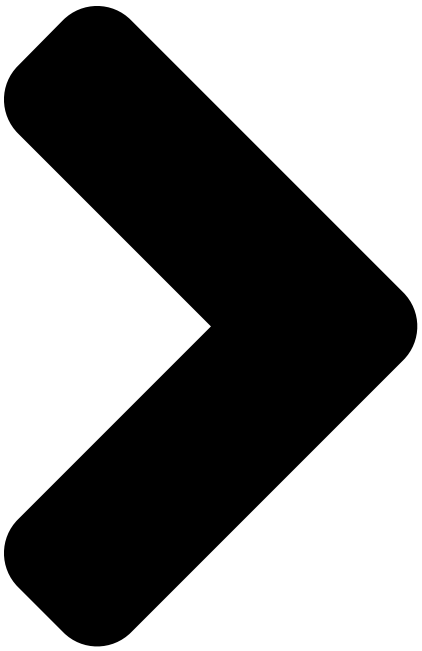


- Branding



Social Media & Content Creation



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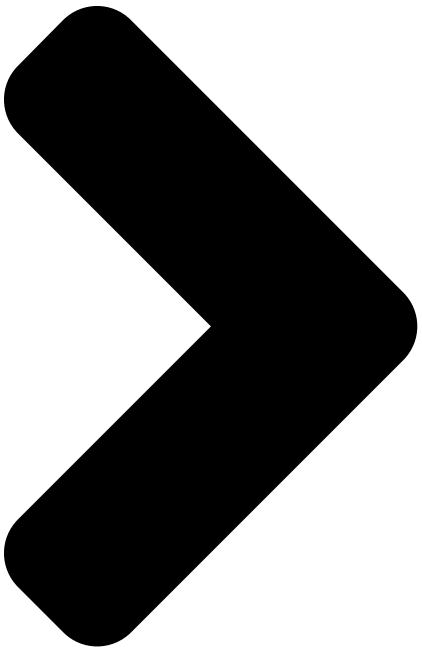

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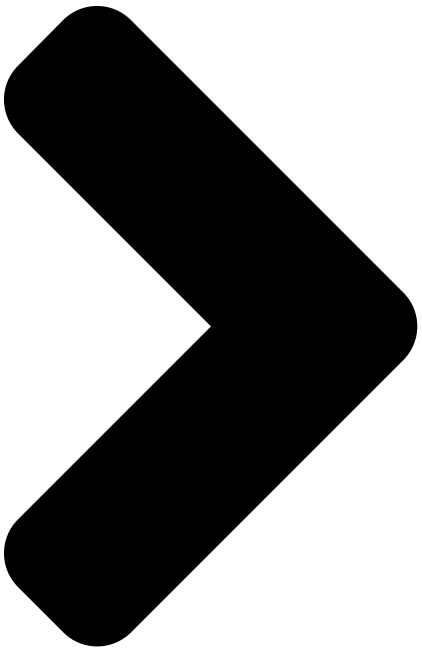

Photo- & Videography

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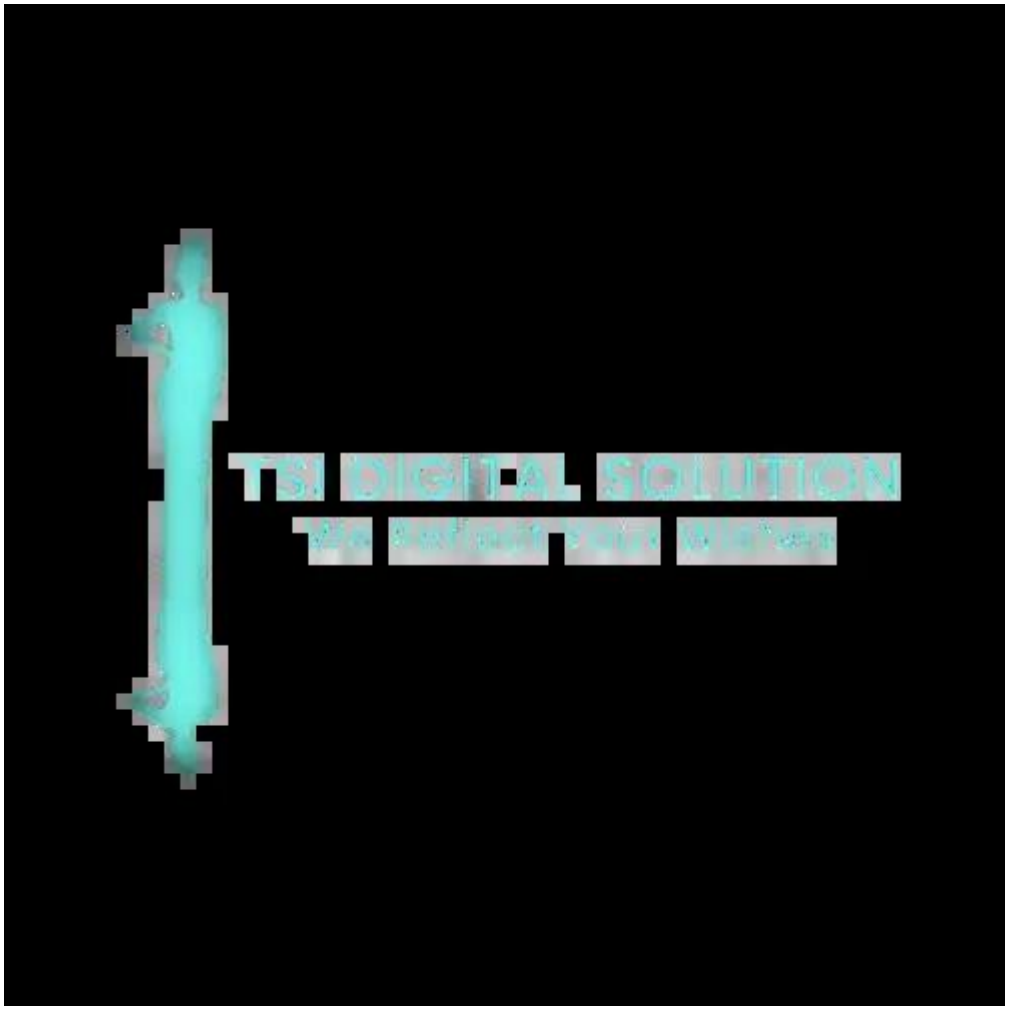
The way we work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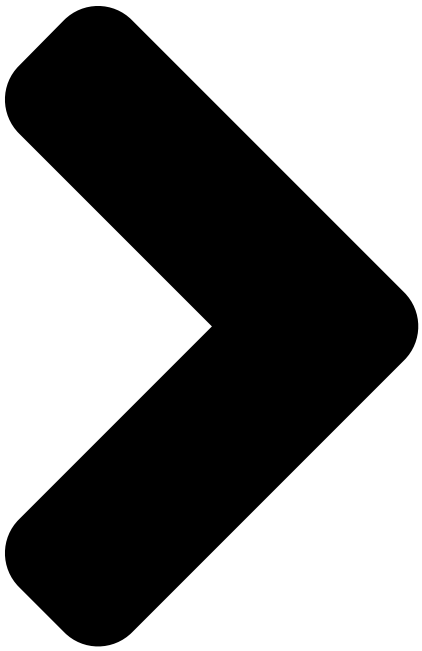

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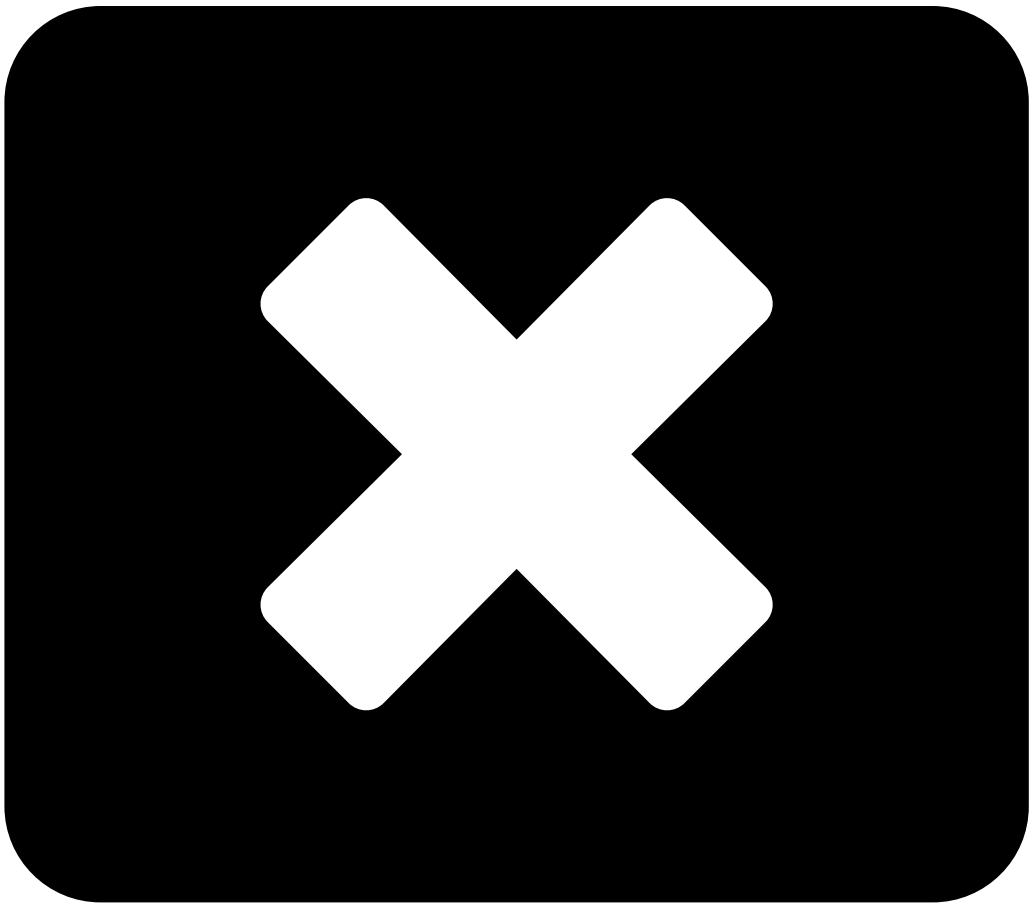

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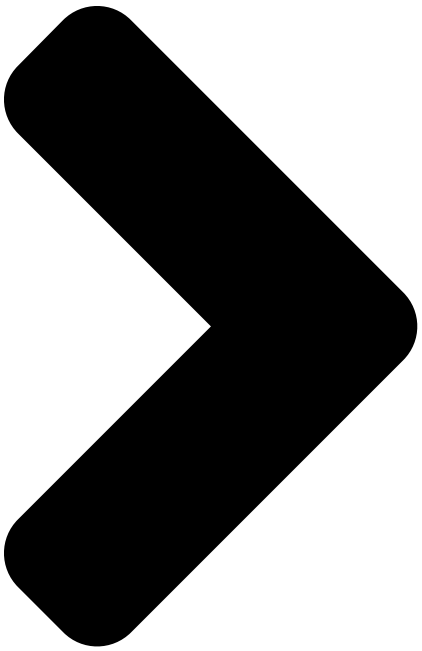

Realized projects

Calculate an estimate of your project costs directly online

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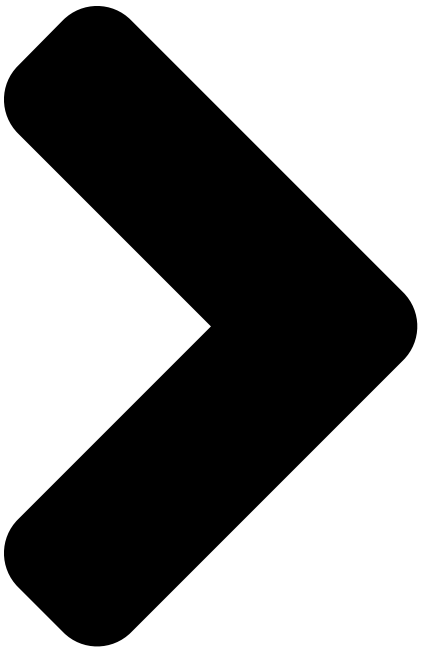
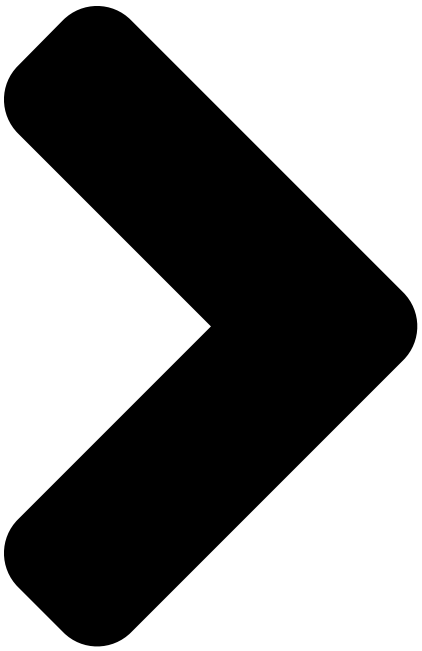


- Cost calculation for my website



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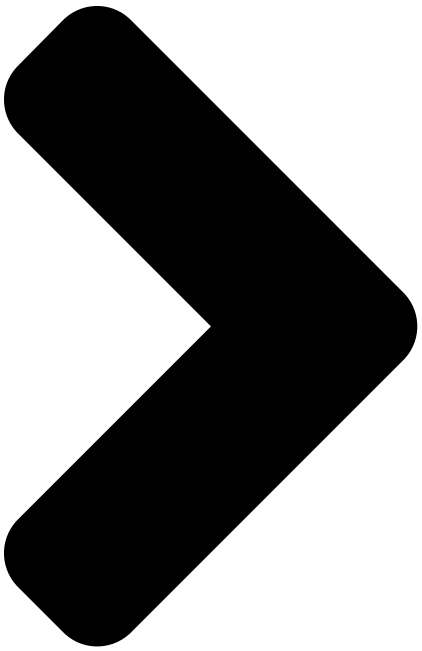

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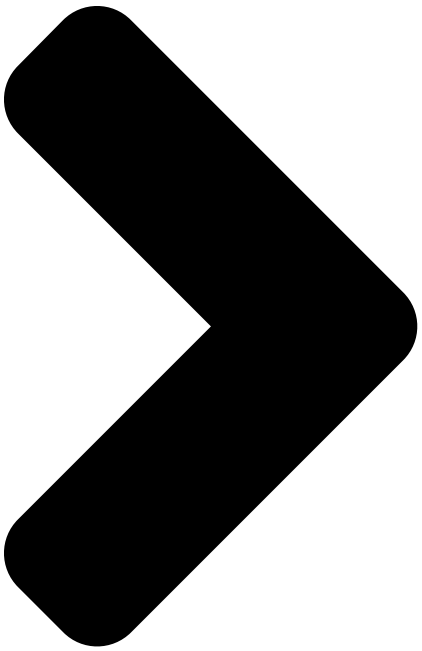

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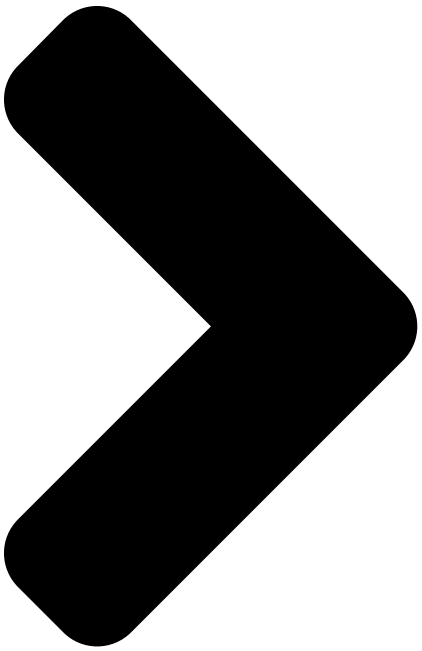
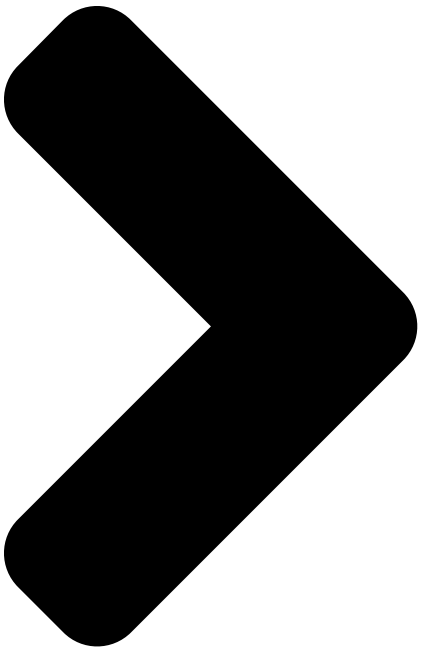
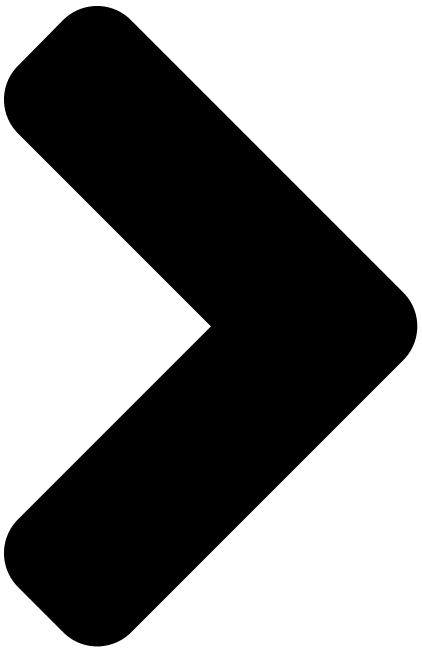


Cost calculation for an e-commerce shop



- Contact us for branding



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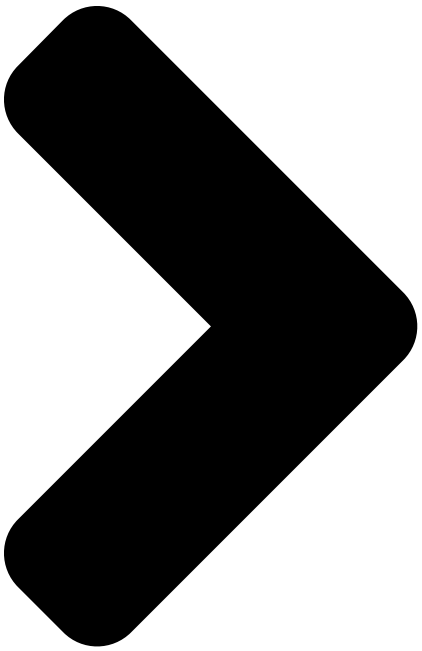
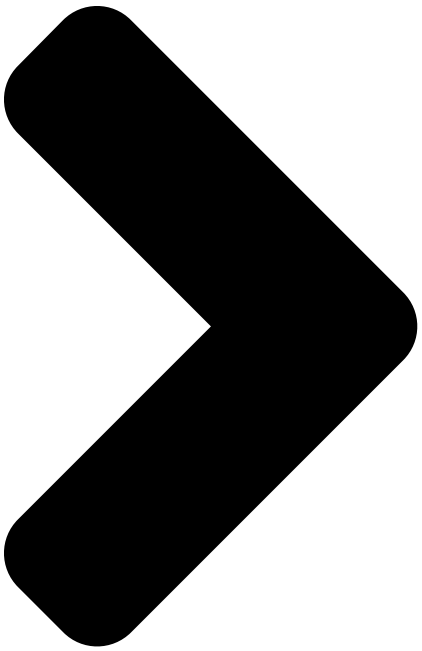


- Cost calculation for Graphic Design



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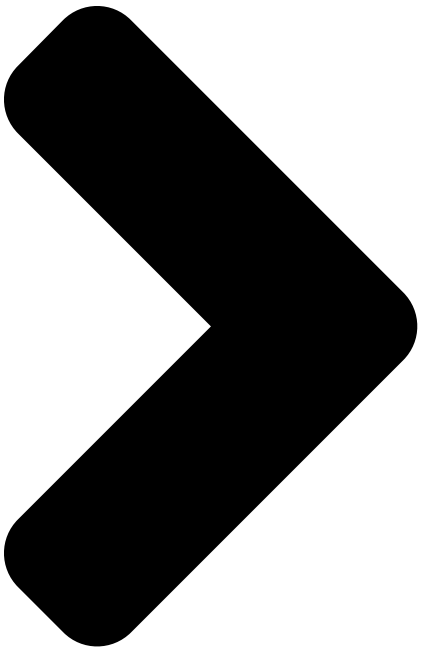

Cost calculation for Photo- & Videography

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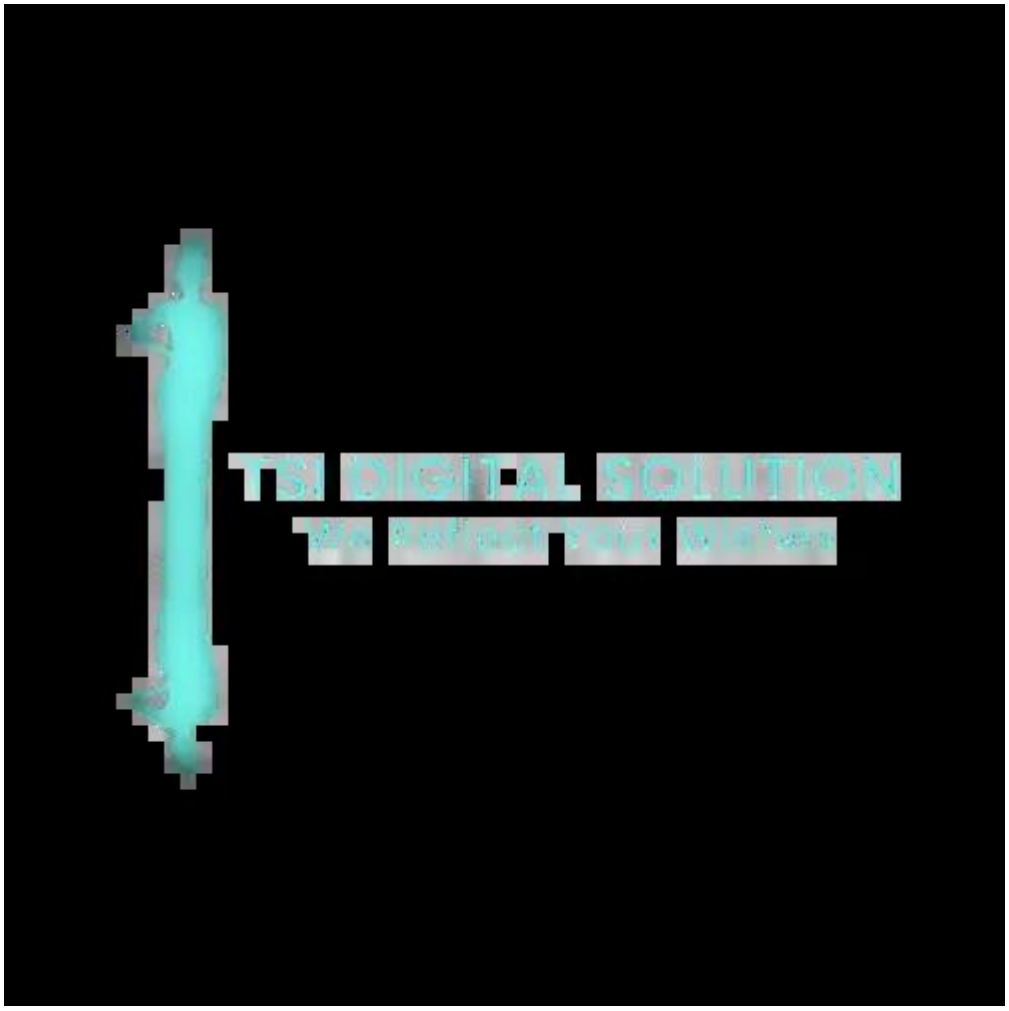
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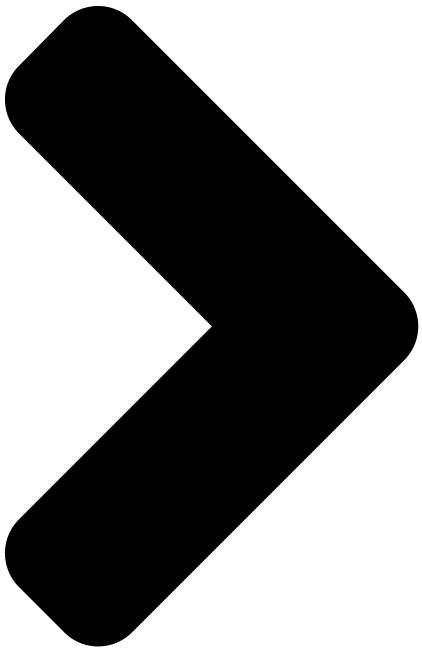

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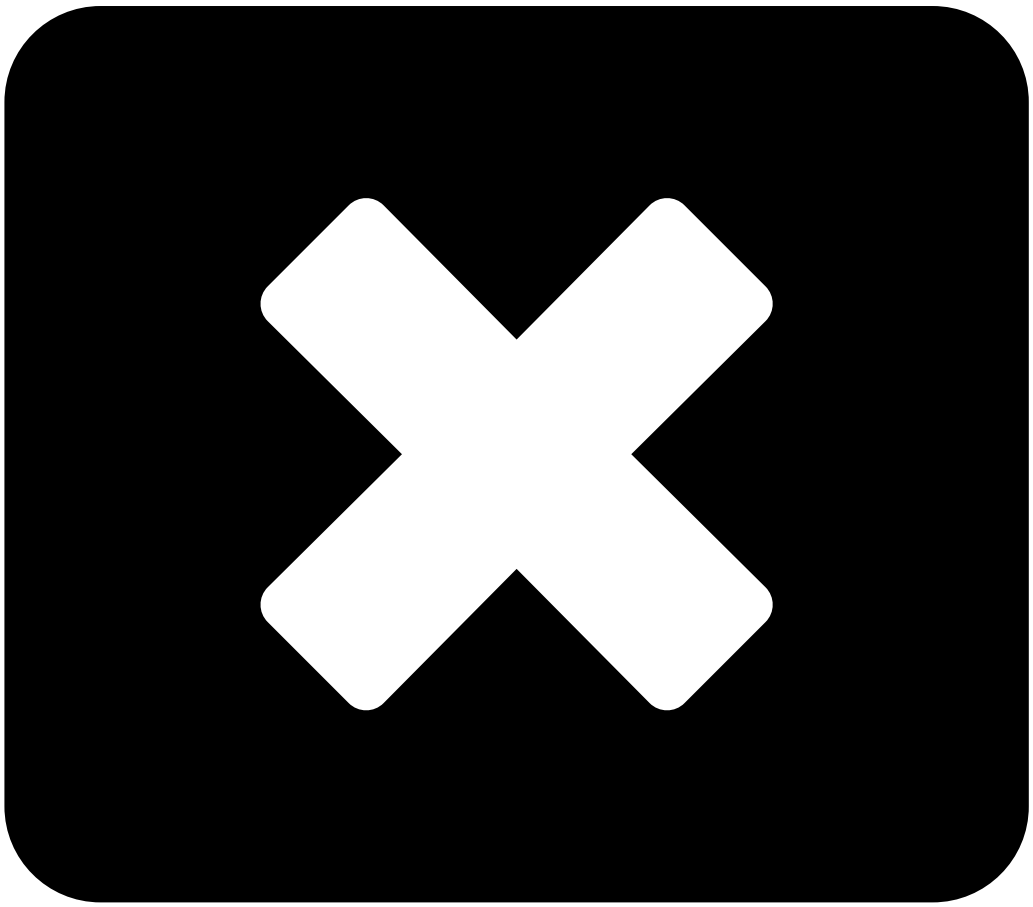

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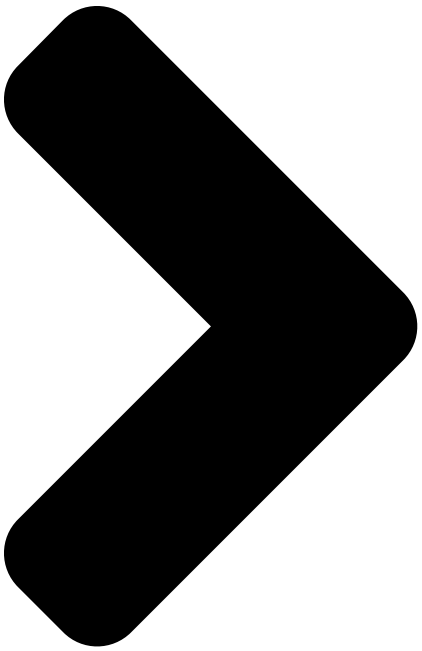

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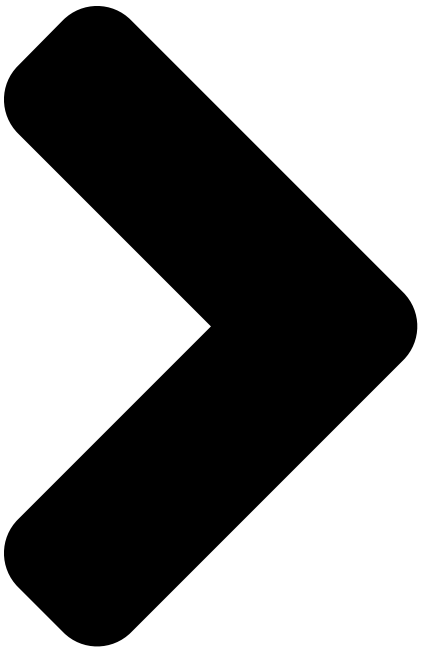
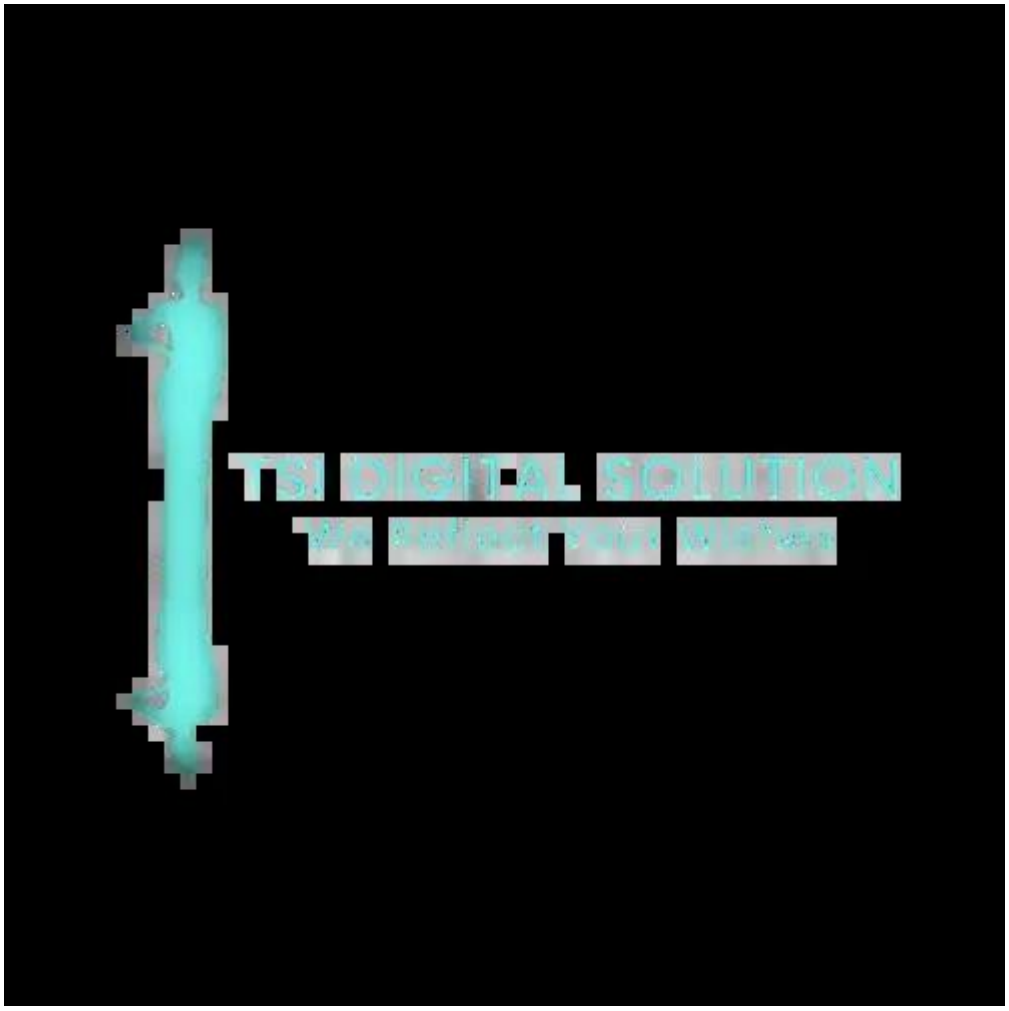


Demo

Just ask, we are here for you

Who we are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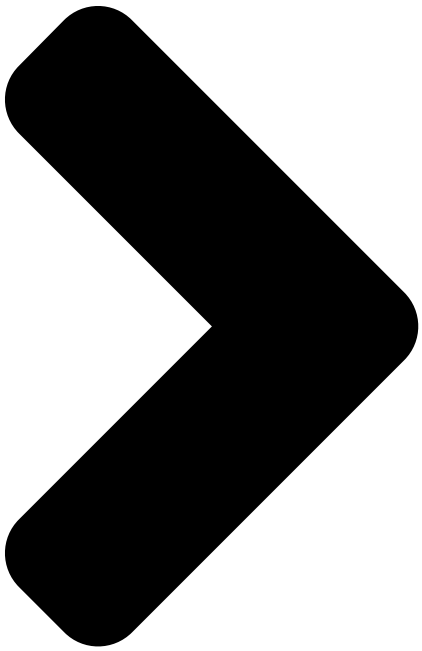

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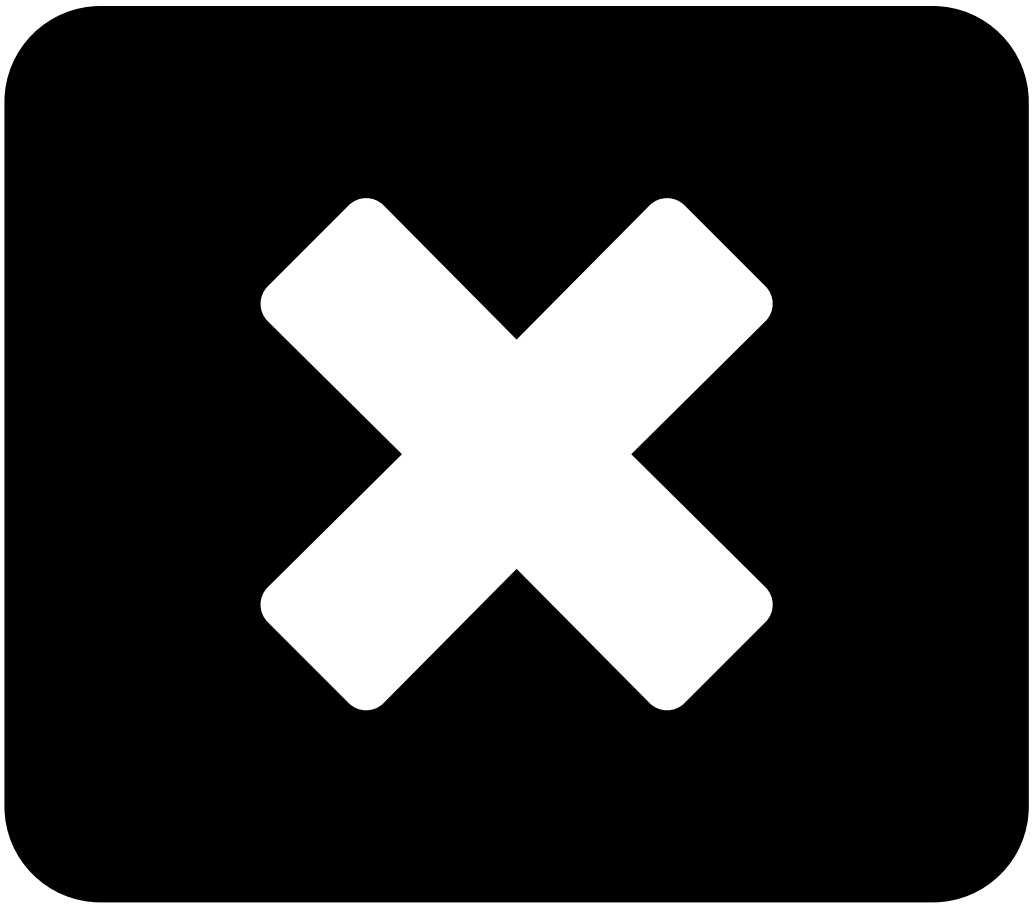

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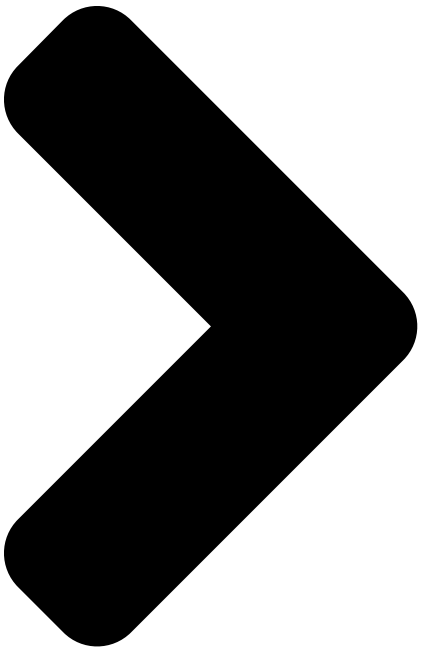

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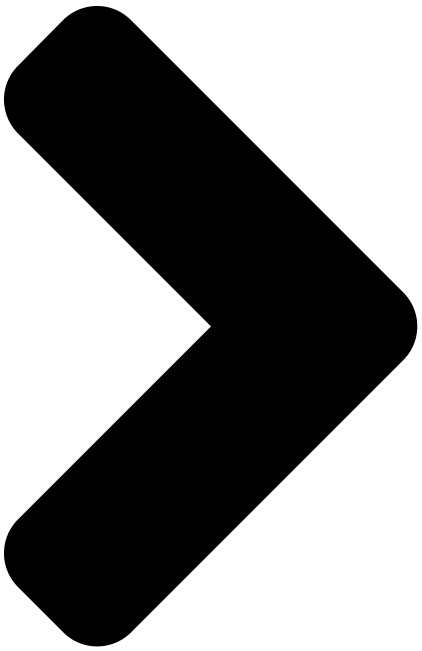

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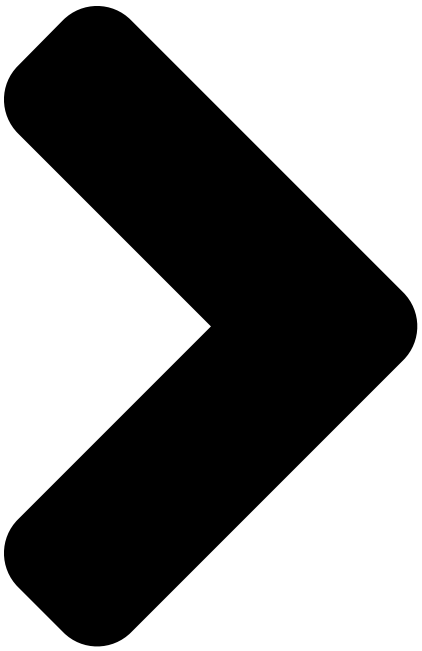

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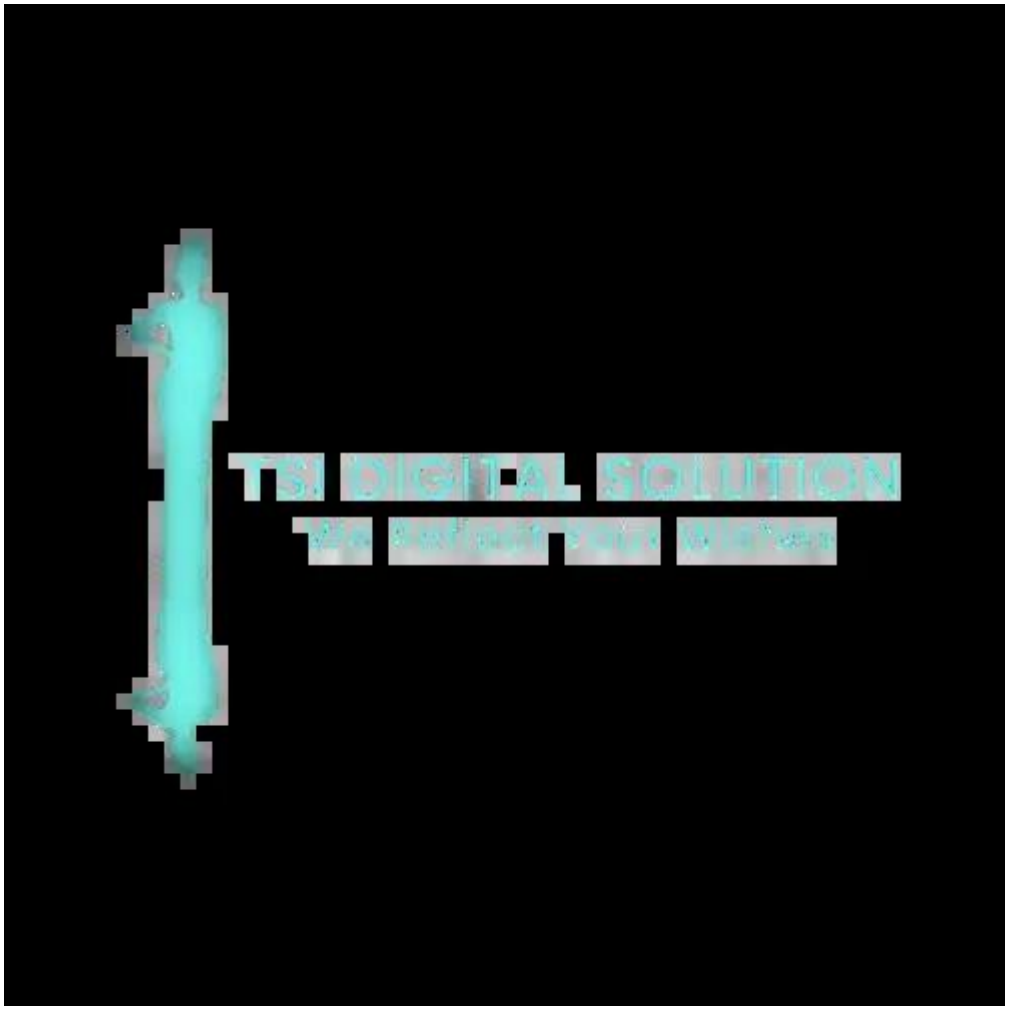
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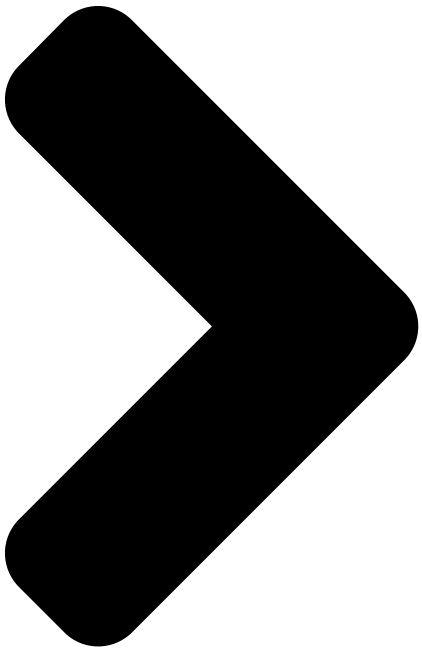

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Beware the Template Trap

Risks & Remedies in Web Development

Using **web development templates** can feel like unlocking instant site launches and budget savings. Yet beneath that convenience lie hidden pitfalls that can

stall growth, undermine credibility, or even expose you to legal and security disasters. In this in-depth guide, tailored for TSI Digital Solution clients and we dig into every major risk, share practical tips, and map out how templating will evolve, so you stay ahead of the curve.

Why Templates Tempt, and Where They Shine

Choosing a web development template often boils down to two simple wins: speed and cost.

• **Rapid deployment:** Launch a brochure site in days, not weeks.
• **Built-in features:** Responsive layouts, slider galleries, and SEO tags out of the box.

In fact, organizations report cutting time-to-market by up to **60%** when using templates. For startups and campaign microsites, that head start can translate into real competitive advantage.

The Hidden Risks Unveiled

Even the best-selling themes carry baggage. Below, we spotlight three core traps that routinely catch teams off guard.

Performance and SEO Pitfalls

Templates often bundle **50+ scripts and stylesheets**, but your site may use only 10% of them. That bloat adds up: pages overloaded with unused code suffer **35% slower** initial renders, driving bounce rates past 40%. Worse, generic meta descriptions and duplicate title tags can trigger search penalties, undermining the very “SEO-friendly” promise you paid for.

Security and Maintenance Nightmares

Nearly **one in three** template-based sites fall victim to exploits tied to outdated libraries or abandoned plugins. Without a clear update path, you risk cross-site scripting (XSS), remote code execution, or data breaches. Automated “one-click” updates sometimes introduce breaking changes that stay hidden until downtime strikes.

Compliance and Brand Dilution

Pre-built forms and analytics snippets rarely address GDPR or CCPA nuances out of the box. Fines can reach **€20 million** or 4% of global turnover for non-compliance. Meanwhile, cookie-cutter layouts blur brand identity: 62% of users judge trustworthiness on design uniqueness, so your templated look could cost you credibility and conversions.

Expert Safeguards: Turning Templates into Secure,

Scalable Foundations

You don’t have to ditch templates to avoid these traps. Apply these five strategies to fortify your site:

1. **Conduct a Pre-Launch Code Audit:**
   Use tools like Lighthouse and OWASP ZAP to flag unused assets, injection risks, and outdated dependencies before going live.

2. **Adopt Modular Overrides**
   Implement child themes or component libraries so core template updates never overwrite your custom code.

3. **Enforce a Performance Budget**
   Cap total script weight at **100 KB** and page size under **1 MB**. Integrate budget checks into your CI/CD pipeline to prevent regressions.

4. **Establish a Patch & Compliance Cadence**
   Subscribe to CVE alerts for each plugin or theme. Audit data-capture forms against GDPR/CCPA regulations monthly.

5. **Brand-First Customization**
   Infuse custom typography, color palettes, and micro-interactions to distinguish your site—leveraging templates only as starting points.

Pro Tips & Tricks for Day-to-Day Management

- **Lazy-Load Non-Critical Assets:** Defer off-screen images and widgets to cut initial load times by up to 30%.

- **Strip Unused CSS:** Tools like PurgeCSS can remove dormant styles, trimming kilobytes without manual work.

- **Automate Visual Regression Testing:** Catch layout shifts after template updates before they reach production.

- **Monitor Real-User Metrics:** Lab tests are helpful, but only real-user monitoring reveals true performance under varied network conditions.

Future Outlook: What’s Next for Templating

As the web evolves, templating will shift from static packs to adaptive

ecosystems:

- **AI-Powered Code Pruning:** Real-time analysis will eliminate unused functions on the fly, shrinking payloads and attack surfaces.

- **Headless + Component-Driven Templates:** Frameworks like Next.js will bundle only the components you reference, delivering static-speed performance with dynamic flexibility.

- **Built-In Compliance Engines:** Future templates will integrate consent management platforms (CMPs) and privacy-by-design flows by default, reducing legal friction.

TSI Digital Solution is already piloting these approaches—guiding clients toward more robust, future-proof infrastructures that harness template convenience without compromise.

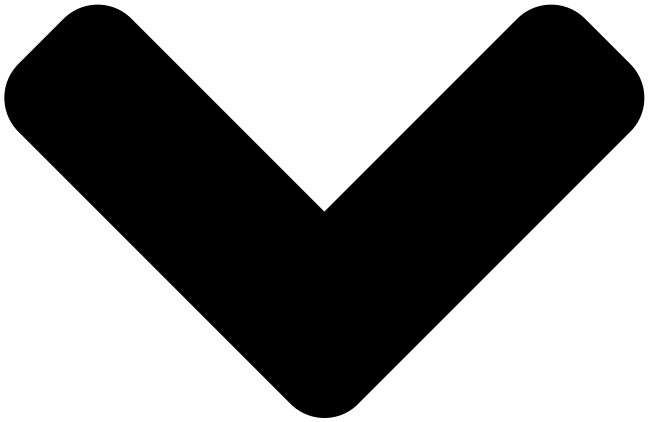
Conclusion

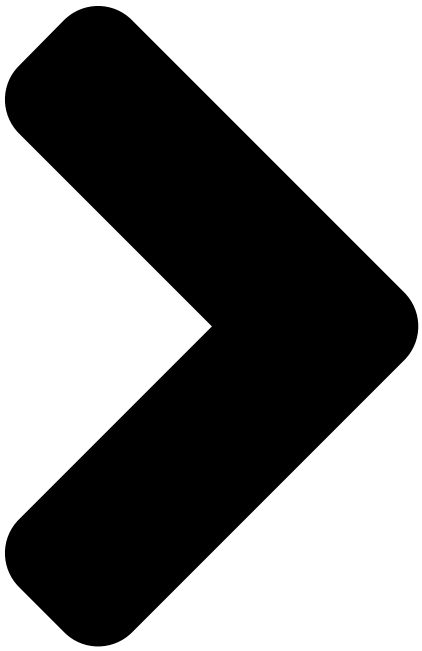
Web development templates offer undeniable advantages, but only when treated as strategic launchpads, not turnkey endpoints. By recognizing the silent threats of performance drag, security gaps, and compliance oversights, and by applying disciplined audits, modular overrides, and proactive monitoring, you can convert template-based builds into secure, high-performance platforms.

Embrace these best practices today, and you'll achieve the speed and cost savings of templates, while safeguarding your brand and future-proofing your digital presence.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

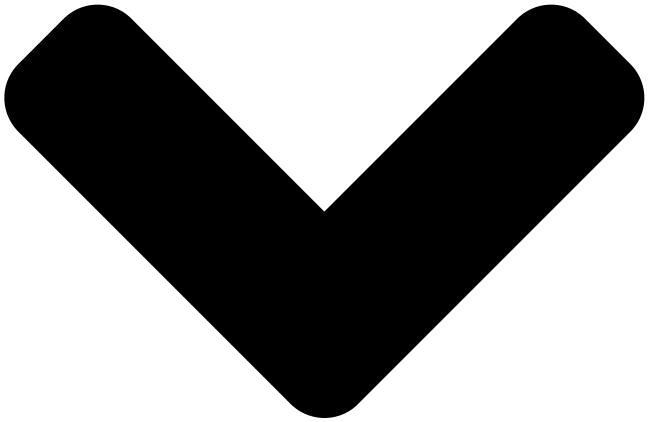
What are the main risks of using a web development template?

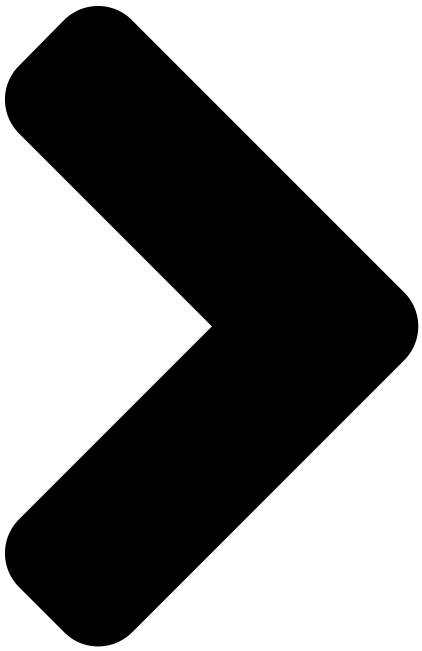




The main risks include performance and SEO pitfalls from code bloat, security vulnerabilities from outdated components, and legal/compliance issues from non-compliant forms. Templates can also dilute your brand with a generic look.

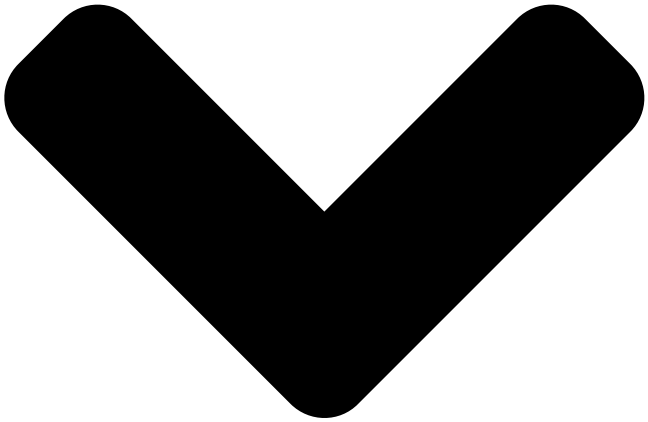
How do templates hurt website performance and SEO?

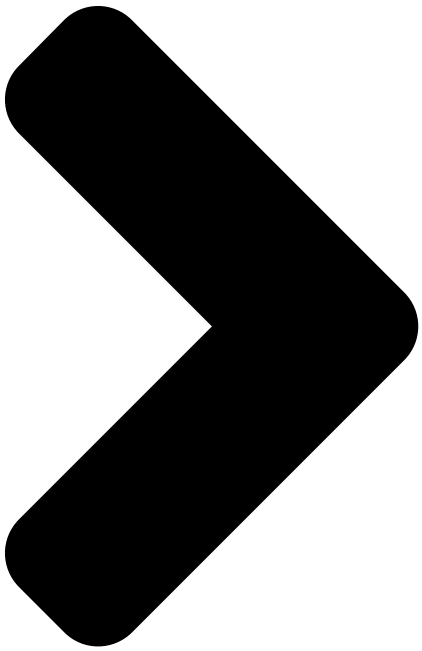




Templates often bundle excessive unused code, slowing page loads and increasing bounce rates. Generic or duplicate meta tags can also trigger search engine penalties, harming your SEO.

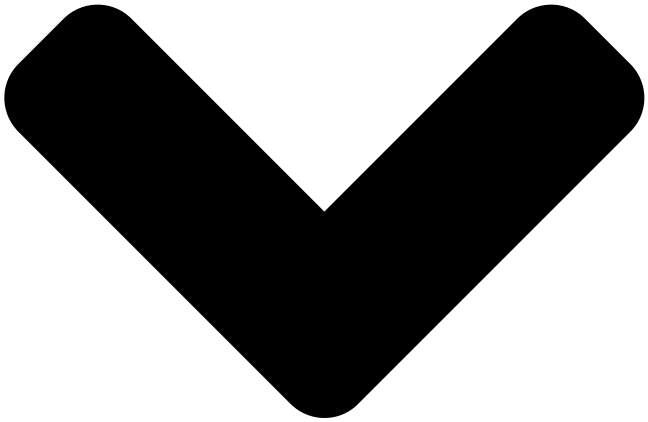
What are the security risks with template-based websites?

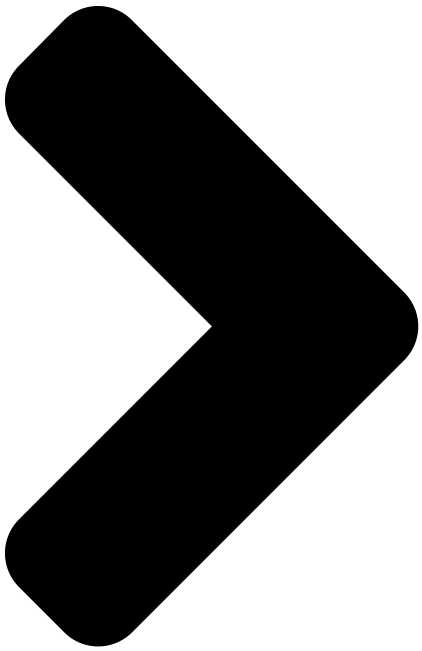




Security risks stem from abandoned plugins and outdated libraries, which can lead to exploits like cross-site scripting (XSS) or data breaches. Automated updates can also introduce breaking changes.

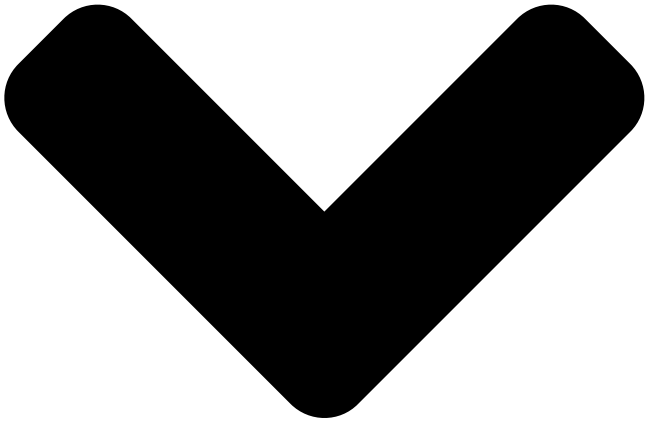
How can I safely customize a template without breaking updates?

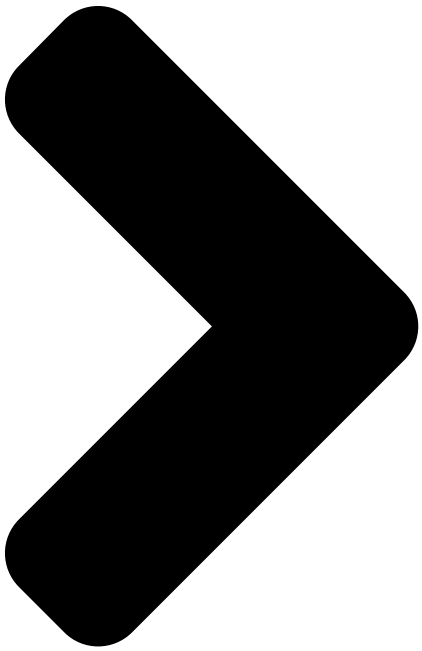




Use a child theme or a component library for customizations. This creates modular overrides, ensuring your custom code remains intact when the core template receives updates.

What is the future of web development templating?





The future points toward AI-powered code pruning, headless/component-driven templates for better performance, and built-in compliance engines to automatically address regulations like GDPR.

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The future points toward AI-powered code pruning, headless/component-driven templates for better performance, and built-in compliance engines to

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Reach Out to Us

Ready to harness templates without risk?

Get a tailor-made template risk assessment and a roadmap to secure, scalable web development, delivering speed, SEO, and peace of mind.

Contact TSI Digital Solution to preserve your voice and grow with authenticity.

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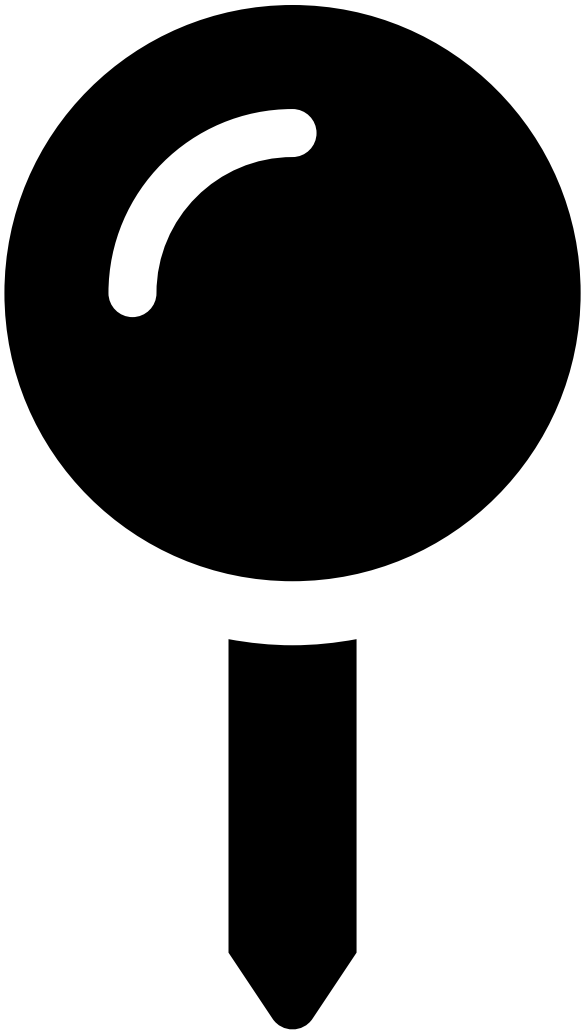

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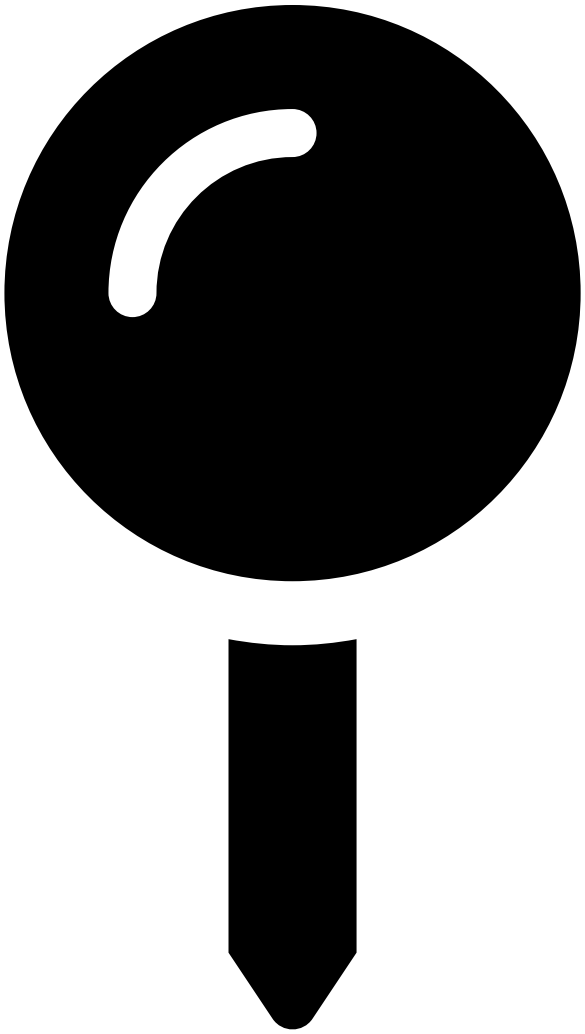

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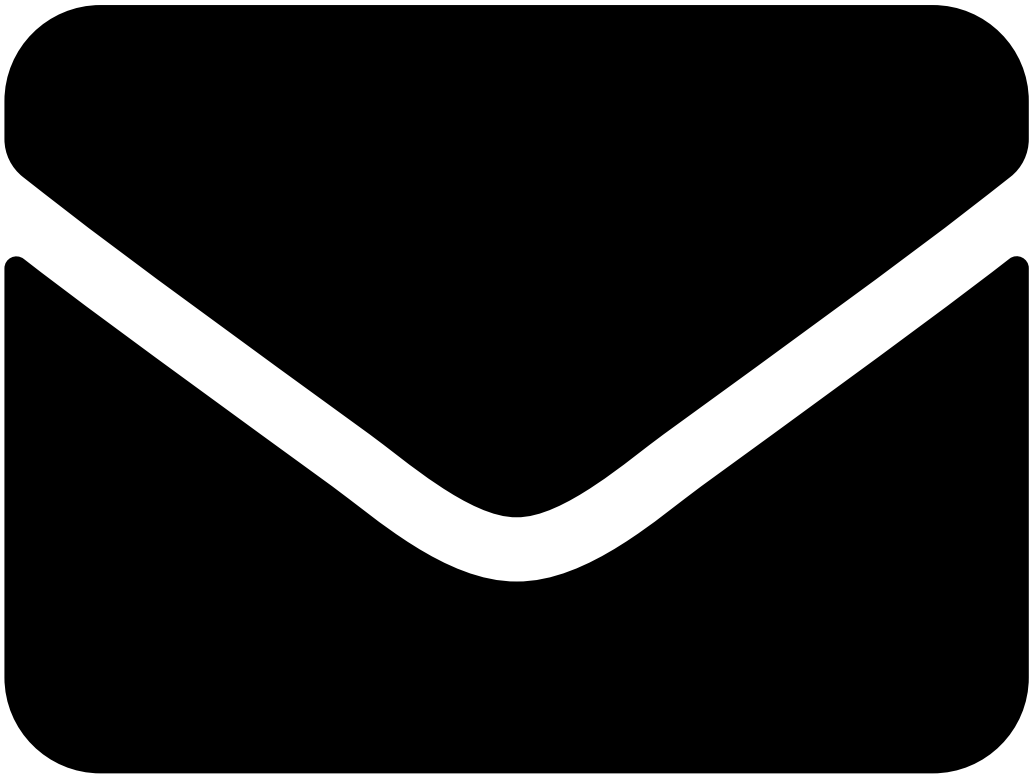

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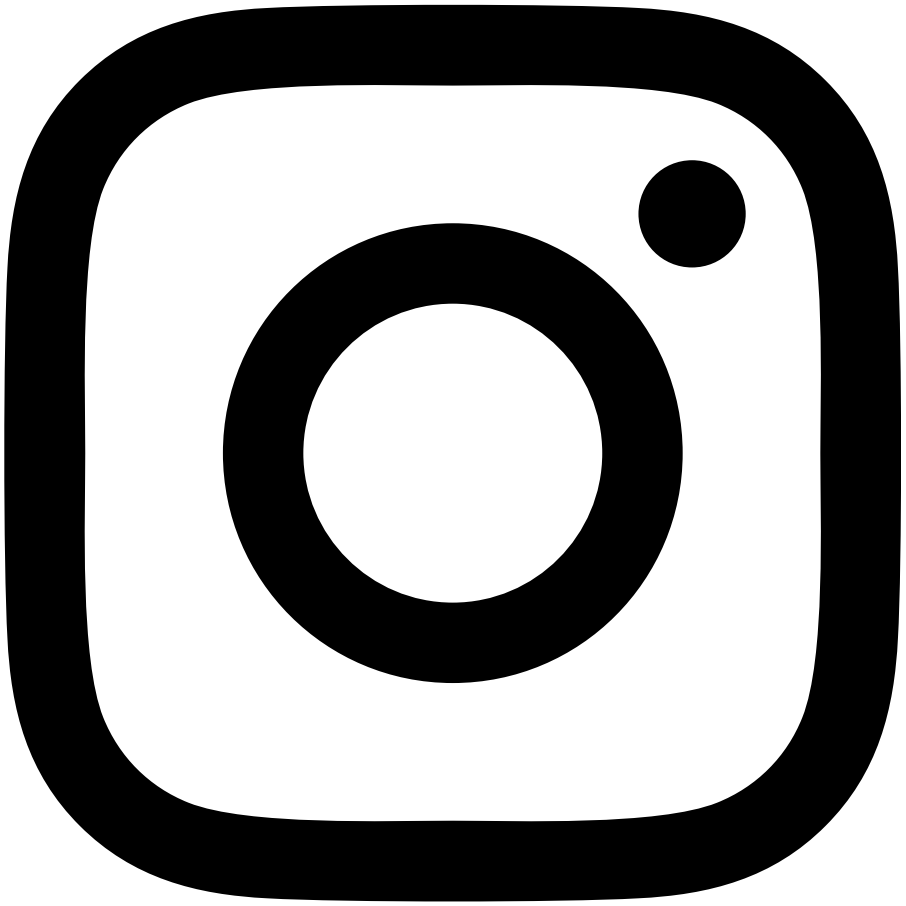

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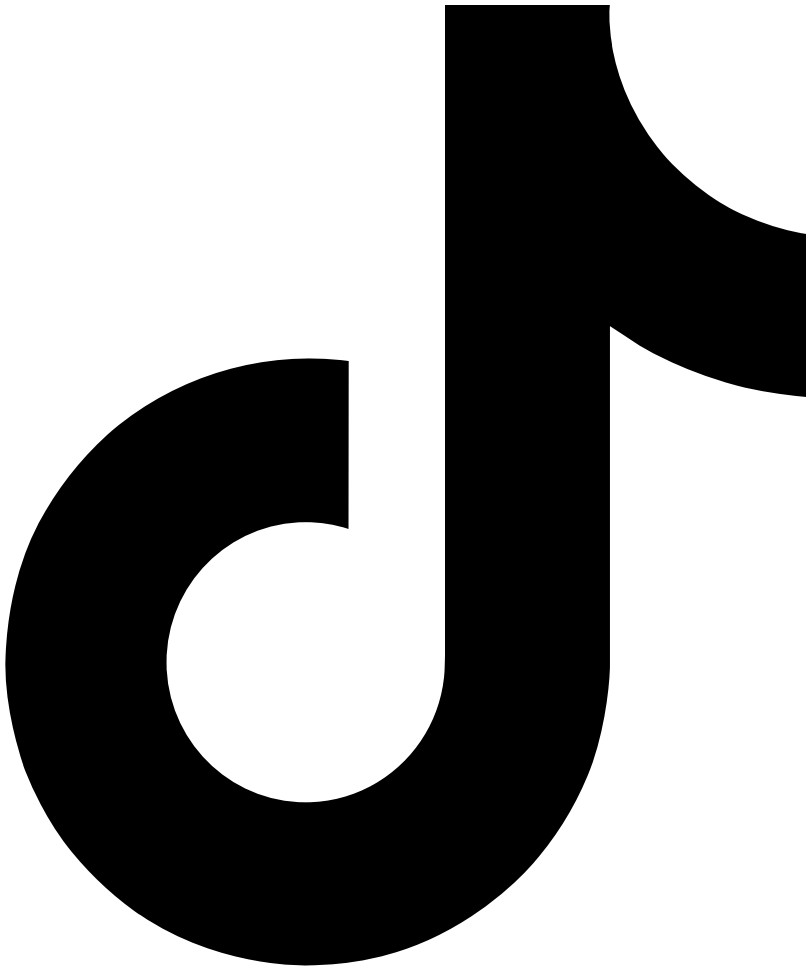

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