24/02/2026

# The Vespers of Forgiveness in Sydney



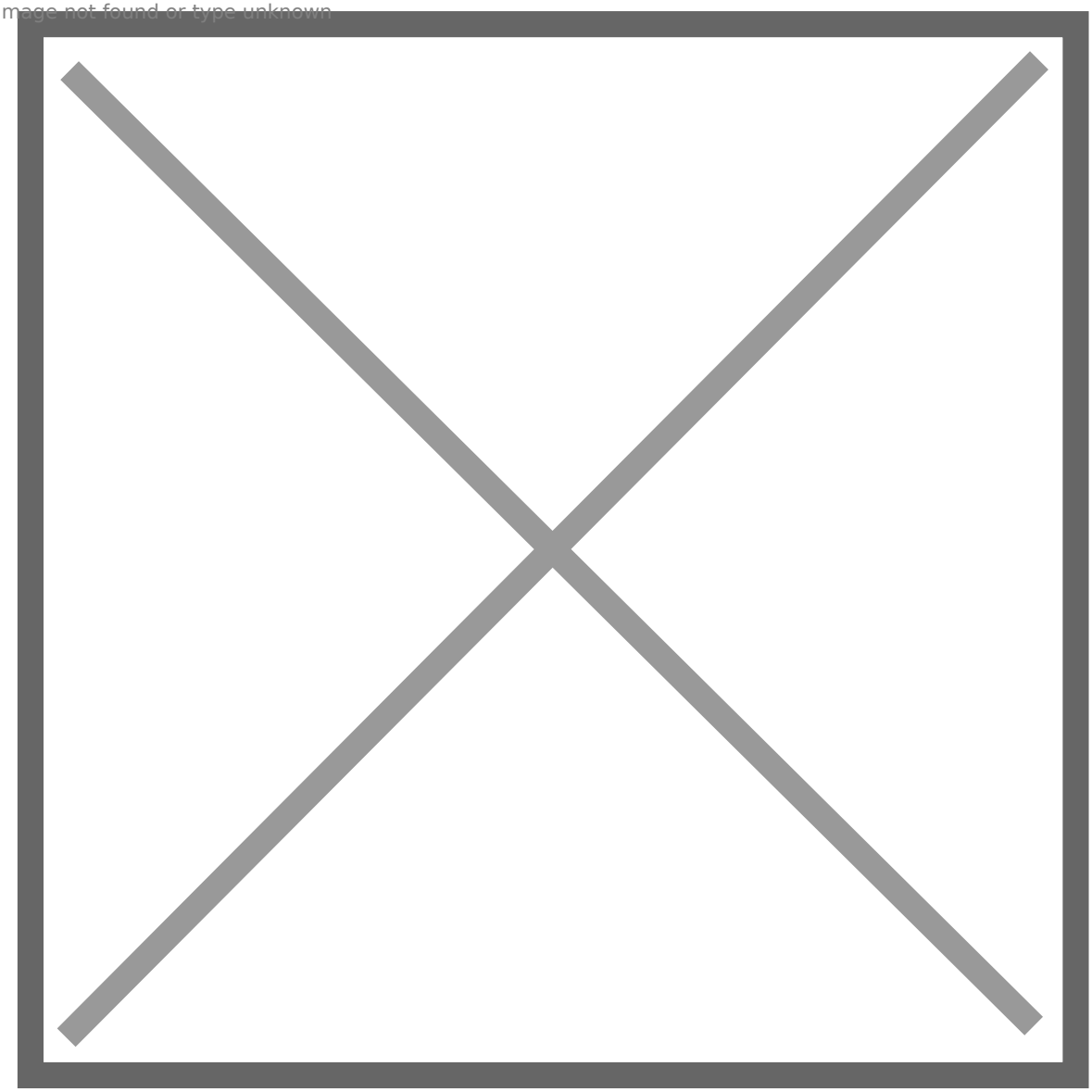
In a deeply prayerful and reverent atmosphere, on the afternoon of Cheesefare Sunday, 22 February, the First Lenten Vespers of Holy and Great Lent, known as the Vespers of Forgiveness, was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of Our Lady in Sydney.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia presided over the service. Present also in prayer were Their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Saint George, Yellow Rock; Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, Chief Secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod; and Bishop Christophoros of Kerasounta, Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese. A large number of clergy from the city of Sydney also took part, while many devout faithful filled the Cathedral. Among them was Mr Athanasios Lambrou, Communications Advisor at the Office of Public Diplomacy of the Consulate General of Greece in Sydney, representing the Consul General Mr Georgios Skemperis, as well as presidents and representatives of organisations and institutions of the Holy Archdiocese.

At the conclusion of Vespers, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios delivered an address on the significance of the period of Holy and Great Lent, which constitutes a challenge for the spiritual advancement of the faithful. As he noted in his introduction: “This blessed period is a challenge for all Christians to become better,

to become better not in the areas that the modern world presents to us, but to become better spiritually.”

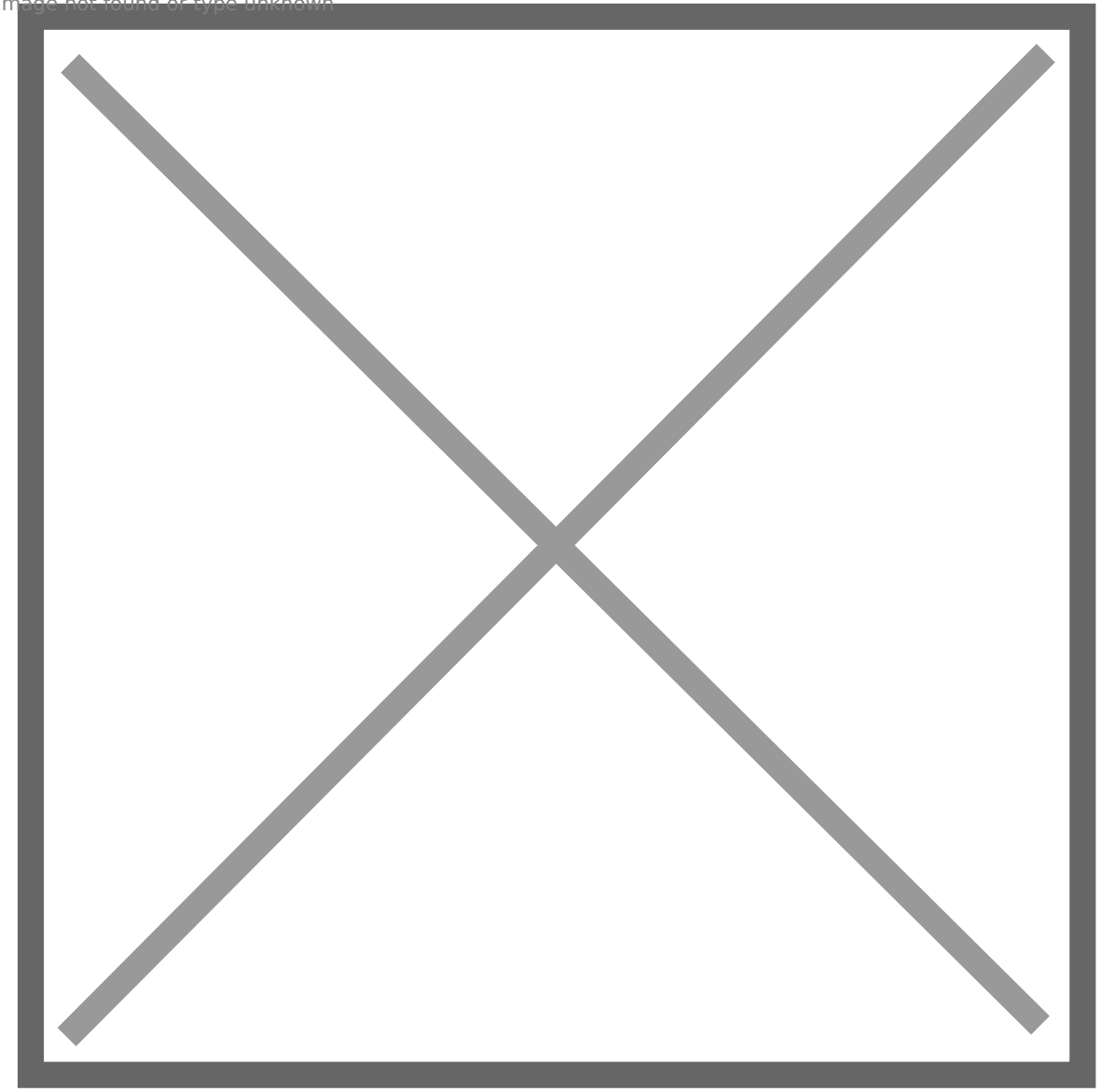
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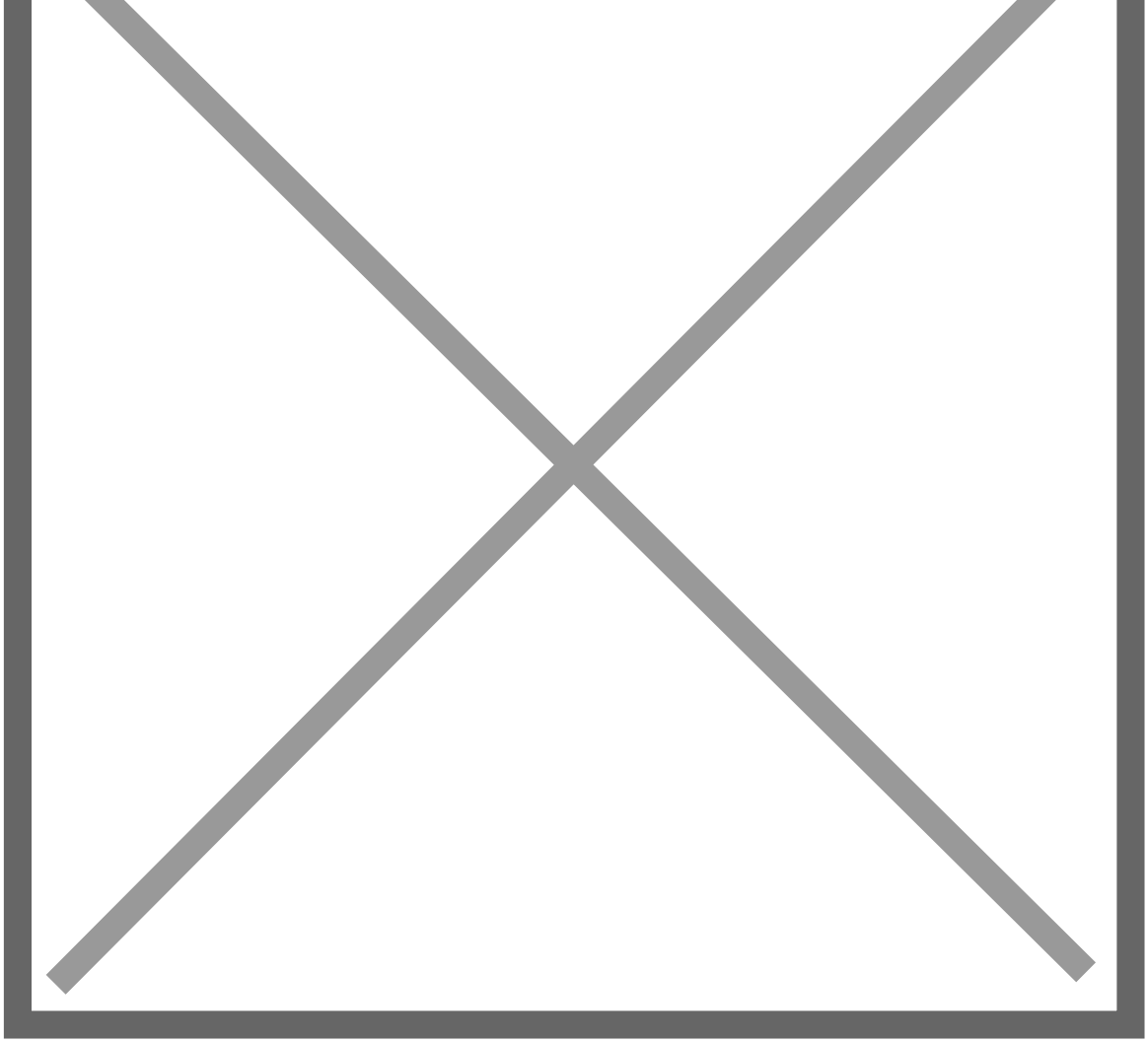


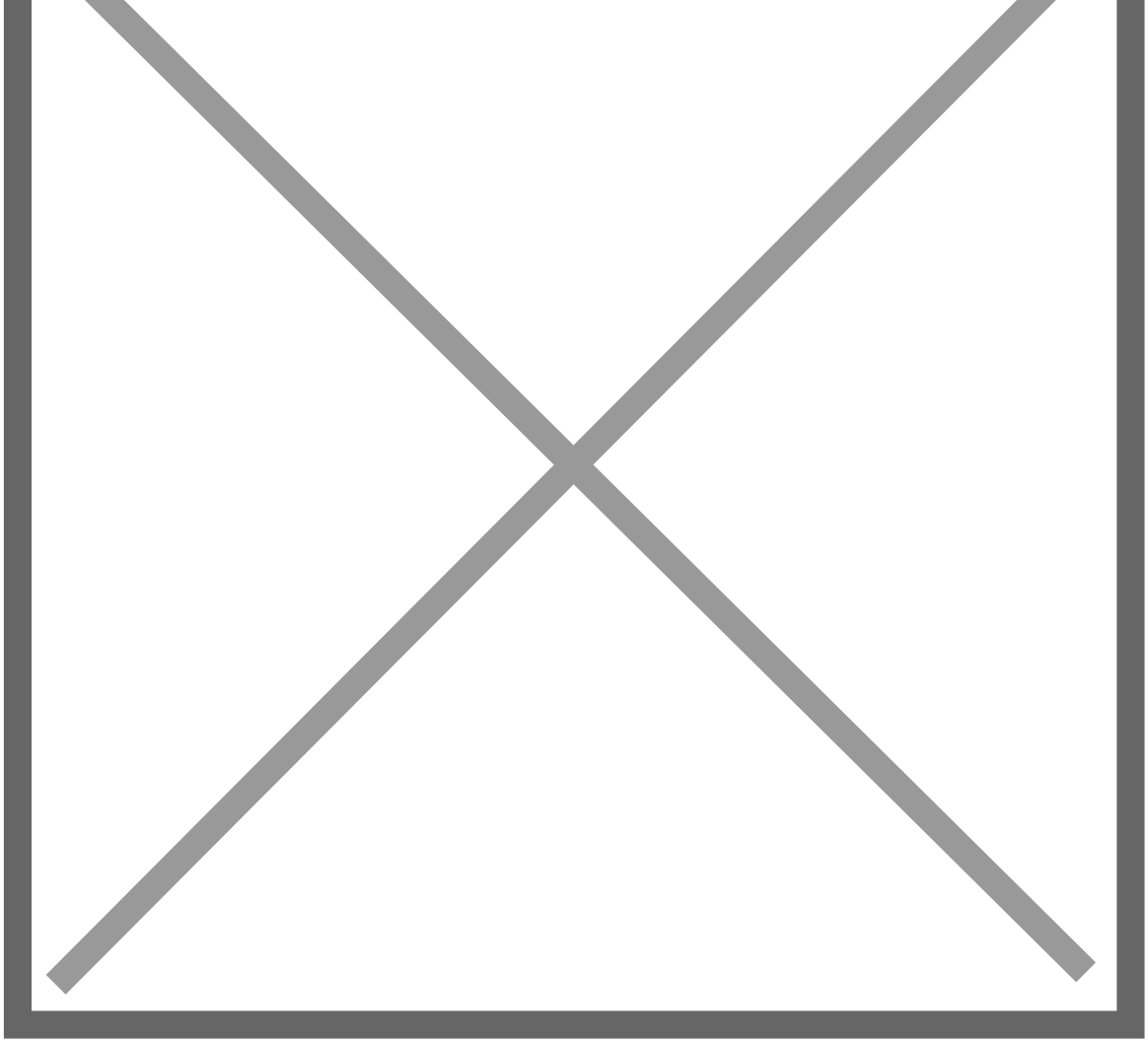
The Archbishop then focused on one of the fundamental prerequisites for spiritual growth and elevation: repentance. After sharing with the faithful an instructive story from the Gerontikon (Sayings of the Desert Fathers), he urged them, in their spiritual struggle during Holy and Great Lent, to make sincere and heartfelt repentance their foremost concern.

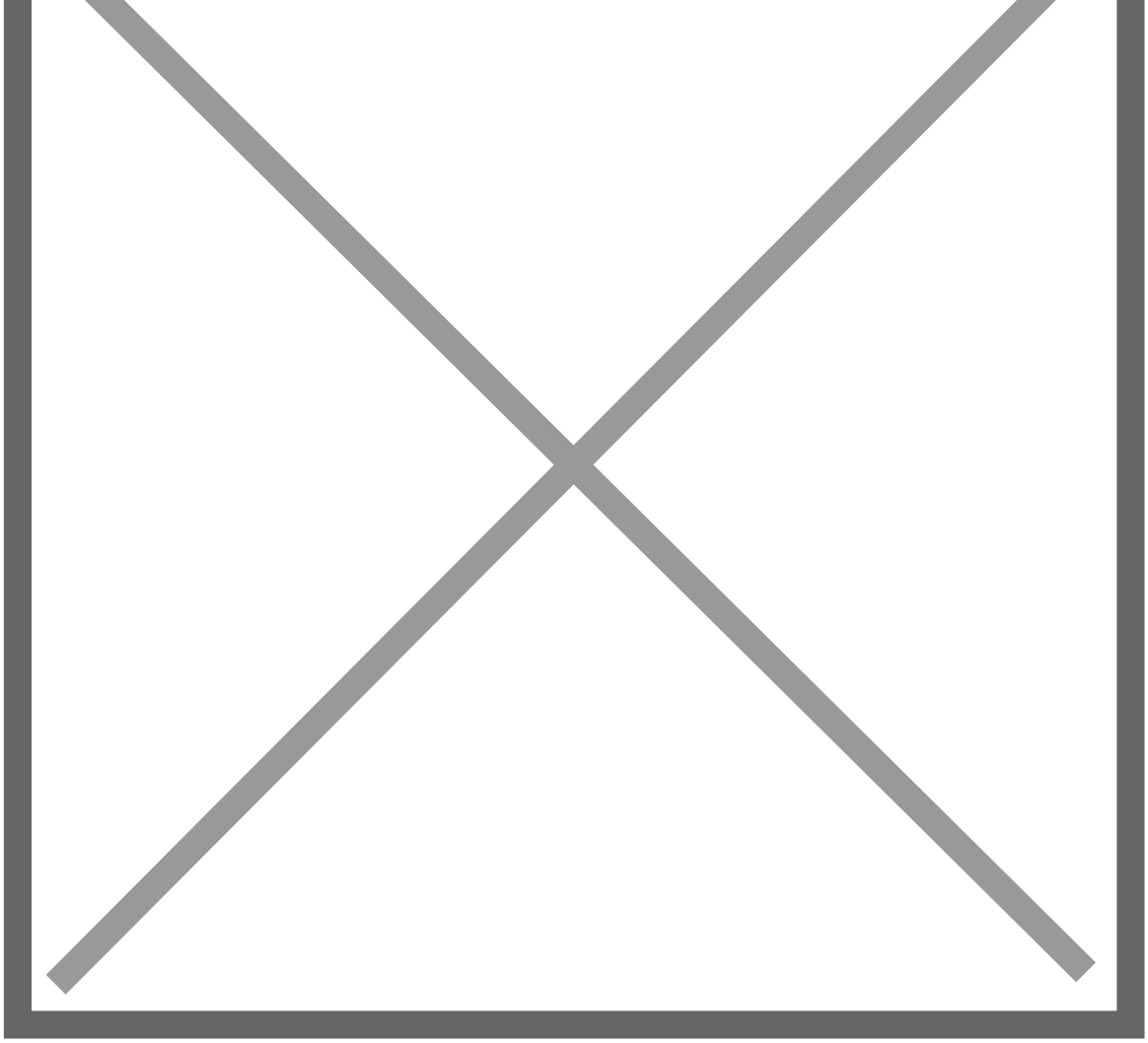
In closing, His Eminence paternally entreated all to journey forward without hatred, division, or ill will. He wished that their spiritual struggle might be fruitful and, in accordance with the custom, exchanged the kiss of forgiveness with the attending bishops, clergy, and faithful.

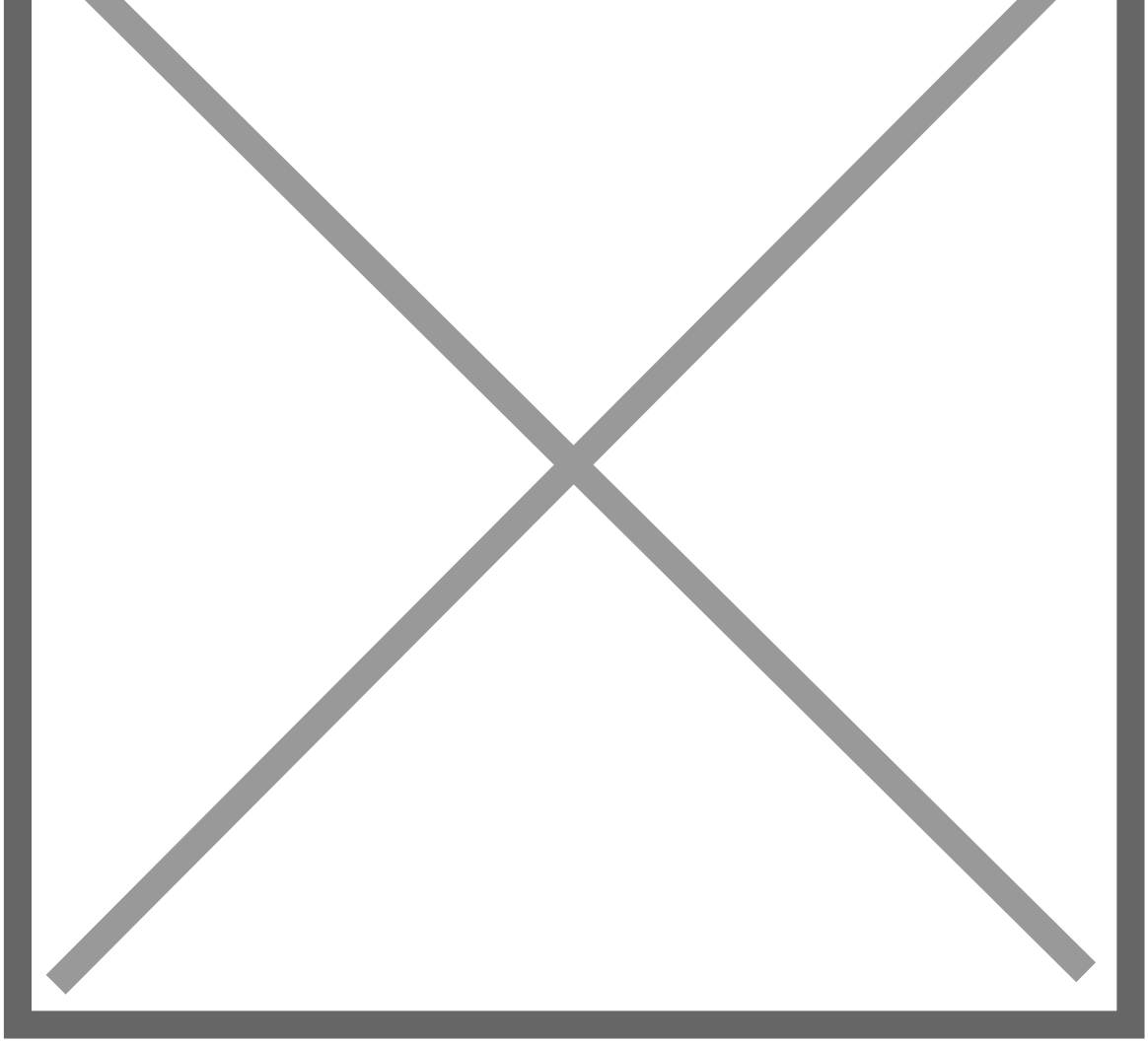
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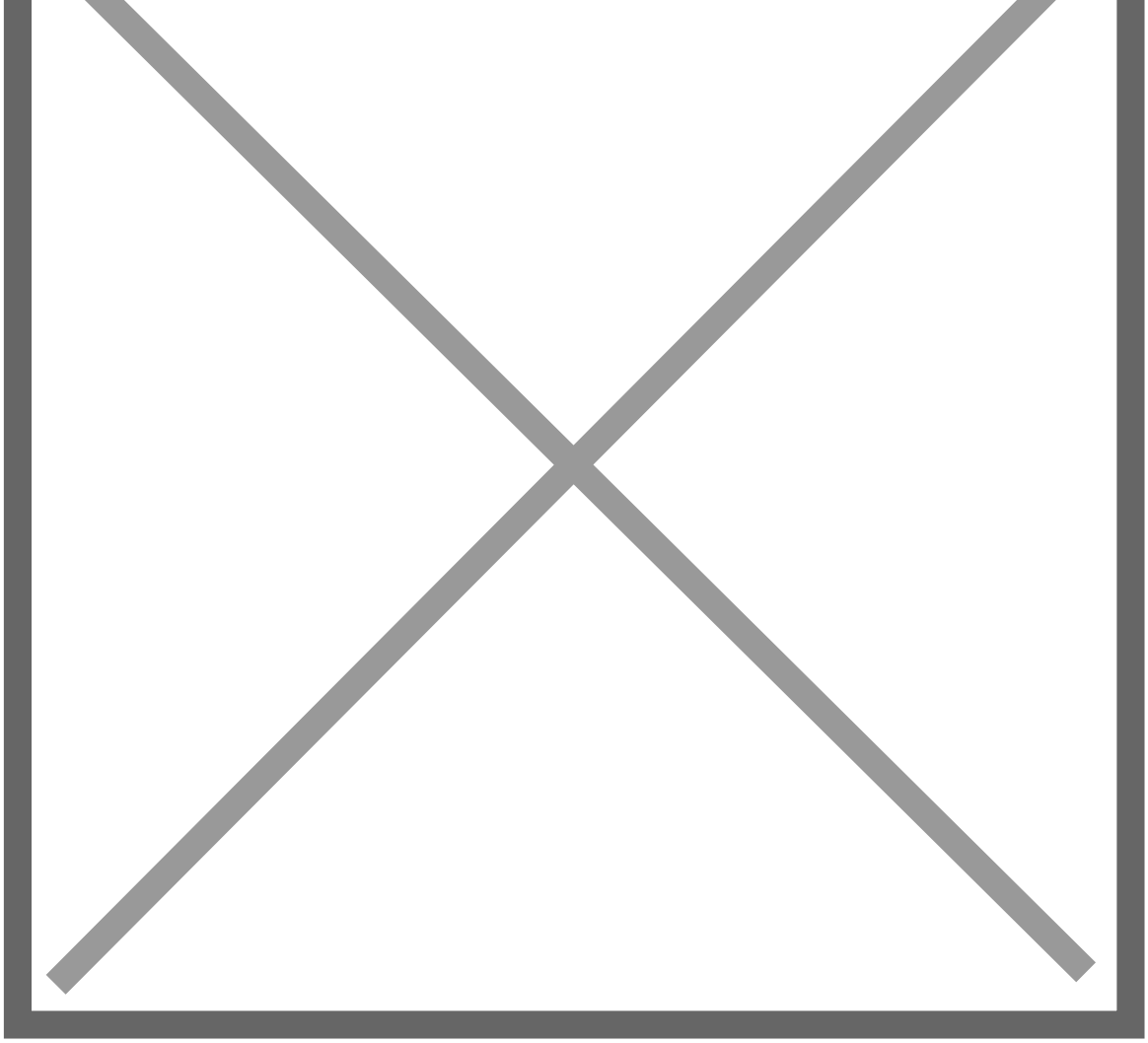


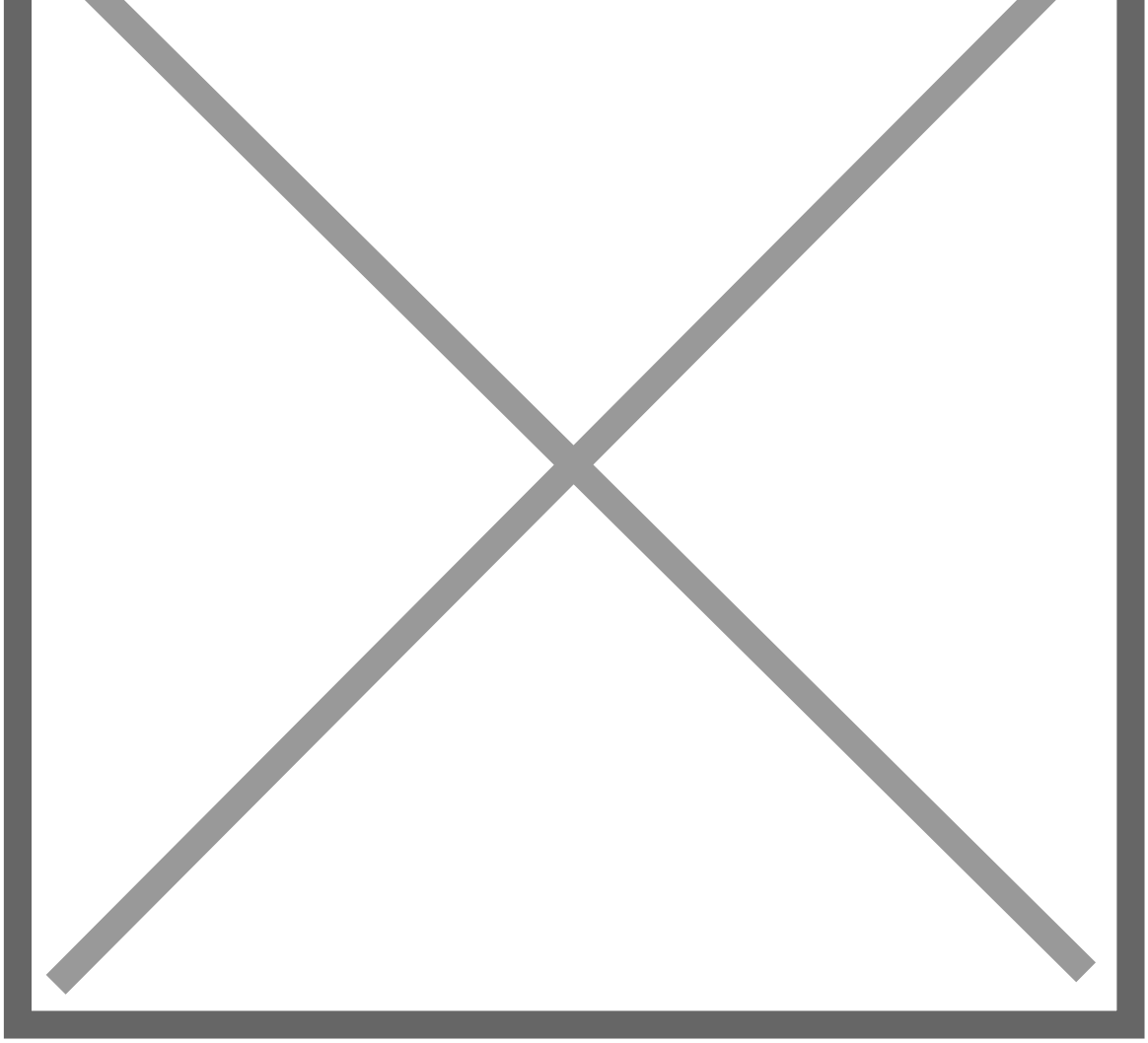


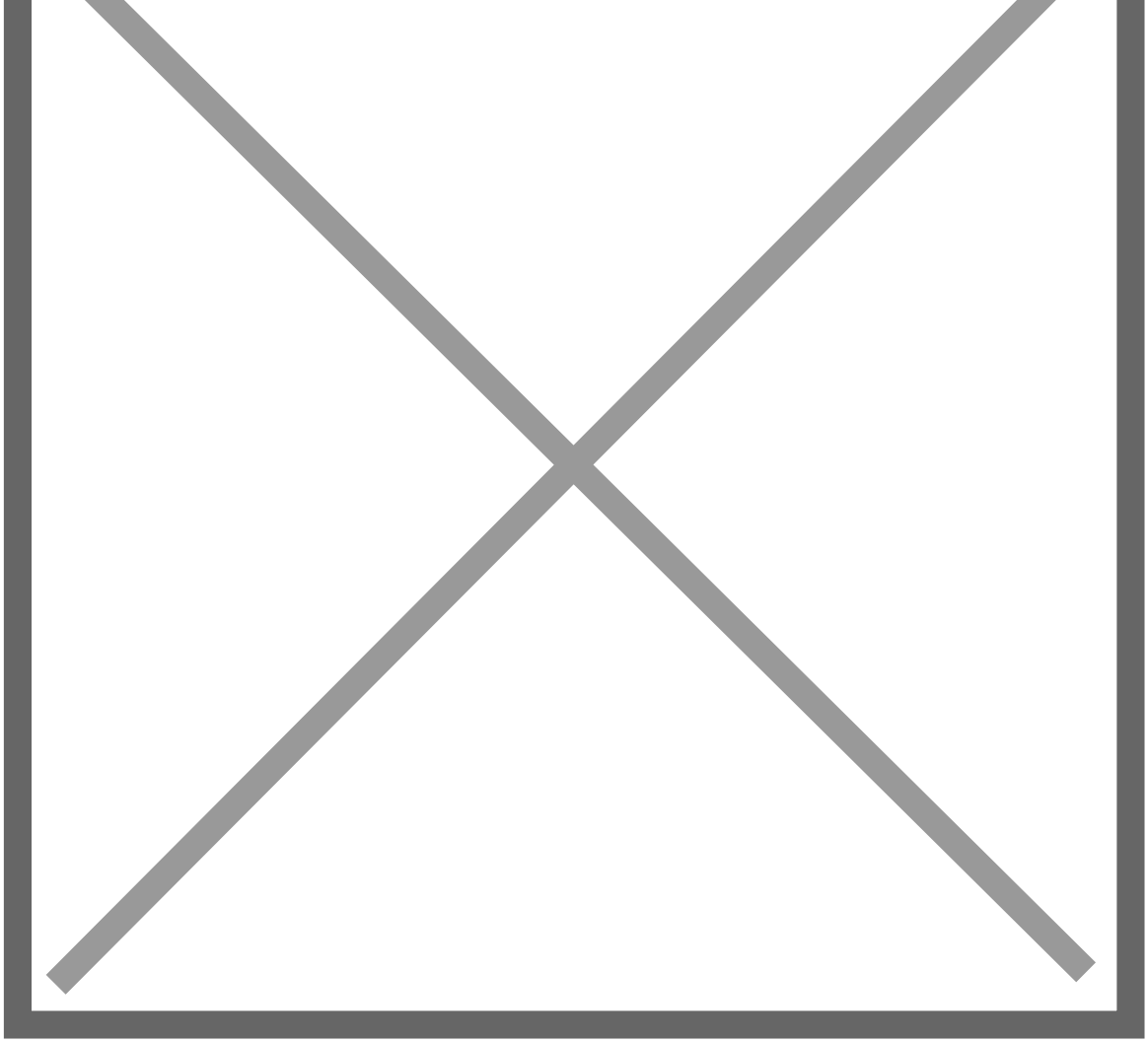


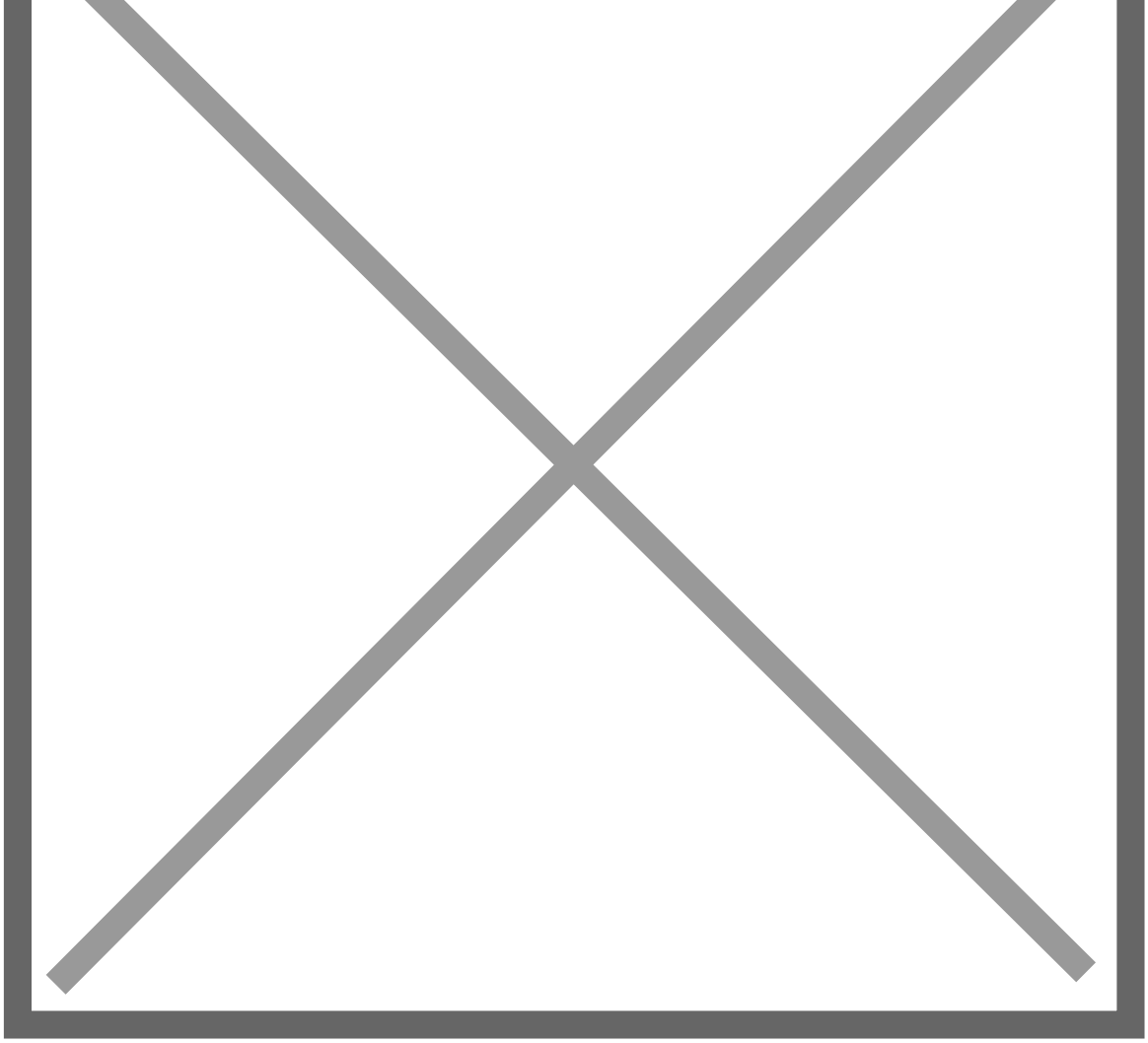


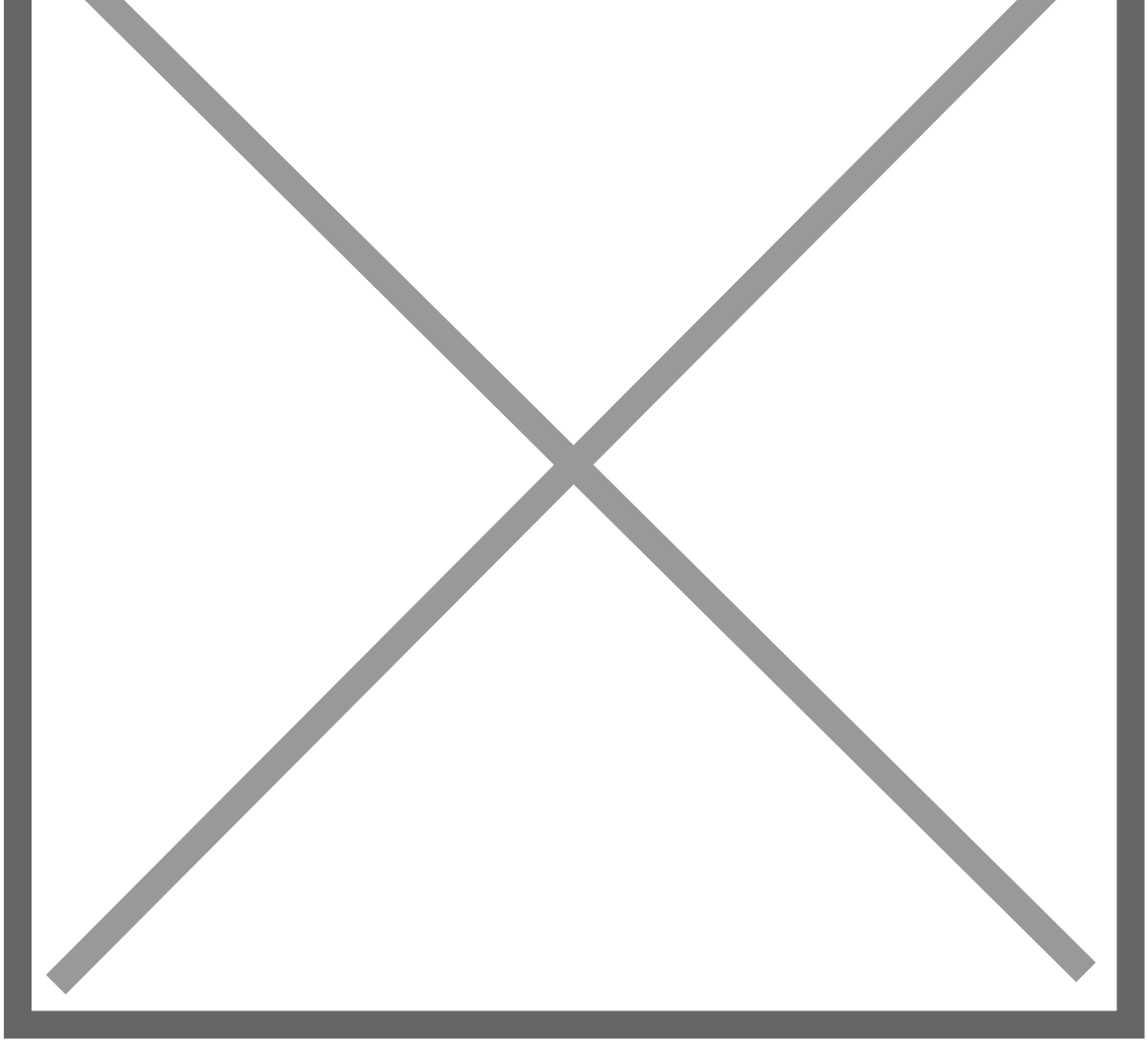












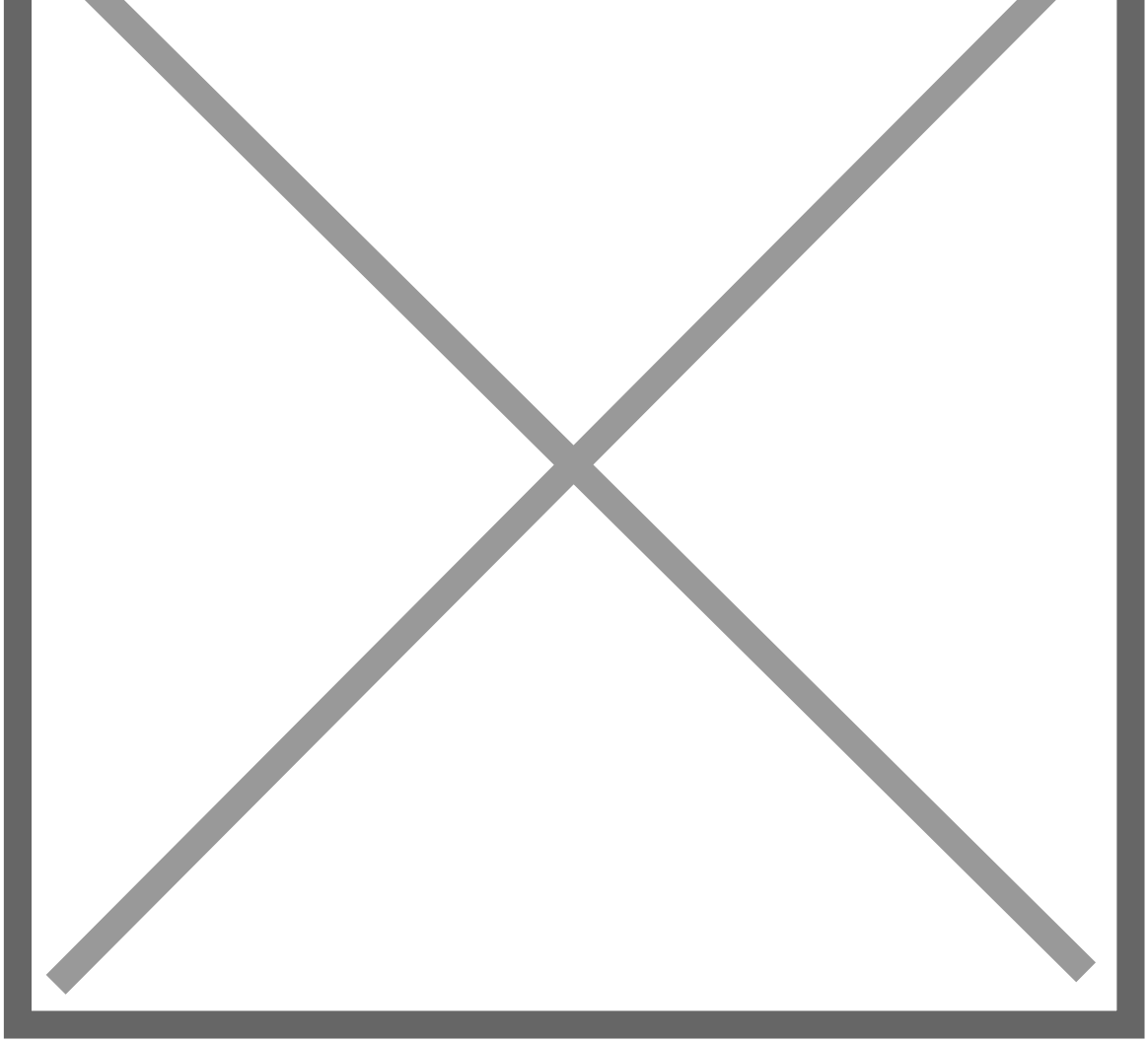


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