

Sensory Friendly Monitoring

Keeping the Noise Down

 QuintessenceAnx



When we try to know everything...

The image is a collage of various software notifications and a central cartoon character. The notifications include:

- Slack #gcp channel:** A series of bot messages reporting logins and bucket operations. The channel header shows "June 26th".
- JIRA Cloud:** A notification that "Helen transitioned a Story from To Do to Done" with a link to "TIS-18: Update the documentation on the launch sequence".
- Confluence:** A notification that a "Page created in Space Company" titled "Project Milestone Overview" by "Eve".
- Trello:** A notification that "@brian created Taco Drone Deliveries" with options to "Join", "Subscribe", "Due Date", "Labels", and "Attach Conversation".
- Lunch Train:** Two notifications: "You've started a lunch train" and "@mathowie started a lunch train" mentioning "@lima, @anna, @evie".
- System Status:** A "MISSION: DEMO ACCOUNT" section with a "Multitenancy Demo" button. Below it, a "Partial System Outage" banner is visible. At the bottom, a status table shows "Management Portal" as "Operational" and "API" as "Major Outage".
- Cartoon:** A central cartoon character with a distressed expression, a large speech bubble saying "ACK! ACK!!! ACK! AAACK!", and sweat drops around their head.
- Other UI Elements:** Several "Close" and "Reply" buttons are scattered around the notifications, suggesting a cluttered interface.

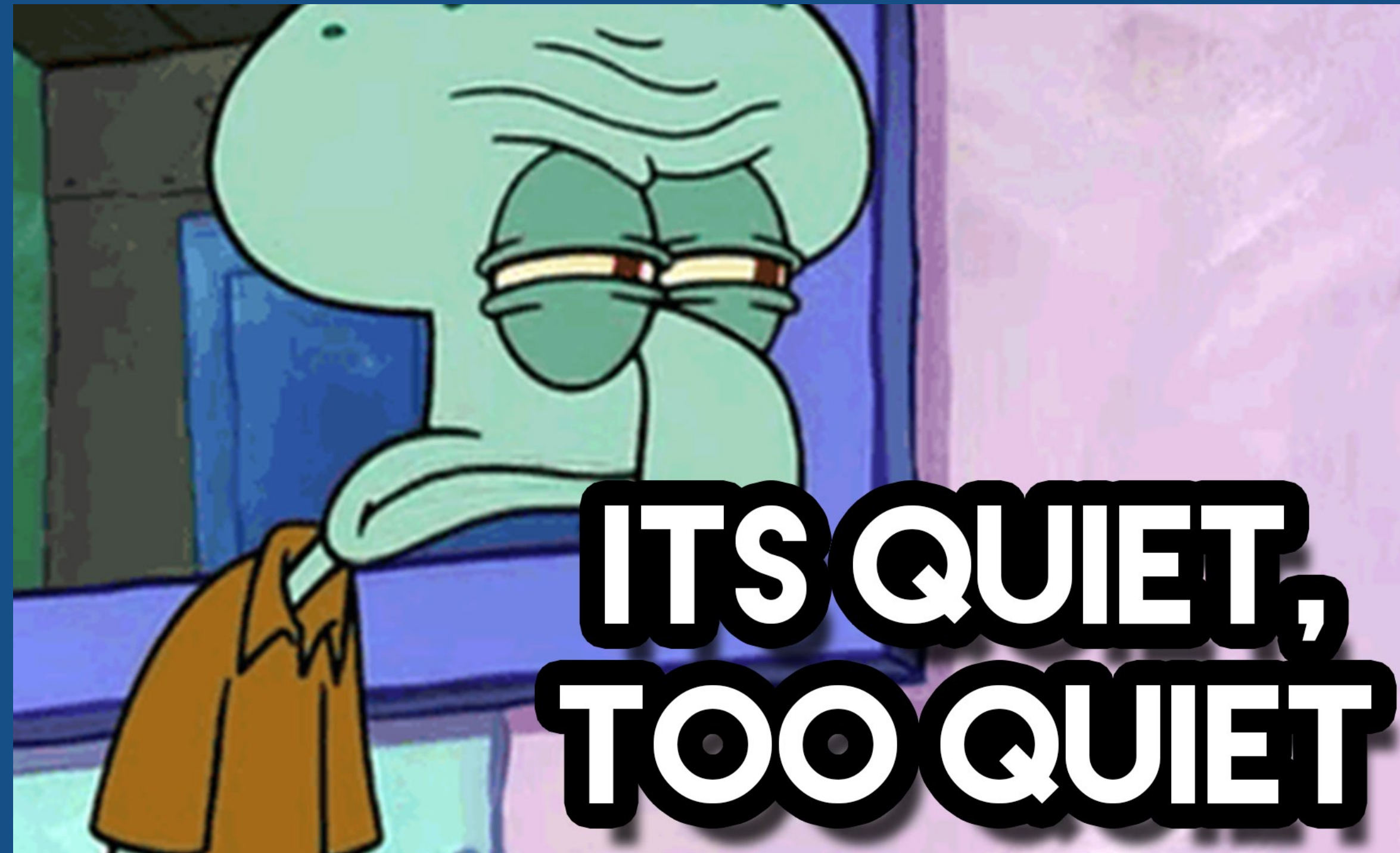


Too much noise can...

- * ...bury important / high severity alerts in a sea of low priority notices
- * ...causing engineering teams to start muting alarms or whole alarm sources
- * ...which in turn means the people who need to be notified, won't be.



Meanwhile, when we turn the dial too far...





Updates Available

Do you want to install the updates now or try tonight?

Install

Later

Let's find a happy
medium



Consider:
the cost of noise



Your Brain on Alerts



Time Cost

~25 minutes



Quality Cost



Cost of Multitasking



So how do we
reduce the noise?




Be Aware, Not Overwhelmed

- * Determine the sources of noise
- * Categorize the types of noise
- * Channel the noise into a productive workflow
- * Create a routine to clear the clutter



Sources of Noise

- * Logging / alert system
- * Knowledge base
- * Ticketing system
- * Chat integrations
- * Repetition
 - * ...and you 

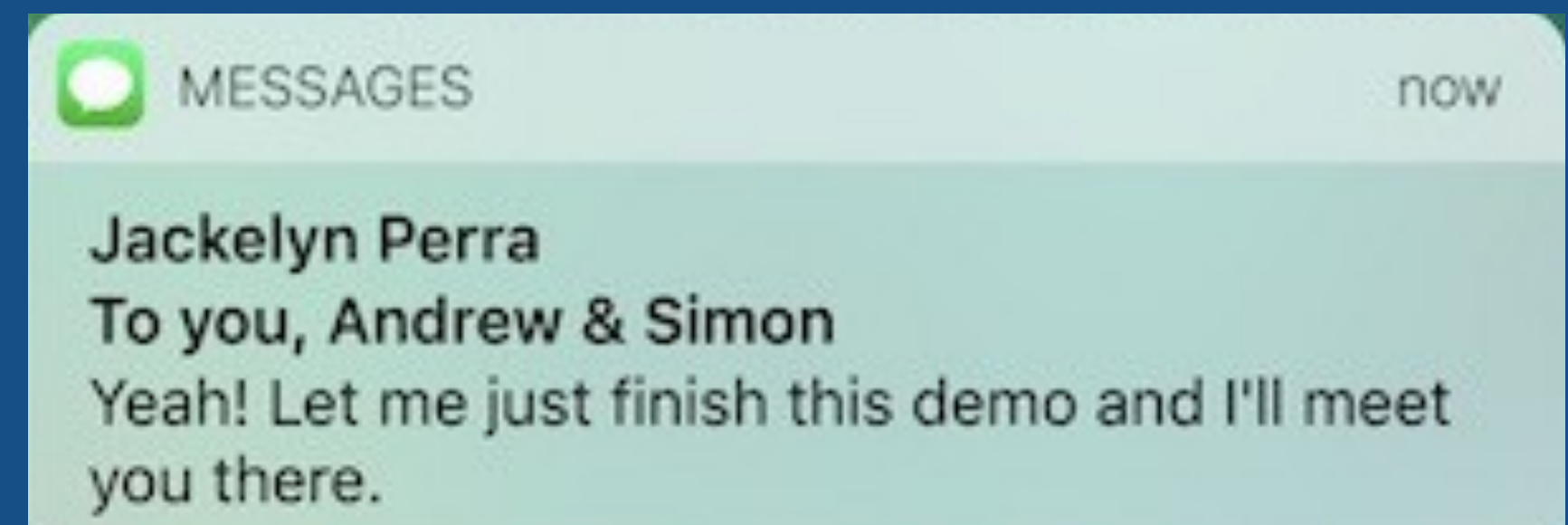
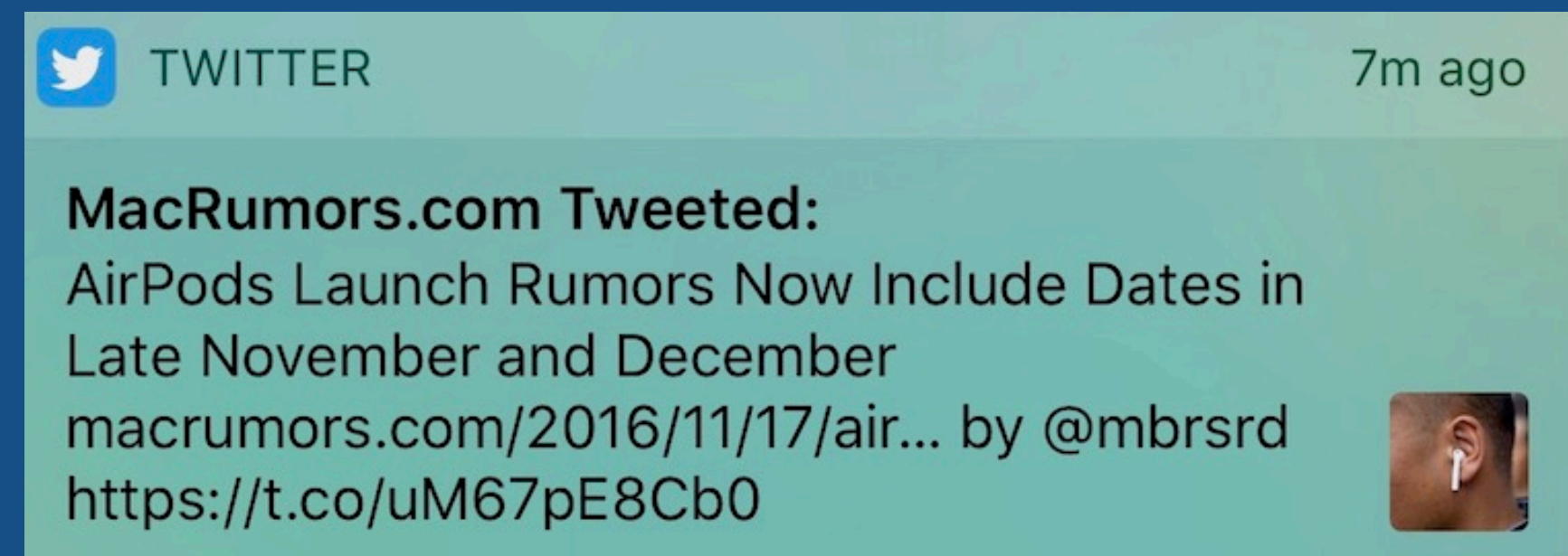
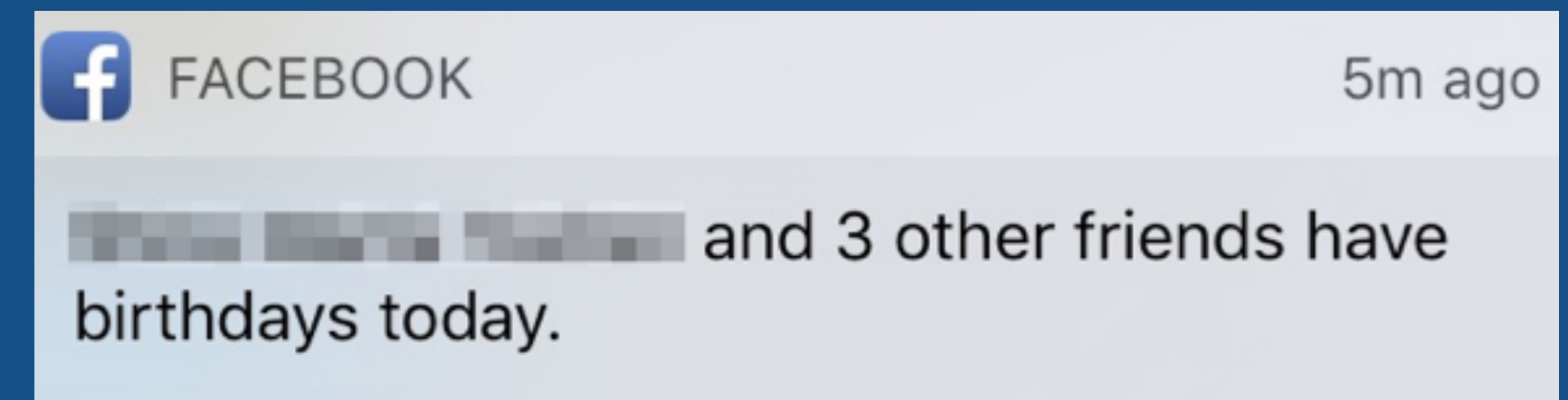
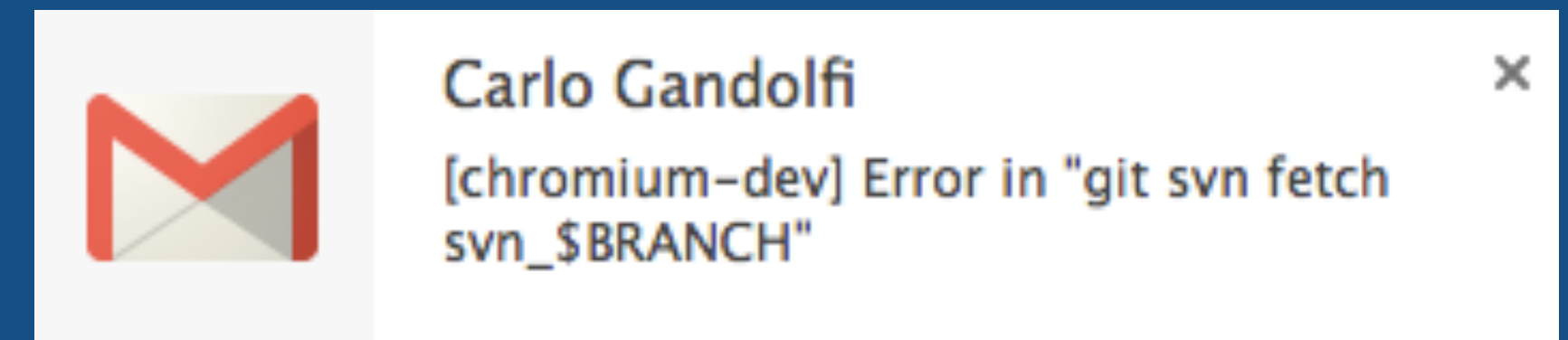


Wait, I need to be
aware of myself?

Absolutely.

How often do you...

- * ...check your email?
- * ...check your social media?
- * ...check your text messages?
- * ...check your Apple / Google messages?
- * ... the list goes on.



Communication & Boundaries

- * Plan for set times to focus on your work and mute non-critical alerts
- * This includes messages from friends & family
- * When setting boundaries make sure your friends, family, and co-workers know what you consider to be relevant emergencies
- * Set reasonable expectations for yourself and others



pd PAGERDUTY now

User 1 has published an update to incident #152: We think we've located the issue and are working on a fix now.

But what about external sources of noise?

Start Categorizing Your Noise



- * False positives
- * False negatives
- * Fragility
- * Frequency (just **fix** it)



Save Time: Create Your Noise Flow



- * What needs to be known
- * Who needs to know it
- * How soon should they know
- * How should they be notified



Re-Evaluate Redundancy

Know How to Add a Little Complexity to Stop a Vacuum

a.k.a. A bad day in SlackOps

(Sorry Slack.)

Wednesday June 27, 2018

Outage

Connectivity issues affecting all workspaces

✓ We're happy to report that workspaces should be able to connect again, as we've isolated the problem. Some folks may need to refresh (Ctrl + R or Cmd + R). If you're still experiencing issues, please drop us a line at [@feedback@slack.com](mailto:feedback@slack.com)
9:49 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

Services affected
Connections

Status
Resolved

Our efforts to isolate the problem and resume connections are ongoing. Your patience through this is greatly appreciated.
9:33 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

We're getting closer to a solution, but we aren't out of the woods yet.
9:03 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

We really appreciate you sticking with us. We know this is a big disruption to your day, and we've got all eyes on this issue to get us back up to normal.
8:33 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

We have no new information to share just yet, but we're continuing our efforts. Your patience is truly appreciated.
8:03 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

We are continuing to work on fixing the connection problems that have been impacting folks. We hope to have the issue fully resolved as soon as possible.
7:33 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

Our team is still looking into the cause of the connectivity issues, and we'll continue to update you on our progress.
7:03 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

We've received word that all workspaces are having troubles connecting to Slack. We're currently investigating the issue, and will have updates shortly.
6:33 AM PDT · [See in your timezone](#)

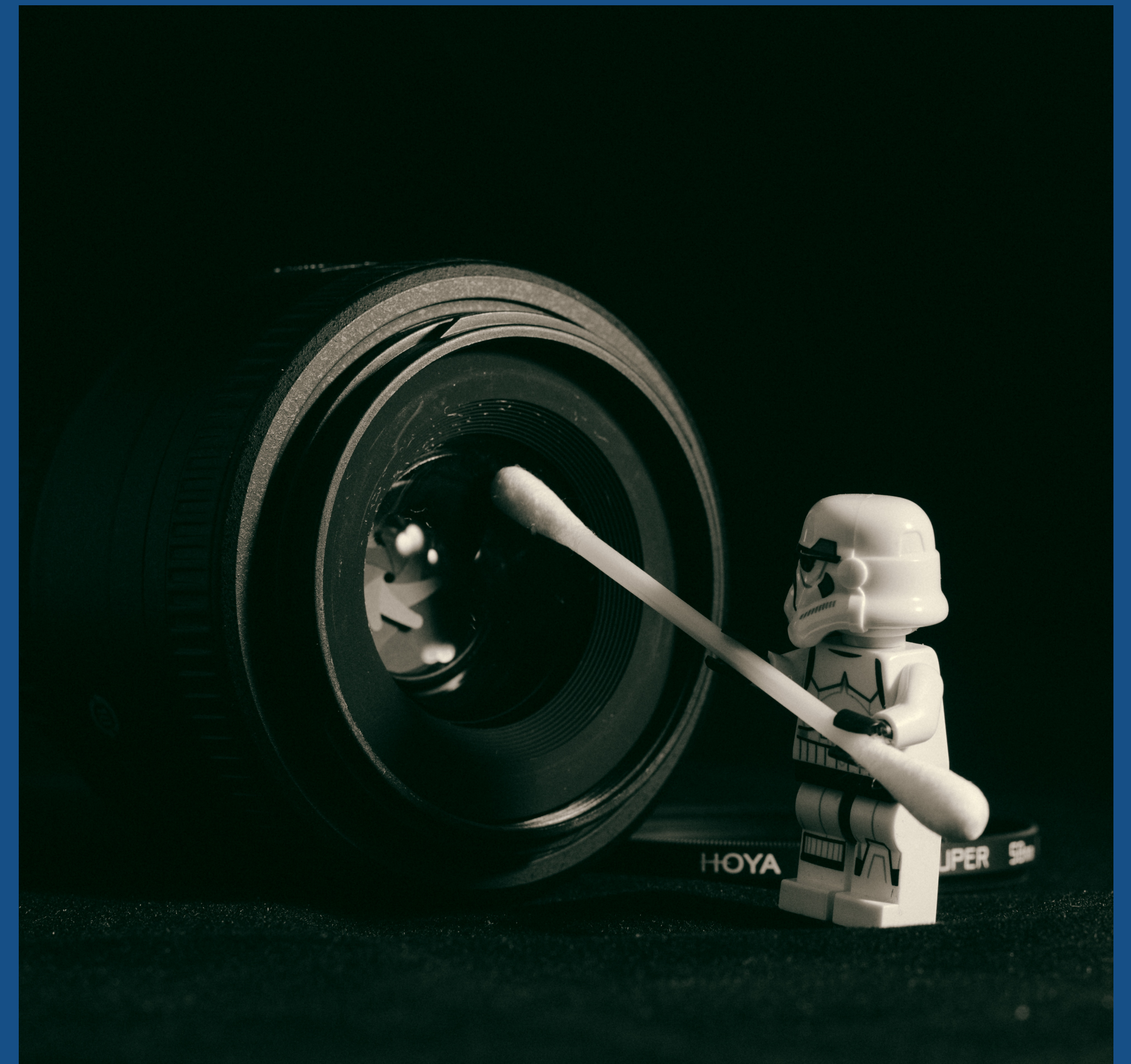
Resilient Noise Builds Trust

- * How reliable are your tools and services?
- * How much notification duplication is needed?
- * Do you have the ability to switch alert endpoints in the event of a service outage?
- * Do you regularly evaluate the reliability of your services (external *and* internal)?

Keep Alerts Relevant: Sprint Cleaning

For every alert triggered, ask:

- * Was the notification needed?
- * How was the incident resolved?
- * Can the solution be automated?
- * Is the solution permanent?
- * How urgently was a solution needed?



Additional Reading

- * "The Cost of Interrupted Work: More Speed and Stress" -- Gloria Mark, dept of Informatics @ UC Irvine
<https://www.ics.uci.edu/~gmark/chi08-mark.pdf>
- * "Are digital distractions harming labour productivity?" -- The Economist
<https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2017/12/07/are-digital-distractions-harming-labour-productivity>
- * "Brief Interruptions Spawn Errors" -- Michigan State University
<https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2013/brief-interruptions-spawn-errors/>
- * "Tenets of SRE" -- Stephen Thorne, Sr Google SRE
<https://medium.com/@jerub/tenets-of-sre-8af6238ae8a8>





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Developer Advocate 🥑



logz.io



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