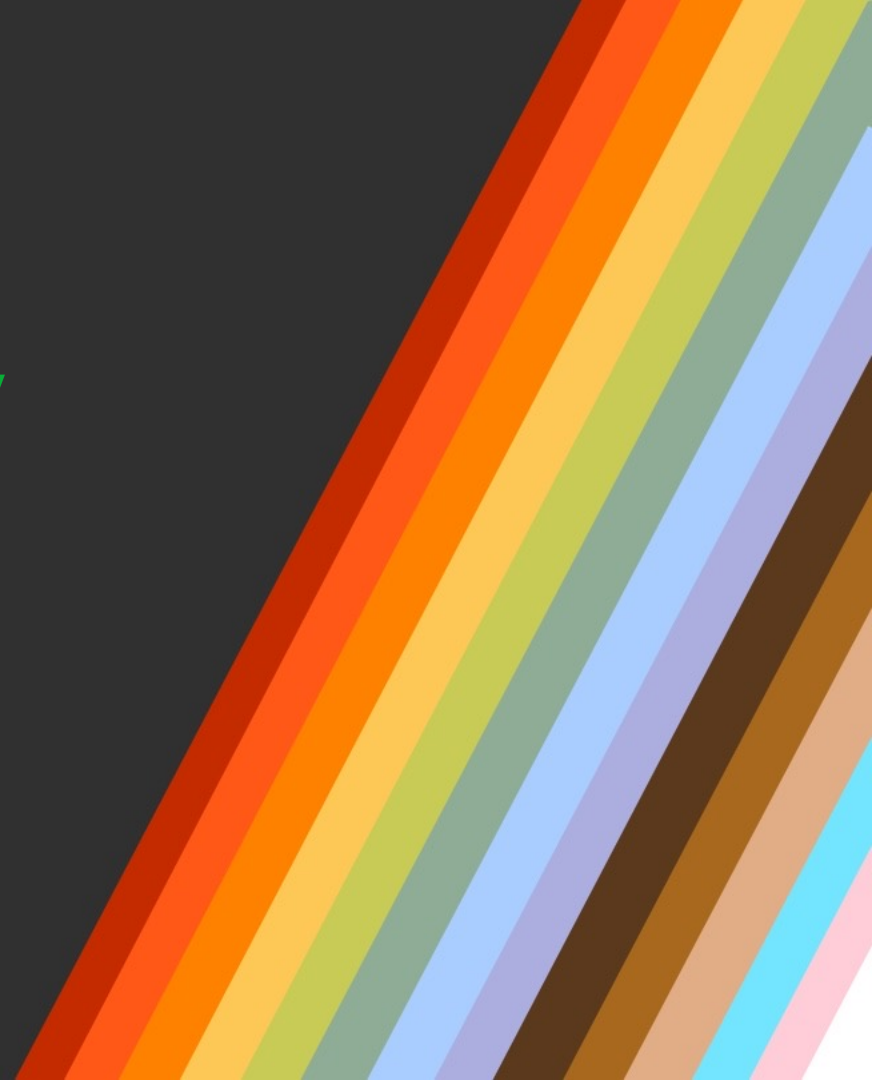
Sensory Friendly Monitoring

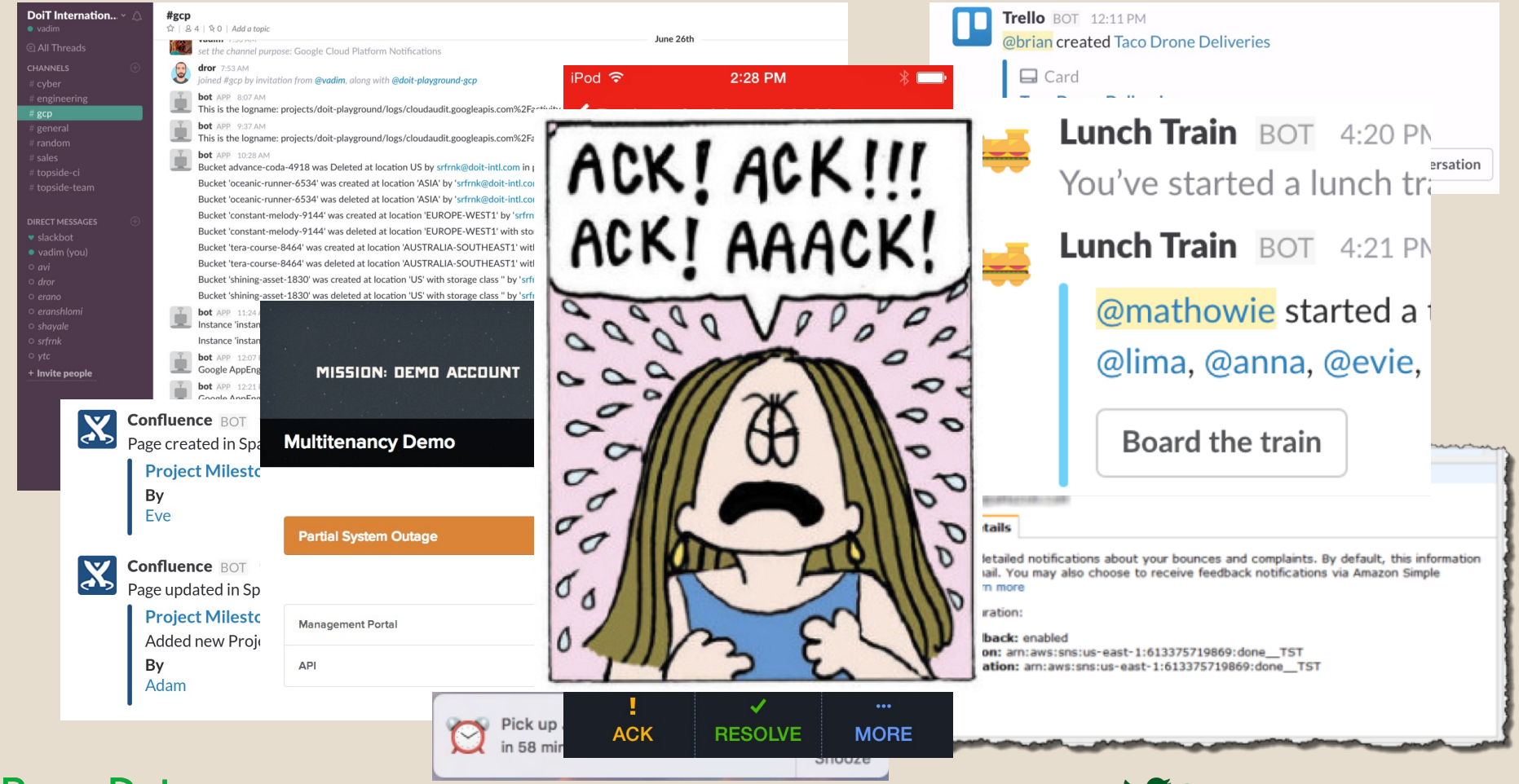
Keep the Noise Down

Quintessence Anx
Developer Advocate
PagerDuty



Head’s up: Mute your Echo devices in listening range, or use 🎧

When we try to know everything…



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Too much noise can

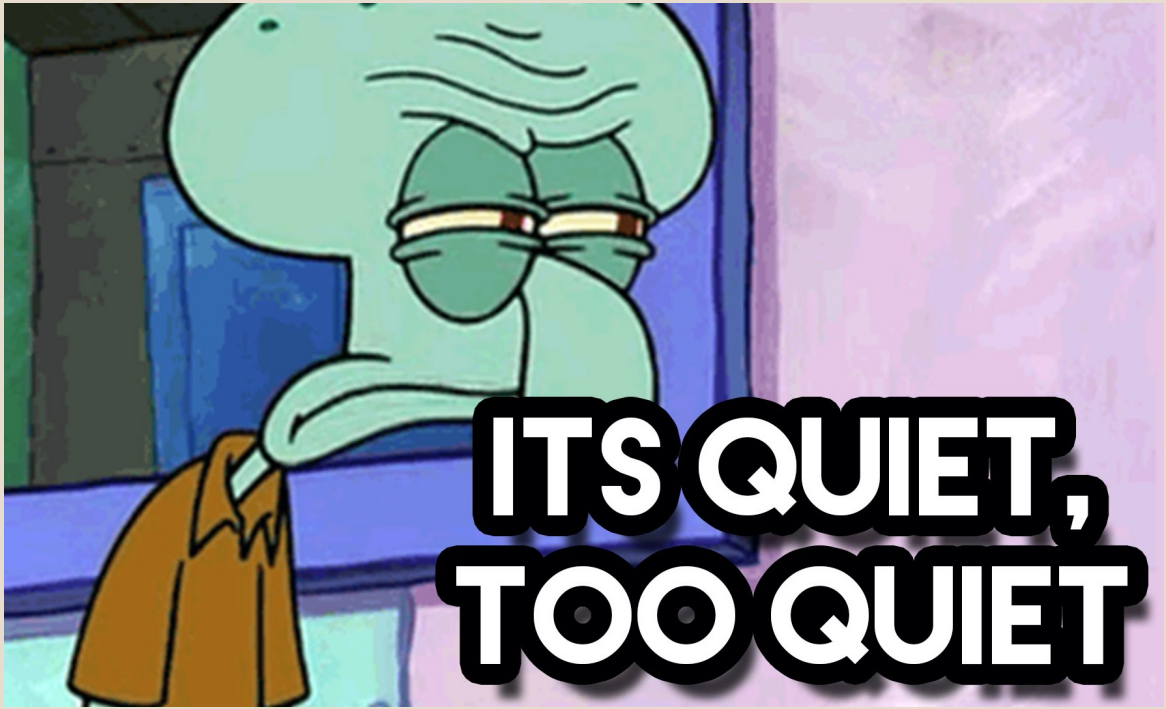
Bury important / high SEV alerts in a sea of low priority notifications

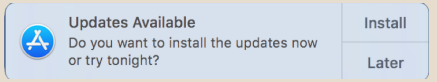
…causing teams to **mute** individual notifications or their sources.

The result?

The people who **needed** to be notified, won't be.

Meanwhile, when we turn the dial back too far…


ITS QUIET,
TOO QUIET



Let’s find a happy medium.

All alerts are fictional.

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Consider: the cost of noise

Your brain on alerts

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Time cost: ~25 minutes

Quality Cost

Multitasking Cost

How to reduce the noise?

Be aware, not overwhelmed.

Determine the **sources** of noise

Categorize the types of noise

Channel the noise into a productive flow

Create a routine to clear the clutter.

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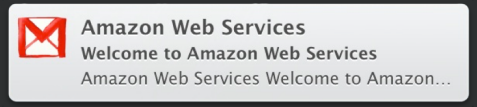
Sources of noise



Wait, I need to be aware of myself?

All alerts are fictional.

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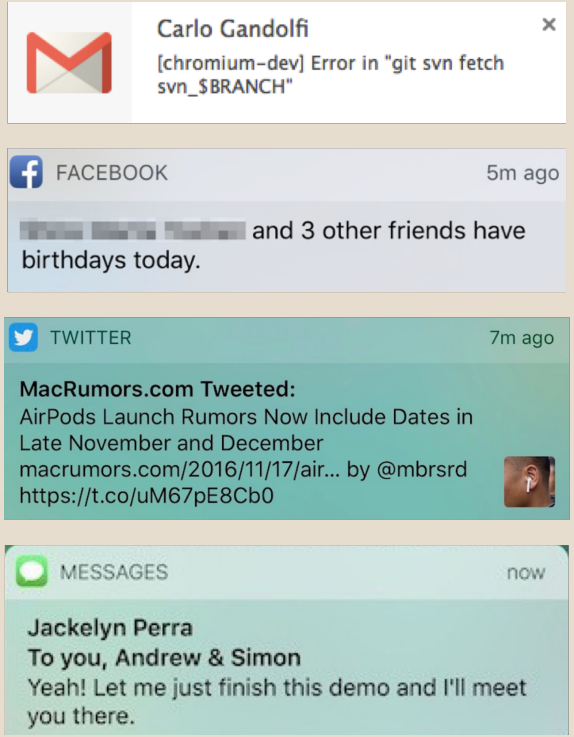
How often do you…

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



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Communication & Boundaries

Set times to **focus** on work and mute non-critical alerts.

This includes messages from friends & family

Define “relevant emergency”

Set reasonable expectations for yourself and others.

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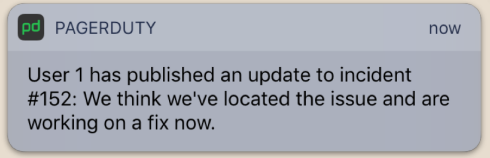
- This includes messages from friends & family
- Define “relevant emergency”
- Set **reasonable expectations** for yourself and others.



And what about external sources of noise?

Categorize your noise

False positives

False negatives

Fragility

Frequency (fix it)

Noise Categories

- False positives
- False negatives
- Fragility
- Frequency

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

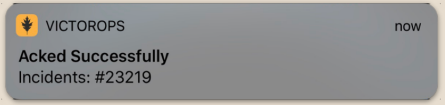
Noise Flow

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

Re-Evaluate Redundancy

How to add a little complexity to stop a vacuum

a.k.a. A bad day in ChatOps



Resilient noise builds trust

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How reliable are your tools and services?

How much notification duplication is needed?

Can you switch alert endpoints in the event of a service outage?

Do you regularly evaluate the reliability of your services (internal and external)?

Reliability & Redundancy

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

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?

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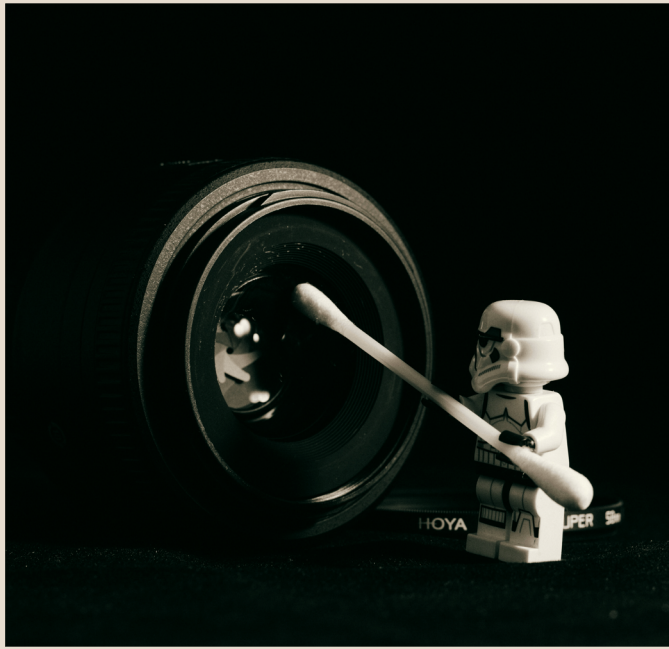

Slides & Additional Resources on Notist

https://noti.st/quintessence

Thank you!

Quintessence Anx

Developer Advocate 🥑

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