

Best Practices for Pager Rotation Duties

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What is it?

- Pager Duties refer to an idea that we often refer to now as ‘on-call’
- When a developer is on-call and their services are needed during the week/time-span that they are on-call for, they are immediately notified via push-notification (or whatever paging service they use) and are expected to immediately hop on to either fix the problem or escalate it if they cannot fix it
- On a team, on-call duties usually work in rotations, meaning that each week a different engineer/developer will be responsible for this duty
- This ensures that a service or application continues to work even when the work-day is done, ensuring that everything continues to run smoothly no matter when something breaks

Benefits

- Team transparency and accountability when handling issues that occur
- Increased service reliability by quickly responding to and fixing alerts
- Increase in customer satisfaction since they are able to contact on-call agents to help resolve urgent issues and will, therefore, be assured that their problems will always be fixed
- Less time wasted trying to find someone to fix an issue since there is a dedicated staff to it

Drawbacks

- An employee may have to be paid for their time even if they are not actually called in to fix a problem during the week; if they are entitled to be paid, then they will have to be
- Employee personal work-life balance and happiness can suffer since their activities will have to be limited on the off chance something breaks

Best Practices - Scheduling and On-Call Rotation

- This would entail creating an easy-to-understand schedule that is fair for everyone. A schedule that ensures the coverage for on-call duties is continuous and balance among every member of the team

Best Practices - Escalation Policy

- This entails a clearly defined escalation path for issues that are unresolved or ensure that they are quickly and promptly elevated to be handled at the appropriate level.

Best Practices - Ownership Group Management

- This entails clearly marking the ownership of any given service or system and assigning them to the proper teams that should be responsible for them to ensure that any incidents are being handled by the correct department/people.

Sources

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