

A photograph of a woman from the waist up, wearing a blue and gold horizontally striped dress. The dress has a dark blue band at the top and a gold band near the hem. She is standing in front of a white background.

# What I learned from a dress.

An On-Call  
Nightmare

My name is  
Jay Gordon  
I am an Ops  
professional and not  
a fashion icon.



@jaydestro

I've been podcasting,  
collecting your  
stories.

# ON-CALL



# NIGHTMARES

Here's one of mine.

@jaydestro

# ON-CALL NIGHTMARES HAS THREE RULES



ONE

DO NOT  
INCRIMINATE  
YOURSELF



TWO

DO NOT  
INCRIMINATE  
OTHERS



THREE

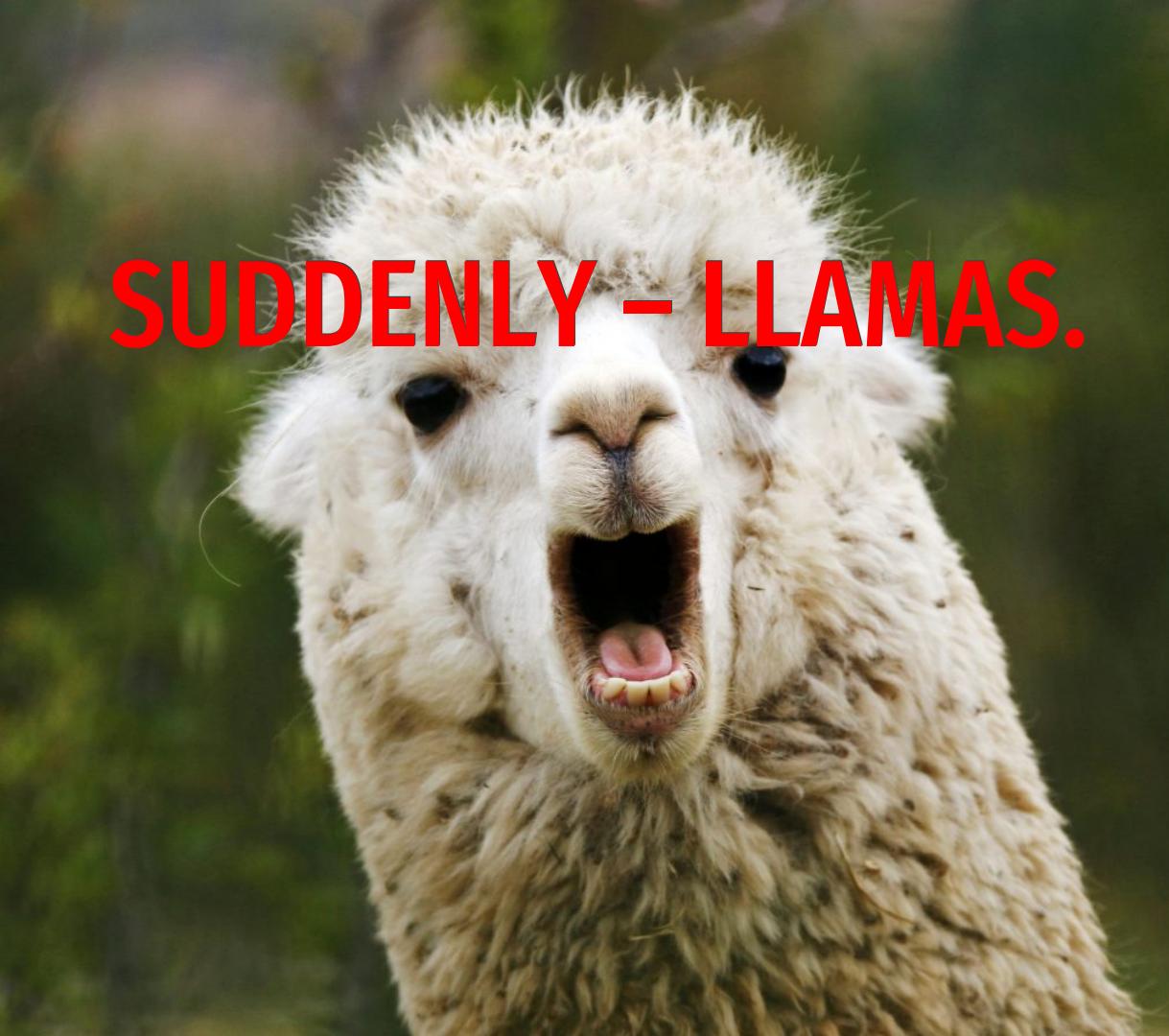
HELP US LEARN

# BuzzFeed

Feb 26, 2015 - A regular  
day, at the datacenter.

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RACKIN' N STACKIN' –  
on-call for our alerts...

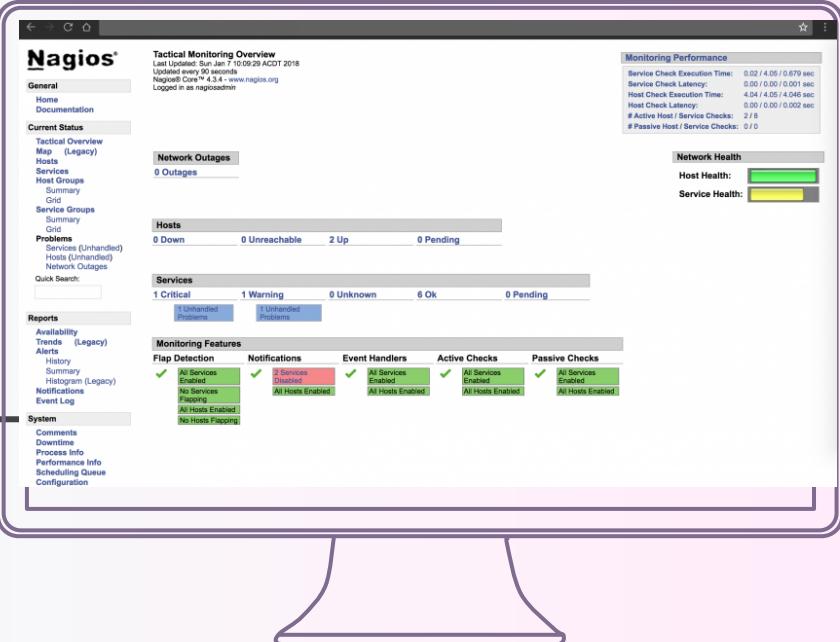


**SUDDENLY – LLAMAS.**



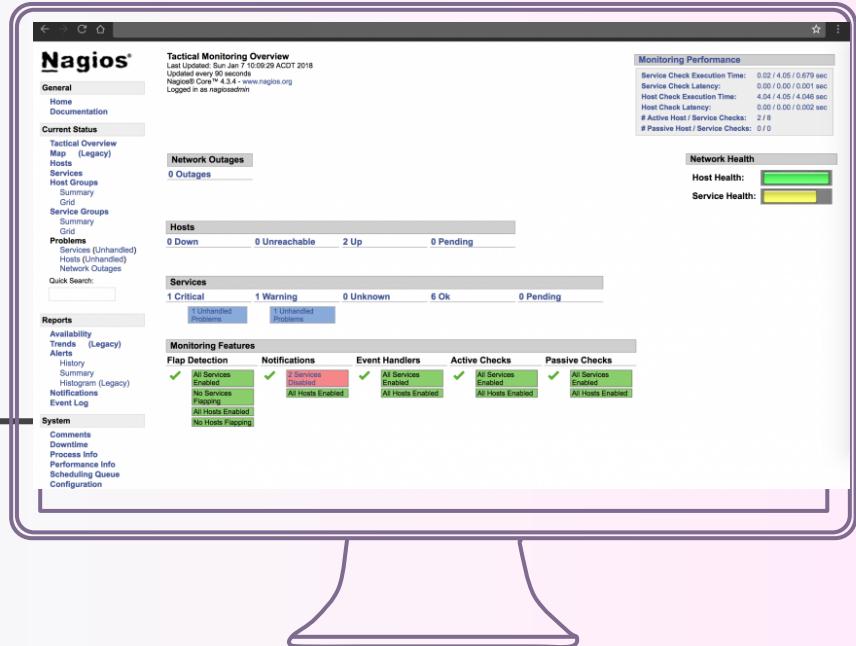
# Alerts Explode

We release an article letting the world know about llamas running the street, alerts go nuts.



We noticed the database was hot and absolutely killing the web servers that couldn't keep up.

But technical debt didn't allow us to make any massive changes.



**Back to the story... so... Around 8:30pm my pager goes off again.**

**My wife asks,  
“oh is that because of the dress?”**



“What dress?”  
I ask...? Nagios then  
tells me a bit more.

webdr08/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 39.34, 37.92, 18.70

 **jay.gordon** 8:25 PM  
checking

 **nagios** BOT 8:25 PM ★  
webdr04/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 49.84, 36.23, 17.90

 **jay.gordon** 8:26 PM  
whoa

 **nagios** BOT 8:26 PM  
webdr02/proddr\_load is WARNING:  
WARNING - load average: 18.25, 19.05, 10.62

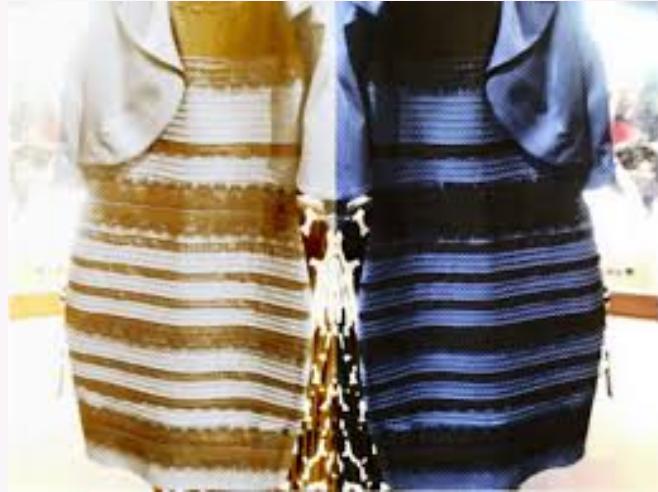
webdr04/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 37.80, 35.22, 18.44

webdr05/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 48.12, 40.57, 20.86

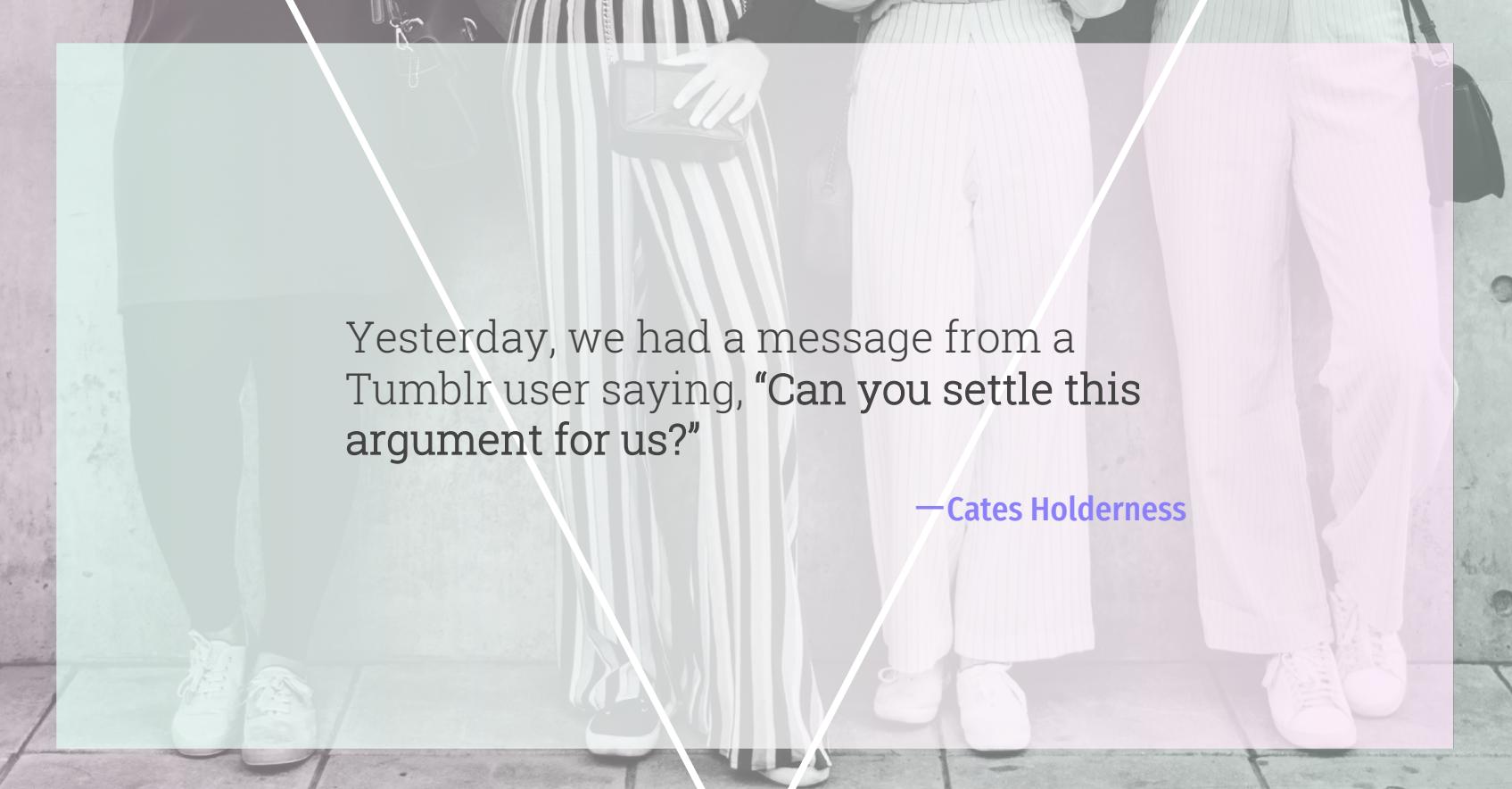
webdr08/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 49.18, 41.72, 22.28

# What was "the dress" phenomena?

No one could decide,  
blue and black or  
white and gold?



More than 670k active users  
on the site at the time.  
Stack was LAMP  
(The past p is perl)  
MongoDB for pixel tracking

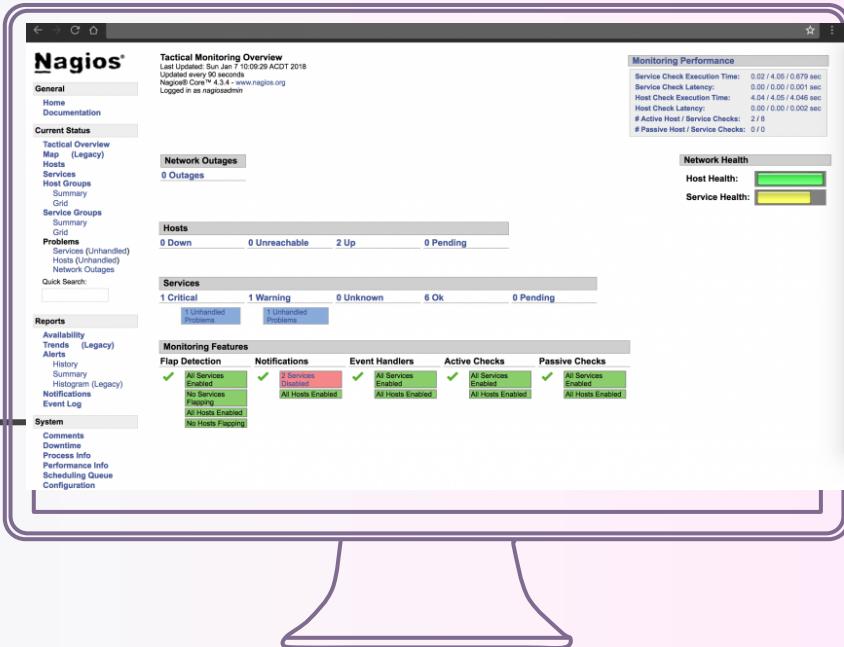


Yesterday, we had a message from a  
Tumblr user saying, "Can you settle this  
argument for us?"

—Cates Holderness

# (once again!) Alerts Explode

We release an article  
letting the world  
know about llamas  
running the street,  
alerts go nuts.



[Messages](#)**PagerDuty**[Details](#)

Uh, your stuff is totally  
broken dude.

maybe you should fix it.

yeah i think you should

webdr02/proddr\_load is WARNING:  
WARNING - load average: 18.25, 19.05, 10.62

webdr04/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 37.80, 35.22, 18.44

webdr05/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 48.12, 40.57, 20.86

webdr08/proddr\_load is CRITICAL:  
CRITICAL - load average: 49.18, 41.72, 22.28



iMessage



@jaydestro



**Chris Tindal**  
@christindal



Actual quote from a BuzzFeed server admin: "I AM THROWING SERVERS INTO THE INTERNET"

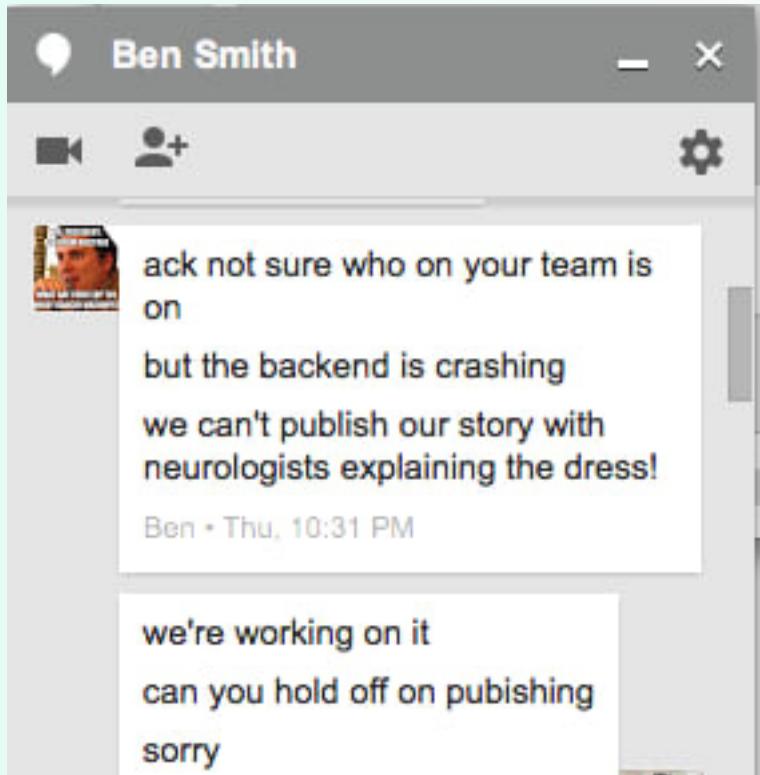
♡ 52 11:38 PM - Feb 26, 2015



36 people are talking about this



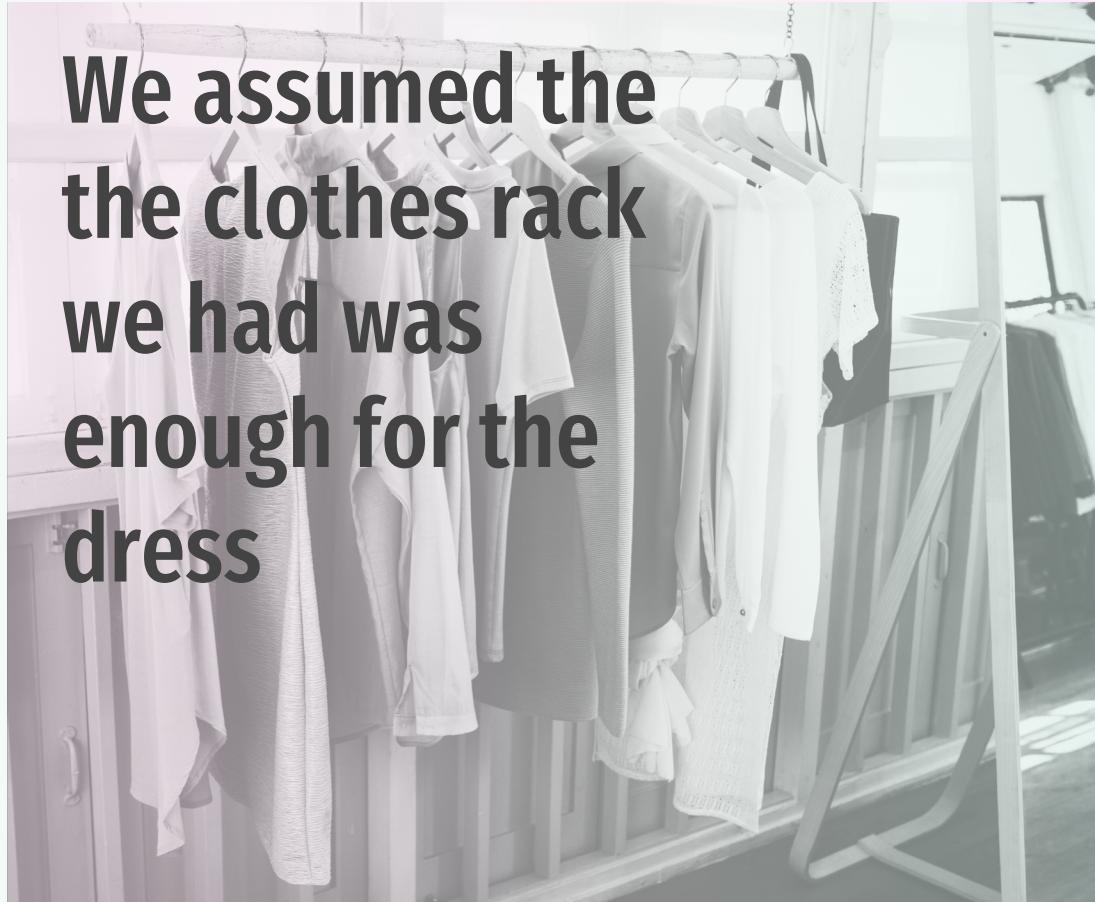
@jaydestro



**Why?  
We assumed capacity.**

Our app for voting was fine. The main webapp (website, cms, stats) all down.

We assumed the clothes rack we had was enough for the dress



Lesson learned?



Always be ready to  
restock and reassess  
when this season's hot  
style is unexpectedly in  
demand.

Thanks, listen to  
[@oncallnightmare](https://twitter.com/oncallnightmare)

@jaydestro