

Automation + *Artisanship*

The Future of Runbooks

Hi!

I'm Kenny Johnston



@kencjohnston

README.md

- Engineer by education, learner in spirit
- Political Campaigns
- Open-source
- OpenStack
- Operations
- GitLab

The image shows a wide-angle aerial view of the Portland, Oregon skyline at sunset or sunrise. The city is densely packed with buildings of various heights, including several skyscrapers. In the background, a large, snow-capped mountain peak, identified as Mount Hood, rises prominently against a bright, orange-hued sky. The foreground shows the urban landscape, while the middle ground features a hillside covered in green trees.

START: Where are we?

Artisanship

#8 - Artisanal Everything!

.. more artisanal versions of
what the rest of us have

Artisans work together

“Portland got
there first, sorry
Brooklyn”

The image shows a collage of screenshots from the Crafty Wonderland website. At the top is a banner with two birds and the text "CRAFTY WONDERLAND". Below it are three navigation links: "ABOUT THE ART + CRAFT MARKETS", "ABOUT OUR PORTLAND STORES", and "SHOP OUR PRODUCTS". The middle section features a large photo of a crowded indoor craft fair with many booths and people. To the right of this photo is a sidebar with the text "ART + CRAFT MARKET" and a "LEARN MORE" button. The bottom section shows the interior of a brick-and-mortar store with shelves of products and a wreath on the wall.

CRAFTY
WONDERLAND

ABOUT THE ART + CRAFT MARKETS

ABOUT OUR PORTLAND STORES

SHOP OUR PRODUCTS

ART + CRAFT MARKET

LEARN MORE

JR PORTLAND STORES

our brick + mortar stores
featuring handmade goods and art by
200 Portland artists or shop

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Artisanship

In Portland you can find artisanal:

- Cocktails
- Bakeries
- Jewelry
- Furniture
- Cake
- **Razor blades**
- Costumes
- Scooters
- ...



Artisanship

Ar·ti·san - /'ärdəzən/ - noun

1. a worker in a skilled trade, especially one that involves making things by hand.

Shokunin (artisans) honoured their tools of trade at New Year's – the sharpened and taken-care of tools would be placed in a tokonoma ... to express gratitude for performing their task



Artisanship

Right brain vs Left brain

Contractive vs **Expansive**

Intrinsic vs Extrinsic motivation

Autonomy, **Mastery**, Purpose





PIVOT: What's the opposite of artisanship?



Automation

Contractive vs Expansive

No skill, no mastery required

Tools aren't revered, they are commodities

Intrinsic vs Extrinsic motivation

A photograph of a person sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. They are wearing a black t-shirt with a logo and plaid pants. A book titled "SUPER 1" is propped up against their head. The person is looking down at the book. The background shows green foliage and a building with white columns.

Automation

Button pushing

Tedious

Repetitive

Inflexible

Robotic

< Messages

Darlin'

Contact

Today 8:32 AM

How'd the meeting go?

UGGGH, getting doctors
to agree to best-practices
is impossible!

Do they not believe in
science??!!

They just don't like being
told what to do.



Text Message

Send

Automation

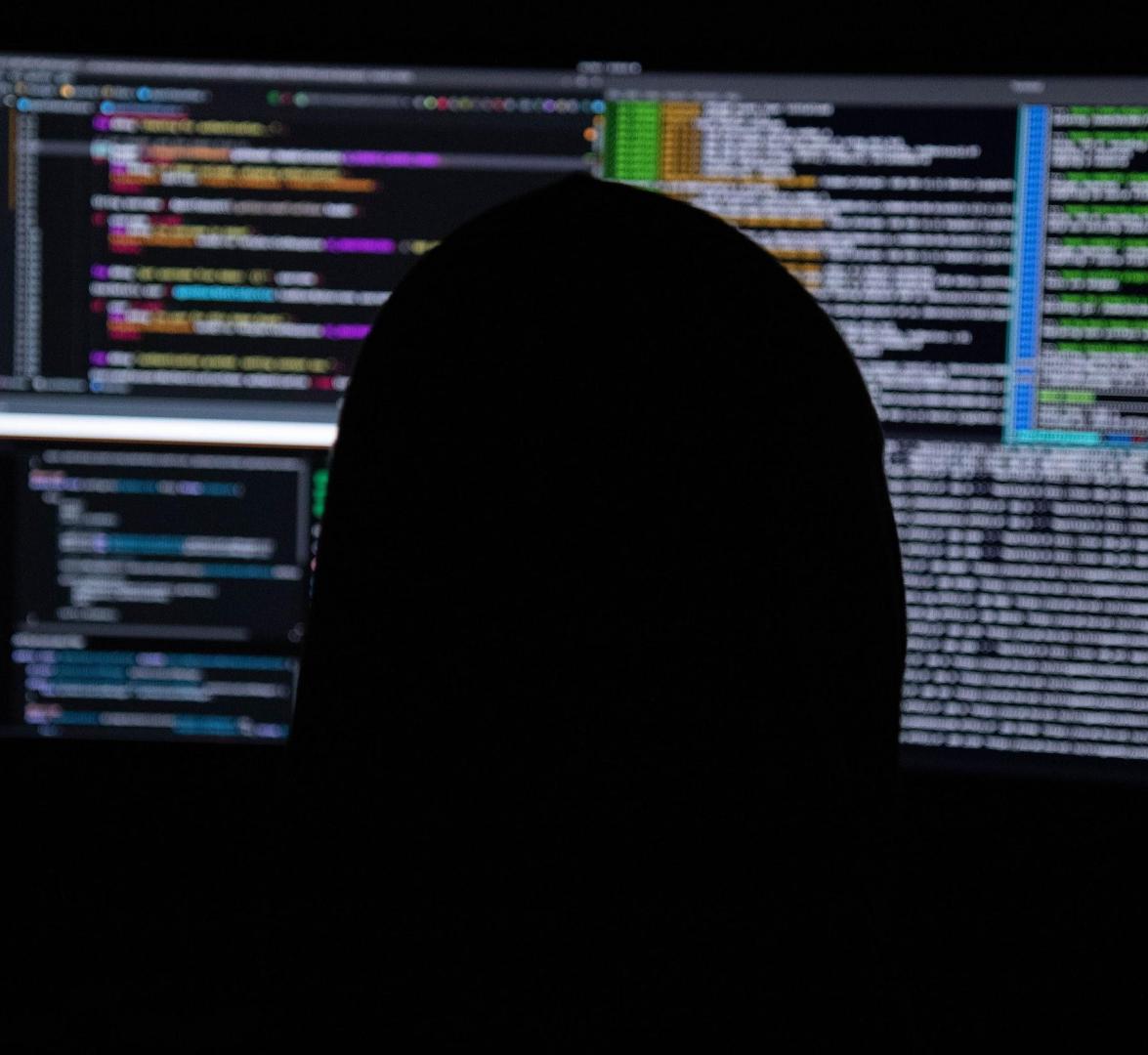
Architects

Doctors

Mechanics

DevOPS

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Automation

Hacks

Bots

Operators

Scripts

Process documentation

Scripts

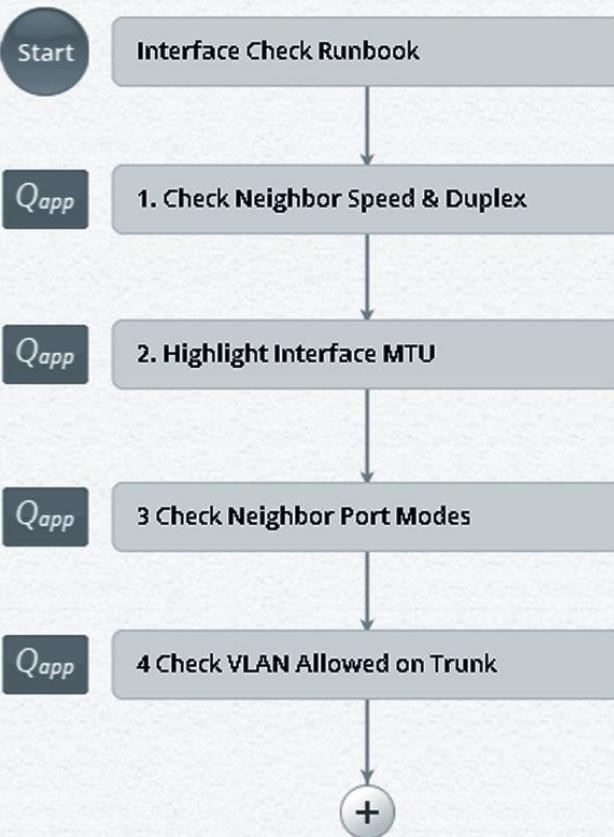
Runbooks

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Auto Layout

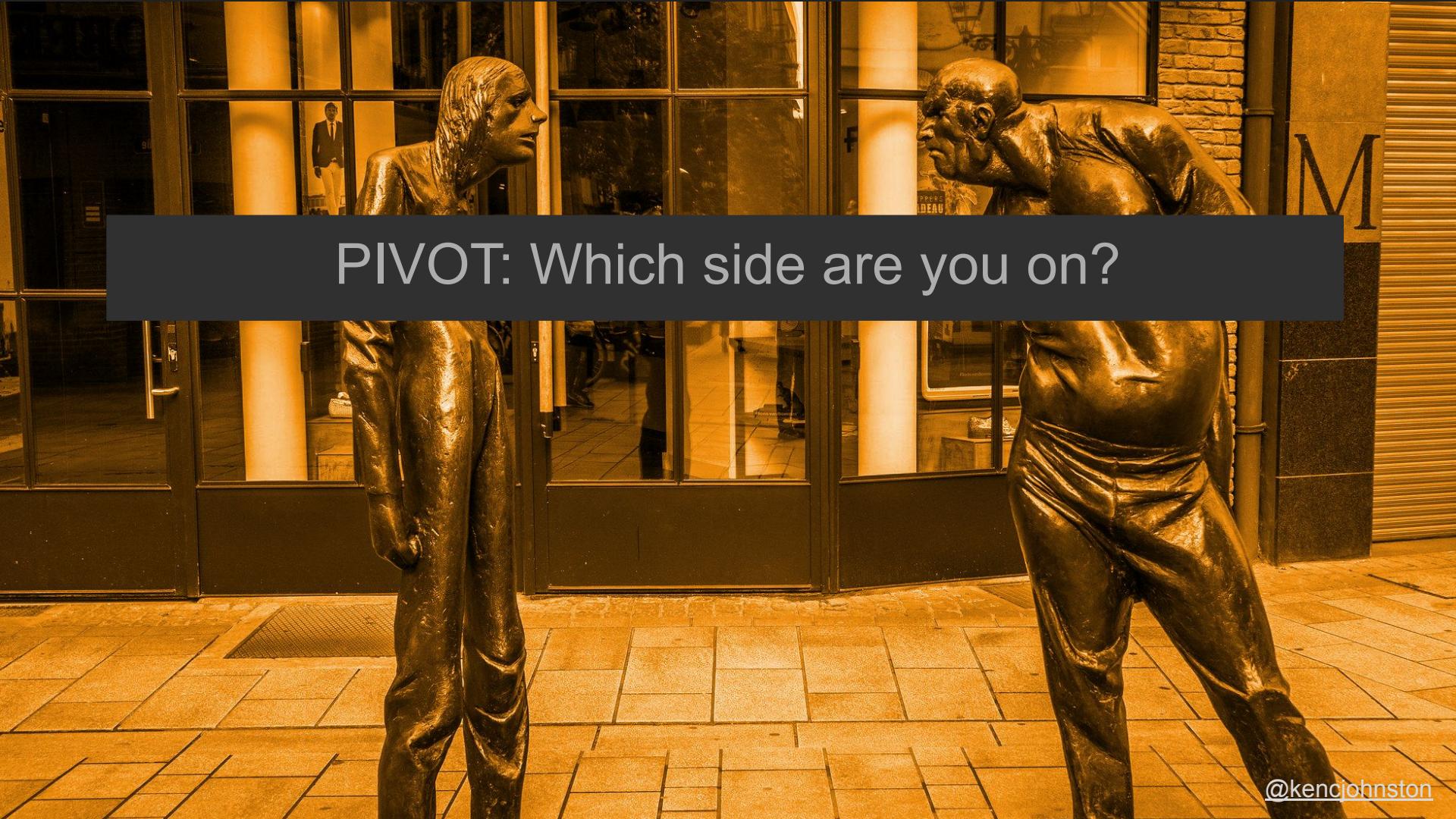
Run

Save



Automation

A **runbook** is a compilation of **routine procedures** and operations that the system administrator or operator **carries out**.

A photograph of two large bronze statues of men standing on a city street at night. The statue on the left is a man with long hair, looking towards the right. The statue on the right is a man with a shaved head, looking towards the left. They are positioned in front of a building with large windows. The scene is lit by streetlights and the building's own lights, creating a warm, golden glow.

PIVOT: Which side are you on?

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THE CONFLICT

Pitchforks! We're being robbed of our ability to be artisans!

THE EVOLUTION OF AUTOMATION at Google

Written by Niall Murphy with John Looney and Michael Kacirek

Edited by Betsy Beyer

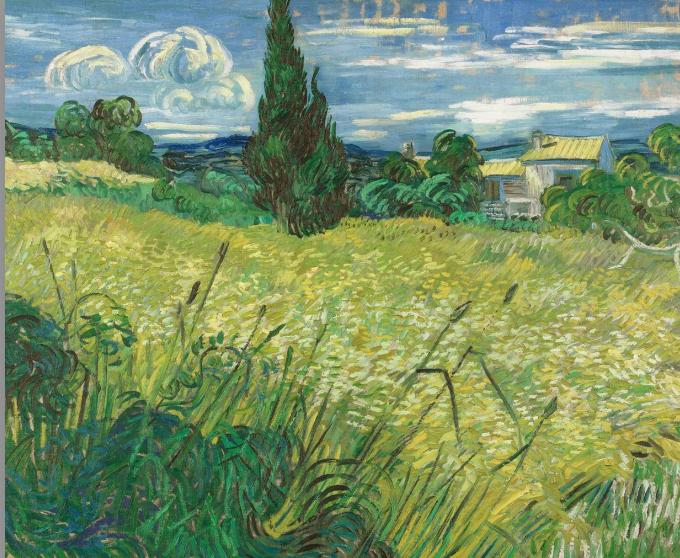
“ Besides black art, there is only automation and mechanization. ”

Federico García Lorca (1898–1936), Spanish poet and playwright

For SRE, automation is a force multiplier, not a panacea. Of course, just **multiplying** force does not naturally change the accuracy of where that force is applied: doing automation thoughtlessly can create as many problems as it solves.

THE CONFLICT

“[Above we've] stated a maximalist view of our position... in general, we have chosen to create platforms where we could, or to position ourselves so that we could create platforms **over-time**. ”



THE CONFLICT

Something is broken, my observability system, scripts and runbooks aren't born
fully mature

A photograph of a person climbing a textured rock face at night. The climber is illuminated by a headlamp, casting light on their hands and the rock. The background is dark.

PIVOT: What's band did you discover
before everyone else?

The Cure - Balance

- *Avenue for artisanship* and a path to automation
- *Lovable* and efficient
- *Extrinsic* and intrinsic
- *Brownfield* and Greenfield



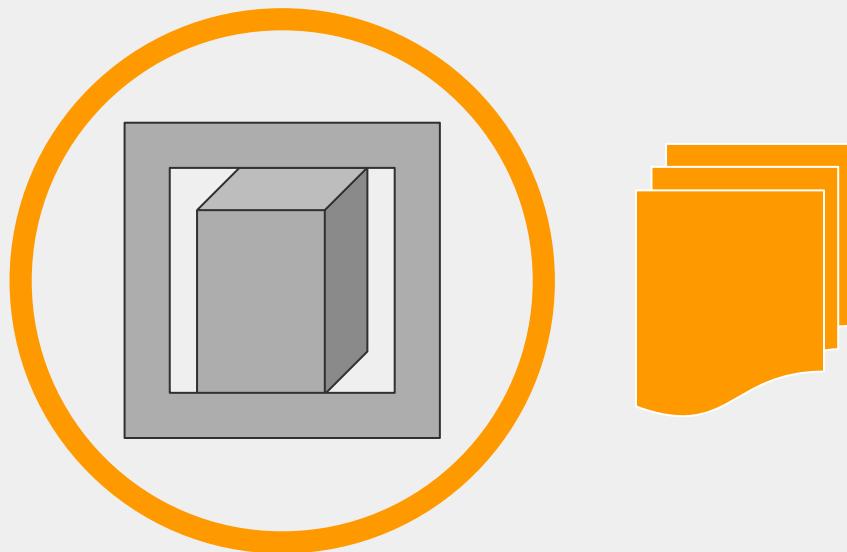
The Cure - Runbook Zero

Inbox Zero - Completeness, Prioritized, Rigid



The Cure - Runbook Zero

Completeness - Principle 1 - Capture everything



The Cure - Runbook Zero

Prioritization - Principle 2 - Prioritize with data

The image shows a digital interface for managing runbooks, likely from a tool like Ansible Tower or a similar orchestration platform. It displays six items, each with a title, a 'response::' label, a status badge, and a risk indicator.

- Redis replication has stopped**
response::manual runbook ⓘ risk::high ⓘ
#10
- PostgreSQL switchover**
response::manual runbook ⓘ risk::high ⓘ
#9
- SSL certificate expires**
response::manual runbook ⓘ
- Gracefully restart gitaly-ruby**
response::automated runbook ⓘ
#16
- Blocking a project causing high load**
response::automated runbook ⓘ risk::medium ⓘ
#14
- Runners cache is down**
response::automated runbook ⓘ risk::high ⓘ
#15
- Runner scaling**
response::automation ⓘ
#17
- Database backups**
response::automation ⓘ
#15

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The Cure - Runbook Zero

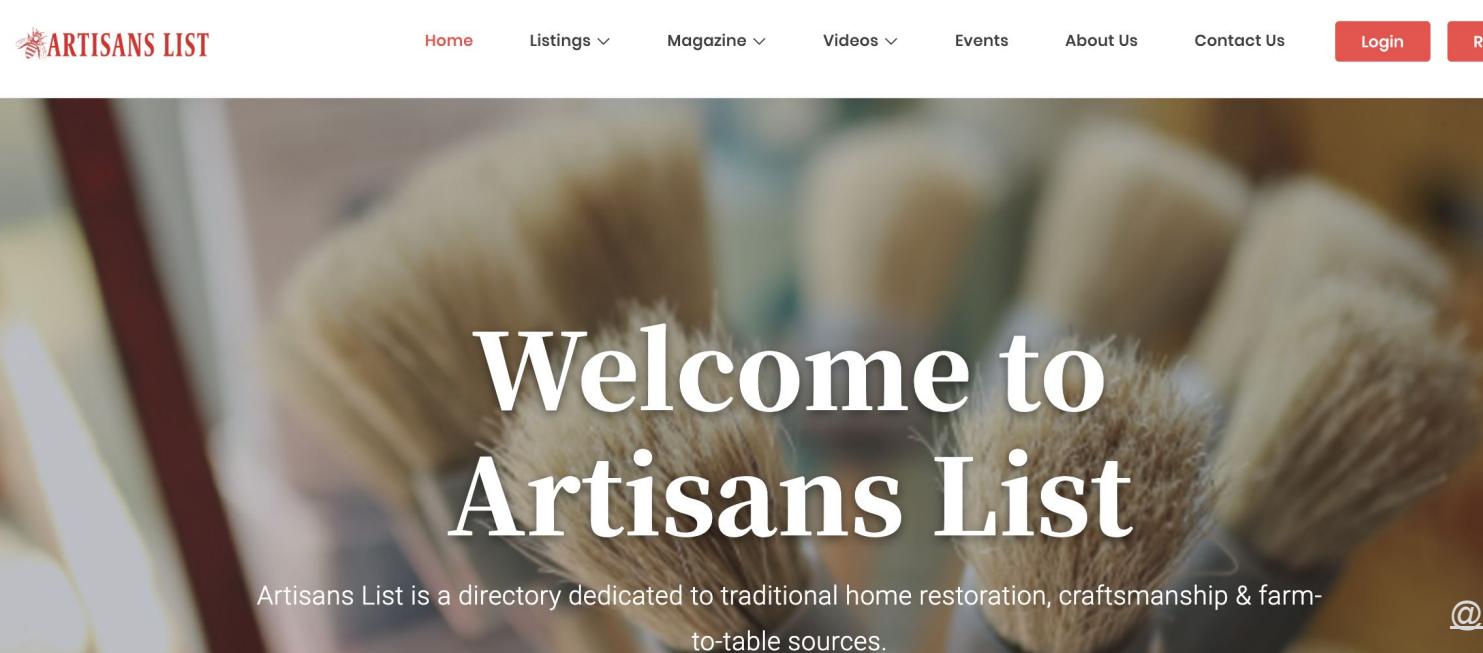
Rigidity - Principle 3 - Iterate + Incremental

Adding runbooks rules

- Make it quick - add links for checks
- Don't make me think - write clear guidelines, write expectations
- Recommended structure
 - Symptoms - how can I quickly tell that this is what is going on
 - Pre-checks - how can I be 100% sure
 - Resolution - what do I have to do to fix it
 - Post-checks - how can I be 100% sure that it is solved
 - Rollback - optional, how can I undo my fix

The Cure - Runbook Zero

An Example

A screenshot of the Artisans List website homepage. The header features a navigation bar with links for Home, Listings, Magazine, Videos, Events, About Us, and Contact Us, along with Login and Register buttons. The main visual is a blurred background image of several wooden paintbrushes. Overlaid on the center of the image is a large, white, sans-serif text that reads "Welcome to Artisans List". Below this, a smaller line of text states: "Artisans List is a directory dedicated to traditional home restoration, craftsmanship & farm-to-table sources." In the bottom right corner of the page, there is a watermark or social media handle that reads "@kencjohnston".

ARTISANS LIST

Home Listings Magazine Videos Events About Us Contact Us

Login Register

Welcome to Artisans List

Artisans List is a directory dedicated to traditional home restoration, craftsmanship & farm-to-table sources.

@kencjohnston

The Cure - Runbook Zero

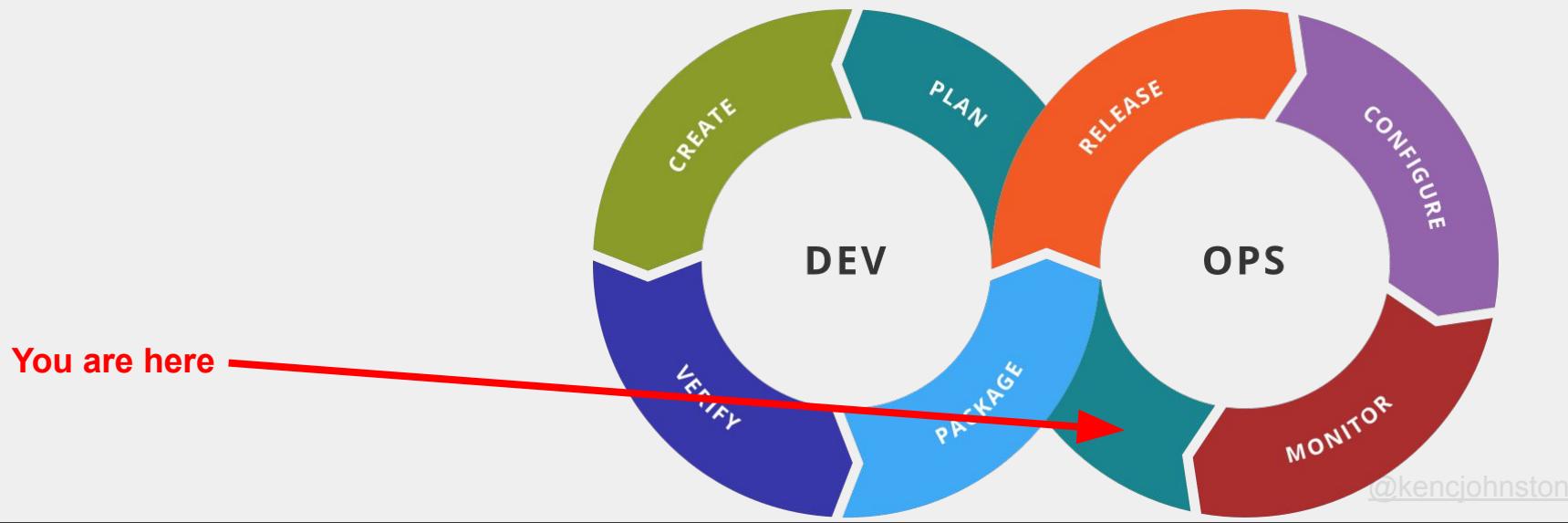
Three Principles

- Capture everything - tools and usage
- Prioritize with data - risk, size and usage
- Iterate - part of your existing iteration cycle

This sounds a lot like...

The Cure - Dev[Response]Ops

Continuous Feedback loop for your Observability and Response





WRAP: Automation ❤️ *Artisanship*

Thanks!

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Questions?