

RCA – Runbooks Page Incident (dev.aimlsre.com)

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Environment: Dev (CloudFront + S3 UI, Lambda Image API)

1. Executive Summary

After adding a new UI page (Runbooks), the application began returning HTML error responses instead of JSON for API calls. This broke the Runbooks UI flow and appeared as lost retry behavior. The root cause was CloudFront/S3 edge responses combined with insufficient client-side validation.

2. Impact

- Runbooks UI showed parsing errors.
- Retry logic appeared broken to users.
- RAG queries could not be completed reliably.

3. Root Cause

CloudFront/S3 returned HTML error documents for API paths under certain failure modes. The frontend assumed JSON and attempted unconditional parsing, causing failures and bypassing retries.

4. Resolution

- Switched to `res.text()` and validated Content-Type.
- Added safe JSON parsing and descriptive errors.
- Restored retry behavior after transient failures.

5. Key Commands

```
aws s3 sync ui/dist s3:// --delete aws cloudfront create-validation  
--distribution-id --paths "/*"
```

6. Prevention

Always validate response Content-Type at the UI boundary and never assume JSON from edge APIs.