

MONITORING

vs

OBSERVABILITY

What's the difference?

(And why it matters at 3 AM)

Swipe →

MONITORING answers:

- "Is CPU above 80%"
- "Did the health check pass?"
- "Is the service up?"

Known questions.

Known answers.

OBSERVABILITY answers:

- "Why is checkout slow?"
- "Which service caused the failure?"
- "What's different about failing requests?"

Unknown questions.

Discovered answers.

MONITORING is like a car dashboard:

- Speed
- Fuel level
- Engine temperature

You know SOMETHING is wrong.

You don't know WHAT.

OBSERVABILITY is like a full diagnostic:

- Every component checked
- Error codes explained
- Root cause identified

You know EXACTLY what's wrong.

THE THREE PILLARS

METRICS

What's the pattern?

TRACES

What's the journey?

LOGS

What's the detail?

WHEN YOU NEED OBSERVABILITY:

- Requests cross service boundaries
- Failures are intermittent
- Scale makes direct inspection impossible
- Context gets lost between services

Want the complete guide?

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observability documentation.

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