



# 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.





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.

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



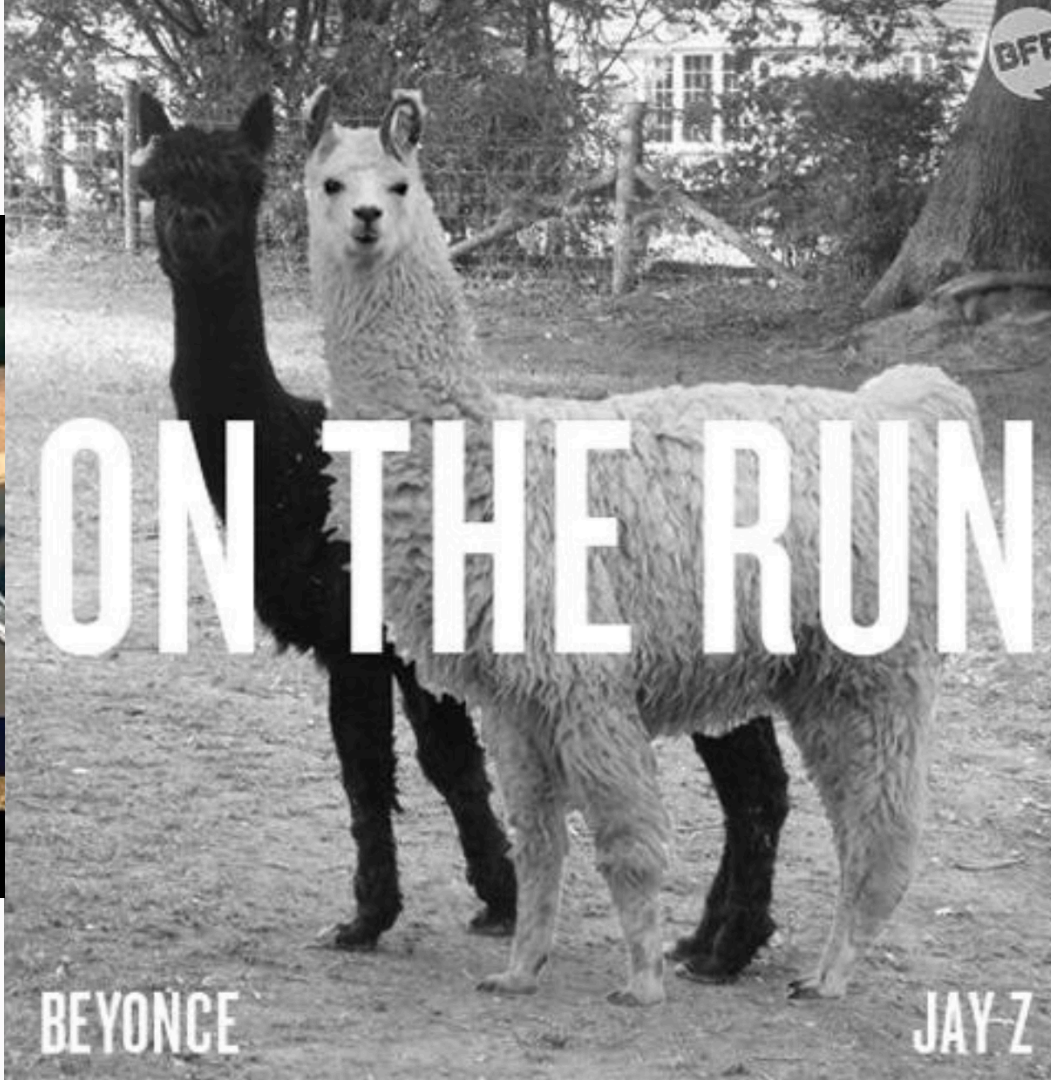


**SUDDENLY - LLAMAS.**



**LLAMA DRAMA**

5:14 26°



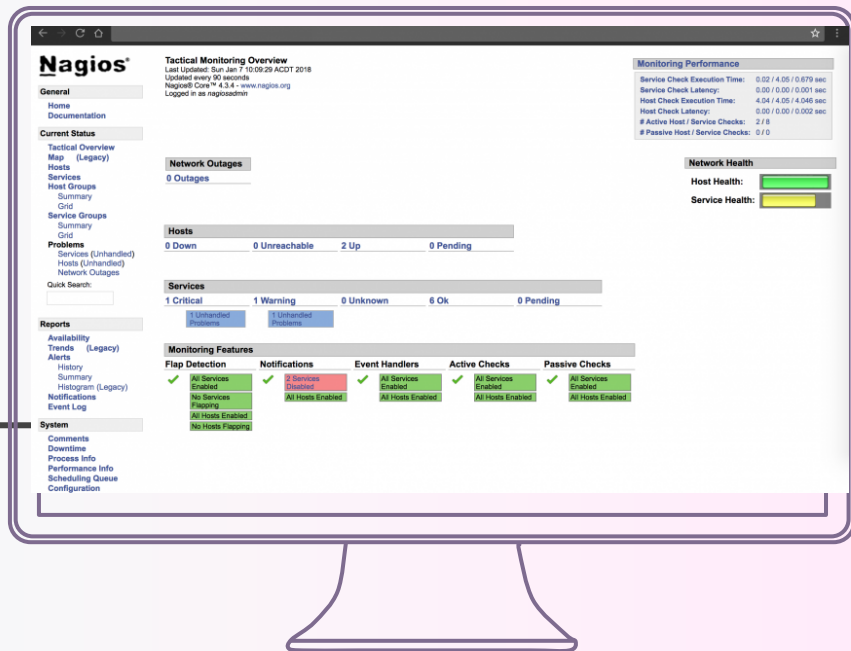
**ON THE RUN**

**BEYONCE**

**JAY-Z**

# Alerts Explode

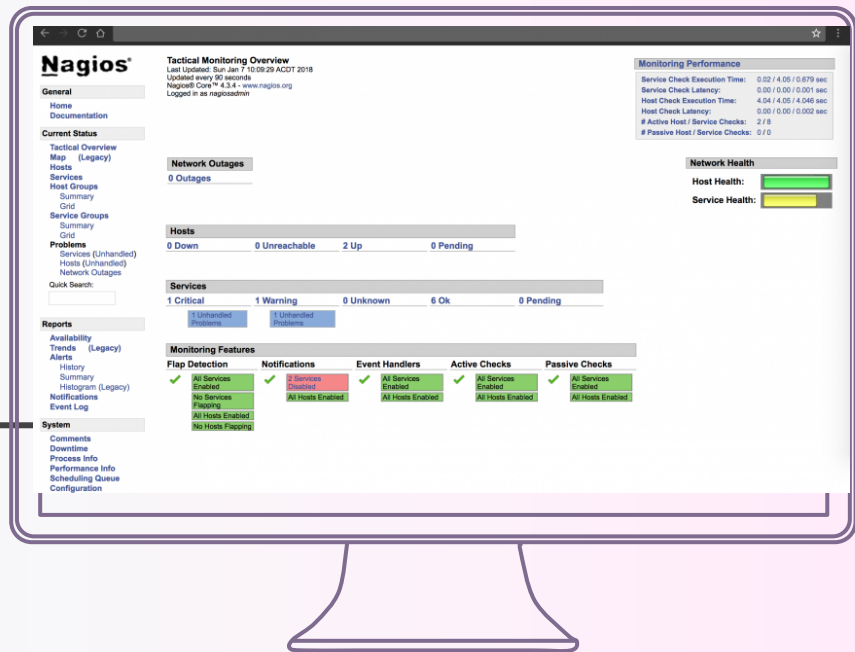
We release an article letting the world know about llamas running the street, alerts go nuts.





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.

opsalerts ▾ nagios bots alerts

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

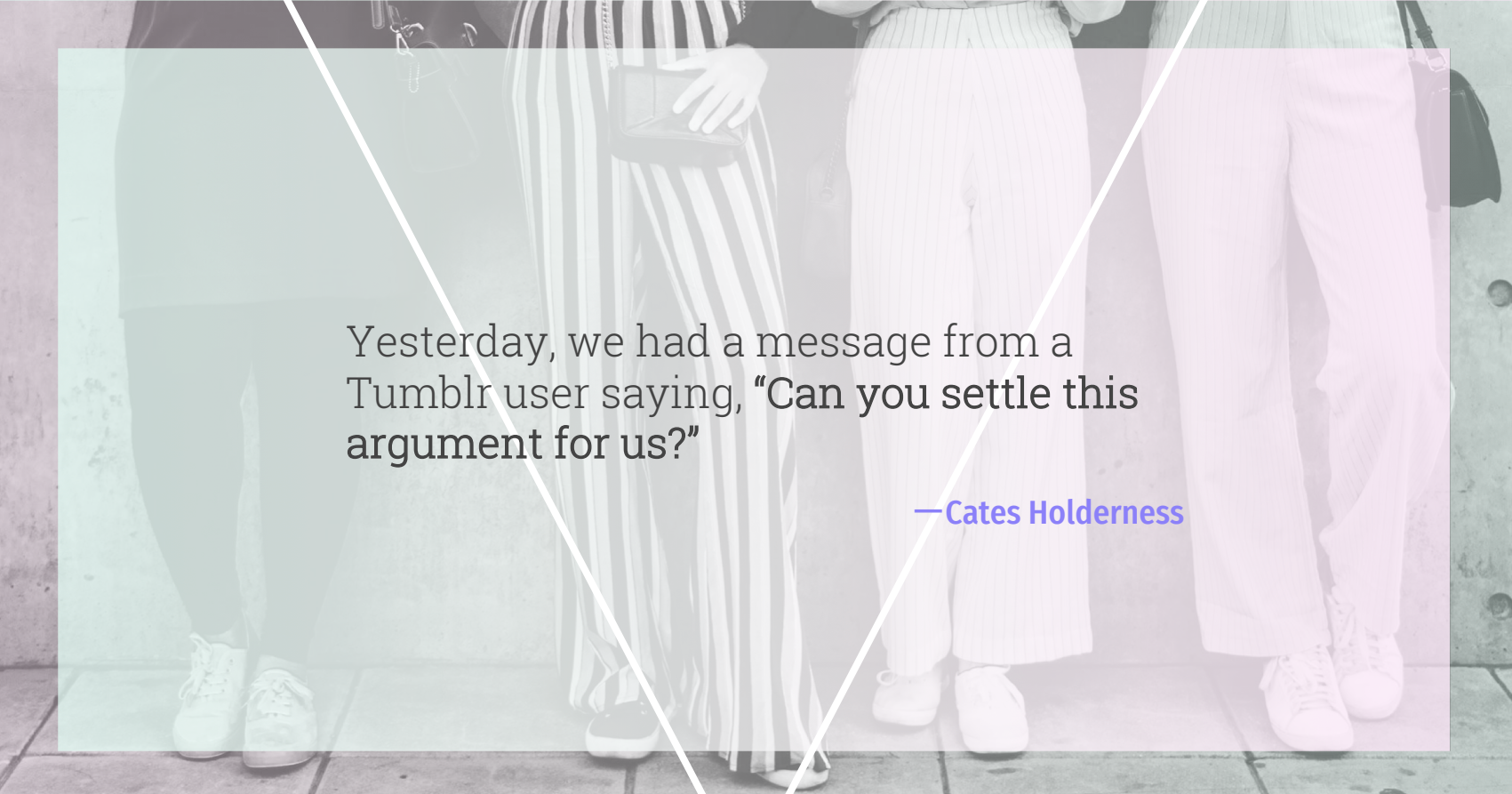


# What was "the dress" phenomena?

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

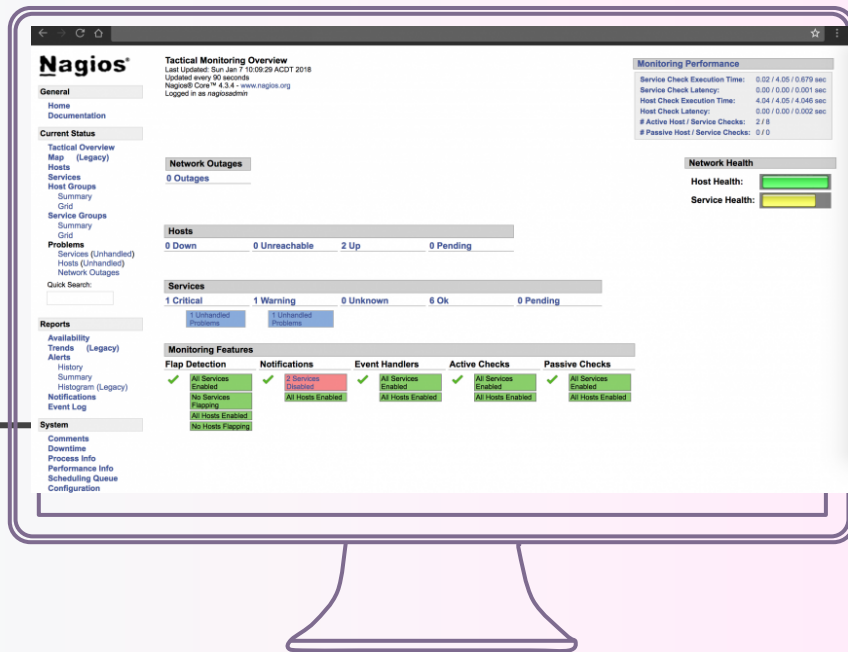


Yesterday, we had a message from a Tumblr user saying, “Can you settle this argument for us?”

—Cates Holderness

# (once again!) Alerts Explode

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





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:  
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CRITICAL - load average: 49.18, 41.72, 22.28



iMessage





**Chris Tindal**

@christindal



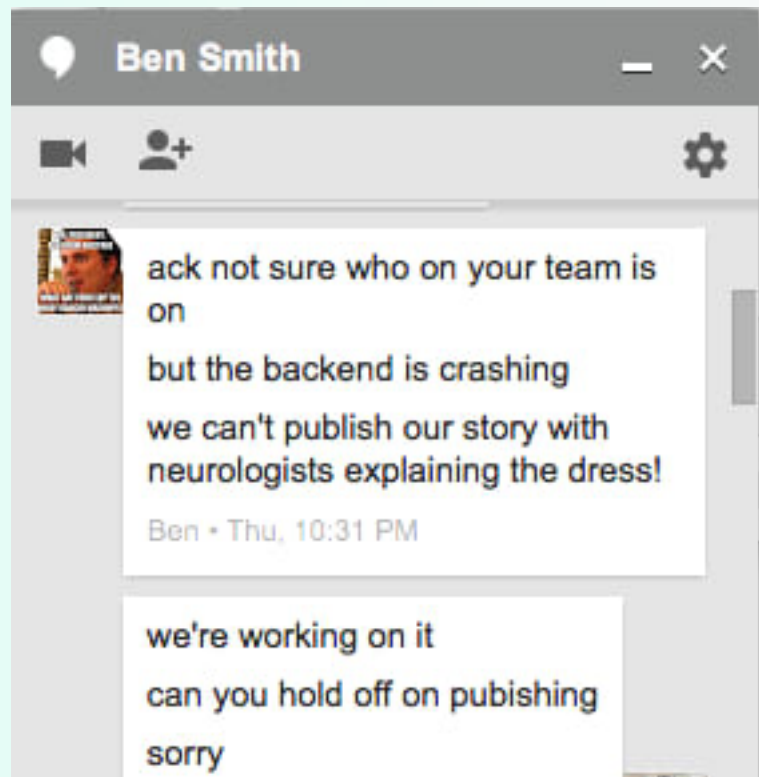
Actual quote from a BuzzFeed server admin: "I AM THROWING  
SERVERS INTO THE INTERNET"

♡ 52 11:38 PM - Feb 26, 2015




💬 36 people are talking about this





**Why?**  
**We assumed capacity.**

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


A photograph of a wooden clothes rack filled with various light-colored garments, including shirts, blouses, and dresses, hanging on hangers. The image is semi-transparent, serving as a background for the text.

**We assumed the  
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.**

A photograph of three dresses hanging on a rack. The dresses are dark blue, light blue, and white with horizontal stripes. They are all short-sleeved and have a fitted, bandage-like style. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a retail or display setting.

**Thanks, listen to  
@oncallnightmare**

@jaydestro