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Reducing Time-to-Resolution with Interactive Runbooks

OBS1663C

Mike Kruze
Principal Engineer | Splunk

Mike Kruze

Principal Engineer | Splunk® Observability

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About Me

I'm a backend software engineer working on Splunk® Observability

I'm part of the on-call rotation

I'm a service owner, so I can get paged even when I'm not on-call

What is a Runbook?

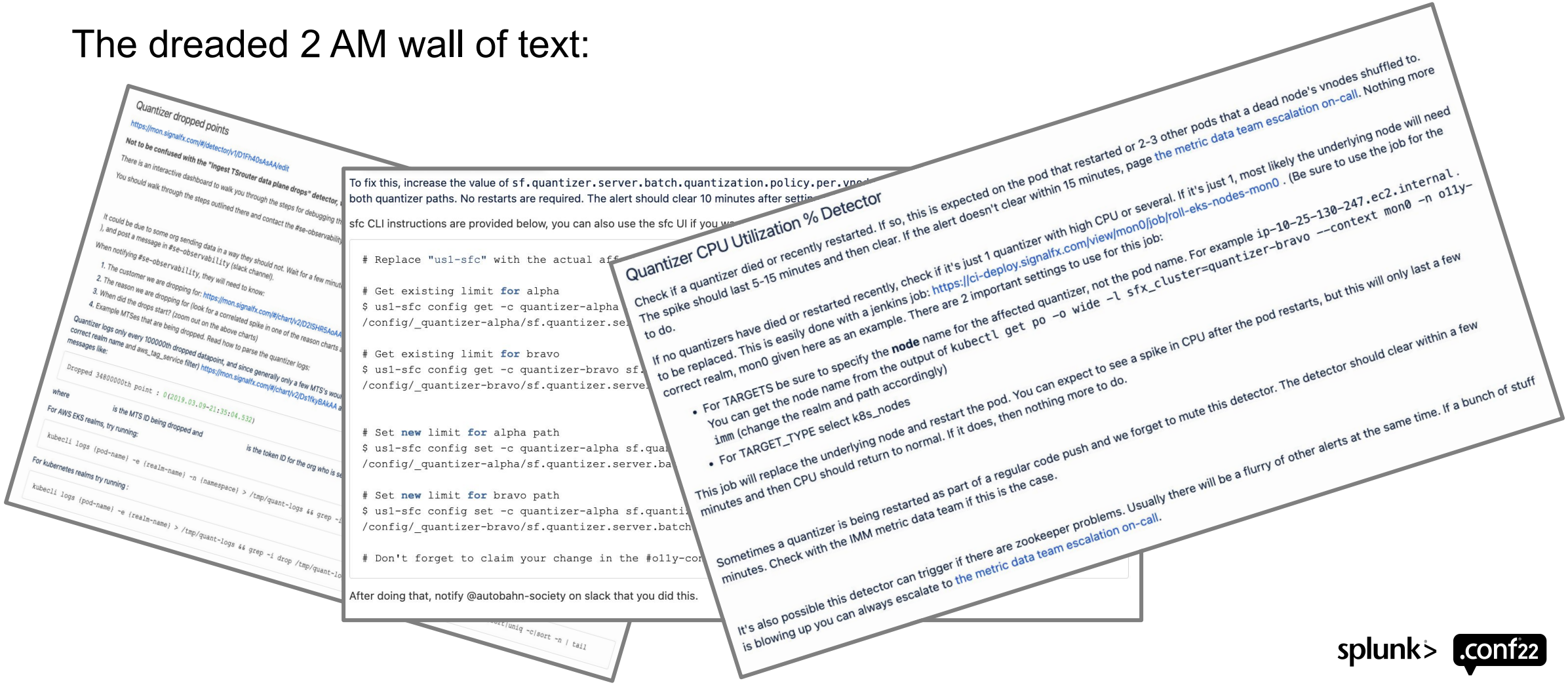
A list of steps to debug and remediate a problem, usually to be run by an on-call engineer when they get paged

On-call engineers may not be familiar with all system components

Often a static document or wiki that must be maintained

Runbooks the Old Way

The dreaded 2 AM wall of text:



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Runbooks the Old Way

One of the most common lines in our old runbooks:

"There are multiple reasons this detector could have triggered..."

Runbooks the Old Way

"Is the problem happening on just one node or all nodes?"

"This can happen sometimes when a host unexpectedly restarts"

"Or maybe all threads are exhausted because of a large query"

"Database write errors can also cause this"

And of course it's a different remediation step depending on the reason!

Runbooks the Old Way

Having multiple reasons for an alert requires looking at a different set of metrics

Often done with static (broken!) links to dashboards

Confusion == Escalation

There Must Be a Better Way

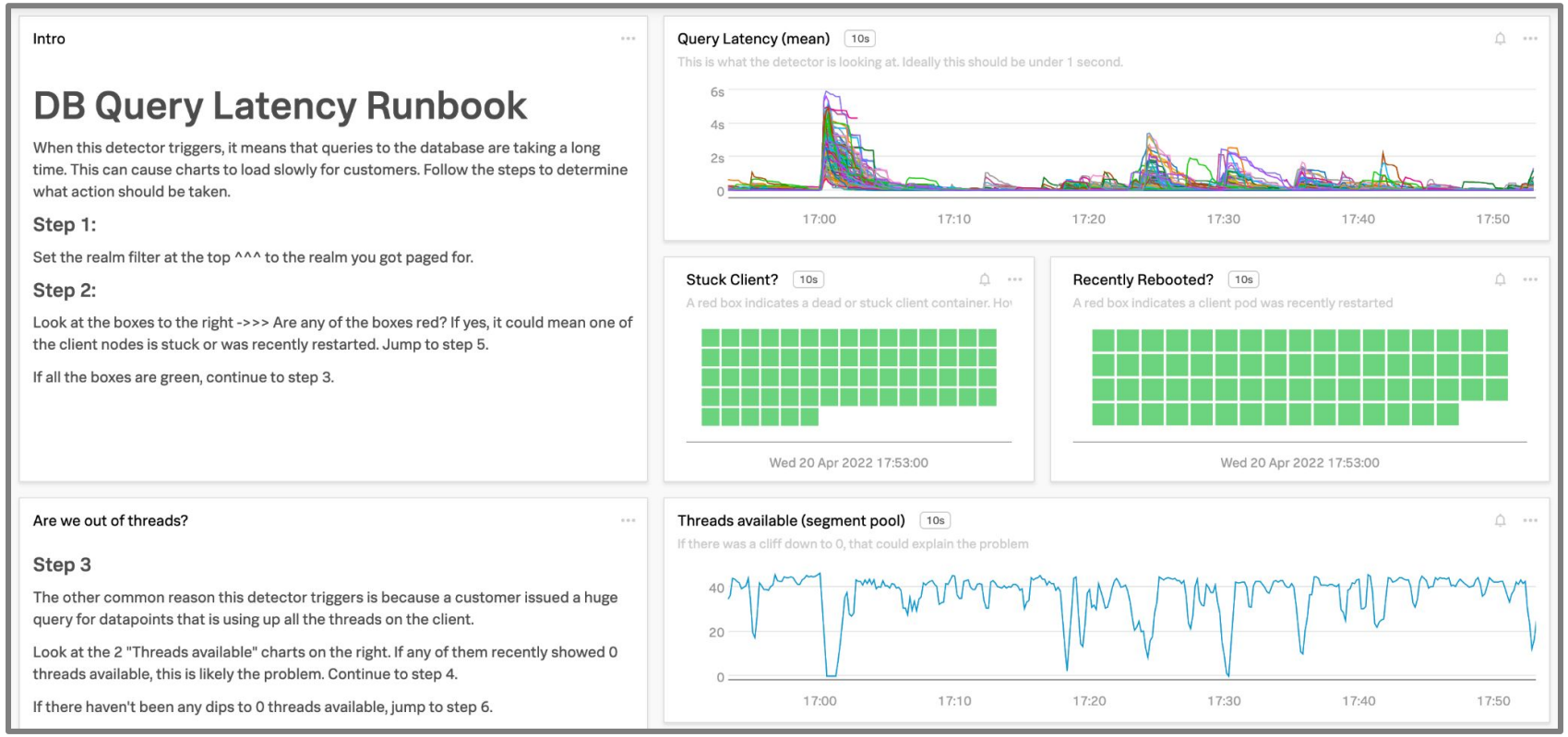
How can we improve the on-call experience for engineers?

How can we reduce mean-time-to-resolution for incidents?

How can we reduce impact to customers?

Introducing Interactive Runbooks

What if we could combine runbooks with the real-time metrics available in Splunk® Observability?



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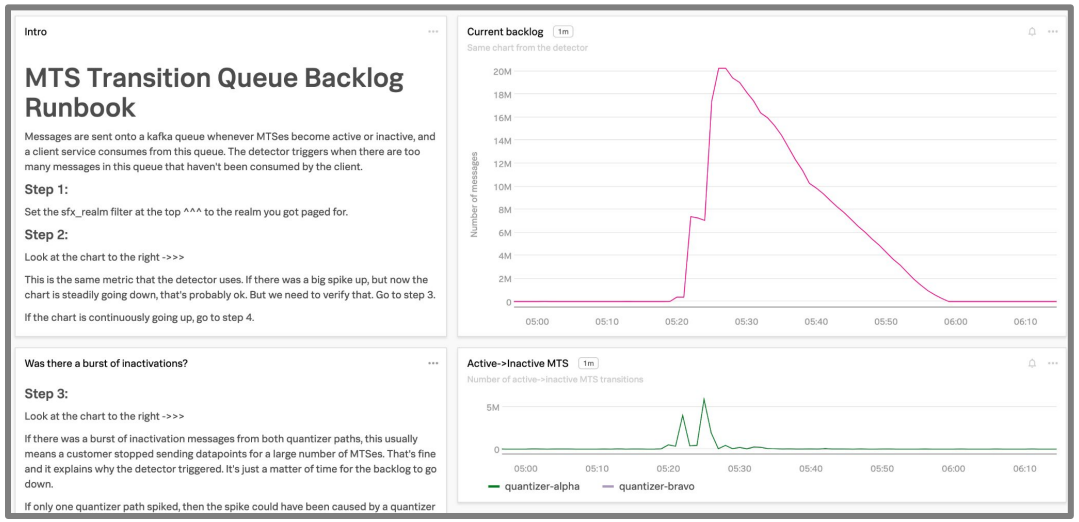
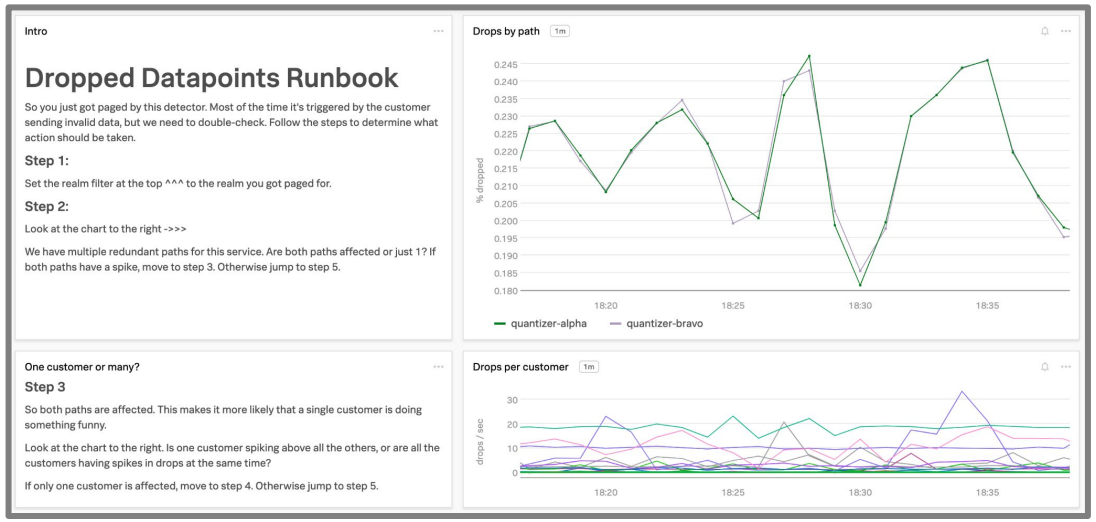
Interactive Runbooks in Summary

Increase developer efficiency and lower stress- our on-call engineers love them!

Decrease total mean-time-to-resolution

Provide a better customer experience





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Thank You

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