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A KEYNOTE FOR OPERATIONS, MSPs & ENTERPRISE LEADERS

Boring by Design

How the Worst Incidents Taught Us to Build the Quietest Operations



ModernOps

Chris Black

CTO & Managing Partner

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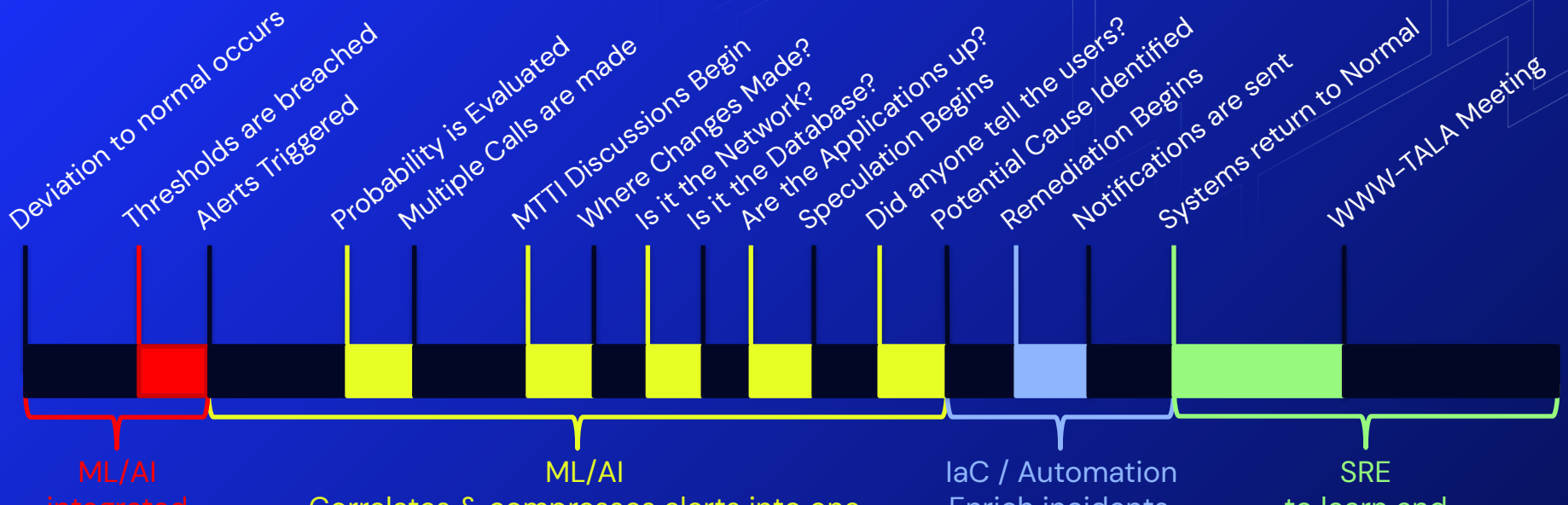
An Origin Story



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Typical Incident Workflow

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This is the promise of AIOps

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WHO'S SPEAKING

- 30+ years in MSP
- Scaling operations through both organic grown and M&A
- Building Operations that are structured flexible
- Unapologetic Gen-X



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What makes an incident a “112”?

No good options

Every choice costs something

RISK RISK RISK

Everything at once

Multiple system failures

Effect of the effect

Time matters

Speed Kills

Delays Kill

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Asked myself

1. How fast can we get everyone on a bridge — and who runs it?
2. Would everyone agree on when our incident was “done”?
3. How many versions of “the truth” are we trusting right now?
4. How do I identify the Effect of the Effect within distributed platforms?
5. How do I create a flexible, repeatable, predictable and TRANSPARENT process?

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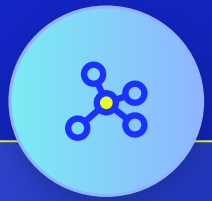
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Every “112” P0 Starts With a Bridge



Under 60 Seconds

Everyone's on it.
No chasing, no waiting.



Who Runs It

One named commander.
One voice, no debate.



Keep the Clock

One job: timestamps.
Updates on a timer.



Facts Only

Zero speculation.
Cold, hard facts only.

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One owner. One next action.

One Owner

Clear accountability.
No committee.

One Action

Never ten things.
Always the next one.

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Who Tells Who Matters More Than You Think

- Most plans cover who fixes it — not who hears about it, or when.
- Notification is a discipline: a cascade, named owners, a clock.
- 3 things every engineer everywhere has said at one point in their career...

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Stabilize first. Perfect later.

1. **Stop the bleeding**
   Restore service before anything else.
2. **Buy time**
   A workaround beats a perfect fix that's still in review.
3. **Build the real fix**
   Now do it properly — tested, not rushed.

> ‘Do not make perfect the enemy of the good’

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Identify Versions of the Truth

We have the advantage of leveraging AI within our environments to identify types of data, knowledge and systems.

“If you have 2 versions of the truth - you have NONE” - me

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These are a Golden Opportunity

- People remember who was there for them (and with them) when everything goes sideways.
- Instinct: Go quiet, downplay it. That's backwards. Show up fast, own it, fix it in front of them
- Over Communicate: Say something 7 times everyone will swear you said it once
- Leverage AI to create your top 10 lists, then address 3

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"Everything with a moving part will break;
including you and me.

It's how you respond that matters."

— CHRIS BLACK

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“Boring” is not low ambition. It’s scale.

What people fear	What’s actually true	How you instrument it
Boring is a lack of caring, dedication and creativity	Scaling is the same discipline during a “112” as a Tuesday	KPIs vs Metrics vs Data vs Records

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Key Takeaways

1. One owner, one action
2. Boring is a sign of maturity
3. Stabilize, remediate, improve, prevent
4. One version of the truth
5. Standards scale

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The objective is results, not systems

Every new tool adds

- load.
- complexity.
- integrations.
- distributions.
- operations.
- cost.
- variables.

Add one, retire two.

That's continuous tools rationalization.

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Thank you for attending

We want your input:
Share your feedback to help shape future Elevate experiences.

Let's make every Wednesday uneventful.

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