

Incident Oct. 29, 2021: Intelligent Search outage

Availability: Outage of search results

% of stores affected: 3%

Duration of incident: 165 minutes

Symptoms

From 19:19 to 21:04 UTC, some of our databases were out of service. As a result, some clients received an empty PLP for around 20 minutes. The indexing process for the affected stores was also impacted, resulting in products not being indexed in our search databases for the duration of the incident.

Summary

During routine infrastructure maintenance, at 19:19 UTC, we were notified that some of our databases were out of service. We also received feedback from some stores about search results returning empty, in addition to an elevated error rate in our indexing process.

To maintain the reliability of our service, we will review our internal processes when dealing with our infrastructure and prepare a more resilient environment that would be ready to handle a faster recovery.

Timeline

[2021-10-29 19:19 UTC] Our monitoring systems warned us of anomalous behavior in our search module.

[2021-10-29 19:25 UTC] We identified that some of our databases were out of service and started mitigation actions.

[2021-10-29 20:50 UTC] We were notified that some stores had a higher than average error rate and that product searches were coming up empty.

[2021-10-29 21:13 UTC] All the affected databases were recovered.

[2021-10-29 22:04 UTC] The indexing process went back to normal.

Mitigation strategy

To mitigate this problem, we started restoring our database for all the affected accounts using backups.

To alleviate the issue as much as possible, we prioritized accounts in production environments.

Follow-up actions: preventing future failures

As a follow-up to this incident, we will review our internal processes regarding infrastructure maintenance, in addition to identifying the main recovery bottlenecks.