

Incident Report

Jul 12, 2023 : Elevated Errors in the Platform

Status Page URL	https://status.vtex.com/incidents/l8wvyz45szbj
Impacted accounts	All stores
Duration	2 hours and 34 minutes
Availability	Partial outage (up to 50% drop compared to orders forecast)

Summary

On July 12, 2023, at 20:29 UTC, one of our replicated and highly available database systems experienced severe service degradation and didn't automatically recover. This issue caused intermittent errors and high latency in the overall user experience, leading to a partial outage across the VTEX Platform. Sales flow, Product Indexing, and the Administrative Environment were severely impacted.

At 21:15 UTC, the initial issue was manually remediated. Unfortunately, failures in our self-healing mechanisms (circuit breakers) caused cascading effects in our services that affected a subset of our customers for longer than we'd like. Our incident response team continued applying remediation actions and monitoring platform performance.

At 23:03 UTC, we were able to fully reestablish platform performance, with sessions and orders stabilizing within forecasted levels.

Symptoms

On July 12, 2023, from 20:29 to 23:03 UTC, the platform experienced intermittent errors and high latency in the overall user experience. This issue caused a partial outage that severely impacted critical flows in the WebStore, Checkout, Administrative Environment and Internal Modules for a subset of our customers.

Timeline

[2023-07-12 20:29 UTC]	<p>One of our replicated and highly available database systems experienced severe service degradation and didn't automatically recover.</p> <p>Our incident response team was alerted. This issue caused intermittent errors and high latency in the overall user experience, leading to a partial outage across the VTEX Platform. Sales flow, Product Indexing, and the Administrative Environment were severely impacted.</p>
[2023-07-12 21:15 UTC]	<p>The initial issue was manually remediated. Unfortunately, several of our services circuit breakers opened up and failed to automatically close once the initial issue had been resolved. This extended the incident to some customers for longer than we'd like. The circuit breakers are in place to avoid complete unavailability, and as a side effect, a subset of our platform continued to operate.</p>
[2023-07-12 22:00 UTC]	<p>Our incident response team was still investigating the failure's cascading effects and manually implementing remediations to address the issue.</p>
[2023-07-12 22:32 UTC]	<p>We confirmed that remediation efforts were underway to recover the platform. However, some intermittent errors and higher latency persisted for several customers.</p>
[2023-07-12 22:56 UTC]	<p>The teams' additional remediation actions were proving successful, with sessions and orders gradually increasing towards expected levels.</p>
[2023-07-12 23:03 UTC]	<p>We validated that the remediation actions had been effective, resulting in a steady recovery.</p>

Mitigation strategy

We reestablished normal operations of the platform by performing multiple traffic and database operations in the affected infrastructure, such as database failovers, load shedding, and scaling up core applications.

Follow-up actions: preventing future failures

Moving forward, the following actions will be taken to prevent similar incidents:

- Re-evaluating the size of the failure domain associated with the replicated and highly available database system.
- Investigating and fixing the cause of the severe service degradation in the database system with one of VTEX's cloud providers.
- Investigating and fixing the issue related to the self-healing mechanism not properly closing once the database issue had been resolved.

Efforts are underway to enhance the infrastructure and implement additional safeguards to bolster the platform's resiliency. Improvements will also be made to the timing, frequency, and quality of communications through our Status Page.

We appreciate your understanding and patience during the incident. We remain committed to providing the highest level of service and will continue working diligently to ensure uninterrupted service. Apologies were extended for any inconvenience caused, with gratitude for ongoing support.