

# When Crisis Strikes

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Helping Your Support Team Survive and Thrive

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# What happened?

- Over the twelve days between December 25th 2015 and January 5th 2016, Linode saw more than a hundred denial-of-service attacks against every major part of our infrastructure, some severely disrupting service for hundreds of thousands of Linode customers.
- Over these twelve days, our Support Team:
  - responded to **17,416** *new* tickets, or **1,451.33 / day**
  - completed **1,055** phone calls, or **87.92 / day**
  - were paid **183.5** hours of overtime
- We were **EXHAUSTED**.

# What did we do during the attacks?

- Adjusted our organizational structure. Drop down a level. Be on the front lines.



**Our objective is to win the war.**

# What did we do during the attacks?

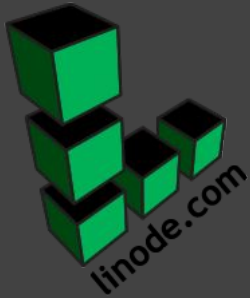
- Adjust your organizational structure. Drop down a level. Be on the front lines.
- Maintain empathy - for our customers, for our people.
- Prioritize positive feedback.
- It's not a time to have tough conversations.
- Give them the tools they need - answers to common questions. Use TextExpander!
- Take (forced) breaks.
- Utilize skills. Have someone on the team who can take a beating? Prioritize them on phones.
- Lots and lots of Red Bull + food definitely didn't hurt :)

# What did we do after the attacks?

- Lots and lots and lots of praise, encouragement, and thanks.
- Lots and lots of sleep.
- Regain work / life balance.

# So - what did we learn? How can you prepare?

- Don't become a good manager when disaster strikes, be a good manager now.
- Have a communication plan. When disaster strikes, how are you going to share consistent, timely, and accurate information available to your team?
  - We use Confluence - the blog component and the knowledge base component. Everyone can post an update, and anyone can edit them. Everyone's first task of the day, before you even look at tickets, is to read what's new in Confluence. Stuff that's posted during the day also gets put in IRC so everyone who is currently on shift sees it.



# Thank you!

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