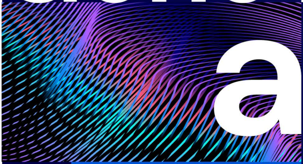
chronosphere

# Gone in a Glitch



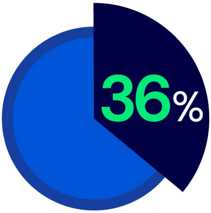
## 2023 Online Reliability Report

# The Impact of Outages and Disruptions on Your Customer Loyalty

*This report integrates third-party research, consumer data, and insights to create a comprehensive view of the online reliability landscape.*

### Glitch Happens, But at What Cost?

Online services and apps are an integral part of the digital foundation that we rely on day in and day out. Work, play, connection, belonging—it's all happening through online platforms, making online reliability as essential as gas, water, or electricity. New research shows that while your customers may forgive occasional outages, it's crucial not to underestimate their impact. Glitches, disruptions, and outages could not only cost you credibility but also lead to a substantial loss of your customer base.



36% of Americans, more than a third, say they talk to people via apps and websites more than they do in person or on the phone.

Gen Z, especially with their growing buying power, is critical to your ongoing business success. And they are quick to abandon brands that don't live up to their expectations, with 25% switching to a competitor *whenever* an app or website is slow to load or less reliable than usual. Even one minor glitch can leave your customers stranded, angry, or running toward the nearest competitor in a phenomenon we refer to as **Gone in a Glitch.**

# A Matter of Trust

01

## Confidence is Eroding Amidst Online Outages

Like any good relationship, the one between online brands and their customers is built on trust, which is rooted in consistent reliability. Customers need to know they can rely on your app or website to do their work, get the things they need, and connect with loved ones without facing any obstacles. Unfortunately, this isn't the experience of most online consumers.

While you may assume your brand's glitches or outages are passing under your customer's radar, our study indicates that almost all Americans (94%) have noticed apps and websites being less reliable than they were a year ago, with only 10% saying they rarely or never notice unreliability.

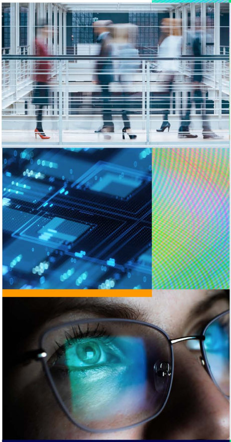
y 10%

# Online Reliability is Falling Short

**94%**
of Americans have noticed apps and websites being less reliable than they were a year ago.

**61%**
of consumers say they experience unreliable apps/websites at least once a week.

**25%**
of customers (and 75% of Gen Z) report that they experience slow or glitchy apps and websites daily.



## All Eyes, All Ears, All Tuned In

Not only are customers noticing glitches and interruptions, nearly all Americans (**92%**) are *actively* paying attention to major widespread outages. Sometimes, they can't even trust the brand to be open and honest about their own outages in a timely manner, with over a quarter of customers (**30%**) learning of the news on social media first.

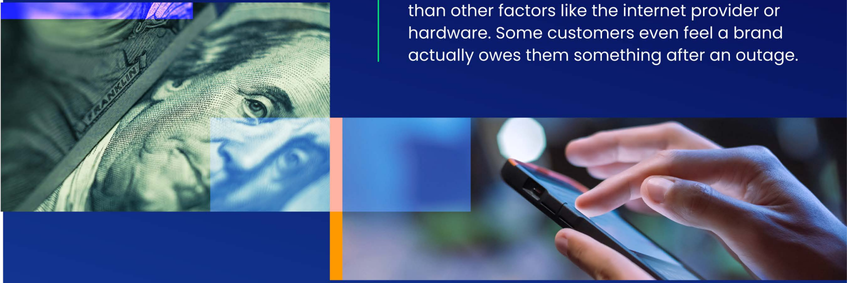
**Bottom line:** Not great. People's perception of online reliability is deteriorating, and the impact to brand loyalty and consumer trust is both significant and swift. Read on to discover just how significant that impact can be—and what you can do about it.

# Disrupted

02

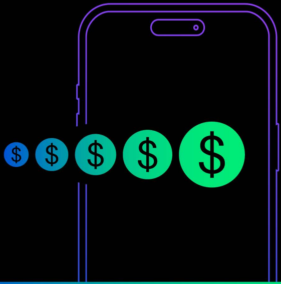
## When Glitches Become Deal-Breakers

When having problems with an app or website, customers are quick to point fingers, and it may not be in the direction you'd expect. Over half **(58%)** blame the brand itself, more than other factors like the internet provider or hardware. Some customers even feel a brand actually owes them something after an outage.



## Damage Control

### Consumers Seek Restitution



**13%**

of consumers feel they are outright owed something from an app or website during a widespread outage. For Gen Z and Millennials, this climbs to **16%.**

# The **Last Straw**

The hard truth is, **customers don't care why your app or website isn't working.** They only care that their experience is not lining up with their expectations. And with 1 in 4 Americans abandoning apps for simply being slower or less reliable than normal, it's crucial to stay on top of signs of a potential issue, like lagtime, so you can eliminate problems before your customers start looking for the door.

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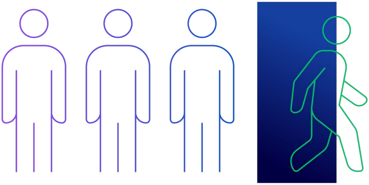


# Over It:

## When Customers Walk Away

First glitch:

**54%** of consumers will refresh or restart the app.

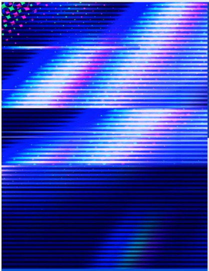
If that doesn't work:

**36%** will switch to a competitor or stop using the app altogether.

On average, Americans will tolerate fewer than 4 instances of unreliability/outage on an app or website before switching to a competitor.

## Back Up or **Break Up**

Even the most forgiving customers have a limit. Just because your customers can tolerate an occasional outage, doesn't mean they will—or they should. Regardless of the industry or type of provider, at least **3 in 4 consumers** will eventually switch brands if they encounter too many problems.



**55%** have pre-emptively saved information elsewhere in case they can't access it in the app or website.

**32%** have multiple apps on their phone that do the same thing in case one isn't working. **For Gen Z this jumps to 43%.**

# It's **Personal**

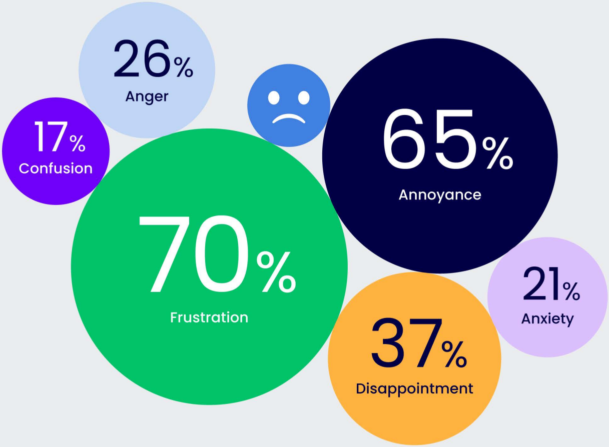
03

## Glitches Break Our Hearts

Customers want—no, customers *need* apps that they can depend on. That dependability is the foundation that, once broken, can lead to crumbled relationships and fractured brand loyalty.

It makes sense, then, that your customers respond emotionally to unreliability and outages. Nearly all consumers **(95%)** experience negative emotions when an app or website fails to work as expected, leading to an overall sense of anxiety and helplessness.

## Unreliability Takes an Emotional Toll



# When Apps Go Ghost

The online world's influence on our emotions runs deep, as 1 in 4 members of Gen Z (**25%**) admits to crying when an app or website is down. But they're not the only ones experiencing deep feelings.

## Frustration Face-Off

One third of Americans say experiencing an app or website disruption is more frustrating than **being stuck in traffic and weather ruining their plans.**

# A Thousand Cuts

04

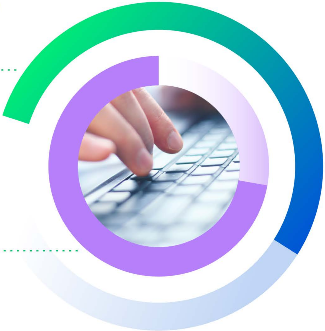
## The Impact of Frequent Unreliability

> If you break your customer's heart once, you may get a second chance. But an accumulation of outages can cause significant damage to brand loyalty, customer trust, and the overall user experience. And frequent unreliability can be even worse than one widespread outage.

# The Breaking **Point**

## 55%

of Americans say they are equally as likely to stop using an app or website that is slow to load and glitchy as they are one that is completely unavailable.



## 75%

of Americans say they can forgive occasional outages. But frequently experiencing slowdowns or glitches will cause them to stop using an app or website.

# Ditch the **Glitch**

### Bottom line, your relationship with your customers is exactly that: a relationship.

They trust you to deliver, and when you break that promise, they leave. The decline in customer satisfaction with online unreliability, combined with Gen Z's growing influence, is fueled by a revolution in customer expectations. They expect the same things from you that they would expect from any lifelong partnership: responsiveness, reliability, and trust. If their expectations aren't met? **Gone in a Glitch.**

## Better Observability Leads to Long-Standing Relationships

Cloud Native Observability gives you more visibility into your infrastructure and applications' performance so you can detect issues before they arise and become the reliable partner your customers need. Schedule a demo today.

## Methodology

Chronosphere conducted this research using an online survey prepared by Method Research and distributed by Dynata among n=2,000 adults ages 18+ that spend 3 or more hours a day online. The sample was balanced by gender, age, and race, with a geographic spread of respondents. Data was collected from May 25 to May 31, 2023.