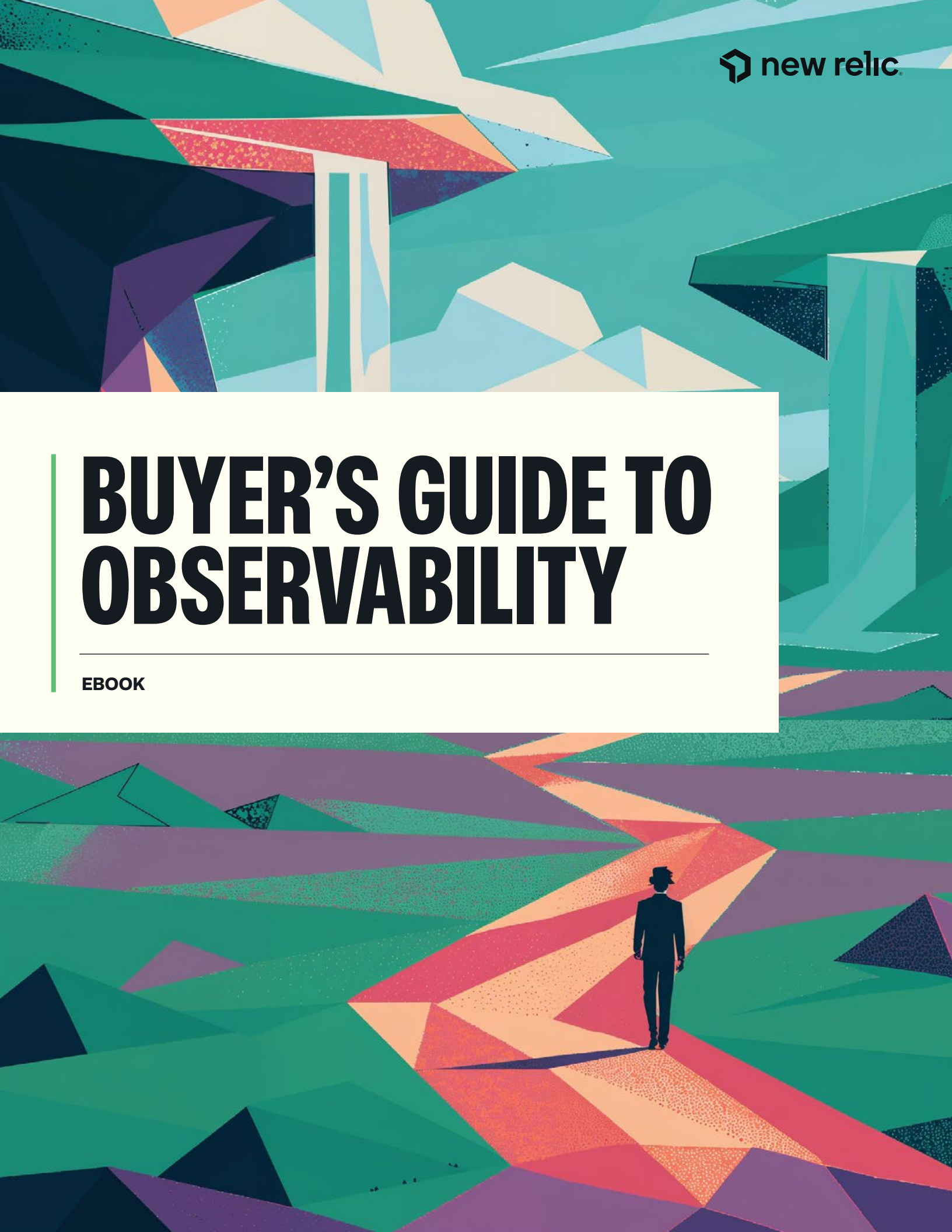


BUYER'S GUIDE TO OBSERVABILITY

EBOOK

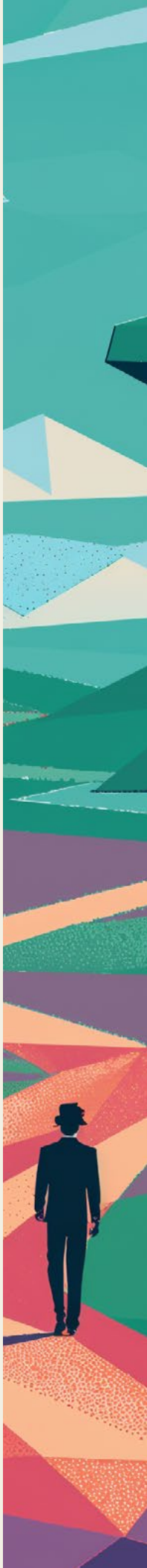
INTRODUCTION

Executive leadership faces a paradoxical mandate today: accelerate the adoption of disruptive technologies like Generative AI with the hope that they will drive top-line growth, while simultaneously cutting costs and enforcing strict governance.

However, these goals are often at odds. As your architecture expands to accommodate Generative AI and distributed systems, the operational complexity increases across the stack while maintaining a coherent view of system behavior becomes increasingly difficult. Service boundaries blur, dependencies multiply, and failures propagate in ways that are harder to predict and isolate.

Siloed tools and outdated observability solutions are dangerously inadequate for today's complex systems. This fragmented approach inevitably leads to reactive "war rooms," where teams scramble to piece together a coherent picture of an incident long after it has begun to impact customers. This model fosters alert fatigue, burns out high-value engineering talent with repetitive work, and, most critically, creates blind spots that threaten operational resilience and obscure the true ROI of your cloud investments. Furthermore, as AI adoption accelerates, so does the risk profile of your applications. Without a unified source of truth, decision-makers are left with fragmented data, making it difficult to assess health, attribute costs, or ensure compliance with evolving standards.

The solution lies in intelligent observability. By consolidating your telemetry, context, and analysis into a single platform, you gain the ability to predict issues before they impact the customer, strictly manage cloud ROI, and confidently deploy new technologies. This guide shows how the right platform empowers you to align IT operations with business strategy and deliver undeniable value to the board.



HOW INTELLIGENT OBSERVABILITY HELPS DIFFERENT TEAMS

In addition to the core benefits of increased uptime, reduced spend, and greater situational awareness, intelligent observability offers unique advantages for different teams across the organization.

PLATFORM ENGINEERING TEAMS

Platform engineering teams gain a unified view of performance and technology adoption across teams within the organization. Intelligent observability provides a way to define organization-wide standards and then track their adoption and compliance across every team.

ENGINEERING MANAGERS

Intelligent observability gives engineering managers visibility into their team's performance. It also enables them to track historical trends so they can show the board exactly how MTTR dropped 80% quarter over quarter. And it provides actionable insights to help drive engineering team priorities in the future.

DEVOPS ENGINEERS

For DevOps engineers, intelligent observability supports confident deployments and faster identification of latency and performance issues. It integrates with engineering workflows, across development, deployment, and ongoing operations. And it enables clear standards creation and compliance tracking.

SECURITY/COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

Security and compliance leaders gain the ability to detect anomalies, remediate issues, and assess compliance in near real time. Observability also provides a reliable way to access historical data when preparing for audits or reviews.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR OBSERVABILITY NEEDS

To achieve the outlined outcomes, organizations must first understand how well their current tools and practices support them. Before diving in, stop and take a look at the current state of your stack. How well do your existing tools and practices support the level of insight required to operate your systems? Use the following checklist to identify gaps and assess your organization's observability readiness.

OBSERVABILITY READINESS SELF-ASSESSMENT ↘

- ☑ **Can you quantify the exact cost of your last major outage in terms of lost revenue and engineering hours?**
- ☑ **Are you relying on reactive "war rooms" to handle outages?**
- ☑ **Do you know exactly what is running in your environment right now, who owns it, and if it is secure?**
- ☑ **Are you getting a measurable return on investment from your current monitoring tool stack, or is it merely an operational expense?**
- ☑ **Is your attrition rate or team morale negatively impacted by on-call burnout and alert fatigue?**
- ☑ **Could you prove to an auditor today that every service in production meets your internal security and compliance standards?**
- ☑ **Do you have full visibility into the performance and cost of your AI models?**

This checklist does more than highlight gaps in tooling. It surfaces the difference between simply collecting data and having the insight required to operate systems with confidence. Closing that gap is not a matter of adding just another monitoring tool, but of understanding what your organization actually needs from observability and whether a platform can meet those needs in practice. Especially since not all platforms are built to support the same level of clarity, accountability, and decision making, and that matters more than feature count.

The next section focuses on the core capabilities to look for and red flags to watch out for when evaluating an observability platform and determining whether it can deliver the level of insight your organization needs.

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING OBSERVABILITY PLATFORMS

Choosing an observability platform is a critical strategic decision and an investment in operational resilience, innovation velocity, and business alignment. Therefore, evaluating potential solutions requires a framework focused not just on technical features, but on the core capabilities that drive tangible business value.

UNIFIED FULL-STACK VISIBILITY ↘

The foundational requirement of any strategic observability platform is a single, unified source of truth. By ingesting all operational, cost, change, and dependency data data into one platform, an organization eliminates the silos that create confusion and delay. This unified view aligns development, operations, security, and business stakeholders around a shared, real-time understanding of system health, performance, and cost.

Achieving this requires a platform capable of ingesting more than just basic telemetry such as metrics, events, logs, and traces (MELT). To deliver genuine intelligence, a modern observability platform must ingest and correlate a richer set of data points for a full contextual understanding of system behavior. This broader signal set is commonly referred to as MELTx.

In practice, the MELTx framework includes:

- ✅ **Security Signals:** To integrate security posture directly into operational health and provide a unified view of risk.
- ✅ **Cost Data:** To attribute cloud spend to specific services and features, enabling precise ROI analysis.
- ✅ **Configuration Changes:** To correlate deployments and environmental changes with performance degradation or improvements.
- ✅ **Dependencies:** To map the complex relationships between services, infrastructure, users, and third parties.
- ✅ **Runbooks:** To embed remediation knowledge directly within the platform, accelerating incident response.

Furthermore, this data must span every part of your stack, from front-end to back-end infrastructure, and include continuous contexts such as deployment markers, feature flags, and ownership metadata. This enables teams to move from knowing what happened to understanding why it happened and what it affects.

ARCHITECTURAL AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

UNIFIED DATA PLATFORM

A modern observability platform should be built on a single, real time data platform that connects and correlates telemetry in context while explicitly modeling relationships across services, infrastructure, and users. This shared data foundation is what enables consistent correlation, ownership, and system level understanding as environments evolve.

That foundation should also support a native service catalog, and compliance or scorecards that operate on the same underlying data rather than separate modules.

OPEN AND EXTENSIBLE FEATURES

A strategic observability platform must include open and extensible features to avoid vendor lock-in and ensure future-readiness. An open approach allows organizations to standardize instrumentation and maintain data portability, providing the flexibility to adopt new technologies without being constrained by a proprietary ecosystem.

The non-negotiable standard for this is first-class support for OpenTelemetry (OTel). A platform must treat OTel data as a peer to its own native agents, with full support for native OpenTelemetry Protocol (OTLP) and flexible Collector deployment in both agent and gateway modes. This commitment ensures you can instrument your services once and send that telemetry to any compatible backend, giving you complete control over your data and technology choices.

This framework provides a clear lens for evaluating the core capabilities an observability platform should have. The following section examines how New Relic is architected to deliver on these strategic capabilities and translate them into measurable business outcomes.

APPLIED INTELLIGENCE

In an environment of escalating complexity, traditional human driven, manual analysis alone is insufficient. This means moving beyond simple threshold-based alerts to AI-strengthened capabilities like automatic anomaly detection, intelligent alert correlation, and deep root-cause analysis that works across all telemetry signals.

This eliminates context switching and critically, enables business users to access production insights without needing console access, democratizing data across the enterprise.

AT A GLANCE: RED FLAGS (WHAT MOST VENDORS GET WRONG)

Watch out for vendors' technology claims. Some may check all the feature boxes, but do so with poorly integrated, separate tools. Fragmented data sources and tools will only make it more difficult to keep your digital experiences reliable.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS ↘	RED FLAGS ↘
UNIFIED DATA PLATFORM	• Separate products for governance, AIOps, and DEM. • Scorecards running on separate modules. • Different permissions per module.
EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND ADOPTION	• Long setup with significant professional services dependency. • Hidden components at added cost to "unlock" value. • Sparse or fixed templates.
FULL STACK VISIBILITY	• "Unified" means just a UI stitched from multiple modules. • Different query engines per signal. • Logs or traces live in separate products.
OPEN AND EXTENSIBLE	• OTel is treated as second-class (e.g., proprietary adapters, partial OTLP). • Limited or read-only APIs. • Vendor-specific formats required.

NEW RELIC: DELIVERING INTELLIGENT OBSERVABILITY AT SCALE

New Relic delivers intelligent observability through a single, unified platform designed to support modern, highly distributed systems at scale. It brings together telemetry, context, and applied intelligence to help organizations understand system behavior, reduce operational risk, and connect technical performance to real business outcomes. The following capabilities illustrate how New Relic translates intelligent observability principles into real, operational outcomes across complex environments.

FLEXIBLE, OPEN OBSERVABILITY TO MONITOR YOUR FULL STACK ↘

New Relic unifies all telemetry, service catalog, team ownership, and compliance in a single platform with 700+ integrations, first class OTel support, and open APIs. The platform fits cleanly into your existing environments and scales as systems grow. Every team has a shared, real-time, single source of truth across apps, infrastructure, and third-party services.

As you evaluate observability platforms, you'll see that all have a variety of features, but few capabilities that are true difference makers. These are the New Relic features that are force multipliers for your teams:

EXPERIENCE-CENTRIC OBSERVABILITY ↘

New Relic extends observability beyond system metrics to include real user experience. It helps teams understand how performance issues affect users, anticipate frustration or churn, and guide developers with code level insight based on real production behavior.

Force multiplier: Code-to-Impact Traceability links performance issues or business impact back to specific code commits or even lines of code.

PREDICTIVE AND PROACTIVE INTELLIGENCE ↘

New Relic uses applied intelligence to forecast potential incidents and their business impact before issues spread. This includes deployment risk scoring that highlights risky releases, surfaces contributing factors, and recommends preventive actions so teams can intervene early rather than react after impact.

Force multiplier: Predictive Alerts indicate the likelihood of a major incident in the next hour/day, with drill-down to contributing factors.

AI OBSERVABILITY

New Relic provides purpose built visibility into AI systems and agent based workflows. It enables teams to monitor model performance and drift, understand how model behavior impacts business outcomes, and observe how agents interact, hand off tasks, and execute workflows across distributed environments.

Force multiplier: Model Drift Alerting with Business Context notifies teams on AI model performance degradation and explains the potential business consequences.

ACTIONABLE REMEDIATION

Teams can move beyond alerting by using safe, AI-strengthened remediation with clear guardrails. This approach helps reduce MTTR by recommending or triggering corrective actions, freeing up SRE cycles while maintaining visibility into dependency risks so teams can resolve issues faster without increasing operational risk.

Force multiplier: Autonomous Fix Suggestions recommends specific remediation steps, including confidence levels and potential side effects.

INTEROPERABILITY AND STANDARDS

New Relic extends observability beyond applications and infrastructure into the broader digital and AI supply chain. It unifies operational and security signals and supports emerging standards and protocols, enabling systems and tools to work together without tight coupling or vendor lock-in.

Force multiplier: Standard Compliance Monitor automatically checks and reports on adherence to emerging AI communication standards.

ACTIONABILITY TIED TO BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Operational data becomes more valuable when it is directly connected to business results. Scorecards and analytics can turn best practices into automated checks, track progress over time, and roll results up by team, making operational excellence measurable, auditable, and continuously improving across reliability, customer experience, and unit economics.

Force multiplier: Business Impact Dashboard shows how the current system performance is directly impacting key business metrics.

AT A GLANCE: KEY CRITERIA

CRITERION	NEW RELIC	DETAILS ↘	OTHER PLATFORMS ↘
FULL-STACK OBSERVABILITY	✔	Unifies all telemetry for full-stack, end-to-end, real-time visibility.	Often provide observability capabilities but may rely on fragmented tools or integrations, leading to potential gaps in end-to-end visibility.
OPEN AND EXTENSIBLE	✔	OpenTelemetry, 700+ integrations, open APIs that are extensible, portable by design.	While many platforms claim extensibility, they may require proprietary agents, limiting flexibility and vendor neutrality.
UNITED DATA PLATFORM	✔	Single real-time data layer unifying entities, queries, correlations.	Other platforms may use separate data stores for different telemetry types, resulting in siloed data and more complex cross-domain analysis.
APPLIED INTELLIGENCE	✔	Built-in, context-aware AI tools like the SRE assistant and predictive capabilities allow for automated anomaly detection, proactive alerting, and accelerated, proactive remediation.	Often treat AIOps as fragmented, add-on modules that lack platform-wide context. These siloed or limited capabilities can result in fragmented or incomplete insights and make cross-domain analysis more complex.
EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND ADOPTION	✔	Quickstarts, broad integrations, minimal setup, day-one value from existing telemetry.	Other platforms may require extensive setup or additional tools given the siloed nature of their architecture.
BUILT FOR DEVOPS	✔	Self-service ownership, IDE surfacing, ChatOps workflows, team-aligned permissions.	Provide DevOps tools but often lack the seamless integration and team-aligned workflows that New Relic offers.
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE	✔	Custom scorecards automate standards, track compliance, and drive continuous improvement.	Often lack the customization and automation capabilities of New Relic's scorecards.
CONNECTIONS TO BUSINESS OUTCOMES	✔	Overlay KPIs and cost with reliability, quantify real-time business impact.	Typical monitoring solutions are often not as deeply integrated with operational data and are unable to provide real-time business impact analysis.

YOUR JOURNEY TO INTELLIGENT OBSERVABILITY STARTS HERE

The stakes are clear: unplanned downtime costs businesses millions, fragmented tools slow your teams, and AI is accelerating operational complexity faster than traditional monitoring can handle. You need a platform that unifies your data, automates compliance, and gives every team, from DevOps to the C-suite, the visibility and clarity they need to act.

New Relic delivers that unified platform. With 700+ integrations, customizable scorecards built on live production data, and AI-strengthened insights that surface issues before they become incidents, New Relic is built for the realities of modern software.

The best way to understand what intelligent observability can do for your organization is to experience it. Explore the platform, see how your data connects in real time, and discover how much faster your teams can move when they're working from a single source of truth

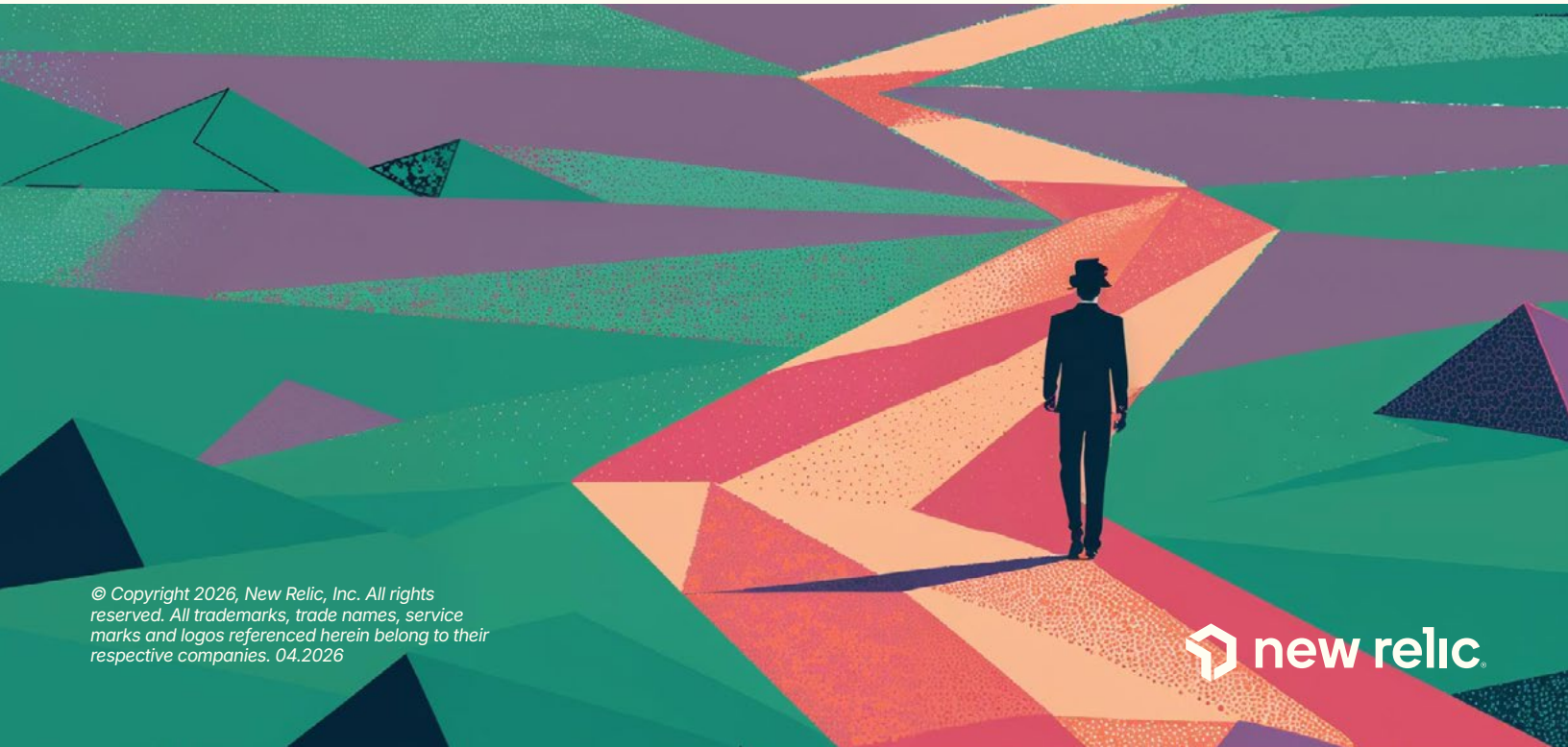
READY TO GET STARTED?

Try New Relic free for 30 days

Try it Yourself →

Join us for a demo today

See How it Works →



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