•

9 Ways to Secure Your Graph

You've built, tested & deployed your graph





You've built, tested & deployed your graph





Malicious actors?



Malicious actors? Slow or failing queries?



Malicious actors? Slow or failing queries? Manage public schema access?



Malicious actors? Slow or failing queries? Manage public schema access? Handling deprecations safely?



Malicious actors? Slow or failing queries? Manage public schema access? Handling deprecations safely? Well-known GraphQL exploits?



Let's learn a baseline for graph security



Authentication
 Authorization

Reducing the attack surface area

- 3. Mitigating malicious queries
- 4. Limiting API discoverability
- 5. Batched requests

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Operations & Governance

- 6. Stability
- 7. Managing graph access
- 8. Observability
- 9. Monitoring



Authentication

You are who you say you are

Sessions + Identity

Authorization

What are you allowed to see and do?

Permissions + Capabilities



#1. Authentication

- Maintain session for a particular user through the use of context
- Different ways to handle this
 - JWT
 - 3rd party (ex: Auth0)

```
const server = new ApolloServer({
 typeDefs,
 resolvers,
context: ({ req }) => {
```

// Get the user token from the headers. const token = req.headers.authorization || '';

```
// Try to retrieve a user with the token
const user = getUser(token);
```

```
// Add the user to the context
   return { user };
 },
});
server.listen().then(({ url }) => {
```

```
console.log(`# Server ready at ${url}`)
});
```

#1. Authentication

 Authenticating within GraphQL, you can then use the context object to pass session information to lower layers.

```
const resolvers = {
    ...
    me: (parent, args, context) => {
        if (!context.user) {
            return null;
        }
        return context.models.User
        .getById(context.user.id);
     }
}
```

#1. Authentication

- You can also:
- Handle auth in data models
- Use custom directives
 - Ex: type Reviews @isAuthenticated
- Perform auth work outside of GraphQL (pass to REST endpoint)
 - Ex: Request \rightarrow GraphQL \rightarrow RESTful API (auth)
 - Makes sense for RESTful APIs that already have auth logic built in

Key resource Apollo Docs "Authentication and authorization" apollographql.com/docs/apollo-server/security/authentication/

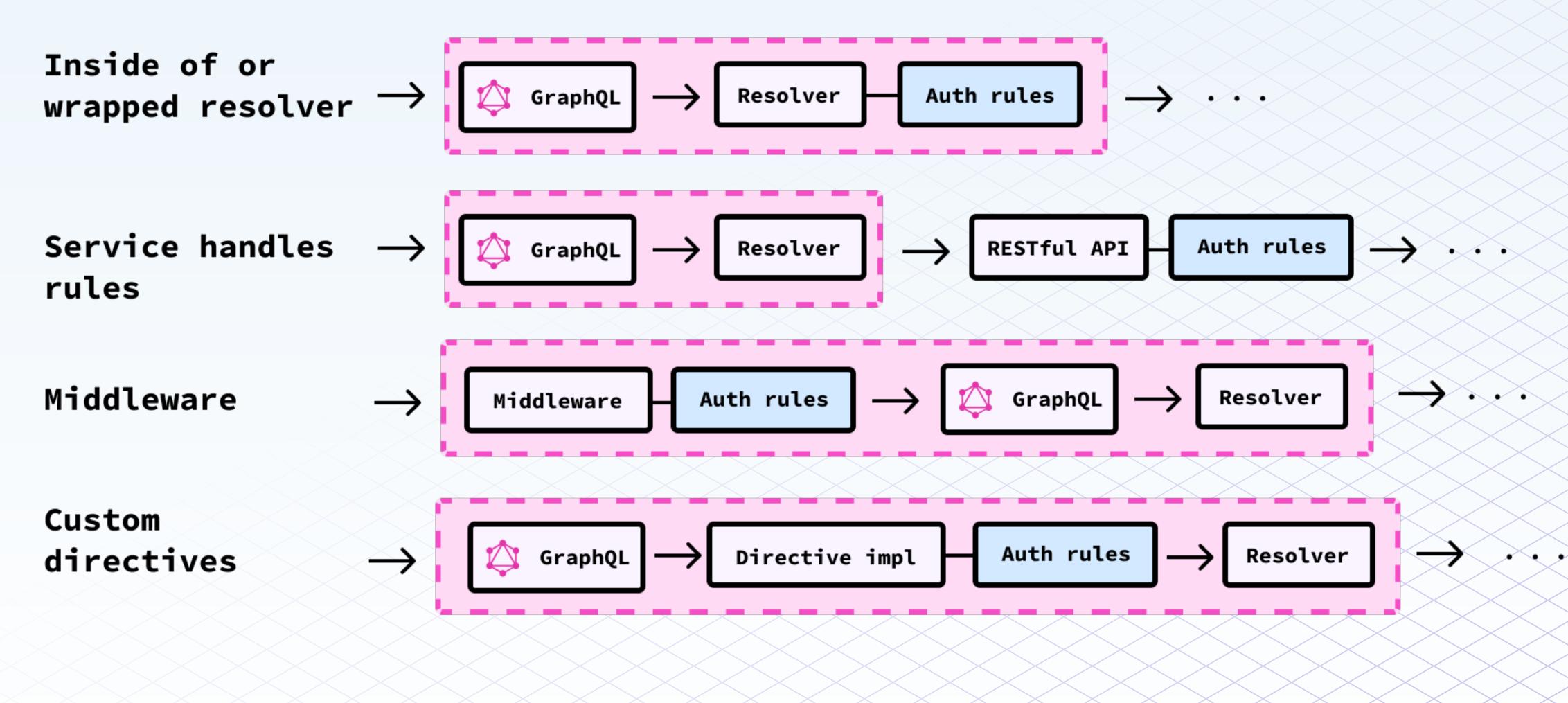


Auth **#2. Authorization**

- Do you have permission to do this?
 - Example roles:
 - `Admin`, `Editor`, `Contributor`, `Subscriber`
 - Roles have permissions/capabilities:
 - Admin → `EditPage`, `EditOthersPages`, `ReadPrivatePosts`
 - Editor → `EditPage`









#2. Authorization

- There is no single correct way to set up authorization
- Custom directives (e.g @auth (requires: ADMIN))
- Wrap resolver functions
- Put auth rules into middleware layer (e.g. graphql-shield)
- Delegate to use case/application layer

via the Apollo Blog

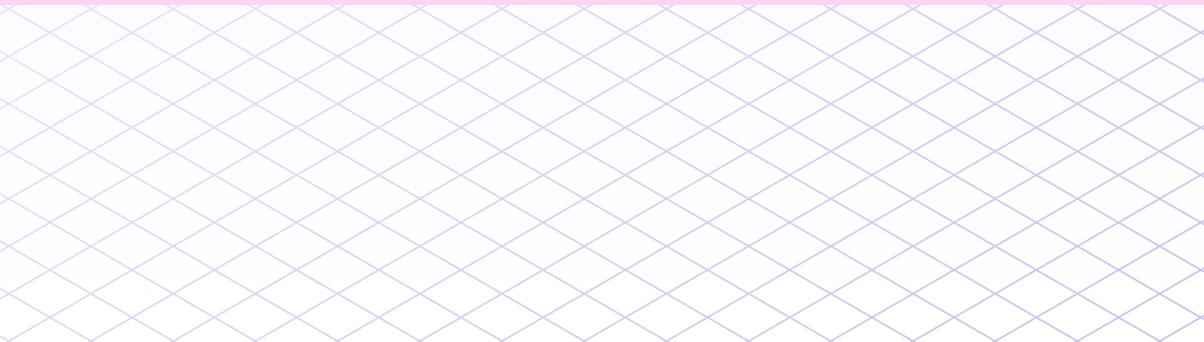
Key resources "How to Auth: Secure a GraphQL API with Confidence" by Mandi Wise

From GraphQL Summit Worldwide 2020

"Setting Up Authentication and Authorization with Apollo **Federation**" by Mandi Wise

Rules and Capabilities in WordPress

https://wordpress.org/support/article/roles-and-capabilities/





Reducing the attack surface





#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Limit query depth

- GraphQL gives clients the ability to ask for data in a variety of different ways. Because of the various entry-points available to request data, it's possible to write exceptionally large nested queries.
- Queries like this are dangerous
 - They're expensive to compute.
 - They could crash our API and take up all available resources.

```
query {
  author(id: 42) {
      posts {
           author {
               posts {
                   author {
                        posts {
                            author {
                                # and so on...
                            }
                        }
               }
      }
```

#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Limit query depth

- graphql-depth-limit
 - <u>https://github.com/stems/graphql-depth-limit</u>
- easily limit the maximum depth of incoming queries

app.use('/api', graphqlServer({ validationRules: [depthLimit(10)] }));

#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Paginate list fields

- Query depth isn't the only thing to worry about.
 We should also be conscious of how query amount could affect the performance of our API.
- Example: If there were 100 authors, each with 100 posts, this query would attempt to return 100,000 nodes 😨 .
- Can slow (or DoS) your server.

```
query {
    authors(first: 1000) {
        name
        posts(last: 100) {
            title
            content
        }
    }
}
```

#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Paginate list fields

- graphql-input-number
 - <u>https://github.com/joonhocho/graphql-input</u> -number
- Example: We can restrict the maximum value to 100
- We can also perform these checks in the resolver imperatively.

```
const PaginationAmount = GraphQLInputInt({
  name: 'PaginationAmount',
 min: 1,
 max: 100,
});
```

```
- -
```

```
type Thread {
 messages(first: PaginationAmount,
  after: String): [Message]
}
```



#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Improve validation & sanitization

- Standard web application security practices.
- When you accept data from a user, one should always expect that user-provided data could be malicious.
- Two especially malicious techniques in this area:
 - Data exfiltration: tricks the database into returning more data than originally intended
 - Data destruction: destroy production data

```
query User {
   user (id: "User*") {
    email
    id
   }
}
```

#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Improve validation & sanitization

- Follow the usual rules for web application sanitization in addition to the **OSWAP** GraphQL-specific recommendations like:
 - Reject invalid input without giving away too many details

Key resource OSWAP "GraphQL Cheat Sheet"

https://cheatsheetseries.owasp.org/cheatsheets /GraphQL_Cheat_Sheet.html#general-practices



#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Improve validation & sanitization

- Follow the usual rules for web application sanitization in addition to the **OSWAP** GraphQL-specific recommendations like:
 - Reject invalid input without giving away too many details
 - Leverage the GraphQL schema to support validation

Key resource OSWAP "GraphQL Cheat Sheet"

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#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Improve validation & sanitization

- Follow the usual rules for web application sanitization in addition to the **OSWAP** GraphQL-specific recommendations like:
 - Reject invalid input without giving away too many details
 - Leverage the GraphQL schema to support validation
 - Beware of using JSON scalars (prone to malicious queries if not properly sanitized)

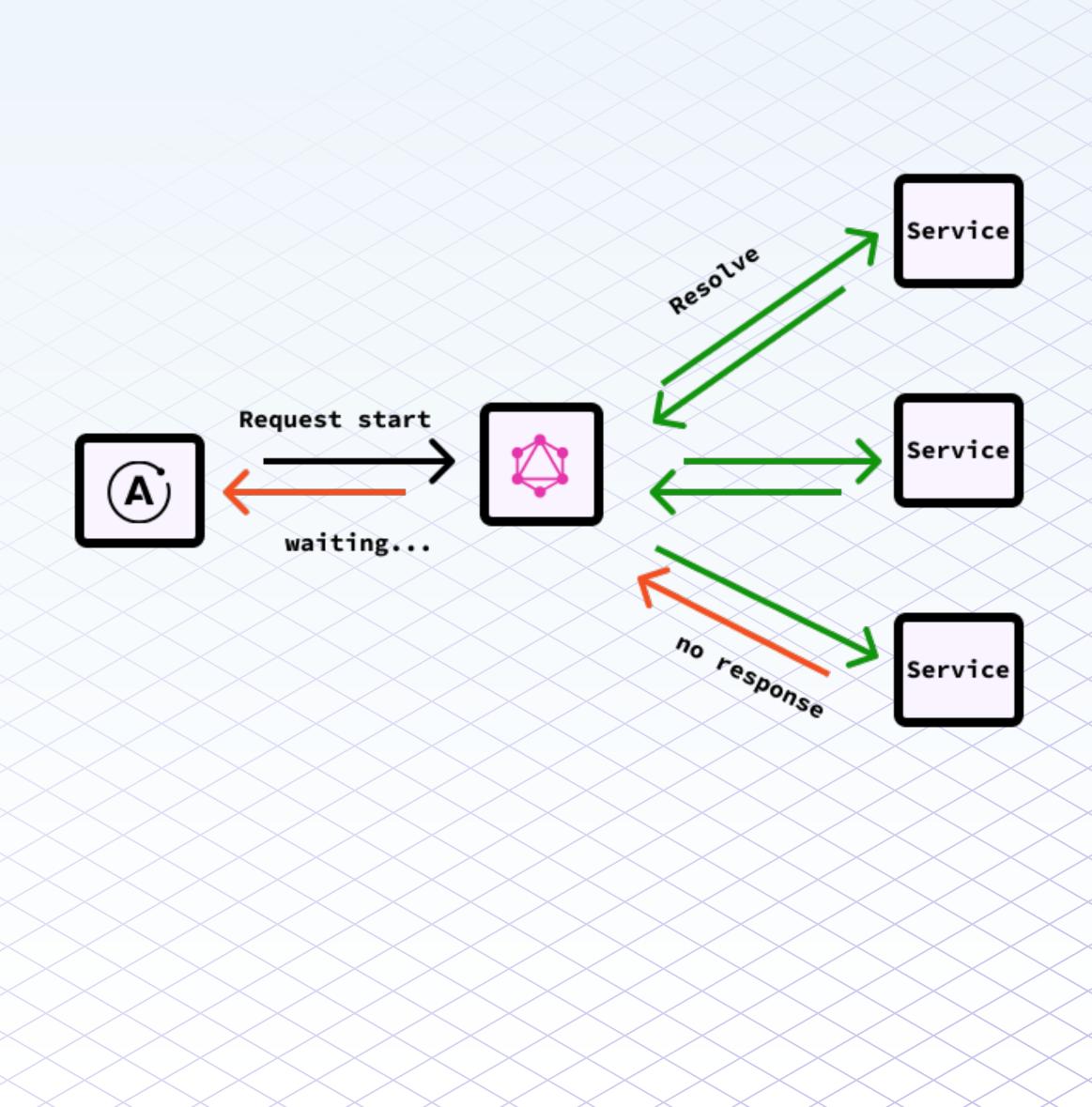
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#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Use timeouts

- When resolving data, there are various reasons why it may take a long time to respond.
 - Services could be down
 - Queries may be expensive
 - or something else might be going on.
- We don't want our GraphQL API to hang for too long, waiting for a response.





#3. Mitigating malicious queries \rightarrow Use timeouts

- Explore using timeouts in the following contexts:
 - On resolver functions (and using REST) data sources)
 - [Federation] On requests to the gateway's Node HTTP server
 - [Federation] On requests to the subgraphs services

```
// Federation gateway - subgraph timeout
// example (credit Mandi Wise)
const gateway = new ApolloGateway({
  // ...
  buildService({ name, url }) {
    // Sets a 3 second timeout on requests
    // to subgraph
    const fetcher = (input, init) => {
      if (init) {
        init.timeout = 3000;
      } else {
        init = \{ timeout: 3000 \};
      return fetch(input, init);
   };
    return new RemoteGraphQLDataSource({
      url, fetcher
    });
});
```



#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Rate limit APIs

- Dictates how many requests a client can make per some time.
- Often used to prevent brute-forcing login details, scraping data, or denial of service attacks.

Key resources

GitHub's approach: "Resource limitations" based on maximum node limit + num requests in query https://docs.github.com/en/graphql/overview/ resource-limitations

Shopify's approach: "Query cost points" and the leaky bucket algorithm

https://shopify.dev/api/usage/rate-limits

graphql-rate-limit npmjs.com/package/graphql-rate-limit



#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Query cost analysis

- Despite our best efforts using query depth + amount limiting techniques, it's still possible to overload the server with semantically expensive queries.
- Sometimes we can't just look at the depth or potential amount of nodes.

query evilQuery { thread(id: "54887141-57a9-4386-807c") { messageConnection(first: 100) { ... } participants(first: 100) { threadConnection(first: 100) { ... } communityConnection { ... } channelConnection { ... } everything(first: 100) { ... }



```
type Query {
import costAnalysis from
   'graphql-cost-analysis'
const costAnalyzer = costAnalysis({
 maximumCost: 1000,
})
. . .
```

}

/pe Query {
 # will have the default cost value
 defaultCost: Int

will have a cost of 2 because this field does not depend # on its parent fields customCost: Int @cost(useMultipliers: false, complexity: 2)

complexity should be between 1 and 10
badComplexityArgument: Int @cost(complexity: 12)

the cost will depend on the `limit` parameter passed to the field # then the multiplier will be added to the `parent multipliers` array customCostWithResolver(limit: Int): Int @cost(multipliers: ["limit"], complexity: 4)

for recursive cost
first(limit: Int): First
@cost(multipliers: ["limit"], useMultipliers: true, complexity: 2)

you can override the cost setting defined directly on a type overrideTypeCost: TypeCost @cost(complexity: 2) getCostByType: TypeCost

```
# You can specify several field parameters in the `multipliers` array
# then the values of the corresponding parameters will be added together.
# here, the cost will be `parent multipliers` *
# (`first` + `last`) * `complexity
severalMultipliers(first: Int, last: Int): Int
    @cost(multipliers: ["first", "last"])
```



#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Safelist operations

- During development, front-end engineers can explore all the data available and fetch what they need for the components they're building.
- But in production, this amount of flexibility can be unnecessary and undesirable
- If we know what operations we're going to perform, can't we make it so that we can only perform those?

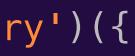


#3. Mitigating malicious queries → Safelist operations

- Catchall approach: maintain a list of approved operations allowed to execute against your graph
 - Operation safe listing
- Setup
 - 1. Register your schema
 - 2. Register the operations from your client bundle
 - 3. Add the operation registry plugin to Apollo Server

```
const server = new ApolloServer({
  // Existing configuration
  typeDefs,
  resolvers,
  subscriptions: false,
  // ...
  // New configuration
  plugins: [
    require('apollo-server-plugin-operation-registry')({
      forbidUnregisteredOperations: true,
   }),
  ],
});
```

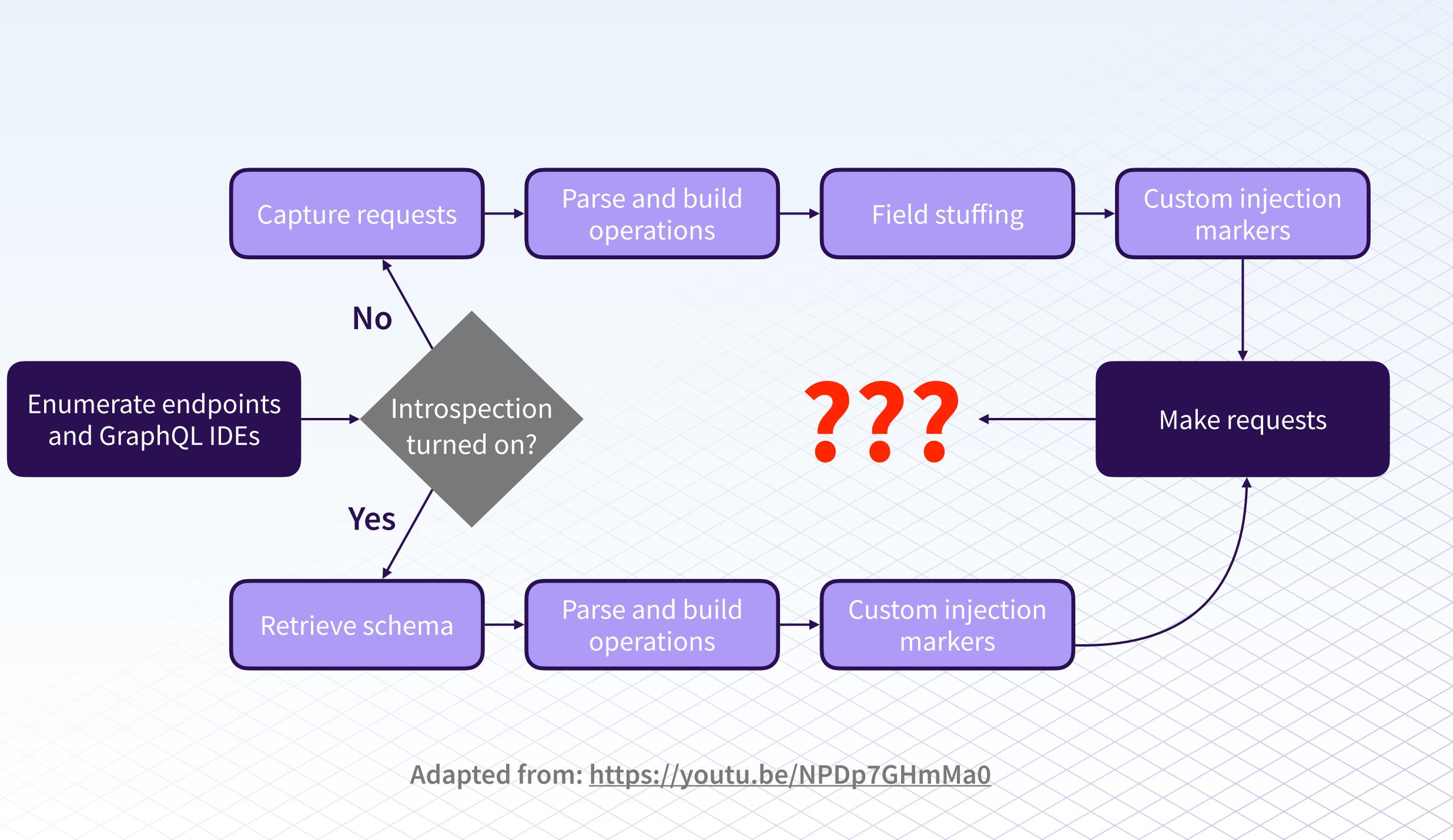




#4. Limit API discoverability → Turn off introspection in production

- Introspection is for development and tooling purposes.
- Behind the scenes, GraphQL IDEs are powered by introspection queries
- With Apollo Server, introspection is on by default unless the NODE_ENV environment variable is set to production

```
const server = new ApolloServer({
   typeDefs,
   resolvers,
   introspection: process.env.NODE_ENV
     !== 'production'
});
```



#4. Limit API discoverability

Turn off introspection in production

- With introspection disabled, how do we:
 - Enable new developers to explore the current schema and its capabilities?
 - Utilize tooling during development?
 - Query production data?



Use a schema registry

There should be a **single source of truth** for registering and tracking the graph - via principledgraphql.com

• Similarly to how your track your source code with Git, a schema registry exists to keep track of your graph and how it changes over time

• Here are two ways to register your schema to Apollo Studio

- 1. Through schema reporting
- In Apollo Server set APOLLO_SCHEMA_REPORTING=true

- 2. Through the Rover CLI
 - rover graph publish



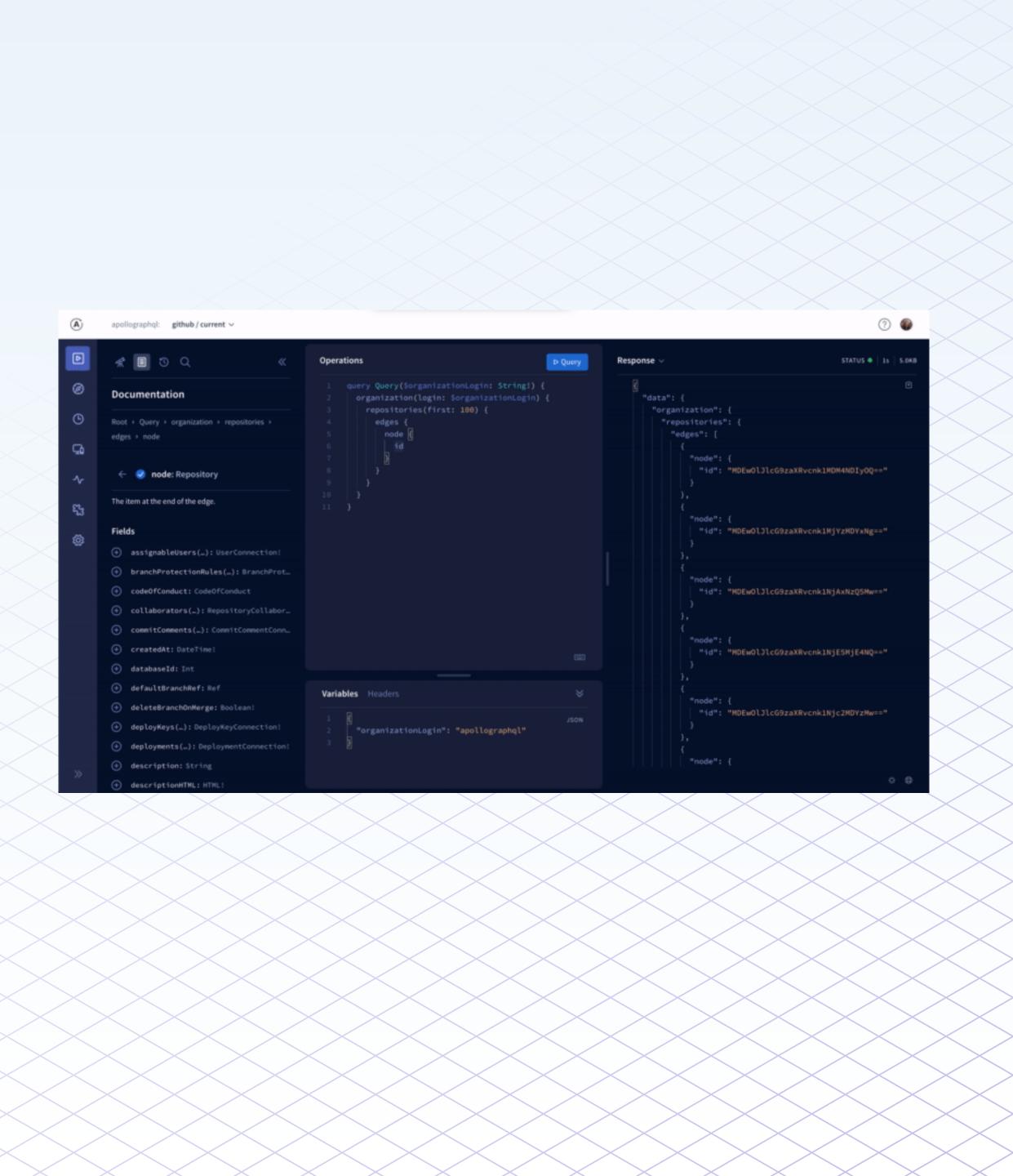


Explore the schema's shape and data

Explorer — build queries and explore data

Schema reference — out of the box documentation

Graph README — to onboard developers to the graph



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Explore the schema's shape and data

Explorer — build queries and explore data

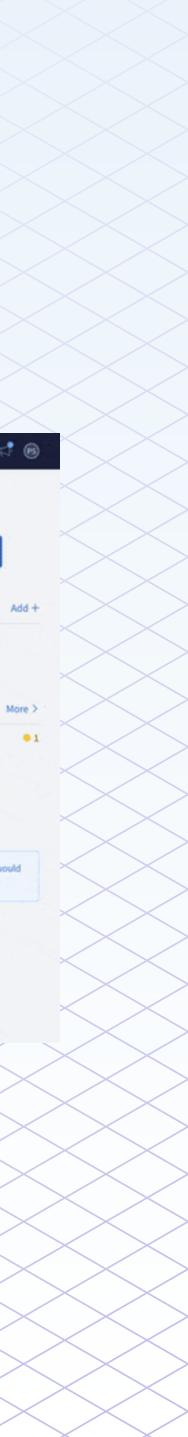
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Graph README — to onboard developers to the graph

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How to authenticate to this graph



Reducing the attack surface area

#4. Limit API discoverability → Mask errors in production

- When server or downstream service errors occur, it's a good idea to withhold the exact specifics of what went wrong from the client.
- Returning *complete* error details to the client exposes the current server vulnerabilities and opens the door for more concentrated attacks.

```
"data": {
  "astronaut": null
 },
"errors": [{
   "message": "Database Error: Astronaut
     does not exist",
   "extensions": {
     "code": "INTERNAL_SERVER_ERROR",
     // ...
     "exception": {
       "stacktrace": [
         "Database Error: User does not exist",
         " at ____resolveReference (.../services
/vehicles/index.js:29:13)",
         // ...
```

Reducing the attack surface area

#4. Limit API discoverability → Mask errors in production

- To prevent this issue, swallow errors before they get to the client.
- You can use the formatError API in Apollo Server to implement this.

```
const server = new ApolloServer({
  typeDefs,
  resolvers,
  formatError: (err) => {
    // Don't give the specific errors to
    // the client
    if (err.message.startsWith('Database Error:')) {
      return new Error(
       'Internal server error'
      );
    // Otherwise return the original error
    return err;
 },
});
```



Reducing the attack surface area

#4. Limit API discoverability → Mask errors in production

- Errors vs. Exceptions
- Errors \rightarrow Expected and application-specific
 - UserAlreadyExists, UserDoesntExist, InvalidPermissions
- Exceptions → Unexpected and infrastructural
 - Database, source code, or network connectivity problems

Reducing the attack surface area

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Key resources
Unions and interfaces
via the Apollo Docs
200 OK! Error Handling in GraphQL by
Sasha Solomon
via GraphQL Summit Worldwide 2020



Reducing the attack surface area

#4. Limit API discoverability Avoid schema autogeneration

- Some tools can autogenerate a GraphQL schema based on database tables, etc.
- While these tools tend to speed you up in the short run, used as your public graph, it becomes very easy to guess fields on the root operation types based on CRUD patterns.
- Prefer a demand-oriented schema



smoothly over time

The schema should be **built incrementally** based on actual requirements and evolve

- via principledgraphql.com

Reducing the attack surface area

#5. Batched requests

→ Limit query breadth

- Clients can use aliases to write batch queries like the following:
- Someone may write a query like this to purposefully disrupt performance, scrape as much data as fast as possible, or attempt to mitigate rate-limiting.

```
query MaliciousQuery {
 alias1: fieldName { subField1 subField2 ...}
  alias2: fieldName { subField1 subField2 ...}
  alias10: fieldName { subField1 subField2 ...}
  alias100: fieldName { subField1 subField2 ...
  alias1000: fieldName { subField1 subField2 ...}
```

```
query Mutation (
  $input1: LoginInput,
 $input2: LoginInput,
 $input3: LoginInput
  # ... And more
  \prec
  first: login (input: $input1) {
    token
  }
  second: login (input: $input2) {
    token
  }
  third: login (input: $input3) {
    token
  }
 # . And so on
```

Brute-force attempt

Solution: Use a combination of rate-limiting and query complexity analysis.



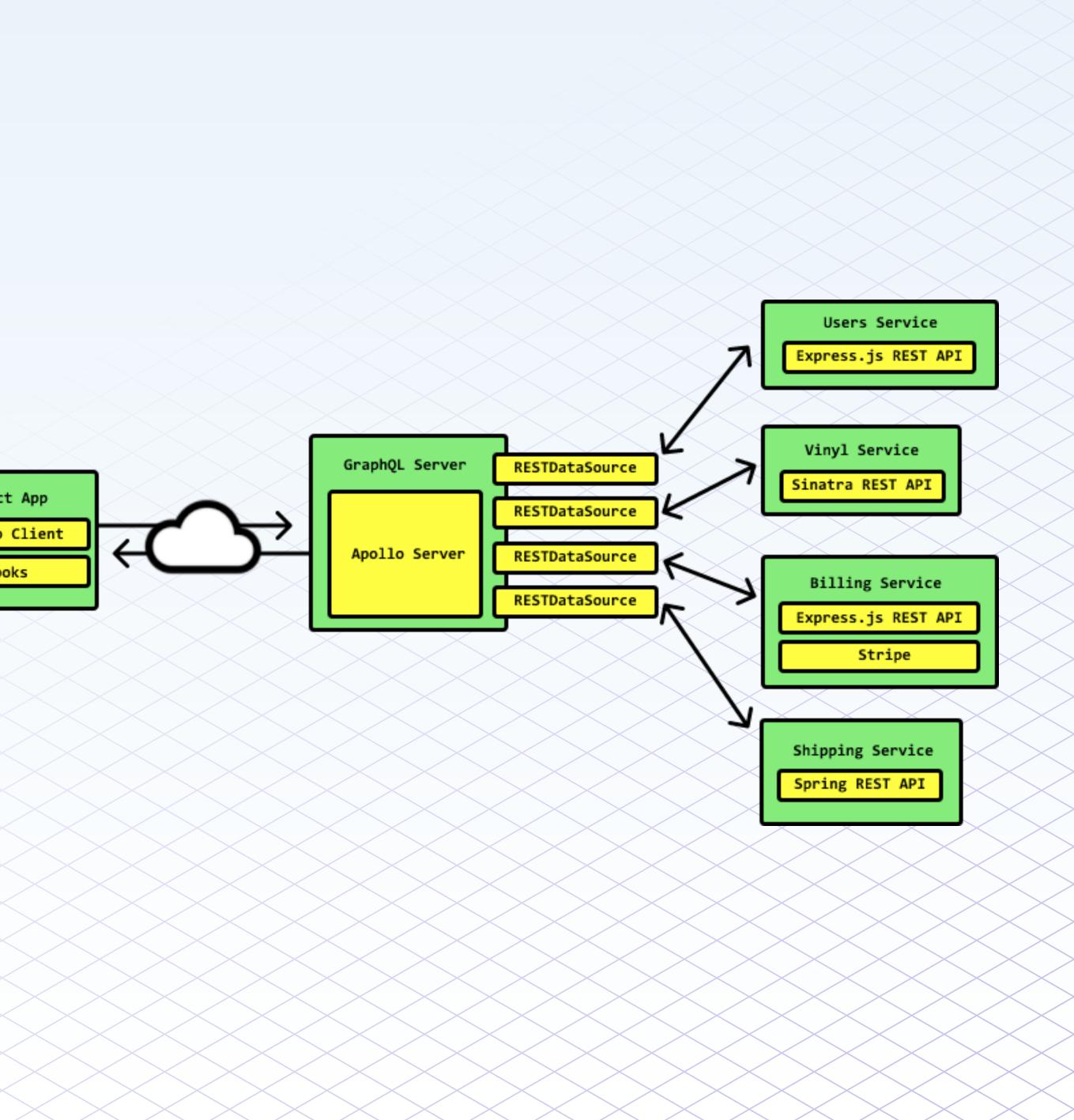
Reducing the attack surface area

#5. Batched requests

→ Use data loaders to prevent
DoS-ing yourself

Read
Apollo
Но

 If you're resolving data from backing data sources (like a REST API or a subgraph), you'll want to make efficient use of the network to prevent DoS-ing yourself.



Reducing the attack surface area

#5. Batched requests

→ Use data loaders to prevent
DoS-ing yourself

- A great technique is to use data loaders to minimize the number of requests to backing data sources from resolvers
- Also, consider caching as an approach to mitigating the number of necessary requests.
 You can implement caching at various levels:
 - Client, gateway, data source, subgraph, etc

Key resources

DataLoader

https://github.com/graphql/dataloader

How Apollo REST Data Source Deduplicates and Caches API calls

https://khalilstemmler.com/blogs/graphql/ how-apollo-rest-data-source-caches-api-calls/

Using Memcached/Redis as a cache storage backend via the Apollo docs



Operations & Governance



Operations #6. Stability

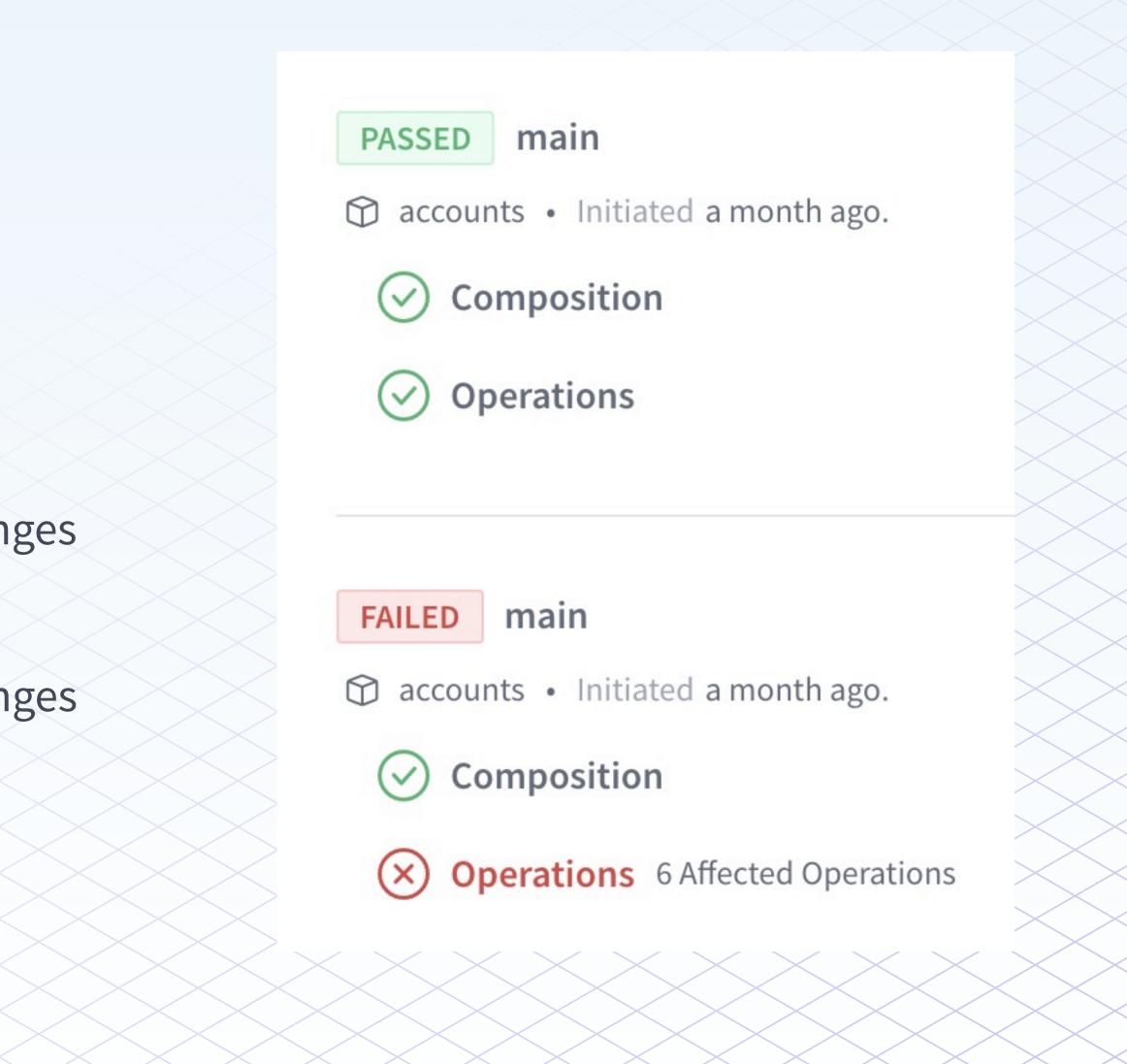
- By design, GraphQL isn't a versioned API.
 - In an Agile fashion, you deprecate and evolve fields (sometimes multiple times a day).
- How can we do this safely? Won't we break clients?





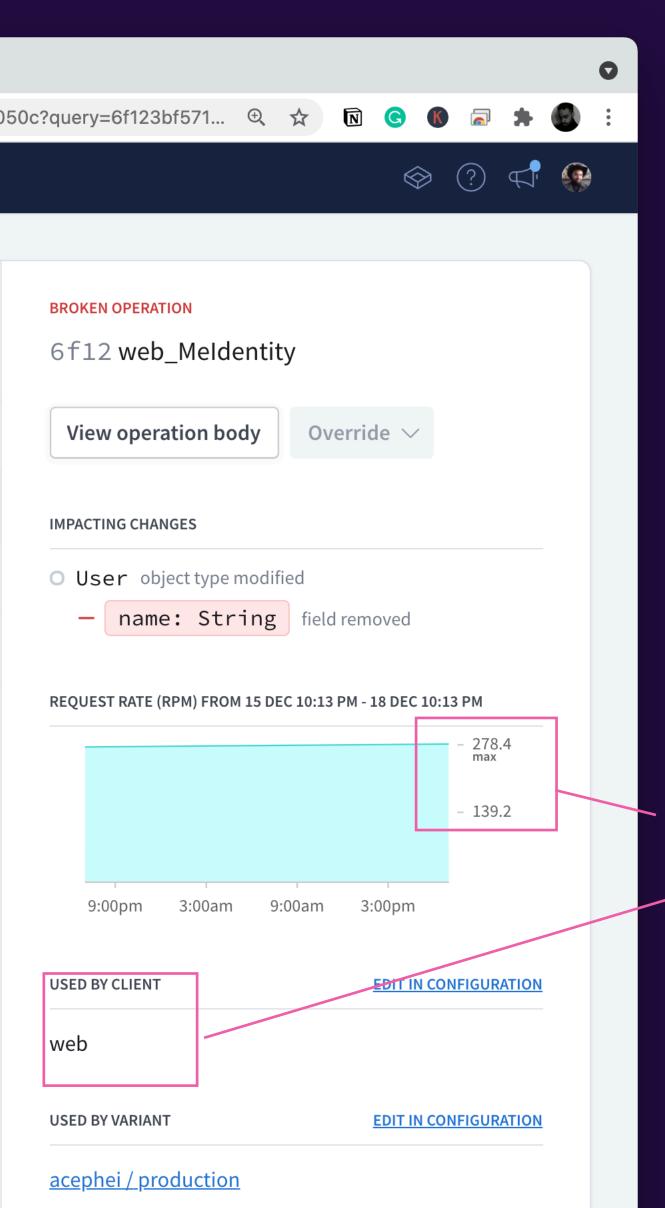
Operations #6. Stability

- Schema checks
 - **Operations**: Will your proposed schema changes break any of your graph's active clients?
 - **Composition**: For federated graphs, will changes to a subgraph successfully compose with your *other* registered subgraph schemas.





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	TASK Solutions Dec 15, 2020 at 5:13 PM EST — Dec 18 AFFECTED OPERATIONS 4 affected operations out of 7 checked CHANGES — 1 deletion + 3 additions	



Detecting potentially broken clients

The web client calls these operations frequently!



Operations **#6. Stability**

- Recommended to use in a CI with the **Rover CLI**
 - Like Jenkins or CircleCI
- Define a CI job for each variant of your schema (production, staging, etc)
 - Run `rover graph check`
 - If it returns a non-zero exit code, a breaking change has been detected.

Key resources

Rover "Getting Started" docs via Apollo docs

Schema checks via Apollo docs





- As discussed earlier, we might not want our production graph to be available to everyone
 - We turn introspection off
- With introspection off, how do we safely manage graph access?
 - Teammates, non-developers, consultants, etc



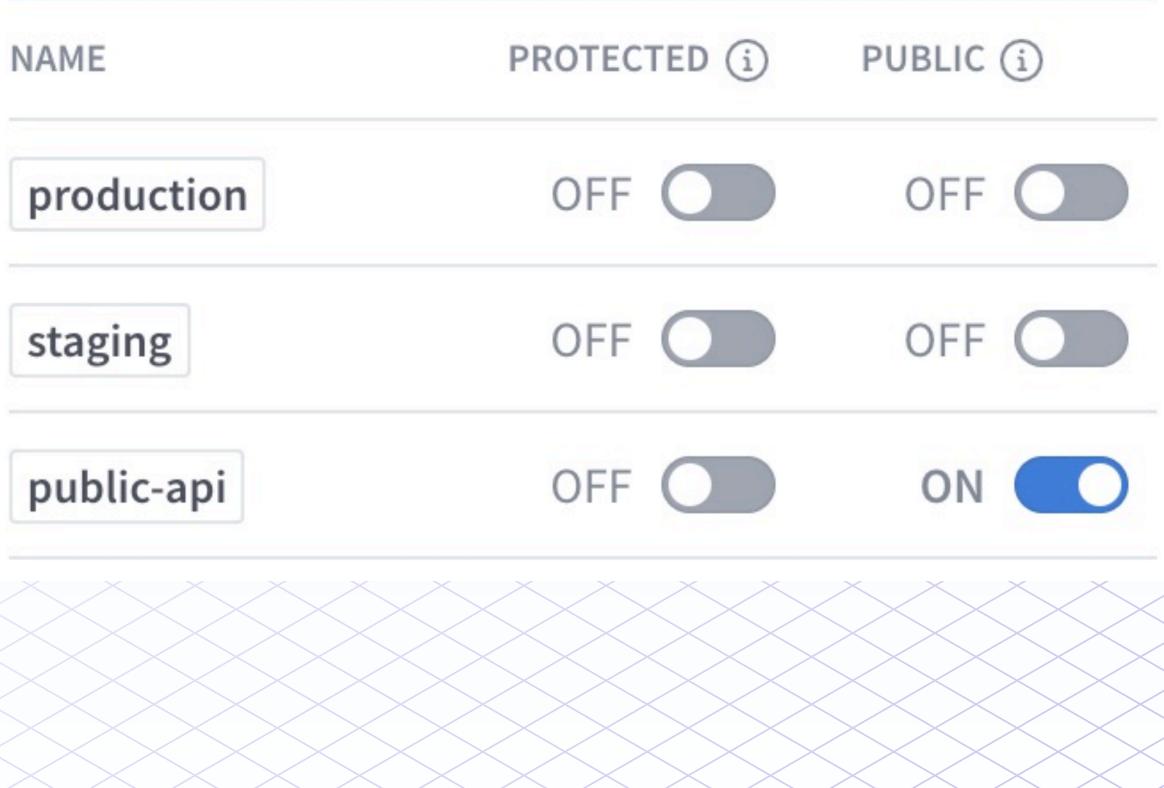
- User roles:
 - Graph admin
 - Billing manager
 - Consumer
 - Observer
 - Contributor
 - Admin
- Org-level roles and graph-level roles

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- User roles
- Graph variants (public, private, protected)

Variants





- User roles
- Graph variants
 (public, private, protected)
- Public readme page

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- User roles
- Graph variants (public, private, protected)
- Public readme page
 - Embeddable explorer: public variants can also be embedded into your docs as an iframe

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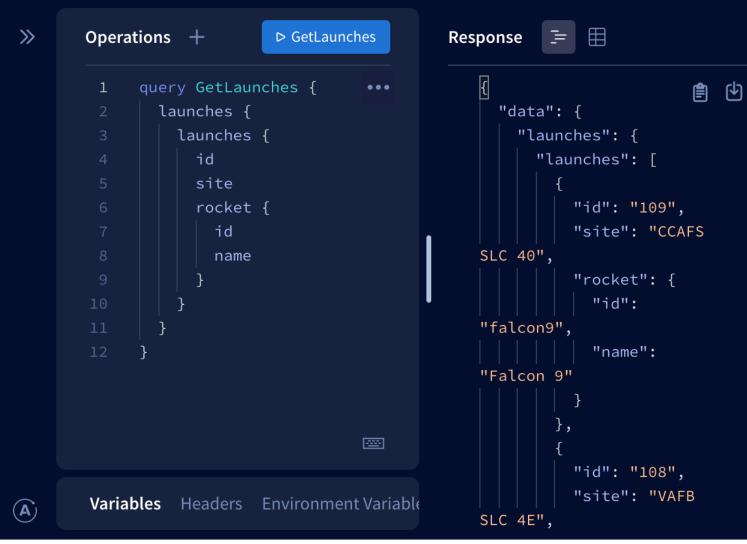
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Protocol reference (ac	lvanced)	
METRICS REPORTIN	1 G	^
Setup		
Segmenting by client		

Q What do you want to learn about GraphQL?

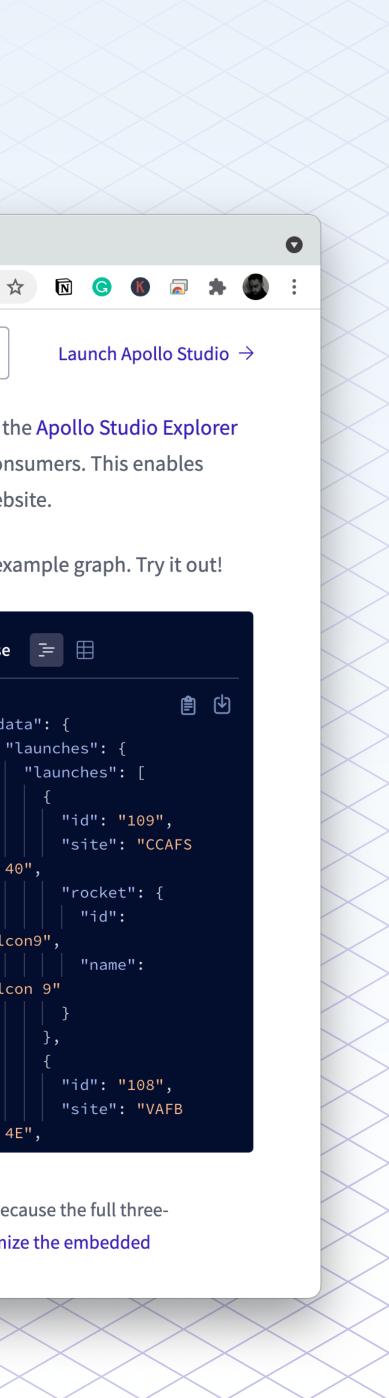
Launch Apollo Studio \rightarrow

If you have a public variant of your graph, you can embed the Apollo Studio Explorer in a webpage that you can then provide to your graph's consumers. This enables those consumers to test out operations from your own website.

For example, here's an embedded Explorer for an Apollo example graph. Try it out!



This embedded Explorer collapses its left column by default because the full threecolumn layout is a little cramped on this page. You can customize the embedded Explorer's appearance to suit the page it's on.



Operations **#8. Observability**

- There's a lot going on in any production graph.
- We need a way to keep track of what's going on.
- We can view our graph's usage by the org, client, field, and operation level.

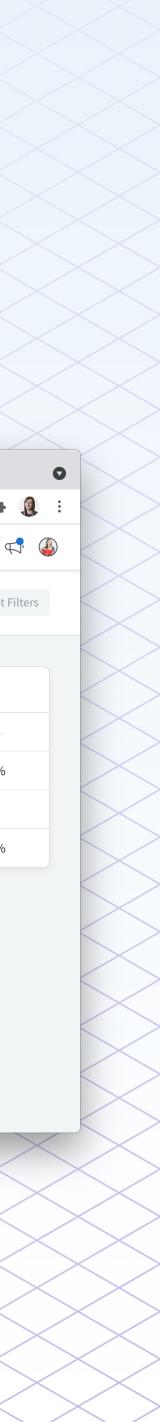


Operations #8. Observability

→ Client awareness

- Know who is using your graph
 - See precisely which clients are querying your graph and what operations they're sending.
- Require clients to identify themselves and consistently name operations to enhance API usage understandability

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Operations #8. Observability → Field-level tracing

 You can set up tracing as well for a detailed breakdown of the performance of your resolvers

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Operations

#9. Monitoring

Performance alerts

- We can also track performance degradations, and error spikes
- You can also set up alerts to be notified when something goes wrong:
 - Increase in requests per min
 - Change in p50, p95, p99 response time
 - Errors in operations

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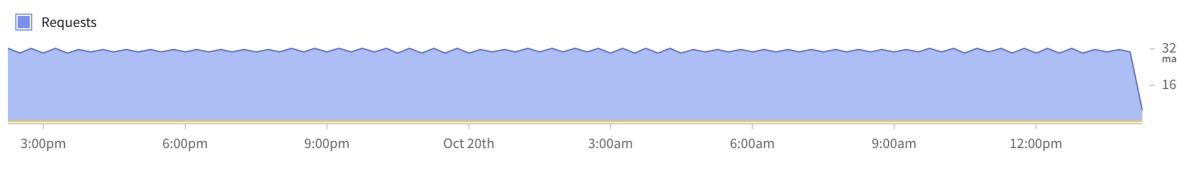
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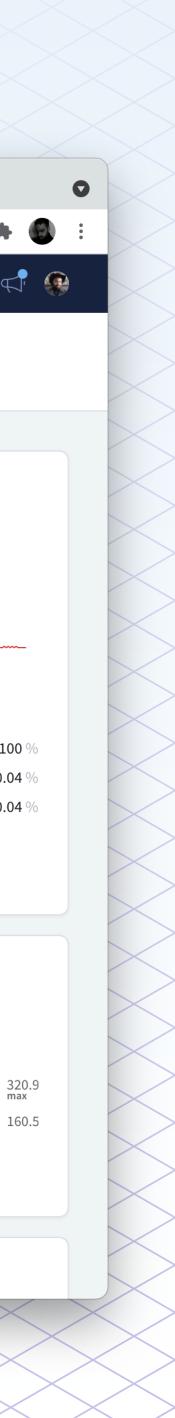
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Request rate over time (RPM)



Request latency over time



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Performance Alerts from Apollo Studio via Apollo docs

Sending metrics to Apollo Studio via Apollo docs

Segmenting metrics by client via Apollo docs

GraphQL Observability by Ashley Narcisse GraphQL Galaxy Conference 2020



Operations **#8. Observability** \rightarrow Audit logs

- Export a data file with key actions taken within your organization
- Investigate an incident and see what actions lead up to that incident by exporting a log for a time period and graph
- See what actions an individual has taken within a time period
- Investigate your automated systems that are changing the graph

Create an Audit Log export for We will email a link of your audit log to when it's ready and it will be available to download for 30 days.

Time range

The time parameters set here will be interpreted in UTC time. Use max time range.

From		То	
07/28/2021,08:00 PM		07/29/2021,05:09 PM	
Audit logs can only be expor	ted back to J	ul 28, 2021 at 8:00 PM PDT	

Filter

Export a full audit of all actions in Apollo (Internal), or filter the log by actions from a specific user or on a specific graph.

User:	Select a user
Graph:	Select a graph



Cancel

Submit



In conclusion



In conclusion We covered nine ways to secure your graph





Auth

1. Authentication 2. Authorization

In conclusion

We covered nine ways to secure your graph



Auth

1. Authentication 2. Authorization

In conclusion We covered nine ways to secure your graph

Reducing the attack surface area

- 3. Mitigating malicious queries
- 4. Limiting API discoverability
- 5. Batched requests



Auth

1. Authentication 2. Authorization

We covered nine ways to secure your graph

Reducing the attack surface area

- 3. Mitigating malicious queries
- 4. Limiting API discoverability
- 5. Batched requests

In conclusion

Operations & Governance

6. Stability 7. Managing graph access 8. Observability 9. Monitoring



Thanks! Chat w/ me @stemmlerjs

