

LaunchDarkly ➔

# Minimizing risk in the software development lifecycle

How Guarded Releases prevent outages and bugs



Regression  
detected

Rolling back  
to App V1



# Introduction

In software development, bugs and performance issues are inevitable—but the cost of letting them slip through can be staggering. Software outages, in particular, can lead to massive financial losses, customer dissatisfaction, and a strain on development teams. The majority of performance incidents are tied to software changes. This makes the release process one of the most critical—and riskiest—phases of software development. Ensuring stability while continuously delivering new features has become a balancing act, with any misstep potentially leading to outages that cost businesses both time and money.

**“Launch Darkly allows teams to release their code safely and even more rapidly because their code changes can be progressively rolled out to specific users and geographies.”**

Ian C. Senior Release Train Manager



## CURRENT STATE

# Operating under high risk

When a new release rolls out, the chance of introducing a bug or performance problem skyrockets. Many teams rely on traditional application performance monitoring (APM) tools that monitor overall system health but often miss the early signs of trouble caused by incremental changes. Worse yet, when an issue is finally detected, it may have already affected thousands of customers, triggering a frantic race to fix it.



Incidents are stressful for everyone involved—especially when they divert focus from strategic work, causing development teams to spend valuable time firefighting instead of innovating. The average mean time to recovery (MTTR) is often far longer than desired, with teams struggling to detect, debug, and mitigate issues quickly. This reactive approach to risk management not only hurts the business but also negatively impacts the customer experience.

**74%**

saw fewer application deployment issues  
after implementing LaunchDarkly

**16%**

average reduction in downtime

(Source: February 2025 LaunchDarkly Customer Census Survey)

#### FUTURE STATE

## Lowering risk with proactive monitoring

Imagine a future where software releases no longer carry such a heavy burden of risk. In this future state, development teams would be able to monitor feature-specific performance metrics in real time, catching potential problems before they can escalate into full-blown incidents. Outages could be minimized, and MTTR could be drastically reduced, allowing teams to resolve issues automatically—before they impact users.

In this future, releasing software changes would no longer feel like rolling dice. Teams would release code with confidence, knowing they had complete visibility into the health of their software and could address issues



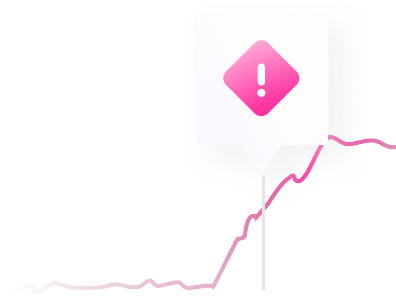
instantly, before customers are affected. Engineering velocity could remain high without sacrificing stability, and development teams would be able to focus on growth rather than crisis management.

Learn How [LaunchDarkly Reduces Risky Releases](#)



#### HOW WE SOLVE IT

## Ship safely, sleep soundly: automate stability and take back your nights & weekends



This future is already here with **Guarded Releases**, the newest LaunchDarkly product designed to catch and fix software performance problems before they become customer issues. Guarded Releases introduces a proactive approach to risk mitigation in the software delivery lifecycle by embedding real-time monitoring and automatic remediation directly into every release. Guarded Releases monitors key performance metrics throughout the release process, detecting regressions early and correlating issues with specific changes.

With integrations across popular APM tools such as Sentry, Segment, OpenTelemetry, and LaunchDarkly SDKs, Guarded Releases provides end-to-end visibility into the health of your releases. When a problem is detected, it automatically correlates the issue with the problematic feature flag, allowing an instant rollback before that issue escalates into an outage. This means less time spent debugging, fewer customer-facing incidents, and faster recovery times.





Key features include:



### **Proactive risk monitoring**

Get complete visibility into how your software is performing from the moment it's deployed. Guarded Releases tracks key metrics across all releases, automatically detecting anomalies and regressions that could degrade the user experience.



### **Automatic remediation**

By automatically correlating issues with the problematic release, Guarded Releases empowers teams to take immediate action—whether through a rollback or a fix—before customers feel the impact.



### **Seamless integration**

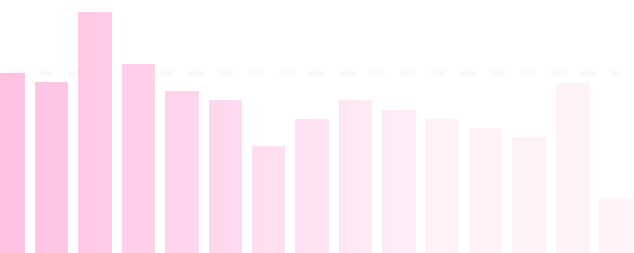
Through integrations with tools like Sentry, Segment, and OpenTelemetry, Guarded Releases brings together metrics from across your stack. This allows teams to learn from customer behavior, iterate on features, and ensure that future releases are even more customer-centric.



### **Customizable release monitoring**

Tailor your monitoring settings for each release so you can schedule rollouts by time, date, and location for more controlled and targeted deployments.

Guarded Releases ensure that you never have to compromise between innovation and reliability.



# Need help setting up?

Our Professional Services team is here to  
help you get started with Guarded Releases.

Get in touch

Get a demo

[launchdarkly.com](https://launchdarkly.com) | [sales@launchdarkly.com](mailto:sales@launchdarkly.com)

