

HAMBURG AWS MEETUP · AUGUST 2026

AWS Deletion Dialogues

A field guide to how AWS says goodbye to your resources — and why every service does it a little differently.

AGENDA

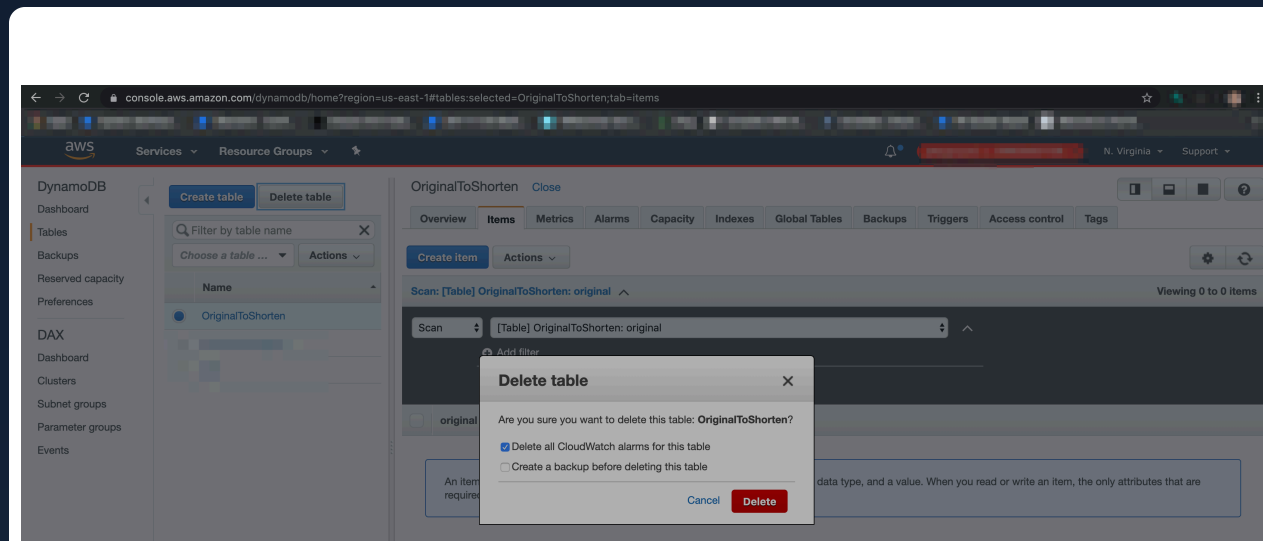
What we'll cover

- 01 Three species of deletion dialogue, with receipts
- 02 All 30 of them, at once, for maximum chaos
- 03 The two-pizza-team theory of why
- 04 What AWS itself — and other engineers — say about it
- 05 Takeaways for building your own platform

ORIGIN STORY

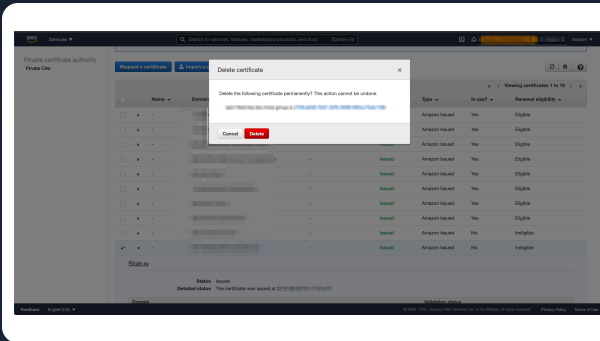
Why I started collecting these

- Delete *anything* in the AWS Management Console and you'll hit a confirmation dialog — a different one almost every time.
- Since 2019 I've been screenshotting every new variant I find, and asking coworkers to send me theirs.
- First published on my blog in January 2021 — still growing, with new species discovered as late as 2024.



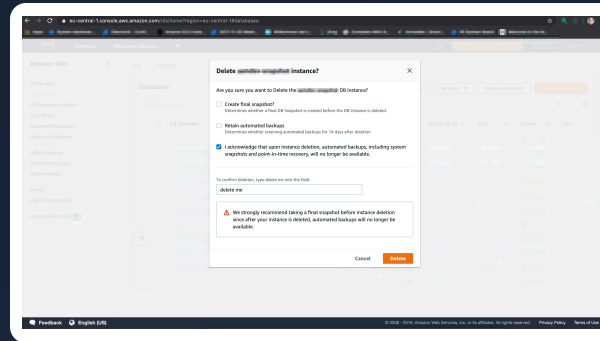
THE TAXONOMY

Three species of deletion dialogue



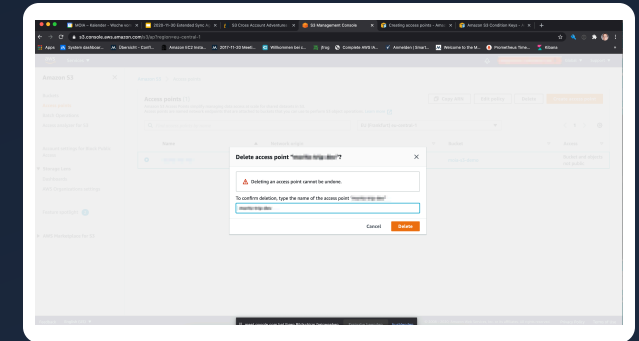
1. Simple confirmation

Click a button. Done.



2. Type “delete”

Prove you meant it.



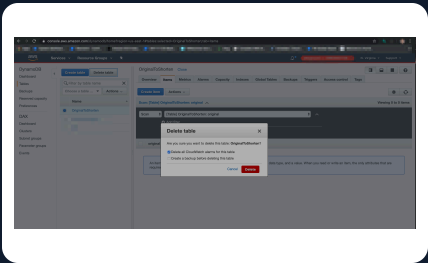
3. Type the resource name

Prove you *really* meant it.

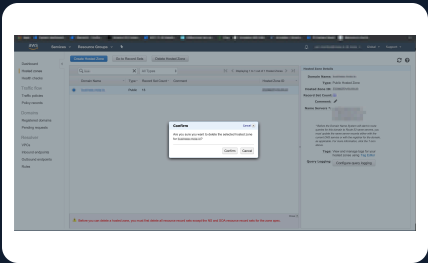
SPECIES 1 OF 3

Simple confirmation

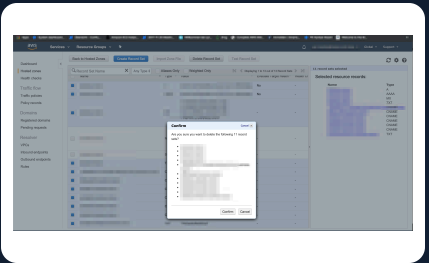
Watch the colour (blue, orange, red, grey), the button position (left or right of Cancel), and the label (“Confirm”, “Yes, Delete”, “Yes, delete”, “Delete”).



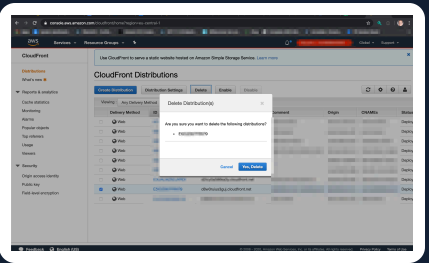
DynamoDB table



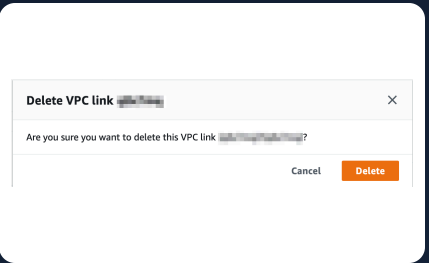
Route53 Hosted Zone · 10/2019



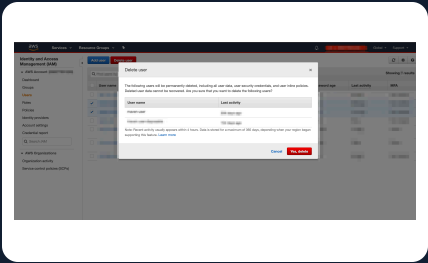
Route53 Record Sets · 10/2019



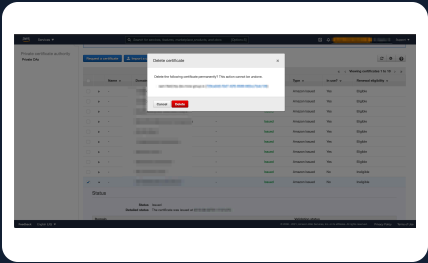
CloudFront Distribution · 03/2020



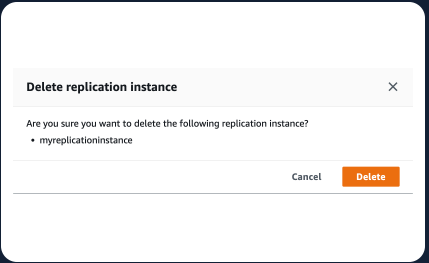
VPC Link · 05/2020



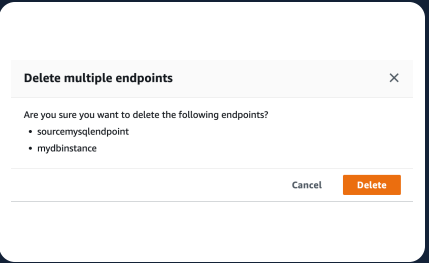
IAM User



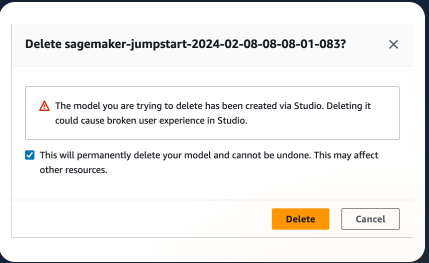
ACM Certificate · 01/2021



DMS Replication Instance · 10/2022



DMS Endpoints · 10/2022

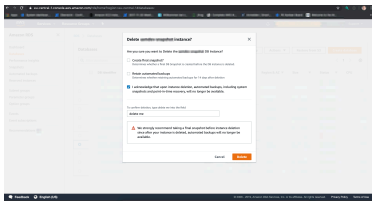


SageMaker Model · 03/2024

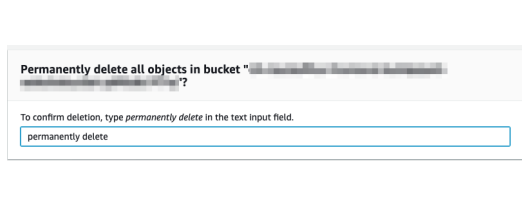
SPECIES 2 OF 3

Type something like “delete”

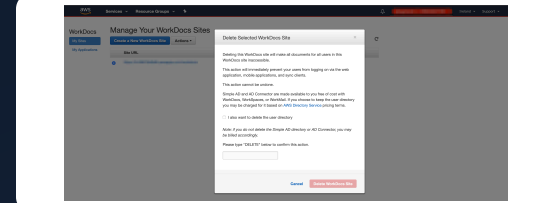
The magic word changes per service — *delete*, *delete me*, *delete permanently* — sometimes localized, sometimes gated behind an extra checkbox, and not always showing the resource name at all.



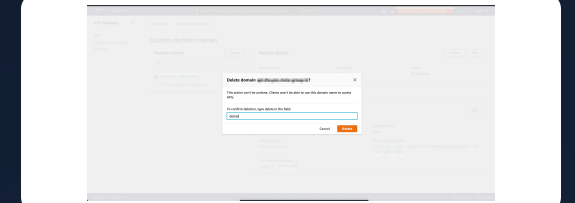
RDS Instance · 09/2019



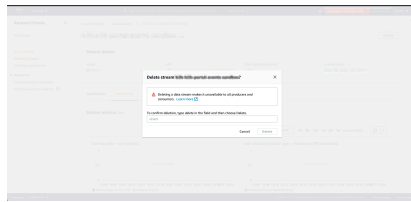
S3 objects · 11/2020



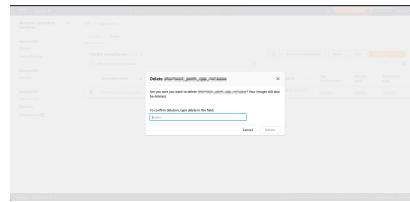
WorkDocs Site



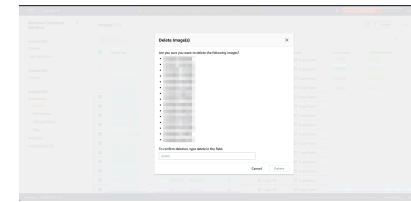
API Gateway Domain · 01/2021



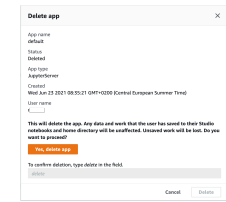
Kinesis Data Stream · 01/2021



ECR Repository · 01/2021



ECR Images · 01/2021



SageMaker Studio App · 10/2022

SPECIES 2 OF 3 · CONTINUED

...and it keeps going

Delete user

User name

r

This will delete the user from Studio, and they will lose access to their data and notebooks. If you want to back up the data and notebooks first, click Cancel.

Do you want to delete this user?

Yes, delete user

To confirm deletion, type delete in the field.

delete

Cancel

Delete

SageMaker Studio User · 10/2022

Delete Studio

Studio ID

d-frlhdgo7sdgg

This will delete Studio and access to all of your Notebooks and data.

Do you want to delete Studio?

Yes, delete Studio

To confirm deletion, type delete in the field.

delete

Cancel

Delete

SageMaker Studio · 10/2022

Terminate account-Backup-production?

This can't be undone. If you're sure you want to continue, type terminate in the field.

terminate

☐ Ignore errors - optional

Cancel

Terminate provisioned product

Service Catalog Product · 03/2024

Delete 2 snapshots?

Are you sure that you want to delete the following snapshots?

• snap-0895500da803b402

• snap-0bd3665e7c9baf661

To confirm deletion, type delete in the field.

delete

Cancel

Delete

EC2 Snapshots · 10/2022

Delete databaseb269d8bb-nhvevwrztpji cluster?

Are you sure you want to delete the databaseb269d8bb-nhvevwrztpji cluster?

⚠ Deleting the cluster will delete all the instances in the cluster, the storage volume, the automatic snapshots, continuous backups. Any associated resources like integrations will stop functioning.

Create final cluster snapshot?

Determines whether a final cluster snapshot is created before the cluster is deleted.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ I acknowledge that upon cluster deletion, automated backups, including system snapshots and point-in-time recovery, will no longer be available.

Enter the phrase delete entire cluster into the field below to confirm the deletion

delete entire cluster

Cancel

Delete

DocumentDB Cluster · 03/2024

Delete Launch Template

You can't undo this action. Any Auto Scaling groups or Spot Fleet requests currently using this launch template might be affected.

Are you sure you want to delete test (lt-08bdbb8d166e24645) and all its versions?

To confirm deletion, type Delete in the field

Delete

▶ CLI commands

Cancel

Delete

EC2 Launch Template · 03/2024

Delete project

Permanently delete My_Project_m6ktw74c and its underlying resources? You can't undo this action.

ⓘ Deleting a project is final and removes all resources and assets created in the project

To confirm this deletion, type "confirm".

confirm

Cancel

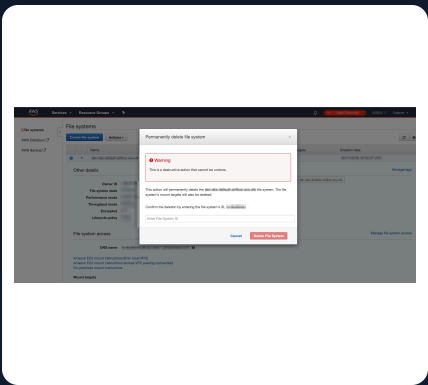
Delete project

SageMaker Studio Project · 03/2024

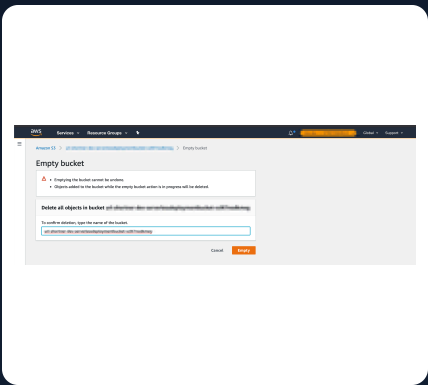
SPECIES 3 OF 3

Type the resource name

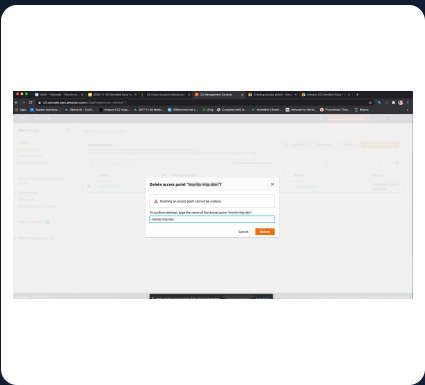
The most demanding pattern: type — or more realistically copy-paste — the exact name or ID of the resource before it dies.



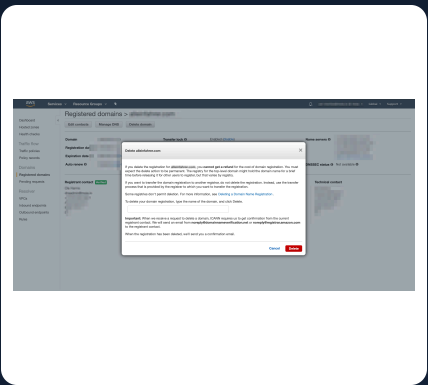
Elastic File System



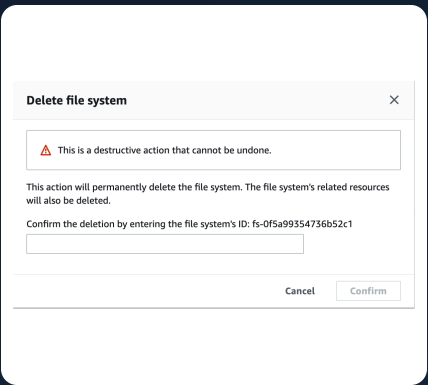
Empty an S3 bucket · 04/2020



S3 Access Point · 12/2020



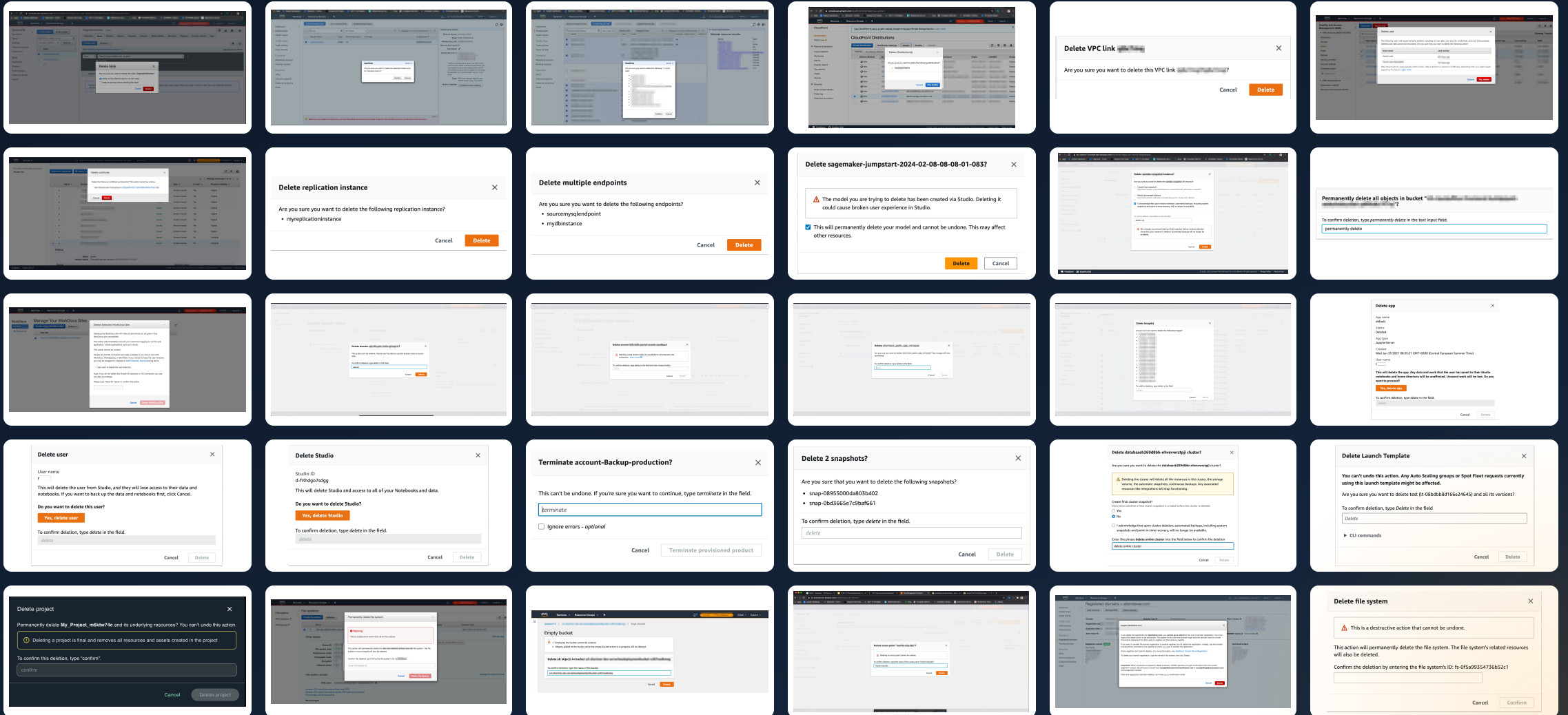
Route53 registered domain · 03/2020



EFS, updated dialogue · 10/2022

THE FULL COLLECTION

30 dialogues. One action: delete.



THE QUESTION

So... why?

No migration guide, no changelog entry ever says “we changed how deletion confirmation works.” Each dialog was designed once, by someone, and never touched again.

The two-pizza-team model

“If you can’t feed a team with two pizzas, it’s too large.”

— Jeff Bezos

- AWS’s 200+ services are built by thousands of small, autonomous teams — no more than ~10 people each.
- Each team owns its service end-to-end: backend, API, docs... and its own console UI.
- Teams are deliberately shielded from needing to coordinate with anyone else to ship.

The 2002 API mandate

“All teams will henceforth expose their data and functionality through service interfaces... There will be no other form of interprocess communication allowed: no direct linking, no direct reads of another team’s data store, no shared-memory model, no back-doors whatsoever.”

— Jeff Bezos, via Steve Yegge’s “Google Platforms Rant”

Notice what’s missing: **no shared UI toolkit was mandated**. Only the API had to be a service interface — the confirmation dialog on top of it was every team’s own call.

AWS admits the trade-off

“With so many autonomous, single-threaded teams running fast to meet the needs of their own customers, there is a risk of duplication and siloed development.”

— AWS Executive-in-Residence Blog

AWS even has a name for tolerating this: “**1 > 2 > 0**” — better two teams building the same thing than none, consolidate later if it matters. Speed beats efficiency by design. Consistency was never the objective function.

THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE

Conway's Law

“Organizations which design systems... are constrained to produce designs which are copies of the communication structures of these organizations.”

— Melvin Conway, 1968

Apply it to AWS: thousands of two-pizza teams, each shipping its own console screen. The deletion dialog you see isn't a design decision — it's a snapshot of which team owns that pixel, and when they last touched it.

I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE

Other people noticed too

“Eleventeen ways to delete an AWS resource” — Rami McCarthy & Daniel Grzelak, AWS Security Digest, Sept 2024. They independently catalogued almost the same taxonomy: one-click, simple confirm, type generic text, type the resource ID, acknowledge consequences, schedule for later.

“The design system isn’t enough to stop engineers from closing their eyes and slamming the Shift key at random while spelling Delete dElETe delete.”

“We have reason to believe a hamster has been imprisoned and is now choosing confirmations at random.”

They don't all blame the org chart

“Technically Rami thinks it’s because of ‘two pizza teams’ doing their thing but he’s wrong.”

— Daniel Grzelak, on his co-author

Fair — AWS *does* have a shared design system (Cloudscape). But “engineers doing their own thing despite a shared component library” is exactly what unmanaged team autonomy produces. Cloudscape ships the button. It doesn’t decide whether your service needs a text field, a checkbox, or nothing at all — and nobody reviews that choice across teams.

THE FIX IN PROGRESS

AWS is trying to converge

- 2017: AWS launches the **Cloudscape** design system to unify components across the console.
- November 2024: a console-wide **visual update** — new typography, colour palette, and layout — rolling out service by service.
- But: a shared visual language is not a shared interaction pattern. Buttons now share a colour palette — the deletion *flows* underneath still don't.

TAKEAWAYS

What this means for you

1. Team autonomy is why AWS ships so fast — and why AWS looks so inconsistent. Same root cause, two faces.
2. A design system fixes typography and colour. It doesn't fix product decisions like “does this action need a confirmation text field?”
3. The chaos lives in the console, not the API — that's the one interface the 2002 mandate *did* standardize. Script deletions through the API/IaC and most of this inconsistency disappears.
4. Clicking around the console by hand: don't build muscle memory — the confirmation you expect on one service won't show up on the next.
5. Building your own platform: decide up front whether consistency or team speed wins. Without governance, you don't get to have both.

SOURCES

Further reading

- › Moritz Siuts — **AWS deletion dialogues**, moritz-siuts.de/2021/01/01/aws-delete-dialogues/
- › Rami McCarthy & Daniel Grzelak — **Eleventeen ways to delete an AWS resource**, AWS Security Digest, Sept 2024
- › AWS Executive Insights — **Amazon's Two Pizza Teams**
- › AWS Executive-in-Residence Blog — **Two-Pizza Teams Are Just the Start** (Parts 1 & 2)
- › Steve Yegge — **Google Platforms Rant** (2011), on Jeff Bezos' 2002 API mandate
- › Melvin Conway — **How Do Committees Invent?** (1968)
- › AWS News Blog — **Introducing an AWS Management Console Visual Update**, Nov 2024

THANK YOU

Questions?

moritz-siuts.de/2021/01/01/aws-delete-dialogues/