

# Vectra AI Platform

## Advanced Investigation QuickStart Guide

Version 1.5

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## What is Vectra Investigate?

*Advanced Investigation* (or *Investigate* in the SaaS UI) provides more details and context into Indicators of Compromise (IOC) associated with detections, by allowing customers to explore Azure AD, M365 or AWS Control Plane logs directly within our platform.

With this feature, users can create a query (or search) to narrow down results as part of their incident analysis.

In this QuickStart Guide we will also provide some examples to help get you started with this feature.

## Before you begin

Please note that to be able to run a query for AWS, you must first create a CDR for AWS connection in the *Data Sources* section of your UI. To learn more please see: [Vectra CDR for AWS Deployment Guide](#)

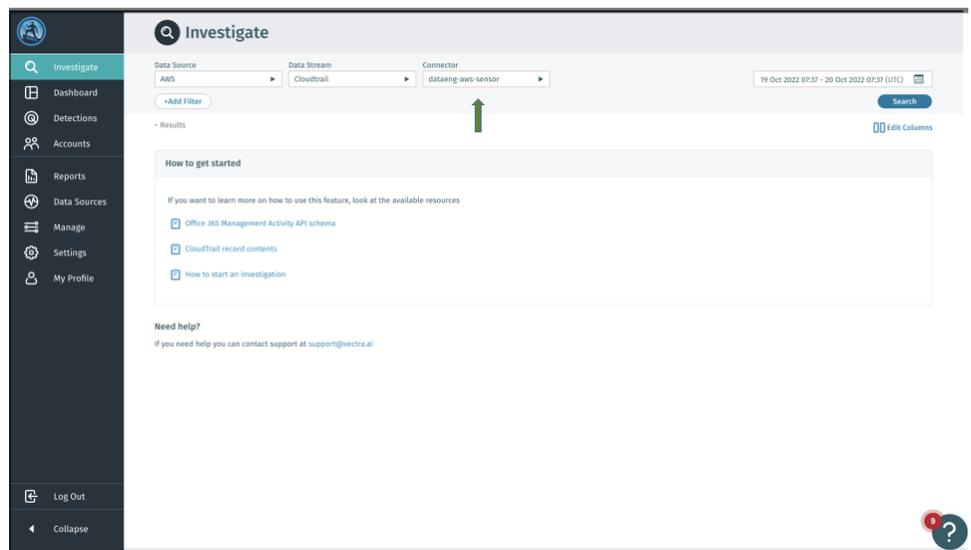
To be able to create queries for Azure AD & M365, you need to create a Azure AD & M365 connection in the *Data Sources* section of your UI. To learn more please see: [IDR for Azure AD and CDR for M365 Quick Start Guide](#)

To be able to create queries for Network, you need to create a Network sensor in the *Data Sources* section of your UI. To learn more please see: [Vectra Respond UX Deployment Guide](#)

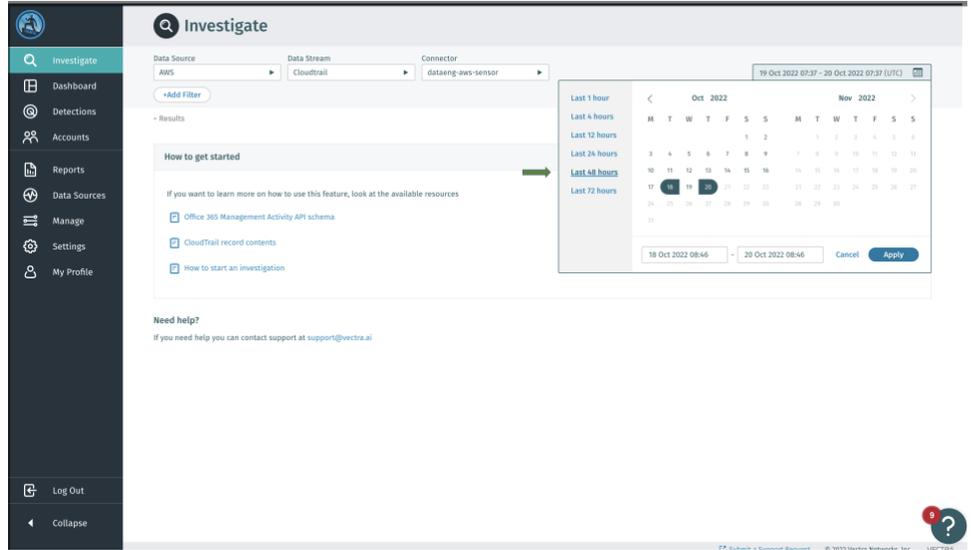
## How to create and run a query

1. Log in to your Vectra SaaS instance and navigate to *Investigate*. Select the Data Source, Data Stream and Connector you plan to investigate. *Please check the “Before you Begin” section in this document if you don’t have a connector.*

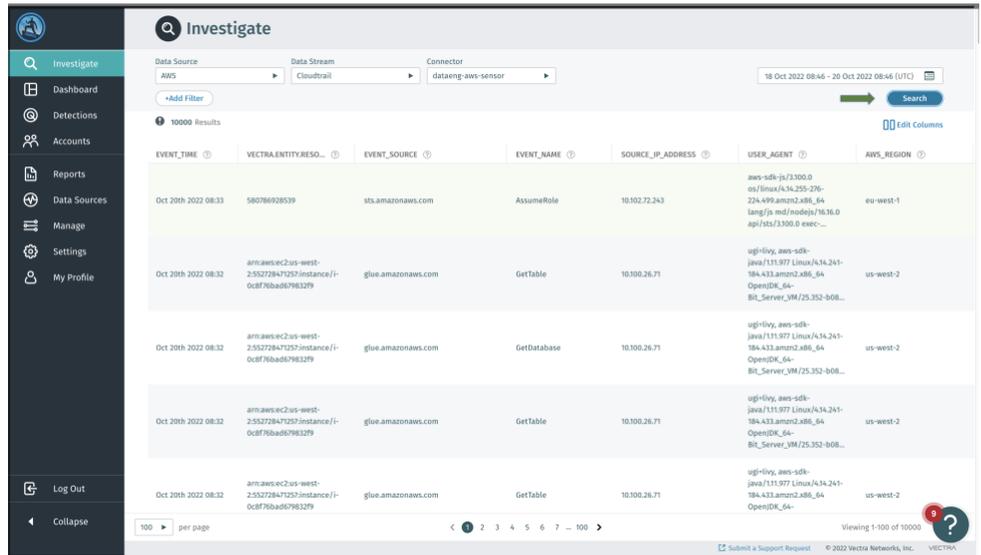
If your query is for Network metadata, you will only need to select the Data Source and Data Stream.



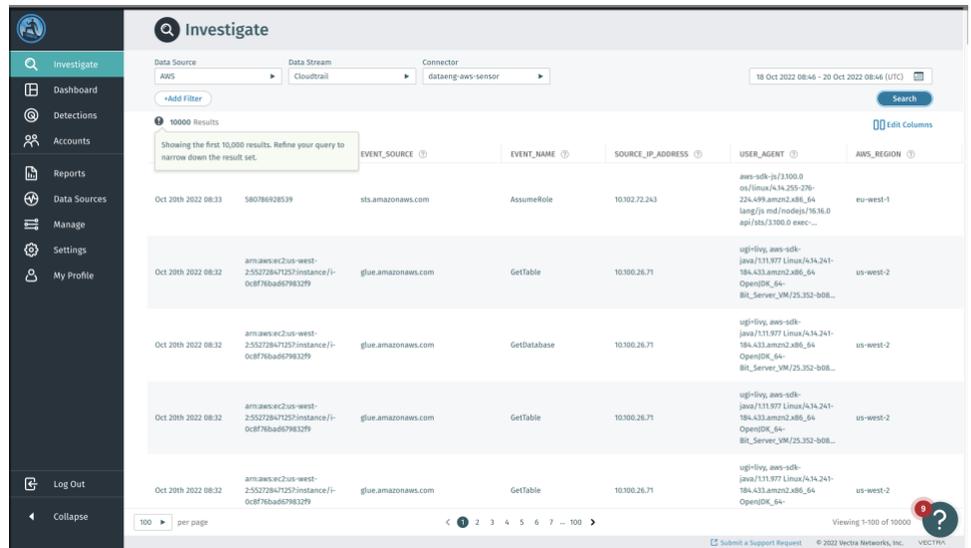
- Select the search period for your query and click Apply.



- Click on the Search button.

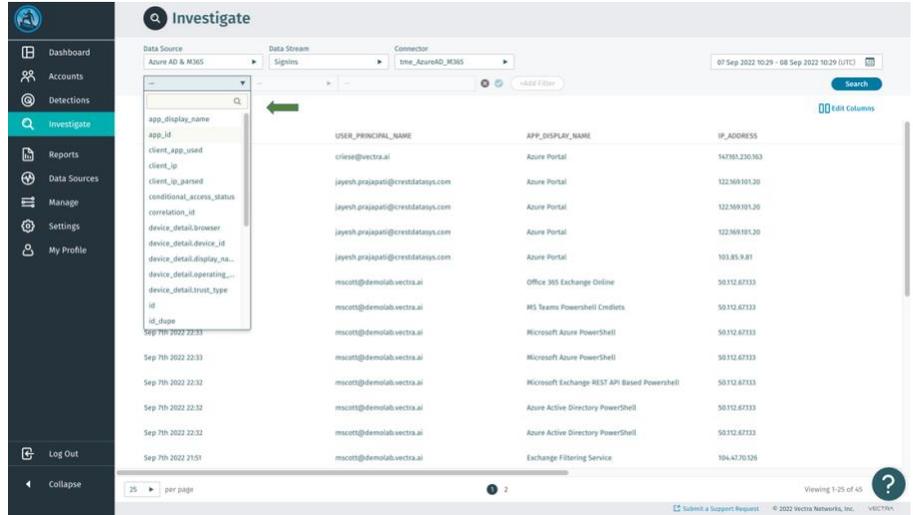


- The results' view will display 10000 results, starting by the most recent events.

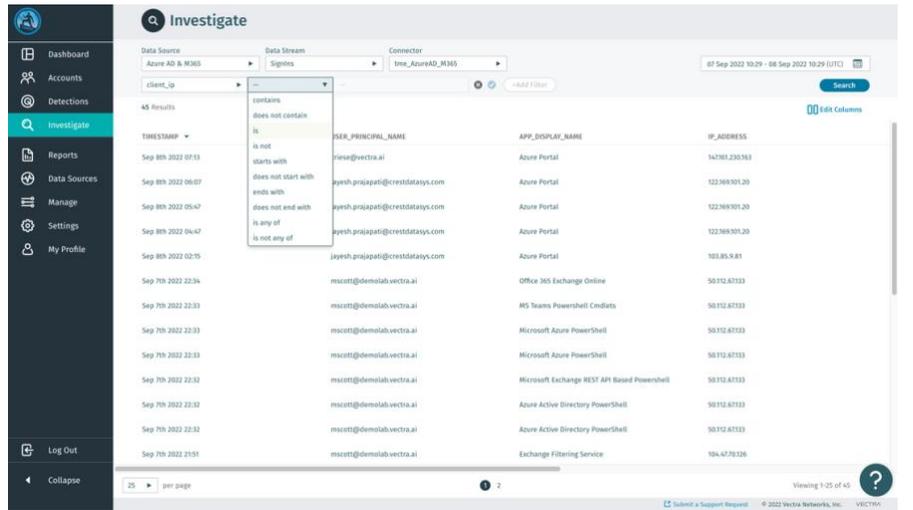


## How to add or remove filters

1. Click on the *Add Filter* button and select the field to use from the dropdown menu.



2. Select the operator to use from the dropdown menu.



- Enter the value (in this example, an IP address of interest) and click on the check button on the right of the entered value field to add the filter.

The screenshot shows the 'Investigate' page with the following configuration:
 

- Data Source: Azure AD & M365
- Data Stream: Signins
- Connector: tme\_AzureAD\_M365
- Filters: client\_ip is 50.112.67133

 A green arrow points to the checkmark button on the right of the filter input field. Below the filter configuration is a table of 45 results.

TIMESTAMP	USER_PRINCIPAL_NAME	APP_DISPLAY_NAME	IP_ADDRESS
Sep 8th 2022 07:13	crise@vectra.ai	Azure Portal	14781.230.163
Sep 8th 2022 06:07	jayesh.prajapati@crestdatays.com	Azure Portal	122369.101.20
Sep 8th 2022 05:47	jayesh.prajapati@crestdatays.com	Azure Portal	122369.101.20
Sep 8th 2022 04:47	jayesh.prajapati@crestdatays.com	Azure Portal	122369.101.20
Sep 8th 2022 02:15	jayesh.prajapati@crestdatays.com	Azure Portal	103.85.9.81
Sep 7th 2022 22:34	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Office 365 Exchange Online	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:33	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	MS Teams Powershell Cmdlets	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:33	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Microsoft Azure Powershell	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:33	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Microsoft Azure Powershell	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:32	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Microsoft Exchange REST API Based Powershell	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:32	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Azure Active Directory PowerShell	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 22:32	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Azure Active Directory PowerShell	50.112.67.133
Sep 7th 2022 21:51	msscott@demolab.vectra.ai	Exchange Filtering Service	104.47.70.226

- Click on the *Search* button.

This screenshot is identical to the previous one, but a green arrow points to the 'Search' button in the top right corner of the filter configuration area.

- To remove a filter hover on the statement that contains the filter to be removed and click on the X on the right of the filter. Click on the *Search* button again to run the search with the new parameters.

This screenshot shows the 'Investigate' page with the filter removed. The filter configuration area is empty, and a green arrow points to the 'X' icon on the right of the filter input field. The 'Search' button is highlighted in blue. The table of results remains the same as in the previous screenshots.

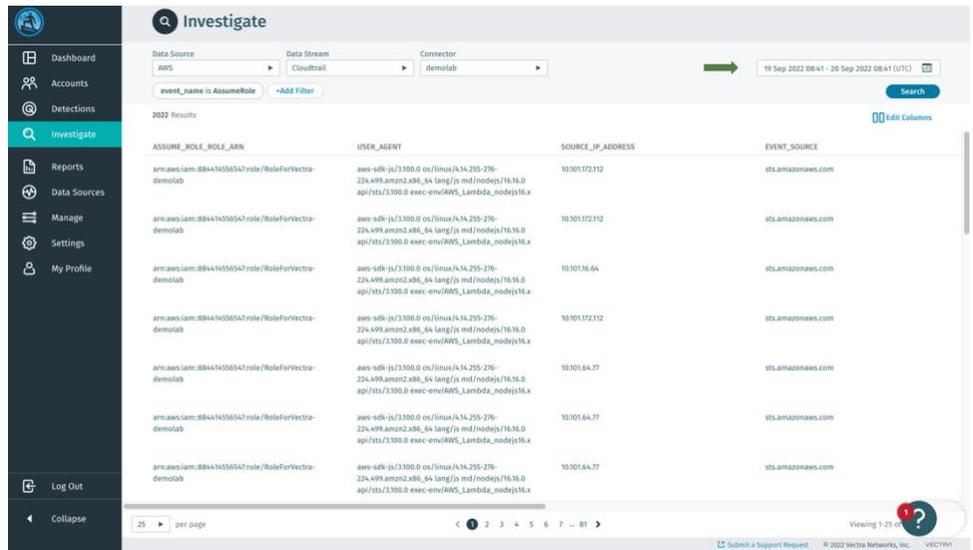
## How to modify the query's search period

The default search period for running queries is set at 'Last 6 hours.' In this section, we will explain how to customize this default search period.

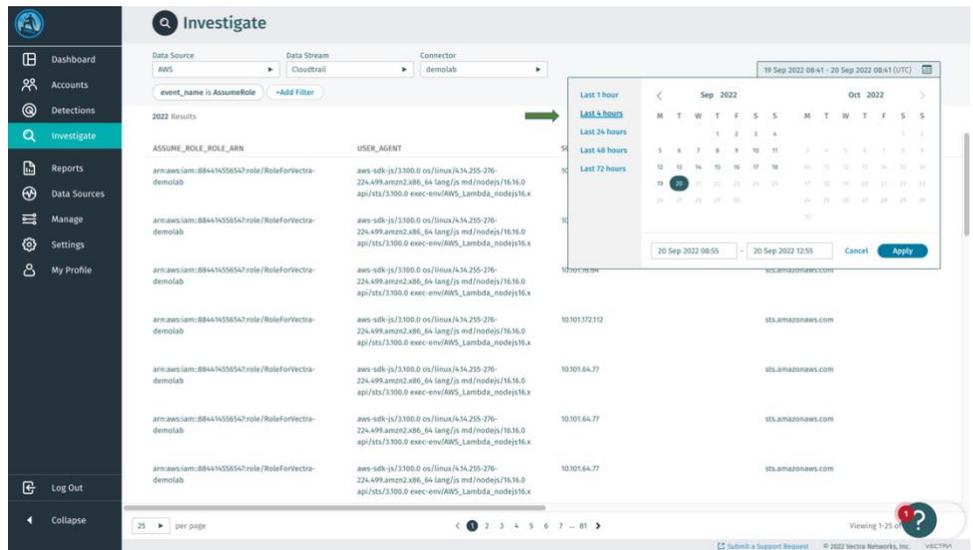
Another critical timeframe to consider for metadata searches is the retention period. This period represents the maximum number of days that Vectra retains customer data. By default, this retention period is set at 72 hours. However, customers have the option to extend the metadata retention period by purchasing either a 14 or 30-day license.

To modify the search period:

1. Click on the time picker located on the top right side of the screen to select the search period you would like to use for the query and click on the *Apply* button. In this case we've selected the last 4 hours.



2. Click on the *Search* button, and only entries within the selected search period will be displayed.



## How to add/remove and re-order columns in the results

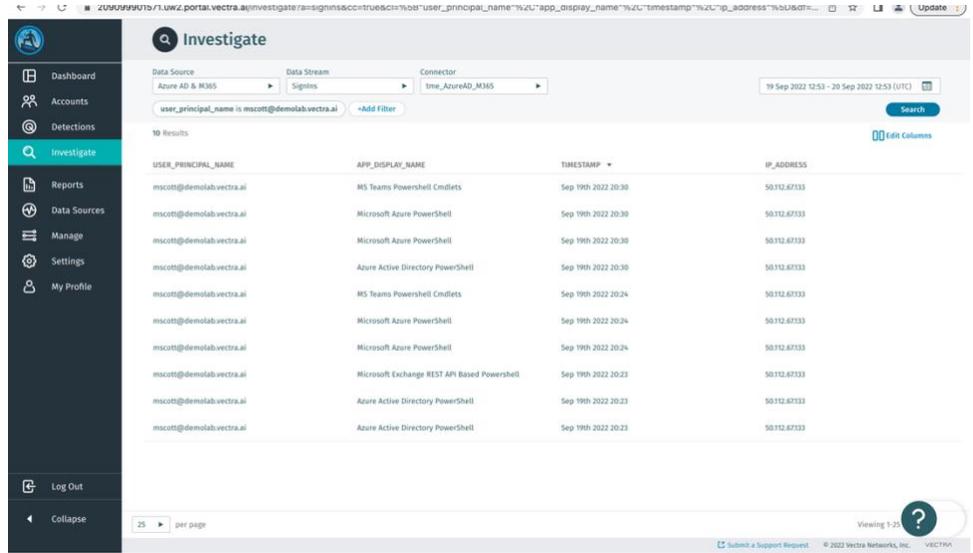
1. To add columns to the results, click on the *Edit Columns* icon under the *Search* button.

The screenshot shows the 'Investigate' page with search filters: Data Source (Azure AD & M365), Data Stream (Signins), and Connector (Time\_AzureAD\_M365). The search criteria is 'user\_principal\_name is mscott@demolab.vectra.ai'. The results table displays 10 entries with columns: USER\_PRINCIPAL\_NAME, APP\_DISPLAY\_NAME, and TIMESTAMP. An 'Edit Columns' button is located in the top right corner of the results area.

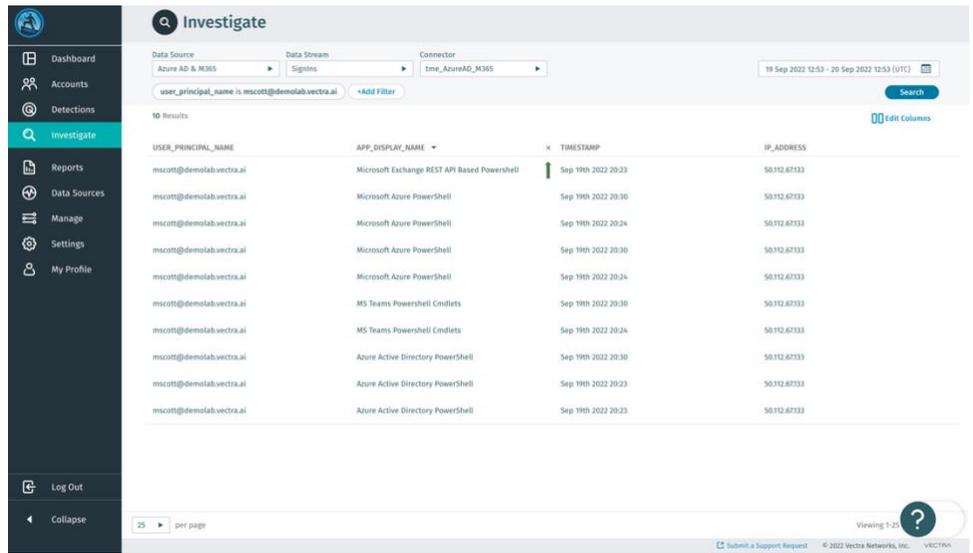
2. Select the columns to be added to the view. In this example we will add the *ip\_address* column and then click save.

The screenshot shows the 'Edit Columns' dialog box open over the search results. The dialog lists various columns with checkboxes. The 'ip\_address' checkbox is checked, indicating it has been selected for addition to the view. Other columns listed include id\_dupe, is\_interactive, location.city, location.country\_or\_region, location.geo\_coordinates.altitude, location.geo\_coordinates.latitude, location.geo\_coordinates.longitude, location.state, office\_tenant\_id, resource\_display\_name, resource\_id, risk\_detail, risk\_level\_aggregated, risk\_level\_during\_sign\_in, risk\_state, status.additional\_details, status.error\_code, status.failure\_reason, user\_display\_name, and user\_id.

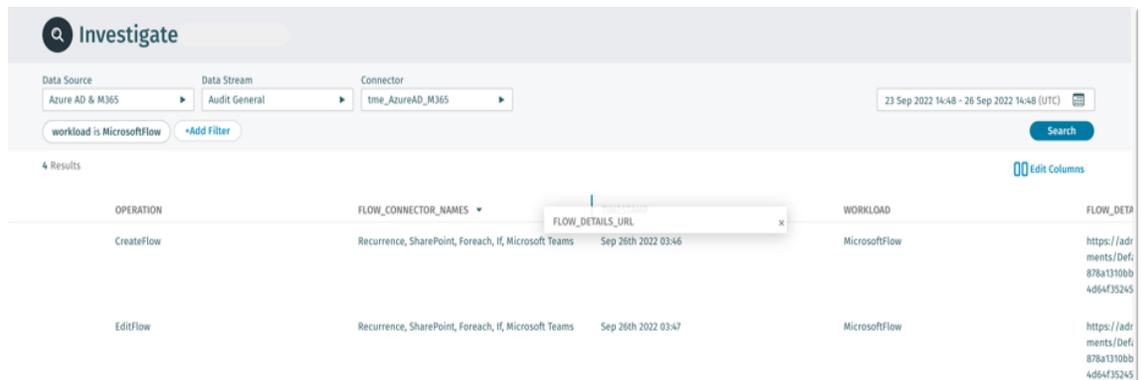
- The newly added column is added to the results.



- To remove a column from the results view, you can click on the “x” at the right side of the column’s name, or you can use the *Edit columns* option as shown before.



- To re-order the columns you can simply drag and drop them in the desired order.



## How to run a query from Instant Investigation

In this example, we will assume that an AWS account has been identified to be of interest in *Instant Investigation*. Using the source IP address, we would like to investigate further.

Clicking on *Investigate Further* takes us to the Advanced Investigation (*Investigate*) landing page.

The screenshot shows the 'Instant Investigation' page for an AWS account (AWS:602592549188). The interface includes a sidebar with navigation options like Dashboard, Accounts, Detections, Investigate, Reports, Data Sources, Manage, Settings, and My Profile. The main content area displays account information, an assigned user (gearoid@vectra.ai), and attack phases (Recon, Exploit, Post-Exploit, Persistence). The 'Changes made to services' section shows a table with columns for SERVICE CHANGED, NUMBER OF CHANGES, FROM, and TO. Below this, there are sections for 'Regions active' and 'Roles assumed', each with a table of details and an 'Investigate further' button.

Once in *Investigate*, the filters from Instant Investigation are carried into *Advanced Investigation* and you can add/remove filters, change the search period, etc.

The screenshot shows the 'Investigate' page. At the top, there are filters for Data Source (AWS), Data Stream (Cloudtrail), and Connector (demolab). A search query is entered: 'vectra.entity.resolved\_identity.canonical\_name is 602592549188 read\_only is false'. The results section shows 2 results in a table with columns: EVENT\_NAME, EVENT\_SOURCE, VECTRA.ENTITY.RESOLVED\_IDENTITY.CANONICAL\_NAME, and SOURCE\_IP\_ADDRESS. The results are:

EVENT_NAME	EVENT_SOURCE	VECTRA.ENTITY.RESOLVED_IDENTITY.CANONICAL_NAME	SOURCE_IP_ADDRESS
AssumeRole	sts.amazonaws.com	602592549188	18.208.206.128
AssumeRole	sts.amazonaws.com	602592549188	18.208.206.128

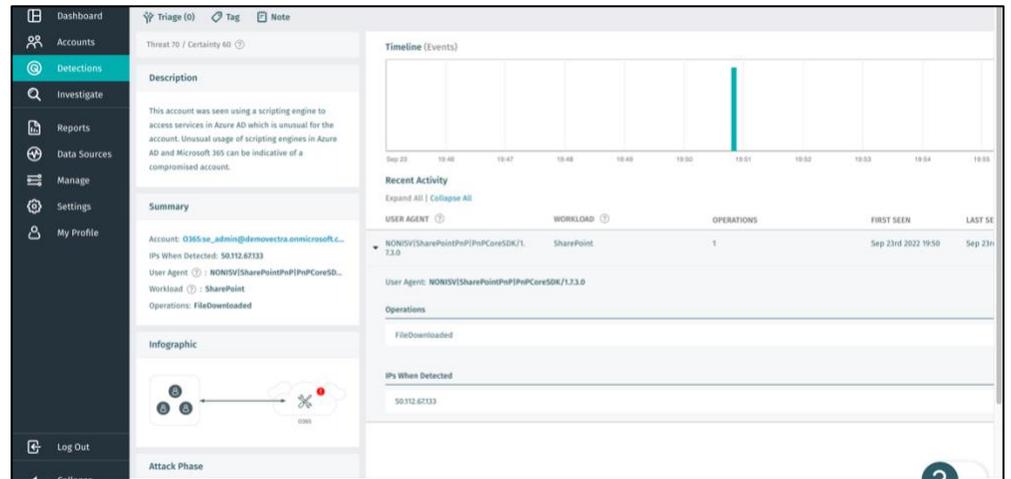
The interface also includes a sidebar, a search bar, and a footer with pagination and support options.

## Query Examples

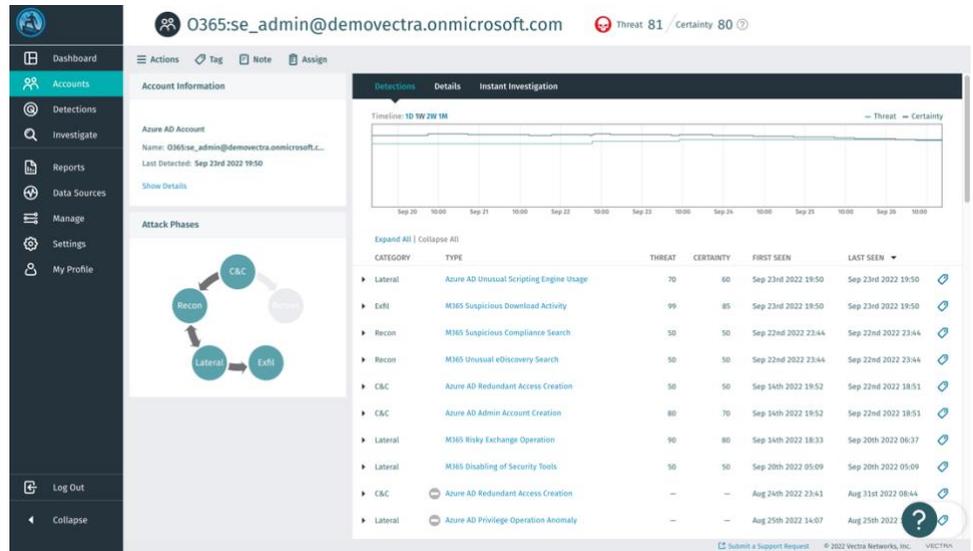
### Investigating an Azure AD attack with Powershell

Attackers will use Powershell to automate parts of their attack. Vectra enables fast response to Powershell-based attacks with effective detections and functionality to rapidly investigate and understand the breadth of an attack.

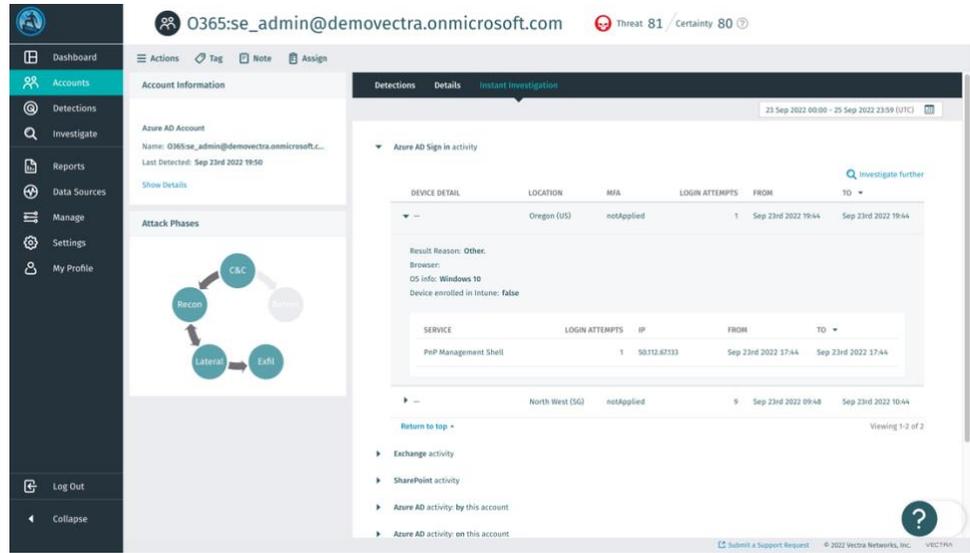
A Vectra Azure AD Scripting Engine detection will identify the use of unusual scripting engines like Powershell.



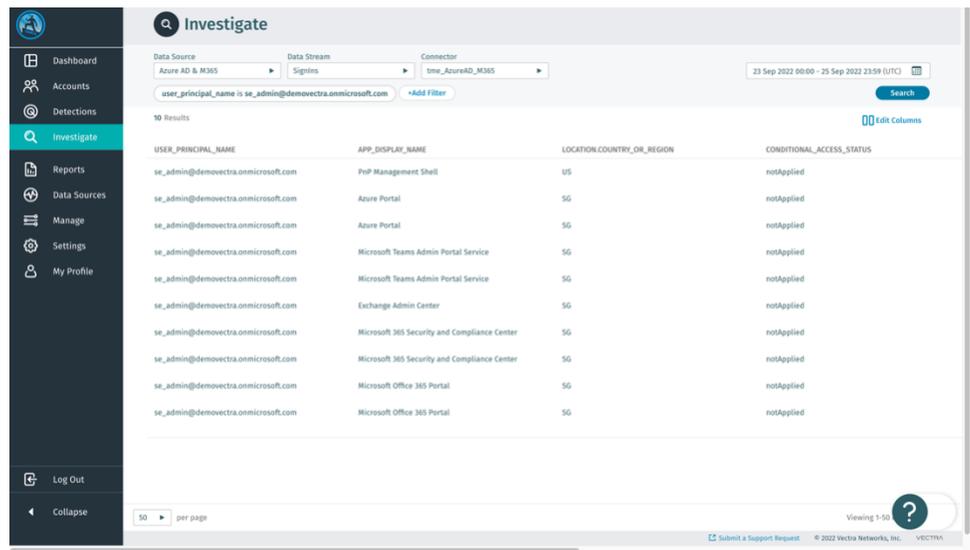
To investigate the impact of the Powershell usage during an attack, analysts can pivot to the account page and access the *Instant Investigation* tab



From the *Instant Investigation* tab teams can quickly review the sign in activity



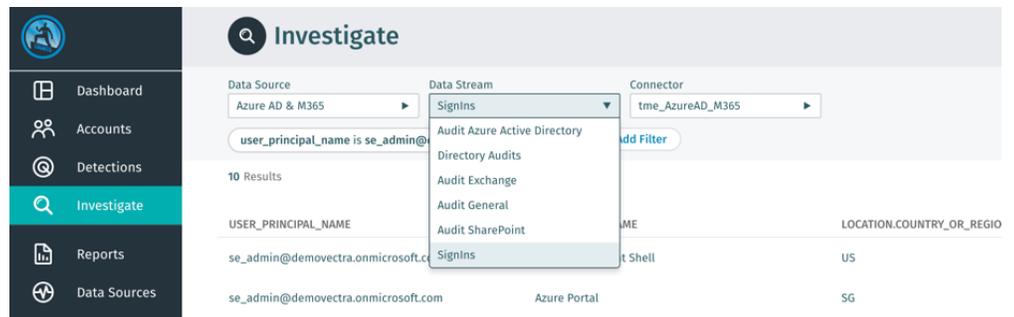
Teams wanting to dive in deeper, can use the *Investigate further* action to review more details.



The full timeline of Powershell usage and instances of other federated SaaS applications being accessed without Powershell are shown.

To understand further how an attacker might have used Powershell to propagate, review other logs.

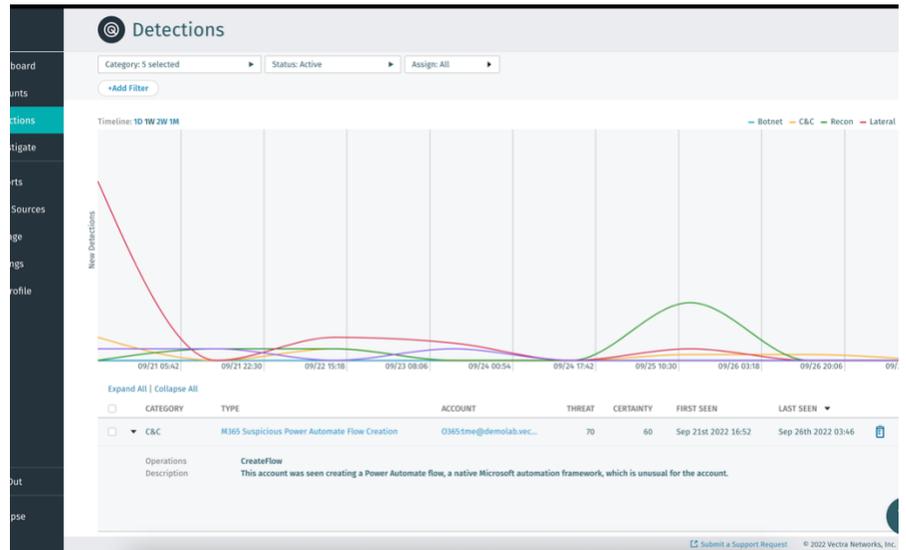
For instance, the Audit Exchange data stream can be reviewed to see mailbox related activity, Audit SharePoint for file and data related activity, and Directory Audits for high impact Azure AD backend activities.



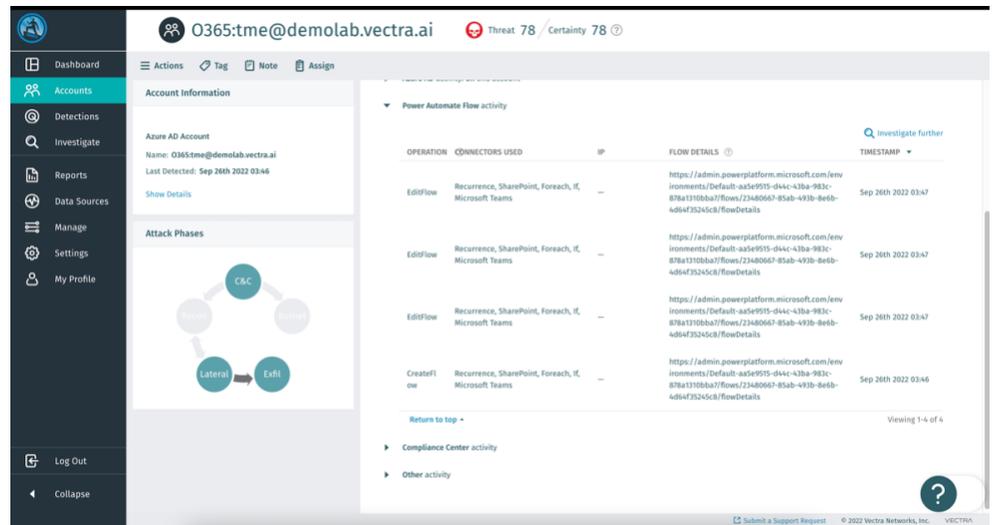
## Investigating a Microsoft 365 attack with Power Automate

Attackers will abuse the Power Automate suite to automate their attacks. Connectors set up recurring data movements that allow data theft to occur continuously without manual action. Detection events related to the abuse of Power Automate can be remediated quickly with the knowledge Vectra's Advanced Investigation feature provides.

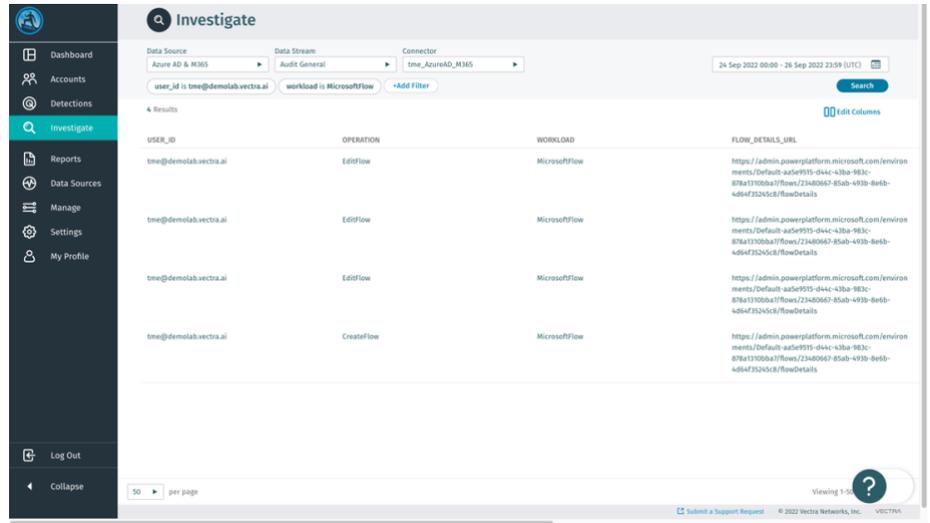
A Vectra M365 Suspect Power Automate Flow Creation alert will identify anomalous use of Power Automate.



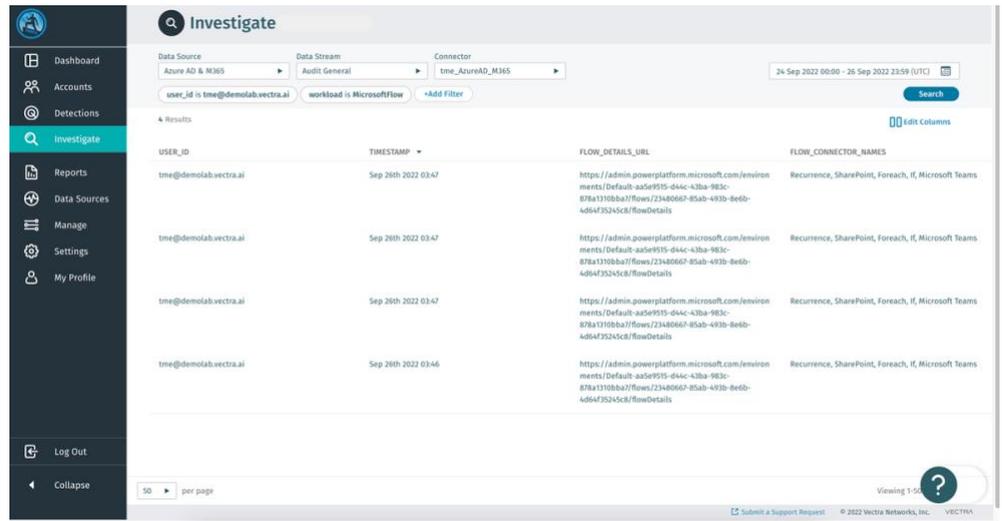
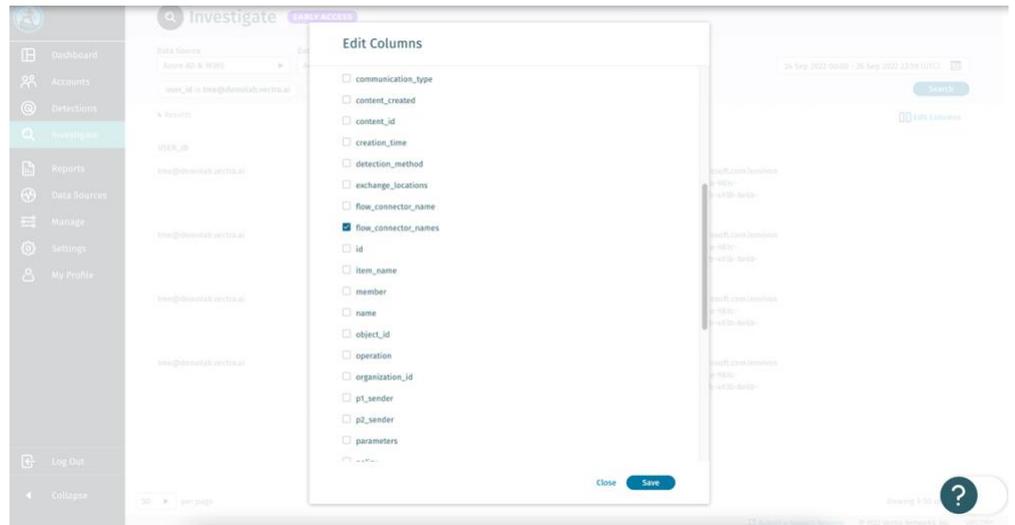
To investigate the details of the Power Automate usage during the attack, analysts can pivot to the account page and access the *Instant Investigation* tab to review the Power Automate activity.



Teams wanting to dive in deeper, can use the *Investigate further* action to review more details.

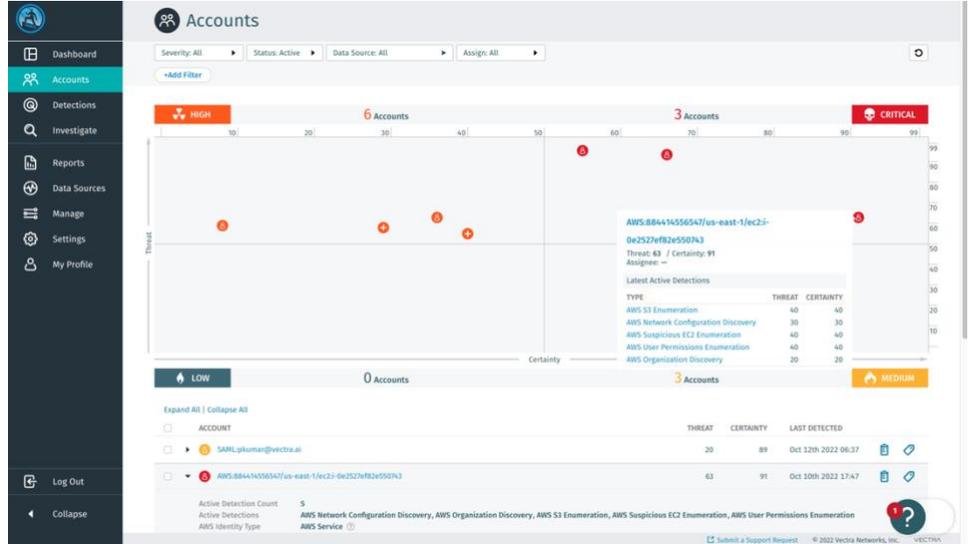


To view the flow connectors that were used during the attack select *Edit Columns* and add the “flow\_connector\_names” column.

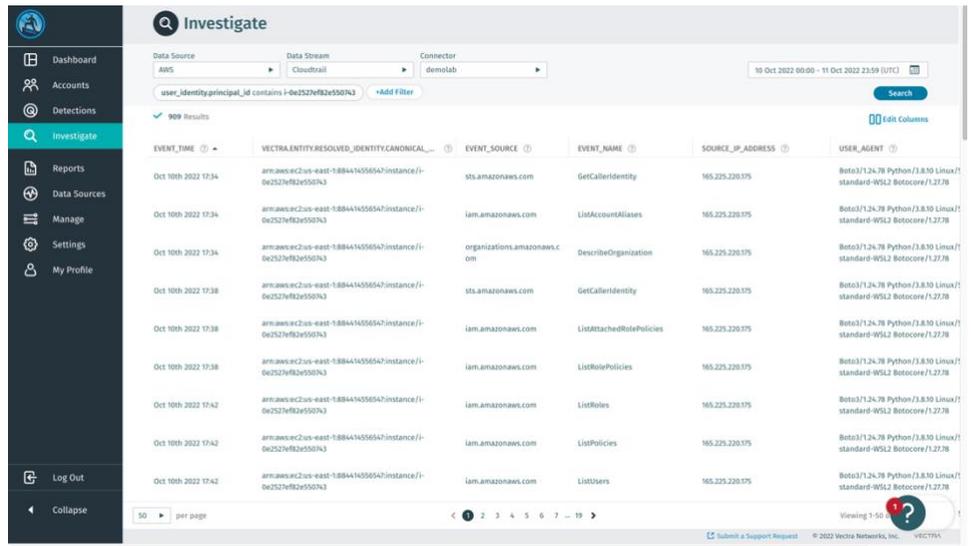


## All activity around a specific AWS EC2 instance

In this example, while in the *Accounts* page we decide to investigate an AWS account that's currently in the Critical quadrant.

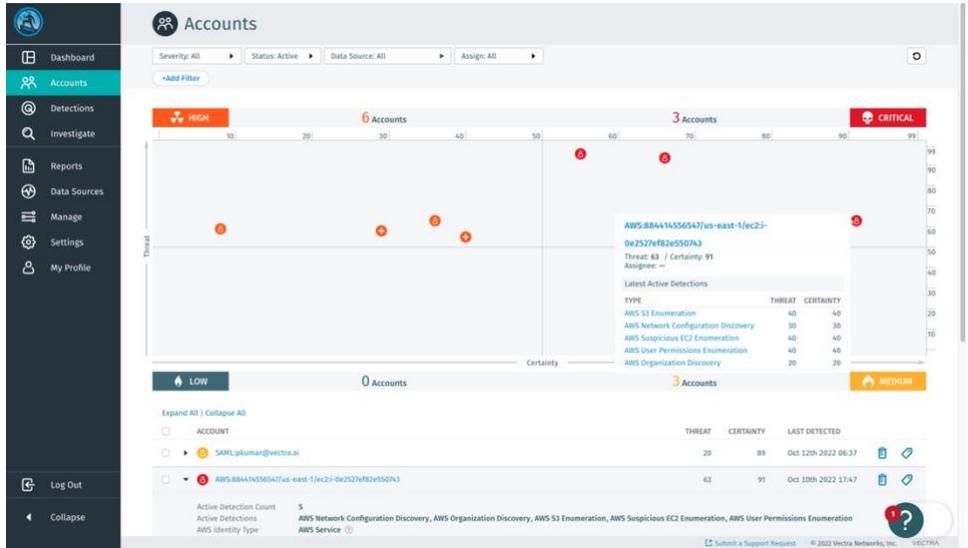


To investigate the activities related to an EC2 instance, we could create a filter in *Advanced Investigation* using part of the AWS account name of interest in the filter.

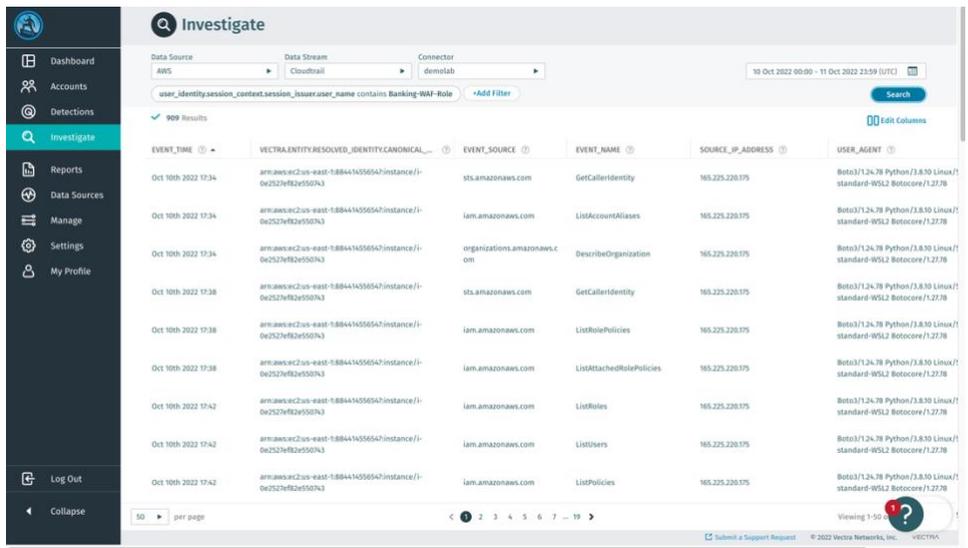


## AWS activity performed with an assumed role

In this example, we'd like to know all activity this EC2 instance performed. One way to gather this information is to query for all activity by an AWS role attached to the EC2 instance.



To investigate the activities related to an EC2 instance, we could create a filter in *Advanced Investigation* like the one shown in the image.



## AWS activity performed with an assumed role on a different region

Continuing the previous example, we could add a filter to check the activities the EC2 has performed with the assumed IAM role.

This EC2 is in the us-east-1 region, but we can see that the IAM role attached to the EC2 instance has made API calls for different regions.

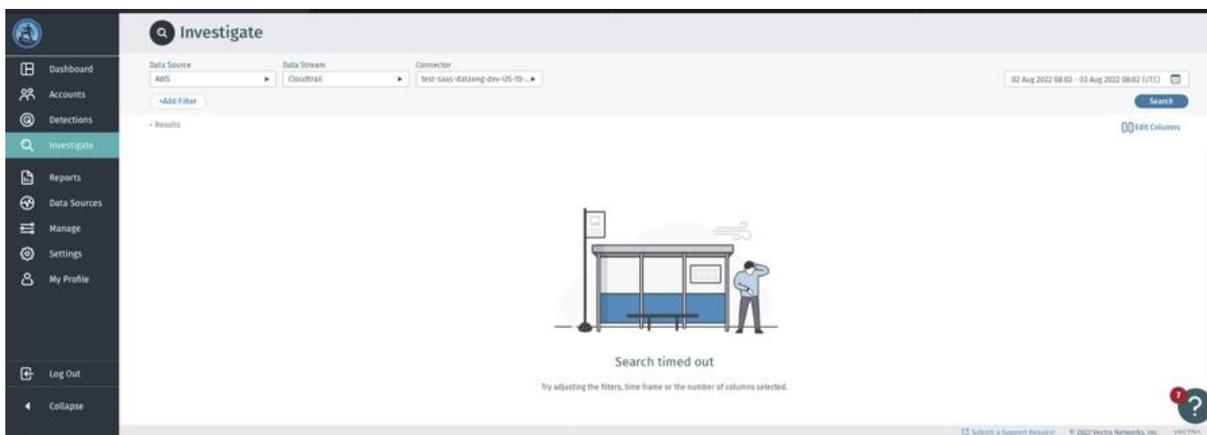
EVENT_TIME	VECTRAENTITYRESOLVED_IDENTITYCANONICAL_	EVENT_SOURCE	EVENT_NAME	SOURCE_IP_ADDRESS	USER_AGENT
Oct 10th 2022 17:34	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	sts.amazonaws.com	GetCallerIdentity	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:34	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListAccountAliases	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:34	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	organizations.amazonaws.com	DescribeOrganization	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:38	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	sts.amazonaws.com	GetCallerIdentity	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:38	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListRolePolicies	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:38	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListAttachedRolePolicies	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:42	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListUsers	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:42	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListPolicies	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78
Oct 10th 2022 17:42	arn:aws:ec2:us-east-1:888441556547:instance/i-0e2527f8b2e50763	iam.amazonaws.com	ListRoles	165.225.228.075	Botocore/1.24.78 Python/3.8.10 Linux/standard-WSL2 Botocore/1.27.78

## Troubleshooting

There are cases in which a query cannot be completed due to a variety of reasons; in this section, we propose different actions to take that help avoid those situations.

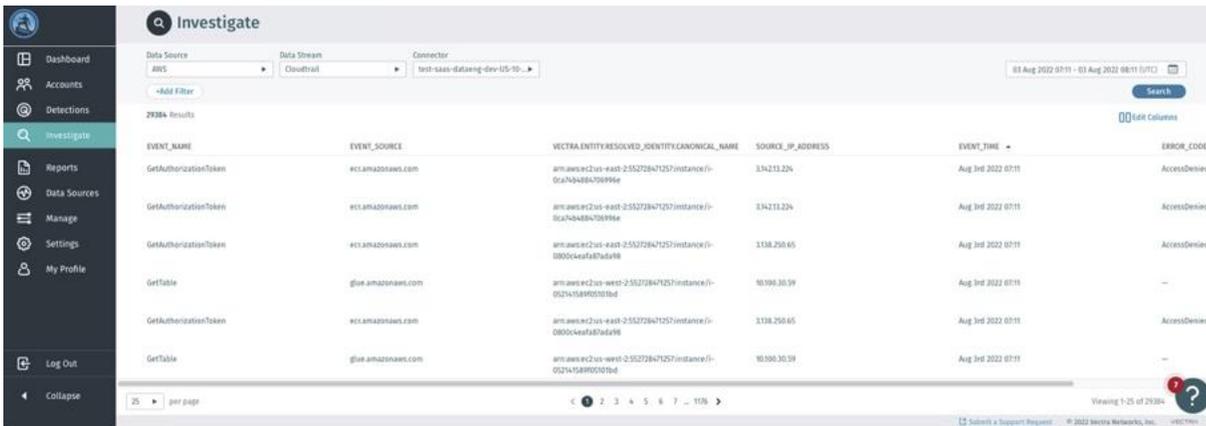
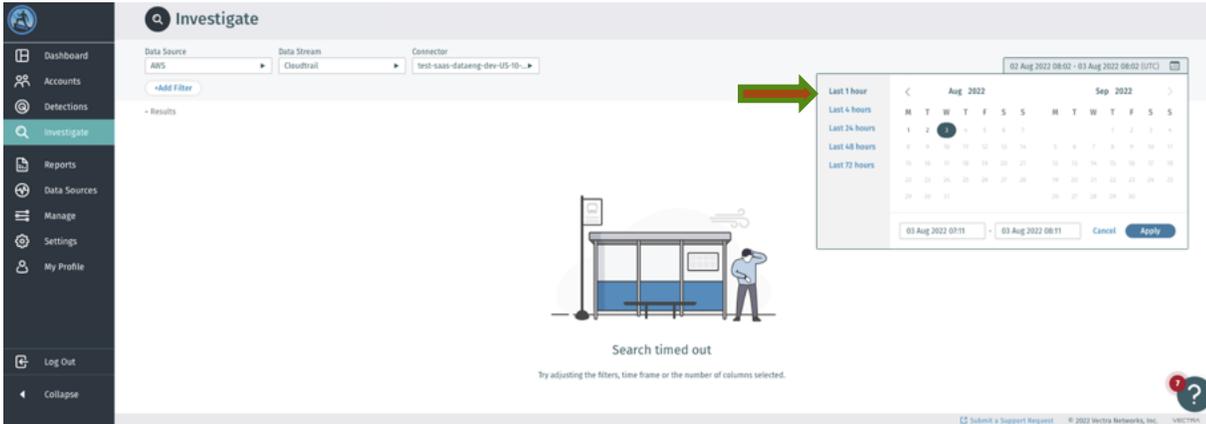
### “Search could not be completed” or “Search timed out”

In cases where the data sets to be retrieved are very large, the query may time out and you will see a message like the one shown below:

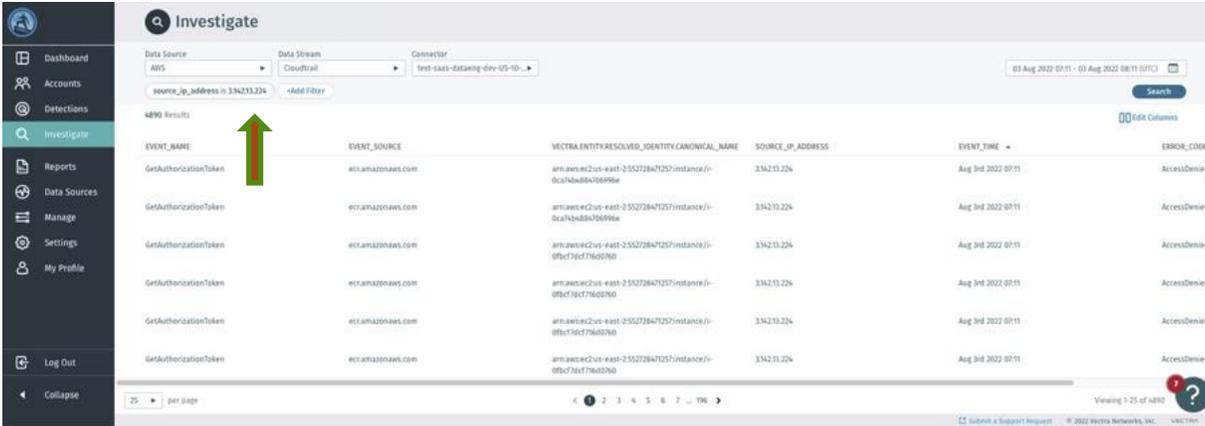


If that's the case, you can try the following steps:

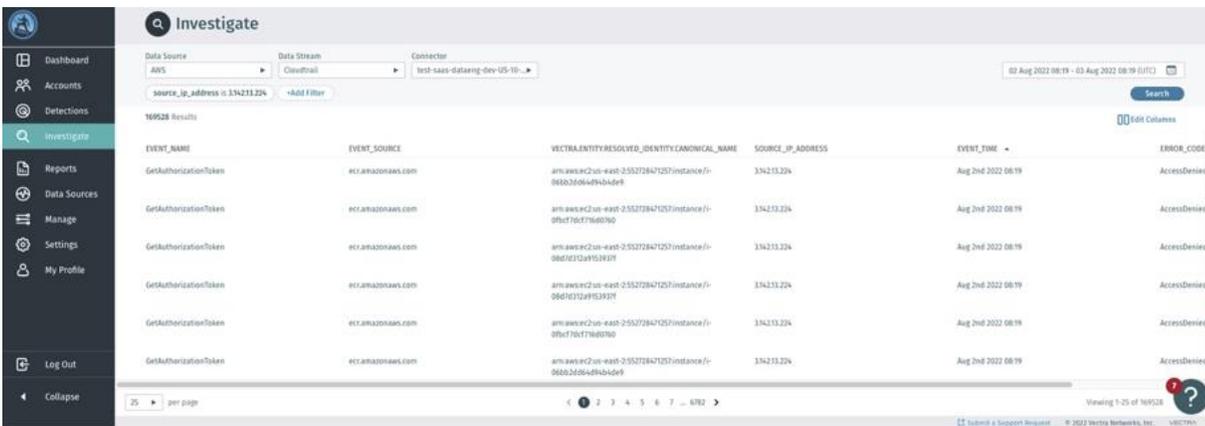
1. Reduce the search period for the query to one of the lower possible values. In this example, we've reduced it to *Last 1 hour*, click *Apply* and click *Search*.



2. If the results yield a field you may want to use as a filter, add a filter for it. In this case, we're filtering by an IP address of interest. Please see [How to add/remove filters](#) in this document for more details.



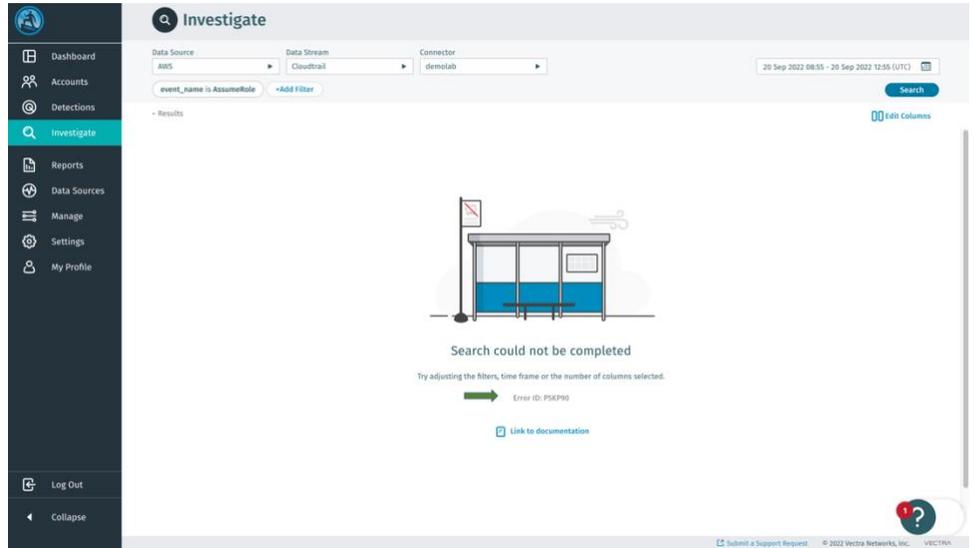
3. You could now try to change the search period back to a larger period. In this example, we've reverted to Last 24 hours. For more details on how to modify the time frame, please see [How to modify the query's search period](#) in this document.



4. Depending on the size of your data set you may need to repeat this sequence of steps (reduce the time frame and add filters) until you narrow the search down to the data you're looking for.

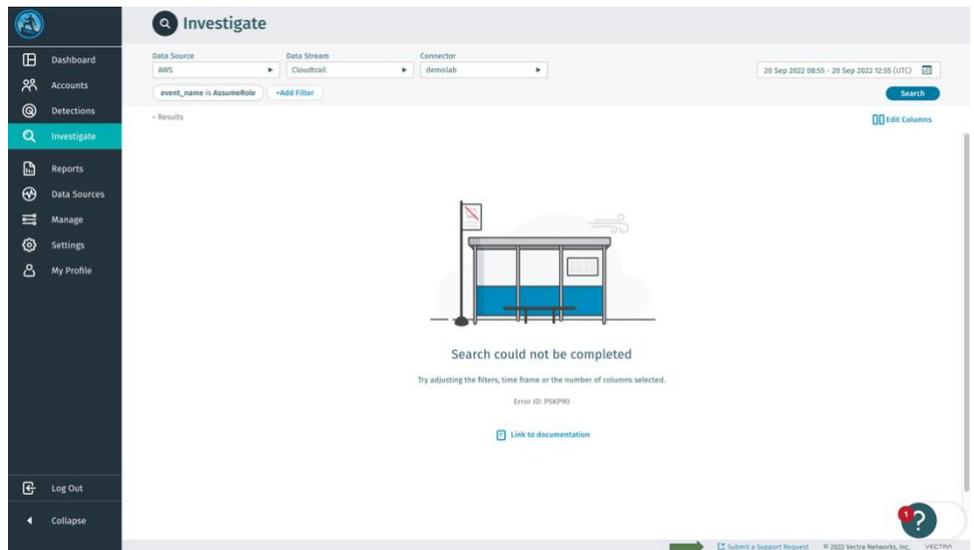
## “Search could not be completed” (with error id)

In rare occasions, an error message will be displayed, indicating the search could not be completed, and an error id is printed below the error message.



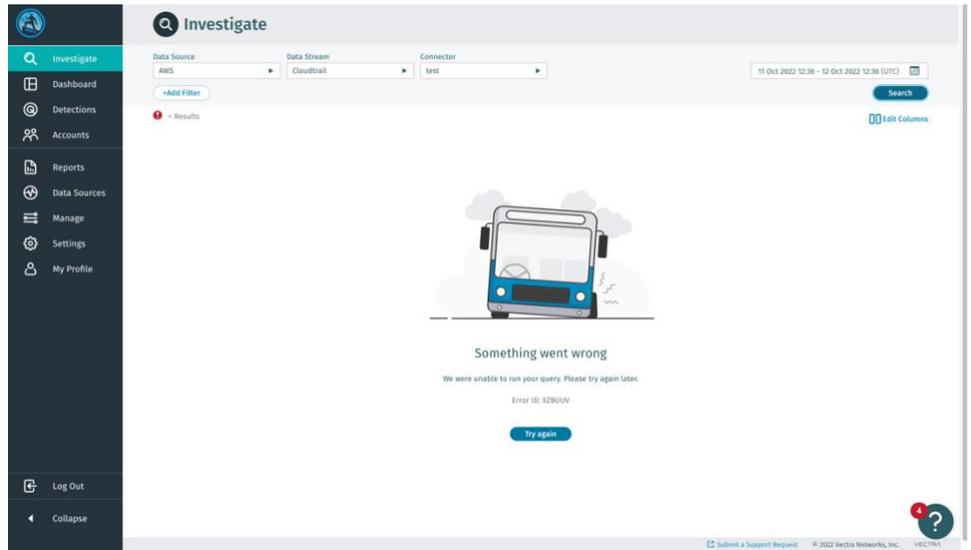
For the query to be executed, please follow the same steps used for the error scenario in which the error id is not being displayed (*Search could not be completed* section)

To help us improve, please also consider submitting a Support request, indicating the error id that was displayed for your query. Please include a snapshot of the query as well.



## “Something went wrong”

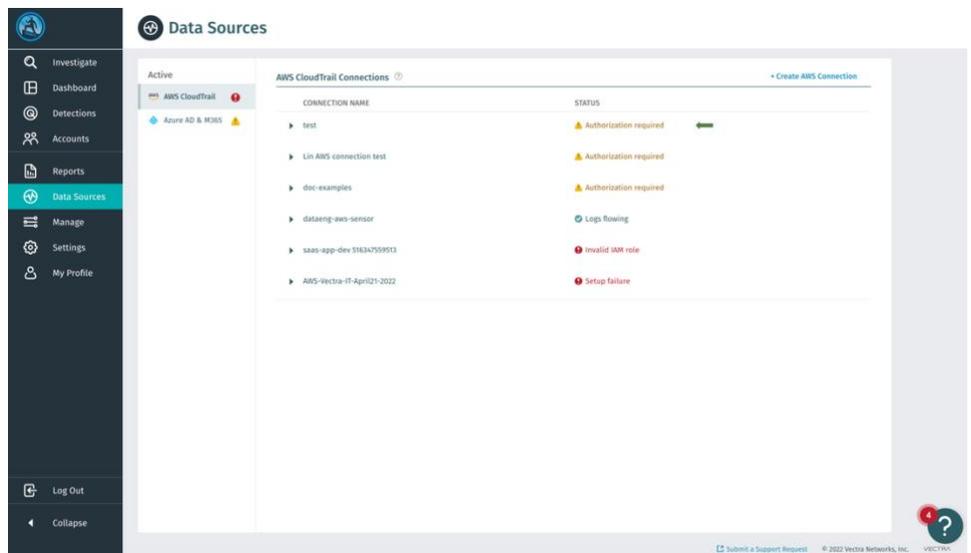
In rare occasions, an error message will be displayed, indicating something has gone wrong (and most likely, the query can't be triggered).



For the query to be executed, please check that logs are flowing successfully for the connector you're using.

To do that, click on *Data Sources* option in the left side panel.

Once logs are flowing, try to execute the query again.



## Related articles

<https://docs.aws.amazon.com/awscloudtrail/latest/userguide/cloudtrail-event-reference-record-contents.html>

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/graph/api/resources/signin?view=graph-rest-1.0>

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/graph/api/resources/directoryaudit?view=graph-rest-1.0>

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/office/office-365-management-api/office-365-management-activity-api-schema?view=o365-worldwide>