The Power of Free T-Shirts:
Building a Brand Around a Technology and Cultural Transformation
We have tried this before

- There is intense pressure to innovate
- We wanted to be technology enabled
- We tried to change one piece at a time, but everything is interconnected
Life is good!
Centralized control requires rules to scale
Over time, tools that helped us scale are now obstacles
CIA – The Simple Sabotage Field Manual

Designed to be used by agents in the field to hinder our WWII adversaries

- Give undeserved promotions
- Work slowly
- When possible, refer all matters to committees
What We Wanted
Innovation from anyone, anywhere, anytime at scale

The Answer
Decentralize—create empowered and collaborative teams
Visually, the answer

VALUES, BEHAVIORS, AND OUTCOMES
Customer perception vs. employee behaviors

- We want our consumers to know that Allstate’s products help protect them from life’s uncertainties.

- We want our employees to develop innovative software quickly to meet our business needs and customer expectations.
We started with a challenge

What do we call this new way we are developing software?

• Extreme programming
• TDD
• Paired programming
• Collaborative workspaces
• Self-service deployment
• Product mindset
Security as a product

Security becomes a critical component to cross-functional teams

• We must democratize security
• Security is part of the product team
• Security has input into backlogs
• Compliance becomes a set of automated tests
CompoZed Labs – It’s Alive!!

Originally we started with a number of ideas:

- IDEA Labs
- IDEAL Labs
- ADEPT Labs

We landed on CompoZed because:

- Composable micro-services
- The musical metaphor of everyone working together
- It was approved
We created a logo

- The two people facing each other represent a pair.
- The hexagon is from a bee hive metaphor that communicates that we wanted something stackable, scalable, and quick to build.
- This is the flag and symbol that represents our effort.
Corporate branding

- We wanted something that said “powered by Allstate” but unique
- When asked why include the capital “Z” we emphasized this was more representative of Silicon Valley
  - We wanted our brand to be centered on technology and run and organized like a start-up
First, we created t-shirts

...because PowerPoint does not change culture
We had to clarify the model
Labs

Where we work

• Casual dress
• Fun
• Collaboration
• Learning
• Engagement
• We have a gong!
Methodology
How we work

• Pairing always!
• TDD
• Continuous delivery
• Automate everything
• Deliver fast & get feedback
Platform
The tools we use

- Cloud Foundry
- Continuous integration
- Collaboration
- Workstation toolsets
Next, we built a website

- Constant communication has been critical to our success
- Of course, everything we do is also hosted on CF
We started building communities
We clarified values

- Respect your pair
- Respect your team
- Always try to get better
- User first
- Learn always
Introducing the CompoZed accelerator training course
CompoZed changes the game

The CompoZed brand changes how we recruit

• Leverage developers and community to recruit instead of just Talent Acquisition
• View our recruiting pipeline holistically instead of mid-level vs campus

CompoZed changes how we build new facilities

• Allstate has opened an innovation center in Chicago’s Merchandise Mart
Everything is cross-functional

Partnership between security and product is critical to success

- Partnership in recruiting
- Partnership in development
- Partnership in tooling
- Partnership in community building
- Partnership in technology and platforms
All encompassing change

We have had past transformation efforts

- Tech platforms
- Application design
- Customer focus
- Operational models
CompoZed is the first effort to change everything

- Legal
- Real estate
- Tech stack
- Skillsets
- Culture
- Architecture
- Customer focus
Lessons learned

• Iterate quickly
• Communicate always…storytelling is critical
• Constantly be inclusive
• Understand incentives
• Live the culture at all levels
Seems to be working

200 hours of Accelerator training under their belts and our latest #CompoZedLabs cohort graduate!

Matthew Curry @mattcurry · Jun 13
Come find your dream job! Welcome to the revolution. #acceleratorforvalue #ctsummit @CompozedLabs

Allstate is joining the Cloud Foundry Foundation, read more here

Allstate Joins Cloud Foundry Foundation as Gold Member | ... Cloud Foundry Allstate joins Cloud Foundry Foundation as Gold Member. Speed, simplicity and control to develop and deploy applications faster and easier.
cloudfoundry.org

Anouncing Deployadactyl! Deploys apps to multiple @cloudfoundry foundations. First OSS created at Allstate.

compozed/deployadactyl
Make deployment downtime extinct. Contribute to deployadactyl development by creating an account on GitHub.
github.com

Chi Le @CHi_Le · Sep 13
Day 2 @devopsdaysChi, Are you ready for an exciting opportunity? Stop by and say Hi. We are hiring for multiple locations. @CompozedLabs

Good morning @CompozedLabs Chicago! #Transformation
We are CompoZed

• We are a high tech startup within an 86-year-old insurance company

• We are changing everything!

• And, we have cool t-shirts
Thank you