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DRUPALCON SYDNEY
FEBRUARY 6-9 2013

Growing and Managing a Drupal Team in Your Corporation

Case Studies

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Date 7 February 2013

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About Suncorp

16000+ employees, top 25 ASX listed
The Suncorp Group of companies is unique in the Australian market
It is the only company to be in banking, insurance, wealth and life.
It is the largest 2nd tier bank and one of the largest insurer in Australia.
It has many famous brands like: Suncorp, AAMI, GIO, Apia, Bingle and Shannons

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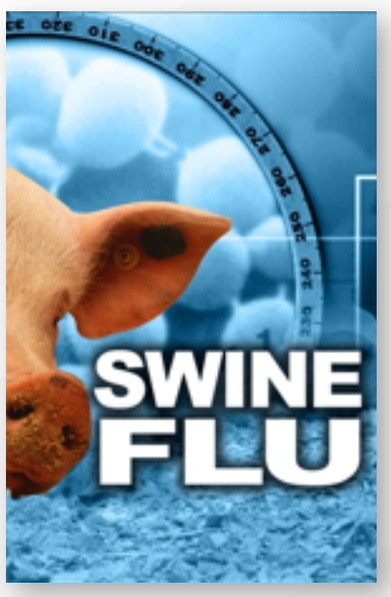
2009



2009 is an important year for many reasons:
- The Death of the King of Pop Michael Jackson (June 25th)
- Top movies "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" and "Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs"
- Barack Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize
- The Swine Flu (H1N1) was a world pandemic
- Australia's deadliest bushfire in Victoria, 2000 homes destroyed, 173 lives

AND... Suncorp had a transformation in corporate strategy
- It adopted Open Source and Agile Methodolgy throughout BT

SO...

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When met SUNCORP DRUPAL

- Suncorp met Drupal for the very first time in 2009

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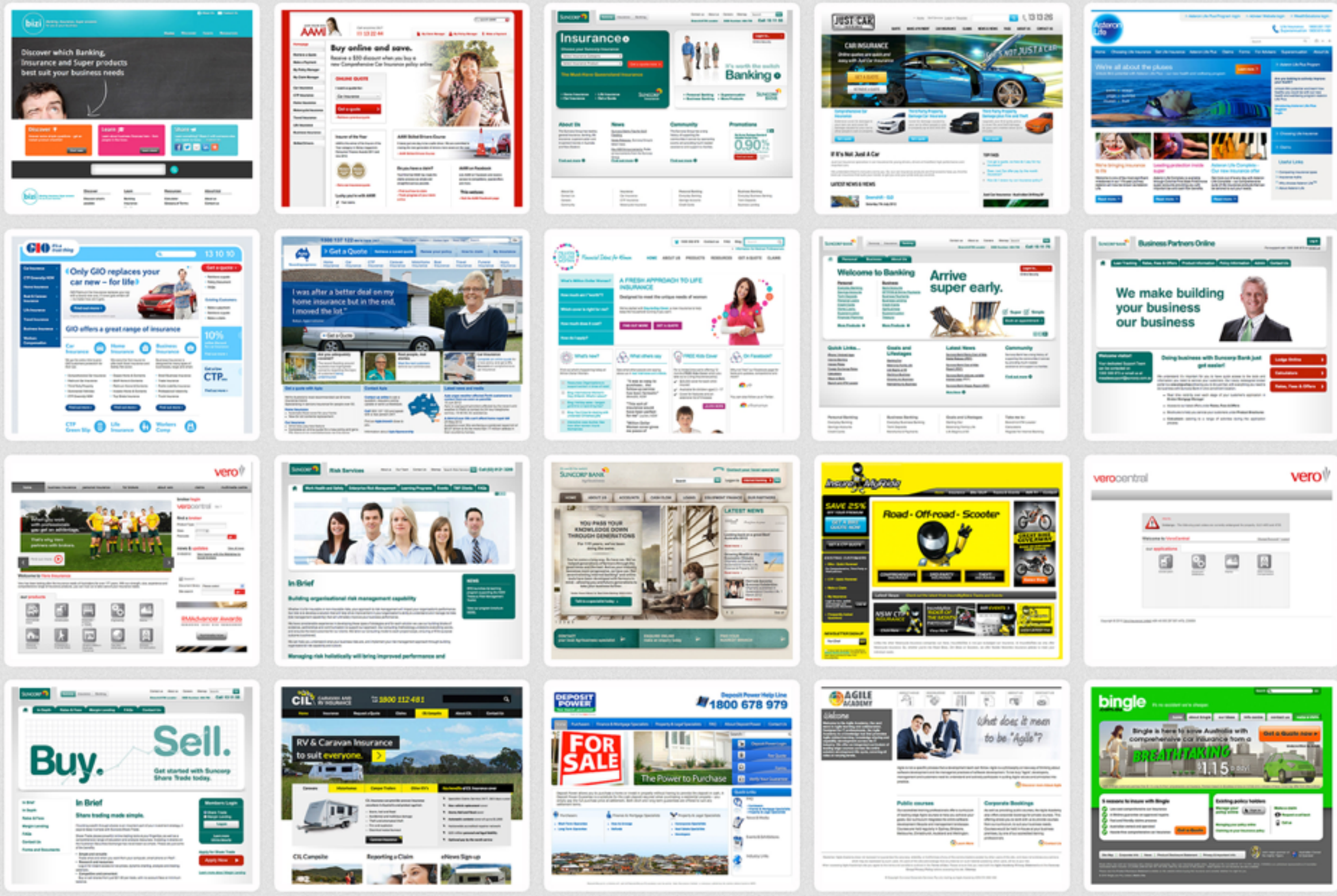

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- As a result of this union, today many of our sites are powered by Drupal

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Why Drupal?

BUT... Why Drupal?

To answer this question, I will need to take you back to a time before 2009...

- Suncorp attained new businesses through mergers and acquisitions throughout 2000
- Had many restructures
- New managers leading new teams
- Opportunities and uncertainty were common
- Large businesses like AAMI, GIO, Suncorp had large complex systems

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Microsoft® .NET

Java™

HTML & CSS

Countless Web systems

Countless web systems!
- Aptrix, .Net, Java, HTML, Coldfusion, PHP
- Internally hosted, externally hosted, personal servers and even laptops

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Online was not a profitable channel

- Hundreds of sites
- Non supportable
- High risk
- Un-secure
- Non-resilient
- Non-compliant
- Not searchable
- It was expensive to maintain these sites and they we not making any money

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WE NEEDED a flexible web content management system ***FAST!!***

- We needed a web content management system fast!

- Competitors were moving quickly
- Online technology accelerating
- Mobile adoption increasing
- Our businesses needed a way to respond quickly to market demands - independent of IT!

- Drupal - our saviour?

- Not quite yet...

- We evaluated many web content management systems

- Our strategy was a move towards OpenSource so we stayed away from large many large vendor solutions with the exception of IBM WCM

- OpenSource, we evaluated .dotNetNuke, LifeRay, WordPress, Joomla

- BUT...

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- The process of comparison was rigorous
- Built a proof of concept site
- Analysed roadmaps, support and future direction
- Compared to the other WCMs Drupal was:
    - had no locked in licencing
    - large active community
    - huge number of quality modules
    - mobile friendly
    - flexible
    - scalable
    - secure
    - growing quickly

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We needed support...

- Ultimate reason why Drupal was adopted in Suncorp:
- Developers wanted the platform after their analysis
- Businesses needed a platform - they didn't know which
- The managers adopted an Opensource strategy, agreed that Drupal could and would fulfill our need

- Not everyone was sure that Drupal was the right choice.
- Some main concerns were:
- Is Opensource secure enough for an enterprise platform?
- There were no vendor support.
- There were a lack of Drupal skills and developers in Australia.

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First Observation...

Do your research on Drupal, but have compelling reasons why you need it and ensure you have very strong support from your leaders for the journey ahead.

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Building a Drupal team

- We have chosen our web platform and it’s Drupal!

- Fantastic! We are back in business!

- Unfortunately - Not yet..

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Drupal journey begins

- ✗ Drupal roadmap
- ✗ Drupal infrastructure
- ✗ Drupal development or support skills

- We don’t have a Drupal roadmap
- We don’t have any Drupal Infrastructure
- We don’t have Drupal development or support skills

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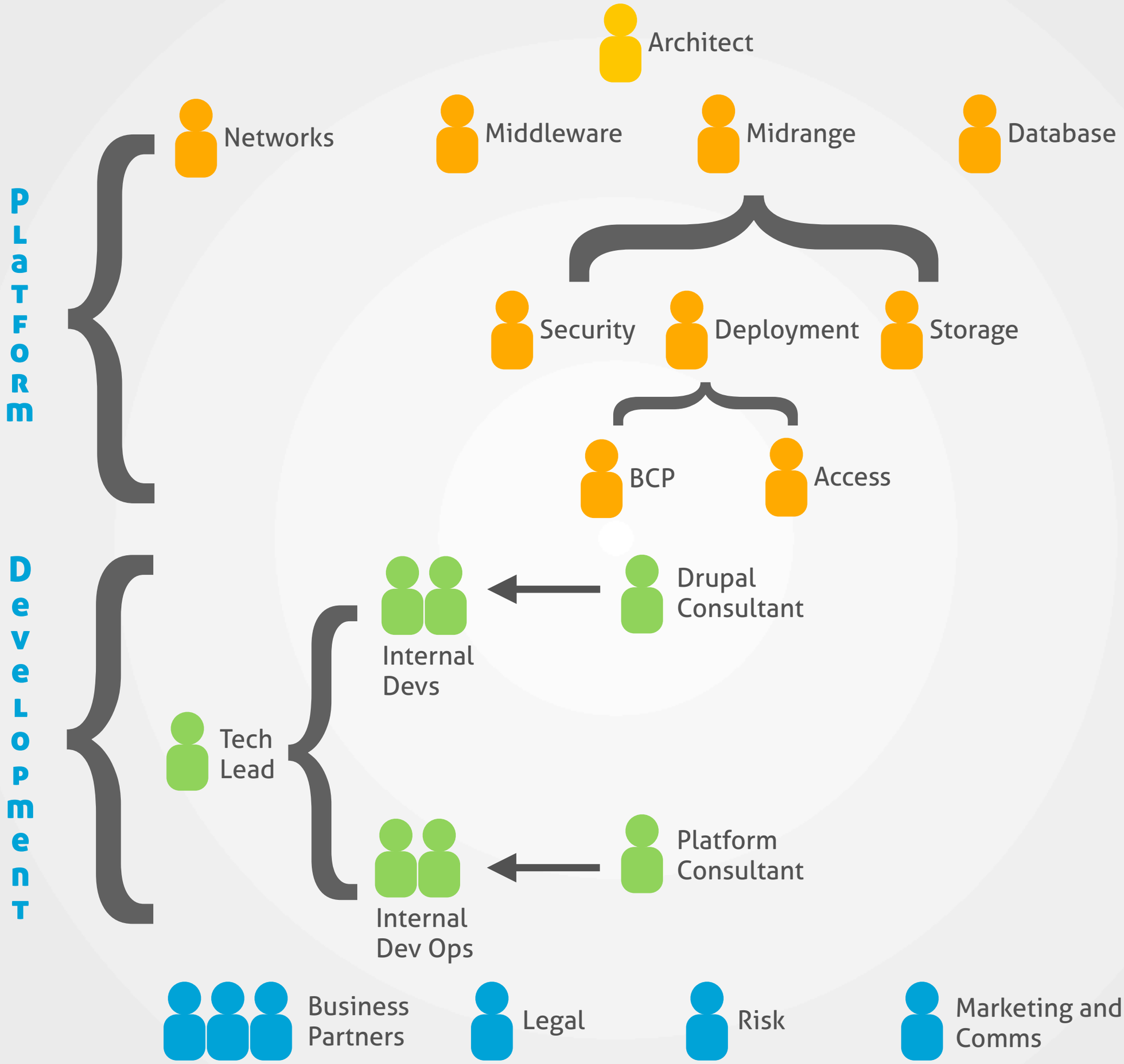
Passionate People!

Engaged
Enthusiastic
Enabled

- To overcome this barrier, we had to rely on our most valuable asset
- Our people
- You will want engaged, enthusiastic and enabled people on your team

- Notice I did not mention skills or knowledge
- We did not have any specific Drupal skills but there were plenty of willingness to learn



- The process of bringing Drupal into Suncorp was not very large or difficult
- Team consists of:
- For Platform - Solution Architect
- Networks, Middleware, Midrange, Database
- Security, Deployment, Storage, Access
- BCP
- For Development - Tech Lead
- 2 x Internal developers - support from Drupal consultant
- 2 x Internal DevOps - support from Drupal platform consultant
- For Business - Business partners
- Legal, Risk, Marketing and Comms

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Drupal platform

✗ Did not have continuous integration

✗ Could not edit on the Live server

✓ Host sites on multiple regions

- Live in 3 months from design to production ready
- This was very quick for an Enterprise like Suncorp
- Keep it simple
    - Didn’t have testing servers
    - Could not edit on the Live server
    - Use of versioning and code repository was not best practice
- It was enough to go live with all the essentials that we needed
- It allowed us to build websites, mobile sites and content repositories

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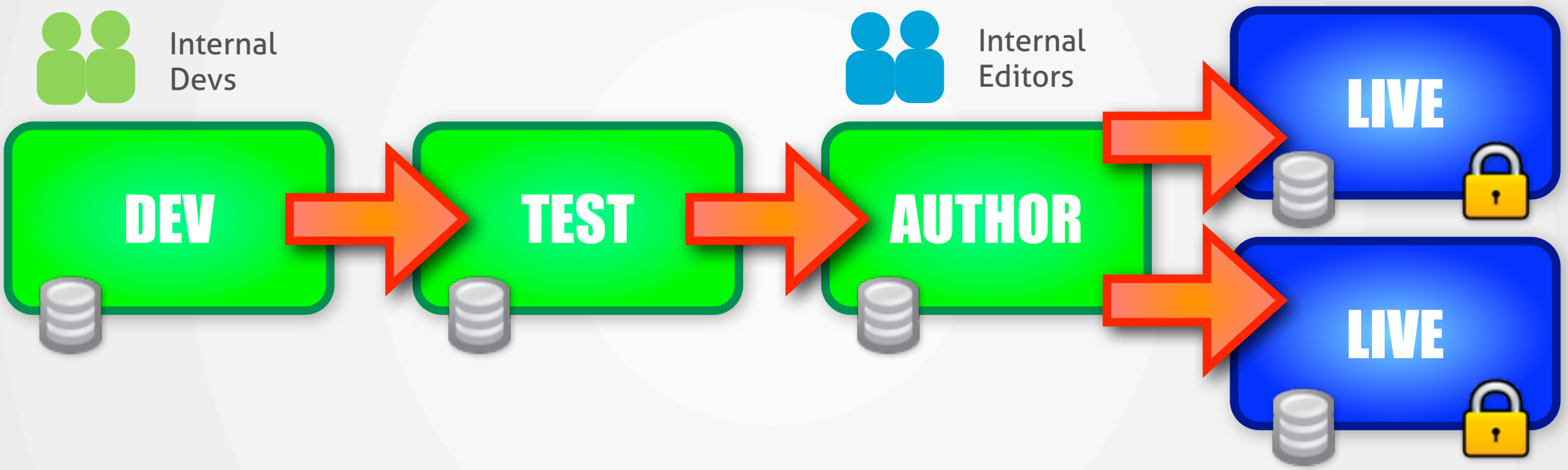

Multiple Regions

- Different regions
- Development, Testing, Authoring, Live
- Automated deployment

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First Drupal sites

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- Our first site was launched in June 2009
- Although very small and basic, it took us 3 months to build the site
- We relied heavily on consultants and Drupal experts who kept us on the right path
- Despite this, it was still a steep learning curve and we didn't leverage the power of Drupal too much
- From memory we only used 7 contributed modules for the whole site
- It was a start and gave us confidence that Drupal was the right platform

- Second site was also launched in June 2009 which provided us with a springboard to tackle our first big corporate site: Apia

- Apia, launched in September 2009 was our first big enterprise site
- It is still serving customers today - with the core code that was developed back in 2009

- Team consists of 2 devs, 2 devops, 1 tech lead, 2 consultants

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Challenges

* Steep learning curve
* Few large corporate sites in Australia
* Big risk, leap of faith

- We faced many significant challenges whilst building our site portfolio

- Steep learning curve
    - There were few books
    - Documentation on the web was incomplete for advanced features
    - There were no Drupal courses
    - It was hard finding Drupal developers

- Few large corporate sites in Australia
    - Difficult to connect and solve similar issues
    - It wasn’t only Drupal developers but the DevOps, System Administrators and Systems Engineers had to learn and use trial and error to find a solution

- We took some big risks and had a leap of faith
    - This paid huge dividends and the team grew!

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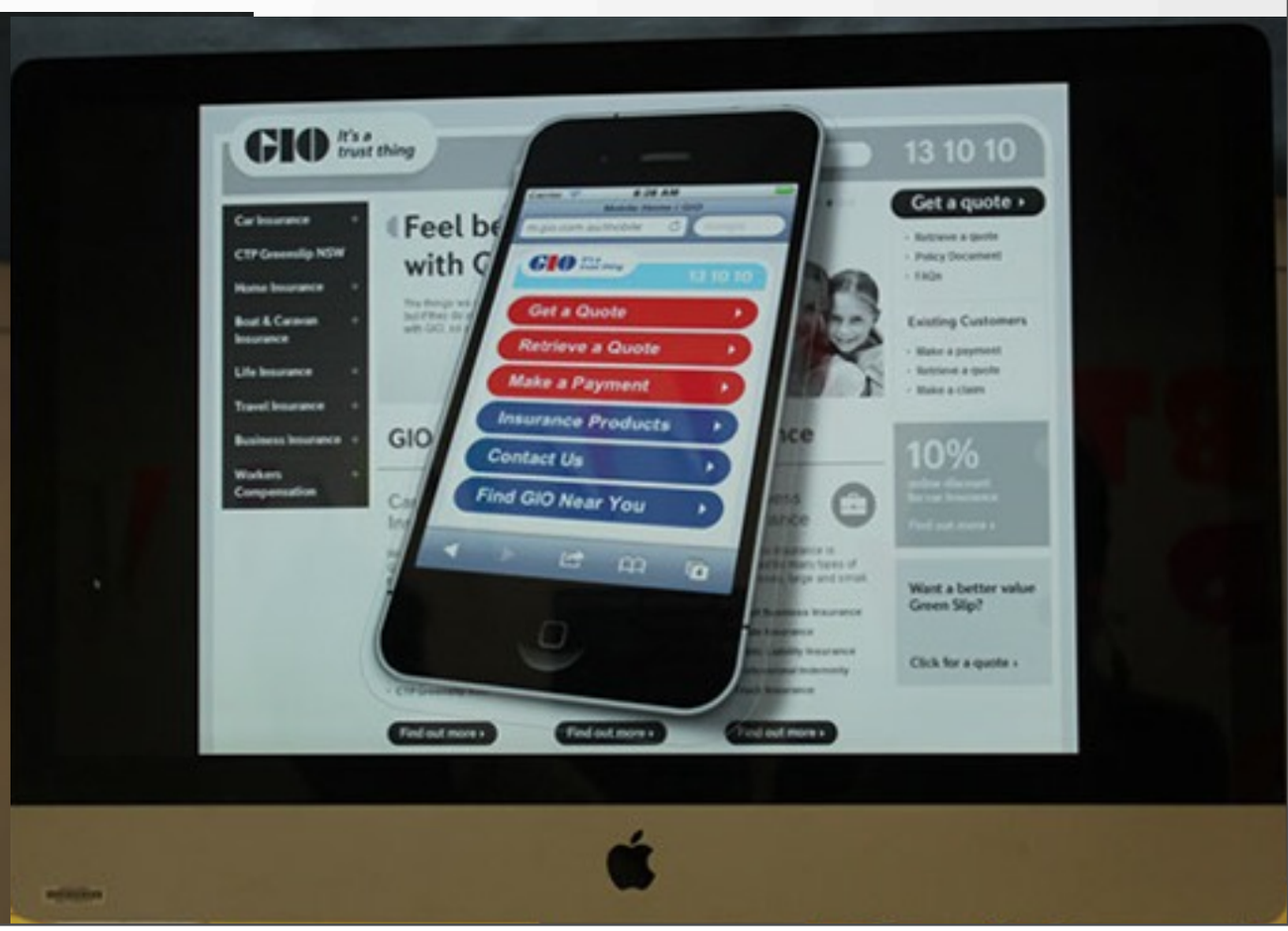
One small site for Drupal. One GIANT leap for Suncorp.



- So from humble beginnings, starting with a small site in 2009
- We built a simple robust platform and overcome early challenges
- We have business confidence and is in a great position to grow

It is truly
  - One small site for Drupal, one giant leap for Suncorp

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Second Observation

Keep the platform simple, launch quickly, use the community, consultants and experts to get your first win to enable you to grow.

Second Observation

Keep the platform simple, launch quickly, use the community, consultants and experts to get your first win

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Growing the team

Once we had our first few sites, it was only a matter of time that the team will grow...

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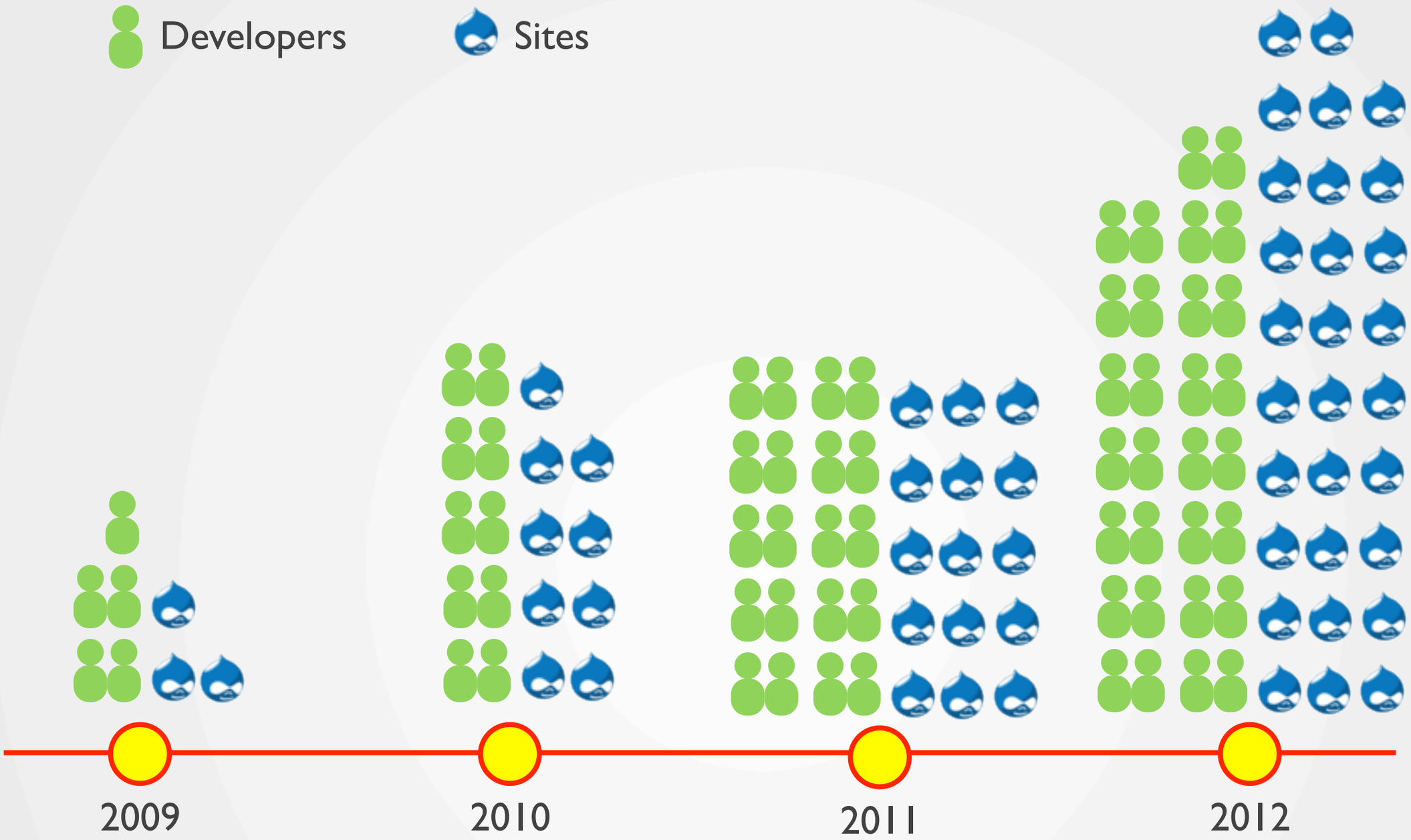
Outstanding success

- ✓ Business demand was huge
- ✓ Fast team growth
- ✓ Distributed teams

- Once we had our first few sites launched
    - We demonstrated to the executives and business leaders our new capabilities
    - Business demand exploded, first from our early adopters - Personal Insurance then Bank, Commercial Business, Life and NZ
    - Now the Drupal platform drives the Group’s websites, content repositories and mobile web



Fast team growth

- The team grew very quickly
- 2009: 5 devs, 3 sites launched
- 2012: 30 devs, 29 sites launched including mobile and Facebook

Distributed teams

- The location of the team expanded to meet customer locations
    - Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane
    - Chengdu in China are where our partners are located

Collaboration

- Collaboration is usually over Skype, video-conference, LyncTV
- We usually have the live video link on for the duration of the day
- The setup is inexpensive with a TV screen, netbook and internet connection

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Attracting Talent

* Rotations and cross train from the Group
* Pure Drupal developers are rare
* Training and support structure

- In growing the team, we needed to source people from all over the Group
    - Young team with many high calibre graduates from the Graduate Program
    - Internal rotation of staff - many opportunities for people to move
    - Access to our on-shore and off-shore partners
    - We also use interns, students/CEED

- Pure Drupal developers are rare
    - I should qualify that with the word ‘corporate’
    - Pure Corporate Drupal developers are rare
    - It is much easier to source corporate java, .Net and PHP developers
    - We grow and nurture our people into pure corporate Drupal developers

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Training and Support

70%

20%

10%

Developers trained and supported
- Sometimes they start with various skills already like java or .Net. Some have no skills like interns or graduates.

Training Resources (10%)
Videos from Lullabot, books for our internal training library, official courses

Buddy System (20%)
All new developers are given a buddy and paired up until they are confident. This brings a developer up to speed in about 2 weeks.

Real Work (70%)
New developer starts real work with full support from second week. By fourth they are confident enough to build their own sites

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Remaining Competitive

* Focus on core competencies
* Continual monitoring of the market
* Showcasing to other corporations

- Focus on core competencies
    - Outsource anything that is not core
    - Initially the team did not have design or UX skills
    - All the design and UX was outsourced and we focused on being fast and efficient at building sites
    - Link to third party providers and integrate them into our sites

- Continual monitoring of the market
    - Trying out new ideas
    - Implementing at least two new features into every new site

- Showcasing to corporates in other industries

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Campaigns

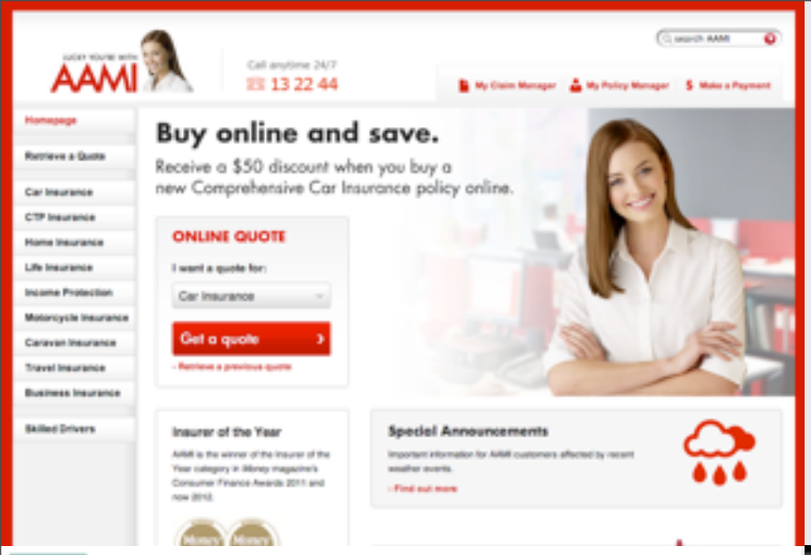
Mobile

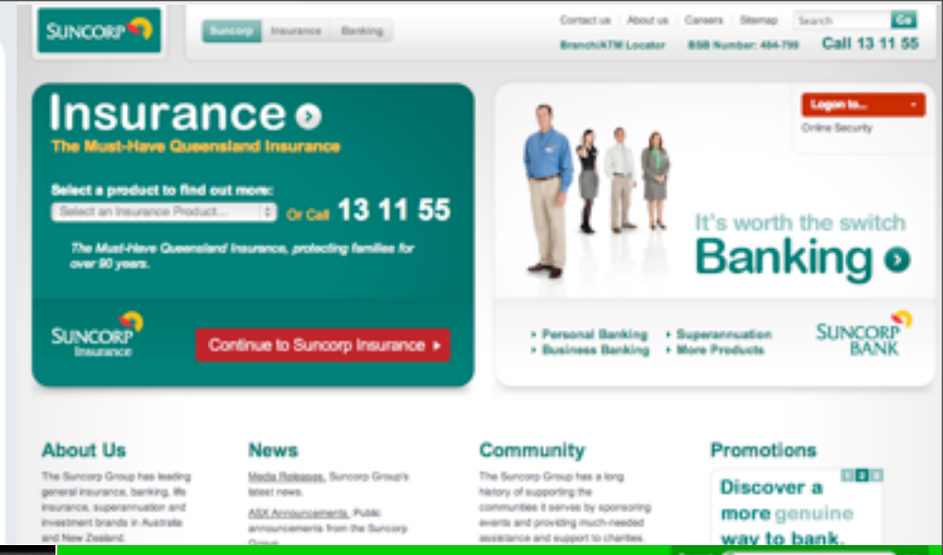
Sites

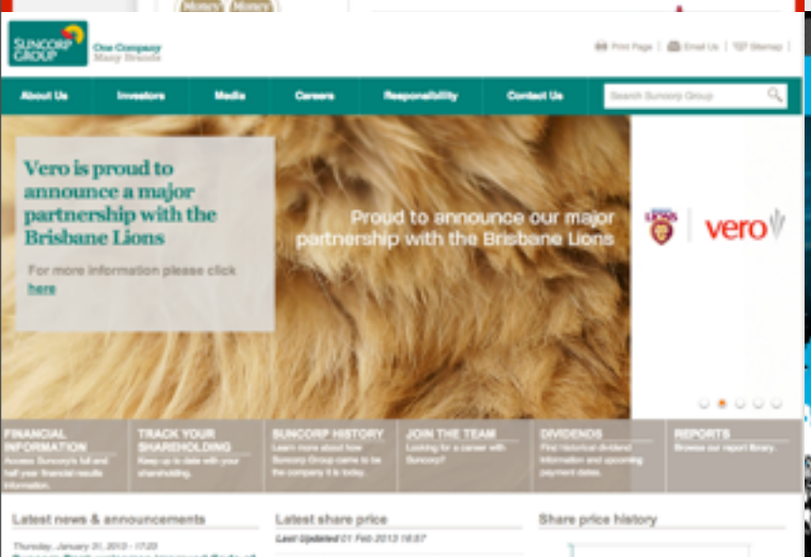
Content Repositories

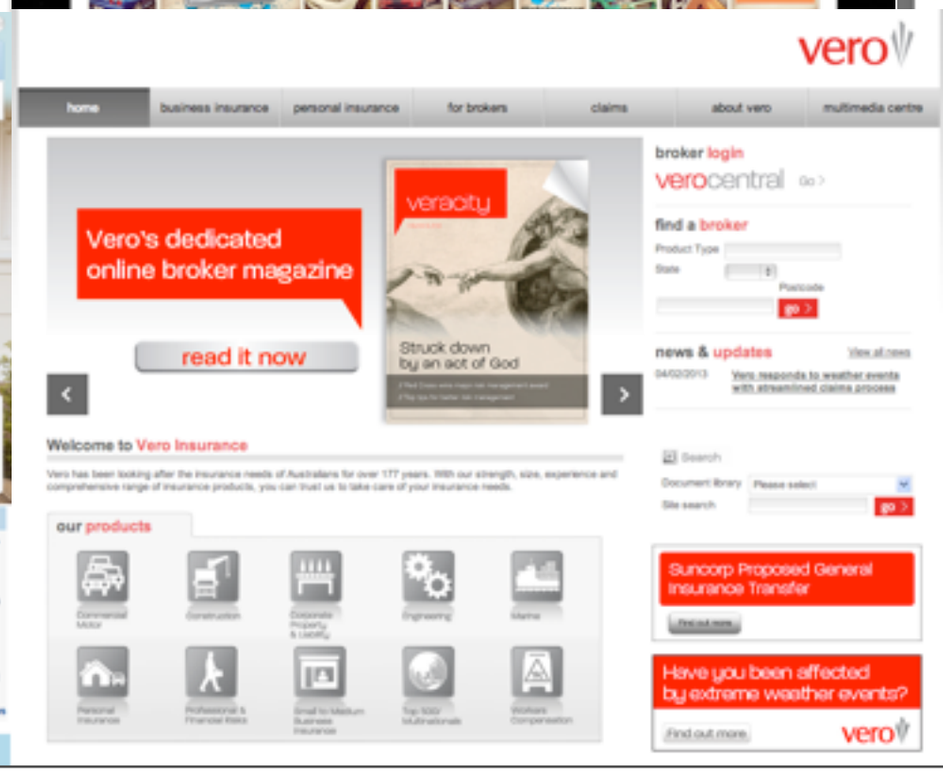
Core competencies

- Our core competency is to build and support
    - Sites
    - Mobile web
    - Campaigns
    - Content repositories









Sites - 20 million page views per month

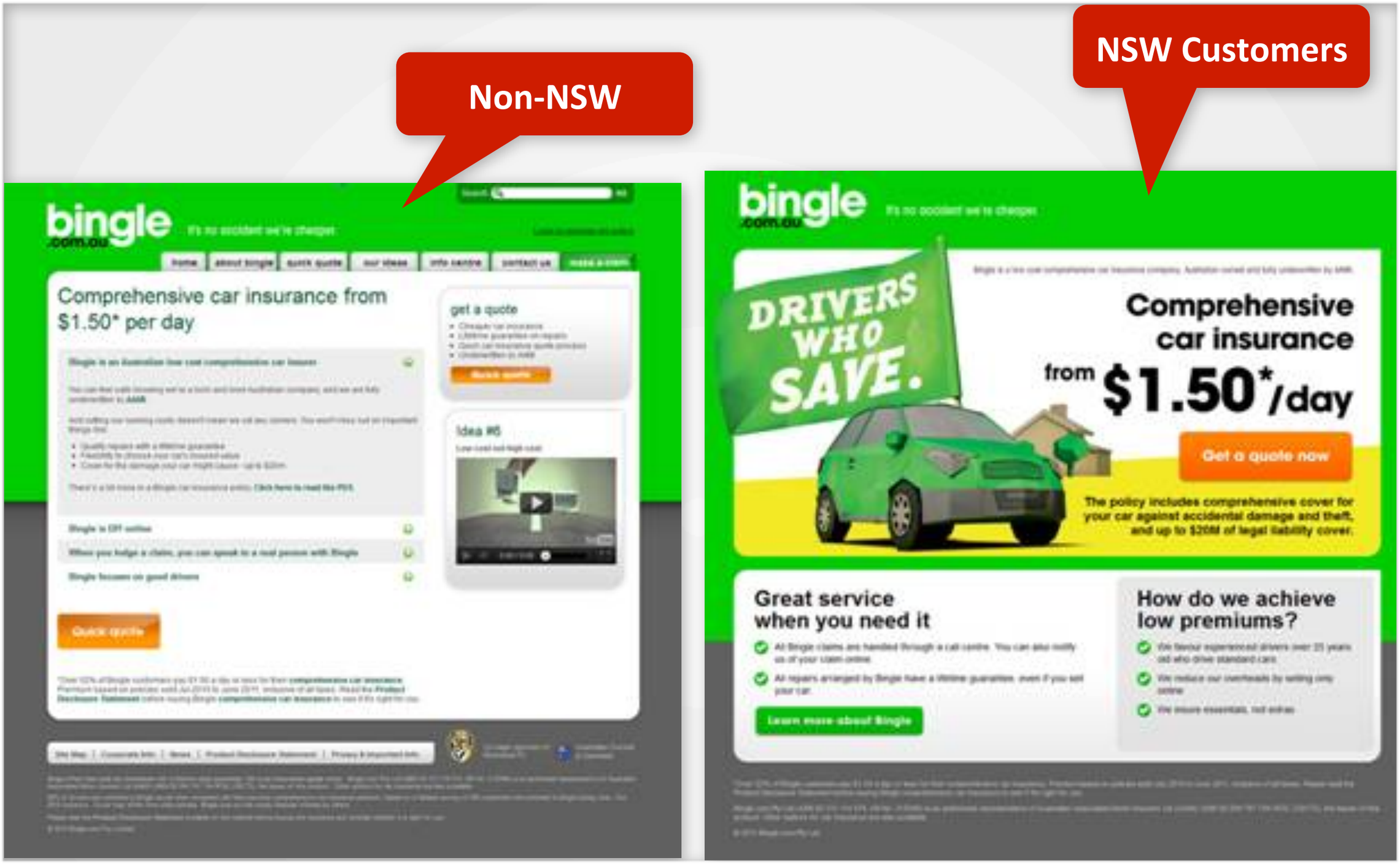
Building Mobile Sites

Building Campaign Pages

- We also do other things
    - Consultancy - gamification, front-end development, web architecture
    - UX/XD
    - Design
    - Native apps

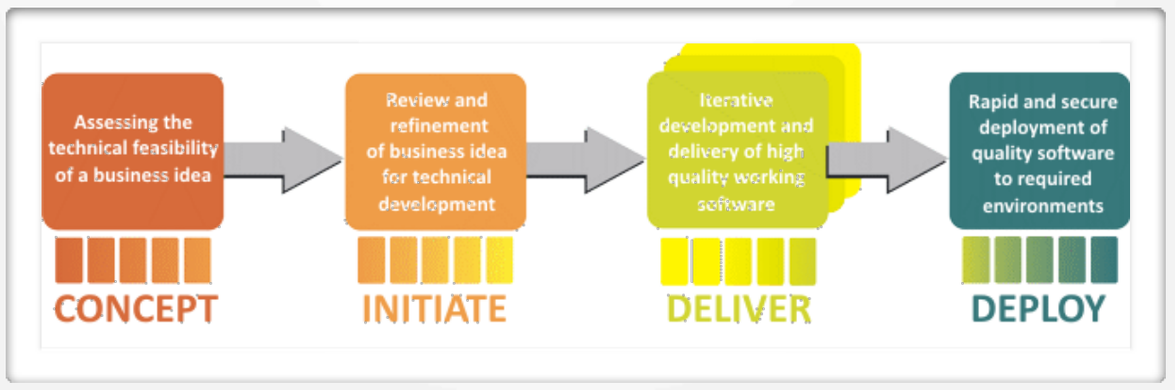
UX/XD

- Heatmaps integrated into the site with the use of Clicktale



A/B Testing

- Using test & target from Adobe



Agile way of working

- Our development methodology is Agile
  - Adopted as a methodology in Suncorp at the same time Drupal was introduced
  - By the end of 2009, more than 3000 people have been trained in Agile practices
  - It is more than just a methodology but is a way of working at Suncorp
  - Underpinning the Agile process are the values - Trust, innovation, accountability, courage, honesty
  - Our businesses also embraces Agile while allows for very close collaboration
  - For every project we go through the different phases - Concept, Initiate, Deliver and Deploy
  - During the delivery phase, we iterate and have daily standups, elaboration, showcases & retrospectives

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Agile - Suncorp Style!

- Agile practices at Suncorp is now very mature
    - Iterative web development is something we are comfortable with
    - We also use Agile for BAU tasks
    - Practices used on projects are replicated for BAU
    - Physical walls and online tools - Jira & Confluence
    - Distributed Agile due teams in other cities and countries

Lean Startup in the mix!

- Recently - applying the Lean Startup principles for some sites
    - Launch quickly
    - Test theories
    - Fail fast
    - Apply learnings
    - Iterate

- FedEx & ShipIt days
    - Testing of ideas quickly

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Acquia

Community

Consultants

In-house Specialists

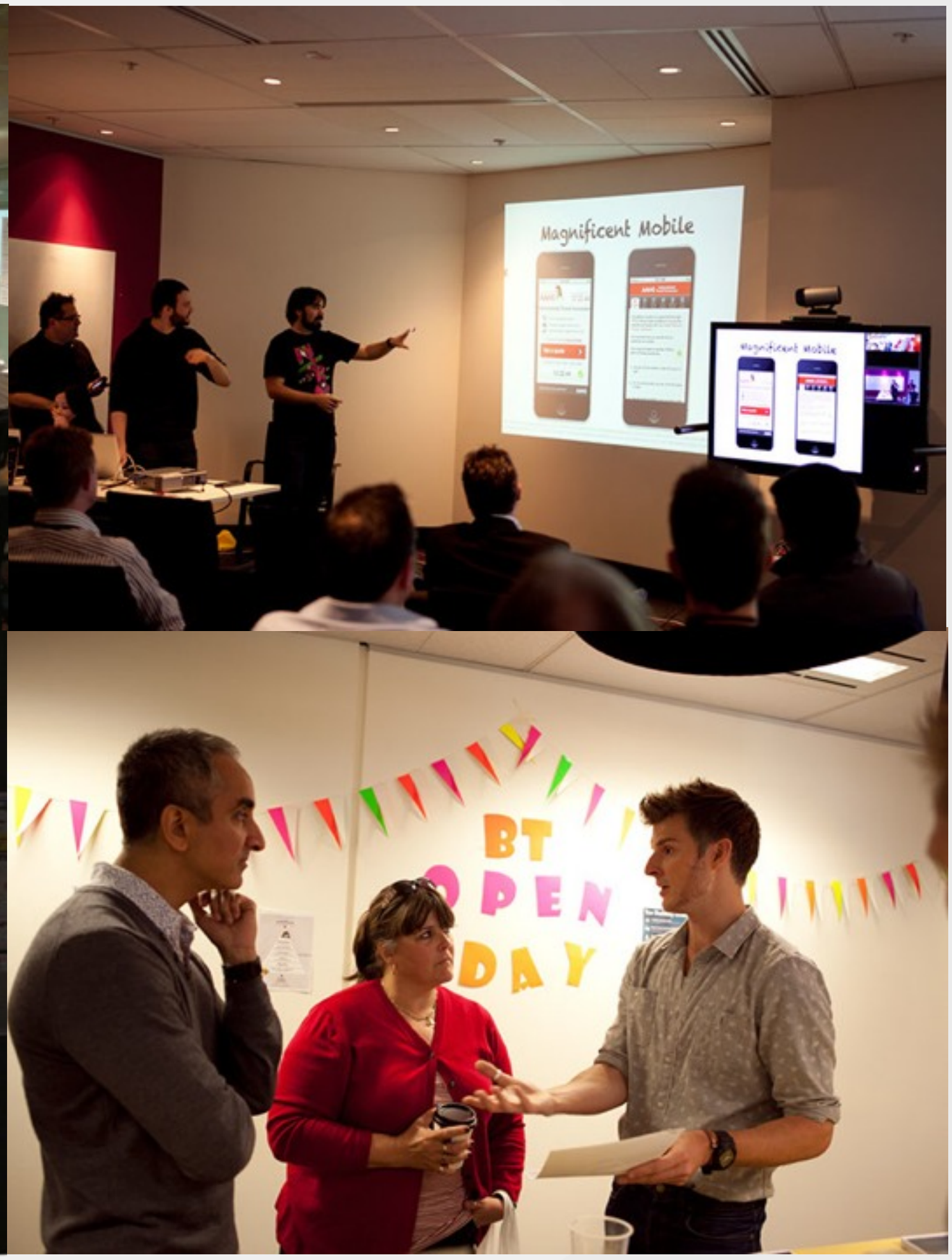
Support Structure

- Not just Drupal developers, in-house specialists provide us with support to keep the platform running
    - Iteration managers
    - Delivery leads
    - Business analysts
    - UX/XD/Designers
    - Content editors
    - Systems engineers and administrators
    - Network engineers
    - Database administrators
    - Security

- Consultants and partners
    - uplift and building of capabilities
    - flexing for peak periods

- Acquia - Drupal corporate support and tools

- Wider community - continual learning and sharing



- Keep up interest, to remain relevant
- Continuously sharing and learning at any opportunity
    - use events like BT Open Day and Geekfest

- Promote the team, promote their work
- Remain competitive

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Final Observation

The team will grow so you will need a training and support structure, focus on your core competency, adopt a sound methodology and remain competitive.

Final observation

Your team will grow so focus on your core competency, adopt a sound methodology and remain competitive

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THANK YOU

Growing and Managing a Drupal Team in Your Corporation

Chuong Vu | 7 February 2013

http://sydney2013.drupal.org/suncorp-group-growing-and-managing-drupal-team-your-corporation