

Salvatore Poliandro III

O-to-1 Builder and Engineering Leader
Startup Infrastructure to Global Scale

New York City Metropolitan Area
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Builder first, engineering leader second. Joined Braze in 2015 as the first Operations/Infrastructure hire when the production footprint was still in the single digits, then helped evolve the platform to thousands of systems and a worldwide operating model. Progressed from hands-on engineering to vice president by repeatedly building the next thing the company needed: infrastructure foundations, production operations, SRE, Security, Compliance, IT, global Platform Engineering, Developer Experience, and now AI-driven engineering workflows.

The common thread across every role is O-to-1 execution. Comfortable writing code, designing systems, debugging production, developing leaders, meeting with customers, and turning an undefined problem into a durable capability.

SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

O-to-1 Systems and Organizations / Startup-to-Scale Infrastructure / Platform Engineering / Cloud and Kubernetes / Developer Experience / SRE and Reliability / Security, Compliance, and IT / AI Agents and Agentic Coding / Customer-Facing Technical Leadership / Global Team Building

SELECTED BUILDER STORY

- First Operations/Infrastructure hire at Braze; progressed through four roles into global Platform and Infrastructure leadership.
- Built or established functions, then created leadership and ownership structures so they could scale beyond a single person.
- Personally built infrastructure automation, internal tools, customer-facing integrations, mobile capabilities, hosted platforms, and production services across multiple stages of the career.
- Maintained a hands-on operating style even as scope expanded to global teams and company-wide technical functions.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Braze, Inc.

August 2015 - Present

New York City, NY

Vice President, DevOps Engineering

Platform Engineering and Infrastructure / July 2022 - Present

- Lead the worldwide organization responsible for infrastructure and platform engineering across AMER, EMEA, and APAC, including the foundations supporting both Braze and Decisioning Studio.
- Own the systems product engineering builds and operates on: cloud and Kubernetes platforms, runtime foundations, deployment workflows, observability, reliability, production operations, and developer tooling.
- Lead the effort to make AI a practical part of engineering execution: build internal agent skills, define tool-access and review guardrails, and develop production services using agent-assisted and agent-led workflows.
- Stay close to architecture and implementation, using direct building and experimentation to validate ideas before turning them into standards or organizational programs.
- Develop leaders and teams that can own large technical domains while preserving the builder mindset that allowed the company to move quickly at the beginning.

Senior Director, DevOps Engineering

August 2020 - July 2022

- Turned a broad operations organization into a focused, global Infrastructure, Platform Engineering, and Developer Experience organization.
- Scaled the team and management structure across AMER, EMEA, and APAC while clarifying interfaces with product engineering and customer-facing functions.
- Spun Security/Compliance and IT into dedicated organizations under their own directors after building and carrying those functions through earlier stages of company growth.
- Concentrated the organization on platform scale, production quality, customer quality of service, and repeatable engineering paths rather than hero-driven operations.
- Built paved roads and automation that moved operational knowledge into systems and made common engineering work safer and easier to execute.

Director, DevOps and Security

August 2017 - July 2020

- Owned everything technical outside product application development: Infrastructure, DevOps, SRE, Security, Compliance, IT, and the customer-facing operational work required to run and sell the platform.
- Built the initial operating foundations for Security, global IT, and product-side SRE, then prepared those capabilities to become independent organizations as the company matured.
- Set production reliability, incident response, access, audit, and operational practices while still participating directly in difficult technical problems.
- Met with customers during pre-sales and post-sales to understand requirements, work through integrations, answer security and architecture questions, and resolve escalations.
- Served as the connective layer between product engineering, customers, company operations, and the infrastructure underneath the product.

Senior Engineer, DevOps

August 2015 - July 2017

- Joined as the first Operations/Infrastructure engineer and built the early cloud, automation, deployment, production support, and developer-tooling foundations.
- Helped take the production environment from a single-digit-server startup footprint toward the distributed platform and operational model required for continued growth.
- Operated as the person who took ambiguous infrastructure and production problems from first diagnosis through working implementation.

Keep

November 2013 - July 2015

Operations Lead

- Served as the company's one-person operations and infrastructure function, owning cloud services managed through Chef, an on-premises datacenter installation for machine-learning workloads, and the DevOps, IT, security, and developer-experience work needed across the company.
- Designed and operated a global private VPN/proxy network that allowed concierge shoppers to digitally geo-locate to the appropriate region when shopping for users.
- Built a Chrome extension that detected the required location and automatically selected and configured the correct VPN/proxy path.
- Built Keep's first iPhone 'Keep It' integration, extending a previously desktop/browser-only product workflow into the iOS application.
- Worked wherever the business needed leverage, including operations, backend services, networking, cloud, datacenter systems, Python, and iOS development.

FortressITX

February 2007 - May 2013

Clifton, NJ

Chief Technology Officer and Datacenter Operations Lead

August 2008 - May 2013

- Progressed from senior systems operations into CTO responsibility for technology direction, production architecture, datacenter infrastructure, and the worldwide network supporting the business.
- Designed and launched SolarSystem, a highly redundant Xen-based cloud platform built from the ground up, including architecture, hardware, networking, virtualization, pricing inputs, support procedures, and ongoing platform improvement.
- Built Firefly, an elastic hosted platform using XenServer APIs to scale media-rich web workloads up and down with demand.
- Deployed distributed monitoring for customer and infrastructure systems and continued to operate the physical datacenter layer beneath the hosted platforms.

Lead Senior Unix Administrator

February 2007 - August 2008

- Supported more than 3,000 Linux servers and designed standalone, clustered, load-balanced, and highly available environments for a wide range of customers.
- Built FIMS, an inventory, hardware lifecycle, and server-provisioning platform using PHP, MySQL, barcode workflows, and Kickstart automation.
- Worked across hardware, networking, Linux, customer support, virtualization, and datacenter facilities including power and cooling.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

IT Manager, Pediatric Urology Associates

2005 - 2007

Owned IT decisions, budgets, vendors, voice/data infrastructure, servers, phone systems, software, and WAN/VPN connectivity for four primary offices and ten satellite locations.

Founder, CoalitionLAN / CaffeineGames

1998 - 2006

Built low-latency event networks, hosted gaming and internet services for worldwide customers, and developed a custom billing application.

Technology Consultant, Office of the New York State Attorney General

2004 - 2005

Supported a statewide Windows XP deployment across more than 25 locations and held the required security clearance.

Evening Technology Support, The Culinary Institute of America

2001 - 2004

Supported campus networks, servers, endpoints, backup/restore, security checks, antivirus, and help-desk operations.

Data Processing / Systems Administrator, Wappingers Central School District

1999

Administered Novell servers, installed network infrastructure and endpoints, and provided systems and user support.