**Explore your data lake with Synapse Serverless Pools**

Many organizations are consolidating all their informational assets into data lake. This is a great idea since all the data is located in one place, both structured and unstructured data can be stored, and many different types of users can access the data.

Traditionally, a SPARK cluster is used to manipulate the data stored in the lake via quality zones. This data engineering batch process can be scheduled at night. The more powerful the SPARK cluster is, the more costly is the AZURE bill. Since most data is written once and read many times, how can we reduce the cost of our companies read activities?

Azure Synapse Serverless SQL pools allows the architect to replace the interactive SPARK cluster with a lower cost service. The OPENROWSET and EXTERNAL TABLE commands have been the traditional way to use POLYBASE to read schema on demand. However, this syntax can be time consuming to setup. Recently, Microsoft has released the LAKE DATABASE that abstracts this underlying mechanism via the Azure Portal.

To recap, having high powered SPARK clusters waiting to satisfy read operations against the data lake can be costly. A better alternative is to use Azure Synapse Serverless SQL pools that only charge you when you run queries. Today we will explore the different ways to setup a Serverless SQL pool.