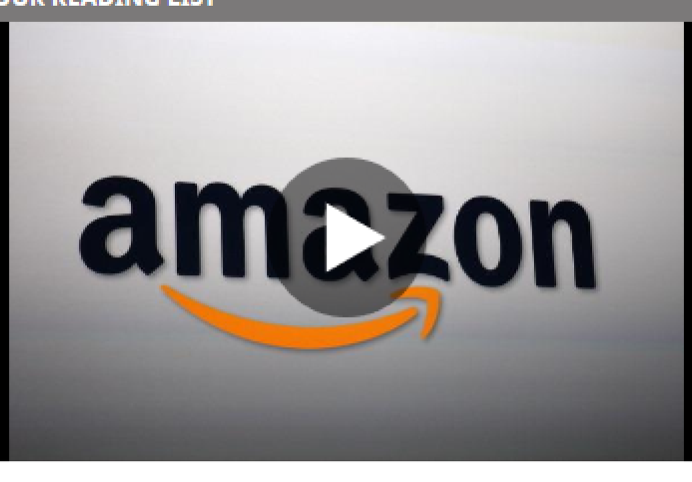



Why Enterprises Should Care About Serverless Computing


Grads of Life *Voice:*
Aspen Institute Summit Offers New Solutions For Expanding Opportunity


PODCAST: How Streaming Is Changing The Game Of Making Money In Sports

+109k views in the last 24 hours

OCT 12, 2016 @ 08:48 AM 4,055

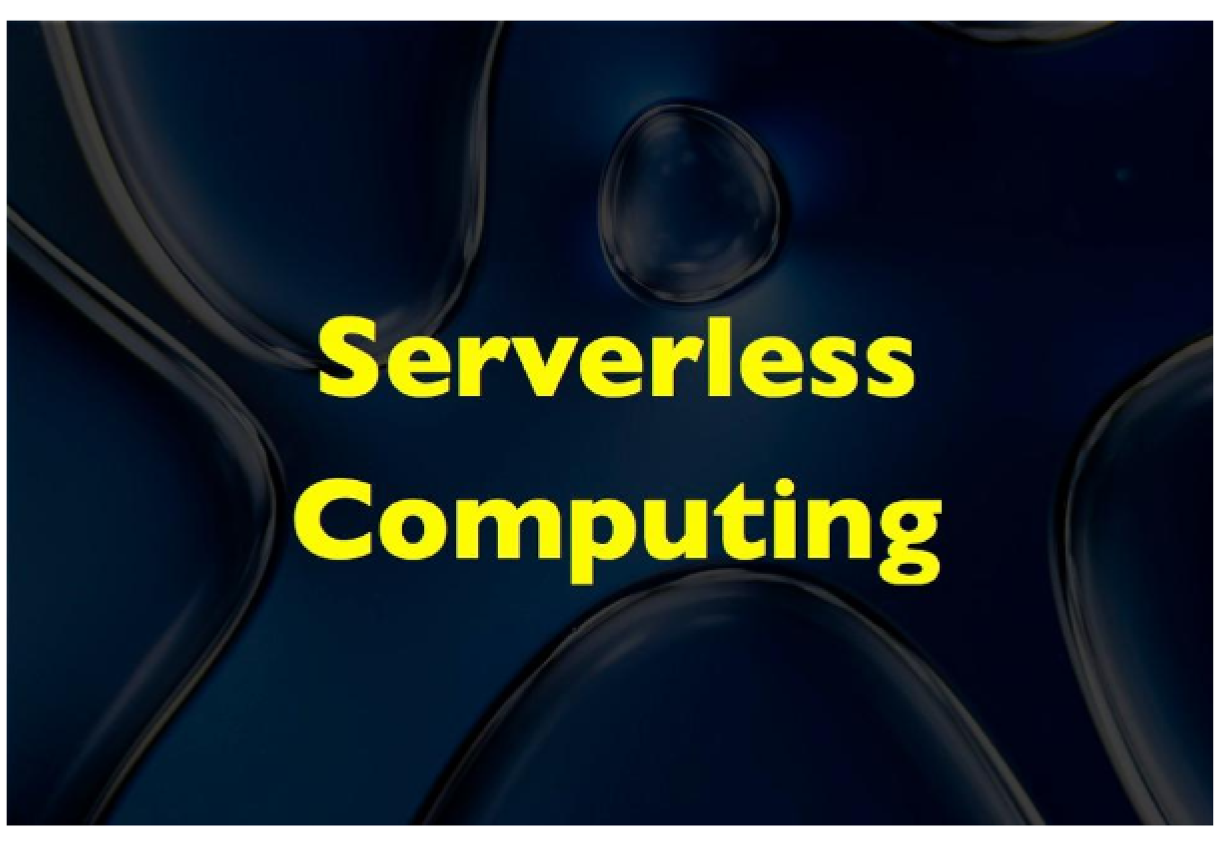
Why Enterprises Should Care About Serverless Computing


Janakiram MSV, CONTRIBUTOR
I cover Cloud Computing, Machine Learning, and Internet of Things FULL BIO
Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

TWEET THIS

Serverless computing is to infrastructure what Visual Basic has been to data.

Enterprises have the tendency to adopt a technology only after it moves to its third major version. CXOs are not for embracing cutting-edge technologies before they became stable and proven to be reliable to run mission critical applications. Thanks to the cloud, that trend is changing fast. Enterprises are far more open to using the latest and greatest services introduced by cloud providers.



Cloud vendors are constantly adding new services to deliver more value to customers. Once they start consuming the essential building block services such as compute, storage, and networking, the next step is to utilize other services such as logging, monitoring, auditing, and security. Depending on the scale and the kind of workload that they run, these large organizations are influencing the cloud vendors in improvising their offerings.

One such trend that is picking up momentum is serverless computing – a framework to trigger code in response to a set of pre-defined events. Large companies such as The Seattle Times, Major League Baseball, and Coca-Cola are tapping into the power of serverless to achieve the required scale without the overhead of running and managing the fleet of servers.

Serverless computing is to infrastructure what Visual Basic has been to data. Back in the 90s, Microsoft has democratized client/server computing with Visual Basic. Complex applications that demanded advanced skills in C++ could be quickly built in Visual Basic using the rapid application development tools. Developers never had to learn the internals of Microsoft Windows operating system to create user-friendly, data-driven, GUI applications. Similar to VB, serverless computing is putting the scale, ease of development, and deployment in the hands of developers. Like VB, serverless computing is event-driven, where tiny code snippets get invoked in response to events such as adding a new row to the database or launching a new server in the cloud. The best thing about serverless computing is that the developers need not rely on ops to deploy their code. They will be able to quickly run and test the code in the cloud without going through the traditional workflow.

Since the unit of deployment in serverless computing is an autonomous function, the platform is also called as Function as a Service (FaaS). Major cloud platforms such as AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, and IBM Bluemix are offering serverless computing. Launched two years ago, AWS Lambda must be credited for defining this new product category. Amazon has been regularly adding new languages and support for additional events to Lambda.

Serverless, Inc. is an Oakland-based startup that's riding the wave of this new trend. It created an open-source application framework for building the web, mobile, and IoT applications on event-driven compute services like AWS Lambda. The company just secured a funding of $3 million, which indicates the confidence of investors in the emerging area of serverless computing. It also announced the availability of version 1.0 of the framework, which has been in beta till now.

Serverless, Inc. is one of the first companies to create a platform-agnostic framework to develop and deploy functions in major environments such as AWS Lambda, Azure Functions, Google Cloud Functions, and IBM OpenWhisk. Its Github repository has garnered over 10,000 stars indicating the keen interest in the open source community. The company aims at simplifying the development and testing of serverless applications through frameworks and tools.

The auto-scaling nature of the framework and AWS Lambda have attracted a variety of use-cases including, data-processing pipelines that process billions of events. Contemporary applications that rely on real-time streaming and sensor data aggregation can take advantage of this framework.

Patrick Brandt, Solutions Architect at The Coca-Cola Company claims that the Serverless Framework is a core component of The Coca-Cola Company's initiative to reduce IT operational costs and deploy services faster.

Enterprise customers with significant investments in AWS and Azure are gearing up to use serverless computing. From audit trails to log analysis to image processing, customers are turning to this technology.

If your company is already consuming cloud services, it is time to consider serverless computing.

Janakiram MSV is an analyst, advisor, and architect. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Comment on this story

SHARE:

Print Send Us Feedback Report Corrections Reprints & Permissions

RELATED TOPICS

1. Cloud Computing Vendors
2. Cloud Computing Technologies
3. Cloud Computing Software
4. Understanding Cloud Computing
5. Best Cloud Service Providers
6. CIO Cloud Computing