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Cloud computing interview series: Meet Jeff Keyes, Director of Product Marketing at Plutora

A tour of cloud computing: "Serverless is the natural evolution of microservices"

⊙ September 18, 2018   👤 Gabriela Motroc

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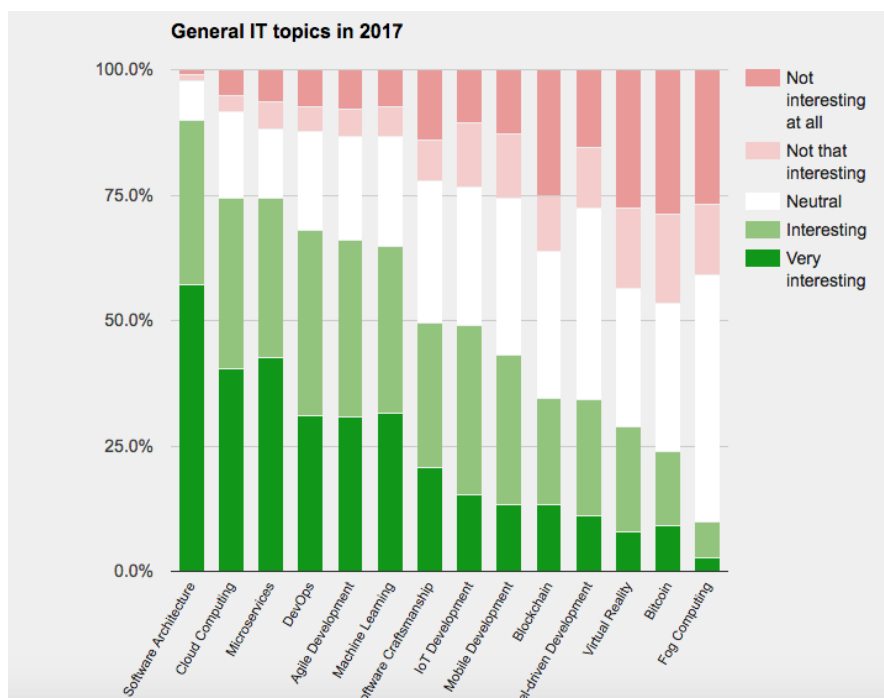
Cloud computing is worth exploring; this is what we think but of course, we're no experts. Therefore, we decided to invite 12 experts to weigh in on the present and future of cloud computing. Our next guest is now Jeff Keyes, Director of Product Marketing at Plutora.

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Cloud computing is worth exploring

In last year's *JAXenter Technology Trends Survey (https://jaxenter.com/technology-trends-2017-these-are-the-most-popular-cloud-platforms-132384.html)*, we asked readers about their interest in different technologies and, according to the results, the cloud was a very relevant topic for developers. As you can see in the figure below, cloud computing was the runner-up in the "General IT topics" section, after software architecture.

JAXenter Technology Trends Survey 2017: Results

If you want to read more about respondents' favorite and least favorite cloud platforms, have a look at the results (https://jaxenter.com/technology-trends-2017-these-are-the-most-popular-cloud-platforms-132384.html). Sure, cloud computing was already very popular but these results put things into perspective for us; in 2017, respondents were more interested in cloud computing than in microservices, DevOps, machine learning, blockchain and the list goes on. That may or may not still be the case, but these results opened our appetite for everything cloud-related.

Despite cloud computing's popularity, there are still a lot of unknowns, misunderstandings and gaps. For example, earlier this year, we learned from Sumo Logic's *2018 Global Security Trends in the Cloud* (https://www.sumologic.com/press/2018-04-10/security-analytics-modern-cloud/) report that almost half of their respondents reported that current tools do not work in the cloud. Furthermore, a whopping 97% out of the 300+ respondents felt that they lacked the tools for proper cloud security. Read more about the report here (https://jaxenter.com/cloud-tools-survey-143504.html).

(https://jaxenter.com/) cloud computing is worth exploring and the benefits definitely outweigh the risks. This is what we think but of course, we're no experts. Therefore, we decided to invite 12 experts to weigh in on the present and future of cloud computing.

A tour of cloud computing **will be published twice a week.**

Here are the interviews published so far

- **Abby Kearns (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-kearns-148249.html):** "It's very important for technology to be cloud-compatible, if not cloud-native"
- **Oleg Chunikhin & Terry Shea** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-kublr-148435.html)**:** "Serverless is another step towards improving productivity, especially in DevOps and operations"
- **Peter Meulbroek** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-meulbroek-148577.html)**:** "Cloud-neutral adds a large amount of complexity and risk to a migration, without really solving the issue"
- **Ross Kukulinski** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-kukulinski-148742.html)**:** "Observability is an essential component when successfully operating software in the cloud"
- **Carlos Sanchez** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-sanchez-148874.html)**:** "A seamless multi-cloud experience is currently practically impossible"
- **Ben Newton** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-newton-148878.html)**:** "Kubernetes is crucial for widespread multi-cloud adoption"
- **Shiven Ramji** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-ramji-149149.html)**:** "The next step is to make integrations between cloud services as easy as possible"
- **Brian Johnson** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-ramji-149149.html)**:** "Cloud-based infrastructure by itself doesn't deliver huge benefits"
- **Vince Arneja** (https://jaxenter.com/tour-cloud-computing-series-arneja-149358.html)**:** "The Fn project is one technology to watch out for as it has great potential"

Our next guest is Jeff Keyes, Director of Product Marketing at Plutora (https://www.plutora.com/).

JAXenter: What benefits does a cloud-based infrastructure bring? What are the drawbacks?

Jeff Keyes: There is already so much guidance on best practices for developing and storing applications in the cloud. Guidelines include factors for monitoring, encryption (at rest and in transit), network security, incident response, application security and even employee vetting, and it's important not to ignore those foundations. For vendors that target their cloud-based solutions at large enterprises, there are compulsory requirements to pass through these security reviews.

Surplus to that, the threat landscape is constantly changing. The customer expectation of security in this changing landscape is related to the company's agility and capability to react to new and unknown threats. How long does it take to roll out a patch or security update? Does releasing a patch put the company at an unknown risk of other bugs or security holes being introduced? Being secure isn't a destination, but a journey of continual improvement and evolution.

JAXenter: Has GDPR affected the way you or your organization does things?

Jeff Keyes: Absolutely, but perhaps not in the way you'd expect. We've already been through so many security reviews where we are required to prove we protect personal data through our technology, so the impact has been most noticeable for us on the marketing side. As the new GDPR guidelines define search and traffic information as being personal, marketing organisations have been required to update their privacy policies in order to request permission to track anonymous visitors. We take that anonymity very seriously, and we were already doing it with our technology because it has always been necessary to.

> *The key to cloud is in the speed and scale. It's fast to onboard, it's available right now, and due to its elasticity, an organisation can get the capacity it needs when it needs it.*

JAXenter: What benefits does a cloud-based infrastructure bring? What are the drawbacks?

Jeff Keyes: The key to cloud is in the speed and scale. It's fast to onboard, it's available right now, and due to its elasticity, an organisation can get the capacity it needs when it needs it. Costs are concrete and incremental; when you compare this to internal infrastructure, where there are high capital costs that are all up front, you can see that there's so much value in going cloud-based, so long as you do it right. You also have the added convenience of being able to add services through an interconnected structure – you can buy disaster recovery and add it to your stack without giving it a second thought.

Looking at the potential drawbacks, operational oversight may be limited. You still need to be able to adhere to compliance and provide transparency, so the key is keeping those responsible as involved as possible. Without oversight, cloud environments have the potential to sprawl without thought for efficiency, so tracking costs and keeping an eye on overprovisioning can alleviate these issues.

JAXenter: What is your favorite cloud-based tool, service, or platform to use and why?

Jeff Keyes: Serverless. Even though it is in its infancy, it really addresses the main drawbacks of cloud-based computing – costs. You pay for what you use, and scaling up and/or down is implicit. AWS has got to be up there – it has such a breadth of offerings that extend from simple hosting to complex machine learning and application development tools. So much so, I can currently build an application that can take voice input from my Echo Dot using Alexa capabilities, integrated with natural language and machine learning, to evaluate complex release cycles and identify risks.

(htt**SEE ALSO: The Cloud** native future is here: These are the most popular technologies (https://jaxenter.com/cloud-native-technologies-cncf-survey-148861.html)

JAXenter: What do you think of serverless? Is it a "revolution of the cloud," as Maciej Winnicki, Principal Software Engineer at Serverless Inc. told us last year (https://jaxenter.com/serverless-limitations-interview-135452.html)?

Jeff Keyes: I love serverless. It is the natural evolution of microservices. Being able to pay for exactly what is used is a game changer, and I think many organisations will get a 'top-down' push to move architectures in that direction.

As a developer, I no longer have to worry about infrastructure, servers, scaling, availability, capacity… I just focus on my application's business logic. The basic developer experience is pretty cool, as I can just write code on my laptop or in a browser. From there, the rest of the development experience can be 100% cloud-based, with the choice of instant deployment if that is what I want. With so many services I can interact with, it really does expand the world of what is possible. Sure, the technology has some way to go, but as more and more companies invest in that direction we'll be sure to see growth and maturity.

Thank you!

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Gabriela Motroc was editor of JAXenter.com and JAX Magazine. Before working at Software & Support Media Group, she studied International Communication Management at the Hague University of Applied Sciences.

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Jeff Keyes

Jeff Keyes is the Director of Product Marketing at Plutora. Keyes has spent his career writing code, designing software features and UI, running dev and test teams, consulting and evangelising product messaging. Outside of six years at Microsoft, he has primarily focused on growing startup companies.

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