Guided Lab: Creating an AWS Lambda Function that Interacts with an Amazon DynamoDB Table

Description

AWS Lambda is a serverless compute service that allows you to run code without provisioning or managing servers. DynamoDB is a fast and flexible NoSQL database service for all applications that need consistent, single-digit millisecond latency at any scale.

We will integrate these services to build a simple backend that handles basic HTTP operations—PUT, GET, POST, and DELETE—on a DynamoDB table. These HTTP methods correspond to common operations for interacting with a backend service:

- **GET**: Retrieve data from the database.
- POST: Create a new item in the database.
- **PUT**: Update an existing item in the database.
- DELETE: Remove an item from the database.

Prerequisites

This lab assumes you have a basic understanding of JavaScript (Node.js) and Familiarity with AWS Lambda functions and Dynamo DB (NoSQL Database).

If you find any gaps in your knowledge, consider taking the following lab:

- Creating an Amazon DynamoDB table
- Creating a NodeJS Function in AWS Lambda

Objectives

By the end of this lab, you will:

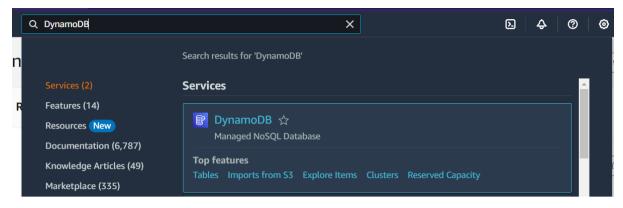
- Build a simple backend service using Lambda and DynamoDB.
- Implement basic HTTP methods (GET, POST, PUT, DELETE) to interact with a DynamoDB table.
- Test the Lambda function with predefined test events to validate its functionality.
- Gain hands-on experience with serverless architecture and NoSQL databases on AWS.

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Lab Steps

Create the DynamoDB Table

1. Navigate to the DynamoDB service in the AWS Management Console.



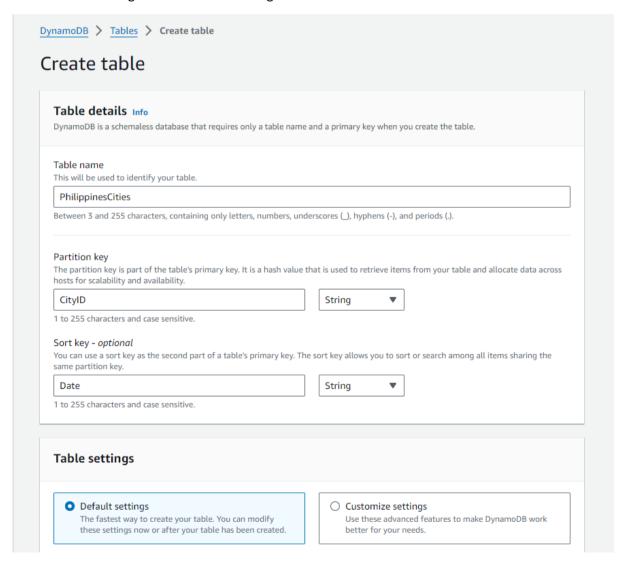
2. Create a new table with the following configurations:

• Table name: PhilippinesCities.

Primary key: CityID (String)

Sort key: Date (String)

• Table settings: Select Default settings



• Click Create table

- 3. Ensure the table status is set to Active before proceeding to the next step.
- 4. Create the following items for the **PhilippinesCities** Table:

• Item 1:

CityID: "001" (String)

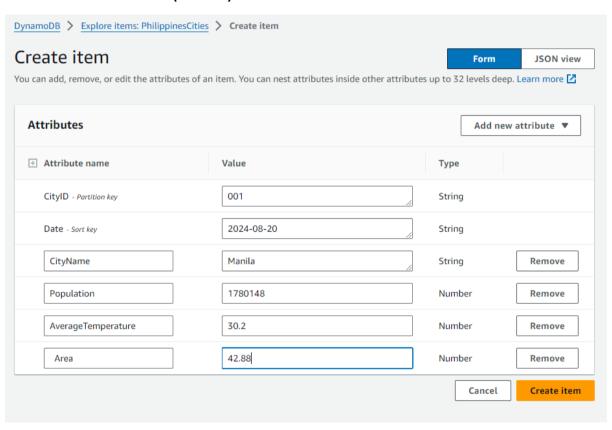
Date: "2024-08-20" (String)

CityName: "Manila" (String)

Population: 1780148 (Number)

AverageTemperature: 30.2 (Number)

Area: 42.88 (Number)



• Item 2:

CityID: "002" (String)

Date: "2024-08-20" (String)

CityName: "Cebu City" (String)

Population: 922611 (Number)

AverageTemperature: 29.5 (Number)

Area: 315.00 (Number)

Item 3:

CityID: "003" (String)

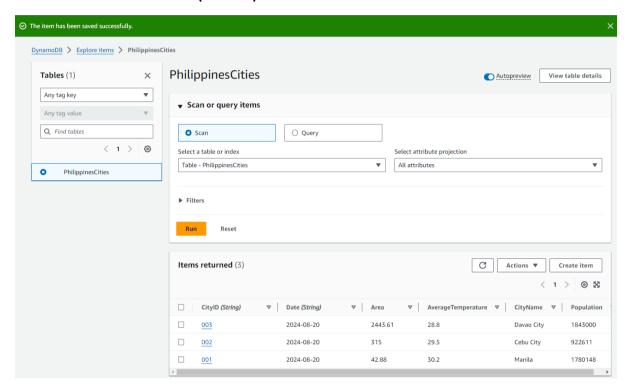
Date: "2024-08-20" (String)

CityName: "Davao City" (String)

o Population: 1843000 (Number)

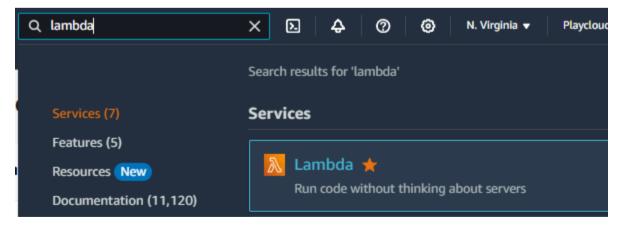
AverageTemperature: 28.8 (Number)

Area: 2443.61 (Number)



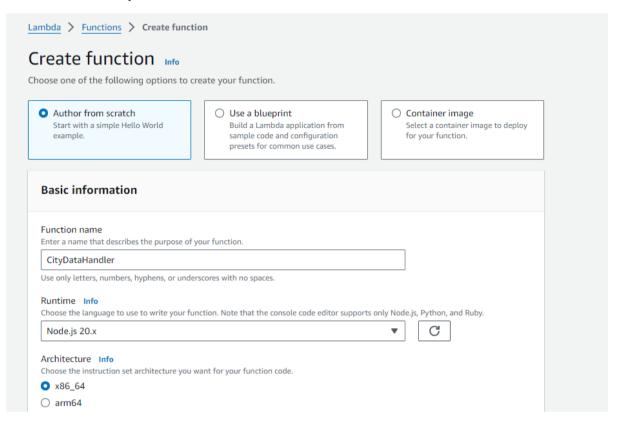
Create the Lambda Function

1. Navigate to the Lambda service in the AWS Management Console.



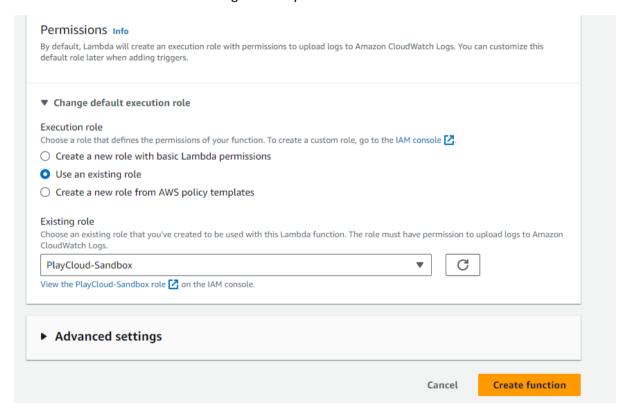
- 2. Create Function using the following confgurations:
 - Choose Author from scratch.
 - Function name: CityDataHandler

• Select Node.js 20.x as the runtime.



• Execution role:

Select Use an Existing Role: PlayCloud-Sanbox



• Click on Create Function

Note: We are using the **old console editor** for this lab. You can switch to the **new editor** as you desire; the process remains the same, but the interface may look slightly different.

```
3. Paste the following code in the code editor
import { DynamoDB } from '@aws-sdk/client-dynamodb';
import { DynamoDBDocument } from '@aws-sdk/lib-dynamodb';
const dynamo = DynamoDBDocument.from(new DynamoDB());
/**
* This function handles HTTP requests to interact with a DynamoDB table.
* It supports GET, POST, PUT, and DELETE methods.
*/
export const handler = async (event) => {
  console.log('Received event:', JSON.stringify(event, null, 2));
  let responseBody;
  let statusCode = 200; // Default status code for successful requests
  const headers = {
    'Content-Type': 'application/json',
  };
  try {
    // Determine the HTTP method and perform the corresponding action
    switch (event.httpMethod) {
      case 'GET':
        // For GET requests, scan the DynamoDB table and return the data
        const scanParams = { TableName: event.queryStringParameters.TableName };
        responseBody = await dynamo.scan(scanParams);
        break;
      case 'POST':
```

```
// For POST requests, add a new item to the DynamoDB table
      const postParams = JSON.parse(event.body);
      responseBody = await dynamo.put(postParams);
      break;
    case 'PUT':
      // For PUT requests, update an existing item in the DynamoDB table
      const putParams = JSON.parse(event.body);
      responseBody = await dynamo.update(putParams);
      break;
    case 'DELETE':
      // For DELETE requests, delete an item from the DynamoDB table
      const deleteParams = JSON.parse(event.body);
      responseBody = await dynamo.delete(deleteParams);
      break;
    default:
      // If an unsupported HTTP method is used, return an error
      throw new Error(`Unsupported method "${event.httpMethod}"`);
  }
} catch (err) {
  // If an error occurs, return a 400 status code and the error message
  statusCode = 400;
  responseBody = { error: err.message };
// Convert the response body to a JSON string
return {
  statusCode: statusCode.toString(), // Convert status code to string
  body: JSON.stringify(responseBody),
```

}

```
headers,
};
```

};

4. Take your time to review the code:

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* It supports GET, POST, PUT, and DELETE methods.
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    console.log('Received event:', JSON.stringify(event, null, 2));
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    responseBody = await dynamo.delete(deleteParams);
    break;
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Code Breakdown:

• Imports:

 DynamoDB and DynamoDBDocument are imported from the AWS SDK. These are used to interact with the DynamoDB service. DynamoDBDocument provides a more user-friendly interface for working with DynamoDB operations.

Initialization:

 The dynamo object is created by wrapping a DynamoDB client with DynamoDBDocument, making it easier to interact with DynamoDB using native JavaScript objects.

• Handler Function:

 The handler function is the main entry point for the Lambda function. It processes incoming HTTP requests and performs the corresponding action on the DynamoDB table based on the HTTP method provided in the request.

• Request Handling:

- o The function logs the incoming event for debugging purposes.
- It initializes responseBody for storing the response and sets the default status code to 200.
- Based on the httpMethod in the incoming event, the function performs different operations:
 - GET: Scans the entire DynamoDB table and returns all items.POST: Adds a new item to the table by parsing the request body and using the put method.
 - **PUT:** Updates an existing item in the table using the update method.
 - DELETE: Deletes an item from the table using the delete method.
- o If an unsupported HTTP method is used, an error is thrown.

• Error Handling:

o If any error occurs during the operation, the function catches the error, sets the status code to 400, and includes the error message in the response.

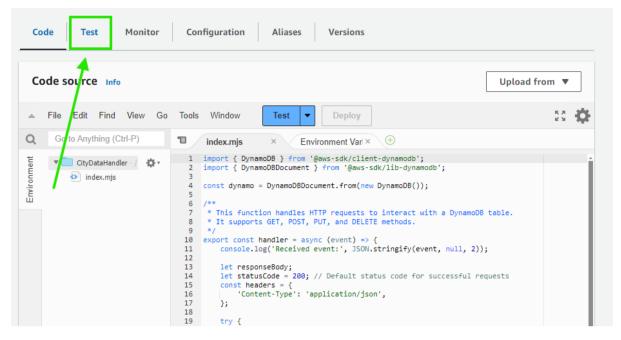
• Response:

- The function returns a JSON response containing the status code, response body, and headers.
- 5. Deploy the Lambda Function to save the code.



Test the Lambda Function Using Test Events

1. Navigate to the Test tab of the AWS Lambda Dashboard.

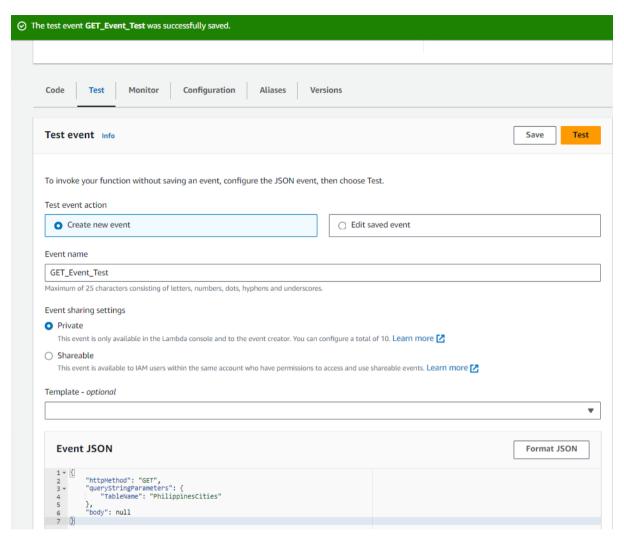


- 2. Once in the Test tab, click on Creat new event:
 - Event name: GET_Event_Test
 - In the Event JSON, paste the following:

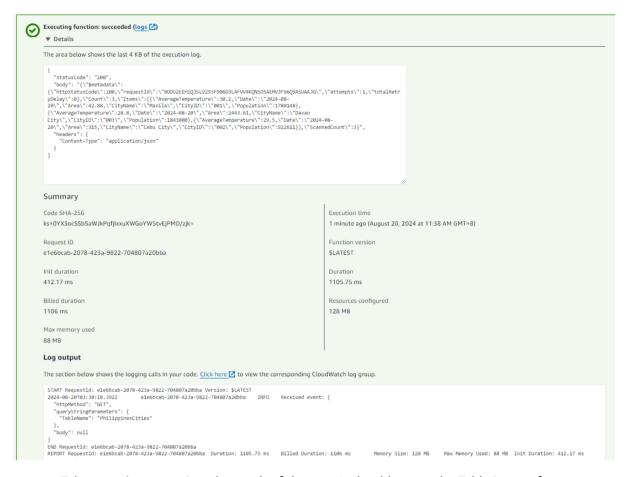
```
{
  "httpMethod": "GET",
  "queryStringParameters": {
     "TableName": "PhilippinesCities"
  },
  "body": null
}
```

This test event triggers a scan of the entire **PhilippinesCities** table and returns all items.

• Click on Save



 Then, click on Test. Wait for the test event to become successful. Lastly, expand the Details of the Test.

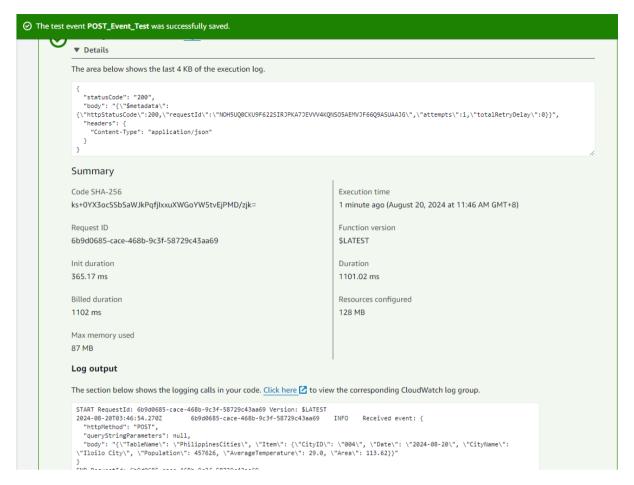


- Take your time to review the result of the test. It should return the Table items of the PhilippinesCities Dynamo DB table
- 3. Now lets create another Test Event using the following details:
 - Event name: POST_Event_Test
 - In the Event JSON, paste the following:

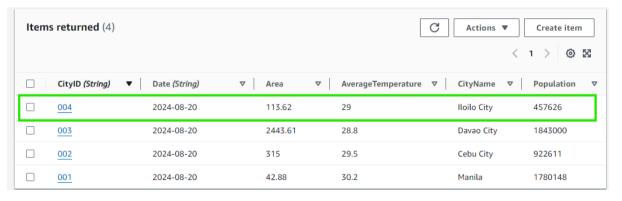
```
{
  "httpMethod": "POST",
  "queryStringParameters": null,
  "body": "{\"TableName\": \"PhilippinesCities\", \"Item\": {\"CityID\": \"004\", \"Date\": \"2024-08-20\", \"CityName\": \"Iloilo City\", \"Population\": 457626, \"AverageTemperature\": 29.0, \"Area\": 113.62}}"
}
```

This test event adds a new item (Iloilo City) to the **PhilippinesCities** table.

- Click on Save
- Click on Test



• Navigate back to the Dynamo DB Table **PhilippinesCities**, then on the on the explore items. The newly added item (Iloilo City) should be visible in the items table.



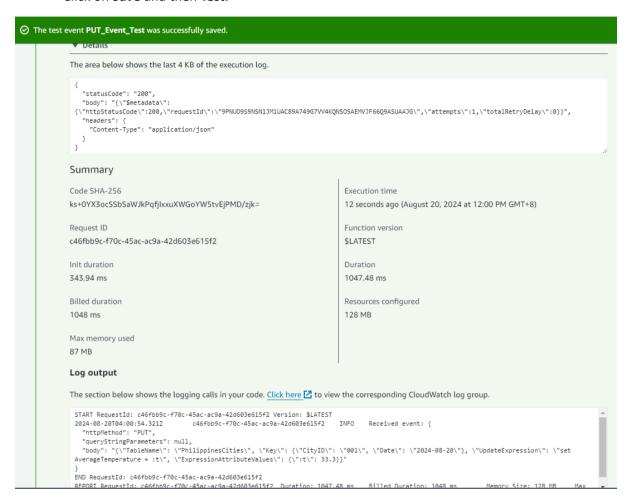
- 4. Take note of the Average Temperature of CityID 001 CityName Manila.
- 5. Navigate back to the Lambda Function **CityDataHandler.** Then, to the **Test tab.** Create this time the **PUT Request Test:**
 - Event name: PUT_Event_Test
 - In the Event JSON, paste the following:

```
{
    "httpMethod": "PUT",
    "queryStringParameters": null,
```

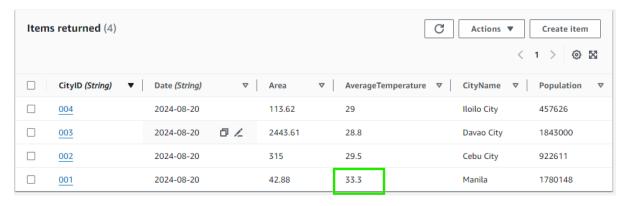
"body": "{\"TableName\": \"PhilippinesCities\", \"Key\": {\"CityID\": \"001\", \"Date\": \"2024-08-20\"}, \"UpdateExpression\": \"set AverageTemperature = :t\", \"ExpressionAttributeValues\": {\":t\": 33.3}}"
}

This test event updates the **AverageTemperature** of Manila in the **PhilippinesCities** table.

Click on Save and then Test.



 Navigate again to the Dynamo DB table and observe that the Average Temperature for Manila has changed from 30.2 to 33.3



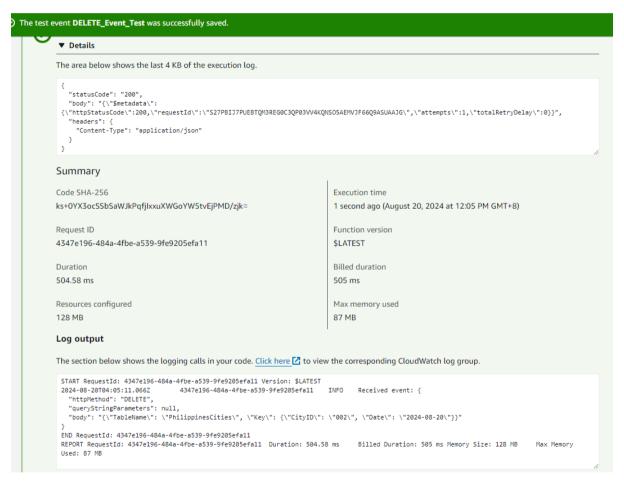
6. For the last test, navigate back to the Lambda Function again and create a new test event:

- Event name: DELETE_Event_Test
- In the Event JSON, paste the following:

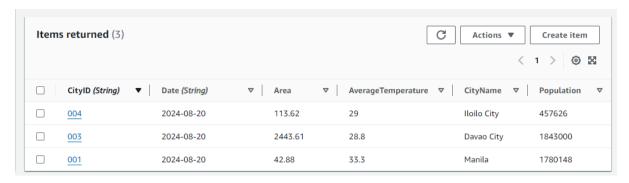
```
{
  "httpMethod": "DELETE",
  "queryStringParameters": null,
  "body": "{\"TableName\": \"PhilippinesCities\", \"Key\": {\"CityID\": \"002\", \"Date\": \"2024-08-20\"}}"
}
```

This test event deletes the item with CityID: "002" (Cebu City) from the **PhilippinesCities** table.

• Click on Save and then Test.



• Navigate again to the Dynamo DB table and observe the item with CityID: "002" (Cebu City) from the **PhilippinesCities** table was deleted.



That's it! Congratulations! You've successfully created a serverless backend using AWS Lambda and DynamoDB. By integrating these powerful services, you've learned how to handle basic CRUD operations—GET, POST, PUT, and DELETE—via simulated HTTP requests using test events in Lambda. This lab is a fundamental building block for creating scalable and cost-effective serverless applications.

Throughout the lab, you configured a DynamoDB table to store city-related data and used Lambda functions to interact with the database. You also learned how to test your Lambda function using predefined test events, ensuring that your code performs as expected. Happy learning!