

Forrester: Edge Computing on the Rise

Written by Alice Marshall
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Edge computing is set to become the next big thing in 2019, Forrester predicts-- and the value of the edge goes far beyond the Internet of Things (IoT), since it finds a spot in the roadmaps of all leading cloud vendors and telcos.



According to the 2018 Technographics Mobility Survey, 27% of participant global telecom decision makers say their companies are either implementing or expending edge computing in 2019. Achieving such a digital transformation requires new wireless tools and updated skill sets, bringing about decisions such as the Verizon employee buyout offer driving nearly \$10 billion in savings.

Content Delivery Network (CDN) providers are also adding edge compute products to their portfolios. Vendors such as Ericsson, Fastly, Limelight and Akamai either have an edge compute offering or plan to release it in 2019. However most enterprises still see CDNs as content-caching solutions for web and mobile apps, even if Forrester points out a number of areas with a stronger value proposition.

The most obvious application for edge computing is, of course, sensor data analysis and aggregation. Every government needs to prioritise smart city programs and sensor data AI expansion in military, transportation and security agencies, while financial services, healthcare and education organisations should tie sensor data to business values. In turn, SaaS and data software companies need to empower customers with tools for sensor data aggregation.

Real-time customer engagement also involves edge computing, especially in the case of customers expecting to make payments with their Apple Watch, track daily exercise and health statistics, and ask Siri or Alexa for location-specific insights. Thus, metros and remote locations

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require customer-facing applications.

Edge A/V equipment will advanced a broad range of industries once they are able to bring close to real-time insights. For example, sports organisations need to aggregate stadium data from thousands of cameras if they want to provide customers with the ability to watch games from a virtual seat in the stadium or from the coach's perspective. Similar values are coming to healthcare, enabling doctors to live in one country and treat patients in another, as do security professionals wanting to virtually visit remote locations via augmented reality in order to resolve issues.

"Edge computing processes and stores data locally and transmits only selected summaries to the cloud. Rather than trying to analyse data in the cloud, edge processes it locally, which is cheaper and easier to manage and enables real-time insights value," the analyst says.

"Perhaps the most difficult barrier to successful edge implementation will be the available talent pool.. Your company will succeed or fail based on your people, not the technology itself. Partner with top talent until you can hire your own."

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