Limelight: Delivering on Programmability at the Edge  
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IDC’s Quick Take
As edge computing becomes pervasive in the industry, technology suppliers and service providers have been using its concepts to develop new offerings that create differentiation in the market and drive growth.

Limelight recognized the opportunity to build on its success in optimizing the delivery of video on its global content delivery network (CDN) by giving developers more dynamic control over content. Architected as a serverless compute platform, customers can now define and deploy workflows at the network edge, achieving the low-latency responses that are required for real-time interactions.

With approximately 130 points of presence and a software stack optimized for performance, Limelight EdgeFunctions is accelerating the proliferation of edge applications.

Product Announcement Highlights
Limelight Networks recently announced a new distributed serverless computing capability named EdgeFunctions, which enables developers to easily deploy code across the company's global edge platform.

EdgeFunctions allows developers to run their code in Limelight edge locations, taking advantage of Limelight’s global footprint and scale. Functions are globally available and run in the same locations as Limelight’s Content Delivery Network — closest to where content requests are received — which ensures the lowest possible latency for code execution and delivers optimal user experiences. An API-first approach to serverless computing with support for Node.js, Python, and Go frees developers to focus on innovation and integration with their content workflows.

The platform targets the requirements of Limelight's content delivery customers. It's ideally suited to streaming video and content delivery use cases such as personalized streaming, access control, dynamic ad insertion, content protection, A/B testing, and image manipulation. And it's integrated with Limelight's edge services platform, one of the world's highest-performance streaming video and object delivery networks.

EdgeFunctions is currently in field trials with general availability planned for 2Q20.

IDC's Point of View
The edge is emerging as the new center for global ecommerce, acquisition and dissemination of data, and rich media delivery. It is a key enabler to transforming the enterprise to a digital-first enterprise. IDC predicts that over 50% of new enterprise IT infrastructure deployed will be at the edge rather than corporate datacenters, up from less than 10% today. As majority of IP traffic will be CDN traffic, reaching around 80% by 2023, CDNs have an important role in advancing edge compute as the new paradigm for
delivering rich media services. End users are demanding programmability at the edge to develop and deploy innovative services in timely and frictionless manner.

This announcement confirms this momentum toward addressing the increasing demand for rich media services at the edge. Programmability at the edge is the underlying technology enabler of this trend. Limelight is following a welcome playbook in targeting programmability at the edge to the developer community. The developers will benefit from an API-based programming environment with open source language support. The ability to scale on a global basis is certainly advantageous. This announcement will open up the door for strategic partnerships among Limelight and key enterprise customers.

This announcement is an important step toward a vision that delivers on seamless integration of global end-to-end services on any available edge platform. Collaboration among CDN providers, content providers, and ISPs will be needed to realize this vision. This will spin out new business models that may change the nature of how content is delivered, priced, and consumed by end users. A marketplace for CDN edge services may ensue. At IDC, we fully embrace these developments and will continue to monitor their progress.

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Content Delivery Networks, Edge Strategies

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