

Serverless vs. Organizations

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About me (Sönke Ruempler)

- Co-Founder of superluminar.io
- AWS since 2009
- Serverless since 2015
- AWS DevOps Pro / Solutions Architect Pro Certified
- AWS Partner Network Ambassador
- Founder of Serverless Hamburg Meetup
- Co-Org of ServerlessDays Hamburg



Serverless is a bad name.

“But there are still servers”

Servicefull

Patrick Debois, 2016

Traditional
“**Serverfull**”

VS.

Modern “**Servicefull**”
organizations

Serverfull vs Servicefull – two mindset extremes

“Serverfull company” mindset

vs.

“Servicefull company” mindset

Sees public cloud as threat (“vendor lock-in”)
Uses “low level” building blocks (compute, storage, network)

Public Cloud

Sees public cloud provider as partner
Fully embraces ecosystem

“We can build X with our own people so we can save money”

Value/cost mindset

“We rather use and pay a cloud service so we can focus on more customer visible work.”

Default

Hosting/maintaining your own

Last resort

“We have to pay our IT/DevOps team anyway, so they can do the maintenance.”

People/labor cost mindset

“Our infra people/teams can shift from undifferentiated heavy lifting to more customer visible work”

Asset / strategic advantage

Owning infrastructure/code is ...

Liability / necessary evil

Servicefull is
a way to focus on
customer value.

“In order to become more **customer focused** we want get more **servicefull!**”

servicefull

?

serverfull

Generic strategies towards a **Servicefull Company**

1. Embrace a **Servicefull Mindset**
2. Have a **Knowledge strategy**
3. Foster **Unlearning** of outdated behaviors/techniques
4. Adjust **Incentives**

1. Embrace the **Servicefull Mindset**

Don't own what you don't have to.

Owning infrastructure/code/software is a
liability.

Focus on customer visible work.

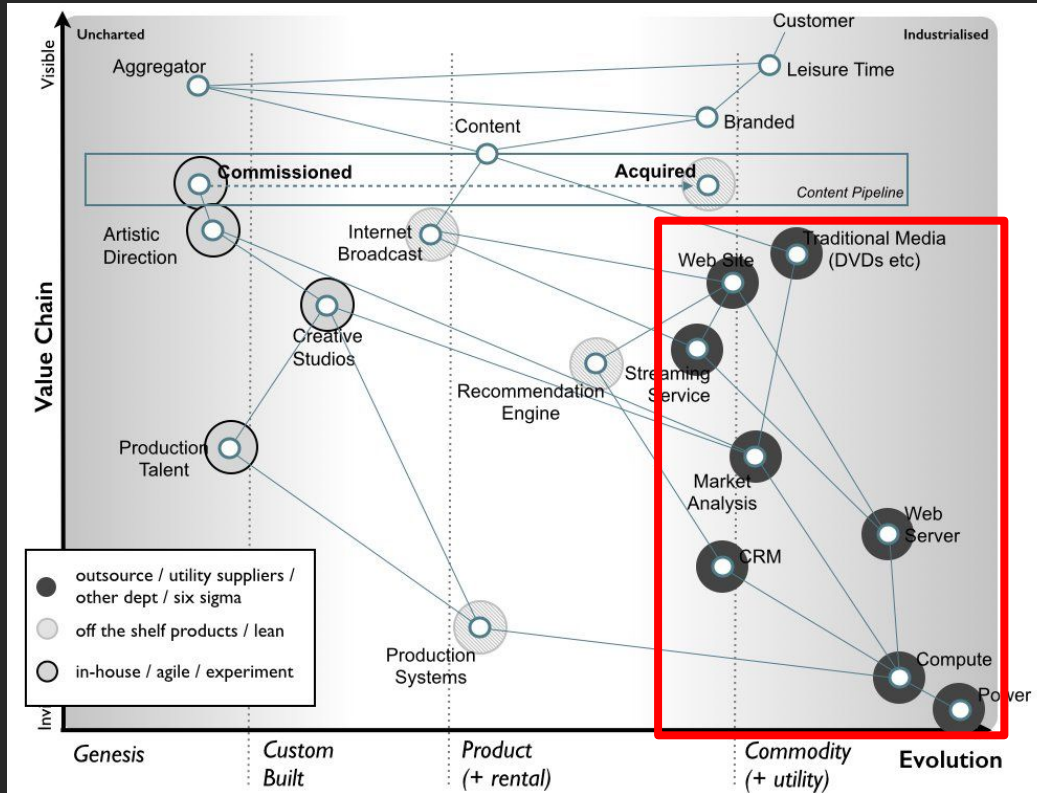
2. Have a **Knowledge strategy**

What differentiates you as a company?

Where to focus?

What to (un-)learn?
What to in/outsource?

Wardley Maps to decide what to outsource



3. Foster Unlearning

Many barriers to
organizational change
and unlearning.

“Knowledge barriers” / “information pathologies”

Individual

- Not-invented-here syndrome
- Routine blindness
- Illusory superiority / Dunning-Kruger effect
- Lack of social meta knowledge
- Lack of time
- Information overload
- Knowledge-is-power thinking
- Poor understanding
- Antipathy
- Reduction of cognitive dissonance
- Lack of Self-efficacy
- ...

Group / Team / Organizational

- Hierarchy
- Formalism and bureaucratism
- Micropolitics
- Silo thinking
- Groupthink
- Separation of information collection/using and decisions
- Lack of a knowledge strategy
- No support from management
- Leaders/managers acting as bad examples
- Top-down procedures
- Missing or dysfunctional incentives
- Focus on IT for “knowledge sharing”
- ...

You cannot force change.

“The harder you push, pushes the system back” ~ Peter M. Senge

But companies can provide
an environment
for change to happen.

Provide alternatives to
“This is how we’ve always done it”

Example:

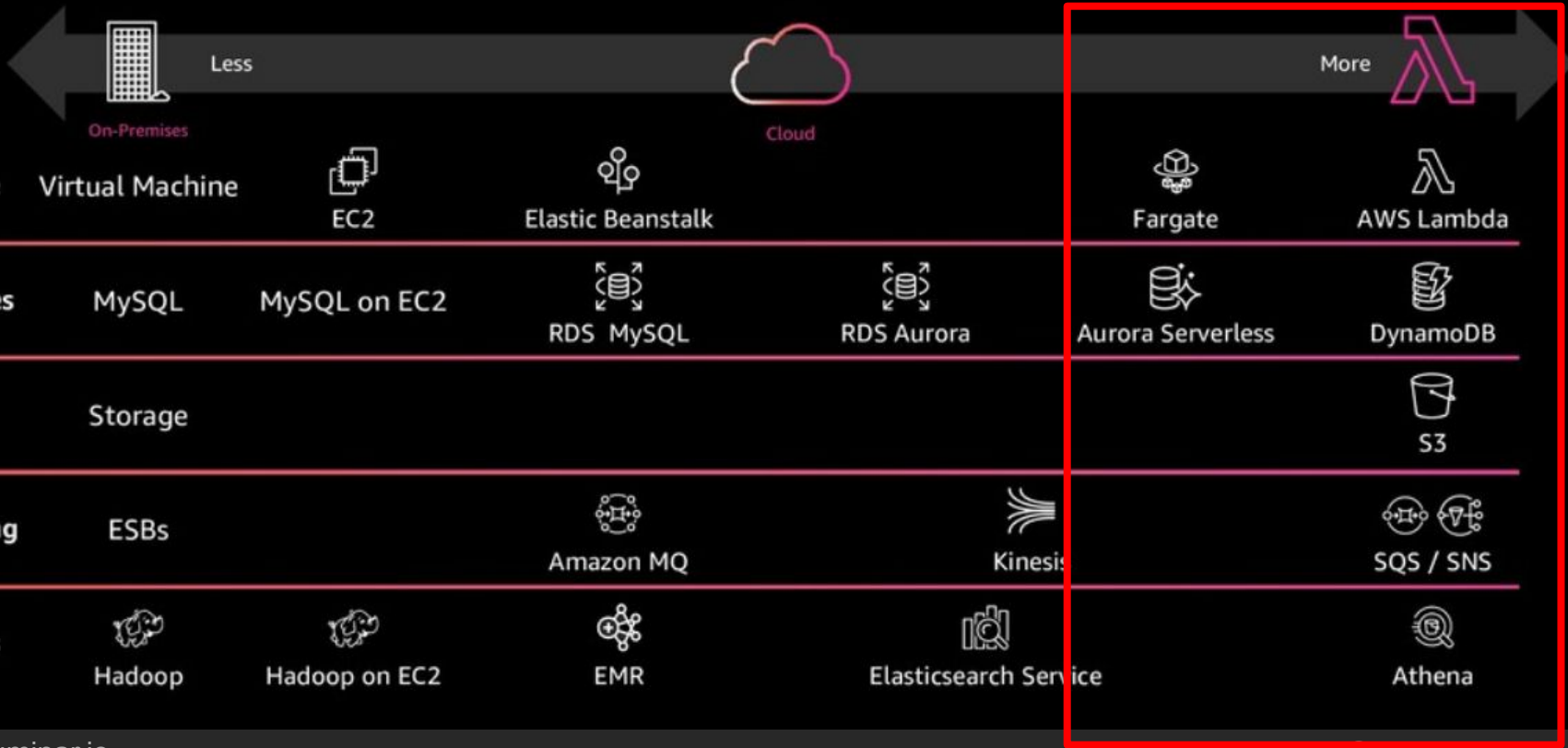
Give employees time and resources for
cloud/serverless courses, training and
certifications

4. Adjust Incentives

**“Tell me how you measure me,
and I will tell you how I will behave”
~ Eli Goldratt**

Praise and reward
Serverless/servicefull
solutions.

Prefer "Servicefulness"



Reward behavior/solutions that
lead to
least amount of owned code
to solve a business problem.

Training + right incentives

A powerful change enabler!

Recap

To become a
servicefull company

Embrace the mindset.

Know what to keep,
learn and unlearn.

Foster the learning
and unlearning
By providing
alternatives.

Change incentives to
reflect the Servicefull
mindset.

Thanks.

References (standing on the shoulders of giants)

- [From serverless to Service Full - How the mindset of devops is evolving](#)
(Patrick Debois)
- [Psychological Safety](#)
- [Wardley Mapping](#) (Simon Wardley)
- Systems thinking (Peter Senge)
- [Serverless mindset](#) (Ben Kehoe)
- Systemic Knowledge Management / Ignorance Management (Ursula Schneider, Helmut Willke, Dirk Baecker, Karl E. Weick)
- Learning Organizations (Argyris & Schoen)
- [Organizational Psychology](#) (Susanne Hopf)
- ([Longer version of the this talk with more information](#))