

FROST & SULLIVAN

LIGHTBEND

2022
COMPANY
OF THE
YEAR

NORTH AMERICAN
SERVERLESS COMPUTING INDUSTRY

Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Lightbend excels in many of the criteria in the serverless computing space.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>Visionary Innovation & Performance</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Addressing Unmet Needs	Price/Performance Value
Visionary Scenarios Through Mega Trends	Customer Purchase Experience
Implementation of Best Practices	Customer Ownership Experience
Leadership Focus	Customer Service Experience
Financial Performance	Brand Equity

Kalix: Delivering High-Performance, Low-Latency Applications

Founded in 2011 and headquartered in San Francisco, Lightbend, is a developer of a platform solution to build and optimize applications. Companies struggle with challenges scaling their business while building and deploying applications, such as dealing with sophisticated structures and expensive technologies and finding developers with top-level technical skills. Lightbend is aware of these challenges and addresses its approach to serverless computing with a groundbreaking solution. Lightbend creates innovative products through deep market research and customer feedback. As a result, the company has expanded its product portfolio and launched Kalix in May 2022. Kalix is a platform-as-a-service solution enabling companies to

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**- Valentina Barcia,
Best Practices Research Analyst**

build large, scalable, high-performance, and low-latency applications with complex architecture, delivering a straightforward developer experience. This solution is the result of Lightbend’s rebranding and replaces Akka Serverless.

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Its local-first software architecture is a highly resilient system that operates continuously and adaptively detects, reacts to, and copes with the failure of its pieces.¹ Kalix delivers high-performance, low-latency microservices supported by the most popular programming languages and frameworks (e.g., JavaScript, TypeScript, GO, Python, Spring, and Scala). With Kalix, Lightbend aims to become a geo-distributed cloud-to-edge data plane that serves application data anywhere, from the public cloud to 10,000 of Points-of-Presence at the network's edge. This attribute allows users to be close physically, where the co-location of data, processing, and end-users ensures ultra-low latency and high throughput.² It also helps clients manage the application's context, communication, business rules, and operational semantics and integrates seamlessly with other systems.³

Customers find Lightbend's solution efficient and reliable, trusting its services to manage distributed state, databases, container management, data caching, service meshes, messaging, and load balancing. For example, the company's architecture optimizes available cloud resources to make data available in real time and secure it with encryption at rest and in motion. Lightbend provides customers with customizable deployment options designed to meet their needs, from a free trial to a more dedicated service. These customizations run on a pay-as-you-go model.

Lightbend's executive team closely monitors emerging market trends and evolving customer demands, then responds with novel solutions. The company incorporates new features to its offering, allowing customers to seamlessly transition into the cloud and innovate with the existing development team. For instance, Lightbend integrated global-scale distributed SQL databases (CockroachDB, YugabyteDB) to fulfill its customers' demands. With this leadership focus, Frost & Sullivan expects Lightbend to sustain its leadership in the serverless computing industry.

Roadmap to Success: Customer-centric, Continuous, Proactive

Lightbend's serverless solution goes beyond its extensive expertise and best-in-class capabilities, with customer value as a strategic imperative. Through the years, the company has earned a sterling reputation supporting customers' path towards enriching and simplifying the experience in cloud computing. Lightbend collaborates thoughtfully with a range of stakeholders and technology partners to evolve alongside market needs and trends (e.g., Amazon Web Services, Cognizant, Google Cloud, Hewlett Packard, Microsoft Azure, Red Hat, and YoppWorks).

In August 2022, Lightbend announced an alliance with Hexaware, a global information technology service company, to jointly create transformative solutions with an eye to customer satisfaction.⁴ Moreover, Hexaware delivers consultation on how to maximize benefit from Lightbend technologies. The company's frictionless and customized customer-centric approach and close relationships position it as a preferred vendor.

¹ <https://www.kalix.io/blog/kalix-move-to-the-cloud-extend-to-the-edge-go-beyond>. Accessed September 2022

² Ibid.

³ <https://www.kalix.io/news/lightbend-launches-kalix-a-revolutionary-approach-to-simplifying-cloud-based-app-development-for-global-teams>. Accessed September 2022.

⁴ <https://www.lightbend.com/company/news/cloud-native-leader-lightbend-joins-forces-with-global-it-services-giant-hexaware>. Accessed September 2022.

“Lightbend’s vision centers on simplifying the developer experience to release the power of the cloud and edge in an uncomplicated way. The company provides the technical knowledge and capabilities to align with the increasing demand of companies to reduce the time to market with a tight budget and have the skills to stay ahead of competitors.”

**- Sandeep Bazaz,
Industry Analyst**

Lightbend: An Innovation Hub

Lightbend’s vision centers on simplifying the developer experience to release the power of the cloud and edge in an uncomplicated way. The company provides the technical knowledge and capabilities to align with the increasing demand of companies to reduce the time to market with a tight budget and have the skills to stay ahead of competitors. The company takes care of these challenges allowing executives and developers to focus on the business logic of their applications. At the same time, Kalix resolves these issues by supporting large-scale, high-performance distributed computing. The

company ensures its serverless approach perfectly matches the customers’ requirements.

“Typically, I spend 80% of my time just dealing with stuff that has nothing to do with the problem I’m trying to solve. With Kalix, I got to spend all of my time on the business problem.”

-James Ward, Developer Advocate, Google Cloud.⁵

“We have started building solutions using Kalix for Internet of Things and Digital Twins, and it is an amazing platform. It is great to finally be able to focus on designing business models, using for example Event-Sourcing and Domain Driven Design, without having to care about all the boilerplate code. Great achievement!”

-Bernard Deffarges, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Ilaama.⁶

Positioned for Growth

Since its inception, Lightbend’s sterling reputation and customer-centric framework led to its coveted preferred partner status. Over the years, it added a range of new customers to its established base. The company’s clients use its technology for various applications, including Internet of Things platforms, financial services, web-based gaming, messengers and chatbots, streaming media platforms, and e-commerce systems.⁷ Lightbend clients include GM, HP, PayPal, Verizon, Telsa, and various other large enterprises.⁸

Lightbend is at the forefront of the fiercely competitive serverless market. With a deep-rooted history of purpose-fit innovation, the company shapes the industry’s trends, impacting its role in the cloud computing market. In 2021, the company recorded \$20 million in revenue.⁹ Furthermore, in March 2020, Lightbend announced it raised \$19 million in a financing round led by Dell Technologies Capital. The company has raised about \$80 million in several rounds with well-known investors such as Capital

⁵ <https://www.kalix.io/>. Accessed September 2022.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://www.kalix.io/deep-dive>. Accessed September 2022.

⁸ <https://www.lightbend.com/case-studies#customers>. Accessed September 2022.

⁹ <https://www.kalix.io/>. Accessed September 2022.

Ventures, Blue Cloud Ventures, Greylock Partners, IBM Corp., Intel Corp., Juniper Networks Inc., and Shasta Ventures.¹⁰

Lightbend participates in several technology events to promote its latest products and innovations. Some examples include Reactive Summit 2022, Strata Data Conference 2019, and Red Hat Summit 2019. Besides this, the company invests in educational resources, interacting and engaging customers through Lightbend Academy with free and premium data engineering, Scala, and reactive architecture courses. Similarly, the company hosts regular events, webinars, and seminars to educate consumers on Kalix's technology. Frost & Sullivan believes the company is well-positioned to drive the serverless space into its next growth phase, capturing market share and sustaining its leadership in the coming years.

Conclusion

Companies moving to cloud-native applications need robust infrastructure and technical expertise. Lightbend redefined its approach to serverless computing and launched Kalix, a platform-as-a-service to successfully enhance and simplify the developer experience while lowering cloud cost and reducing the time to market. Overall, Lightbend addresses these unmet needs with a strong leadership focus that incorporates customer-centric strategies and exemplifies best practice implementation. With Kalix, customers build large scalable, high-performance, low-latency applications. Through strategic partnerships, Lightbend allows clients to digitally transform their business strategy to scale and innovate quickly, relying on its cloud-based services. The company remains a trusted partner, earning a reputation for offering the overall best in the serverless computing market.

With its strong overall performance, Lightbend earns Frost & Sullivan's 2022 North American Company of the Year Award in the serverless computing industry.

¹⁰ <https://www.lightbend.com/company/news/lightbend-closes-19-million-investment-round-led-by-dell-technologies-capital>. Accessed September 2022.

What You Need to Know about the Company of the Year Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's Company of the Year Award is its top honor and recognizes the market participant that exemplifies visionary innovation, market-leading performance, and unmatched customer care.

Best Practices Award Analysis

For the Company of the Year Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

Visionary Innovation & Performance

Addressing Unmet Needs: Customers' unmet or under-served needs are unearthed and addressed by a robust solution development process

Visionary Scenarios Through Mega Trends:

Long-range, macro-level scenarios are incorporated into the innovation strategy through the use of Mega Trends, thereby enabling first-to-market solutions and new growth opportunities

Leadership Focus: Company focuses on building a leadership position in core markets and on creating stiff barriers to entry for new competitors

Best Practices Implementation: Best-in-class implementation is characterized by processes, tools, or activities that generate a consistent and repeatable level of success

Financial Performance: Strong overall business performance is achieved in terms of revenue, revenue growth, operating margin, and other key financial metrics

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Experience: Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

