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Edge Computing in Finance

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ABSTRACT

The financial services industry is undergoing a profound digital transformation, driven by the need for speed, personalization, and enhanced security. In an environment where milliseconds can determine the success of a trade and real-time insights are crucial for fraud prevention, traditional centralized cloud computing architectures are increasingly facing limitations regarding latency and bandwidth. Edge computing addresses these limitations by decentralizing computational power, shifting processing tasks from remote cloud servers to the "edge" of the network—closer to where data is generated and consumed. By minimizing the distance data must travel, edge computing significantly reduces latency, optimizes bandwidth, and enhances data privacy. This paper explores the applications, benefits, and challenges of edge computing in the financial sector.

KEYWORDS: *edge computing, cloud computing, finance, banking, financial services industry.*

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INTRODUCTION

The financial services industry is undergoing a profound digital transformation, driven by the need for real-time data processing, enhanced customer experiences, and stringent security measures. Traditional centralized cloud computing, while scalable, often struggles to meet the ultra-low latency and data sovereignty requirements of modern financial applications. Edge computing has emerged as a critical paradigm shift, decentralizing data processing by bringing computation closer to the data source. Edge computing represents a critical evolution in the IT infrastructure of the financial services industry. By decentralizing data processing, it effectively addresses the latency, bandwidth, and security limitations of traditional cloud computing. Figure 1 shows the symbol of edge computing [1].

Edge computing is a distributed computing framework that brings computation and data storage closer to the location where it is needed, improving response times and saving bandwidth. It represents a paradigm shift in financial IT architecture, moving the industry away from exclusive reliance on centralized cloud systems toward a more agile, distributed model. By processing data at the source, financial institutions can achieve the ultra-low latency required for high-frequency trading, implement proactive real-time fraud prevention, ensure strict regulatory compliance, and deliver highly personalized customer experiences [2].

CONCEPT OF EDGE COMPUTING

The history of edge computing traces back to the introduction of content delivery networks in the 1990s. The concept was straightforward: place servers close to end-user locations for faster cached image and video transmission. Edge computing was created jointly by Microsoft and their academic collaborators. Today, more and more services are pushed from the cloud to the edge of the network. Since data is increasingly being produced at the edge of the network, it would be efficient to process the data there. Keeping this data closer to its users (at the edge) eliminates many of the problems inherent with the public cloud model. Figure 2 shows how edge computing works [3]. Edge computing allows data from IoT devices to be analyzed at the edge before being sent to the cloud.

Edge computing (EC) or edge cloud is a computing paradigm where substantial compute and storage resources are placed at the edge of the Internet, in close physical proximity to mobile devices, sensors, end users, and IoT devices. It refers to bringing the flexibility and openness of cloud-native infrastructure to that local infrastructure. The idea of "edge" is to do processing near the data source. The terms "cloudlets," "micro data centers," and "fog" are used to refer to these small, edge-located computing nodes or data centers. A *cloudlet* is a cluster of computers well connected to the Internet and can be treated as "data center in a box." The main objective of a cloudlet is to extend the remote datacenter cloud services in close proximity to the end users. Physical proximity is the essence of edge computing since it improves latency, bandwidth, trust, and survivability. While the cloud has revolutionized the way we deal with data, the next wave of that revolution will happen at the edge [4].

A standard edge computing framework consists of three distinct levels [5]:

- The cloud: Which manages the overall data storage and processing.
- The edge: Tasked with near-instantaneous data handling.
- The device: Responsible for initial detection and basic data processing.

These three levels are related in the edge computing architecture shown in Figure 3 [6].

Edge computing covers a wide range of technologies such as wireless sensor networks, distributed data storage, and augmented reality. This has made its way to becoming the core of the data center. The term "edge" refers to the computing devices that sit closer to the sources of data, where the digital world meets the real world. These edge devices typically reside away from the centralized computing available in the cloud and are being created with increasingly compute capabilities. Typical edge devices are smartphones, tablets, sensors, wearables, routers, switches, integrated access devices, multiplexers, smart TV, modern cars, and a variety of MAN/WAN access devices. Edge computing enables analytics and data gathering to occur at the source of the data.

Edge computing covers a spectrum of technologies such as cloudlets, fog computing, and mobile edge computing. A combination of edge and cloud computing is referred to as *fog computing* because it combines centralized and distributed computing resources into a single architecture. (Edge computing is a relatively new concept that should not be confused with fog computing.) It is practically unsafe and unnecessary to send such a large amount of data to the cloud. A comparison between cloud computing, edge computing is illustrated in Figure 4 [7]. Compared to cloud computing, fog computing and edge computing have the following five advantages [8]: (1) greater data transmission speed, (2) less dependence on limited bandwidths, (3) greater privacy and security, (4) greater control over data generated in foreign countries where laws may limit use or permit unwanted governmental access, and (5) lower costs because more sensor-derived data are used locally, and less data are transmitted remotely. Figure 5 shows edge computing [9], while Figure 6 shows how edge data is processed [3].

EDGE COMPUTING IN FINANCE

In the contemporary financial landscape, data is the most valuable asset. The proliferation of digital banking, mobile payments, and algorithmic trading has resulted in an unprecedented volume and velocity of financial data. Historically, financial institutions have relied on centralized cloud infrastructures to store and analyze this information. The inherent limitations of cloud computing—specifically latency, bandwidth constraints, and security vulnerabilities during data transmission—have necessitated a shift in architectural paradigms. Edge computing addresses these limitations by decentralizing computational power. By decentralizing processing power and bringing it closer to the "edge" of the network, edge computing directly addresses the critical challenges of latency, bandwidth limitations, and data security that plague traditional cloud architectures. In the context of financial services, the "edge" can represent various touchpoints: a bank branch, an ATM, a point-of-sale (POS) terminal, a customer's mobile device, or a server co-located at a stock exchange. By processing data locally, financial institutions can circumvent the latency inherent in transmitting large volumes of data back and forth to a central cloud, enabling real-time or near-real-time decision-making [2].

As financial institutions strive to meet the demands of a fast-evolving digital economy, edge computing has emerged as a pivotal technology reshaping the way data is processed, analyzed, and used to deliver services. By moving computing power closer to the source of data, edge computing offers financial institutions reduced latency, enhanced security, and optimized bandwidth—transforming customer experience and operational efficiency. It is impossible to overstate the importance of edge computing in the financial sector. It delivers durability, cost-effectiveness, real-time analytics, and speed to an industry that depends on accuracy and confidence. Adopting edge computing in financial services is not

only a choice but a must as financial institutions continue developing in the digital era [10]. Figure 7 shows how edge computing is a game changer for financial institutions [11].

APPLICATIONS OF EDGE COMPUTING IN FINANCE

Applications of edge computing in the financial industry include high-frequency trading (HFT), real-time fraud detection, personalized banking experiences, and regulatory compliance. Common applications of edge computing in finance include the following [2,10,11]:

- *Banking:* In the fast-changing world of banking, where every millisecond counts, transformative technology such as edge computing is emerging as a game-changer. Edge computing in banking matters significantly because it is like bringing the power of super-fast thinking right to where you need it most, making your banking experience faster, safer, and more convenient. Imagine your user is at an ATM, and instead of waiting for their transaction to be processed at a central server far away, edge computing allows the ATM to process their transaction right there on the spot. This makes the withdrawals and deposits faster and more efficient, leading to customer satisfaction. When you use your banking app on your phone, edge computing works behind the scenes to make everything happen in a flash. Edge computing will help you run your bank smoothly by reducing the need for big data centers, which can be expensive and slow. It is like a well-organized toolbox, helping banks be efficient and cost-effective.
- *High-Frequency Algorithmic Trading* (HFT): One of the most critical applications of edge computing in finance is in high-frequency trading (HFT). HFT is characterized by the execution of a large number of orders at extremely high speeds, relying on complex algorithms to analyze multiple markets and execute orders based on market conditions. In this highly competitive arena, a delay of a single millisecond can mean the difference between profit and loss. In high-frequency trading, success is entirely dependent on execution speed. HFT algorithms analyze multiple markets and execute orders based on market conditions in fractions of a second. Traditional cloud architectures introduce latency that can render arbitrage opportunities obsolete before a trade is executed. Edge computing significantly reduces “last-mile” latency by co-locating servers near exchange matching engines and processing data locally. This allows HFT firms to process complex transactions and market data closer to the source, accelerating order execution and improving the efficiency of arbitrage strategies .
- *Fraud Detection:* Fraud prevention is an evolving race against sophisticated cybercriminals. Financial institutions process immense volumes of sensitive transaction data daily, making them prime targets for cyberattacks and fraud. Traditional fraud detection systems often operate post-event, analyzing data in centralized servers after a transaction has occurred. This latency can result in financial losses before fraudulent activity is identified and halted. Edge computing revolutionizes fraud prevention by enabling real-time, localized data analysis. Financial institutions can spot and stop fraudulent actions in real time because of the capabilities of edge computing. By deploying AI and machine learning models at edge nodes—such as ATMs, point-of-sale (POS) terminals, or local branch servers—banks can instantly analyze transaction patterns and identify anomalies. For example, if an ATM is equipped with edge-enabled facial recognition and behavioral analytics, it can immediately detect suspicious activity, lock down the machine, and alert authorities without waiting for a response from a central cloud server.
- *Personalized Customer Experience*: The modern banking customer expects seamless, personalized digital experiences. Edge computing empowers retail banks to deliver hyper-personalized services by analyzing customer data locally and in real-time. For example, when a customer enters a bank branch, edge-powered computer vision and IoT systems can identify the individual and instantly provide branch staff with relevant customer profiles, recent transaction history, and tailored product recommendations. This capability extends to mobile banking applications, where edge processing allows for immediate, context-aware financial advice based on the user's current location and spending behavior, without the delays associated with cloud processing.
- *Data Processing*: Corporate actions, such as mergers, acquisitions, and dividend distributions, involve complex data processing and strict regulatory compliance. Edge computing streamlines these processes by analyzing data closer to the source. This decentralized approach allows for faster execution of complex transactions, improved risk management through real-time monitoring, and better adherence to

region-specific regulatory rules governing corporate actions.

- *Decentralized Finance*: Decentralized finance (DeFi) utilizes blockchain technology to remove intermediaries from financial transactions. However, blockchain networks often face scalability and processing speed challenges. Integrating edge computing with blockchain can significantly enhance network efficiency. Edge devices, particularly those equipped with powerful GPUs, can accelerate the cryptographic processes required for blockchain validation. By offloading computational demands to the edge, DeFi platforms can achieve higher transaction throughput and lower latency, making decentralized applications more viable for mainstream financial use.
- *Central Bank Digital Currencies* (CBDCs): As central banks globally explore the issuance of CBDCs, a critical design requirement is the ability to facilitate transactions in offline or low-connectivity environments, ensuring financial inclusion and operational resilience during crises. Edge computing principles are central to offline CBDC solutions. These systems often rely on secure hardware elements (like smart cards or mobile device secure enclaves) that act as local ledgers, allowing for the cryptographic exchange of value without immediate reconciliation with a central database. Whether through stored-value cards or smartphone-to-smartphone protocols (e.g., NFC, Bluetooth), edge-enabled CBDCs can function autonomously, bridging the gap in areas lacking robust telecommunications infrastructure.
- *Asset Tracking:* Edge computing enables real-time monitoring and tracking of assets for financial service providers working with high-value assets, enhancing security and lowering the risk of loss or theft. This makes it possible for financial organizations to manage their resources more effectively and offer consumers services that are more effective. Additionally, the ability to do predictive maintenance in the financial services industry is greatly facilitated by edge computing. Financial institutions may identify possible problems or abnormalities by utilizing real-time data from IoT devices, which enables them to take proactive measures before situations worsen. This lowers maintenance expenses while improving the dependability and accessibility of crucial financial systems.

BENEFITS

In the context of financial services, edge computing enables ultra-low latency for critical transactions, real-time fraud mitigation, enhanced regulatory compliance, data sovereignty, real-time decision-making, hyper-personalized customer interactions, and robust cybersecurity frameworks. From enabling ultra-low latency high-frequency trading to powering real-time fraud detection and hyper-personalized banking experiences, edge computing is driving operational efficiency and competitive advantage. Other benefits of edge computing in finance include the following [10,12,13]:

- *Cost Reduction:* For financial organizations, edge computing can result in cost reductions. The requirement for enormous data centers is diminished by dispersing processing capacity at the network's edge. Lower infrastructural and operating expenses are the outcome. Financial companies may invest in cutting-edge technology and manage resources more effectively without maintaining massive data centers. Processing data on-site reduces bandwidth usage and transmission-related expenses, offering financial institutions more efficient resource utilization. By minimizing the need for extensive data transfers, edge computing helps manage costs effectively, contributing to overall financial efficiency.
- *Reduced Latency*: In the financial world, every second counts. Data processing becomes nearly instantaneous because of edge computing's dramatic reduction in the time it takes for data to move between devices and servers. Speed is essential for algorithmic trading, where split-second choices may make or break a contract.
- *Automation:* Automated decision-making systems leveraging edge computing can execute risk-mitigation strategies with minimal latency, responding to market events and portfolio changes in real-time. This capability has become increasingly crucial in managing complex derivatives portfolios and ensuring compliance with regulatory risk limits.
- *Improved Customer Experience*: Every second matters in the quick-paced world of finance. By speeding up transaction processing, edge computing financial services are essential for improving the user experience. Edge servers can handle requests quickly and provide real-time replies when a consumer transacts at an ATM or through a mobile banking app. Customer satisfaction rises because of this quick pleasure.
- *Enhanced Reliability:* Decentralizing data processing through edge computing and edge compute devices increases service uptime by reducing reliance on centralized systems. This

decentralization ensures continuous operations even during central data center outages, enhancing the reliability of financial services. Financial institutions can maintain seamless operations, ensuring customer satisfaction and trust.

- *Data Quality:* Edge computing contributes to improved data quality by minimizing the number of handoffs and transformations data undergoes before reaching end-users. By processing data locally and at the point of origin, financial institutions can reduce data lag, ensuring that insights are timely and accurate. With fewer data transfers, there is a lower risk of data loss or corruption, resulting in more reliable and high-quality information. Maintaining data quality is crucial for decision-making processes in finance, especially for tasks like credit scoring, risk management, and customer analytics. Edge computing strengthens data integrity, ensuring that financial institutions operate on accurate, up-to-date information, ultimately empowering better decisions.
- *Data Privacy:* With the increasing importance of data privacy, edge computing and edge compute devices offer a robust solution for securing sensitive financial data. By processing and storing data locally, financial institutions can implement stringent data privacy measures, reducing the risk of data breaches. The ability of edge computing to minimize latency and keep data local is crucial for maintaining compliance with strict financial regulations, particularly concerning data residency and transaction monitoring.
- *Data Security:* Data security in the financial industry is a serious matter. Technology development has created a continual need to be aware of possible cyber risks. Edge computing financial services provide a unique benefit by enabling data to remain localized. This lowers the danger of data breaches while in transit because sensitive financial data will not need to travel great distances to centralized computers. Thanks to edge computing, financial organizations may strengthen their data protection policies by implementing strong security measures at each edge device.
- *Customer Engagement:* With edge computing, financial services can offer real-time customer engagement, enhancing the overall customer experience. By processing data locally, institutions can provide timely and personalized services, meeting the expectations of modern consumers. This capability fosters customer satisfaction and loyalty, driving long-term success in the competitive financial market.
- *Customer Retention*: Understanding customer needs and preferences is essential for banks to deliver personalized offerings and enhance customer satisfaction. Edge computing enables banks to collect and process data from various customer touchpoints, including ATMs, online platforms, and mobile applications. By analyzing this data at the edge, banks can gain valuable insights into customer behavior, spending patterns, and preferences. These insights can then be used to develop targeted marketing campaigns, personalized product recommendations, and tailor-made financial solutions.
- *Real-time Analytics*: Real-time data is highly significant in the finance industry. Thanks to edge computing, financial organizations may run real-time analytics on transaction data, market movements, and client behavior. With the help of this quick analysis, they can make prompt, well-informed judgments, whether they are looking for investment prospects or spotting fraudulent activity.
- *Resilience*: Financial services benefit from an additional degree of resiliency because of edge computing. Edge devices can keep working independently despite network outages or server problems. This guarantees minimum consumer inconvenience even during unplanned outages while continuing to offer vital financial services.
- *Enabling Smart Contracts*: Financial organizations can enable smart contracts using digital transformation services, simplifying complicated financial operations and contract administration. Smart contracts can make transactions quicker and more secure while avoiding intermediaries and reducing fraud. Edge computing can ensure that smart contracts are performed promptly and effectively without centralized servers. Edge computing financial services can also offer real-time data analytics to guarantee that smart contracts are carried out correctly and under proper supervision. Smart contracts can potentially transform the financial sector entirely, and edge computing is essential to making this happen.
- *Optimizing Operations:* The financial sector has been significantly affected by edge computing, and one area where it has excelled is operation optimization. Some solutions that come from edge computing include asset management and predictive maintenance, fraud detection and

prevention, automated regulatory compliance, and boosting trading performance. Asset management and predictive maintenance have greatly benefited from edge computing, and real-time data processing now makes it possible for businesses to monitor their equipment and spot potential problems before they become serious.

CHALLENGES

In spite of its many benefits, the implementation of edge computing in financial industry presents several challenges. The challenges include the following [2,13]:

- S*ecurity*: Security remains paramount in the financial sector, given the highly sensitive nature of the data involved and the severe consequences of breaches. While edge computing enhances data privacy by keeping sensitive information local, it simultaneously expands the organization's physical and digital attack surface. Deploying numerous edge devices across various locations increases the risk of physical tampering and localized cyberattacks. Financial institutions must implement robust security protocols, including zero-trust architectures, end-to-end encryption, and physical security measures for edge hardware, to mitigate these risks.
- *Regulatory Compliance*: The financial industry is governed by stringent regulations regarding data privacy and residency, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union. Cloud computing often complicates compliance due to cross-border data transfers. Edge computing aids compliance by facilitating data processing and storage within national borders, ensuring data sovereignty. However, managing compliance across a highly distributed network of edge devices requires sophisticated orchestration and consistent policy enforcement to ensure all nodes adhere to relevant legal standards.
- *Complexity:* Deploying and managing a highly distributed network of edge servers requires significant capital investment and introduces substantial architectural complexity. Integrating these decentralized nodes with legacy banking systems and ensuring seamless interoperability remains a technical challenge.
- *Heterogeneous Environments:* Financial institutions often employ a mix of hardware and software solutions from various vendors. In an edge computing setup, ensuring that diverse devices, communication protocols, and proprietary software can communicate seamlessly is a major hurdle. This lack of interoperability complicates integration efforts, increases deployment costs, and can lead to vendor lock-in.
- *Lack of Standards*: The industry needs to move toward open standards and application programming interfaces (APIs) that facilitate interoperability between different edge devices and cloud platforms. However, achieving industry-wide consensus on these standards remains an ongoing process.
- *Integration:* Integrating edge computing infrastructure with legacy banking systems presents a significant technical hurdle. Financial institutions often operate on complex, heterogeneous IT environments. Deploying and managing a distributed network of edge nodes requires advanced Edge Management and Orchestration (EMO) platforms to provide centralized oversight, automate updates, and ensure system resilience.

FUTURE OF EDGE COMPUTING IN FINANCE

The adoption of edge computing is expected to grow as financial institutions explore new ways to enhance customer experience, optimize data management, and improve operational efficiency. The future will likely see more sophisticated edge computing applications, such as AI-driven analytics on the edge, which can predict customer needs and provide instant financial solutions. Additionally, edge computing will continue to evolve with 5G, enabling even faster data transfer speeds and new possibilities for financial service delivery. As financial institutions continue to navigate digital transformation, the integration of edge computing with AI and 5G will further catalyze innovation.

Looking ahead, the convergence of edge computing with blockchain technology is expected to further decentralize financial processing, offering enhanced security and transparency for digital currencies and smart contracts. Ultimately, the integration of edge computing will create a more resilient, efficient, and inclusive global financial ecosystem. As we continue to push the boundaries of what is possible in financial services, edge computing will be a key enabler, allowing us to innovate, improve, and inspire change across the banking landscape [2,14].

CONCLUSION

The implementation of edge computing in financial services is not merely an IT infrastructure upgrade; it is a strategic enabler for various mission-critical applications.

In the competitive world of banking IT, edge computing is not just an option but a strategic

imperative. Edge computing holds immense potential to revolutionize the financial services industry by enabling ultra-low latency applications, enhancing real-time analytics, and improving customer experiences.

However, the journey toward a fully realized edge computing architecture is fraught with challenges. Financial institutions must rigorously address security vulnerabilities inherent in distributed networks, navigate complex data sovereignty regulations, manage significant operational complexities, and overcome interoperability hurdles. Beyond traditional banking and trading, edge computing is poised to play a pivotal role in the evolution of decentralized financial systems. Financial institutions that embrace edge computing will be well-positioned to offer innovative, customer-centric services that meet the demands of today's fast-paced digital economy. More information on edge computing in finance can be found in the book in [15,16].

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Figure 1 The symbol of edge computing [1].

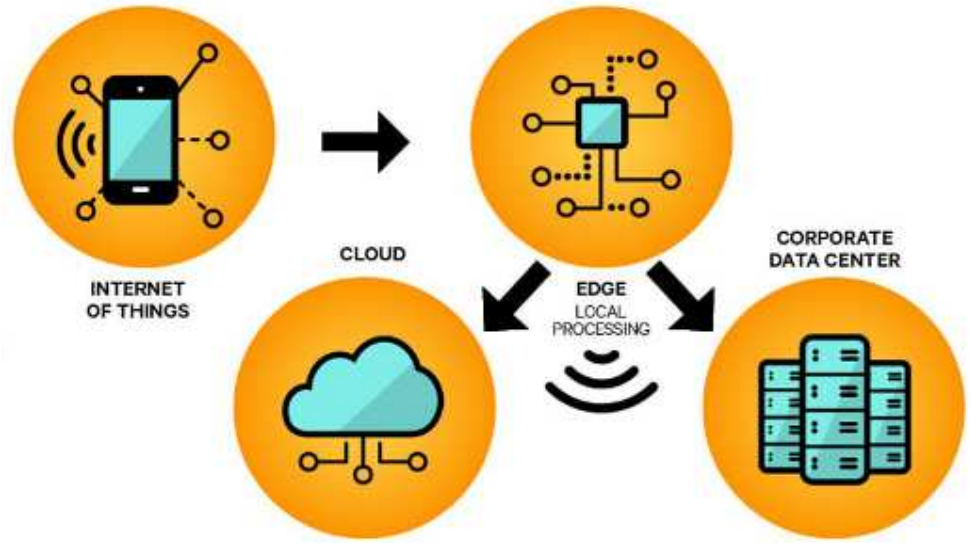

Figure 2 How edge computing works [3].

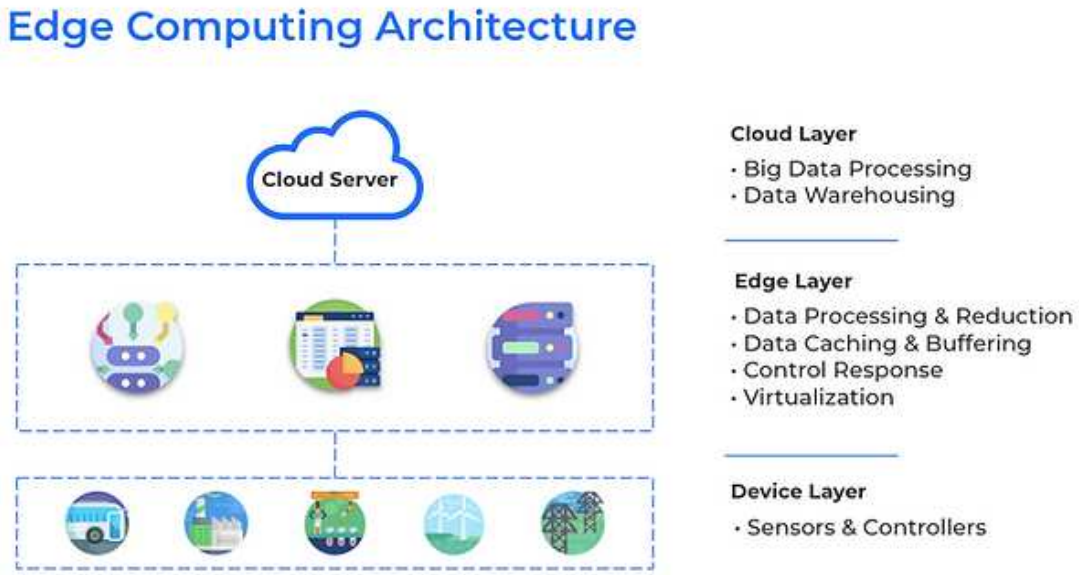

Figure 3 Edge computing architecture [6].

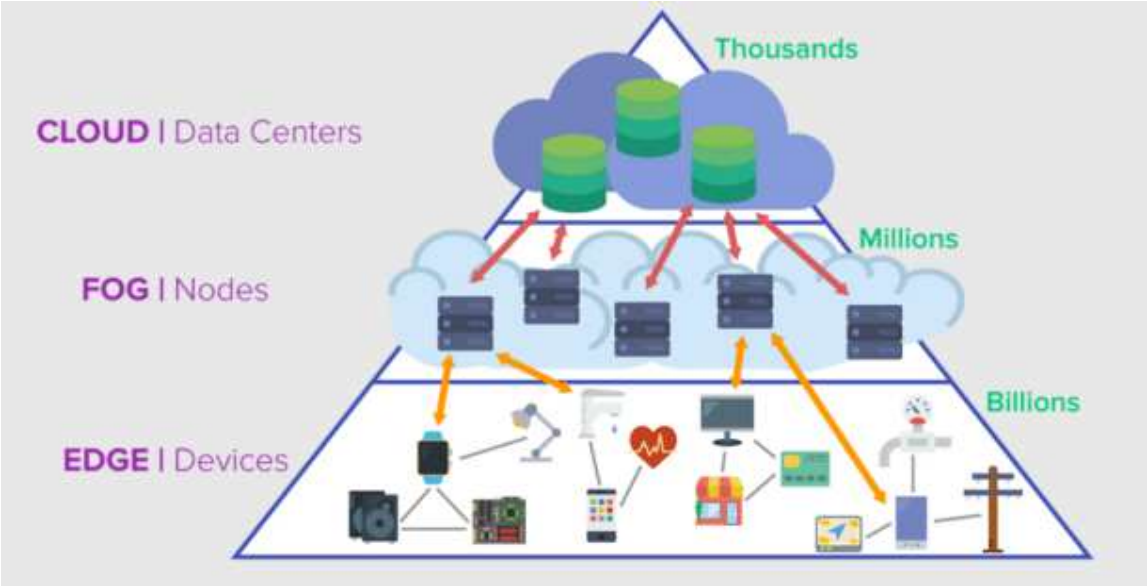

Figure 4 The relationship between cloud computing, edge computing, and fog computing [7].

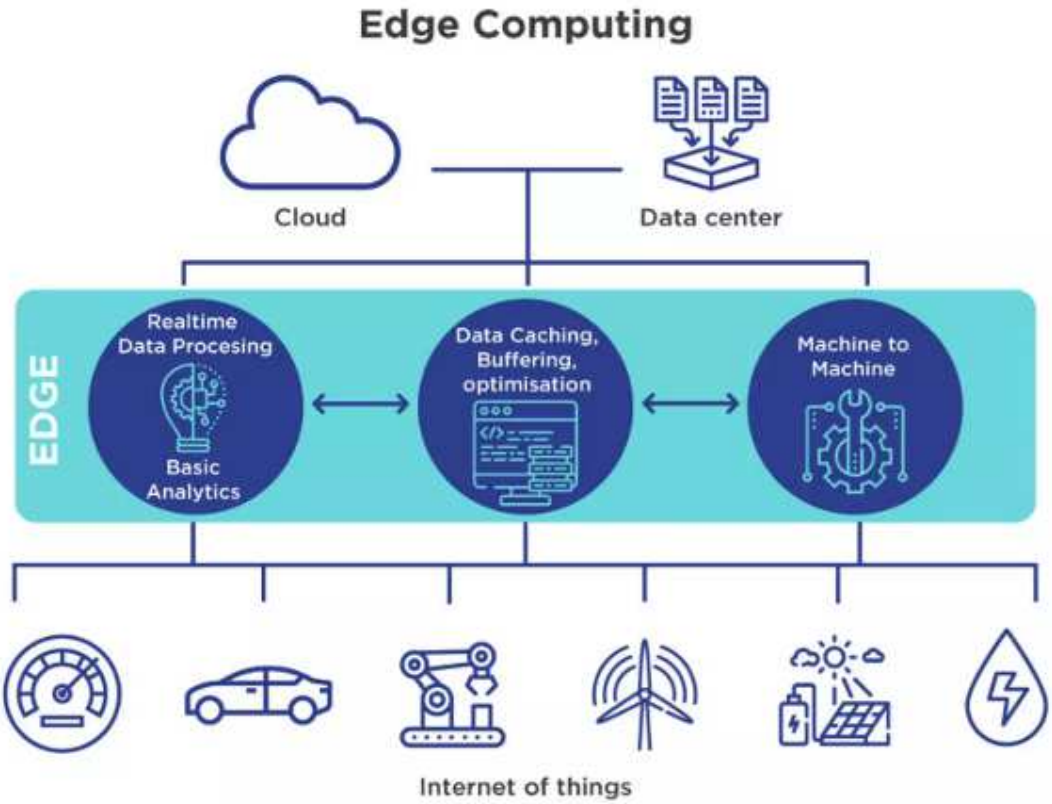

Figure 5 Edge computing [9].

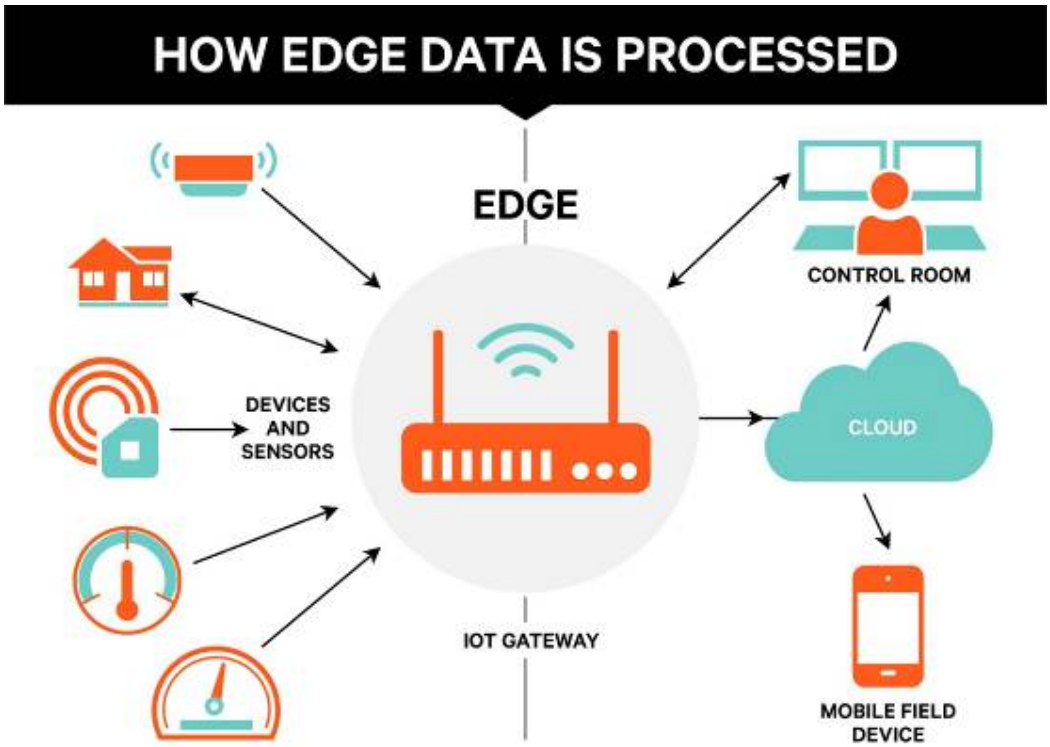

Figure 6 How edge data is processed [3].

Figure 7 How edge computing is a game changer for financial institutions [11].