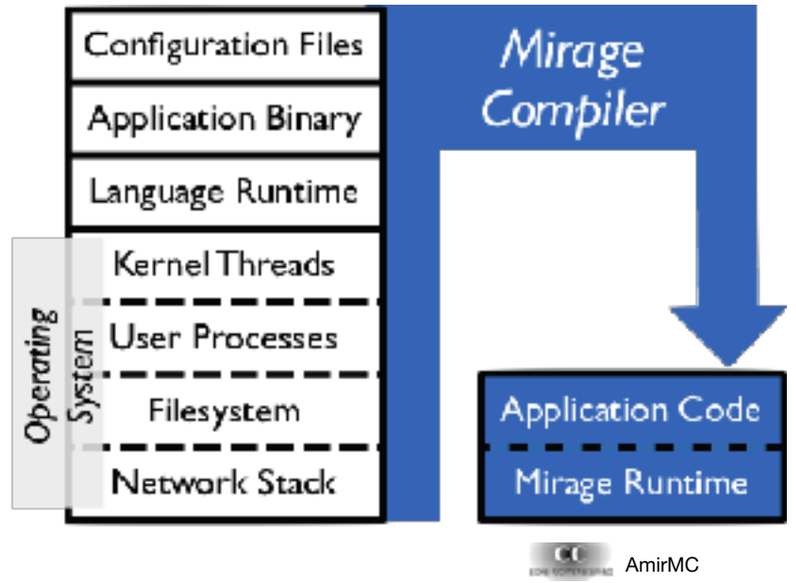
Compute-First Networking (CFN)

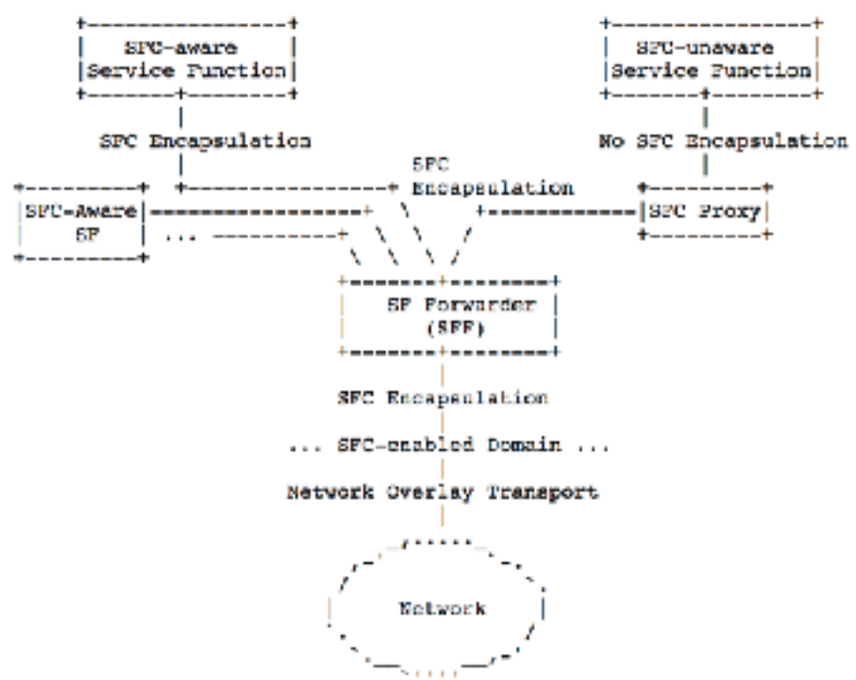
Dirk Kutscher
Huawei

Inspired by discussions with Dave Oran, Jianfei He, Cedric Westphal, Lixia Zhang, Jeff Burke, Eve Schooler and many others

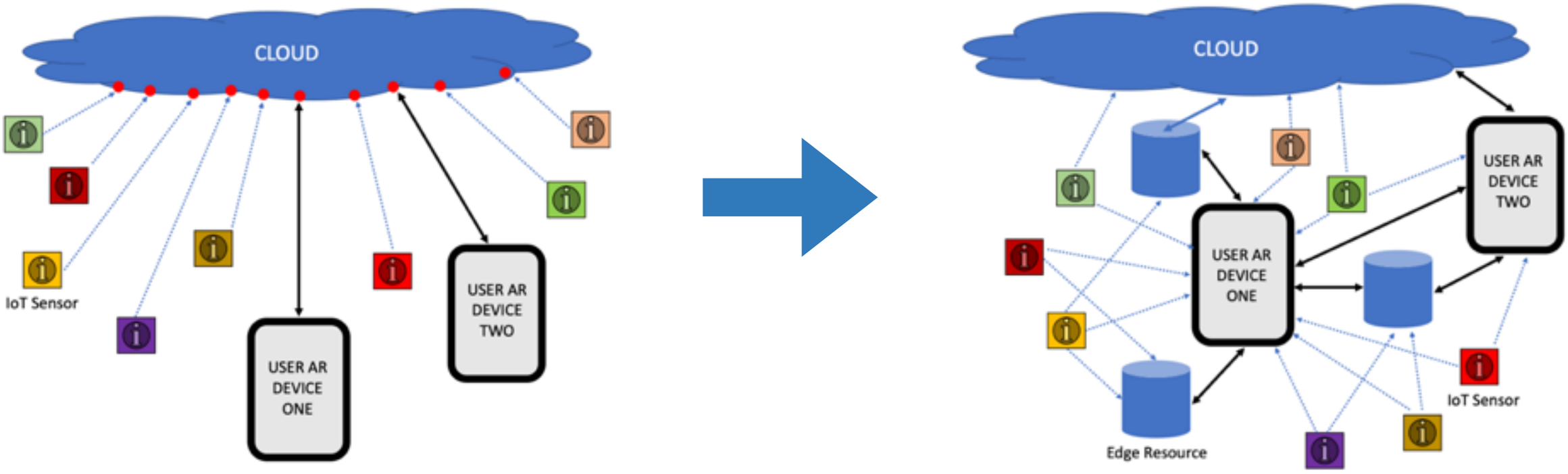
Cannot Leverage Computation in Networks Today

- **Significant advances in making computation available, affordable, programmable**
  - Virtualization: big leaps from host virtualisation to unikernels, lambda expression evaluation engines
  - Application layer frameworks for data processing, microservice architectures, virtualized network automation
- **Networking is lacking behind**
  - Connection-based communication and security model: cannot introduce computation without breaking security and introducing significant overhead
  - IP address-based communication: leads to static and difficult to manage networked computation (“service function chaining”) — not applicable to dynamic, mobile environments
  - No concept for computation on data plane: leads to complex orchestration and management frameworks



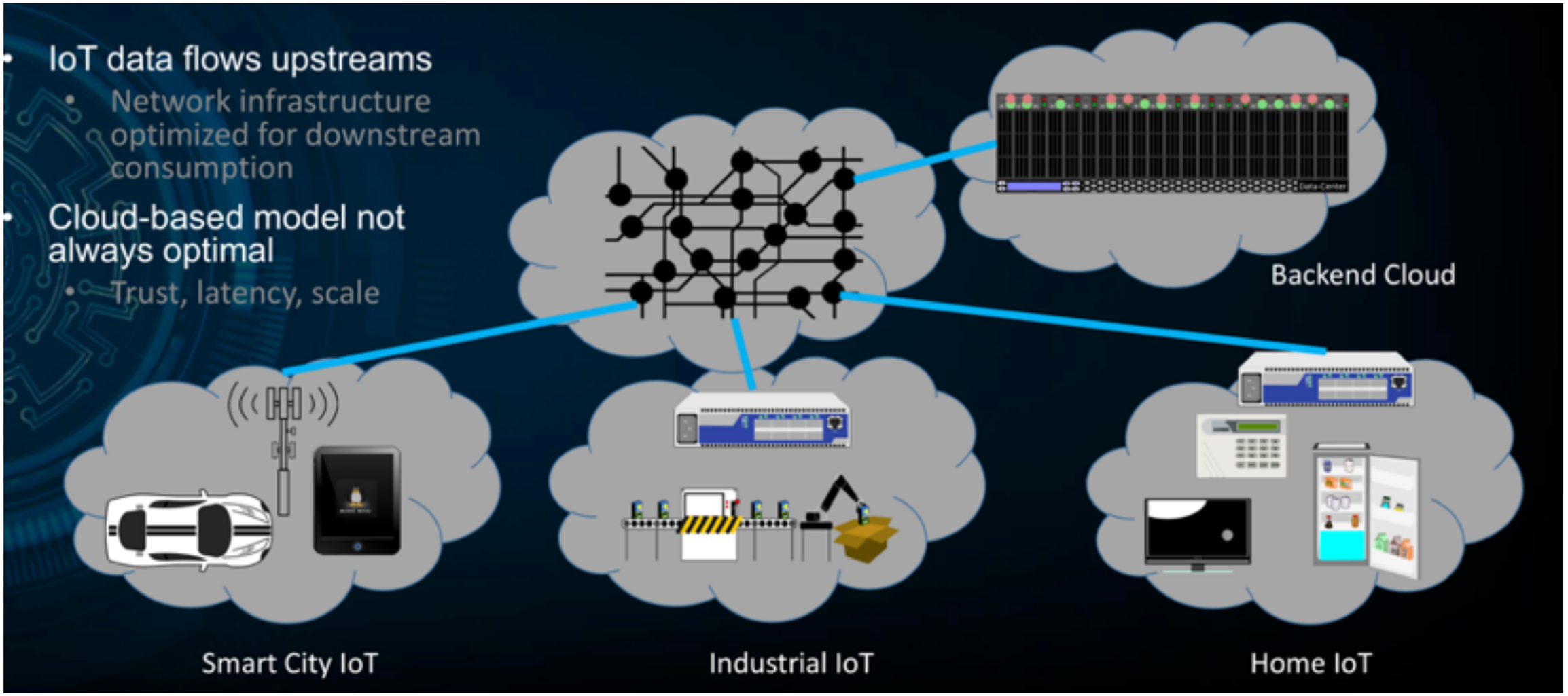


Extended AR



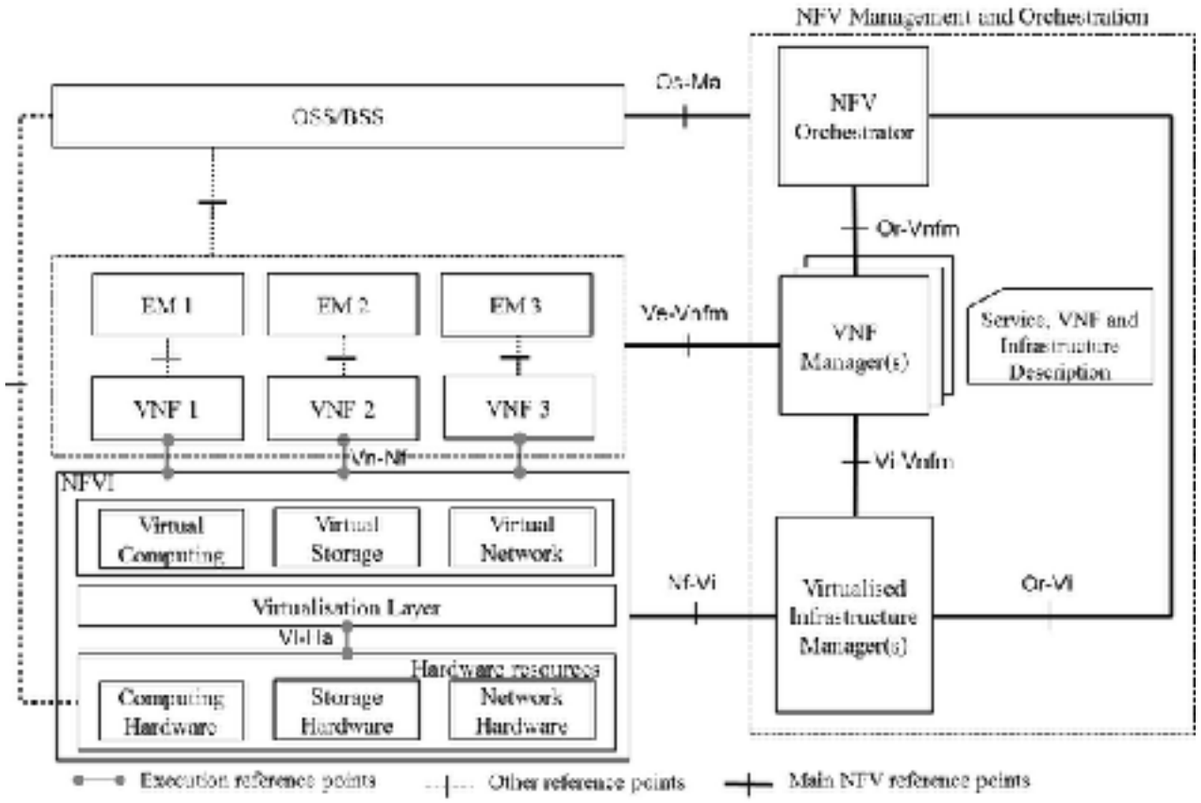
Lemuel Soh, Jeff Burke, Lixia Zhang; Supporting Augmented Reality (AR): Looking Beyond Performance; ACM SIGCOMM 2018 Workshop on Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality (VR/AR Network 2018)

Upstream Data Processing



Also cf. Srikathyayani Srikanteswara, Jeff Foerster, Eve Schooler:
ICN-WEN Information Centric-Networking in Wireless Edge Networks;
Presentation at ICNRG@IETF-98, March 2017
https://www.ietf.org/proceedings/98/slides/slides-98-icnrg-information-centric-networking-in-wireless-edge-networks-eve-schooler-00.pdf

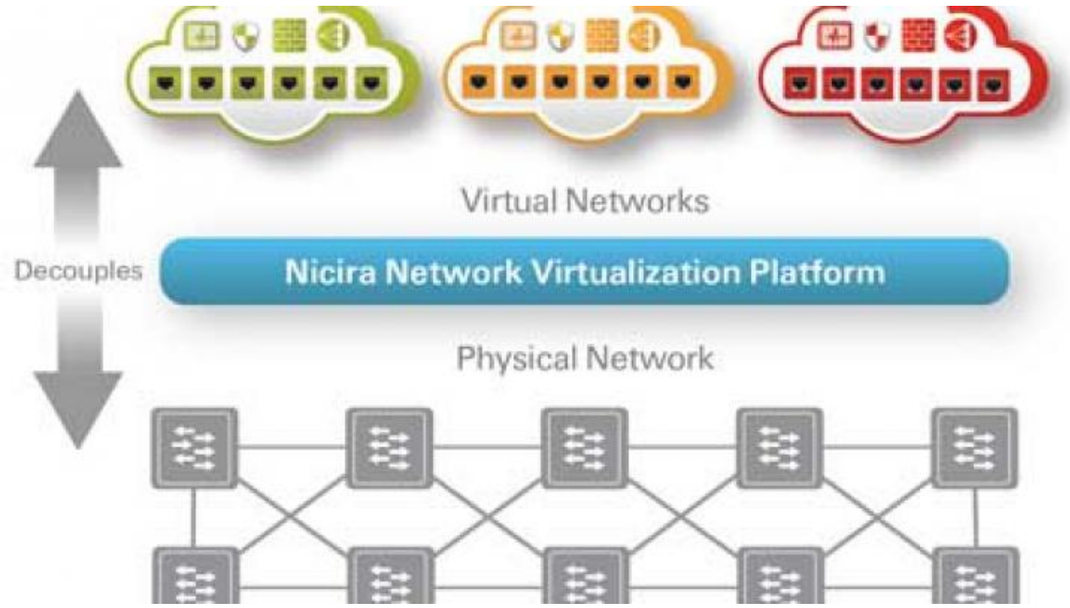
Different Perspectives on Compute & Networking

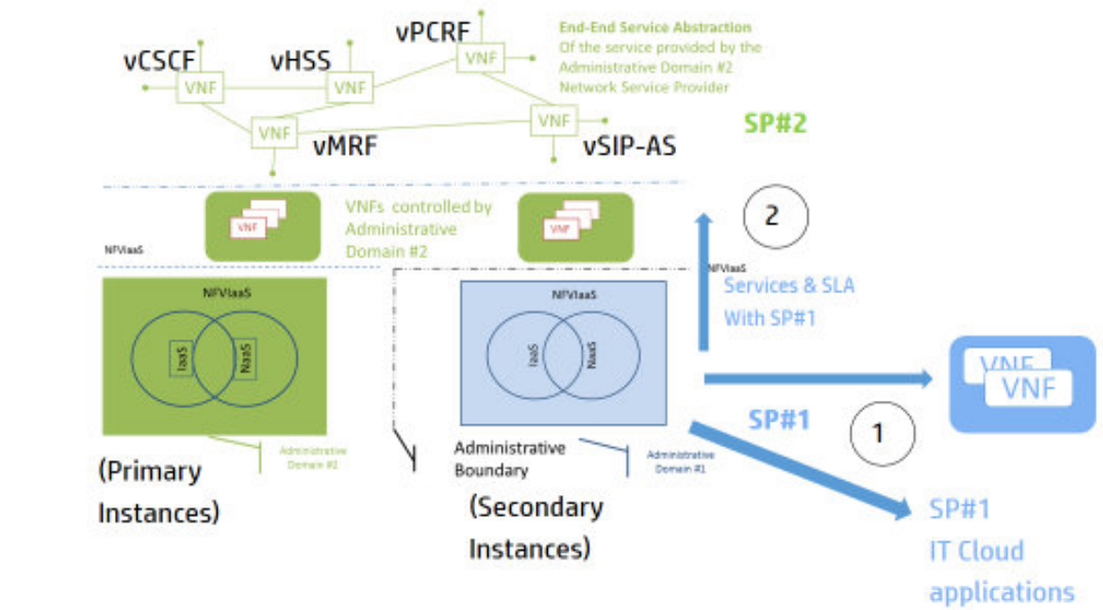


(Virtualized) Compute Servers in Networks

Networked Computations

Old-School In-Network-Computing





Data centers

- Virtual networks providing connectivity in private networks (per tenant/app)
- Workload migration and upscaling
- Networking has to follow server/VM location
- No joint optimization

Telco Core

- Virtual networks providing connectivity in private networks (per tenant/app)
- Workload migration and upscaling
- Networking has to follow server/VM location
- Connectivity dictated by telco function requirements
- Some manual optimization (co-location, chaining)
- No automatic joint optimization

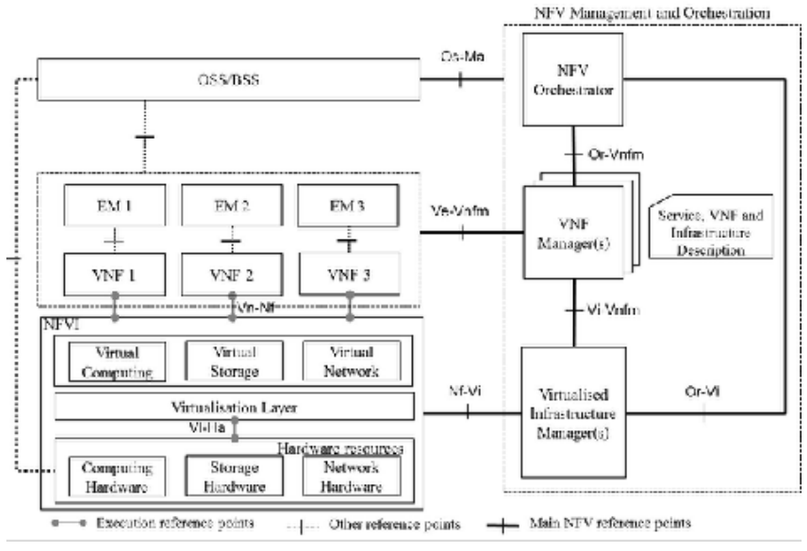
Old-School In-Network-Computing

Computing & Networking — different worlds

- **Technically**
  - DC: Virtual servers instantiated by OpenStack — virtual network has to connect them
  - Mobile Edge: Application VM containers with overlay connection to cloud — overlay on telco tunnelling-based mobility management
- **Culturally & organizationally**
  - Application development: APIs treat Internet as local network — agnostic to topology, indirect reaction to performance degradation
  - Network just infrastructure

CFN: Joint Optimization of Computing and Networking

- Holistic resource management
  - Network capacity
  - Compute resources
  - Storage
- Multi-dimensional requirements/ preferences sets
  - App developer
  - User
  - Network operator



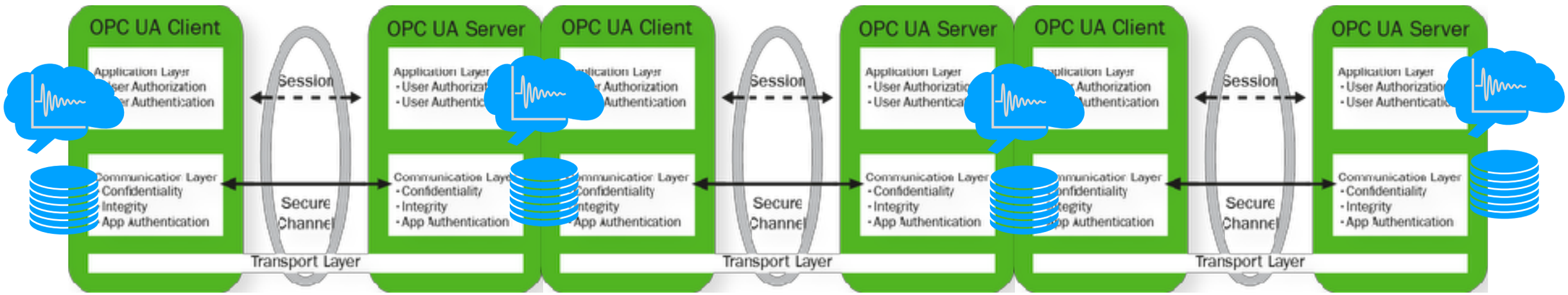
(Virtualized) Compute Servers in Networks

Networked Computations

Previous Work

- Compute servers (physical or virtual)
- Stream processing
- Microservice architectures
- RPC, CORBA
- Active Networking

In-Network Computing With Client-Server Protocols



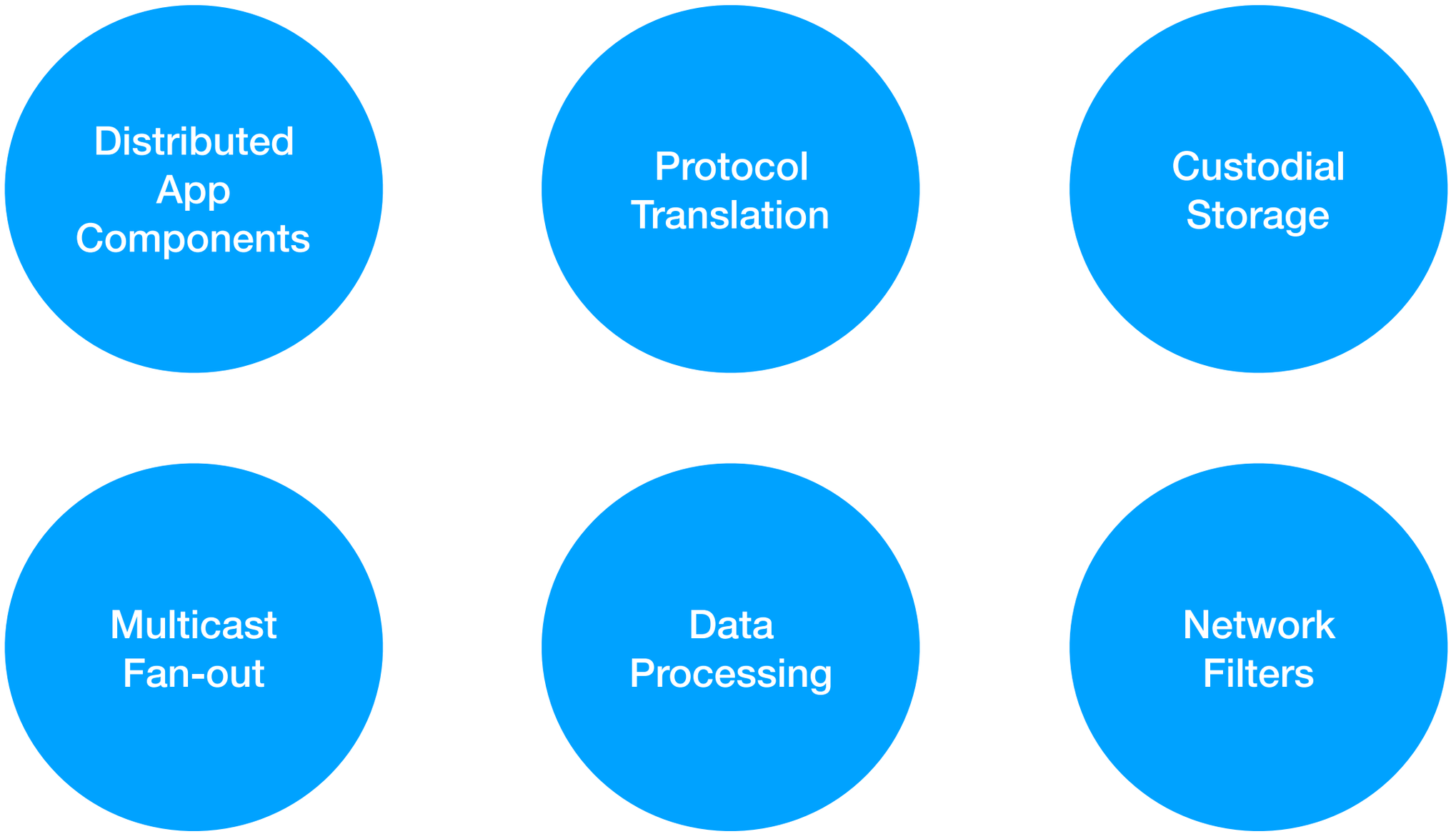
- Overlays
  - Connection-based security
  - Client-server / broker-based
- Limited Scalability
  - Pub-sub distribution to many clients through single-server bottleneck
- Limited efficiency
  - Cannot share data directly
- Limited performance and robustness
  - Network cannot assist data dissemination
  - Compute cannot consider network conditions

Adding a little computation to a data kiosk system is not exactly distributed computing

Joint Optimization of Networking and Computing Resources

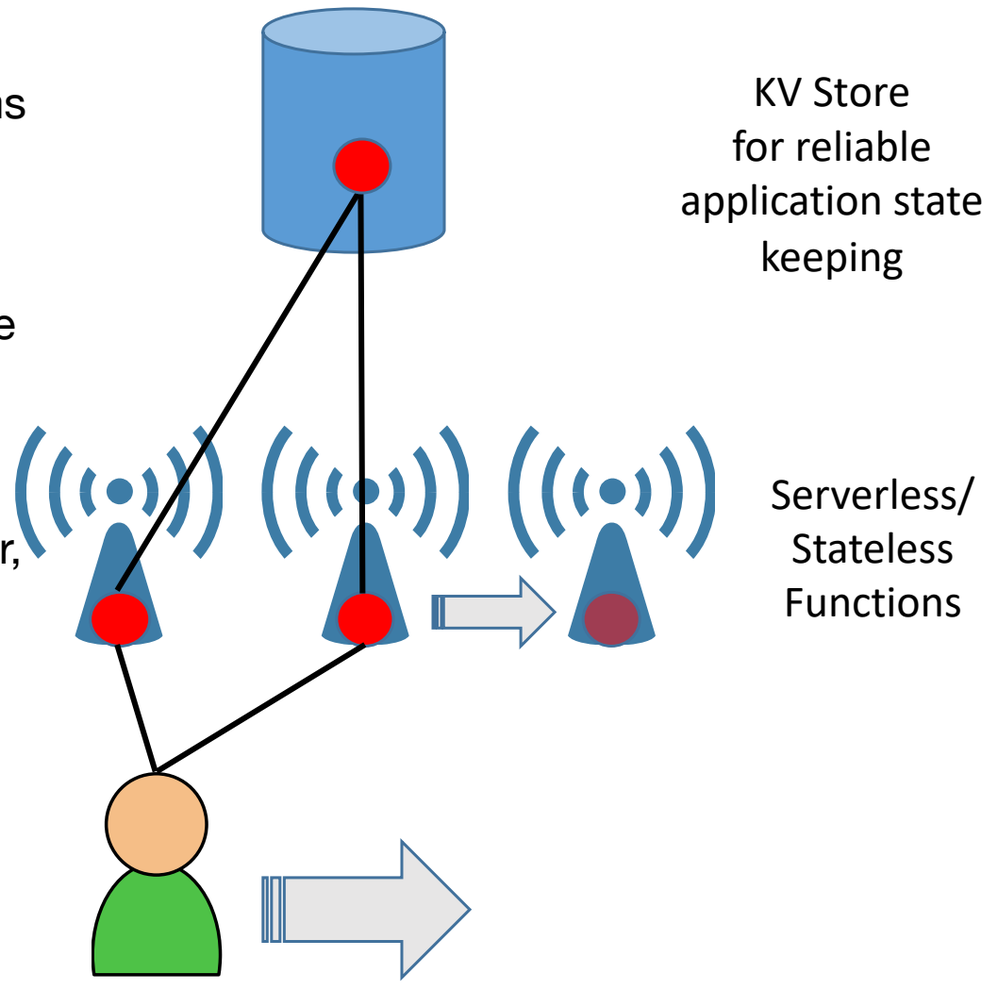
- Do not require fixed locations of data and computation
- Can lay out processing graphs flexibly – meeting requirements optimally
- Sometimes we can move functions (close to big data assets)
- At other times we gradually move data where it is needed (e.g., where specific computations run)
- Conditions may change dynamically and constantly: CFN network to adapt to application requirements, network conditions etc.

CFN Scope


Distributed App Components
Protocol Translation
Custodial Storage
Multicast Fan-out
Data Processing
Network Filters

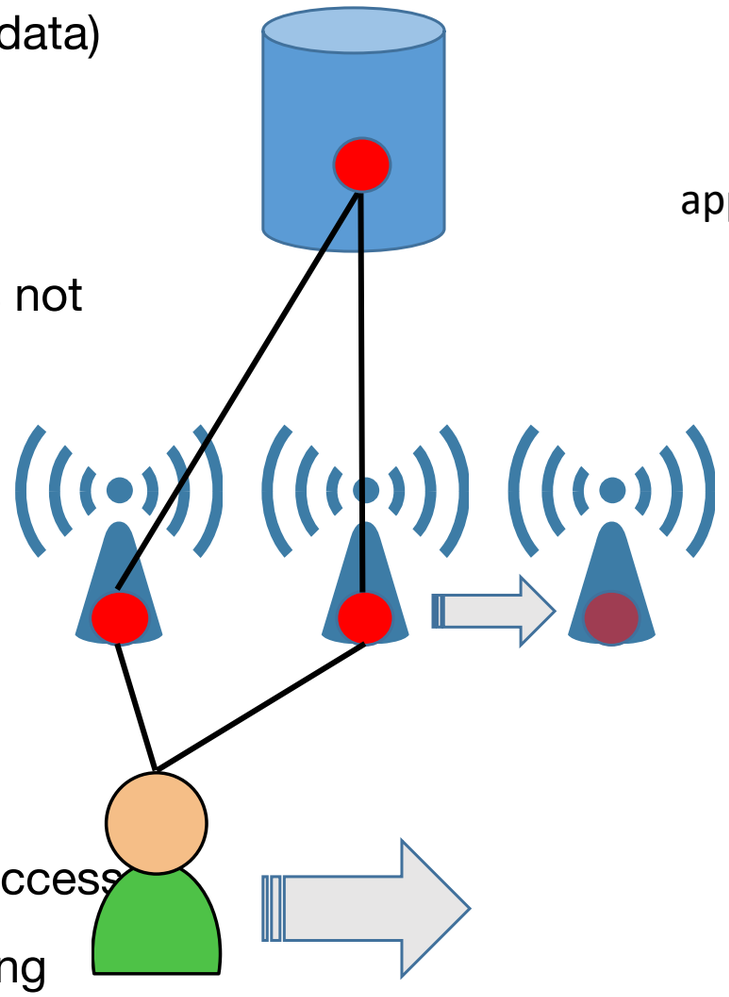
Serverless CFN

- **Serverless does not mean „no servers“**
  - It means decoupling the execution from specific server platforms
  - It also does not mean „no state“
  - It means application state lives independent of function instance
- **Powerful concept for CFN**
  - We can position stateless functions where needed (close to user, following the user etc.) – guaranteeing low latency, good scalability etc.
  - State can be kept somewhere else – in KV stores, in a synchronized set of app components
  - A new instance of a stateless function can access (and potentially modify) that state
  - Function instantiations would follow REST principles



Serverless CFN

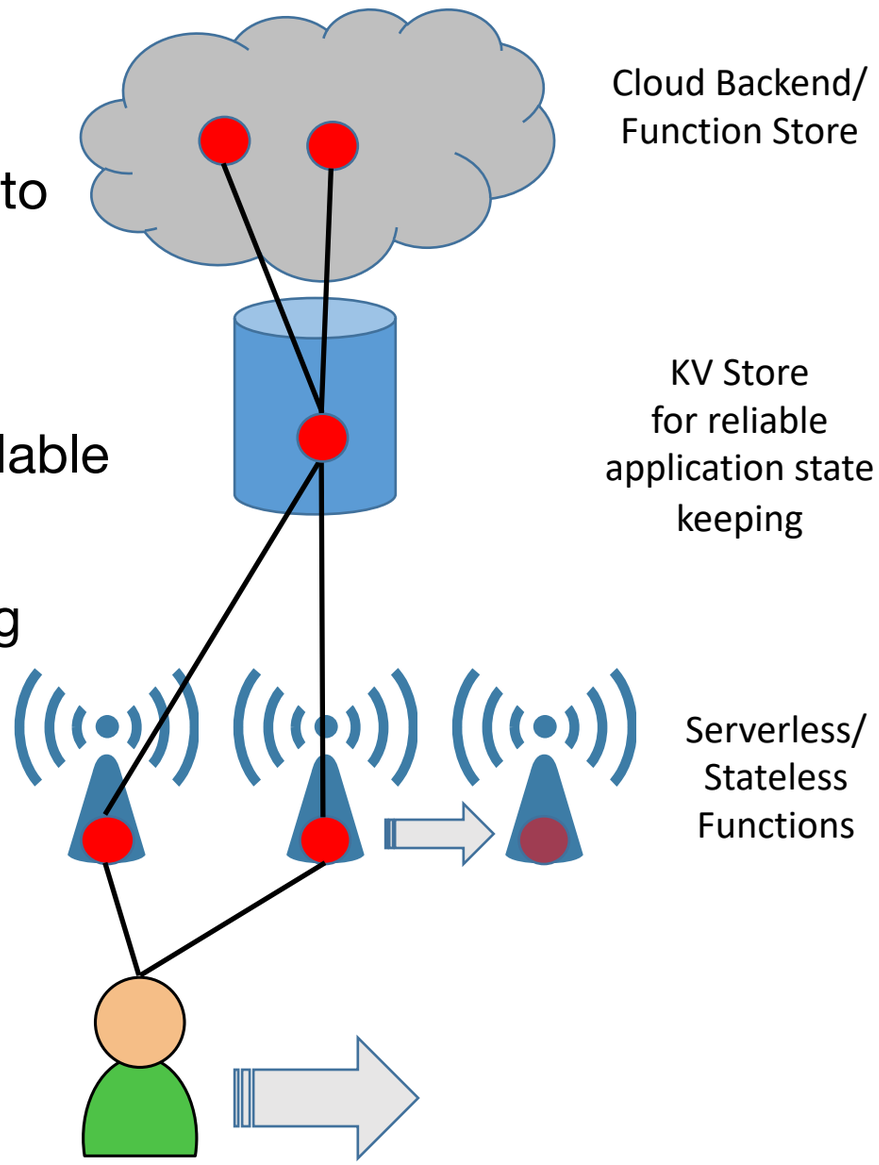
- **Serveless functions can follow users as needed**
  - Pro-active instantiation, even pro-active invoking (and result caching)
  - Pro-active resolution of dependencies (other functions, input data)
- **Session state can be kept independent**
  - But at convenient locations in the network
  - KV stores can be centralized DB or distributed system – does not matter
- **Function instances can be shared (invoked) by many users**
- **Some data (including computation results) can be shared by multiple users**
  - Overall CFN can optimize in several dimensions
  - Move stateless functions close to user
  - Have working set of relevant data available with low latency access
  - Improve throughput by cloning stateless functions and enabling parallel execution, seamless handover etc.
  - Pro-actively move functions/data in times of imminent network. disruptions



This is what we mean by joint optimization!

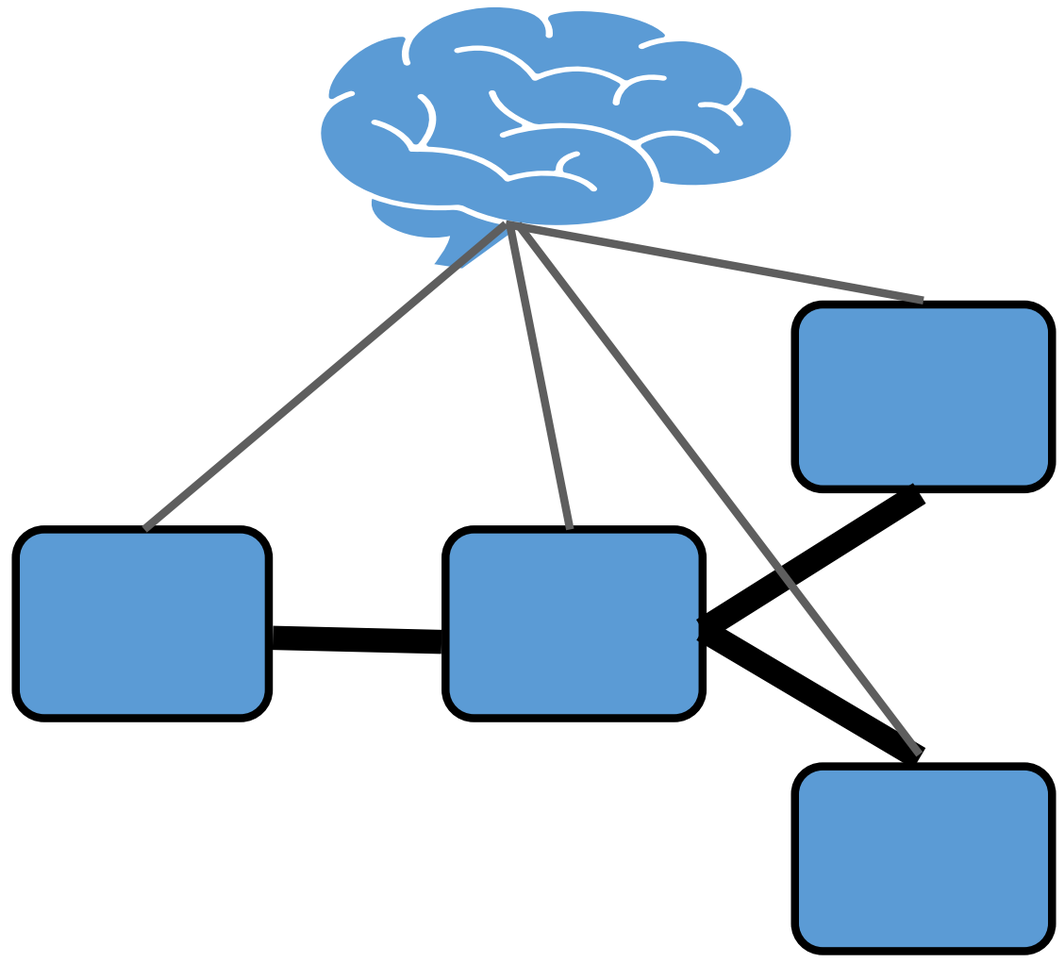
Data Logistics in CFN

- Constantly moving around session state and function parameters could be costly
- Yes, that‘s why CFN should have intrinsic mechanisms to support this
- Accessing data by name & caching data in the network
  - Frequently used data objects are automatically available close to user (or any functions that needs them)
  - Objects can be replicated as needed and forwarding can adapt (joint optimization...)
  - Transparent service to functions (i.e., they don‘t have to search for data etc.)
- Homoiconicity: function code is data
  - Same access principles and mechanisms
  - Same cacheability and efficiency gains



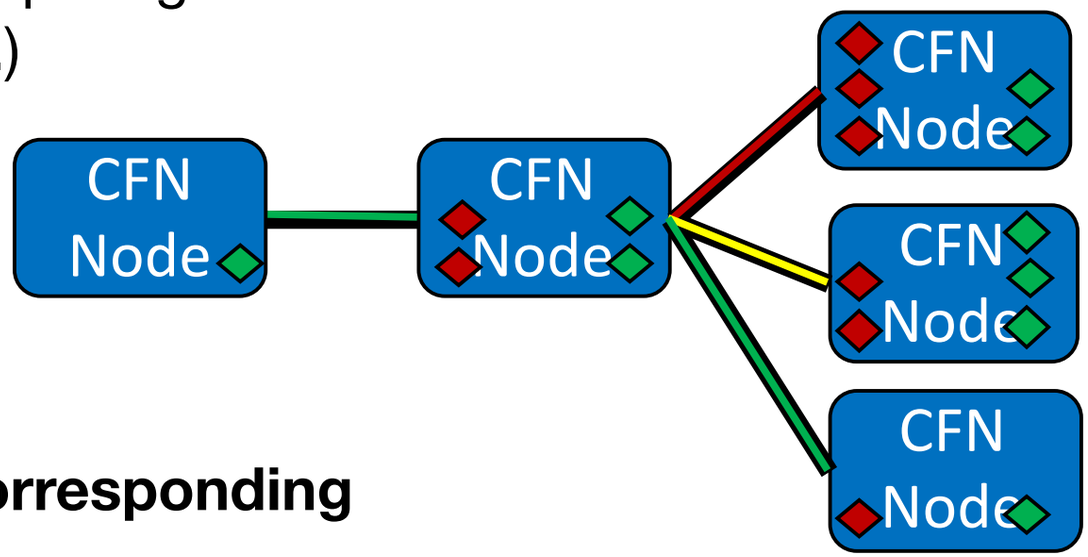
CFN Joint Optimization

- In a dynamic, multi-tenant system
- With unpredictable load on networks and compute notes
- Without being able to predict effects precisely
- Could be an NP-complete problem
- At least not likely to scale



CFN Empowered Data Plane

- **Concept of CFN Data Plane: empower data plane to support optimal app installation and function execution**
  - Control/feedback loops that consider computing and networking resources (joint optimization…)
  - Enable network to react to congestion, dynamic load by making smart forwarding decisions, restructuring forwarding graphs etc.



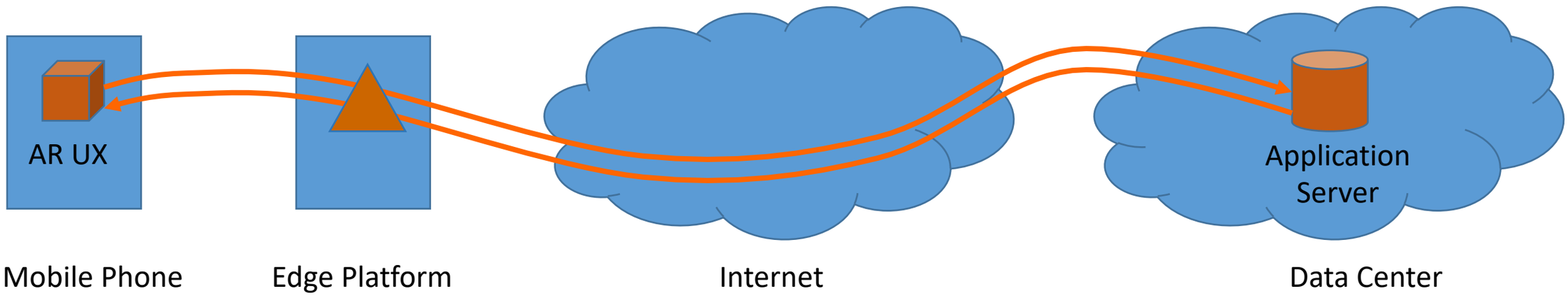
- **Does not exclude operator policies and corresponding configurations**
  - Need to find good balance between in-band control and orchestration
  - But don‘t build a system that requires orchestration for everything

CFN Data Plane

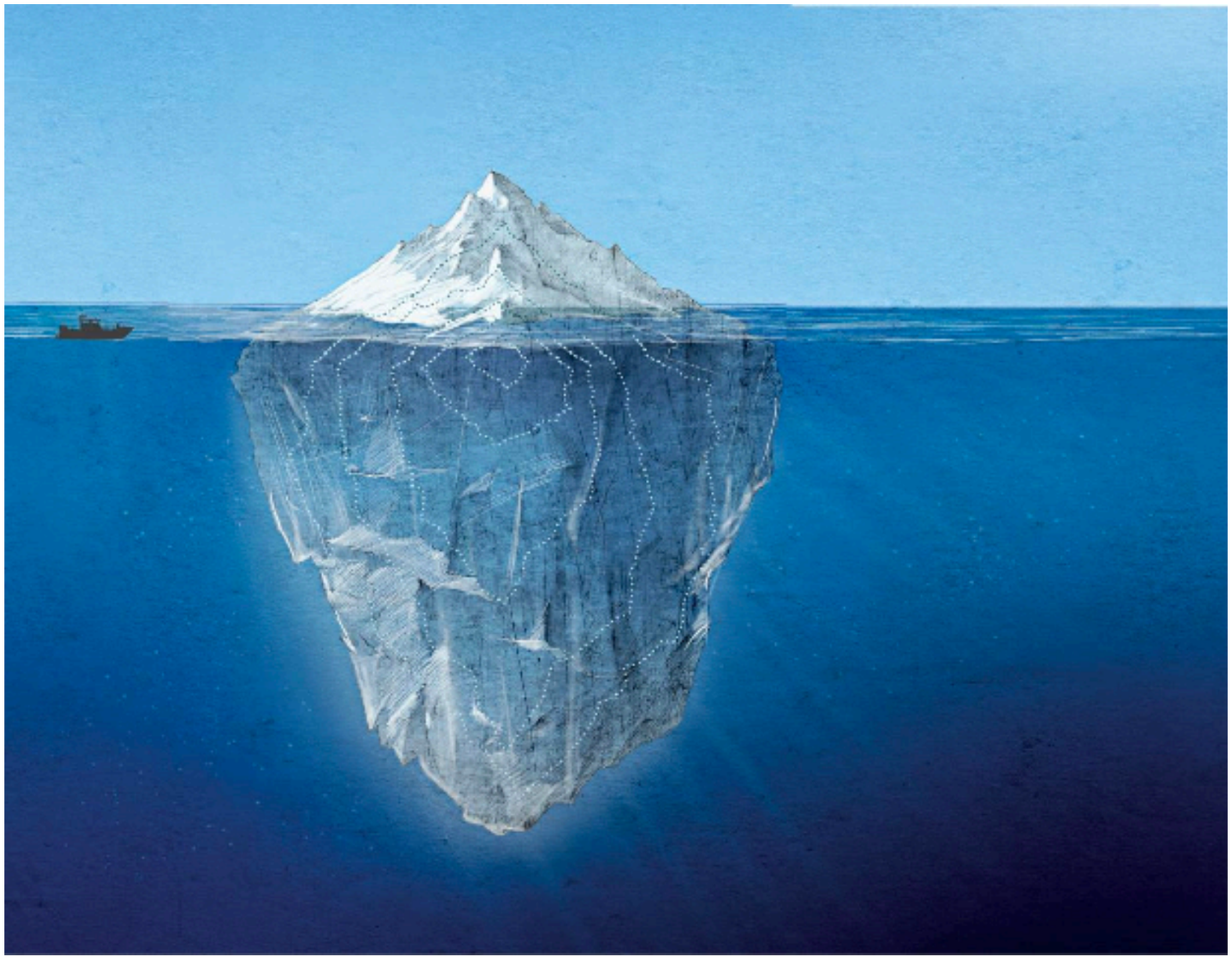
Moving some functions from overlay (or app layer) to network layer

- Load balancing
    - Extend forwarder load-balancing for forwarding computation requests
    - Holistic view on load — server load *and* network load
- Failure resiliency
    - Routing state for multiple instances of a function in the network
    - Do fail-over implicitly through forwarding (and forwarding strategies)
- Result sharing and dissemination strategies
    - Caching computation results
    - Pub-sub

CFN Protocols vs. Platforms

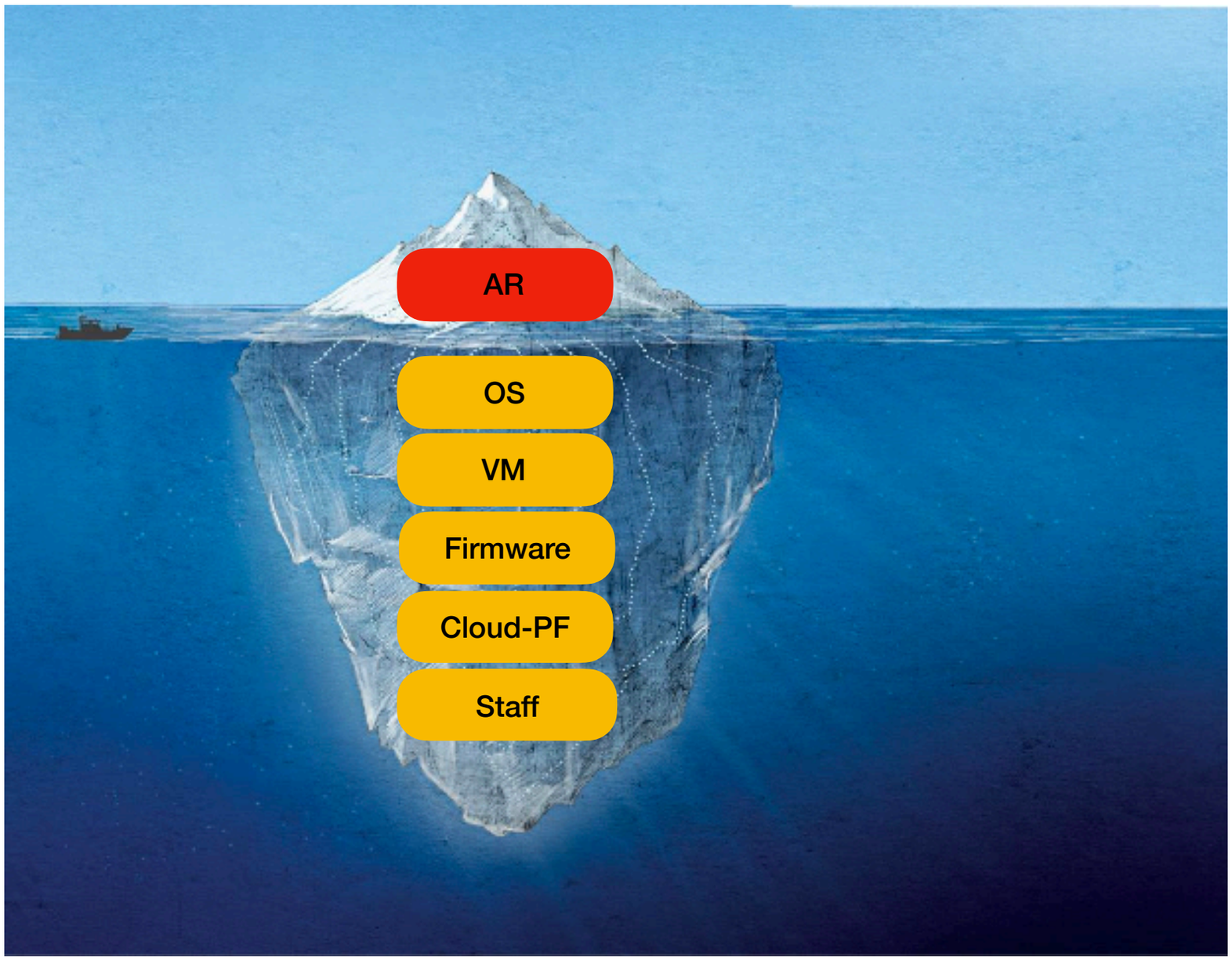


- Like to think that CFN is platform-agnostic
  - Could contradict with code mobility features
  - Might have to converge on sandbox for common classes of functions
  - Maybe still allowing for “bare metal”, specific HW platforms…



Preserving Privacy

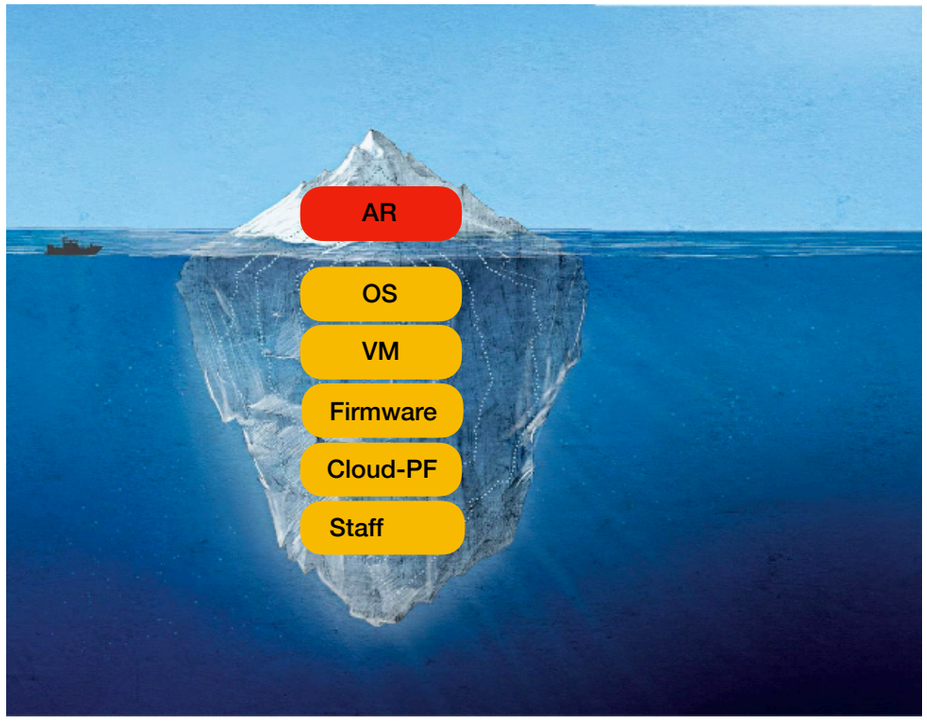
Preserving Privacy



Jon Crowcroft et al.; Privacy Preserving Cloud Computing work at University of Cambridge

Preserving Privacy

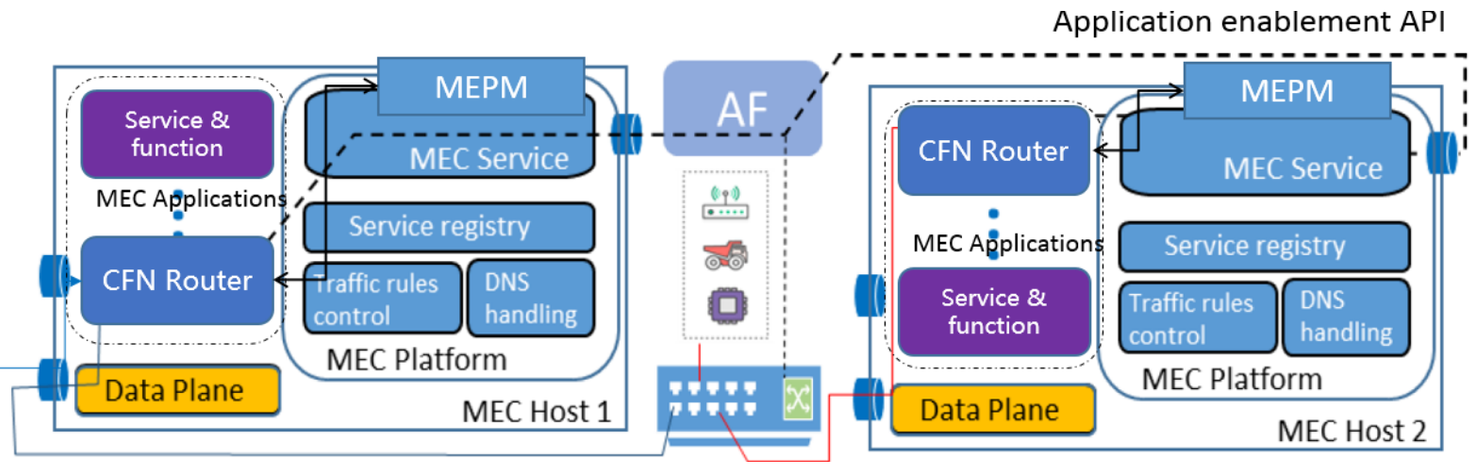
- Trustable platforms will be critical for many applications
- Application will not want to run software on telco-operator platforms they cannot trust
- Users would not want to use the system without any assurance of data protection
- Two features deemed relevant:
  - Protocol and data security & privacy (later)
  - Trusted Execution Environments (TEEs)



Protocol and Data Security

- Connection security vs. dynamic computation in a network
- End-to-end transport semantics vs. end-to-end trust in data and computation results

Running Code



"*Best Technical Contribution Award*" at *China's First MEC Open Platform Hackathon* hosted in Beijing on Sept. 18, 2018