jamstack

Is Jamstack Officially Finished?

Brian Rinaldi | Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Earlier this week, Netlify officially killed The Jamstack Community Discord. It was a rather abrupt end, with little more than a week's notice. Here's a portion of the announcement:

> "Over time, we have noticed a decline in activity and engagement within the server. After careful consideration, we have come to the decision to sunset the Jamstack Discord. First and foremost, this does **not** mean the end of the Jamstack community. In fact, it is quite the opposite. We believe it's important to focus our energy and resources on areas where our community remains vibrant and active, like in the various projects and other communities out there doing wonderful things on the web. Sunsetting the Jamstack Discord server will allow us to concentrate our efforts on those spaces, fostering stronger connections and having more meaningful conversations."

The post ended with a list of other communities folks could join, but, with only one exception, they were all tool specific Discord servers for Astro, Eleventy, Next, SolidJS and Svelte. (The exception was [The New Dynamic slack community](#) which, I seem to recall, has existed since before the term Jamstack and is still active.)

More importantly, Netlify, the creator and stewards of the term Jamstack including it's [canonical site](#), has largely abandoned the term as well, in favor of a "composable web" term that better aligns with their ambitions around becoming a broader enterprise platform including content (with tools like Netlify Connect).

So, despite the post ending the Discord notes that the Jamstack community is not dead, is it actually?

What was Jamstack in 2023?

Every year for the past few years, I've written a post discussing what Jamstack is as we enter the year. This is because the definition has continued to shift to accommodate new tools, new services and new platform features. This past year, I discussed how recent changes to the definition had made it more vague leading me to the conclusion:

> *"Jamstack has become more of a "community" than a set of architectural rules.*
>
> *I don't say that to devalue it.*
>
> *This community builds things a thousand different ways but each of them have overlapping interests in a common sets of tools, services, strategies and architectures. I can read an article or book about Jamstack, go to a conference about Jamstack, join a meetup about Jamstack, get a newsletter about Jamstack and I know that I will gain information that is applicable to what I am building. There's huge value in that, even if the definition is vague and not prescriptive in any manner."*

I made much the same argument on The Shop Talk Podcast in February.

But does that conclusion stand up today? Perhaps not.

What defines community?

It's not that I am trying to overstate the importance of the Jamstack Discord. It is correct that activity and interaction had fallen off on that site (and spam had increased) ever since the community lost its full-time steward within Netlify. But this loss of a steward and subsequent inactivity were obviously symptomatic of larger problem and it is a problem that tool-specific Discord's cannot fix.

The most relevant dictionary definition of community is:

> *"a body of persons of common and especially professional interests scattered through a larger society"*

But what ultimately turns a disparate group of professionals (i.e. developers) into a community (i.e. Jamstack community) is communication and connection. Everyone working within their own silos, even if they share common interests, does not make a community. And right now there is

no means remaining of connecting those folks in whatever was once a Jamstack community. The meetups are dead, the conference appears to be gone (no 2023 date has been announced) and now the Discord is gone.

Yes, many of these same people may be on the tool-specific communities, but what made them part of a larger Jamstack community was the connections beyond each specific tool. As I said earlier this year:

> *"There are thousands of permutations of the above and no two sites may have the same stack or architecture, but there are clearly a bunch of overlapping interests for the developers building these sites regardless. For example, you may be using Nuxt while I use Eleventy, but I can still learn about using Supabase from/with you."*

This kind of connection can't happen in an Astro or Nuxt or Eleventy specific community.

What does this mean?

Honestly, this is all ultimately has little impact on how developers do their jobs, whether they considered themselves Jamstack developers or not. But when it comes to those connections, it probably means a deepening siloing of developers around their specific tools. It likely also means that things like the books, events and other resources that tried to target the broader community across these tools are unlikely to continue as developers no longer use or identify with the term Jamstack.

I, myself, will likely retire using the term anymore, even as I don't have a replacement. I do think newsletters like [Jamstacked](#) (though probably with a new name) and events like [TheJam.dev](#) are still relevant for folks as they have recently tended to focus on full stack web development using JavaScript – so things like full-stack JavaScript ecosystem frameworks/tools and serverless and edge computing, none of which have become less relevant. We'll see how this continues to evolve and whether new terminology is created or even needed.

The point is, the term seems to be dead but the tools and technologies it encompassed are still very much alive.

Goodbye, Jamstack. It was a fun.