

Why your future digital ID should harness blockchain technology

 By [Colin Thornton](#)

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In the aftermath of the far-reaching Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data scandal and other, large-scale data leaks, it is undoubtedly time to adopt a more proactive approach to protecting our identities online.



Source: pixabay.com

Indeed, with rates of cybercrime reaching alarming new heights, nobody can afford to remain complacent. Reports indicate that, as cyber fraud becomes ever more profitable, more malware is being launched than ever before: 230,000 new malware samples/day.

Conventional identity protection methods online include passwords and two-factor authentication. Yet these methods are increasingly ineffective, with a large number of people still using very easily hackable passwords. Admittedly, biometrics has been proposed as a solution, but it's an expensive route and hard to implement.

Embracing blockchain

Now, with the emergence of blockchain technology, we could have a groundbreaking solution to the problem of securing our data and identities online.

Unsurprisingly, blockchain has been proposed for several reasons, including how its architecture makes it inherently safer

than traditional, centralized systems. In traditional systems, you just need to hack one database to all the identities it may contain. With a distributed ledger and blockchain technology you'd need to hack thousands or tens of thousands of disparate machines.



Harnessing blockchain technology to transform global cybersecurity

Colin Thornton 17 May 2018



Blockchain technology has allowed for a creative solution to the problem of protecting and proving a person's identity more efficiently. Many specialists think it is a tool for creating a self-sovereign ID. In essence, the concept of a self-sovereign ID puts people in charge of their own digital identities.

According to coindesk.com, it means

“*“individuals have choice and sovereignty over their digital selves to the same degree we have control over our physical selves”.*”

Implemented correctly it could mean that institutions we interact with never store personal data meaning it can't be compromised or used in illegitimate ways.

The idea of a sovereign digital identity has several potential benefits, and strengthening it with blockchain makes it a more realistic possibility. One innovative platform, called VALID, seeks to bring this concept to life. It is a personal data and self-sovereign identity management tool “that will allow consumers to securely transact online using verified digital identities...”. Earlier this year Microsoft announced they are working on similar concepts, all backed by blockchain.

These digital identity solutions would allow people to transact online securely and seamlessly, while protecting their sensitive personal data. It takes the power to monetize this data away from commercial entities that can put users at risk, and returns this control to individuals.

In a world fraught with privacy concerns, such tools – and concepts – may prove to be nothing short of revolutionary.

ABOUT COLIN THORNTON

Colin founded Dial a Nerd in 1998 as a consumer IT support company and in 2002 the business- focused division was founded. Supporting SMEs is now its primary focus. In 2015 his company, merged with Turrito Networks who provided niche internet services outside of the local network. These two companies have created an end-to-end IT and Communication solution for SMEs. Colin has subsequently become the managing director of Turrito. Contact him at info@dialanerd.co.za

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