

THE BLOCKCHAIN EFFECT: FROM INTER-ECOSYSTEM TO INTRA-ECOSYSTEM COMPETITION

Research Paper

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Abstract

Blockchains enable distributed operation, decentralized control, and token-based representations of tangible and intangible assets. Organizations commonly use blockchain technology to foster collaboration. *In this paper, we investigate the use of blockchain to foster competition. We conduct a single-case study of Germany's mobility-as-a-service community and its efforts to use blockchain as a technical backbone for mobility ecosystems. The community views blockchain as a technology that embodies organizing principles of empowerment and equality. These principles motivated the community to rethink ecosystem structure. In particular, the community began to question the exclusive, non-adversarial position of mobility service aggregators. We find that rethinking this position might shift their competitive focus from the inter- to the intra-ecosystem level and enables the creation of a larger ecosystem. As a second-order effect, the community began to rethink ecosystem governance. Specifically, it began to explore options for effectively distributed decision making while safeguarding efficiency.*

Keywords: Blockchain, Ecosystem, Competition, Collaboration, Governance.