

IMMC 2022 Greater China Problem E (Winter) (English 简体 繁體)

How blockchain can help alliance among merchants of a community drive business value?

Background and context

We are experiencing a revolution in the blockchain space with applications in various industries. Apart from its benefits of transparency and decentralization, blockchain technology has proliferated the concept of community and collaboration among its stakeholders.

Let's see an application relevant to our daily economic activity. Loyalty points or membership programs are digital rights issued by merchants to reward users for consumption. The world generates about 120 billion US dollars' worth of loyalty points each year, including credit card payment rewards, retail points, travel points etc. As a means for merchants to further stimulate consumer demand, the actual utilization rate of loyalty points still has a large room for improvement. According to McKinsey, the point exchange rate in developed countries is 55%, while the average point exchange rate for Chinese companies is only 15%. Currently, 85% are used to exchange points for goods and services provided by the issuers of the loyalty points, and only 15% are used outside the issuers' business. The cross-enterprise and cross-industry circulation of point rights will help improve the utilization rate of points and fully tap the potential of consumer demand. There is a kind of 3rd-party loyalty points platform which integrates the points of different enterprises into a general system to provide cross consumption scenarios. Such 3rd party platform is usually formed among collaborating merchants with rigid rules and conditions.

Problem and task

Blockchain technologies make it possible to design a de-centralized loyalty points system which is open to all merchants. Any merchants, even competing ones, can join such platform to provide service to a much bigger consumer base. Merchants can form alliance or jointly promote services with each other on a timely basis – a co-opetition mode. Privacy computation over blockchain gives merchants better understanding of the market demand by analyzing the collective data pools from all merchants, while at the same time it can maintain the privacy of the customers' specific data from each merchant. Such de-decentralized loyalty points system realizes the flexible transfer of rights and interests across merchant platforms, thereby improving the liquidity and standardization of the loyalty points.

In this Challenge, IMMC Alliance Company wants your team to quantify the benefits of merchant collaboration by forming a mathematical model in the context of de-centralized loyalty points system. You will be required to consider two scenarios, i.e., one-to-one alliance and many-to-many alliance.

- 1. One-to-one alliance: In this scenario, a merchant allies with one other merchant. Let's call them A and B. By forming an alliance, merchants A and B issue reward points to each other. The reward points are distributed to customers on their purchases from the merchants. Let's say Merchant B issues reward points to Merchant A, and then Merchant A distributes them to its customers. The customers can only redeem those points when purchasing items at Merchant B as it was the original issuer. Merchant B pays a commission to Merchant A when the customer redeems.
- a. Explain how merchants can benefit from such an alliance?
- b. What factors do you think are important in forming such an alliance? Business size? Product type?
- c. Develop a mathematical model to determine the change in business yearly revenue for a merchant from this one-to-one alliance.
- <u>Many-to-many alliance:</u> In this scenario, a group of merchants ally and create their own reward points economy. They give out reward points to their customers which are redeemable upon purchase at any merchant who is part of the alliance. You can think of it as a reward system similar to Yuu reward points where Yuu points are redeemable at any Yuu partner (Yuu Rewards Club: https://www.yuurewards.com/). The main difference is that the alliance model utilizes blockchain technology with decentralization and transparency inherently; while Yuu is managed in a centralized way.
- a. What factors will be important in forming such an alliance? Business size? Product type? Size of the community? Try to model each factor as a parameter in your model and determine its importance.
- b. Is there an optimal number of merchants to form such an alliance? If yes, determine the optimal number, or else explain why not.
- c. Would the change of yearly revenue and profit of each merchant have any effect on your alliance model?
- 3. Merchant Value: Assume a group of merchants have formed an alliance. They would like to allocate reward points to any merchant who joins the community. Initially, they agreed to allocate fixed and equal amounts of reward points to any merchant who joins the community. However, some merchants claim that they should be allocated a greater number of reward points as they bring greater benefit/value to the community. What factors are important in assigning value to each merchant in such a community? Please develop a mathematical model to determine the amount of reward point allocation to a particular merchant in this community.

Submission

Your solution paper should include a 1-page Summary. The body cannot exceed 20 pages for a maximum of 21 pages with the Summary inclusive. The appendices and references should appear at the end of the paper and do not count towards the 21 pages limit.



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区块链如何帮助商户社区联盟推动商业价值?

背景与情境

我们正在经历一场涉及不同行业应用的区块链领域的革命。除了透明和去中心化的好处之外, 区块链技术还推广了社区概念,促进了社区利益相关者之间的协作。

我们来看一个与我们日常经济活动相关的应用场景。客户忠诚度积分或会员计划是商户为奖励客户消费而发行的数字权利。全球每年生成约1200亿美元的积分,包括信用卡支付奖励、零售积分、旅行积分等。作为商户进一步刺激消费需求的手段,积分的实际使用率仍有较大改善空间。据麦肯锡称,发达国家的积分兑换率为55%,而中国企业的平均积分兑换率只有15%。目前,85%的积分被用于兑换发行者提供的商品和服务,只有15%用于发行者的业务范畴之外。积分权益的跨企业、跨行业流通将有利于提高积分使用率,充分挖掘消费需求潜力。有一种第三方积分平台将不同企业的积分整合成一个通用系统,提供交叉消费场景。此类第三方平台通常由具有严格规则和条件的合作商家组成。

问题与任务

区块链技术使得设计一个对所有商户开放的去中心化的忠诚度积分系统成为可能。任何商户,甚至是竞争性商户,都可以加入这样的平台,为更大的消费者群体提供服务。商户之间可以结成实效性联盟或共同推广服务——一种竞合模式。区块链上的隐私计算通过分析来自所有商户的集体数据池,让商家更好地了解市场需求,同时它又可以保护每一个商户的客户特定数据的隐私。这种去中心化的积分体系实现了跨商户平台权益的灵活转移,从而提高了积分的流动性和标准化。

在本次挑战赛中, IMMC 联盟公司希望您的团队在去中心化忠诚度积分系统的背景下,通过构建数学模型来量化商户协作的好处。您将需要考虑两种场景,即一对一联盟和多对多联盟。

- 1. 一对一联盟:在这种场景下,一个商户与另一个商户结盟。我们称他们为 A 和 B. 通过结盟,商户 A 和 B 互相发行奖励积分。奖励积分在客户从商户购买时获得发放。假设商户 B 向商户 A 发行奖励积分,然后商户 A 将其分发给其客户。客户只能在向商户 B 购买商品时兑换这些奖励积分,因为商户 B 是原始发行人。当客户兑换奖励积分时,商户 B 向商户 A 支付佣金。
 - 1) 请解释商户如何从这样的联盟中受益?

- 2) 您认为对形成这样的联盟有什么重要因素? 是企业规模? 产品类别?
- 3) 开发一个数学模型来确定该一对一联盟对商户业务年收入变化的影响。
- 2. **多对多联盟**:在此场景下,一群商户结盟并创建自己的奖励积分经济体。他们向他们的客户发放积分奖励,奖励积分可在联盟属下的任何商户处消费时得到兑现。您可以将此奖励积分经济视为类似于 Yuu 积分奖励系统。Yuu 积分可在任何 Yuu 商户合作伙伴处得到兑换(参 Yuu Rewards Club: https://www.yuurewards.com/)。主要的区别在于联盟模型采用了区块链技术,具有区块链模型固有的去中心化和透明性;而 Yuu 积分系统是中心化管理的。
 - 1) 什么因素对形成这样的联盟很重要? 企业规模? 产品类别? 社区规模? 尝试将每个因素建模为模型中的参数并确定其重要性。
 - 2) 是否存在形成这样一个联盟的最佳商家数量? 如果是,请确定最佳数量,否则请解释原因。
 - 3) 每个商家年收入和利润的变化对你的联盟模式有影响吗?
- 3. **商户价值**:假设一群商户结成联盟。他们想将奖励积分分配给任何加入联盟社区的商户。最初,他们同意向任何加入联盟的商户分配固定等量的奖励积分。然而,一些商户声称他们应获分配更多的奖励积分,因为他们为社区带来了更大的利益/价值。在为这样的社区中的每个商户分配价值时,哪些因素很重要?请开发一个数学模型来确定分配给该社区中特定商户的奖励积分数量。

提交

你团队的解决方案论文应包括 1 页的摘要。正文不能超过 20 页,含摘要最多 21 页。附录和 参考资料应出现在正文之后,不算在 21 页的限制之内。



IMMC 2022 Greater China Problem E (Winter) (English 简体 繁體)

區塊鏈如何幫助商戶社區聯盟推動商業價值?

背景與情境

我們正在經歷一場涉及不同行業應用的區塊鏈領域的革命。除了透明和去中心化的好處之外, 區塊鏈技術還推廣了社區概念,促進了社區利益相關者之間的協作。

我們來看一個與我們日常經濟活動相關的應用場景。客戶忠誠度積分或會員計劃是商戶為獎勵客戶消費而發行的數字權利。全球每年生成約 1200 億美元的積分,包括信用卡支付獎勵、零售積分、旅行積分等。作為商戶進一步刺激消費需求的手段,積分的實際使用率仍有較大改善空間。據麥肯錫稱,發達國家的積分兌換率為 55%,而中國企業的平均積分兌換率只有15%。目前,85%的積分被用於兌換發行者提供的商品和服務,只有 15% 用於發行者的業務範疇之外。積分權益的跨企業、跨行業流通將有利於提高積分使用率,充分挖掘消費需求潛力。有一種第三方積分平臺將不同企業的積分整合成一個通用系統,提供交叉消費場景。此類第三方平臺通常由具有嚴格規則和條件的合作商家組成。

問題與任務

區塊鏈技術使得設計一個對所有商戶開放的去中心化的忠誠度積分系統成為可能。任何商戶,甚至是競爭性商戶,都可以加入這樣的平臺,為更大的消費者群體提供服務。商戶之間可以結成實效性聯盟或共同推廣服務——一種競合模式。區塊鏈上的隱私計算通過分析來自所有商戶的集體數據池,讓商家更好地了解市場需求,同時它又可以保護每一個商戶的客戶特定數據的隱私。這種去中心化的積分體系實現了跨商戶平臺權益的靈活轉移,從而提高了積分的流動性和標準化。

在本次挑戰賽中,IMMC 聯盟公司希望您的團隊在去中心化忠誠度積分系統的背景下,通過構建數學模型來量化商家協作的好處。您將需要考慮兩種場景,即一對一聯盟和多對多聯盟。

- 1. 一對一聯盟: 在這種場景下,一個商戶與另一個商戶結盟。我們稱他們為 A 和 B. 通過結盟,商戶 A 和 B 互相發行獎勵積分。積分在客戶從商戶購買時獲得發放。假設商戶 B 向商戶 A 發行獎勵積分,然後商戶 A 將其分發給其客戶。客戶只能在向商戶 B 購買商品時兌換這些獎勵積分,因為商戶 B 是原始發行人。當客戶兌換獎勵積分時,商戶 B 向商戶 A 支付傭金。
 - 1) 請解釋商戶如何從這樣的聯盟中受益?

- 2) 您認為對形成這樣的聯盟有什麼重要因素? 是企業規模? 產品類別?
- 3) 開發一個數學模型來確定該一對一聯盟對商戶業務年收入變化的影響。
- 2. **多對多聯盟**:在此場景下,一群商戶結盟並創建自己的獎勵積分經濟體。他們向他們的客戶發放積分獎勵,獎勵積分可在聯盟屬下的任何商戶處消費時得到兌現。您可以將此獎勵積分經濟視為類似於 Yuu 積分獎勵系統。Yuu 積分可在任何 Yuu 商戶合作夥伴處得到兌換(參 Yuu Rewards Club: https://www.yuurewards.com/)。主要的區別在於聯盟模型采用了區塊鏈技術,具有區塊鏈模型固有的去中心化和透明性;而Yuu 積分系統是中心化管理的。
 - 1) 什麼因素對形成這樣的聯盟很重要? 企業規模? 產品類別? 社區規模? 嘗試將每個因素建模為模型中的參數並確定其重要性。
 - 2) 是否存在形成這樣一個聯盟的最佳商家數量?如果是,請確定最佳數量,否則請解釋原因。
 - 3) 每個商家年收入和利潤的變化對你的聯盟模型有影響嗎?
- 3. **商戶價值:**假設一群商戶結成聯盟。他們想將獎勵積分分配給任何加入聯盟社區的商戶。最初,他們同意向任何加入聯盟的商戶分配固定等量的獎勵積分。然而,一些商戶聲稱他們應獲分配更多的積分,因為他們為社區帶來了更大的利益/價值。在為這樣的社區中的每個商戶分配價值時,哪些因素很重要?請開發一個數學模型來確定分配給該社區中特定商戶的獎勵積分數量。

提交

你團隊的解決方案論文應包括 1 頁的摘要。正文不能超過 20 頁,含摘要最多 21 頁。附錄和參考資料應出現在正文之後,不算在 21 頁的限制之內。