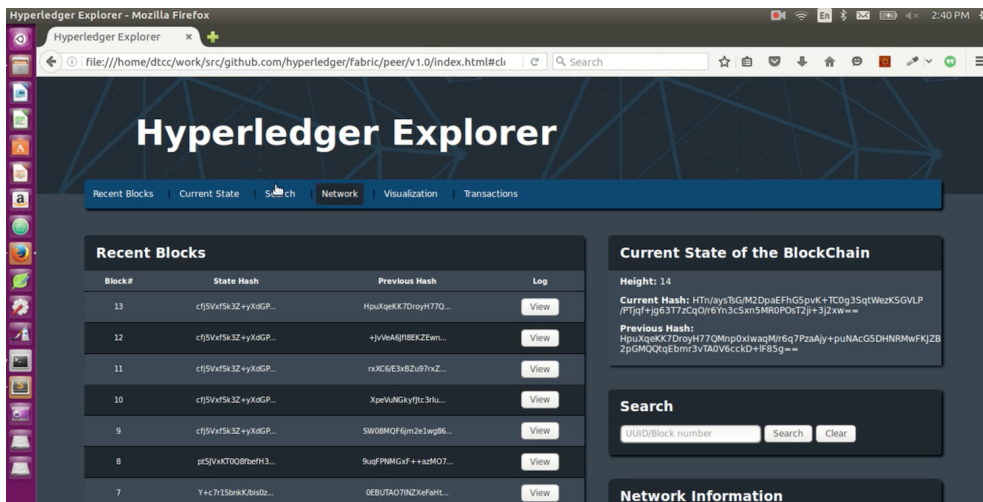


# Hyperledger Tests Open Strategy With First Blockchain Explorer

Michael del Castillo (@DelRayMan) | Published on August 16, 2016 at 13:07 BST

FEATURE

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Business blockchain consortium Hyperledger is now building an open-source tool that will let anyone explore the distributed ledger projects being created by its members.

Originally conceived by an intern at the Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC), the proposal to create a blockchain explorer gained steam last month when it was informally proposed to members. It was then that other prominent contributors to the [Linux-led group](#) discovered they all had similar efforts underway.

But instead of launching competing open-source services, an effort began to merge the blockchain explorers being developed by [DTCC](#), [IBM](#) and [Intel](#). The joint project has been dubbed the "Hyperledger Explorer".

Similar to block explorers already being offered for other public blockchains, the tool would make it easier to learn about Hyperledger from the inside, while still protecting the privacy valued by many of the non-profit organization's members.

Hyperledger's newly [appointed](#) executive director Brian Behlendorf told CoinDesk:

*"Rather than have three different projects that all do the same thing and compete essentially as three different code bases, [we thought] why not work together on one*

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*common codebase and cherry-pick the best parts and use this as an opportunity to talk about standards for talking to different systems?"*

When completed, the explorer is [expected](#) to give Hyperledger developers and non-technical users access to block information, transaction data, network information (such as a list of nodes) and chain codes or transaction families.

Since it was founded in late 2014, Hyperledger has grown to include major enterprises (CME Group, Hitachi and JP Morgan) and blockchain startups (Blockstream, Bloq, itBit).

## Standard connections

According to some of the members involved, the project could end up being the first real test of the open-source collaboration.

The day after DTCC intern Konrad Pabjan [submitted](#) the code, Behlendorf responded with his support for the proposal. At the time, he noted that IBM was working on a similar offering that would detach its existing explorer from its Bluemix app development platform.

Intel's head of technology for blockchain and distributed ledgers, Dan Middleton, noted that his firm was working on a similar effort and instead of overlapping efforts, he proposed a "unified Hyperledger explorer".

Middleton wrote in the original email chain:

*"This could be an interesting first case for showing ledger interaction among the Hyperledger family of blockchains."*

By the end of the day, IBM's CTO in charge of open technology, Chris Ferris, had dubbed the project the "Hyperledger Blockchain Explorer", which has since been shortened to just the Hyperledger Explorer.

The code is currently being developed under the Apache software license created by the non-profit, open-source software company founded by Behlendorf, the Apache Foundation. Under terms of the license, anyone will be able to use the browser, even non-members.

By building one single blockchain explorer through which anyone can explore projects, the participants will continue the process of standardization that the ISITC last month [told CoinDesk](#) could lead to unexpected network effects.

## Deepening the bonds

But as more companies like Bank of America and HSBC begin to [unveil](#) proofs-of-concept using the Hyperledger protocol, a standardized way to search its data is just part of what it will take to scale, according to Behlendorf.

When Behlendorf was first hired in May, one of his goals was to make it easier for new members to join and for anyone – including non-members – to use the open-source software.

By moving the group's communication from predominantly conference calls to Slack, and beginning the process of switching its development tools from Github to Gerrit, he said they've taken the first steps towards accomplishing that goal.

Since his appointment the consortium has more than doubled in size from less than 40 members to 80 members today, not all of which have been announced.

In total, there are now 160 code contributors, including individuals that may not be working on behalf of any company.

## Protecting the future

This approach has led to other considerations, such as how to handle the question of ownership in a collaborative setting.

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To help ensure that companies building on the code don't accidentally find themselves in violation of intellectual copyright law, Behlendorf said contributors each sign an Apache license certifying that they have the legal rights to contributed the code.

The collected copyright of Hyperledger is owned by the Linux Foundation.

In an effort to further formalize the increasingly intertwined relationships, Hyperledger will [host an election](#) beginning Thursday to appoint 11 new members to its technical steering committee.

Behlendorf said the new explorer is part of that effort to further create the bonds that he believes form a successful open-source community.

Behlendorf concluded:

*"We are turning towards this idea that Hyperledger can be a home for a number of different projects with different focuses, with different priorities, with different agendas, all collectively connected by this concept of blockchains, distributed ledgers [and] smart contracts."*

To learn more about the Hyperledger Explorer, view a full demo below.

[Hyperledger Explorer Demonstration](#) from [Konrad Pabjan](#) on [Vimeo](#).

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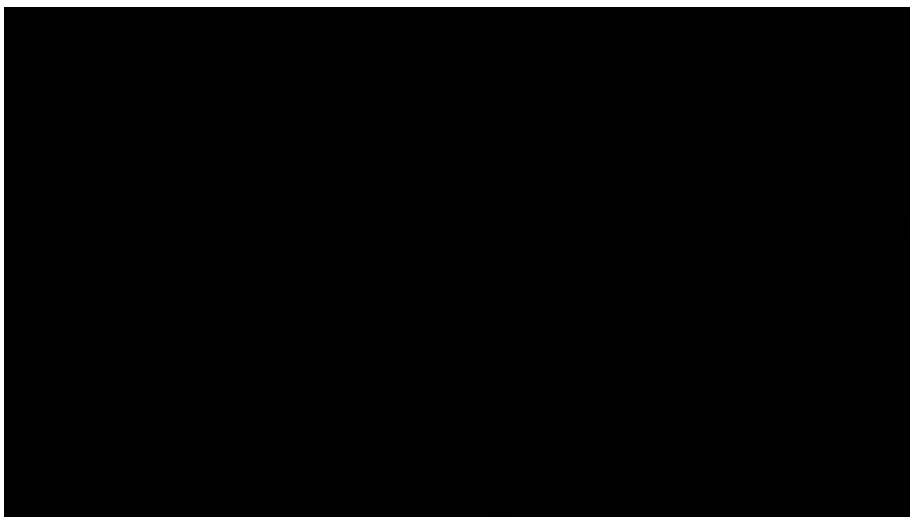
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