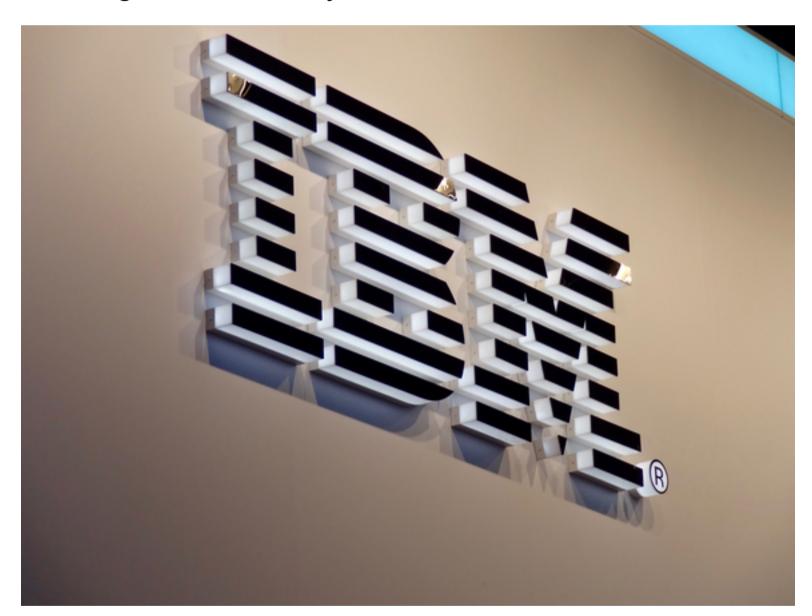(/tag/windows10/)

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IBM beta-tests secure cloud blockchain service

After letting developers experiment with its multitenant cloud blockchain service, IBM is targeting businesses that want to take things more seriously

The IBM logo. Credit: Peter Sayer/IDG News Service

COMMENTS

Peter Sayer (/author/Peter-Sayer/)   Jul 14, 2016 5:00 AM
IDG News Service

IBM is cranking up the security on its cloud-based blockchain service.

On Thursday it began beta-testing a new high-security service plan for IBM Blockchain, with dedicated infrastructure for each customer.

Until now, it has offered only a starter cloud service for developers who wish to experiment with blockchain technology (http://www.pcworld.com/article/3033871/ibm-goes-all-in-on-blockchain-offers-cloud-based-service.html). That service runs in a multitenant cloud, with infrastructure shared among hundreds of blockchains.

The new service plan is still cloud-based, but "you get your own resources dedicated to you," said IBM Vice President for Blockchain Technologies Jerry Cuomo.

It's not the first time IBM has delivered cloud blockchain service to this security level, Cuomo said. Back in April (http://www.pcworld.com/article/3063131/ibm-offers-advice-on-how-to-secure-blockchain-in-the-cloud.html), it offered to build it to order for clients in the financial or health industry.

Now, though, it's something customers can order up for themselves through the company's Bluemix platform-as-a-service portal. One customer that has already done just that is Everledger, which wants to replace paper certificates of authenticity and provenance for high-value goods with digital ones stored on a blockchain.

Everledger has its eye on the market for certifying diamonds, the most valuable of which have an identifying code laser-etched on them. It doesn't certify the diamonds itself, but offers an immutable ledger linking those identifying codes with the certificates and, in the case of a theft, the corresponding police report or insurance claim. The same tools could be used to track any item that carries a hard-to-change identifier.

For now Everledger is embedding details of diamond transactions to the public bitcoin blockchain, but that could change with access to a private blockchain like the one it is testing with IBM.

IBM's new secure blockchain service plan could be available commercially within two to three months, the typical duration for beta tests of services like this, Cuomo said. After that period, the company will introduce a monthly subscription fee for the service, he said, although he wouldn't name the price.

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