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Apr 26, 2016 12:48 PM by Giulio Prisco



Gem, a provider of enterprise blockchain solutions, launched Gem Health, a network for developing applications and shared infrastructure for healthcare powered by the Ethereum blockchain, and announced that Philips Blockchain Lab, a research and development center of healthcare giant Philips, is the first major healthcare operator to join the Gem Health network.

Gem Health is a blockchain network for the global community of companies and individuals that take part in the continuum of care. The company intends to leverage blockchain technology to address the trade-off between patient centric care and operational efficiency by creating a healthcare

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ecosystem connected to universal data infrastructure. “Shared infrastructure allows us to create global data standards without compromising privacy and security,” notes the new Gem Health website.

The Gem Health blockchain network includes identity schemes, data storage, and smart contracts applications that execute against shared data infrastructure. Using the Gem Health network, different healthcare operators can access the same information, which will permit the development of a new class of blockchain-based applications that will unlock wasted resources and solve important operational problems in healthcare.

Closed book-keeping and medical record repositories prevent effective interoperability and collaboration between different healthcare providers, which is an important issue for people who relocate or become sick when they travel and are unable to connect with their local doctor to retrieve their medical records. It’s also

important to note that new medical research is introduced every year, which makes it difficult for individual physicians and healthcare providers to keep up with medical innovation.

“A lot of healthcare companies started reaching out to us,” Gem Founder and CEO Micah Winkelspecht told *Bitcoin Magazine*. “A lot of companies were suffering from these same pain points - working with siloed data that we could bridge together. Use

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technology span the entire healthcare continuum, a whole range of processes from wellness and prevention to billing and claims. We need a patient centric model for healthcare and particularly how to secure clinical data.”



“One of the most interesting groups that reached out to us when we started talking about the



blockchain and healthcare were physicians themselves,” added Winkelspecht. “Many of them see the problems with today’s technology and are fed up with the

technology and are fed up with the current system. Physicians want to help. And so we want to create platform for all the different stakeholders to collaborate.”

In a recent article published in *Distributed*, Winkelspecht argued that it is now possible, using blockchain-enabled data sharing with guaranteed data integrity, to build a global repository of data within the healthcare and other industries, which each party can trust reliably. “Gone are the silos and separate, differing views of the world,” he said. “Every company now has the same data, shared transparently”. In particular, blockchains will permit creating a robust and resilient healthcare ecosystem with industry-wide workflows involving data moving around among multiple parties.

Winkelspecht is bullish about the potential of Ethereum to provide a suitable, evolving technology framework for Gem Health. “We chose to develop this network on the Ethereum blockchain because we’re driven by customer need and look for platforms that satisfy those

needs,” he said. “Because Ethereum is trying to build a global computer for general use, it is good platform for diverse use cases. It doesn’t make a lot of strong assumptions and it has a really great community building lots of different tools.”

Gem, which recently raised \$7.1 million in Series A funding round, is betting that blockchain networks will underpin entire industries, transforming how we collaborate and share value. The early focus on payments and financial applications is, according to the company, a limitation to overcome. “We found that a lot of the discussion around blockchain was so focused on the financial industry and we felt that that was a limiting view of the blockchain,” said Winkelspecht. “We decided to start creating some content around non-financial use cases of the blockchain and found that there was a lot of interest beyond just the financial sector.”

Early support by a major operator like Philips Healthcare, which employs 37,000 employees in 100 countries and makes up 42 percent

countries and makes up 12 percent of the global sales revenue of the Royal Philips group, is a positive signal for Gem Health's adoption in the wider healthcare sector.

“Like the financial industry, it's going to start with small groups working together on proof of concepts and pilot projects to tackle specific use cases,” concluded Winkelspecht. “Out of those use cases, we'll develop a common fabric for the entire industry. A blockchain to run the entire healthcare continuum: the free and instant transfer of healthcare data.”



by Giulio Prisco

Giulio Prisco is a writer specialized in science, technology and business. He is persuaded that Bitcoin and its underlying technology are about to bring disruptive positive changes to finance, business, and society.

KEYWORDS: #data #gem #cases
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