

A protocol for enabling smart, social currency for publishers and content businesses across the internet

Introduction

Steem provides a scalable blockchain protocol¹ for publicly accessible and immutable content, along with a fast and fee-less digital token (called STEEM)² which enables people to earn the currency by using their brain (what can be called “Proof-of-Brain”). The two building blocks of this protocol, both blockchain and token, depend on each other for security, immutability and longevity, and are therefore integral to each others’ existence. Steem has been successfully operating for over a year, and has now exceeded both Bitcoin and Ethereum in number of transactions processed.³

Compared to other blockchains, Steem stands out as the first publicly accessible database for immutably stored content in the form of plain text, along with an in-built incentivization mechanism. This makes Steem a public publishing platform from which any Internet application may pull and share data while rewarding those who contribute the most valuable content.

In the field of crypto-currencies, the unique properties of STEEM make it both “smart” and “social” compared to others, such as bitcoin and ether. This stems from two new token features. The first is a pool of tokens dedicated to incentivizing content creation and curation (called the “rewards pool”). The second is a voting system that leverages the wisdom of the crowd to assess the value of content and distribute tokens to it. These two unique properties when combined are referred to as Proof-of-Brain, which is an entendres based on Proof-of-Work⁴, meant to emphasize the human work required to distribute tokens to community participants. Proof-of-Brain positions STEEM as a tool for building perpetually growing communities, which encourage their members to add value to the community through the built in rewards structure.

In addition to these advancements in blockchain and token technology, Steem as a system provides additional advanced features to enhance the user experience, such as Stolen Account Recovery⁵, escrow services, user promoted content, a reputation system, and savings accounts. This is all done while providing users with three second confirmation times and zero fees on all transactions. All of this allows it to support the mission of bringing smart and social currency to publishers and community builders across the Internet.

Proof of Brain: Smart and Social Tokens

Token systems that reward users as they contribute to a token-based community system require mechanisms for establishing and evaluating content’s social value: we call this “Proof-of-Brain.”

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- ¹ Delegated Proof of Stake Position Paper. Grigg, 2017.
<https://steemit.com/eos/@iang/seeking-consensus-on-consensus-dpos-or-delegated-proof-of-stake-and-the-two-generals-problem>
- ² To differentiate it from the term for its blockchain, the correct spelling of Steem’s native digital token is STEEM.
- ³ Transaction Volumes: Transactions Per Second Report. Steem Witness and user “@roadscape”.
<https://steemit.com/blockchain/@roadscape/tps-report-2-the-flipping>
- ⁴ Proof-of-Work. Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proof-of-work_system
- ⁵ Stolen Account Recovery initiation for Steemit.com users: 07-13-2017
https://steemit.com/recover_account_step_1