

Working Title: Potential Applications of Blockchain Technology as Illustrated through a Sales Leads Business Case

Project Purpose: The project's purpose is twofold: 1) provide an introduction to blockchain technology for business students in the form of a business case, and 2) explore current and possible applications of the technology outside of cryptocurrencies by looking at a specific use case.

Project Importance: Blockchain has been compared to the Internet in terms of its potential impact on society, yet the technology still exists on the fringe of the public's awareness.¹ As companies encounter the technology they will need to understand how best to leverage it and under what circumstances it would be most helpful. Likewise, business students will need a way to gain exposure to the technology and practice implementing it within a realistic context. Blockchain is at the frontier of strategy research, with plenty of space for academic inquiry. I believe this thesis would fit well into the present disruption and foundational technology literature.

Project Overview: My previous research in blockchain stems from my work analyzing the mobile payments industry during my internship this last summer. Additionally, my brother is a co-founder of a startup which offers a security platform for cryptocurrencies. He has shared some useful primers, including slide decks and industry reports. Through him I will also have access to leading researchers when I'm ready to conduct primary research. I am currently in the gathering stage of my research, finding informative sources and specifically looking for use cases of blockchain technology outside of cryptocurrencies.

Thesis Structure:

- Introduction of blockchain technology
- History of the technology
- Explanation of how the technology works
- Attractive features, weaknesses
- Current applications (cryptocurrencies)
- List of other applications
- Business case (focused around sales lead generating and building upon Dr. Oldroyd's prior research)
- Fit analysis of other applications and implications for end consumers

Methodology:

- Secondary research:
 - Industry reports
 - Academic articles
 - White papers
 - Podcasts and documentaries with blockchain experts
- Primary research:

- Interviews with blockchain experts and industry practitioners
- Analysis of impacted industries
- Analysis of potential financial impact on selected companies

Qualifications of Thesis Committee:

- Faculty Advisor: James Oldroyd, “associate professor of Strategy at the Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University and the Ford Motor/Richard Cook Research Fellow. He received his Ph.D. from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in 2007. He was an associate professor of management at SKK-GSB in Seoul, South Korea for five years and an assistant professor of international business at The Ohio State University for three years. His research explores the intersection of networks and knowledge flows. This work has been published in outlets such as the Academy of Management Review, Organization Science and Harvard Business Review. He teaches courses on strategy, strategy implementation, international business, and negotiations to undergraduates, MBAs, and executives. In addition, to teaching at SKK, OSU and BYU, he has taught at the Indian School of Business and the University of North Carolina. He is actively involved in delivering custom leadership training courses for numerous companies including Samsung, Doosan, SK, Quintiles, and insidesales.”¹

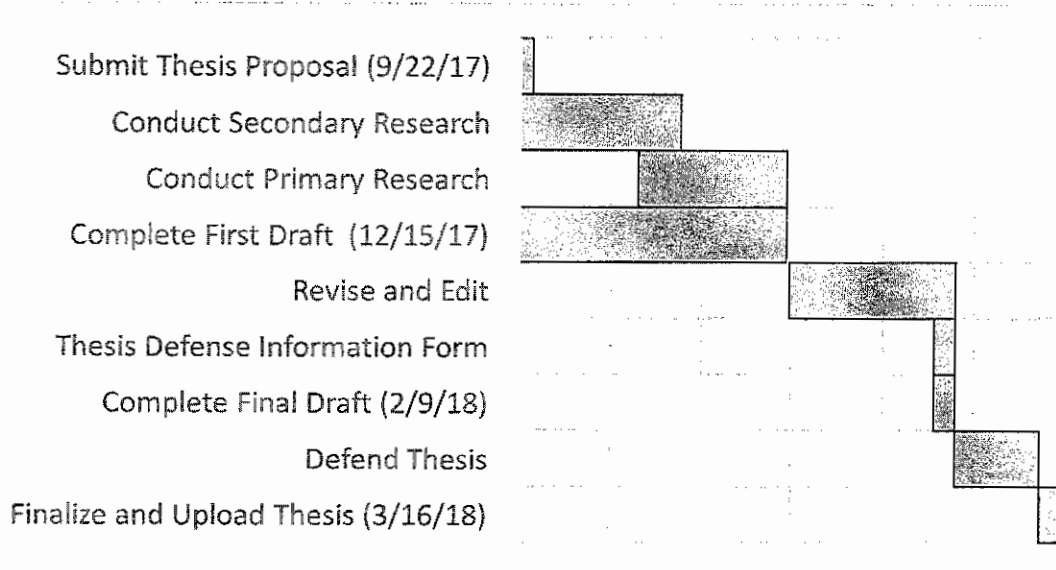
He taught my strategy implementation class and has published on the short life of online sales leads. This work will be a valuable foundation for me to build upon as I research blockchain. He was also instrumental in helping me select a topic for my thesis. ✓ nice!

- Faculty Reader: David Bryce, associate professor of Strategy at the Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University. He currently serves as the department chair. Some of his publications include “Competing Against Free” and “Strategies to Crack Well-Guarded Markets,” which were both published in the *Harvard Business Review*. His research has included high-end disruption by Tesla and the development of the gig or sharing economy as demonstrated by Uber. Dr. Bryce’s class was integral to my growth in strategic thinking. In addition to helping me improve my presentation skills and exposing me to a wide range of industries, Dr. Bryce taught me important theories of organizational structure and adaption.
- Department Honors Coordinator: Mark Hansen, assistant professor of Organizational Leadership and Strategy at the Marriott School of Business. He has published extensively, including in the Strategic Management Journal and Managerial Decision Economics.

¹ <https://marriottschool.byu.edu/directory/details?id=9679>

Project Timeline:

	Start Date	End Date	Duration
Submit Thesis Proposal (9/22/17)	9/18/17	9/22/17	4 <i>wks</i>
Conduct Secondary Research	9/18/17	11/10/17	53
Conduct Primary Research	10/27/17	12/15/17	49
Complete First Draft (12/15/17)	9/18/17	12/15/17	88
Revise and Edit	12/16/17	2/9/18	55
Thesis Defense Information Form	2/2/18	2/9/18	7
Complete Final Draft (2/9/18)	2/2/18	2/9/18	7
Defend Thesis	2/9/18	3/9/18	28
Finalize and Upload Thesis (3/16/18)	3/9/18	3/16/18	7



Funding: No funds for research will be necessary.

Culminating Experience: Ideally, the case will be published by *HBR* and will be widely used among business students looking to better understand blockchain. I would like to present my findings at the annual Utah Undergraduate Research Symposium. At a minimum, it will be used at BYU and will be published in the Marriott Student Review.

good!

Give me a unique competitive advantage as I am looking for job opportunities.

Be used by my brother and other entrepreneurs in the blockchain space.

¹ Iansiti, Marco, and Karim Lakhani. 2017. "The Truth About Blockchain." *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 2017: 118-127. These researchers characterize blockchain as a foundational technology, rather than a disruptive technology.