openIDL - FAQ

Here we answer the burning questions about openIDL.

Blockchain

Question: Why was Hyperledger Fabric chosen over other permissioned blockchain solutions like Corda?

Answer:

The short answer is that Hyperledger checked some very specific boxes that we needed in the underlying ledger technology so that it could be trusted for the purpose of a regulatory reporting data network that could be deployed by our Members, state regulators and AAIS.

Specifically, Hyperledger Fabric was unique in its capability to not only meet our functional needs, some of which we had to contribute to ourselves to get there, but when it reached the maturity level an enterprise or government would consider for long term support, controlled costs, and management for this purpose, specifically we required:

1. Full reference open source and community supported platform – accessible to all of our Community on a going-forward basis (Long Term Support).
2. Part of an ecosystem that enabled growth and integration beyond our initial community and function – partners, tools and resources to extend and reinforce the investment in the platform.
3. Most critically was the adoption by Linux Foundation, that transparently facilitates the governance of technology and standards by those invested in the technology over time, most appreciably demonstrated by the ongoing open-source adoption of the Linux operating system and resulting commercial success.

Each of these parts were critical so the necessary community could reach the first use case – already set in law and practice – and have a pathway to the ultimate purpose with the broadest possible impact. Critical stakeholders include Government agencies, small and large insurers and stat agents like AAIS. Each must be satisfied for a workable solution to entrust an existing, evolving and increasingly important business process to deliver business value to warrant the investment and risk of change. Other potential third-parties, like reinsurers, agents and data or operational solution providers participated in the design and needs considered to assure stakeholders of future value and performance.

 The network must be transparent and trusted to support regulated – licensed and auditable - activities, and rely on it over time for specific and evolving purpose. Failure could result in real economic or human costs, to populations or specific accountable individuals' finances or freedom.

We looked at – and continue to look at – other blockchain and related or supporting technologies, for every component of the technical stack. Connections are required to data networks closer to the enterprise and eventually, the marketplace – both will be other technologies and likely ledger networks (proprietary to the enterprise or perhaps, a truly "public" blockchain). The technology itself inside openIDL is readily adaptable and the purpose of the ledger is fairly straightforward and the foundation on which might sit a business of any complexity.

We are actively pursuing to demonstrate connecting trusted ledger networks, first across enterprise clouds using Hyperledger Fabric and enterprise data processes and hosted environments, as we are discussing. We are also looking for opportunities to leverage data in this network or others, including those based on Corda or other ledger or operational network, as we identify the purpose and there is community support for the effort. We hope that there is more interoperability across networks but that will only come once networks become trusted and open to purposes and transparency of a scale and scope that is valuable to deploy and support.