BLOCKCHAIN NATIONAL FORUM; EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Many of my peers have spotlighted the different ways blockchain technology can be applied in an information science setting. I will be speaking from my unique standpoint as an Information Manager in a marketing department within a higher education setting.

The Marketing & Communication Department at The New School would benefit from different applications of blockchain technologies, including smart contracts and linked metadata. A public or private network hosting smart contracts between The New School and vendors/students/employees/contractors would provide many benefits. For instance, a smart contract created for a promotional video between The New School, a production company, students, and faculty will clearly define financial agreements, deliverables, releases, copyright, and usage rights. The linked metadata describing the video within a digital asset management system could point directly to the smart contract(s) allowing the M&C Department to capture provenance, authenticity, and provide retention. These actions will ultimately impact The New School’s Library & Archive. I believe the use of blockchain technologies for smart contracts and metadata capture will assist the Archive in many ways. Obstacles archives tend to comprise of provenance, usage rights, copyright, funding/staffing. I believe if Marketing & Communication (along with other departments throughout the University) adopted blockchain technologies to capture agreements and metadata for the content created, the archive would benefit greatly. Essentially, blockchain technology would allow the archive to crowdsource metadata for objects, imagery, and videography ingested by the archive in an organized and consistent manner.

The Archive & LIbrary would be able to implement blockchain technologies for smart contracts (i.e. subscriptions), first sale rights, bibliographic metadata, library cards for a consortium of universities and public libraries, badges for skill trainings, borrowing rules, and loan ledgers. I believe there is a way to incorporate a social and revenue blockchain component to libraries and archives. For example, [Steem.io](https://steem.io/) is a social networking site that uses blockchain rewards platform for users and publishers. Libraries, archives, and cultural centers can implement the same blockchain rewards platform for patrons who review books, provide additional metadata, donate physical or digital objects, contribute or point out archival findings, and use services (like workshops and classes). In contrast, the library, archive, or cultural institution can receive rewards (small monetary payments) for providing access to digital and digitally-born objects. Different values can be placed on usage based on the patron- does the student pay tuition to this particular school, is it a New School employee, or an outside researcher, what is the financial background of the individual, is there a grant funding the research?

Bottom Line. There are many ways blockchain technology can benefit academic institutions, however, I believe academic institutions should not spend time creating, exploring, or implementing early stage blockchain tech. I believe creating awareness and education around blockchain technologies is the highest priorities for libraries, archives, and cultural centers. Building awareness will not take place in classrooms, but in public events. M & C’s in-house team, Public Programming, collaborates with the different colleges to provide a curated series, the Nth Degree, “featuring thinkers, visionaries, and creators who bring about positive change in the world and redefine the cutting edge.” The Marketing & Communication Department can collaborate with the Provost Office and the Library & Archive to produce blockchain public events for students, higher-ed supporters, and New Yorkers. Our student body, composed of creators and inventors, can bring blockchain technology and theory into classrooms and their future careers. While I am specifically pointing out how The New School can create and host blockchain public programming, libraries and archives can host blockchain events, similarly to the coding and wiki edit-a-thon events and classes that currently exist.