Seagate and IBM Work Together to Help Reduce Global Hard Drive Counterfeiting with Blockchain Technology

Project combines IBM Blockchain Platform, Seagate’s advanced “electronic fingerprinting” and product tracking to help prove provenance over hard drive life cycle

CUPERTINO, CA and ARMONK, N.Y. - November 8, 2018 — Seagate Technology plc (NASDAQ: STX), a world leader in data storage solutions, and IBM (NYSE: IBM) today announced they are working together to reduce product counterfeiting using blockchain and security technologies. The project, which is designed to help manufacturers, integrators, and business partners fight counterfeit hard drives, uses the IBM Blockchain Platform to authenticate the provenance of disk drive products, bringing a new level of multi-layered security protection to the data management industry.

According to the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition, global trade in counterfeit and pirated electronic products has reached more than $1.7 trillion in value. To verify product authenticity, Seagate will update the IBM Blockchain Platform on the IBM Cloud with product authentication data based on the Seagate Secure™ Electronic ID (eID) at the point of manufacture. Each unique identifier (serving as an electronic fingerprint) can be used to verify the identity of a hard drive at any time during its product life cycle. Seagate’s Certified Erase employs cryptographic erasure technology to produce a digital certificate of data purge, which is electronically signed by the device under the Seagate Secure public key infrastructure (PKI) and stored on the blockchain for compliance management with emerging global data privacy laws.

Building upon IBM’s blockchain expertise and powered by the Linux Foundation’s Hyperledger Fabric distributed ledger framework, the IBM Blockchain Platform is designed to allow network participants to append and view blockchain data based on their level of permissioning. Throughout a product’s life, technology vendors, service providers, and end users will be able to confirm the product’s provenance on the blockchain, which provides an immutable record of events. This can help reduce data loss, fraudulent products and warranty costs, while improving product assurance for customers during deployment.

“Blockchain technology can be extremely effective in confirming provenance and authenticity of assets,” said Bruce Anderson, global managing director, electronics industry, IBM. “The ability to work with Seagate to combine blockchain with advanced cryptographic product identification technology is what sets this work apart, and signals blockchain’s potential to reimagine the electronics product life cycle management processes. Counterfeit electronic components are a global issue that requires an ecosystem-wide effort to address.”

The eID and Certified Erase capabilities are built on the Seagate Secure technology, which can enable higher levels of trust of product provenance and proof of data erasure. Customers can benefit from knowing that a drive is a genuine Seagate product and that any data on it can be securely erased which can assist customers with their efforts to adhere to international compliance standards.

“IBM has a proven history of technology innovation as evidenced by its market leadership in blockchain technology for product provenance in various industries,” said Mark Re, senior vice president and chief technology officer at Seagate. “By combining Seagate’s innovations in product security with IBM’s blockchain expertise, we want to prove that we can help reduce the incidence of product counterfeiting in the future.”

As project development continues in this combined effort to fight global product counterfeiting, Seagate and IBM are anticipating that they will expand the business network to include participation from supply chain partners.
About IBM Blockchain

IBM is recognized as the leading enterprise blockchain provider. The company's research, technical and business experts have broken barriers in transaction processing speeds, developed the most advanced cryptography to secure transactions, and are contributing millions of lines of open source code to advance blockchain for businesses. IBM is the leader in open-source blockchain solutions built for the enterprise. Since 2016, IBM has worked with hundreds of clients across financial services, supply chain, government, retail, digital rights management and healthcare to implement blockchain applications, and operates a number of networks running live and in production. The cloud-based IBM Blockchain Platform delivers the end-to-end capabilities that clients need to quickly activate and successfully develop, operate, govern and secure their own business networks. IBM is an early member of Hyperledger, an open source collaborative effort created to advance cross-industry blockchain technologies. For more information about IBM Blockchain, visit https://www.ibm.com/blockchain/ or follow us on Twitter at @ibmblockchain.

About Seagate

Seagate creates space for the human experience by innovating how data is stored, shared and used. Learn more at www.seagate.com. Follow Seagate on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Spiceworks, YouTube and subscribe to our blog.

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