

LendIt Fintech NEWS

LendIt Fintech NEWS



Metaverse and Future digital technology.

[Home](#)

[Crypto](#)

Solid Metaverse backbone will drive growth

Solid Metaverse backbone will drive growth

Tony Zerucha
Fintech

Jan. 18, 2022 · 6 min read

Shane Rodgers has a vision for cryptocurrency and the metaverse that begins with a simple proposition: cut through the distractions and provide solid infrastructure.

Rogers is the CEO of PDX, developing a blockchain-based digital banking and payments platform. It envisions transactions in both the physical and digital realms.

Stop me if you've heard this before. New financial technology gets introduced, drawing thousands of entrepreneurs. Many are there to catch the wave and cash in on a craze before making their exit. They often have scant business experience.



Shane Rodgers

But others take it seriously, seeing the potential of a nascent industry. They work at it, developing the technology step by step. As their companies mature, they bring in experienced hands to keep them growing.

Cryptocurrencies are following the same pattern, Rodgers said.

“The trouble is, the crypto market is immature, and the reason it’s immature is because it’s populated by a vast ocean of people who have zero technical knowledge or business knowledge whatsoever, and they think it’s all easy and fun, and we’re all going to make billions of dollars and pink champagne for the rest of our lives,” Rodgers said. “The truth is the complete opposite.”

Experience aplenty

Rodgers has four decades of investment banking experience, and the team he has assembled is in their 40s and 50s with decades of banking and legal background.

They know the difference between fact and fiction and focus on real-world problems while at the same time elevating the maturity of an industry he believes could collapse in a few years.

“The infrastructure in crypto is like the professionalism in crypto – almost non-existent,” Rodgers said. “So we’re building a significant piece of the infrastructure to actually give a real value and utility because how much longer do you think all this meme [stuff] going is going to last?”

Rodgers’ banking career took him to Europe, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

His involvement in power generation, natural resources, and oil and gas led to his initial involvement in cryptocurrency.

Fast forward to 2017, when oil and gas was a challenging sector, Rodgers looked at crypto, intrigued by the large amounts of retail capital flowing into it, unlike anything he said he had seen in his career.

His initial thought was to find a way to harness that enthusiasm to fund energy projects with actual business cases, ones solving real problems.

“We looked at many of the cryptos, we looked at their white papers, and then we picked ourselves up from the floor from laughing because none of them made any sense,” Rodgers said.

“None of them made logical, rational sense to real business people. So we thought that this was a giant crock. There’s an awful lot of money flowing to it. And it seems apparent to us that you can finance any real project via effectively securitizing it through a cryptocurrency.”

Riding the rails

Rodgers soon saw a more significant opportunity initially surprised him, but soon made sense for an industry he believed was punching well above its weight.

He assumed there was infrastructure to build the rails for all of these big plans to unfold, but in early 2018 there wasn’t.

No one was making a fiat-to-payments-and-back app. That is what is needed for cryptocurrency to fulfill its original backers’ vision and provide real-world utility.

Rodgers insists that using such an app will allow users to spend any of the top 100-150 cryptos online and at retail shops, where it will be swapped out at the moment of sale.

PDX will swap that out with their settlement mechanism, paying the merchant in whatever currency they receive. To help with the process, PDX is in discussions to purchase a US bank, Rodgers said.

“(Retailers) may or may not be aware that you’re paying with crypto, but they don’t care,” Rodgers said. “They don’t care if you’re paying with dogecoin or bananas as long as they get it settled right now in US dollars.”

Blockchain technology is the key, Rodgers said. That allows for instant settlement instead of what could be days. Blockchain also makes it cheaper, with Rodgers believing he can do it for at most 1.5 percent.

Then come unions with significant point-of-sale providers where PDX APIs can be embedded and scanners provided if needed. That's potentially tens of millions of locations, which is necessary to make cryptocurrency attractive to the mainstream.

Talk to enough industry watchers about what is needed for crypto to become mainstream, and they layout different versions of extensive networks and many steps.

Rodgers believes that is overcomplicated. None of the middle pain points are needed, just someone settling the transaction on the blockchain, with a little piece going to POS terminal providers.

While Rodgers sees the top 100-150 cryptocurrencies as having enough volume to make it work, he stressed the risk is with the cryptocurrency holder until they decide to spend it. He believes he can sell those top cryptos within seconds.

I can have crypto?

That brings Rodgers back to meme coins and irresponsible executives more interested in living a lifestyle than building an industry. All hat and no cattle.

"We're not looking to excite people or get them revved up. We're not looking to be the next meme coin," Rodgers said. "We want to be very boring because it's a serious project that most people, most consumers, when push comes to shove, actually will take seriously because their money is involved."

While many are dabbling in the industry and some more prominent players are starting to participate, Rodgers believes few are severe types who can drive real industry growth. The world needs a billion or more people, many of them real, daily consumers who want to spend their cryptocurrencies on everyday expenses.

Increase that utility, and people might want to be paid in cryptocurrency. Realize that, and the cycle grows more extensive as it turns. That lends itself to remittances, too, as folks sending money back home to more impoverished locations are getting ripped off at every point in the chain.

Rodgers thinks he can deliver service for the same 1.5 percent.

Rodgers believes that a solidly functioning metaverse is likely at least a half-decade away. To become a fundamental proposition, it needs to be highly realistic. The visuals need to be strong, as he said no serious business is going to happen in what he said is Meta's cartoonish version.

Simplicity implicit

From a payments perspective, the experience must be innate. You cannot expect participants to remove their headsets to look at a keyboard to make a payment.

"The practical method of using the payments app will be that you'll have a visual representation swimming in front of you," Rodgers predicted. "You'll be able to either use it with finger controls, gesture controls, or voice command."

Rodgers said, looking for initial metaverse uses to include gaming, gambling, and adult entertainment. Get the visuals right, and he sees industrial design meetings where everyone sees the same rotating model. Real estate also has many applications too.

PDX is currently working on Ethereum, but the ultimate goal is to create and build a separate blockchain, Rodgers said, with lower gas fees.

"That means we can process vast amounts of transactions simultaneously, number one," Rodgers concluded. "Number two, we can do them for a fraction of a penny per transaction."



Tony Zerucha Freelance Reporter

Tony Zerucha is a long-time contributor in the fintech and alt-fi spaces. A two-time LendIt Journalist of the Year nominee and [winner in 2018](#), Tony has written more than 2,000 original articles on the blockchain, peer-to-peer lending, crowdfunding, and emerging technologies over the past seven years. He has hosted panels at LendIt, the CfPA Summit, and DECENT's Unchained, a blockchain exposition in Hong Kong.