

Cryptoassets and Blockchain Technology

Overview

Today, mentioning innovation and technology in the same sentence often conjures up images of blockchain, the underlying technology driving "cryptoassets" such as bitcoin and smart contracts that are programmed in advance to automatically effectuate agreements between parties. As blockchain technology becomes more mainstream and established, companies are joining startups to harness the potential of distributed ledger technology (DLT), and Katten attorneys are leading the way worldwide.

Pioneers in a new financial asset environment

Would-be users often believe blockchain is disruptive technology. We think of it as more an evolutionary technology that brings together many existing product features in a new package, and we break it down that way for clients and regulators. This approach is partly why we believe we were able to help one of our clients secure the first approval with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to be an execution facility and clearing organization for a deliverable bitcoin-based derivative contract.

Leveraging our practical knowledge of DLT and applicable state and federal laws, rules and guidance, we have been thought leaders in explaining this new industry, sharing our views of applicable law in our public writings and guiding our wide range of clients — from exchanges to clearing organizations to brokers, traders and funds — through, in many cases, uncharted legal territory.

Avoiding trouble

Through our deep knowledge of securities and derivatives law as well as laws related to money transmission, commercial transactions, bankruptcy and other disciplines, we are able to help our clients holistically apply existing legal principles in this emerging legal field. We work closely with regulators and our clients to help develop new approaches to novel issues when they arise. This often enables our clients to proceed with new DLT applications with a greater sense of assuredness.

Key Contacts



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Recognitions

Recognized or listed in the following:

- *BTI Litigation Outlook*
 - Securities and Finance Litigation Honor Roll, 2018
- *Chambers Global*
 - Capital Markets: Derivatives
 - USA, 2015–2022
 - Investment Funds: Hedge Funds
 - USA, 2022
- *Chambers USA*
 - Capital Markets: Derivatives
 - Nationwide, 2014–2022
 - Investment Funds: Hedge Funds
 - Nationwide, 2016–2019, 2021–2022

- *The Legal 500 United Kingdom*
 - Corporate and Commercial
 - Financial Services (Non-Contentious/Regulatory), 2013–2023
 - Finance
 - Derivatives and Structured Products, 2016–2023
- *The Legal 500 United States*
 - Alternative/Hedge Funds, 2013–2022
 - Financial Services Litigation, 2016–2022
- *U.S. News Best Lawyers – "Best Law Firms"*
 - Derivatives and Futures Law
 - National, 2011–2023
 - Chicago, 2011–2023
 - New York 2020–2021
 - Private Funds/Hedge Funds Law
 - National, 2012–2023
 - Chicago, 2011–2023
 - New York, 2019–2023
 - Securities Regulation
 - National, 2012–2023
 - Chicago, 2011–2023