

Understanding these aspects of crypto is important to looking past trends and understanding the opportunities beyond investing in the currencies themselves. Here's what you need to know.

The Importance of Blockchain

At its heart, Blockchain technology is a cryptographically sealed digital ledger that's distributed amongst a network of peers. It's similar to the P2P networks that power file-sharing platforms like Gnutella and BitTorrent. It's also been used by proprietary [media-streaming applications like Spotify](#).

If you're a fan of [HBO's Silicon Valley](#), you may remember that Pied Piper inadvertently created and distributed a decentralized P2P Internet protocol in season 4. The real-life [Tor browser runs on a similar premise](#), and several smartphone companies operate on the principle of [creating a similar mesh network](#) to provide cell service.

In fact, Blockchain technology is viewed by some as the next generation of the Internet. Currently mesh cell networks and the Tor browser are slowed down by the low volume of users. Creating speed requires a large user base, so these services simply can't run as fast as the broadband Internet you're currently used to.

Of course, [changes to net neutrality rules](#) and the proliferation of VPNs may very well tip the scales [in favor of the decentralized P2P Internet](#). But that's not the only place Blockchain technology is valuable.

Implementing Blockchain in Business

A distributed, decentralized transaction ledger has benefits far beyond providing Internet service. IBM's Martin Schroeter recently [explained to CNBC's Jim Cramer](#) that Blockchain technology can streamline a lot of logistical processes for industries like retail, manufacturing, and even the investment industry itself.

In his example, if you were to buy IBM stock today, it would take three days to process, whereas with Blockchain, it could be verified instantly in real time. Imagine how that could [disrupt the legal industry](#)

by preserving the chain of custody in criminal cases or creating smart contracts to decrease the friction of creating secure, legally binding agreements.

Everything from supply chain management to quality assurance, accounting, and even voting can be revolutionized using Blockchain technology. It's something that will affect industries far beyond technology and cryptocurrencies.

So ignore the hype surrounding the value of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and [Dogecoin](#). There's a rush to create new ones every day, and in 10 years, they're likely to be as valuable as a [Schrote Buck](#).

The underlying blockchain technology, however, is set to disrupt every aspect of every industry for years to come.