Draper University's Bitcoin Course Enrolls 2,000+ Students

by Diana Ngo (@authors/diana Ngo) @ 2014-12-18 01:52 PM

Two months after the launch of Draper University’s free Bitcoin course, the public commented on the program and highlighted the need of specifications on few topics, but overall, shared gratitude to the free educational material.

Draper University isn’t the only organization that has understood the necessity of providing crypto education programs, as other educational organizations, including Duke University, are also seeing the high demand in this particular market.

Announced (http://cointelegraph.com/news/112700/silicon-valleys-draper-university-offering-free-online-bitcoin-course) in early October, the free "Bitcoin Basis (https://www.udemy.com/the-bitcoin-course/)" course was born from a partnership between Draper University (http://draperuniversity.com/). Tim Draper’s entrepreneurship school based in San Mateo, and...
ZapChain (https://www.zapchain.com/), a network of industry professionals. Bitcoin Basis offers free lectures, and is available on Udemy.com (http://www.udemy.com/), a platform and marketplace for online learning.

"Draper University and Zapchain have come together with the goal of making an engaging Bitcoin course for beginners. By making Bitcoin more approachable, we hope to inspire people to innovate in the space, because Bitcoin truly has transformative potential," explained the two organizations.

Divided into seven sections, the course aims to provide fundamental knowledge on Bitcoin, covering several topics including the protocol, the different innovations occurring within the ecosystem, and targets the wider audience with comprehensive and accessible courses on the technology. The program is organized as such:

- Section 1 - What is Bitcoin?
- Section 2 - An Evolution of Payment Systems
- Section 3 - The Protocol
- Section 4 - Innovation in Bitcoin
- Section 5 - Getting Started
- Section 6 - Bonus Interviews
- Section 7 - Supplemental Material

Along with conventional lectures, the course also offers experts interviews, which tackles numerous topics such as Bitcoin mining, the future of cryptocurrencies, as well as global industry outlooks and business opportunities.

So far the program has enrolled 2,300+ students with feedback already available, notably to point out the need of specifications in several lectures.
Lecture #27, which features an interview of lead engineer at Boost VC Ross McKelvie (https://www.linkedin.com/in/rosmckelvie), raised few remarks regarding the accuracy of his statements.

"Ross is wrong about the 51% attack," argued Udemy user Scott Rose. "This video should be edited, because Ross repeatedly gives incorrect information about a 51% attack several times throughout this video. All the things that Ross said are NOT possible during a 51% attack. A 51% attack would be much more benign, plus the Bitcoin software can be reprogrammed to avoid any bad miners."
Gabriel Lambert, another user, pointed out the need of clarifications on the Bitcoin network's block difficulty in comment to an interview of Chris Shepherd (http://www.linkedin.com/in/shphrd), CEO of HashRabbit:

"Difficulty is not relevant to technology or individuals growing too big. Difficulty controls the blocktime, aka the reward rate, Bitcoin would lose its currency supply control without difficulty and would not be mineable with all the time in the universe at max difficulty, which would be finding a full 256bit hash match to the consented solution hash (all 0's). The difficulty is the number of leading zeros (nbits) required in the hash of the block hash + nonce (incrementing number). Network hashrate solves blocks at an approximate targeted predictable rate. Difficulty adjusts every 2100 blocks, roughly every 14 days."

Overall, the majority encourages the initiative and highlighted the relevance of such programs. "I'm not new to Bitcoin [...] I think this is a great beginners' course," commented Gabe Higgins. "I will be recommending newcomers to take this course, thanks Draper University and Udemy!"

Another user, Apostolos Chatzilakos, wrote:

"Keep it up Draper. Not new either. I have also just completed the course. Easy to digest, good pace, designed for the complete newbie. Not a demanding course, yet should serve well to get people more interested -and less intimidated- by Bitcoin. Thanks Draper University and Udemy. Looking forward to The Bitcoin Course #2!"

While Draper University has chosen the online path with free educational content, other organizations including universities are exploring the crypto phenomenon and starting to offer learning materials in a response to the increasing demand for crypto education.

In late October, Duke University's Innovation and Entrepreneurship, announced a new class called "Innovations and CryptoVentures (https://faculty.fuqua.duke.edu/~charvey/550crypto.htm)." Directed by Business School Professor Campbell R. Harvey, the course is divided into 12 sessions of approximately 2 hours and aims to teach students on P2P methods of exchanging and identifying ownership, as well as helping them understanding the disruptive technology and assess its implications on how business is conducted in the future.
Furthermore, the program will offer traditional lectures and will also feature numerous guest appearances both from the university itself, and external experts. The topics covered include cryptofinance, the blockchain innovation, risks, introduction to venture capital, money and law, regulatory environment, cryptography 101, and understanding and forecasting disruption. Duke University Innovation and Entrepreneurship’s "Innovations and CryptoVentures" course is set to begin on January 15 and end in late April 2015.

The year 2014 is definitely marked by a surging of educational materials and programs, from both educational institutions and private initiatives. In early September, Coin Academy announced the launch of its digital currency-centric education site. Covering numerous facets of cryptocurrencies, the service offers free courses, as well as interviews of industry experts to fill the knowledge gap and help the training market keep pace with innovation.

In late September, the organization announced it had partnered up with college cryptocurrency clubs network, the College Cryptocurrency Network, to expand its coverage and boost crypto education among American students.

Launched in 2014, the Draper University of Heroes is defined as "an unconventional world-class residential and online school for the brightest young entrepreneurs from around the world." The residential program is located in the heart of Silicon Valley, and is said to be designed to promote creativity, innovation, leadership and teamwork.

The establishment was founded by American venture capital investor Tim Draper, a strong supporter of Bitcoin who is widely known for his purchasing of the bitcoins seized from the Silk Road crackdown. His son, Adam Draper, founded Boost VC in 2012, a startup accelerator that has pledged to accelerate 100 Bitcoin startups until 2017 through its relevant program.

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