

WEC 04 Keynote

„Smart Contracts“

Nicholas J. Szabo, The George Washington University Law School

Short Abstract

The first part of the talk will cover highlights from the long history of "artifacts of the deal" -- technologies that facilitated commercial relationships -- with examples from prehistory (proto-money), the first civilization in Sumer (tamper-evident technologies and the first contracts), and the European Middle Ages (clocks and the coordination of schedules). The second part of the talk will discuss the idea of smart contracts, languages for specifying smart contracts, security (especially cryptographic methods), similarities and differences between software code and legal code, contemporary examples, and proposals.

Short Bio

Nick Szabo holds a Bachelors of Science degree in computer science from the University of Washington. He has over ten years experience in software engineering, network security, and technology management. His essays on economics, technology, and the intersection between technology and institutions are widely read. He is perhaps best known for the idea of embedding contractual code in digital technology -- smart contracts. He is currently writing and studying law at The George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C.