

SUBSTRATM social networking protocol

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White Paper



Contents

[dynamic content]

What SUBSTRATM does

SUBSTRATM is an open source platform-agnostic social media network and protocol that allows its users to maintain a permanent and continuous social presence online across long timeframes.

SUBSTRATM enables each user to maintain an on-chain list of subscribed and blocked people, topics, and sites that is maintained independent of and upstream from the content delivery networks it aggregates.

The SUBSTRATM social networking protocol ensures continuity and longevity of user content, and maintains a permanent set of user preferences for outgoing and incoming content to create a precisely curated feed across decades, designed and optimised by each user and built to help online social connections outlast their proprietary social platforms.

How SUBSTRATM works

To be onboarded to the Substratm network a user must:

- Connect to the dapp with a compatible wallet
- Upload a picture and enter personal details—these can be pseudonymous
- Enter links to existing social profiles, and where compatible, confirm ownership
- Mint an NFT containing this information along with other configurable fields that interact with the SUBSTRATM protocol

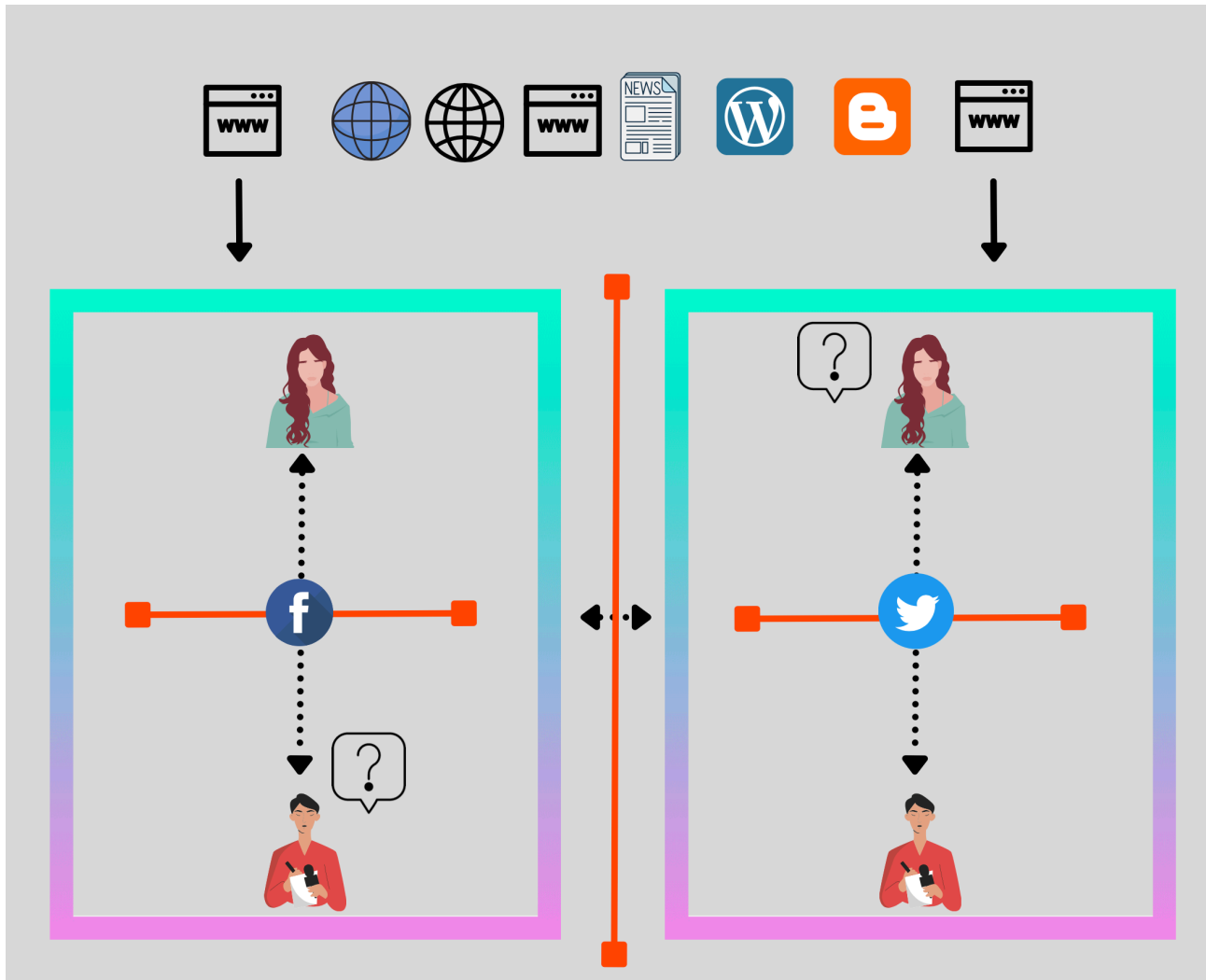
A user's SUBSTRATM NFT contains their personal details, authenticated legacy web social media accounts, photo, and any other information and content they want to share.

The SUBSTRATM NFT also contains a database of every person, topic, and site the user subscribes to, or blocks.

Subscriptions are handled by RSS, aggregating an open source content feed of blogs, news, and social posts via the SUBSTRATM frontend, like a news reader with more functionality and views.

Problems SUBSTRATM attempts to solve

The permanence and inherent security of blockchain, as well as its ability to be a communal Single Source of Truth with its network effect and audit trail, enables the first truly open, permanent social networking protocol to be built from the ground up for pure user experience.



Here are some of the broader problems areas around social media that SUBSTRATM addresses:

Continuity of individual social media presence

SUBSTRATM is designed to take advantage of blockchain's decentralised nature, allowing users to maintain a continuous online social media presence.

A user of SUBSTRATM can be found by anyone searching for their name or details—their online presence is visible to anyone with an internet connection, and anyone with a compatible wallet can subscribe to their content.

That means users of the network can't be banned, suspended, muted, shadow-banned, or otherwise silenced by a moderator. Each individual user has the option to block any other user, topic or site (directly, or by subscribing to a bulk Blocklist that they trust).

Individual content control and curation

SUBSTRATM is designed to promote individual control of who and what users see. Guided by a philosophy of turning the content weighting algorithms of proprietary social platforms inside out, exposing decisions that are usually made by the platform owner to the user. Users can create their personal social algorithm with the ability to weight importance of people, topics, and sites. This set of preferences is interpreted by a front end client using RSS to display social and online content in a variety of columned views.

Black box content moderation

SUBSTRATM is designed to eliminate censorship of any individual or group, while at the same time handing individual users a powerful set of controls to block what they don't want to see at a broad or granular level.

Users of SUBSTRATM can't be banned, muted, or in any way deplatformed by a man in the middle. Users, sites, and topics can only be silenced on an individual basis by any user who doesn't want to see that content.

Users can create and share Blocklists much like existing ad blocking domain lists, and organisations can put out signed Blocklists containing illegal or malware sites with the specific URLs and people encrypted, but enforced in client.

Content curation, aggregation and continuity of user preferences

Because it is platform-agnostic and hosted on the blockchain, SUBSTRATM will maintain the exact preferences users set for both outgoing and incoming content in a way that is permanent, configurable, cumulative across long timespans, independent of administration or moderation, and owned by the individual user with the security of their private key.

A permanent store of content and incoming/outgoing social preferences that plugs into several types of front end view and IFTTT queries to act as a user's social trailhead, avatar, and database—eliminating the double handling and effort spend of signing up for new social media platforms, resubscribing to connections when they churn between platforms, or trying to find someone's piecemeal content across a variety of platforms.

Content consumption by individual users

Currently users of proprietary social media platforms face three specific types of rot in any aggregate content feed, regardless of how well they've curated it with subscriptions to people or topics.

- **Black box moderation by platform and server administrators**

Content is removed without notice or justification, topics are sometimes muted or users banned for discussing them without any awareness that the topic itself was blacklisted or the consequences its discussion would bring.

- **Profit-incentivised content feed curation**

Advertisers pay owners of platforms to insert advertising disguised to appear as regular content. This usually begins sparingly but degrades quickly to become the bulk of content in a feed. Because profit is driven by advertising, owners of proprietary social media platforms will never NOT be incentivised to move content curation in the direction of more ads.

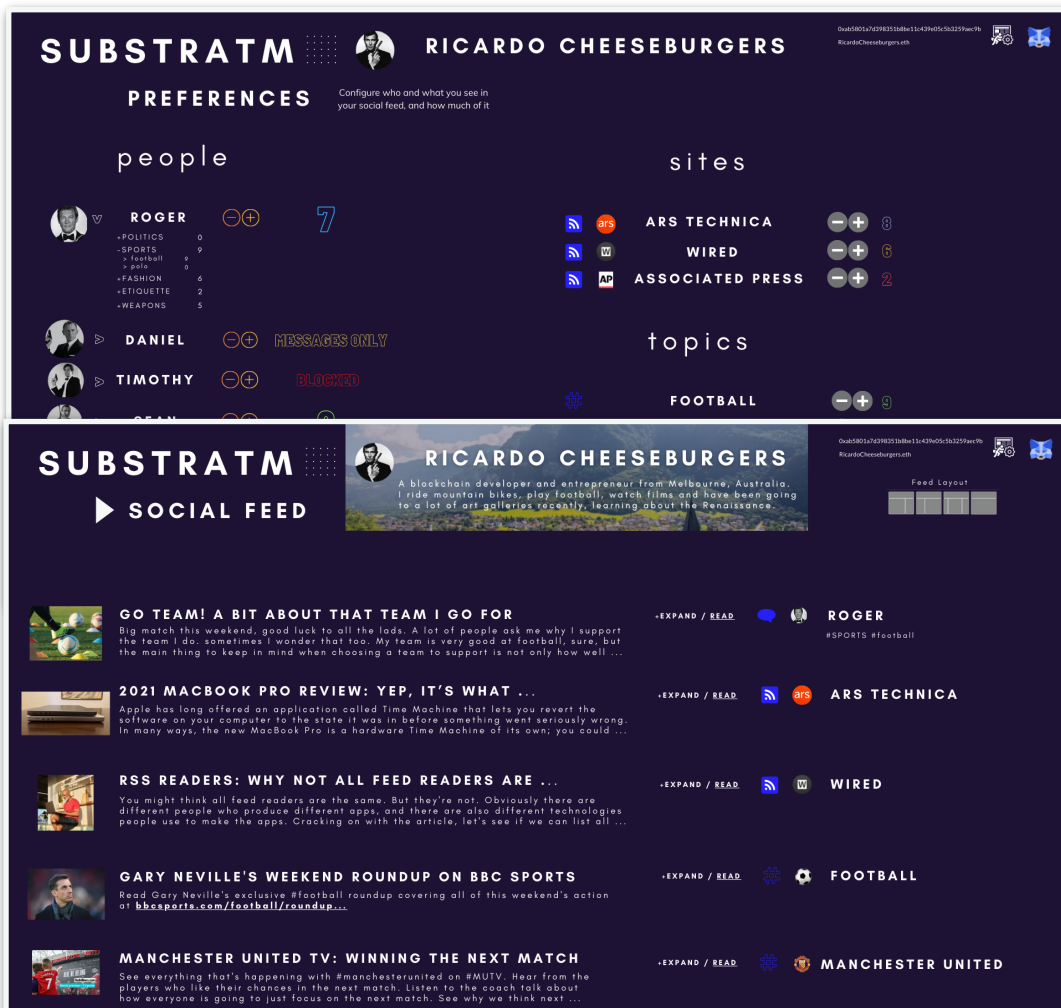
- **Proprietary feed and communication**

Outside of the Fediverse, social media platforms don't allow users of other platforms to subscribe to each other's content or communicate. A select few early movers or novel platforms have managed to dominate with network effect, to the point that they feel comfortable devolving the usability of their own platform to suit advertiser needs. Because users are locked in by their social connections, content feed curation, and content history, they aren't able to simply choose a competing service or self-manage their social presence, so they put up with being bound to increasing restrictions and distractions.

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The SUBSTRATM approach

In the SUBSTRATM approach we design out monetisation incentives like black box content curation and moderation, enabling the user to be entirely responsible for who and what they see, turning the dials on how much of each—at a high level or in fine detail.



The SUBSTRATM Roadmap

