



*Press release
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Palexpo SA announces the 1st Geneva Annual Blockchain Congress at its convention centre on 21 January 2019

Reflecting the impressive wave of curiosity in blockchain technology in Switzerland and more generally all over the world, Palexpo SA is organising the 1st **Geneva Annual Blockchain Congress** in close collaboration with the Canton of Geneva. This independent annual convention will be held on 21 January 2019 at the Palexpo Convention Centre. The event will provide the decision-makers of the region with a day to examine this "major new technology". The name of the event, *From lab to market*, will be illustrated through the presentation of blockchain solutions applicable to four fields of activity: identity and e-government; education; FinTechs; and commodity trading and the supply chain.

"The next digital revolution is imminent. After the Internet, which has profoundly changed our societies, blockchain technology is about to become one of the pillars of tomorrow's economy. A figurehead of "Crypto Lake", the Canton of Geneva has already initiated several pioneer projects – both internally and externally – in the field. It is proud to found the Geneva Annual Blockchain Congress, reinforcing existing blockchains on a local scale and fostering the growth of a true regional "Blockchain Valley," states Mr Pierre Maudet, Councillor to the State in charge of the Geneva economy.

Geneva, French-speaking Switzerland and Switzerland as a whole offer a unique platform thanks to the extent of its economic ecosystem and the quality of work being carried out by academic researchers and start-ups, not to mention the support and involvement of the public authorities. In the words of Claude Membrez, General Director of Palexpo SA, "The objective of Palexpo is to provide a neutral ground for discussion and networking among professionals; throw new light on the current economic, technological and social trends; and promote Geneva and its region." Holding the Geneva Annual Blockchain Congress will only reinforce this position.

From lab to market

Aimed at leaders of the private and public sectors and international organisations, this convention will present the concrete applications of blockchain solutions and will examine their consequences on business models of the market economy.

Therefore, for this first edition, four fields of activity will be addressed: identity and e-government; education; FinTechs; and raw material trade and the supply chain. These will be covered in their interprofessional aspects, including governance, legality and ethics.

A first at Palexpo: a blockchain ticket office

Blockchain technology implies secure ticket sales. SecuTix (an internationally active Swiss company specialising in ticket sales management) and Palexpo SA are joining forces to propose blockchain ticket sales for the convention. Frédéric Longatte, CEO of SecuTix, points out that "The mobile ticket office based on blockchain technology will profoundly transform the industry. Indeed, the complete digitalisation of the sales process for event tickets will force organisations of the secondary market to adapt to the new paradigm. The result will be greater security, both for the organisers of events and for the public throughout the client journey."

Members of the steering committee

The Geneva Annual Blockchain Congress is supported by a steering committee including representatives of the public and private spheres:

- Directorate General for Economic Development, Research and innovation
- Nagib Aouini, Cyber security director of ELCA
- Sahra Benaouda Brean, Independent contractor at SBConsulting
- Lamine Brahim, Co-Founder & Managing partner of the Taurus group
- Olivier Depierre, Co-Founder & Partner, DLT Law
- Antonio Gambardella, Director of Fongit
- Alain Jeannet, Business Development Director and Event and Conference Manager of Ringier Axel Springer Suisse SA
- Jean-Henry Morin, Professor at the University of Geneva – Centre Universitaire Informatique
- Marco Piermartiri, Operational Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Geneva (CCIG)
- Vincent Pignon, Founder and CEO of WeCan.Fund
- Sébastien Ruche, Economic Journalist of the newspaper Le Temps
- Palexpo SA

The history of the blockchain

Technology or revolution, the Blockchain concept is creating a buzz all over the world. Defined as an information storage and transmission technology – one that is traceable and secure, and that does not require a central control body –, the first blockchain appeared in 2008 with the bitcoin digital currency, developed by an unknown individual working under the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto. The blockchain is the underlying structure of the bitcoin. While the blockchain and bitcoin were developed in tandem, today a number of organisations (companies, governments, etc.) are considering the use of blockchain technology for purposes other than digital currency.

[Practical information and ticket sales are available on the website.](#)

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