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Web3 Evolution: 2025 Trends To Watch

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In my **previous Ecosystm Insight**, I spoke about web3 key initiatives in 2024 that caught my attention. As we navigate through the rapidly evolving tech landscape, I've chosen to highlight a few trends in the ecosystem that truly excite me – though this list is far from exhaustive. Interestingly, some of the most hyped trends, like the memecoin frenzy and AI agent platforms, didn't pique my interest enough to dive deeper into.

Here are 7 trends I'll be keeping an eye on in 2025.

#1 Stablecoins: The Bridge Between Fintech and Crypto

In 2024, a significant shift occurred in how global fintechs view crypto, driven by stablecoins. What started as a collateral tool for crypto trading has now evolved into a proven solution for cross-border payments and remittances. Companies like Stripe, Revolut, Robinhood, and Nubank are expanding their role as crypto gateways, offering on and off-ramps alongside stablecoin-enabled payments. With global payment revenues projected to reach **USD 3.3 trillion by 2031**, traditional systems still face challenges like high fees, slow settlement times, and inefficiencies – issues that stablecoin rails are now set to address!

Expect more launches and M&A in this space as every web2 fintech becomes "crypto-ready"!

"Whether intentionally or because of their ability to support third-party apps, every fintech will become a crypto gateway. Fintechs will grow in prevalence and may perhaps rival smaller centralised exchanges in crypto holdings."

PAUL VERADITTAKIT

#2 Bringing Real-World Assets to DeFi: Simplifying Complexities

Over 12,500 DeFi pools currently serve around 7 million users, facing challenges such as onboarding, price discovery, liquidity management, and safeguards against arbitrage. It is expected that decentralised secondary marketplaces for trading real-world assets will be launched, aiming to simplify these complexities and potentially attract new users to DeFi.

#3 Smart DePINs: The Rise of AI-Driven Coordination

More DePIN projects are expected to integrate AI and agentic computation to automate coordination, optimise demand and supply, and enhance interoperability. AI may also be used for tasks like node selection, choosing light nodes for accessibility and switching to heavier nodes for network reliability and redundancy. **Nvidia's embrace of DePINs** like IPFS Filecoin could be a game-changer, with the company recently sharing potential approaches to leveraging decentralised data structures.

#4 Web2.5: The Secret to Scaling Web3 Adoption

Tell me it's crypto without telling me it's crypto!

Prediction markets hit their stride in 2024, particularly with Polymarket and the elections, where most users didn't even realise they were using blockchains. This could be the key to scaling web3 – enter web2.5. However, what is more exciting is the rise of the **Telegram mini app** ecosystem, the **Worldcoin app store**, and the **Solana phone app store**. These simple and intuitive web2-like interfaces are slated to bring more new and first-time users to web3 than some of the louder narratives like the AI-driven memecoin frenzy.

#5 Proof-of-Humanity: Securing the Digital Self

While Tools for Humanity faced early criticism for scanning irises, the project, which now has over 20 million users, will gain more traction as people recognise the importance of proof-of-humanity. With the rise of AI-generated content and deepfakes, proof-of-humanity is becoming crucial – not just for combating Sybil attacks and frauds. Projects like SpaceID, Sign, and Mocaverse are also developing universal identity systems that enable users to access multi-chain services with a single private key or ID. Verifiable identity and credentialing via blockchains will be one of the most compelling use cases for the technology.

#6 NFTs Reimagined: A New Era of Digital Assets

Story Protocol, which **raised** USD 80 million at a USD 2.25 billion valuation, aims to tokenise the world's IP, placing originality at the heart of creative exploration and supporting creators. NFTs can be used not only for ID transactions, transfers, ownership, and memberships but also to represent and value assets. We can expect the emergence of many such NFT use cases beyond profile pictures, particularly in loyalty programs, brand memberships, and token-gated experiences. The second coming of NFTs is set for 2025!

#7 Web3 Gateways: Wallets Evolve into Comprehensive Platforms

Similar to how browsers serve as gateways to the internet, web3 wallets like Metamask and Phantom are becoming essential entry points to the web3 experience. These wallets will evolve into all-encompassing platforms, integrating dApps and decentralised applications into their feature set. Along with enhanced security, leading wallets will soon offer services such as trading, gaming, minting, and token swapping, all directly within the wallet interface.

Ecosystm Opinion

It's a reminder of how far we've come – and how much further we have to go. Yuval Noah Harari once pointed out that early use cases of the printing press were often conspiracy theories, and early Internet days were filled with chatrooms and adult content. We're in the early stages of web3, and with each passing day, new use cases emerge.

This space is still unfolding, and it will be fascinating to see where it leads!

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