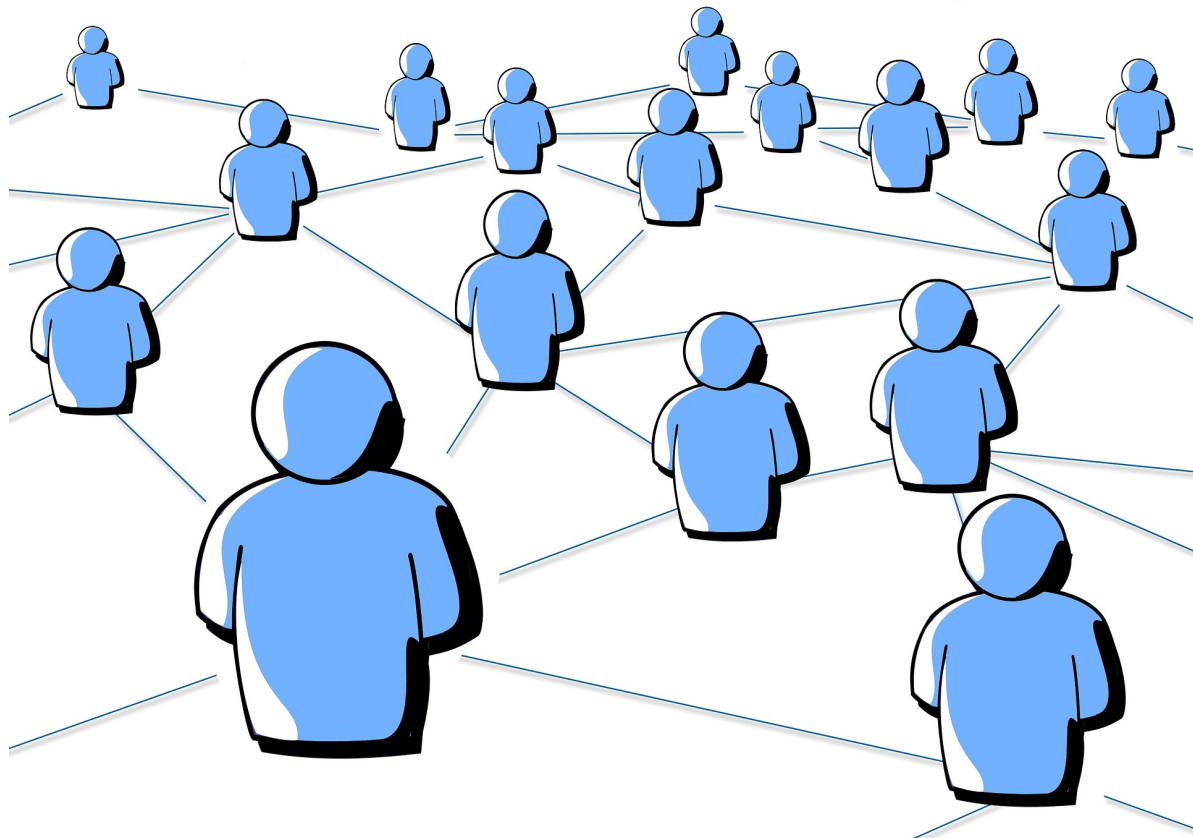# **What is DeSo** (decentralized social networks)?

How the new open-source alternatives run on social **blockchain** technology

What is DeSo, and how does it fit into the concept of decentralization? DeSo stands for **decentralized social** networks, and it essentially combines **social media** with all the benefits of **blockchain** technology. But why would anyone want **social media** to be decentralized?

Decentralization is the key concept behind **blockchain** that dictates no single person or group has all the power in a network. A decentralized network puts the users in charge, unlike traditional **social media,** where the company owns users' data and controls content on the site.

Decentralization applies to many **blockchain** industries, including [decentralized finance (DeFI)](#) and decentralized science (DeSci). While DeFi has already taken off in recent years, **decentralized social** networks are still relatively new.

Source: sixteensmallstones.org

What is DeSo?

So **what is DeSo** exactly, and what does it offer compared to traditional **social media**? With DeSo, **social media** networks are run on independent servers operated by individuals – anyone can start their own server. These servers are interconnected in what's known as a "federated" system.

This system allows users from one server to communicate with users on another, as long as both servers use the same underlying communication protocol.

For example, Mastodon is a DeSo version of Twitter. Unlike the real version of Twitter, Mastodon isn't owned by a single company. Instead, it's an open-source software code.

Anyone can take this code and launch their own server. The server creator sets the rules for the server. If someone doesn't like the rules of one server, they can go start their own.

This structure is what makes Mastodon a network of interconnected computers. But going further, Mastodon uses a communication protocol called Activity Pub. This allows any Mastodon user to communicate with the users from another platform that also uses Activity Pub in its underlying code – such as PixelFed, a DeSo version of Instagram.

Mastodon and Pixelfed, along with hundreds of other federated DeSo projects, make up [the Fediverse](#).
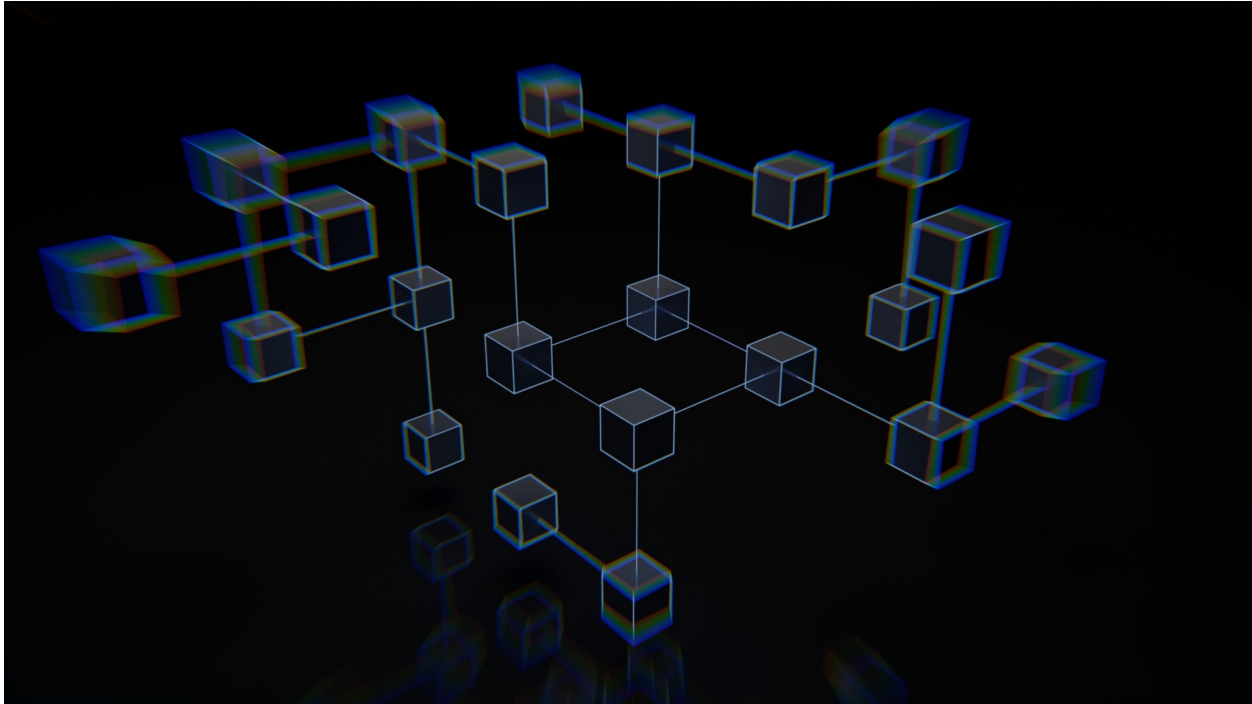
DeSo and **blockchain**

A critical problem with DeSo is scalability. This is where a dedicated DeSo **blockchain** can come in and help increase scalability while maintaining speed.

One DeSo project working on this is the **[Decentralized Social Blockchain](#)**, also known as DeSo. The **Decentralized Social Blockchain** is a project working on a layer-1 **blockchain** exclusively for **decentralized social** media.

The project creators argue that other blockchains were created with decentralized finance in mind, making them unsuitable for handling the thousands of users, posts, and data that make up a **social media** network.

The project's goal is to help DeSo projects scale up to 1 billion users, allowing them to better compete against traditional **social media** platforms.

So far, there are over 200 DeSo apps built using the **Decentralized Social Blockchain**, including Polygram, Flick, Bithunt, and Cloutfeed.

Source: Photo by Shubham Dhage on Unsplash

Key DeSo terms

Decentralization

[Decentralization is a process](#) where a platform's control and decision-making powers are spread out among all the users, not concentrated in the hands of a few. It's one of the main benefits to **blockchain** technology because it provides more security and gives people better control over their digital lives.

Layer-1 **blockchain**

A [layer-1 **blockchain**](#) is essentially a foundation-level infrastructure for a **blockchain** network. Anyone can build a decentralized app (dApp) or **blockchain** network on top of it. Depending on how the layer-1 **blockchain** is designed, it can help the programs built on top of it achieve better scalability, security, and decentralization.

Communication protocol

A [communication protocol](#) is a software code that determines the rules for a server. Different protocols can determine how users post content on a server and how others interact with that content, such as "liking" or sharing it. If servers use the same protocol, they can easily communicate, even if they're two entirely separate platforms.

One way to think of this is different email servers. Even though Gmail and Yahoo users have email addresses on separate sites, they can still easily send emails to each other because the underlying communication protocol is the same.

Source: commons.wikimedia.org

Fediverse

The Fediverse is a network of different DeSo networks that all use the same communication protocol. These networks have a variety of purposes, from video- and photo-sharing to social networking, blogging, and more. There are hundreds of DeSo networks that make up the Fediverse, such as Mastodon, Pixelfed, PeerTube, and Pleroma.

DeSo use cases

Privacy and data security

If you're wondering, "**What is DeSo**?" you might also want to know how it can be used to benefit people. **Decentralized social** networks have many use cases that set them apart from traditional **social media** platforms.

For example, they're better at protecting users' data and giving them more direct control over how it's used. In addition, there are no intrusive ads, so people maintain their privacy from corporate advertisers that use targeted ads to make a profit.

Privacy is also maintained because these networks use cryptography to protect user accounts.

Free speech and censorship

DeSo networks are also good at ensuring freedom of speech and fighting back against censorship. Unlike Twitter or Facebook, which can ban users and remove content, users on a DeSo platform are in control of what they post.

No single entity can remove a post or stop someone from using the network. Of course, that doesn't mean there isn't any moderation or that rules don't still apply to illegal content.

The [**Decentralized Social Blockchain** has developed a moderation system](#) they say is more effective than traditional platforms. All the data is stored publicly on the **blockchain**, so it's possible to use machine learning to catch any illegal or harmful content.

Content ownership

Lastly, DeSo networks are better for content creators because they allow creators to actually own their content and monetize it more effectively. With traditional platforms, any content published to them is technically owned by that platform.

And because these platforms are operated by centralized companies, those companies can dictate how content is curated on newsfeeds and how it is monetized.

In addition, individuals are discouraged from developing new innovations on these platforms – only the companies are able to develop new features or tools.

With DeSo, content isn't owned by any single entity besides the creator, so no one is in charge of who gets to see what. Also, anyone can contribute toward making changes to the network.

Source: Pixabay

Is the future of **social media** apps DeSo?

Do **decentralized social** networks have a chance at being the dominant form of **social media** someday? There are a couple problems with DeSo, though that hasn't stopped the industry from seeing a lot of support.

First, it's important to note that DeSo networks don't have traditional advertising or monetization methods. So **what is DeSo** doing for revenue? Many projects rely on donations from their users to keep the platforms functioning.

But larger projects like the **Decentralized Social Blockchain** have their own native cryptocurrency – $DESO. Using a coin allows people to invest in the project and generate revenue for the platform.

The **Decentralized Social Blockchain** has attracted many large investors and venture fund capital like Coinbase Ventures, Sequoia, and Winklevoss Capital.

Another major issue for DeSo is scalability. Currently, Mastodon has around four million users. In comparison, Twitter is estimated to have 400 million users. Of course, this is partially because Mastodon doesn't have the same type of name recognition as Twitter.

However, for the Mastodon network to support 400 million users, it will need to have a strong enough infrastructure to support that amount of data.

But as people become more concerned about privacy, censorship and how their data is used by Big Tech, they're increasingly looking for alternatives. This is where [DeSo can step in](#) to fill this need.

Future innovators of cryptocurrency

DeSo, DeFi, and [DeSci are still so new](#), yet already have strong support from people hungry for freedom from Big Tech and traditional centralized financial institutions. For example, the **Decentralized Social Blockchain** project has seen [65 million transactions](#) across its network through its native coin $DESO.

As crypto moves towards Web 3.0, there will be more innovations in the industry as creators keep developing decentralized alternatives to existing platforms and institutions.

With DeSo in particular, there's a need for innovators who can help networks achieve the same scalability as traditional **social media** so people have a viable alternative to turn to.

Taking the time to answer "**What is DeSo**?" can help you be better prepared as the [decentralized web](#) gains more popularity in the future.

About the author:

Jennifer Jones is a content writer who just recently started exploring the world of crypto. She loves learning about new things and breaking down complex ideas. Whenever she's not writing, she enjoys playing guitar and obsessing over her cats.

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Focus keyword:

What is deso

Secondary keyword(s:

Decentralized social

Social media

Blockchain

Social description + hashtags:

Twitter: Want to learn more about DeSo? Decentralized social networks will be a key part of web 3.0. Learn more about them here! #deso #socialmedia #cryptocurrency #decentralized

Facebook: Decentralized social networks, or DeSo, are alternatives to traditional social media that offer better privacy, data ownership, and freedom from censorship. Learn more about DeSo in this post!

LinkedIn: Decentralized social networks (DeSo) are social media alternatives that offer services like blogging, video, and photo sharing, with the added benefit of decentralization. Learn more about DeSo in this post!

Short description:

What is DeSo? Learn more about decentralized social networks and how they differ from traditional social media in this post.

Long description:

What is DeSo? Decentralized social networks are social media alternatives where individuals can pursue the same activities as traditional social platforms – blogging, video, and photo sharing – with the added benefit of decentralization. DeSo has a number of benefits for users, such as better privacy, data ownership, and less censorship. Learn more about the benefits of DeSo platforms in this post!