

Tim Berners-Lee sells the source code of the World Wide Web as NFT

Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web (WWW), is auctioning the source code of WWW as an NFT.

Although this groundbreaking code has been in the public domain for a long time, the British computer scientist has only now authorized the sale of a single version of these original files.

Consisting of more than 9,500 lines of code, the files contain the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP), Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), and the Uniform Resource Format (URI).

Lines of code are being sold along with an animation of the code and a digital "poster" "signed" by Berners-Lee via a digital signature. The winner will also receive a letter from Berners-Lee in which he reflects on the code and its creation.



"It's been a pleasure to go back and look at the code. It's amazing to see how those few lines of code, with the help of collaborators growing around the planet, are on track to get it right the web like it is today. I never felt like I could relax and sit back and contemplate because the web has been and is constantly changing. It's still not a good thing: there's always work to do!" - Berners-Lee shared.

Although the world's first website didn't go live until 1991, the World Wide Web is still believed to have been born in 1989 - the year Berners-Lee submitted a manuscript titled 'Information Management: A Proposal' (=> Information Management: Proposal) at CERN (a physics research laboratory in Switzerland).

His original purpose was to help his associates, but then his invention spread beyond the academic world. To date, there are more than 4.6 billion Internet users in the world.

Sotheby's, the company that organized the auction, described the token as the "first digitally born artifact" ever sold at auction. Cassandra Hatton, Sotheby's global head of science and pop culture, said the auction event offers the opportunity to 'own' a piece of technology developments that predict 'paradigm shift' for mankind.

"I was trying to find something comparable. I thought it could be relativity, heliocentrism, the printing press, the light bulb or the internal combustion engine. But I think what I'm trying to find is the much bigger. The light bulb is an improvement of the candle, the internal combustion engine is an improvement of the steam engine, but with the World Wide Web, it's a whole new thing," Cassandra Hatton shared by phone. .

Based on blockchain technology, NFT (non-fungible token), has revolutionized digital art and collectibles by providing proof of ownership.

Berners-Lee's code has been publicly available since 1993, but Hatton believes the opportunity to own the "original files" makes the NFT like other high-value antiques.

"I look at it through the lens of someone who has been a book and manuscript expert for almost two decades. The existence of a paperback does not diminish the value of the first edition and the existence of the first edition. Neither do paintings: How many posters of Van Gogh's 'The Starry Night' are out there, but they don't detract from the painting in the slightest. all' - Hatton emphasized.

Berners-Lee, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2004, says the NFT represents "the most appropriate means of existence" for his pioneering code.

"Why NFT? Well, it's as natural to do as when you're a computer scientist and when you're coding and have been working for years. It's just right to sign my signature on a digital artifact," he said.



On June 26, the auction will open at \$1,000 and run online until the end of the month. Sotheby's declined to give an estimate for Berners-Lee's mark.

Given NFT's limited history in the market, Hatton said it will likely "take some time" before auction houses can provide an accurate valuation for the NFT market. However, Hatton speculates the buyer will likely be someone "who has gone through a paradigm shift" due to the emergence of the web.

"To really appreciate this invention, you have to understand what it was like before," emphasized Hatton.

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