Cardano Foundation

Authenticity

Putting individuals in control of their data and the value it creates

Reef Data gives people a fair and transparent stake in the information economy using the Cardano blockchain

Challenge

Individuals power the data economy without benefiting

Big Tech companies collect personal data at scale and **monetize it for billions in annual profit**. Not every platform sells that data outright; some use it exclusively to categorize and target users within their own ecosystems, building proprietary data products that keep the value locked behind their own walls.

In either case, the individuals who generate that data are **kept in the dark about what's collected, how it's used, and what it's worth.** For companies that do purchase data from brokers, there's no reliable way to trace its origins or verify how it was sourced, and no direct relationship with the people who created it.

And for those people, **there's no mechanism to opt in, opt out, or benefit from the transaction.** This isn't an oversight in the system but a feature of it, and it has operated this way since the data economy began. Value flows freely between corporations, but the people who generate it remain outside the chain.

Reef Data

Reeve

Industry

- Global Data Monetization Market

Size

- USD 3.95 Billion (2025)[1]
- USD 19.32 Billion (2032)
- CAGR 21.95% (2025-2032)

The challenge

- Personal data collected and monetized without user knowledge or consent.
- Embedded consent clauses leave individuals with no right to compensation.
- Purchased datasets carry no verified guarantee of ethical sourcing.
- Individual contributors see none of the value their data generates.

The solution

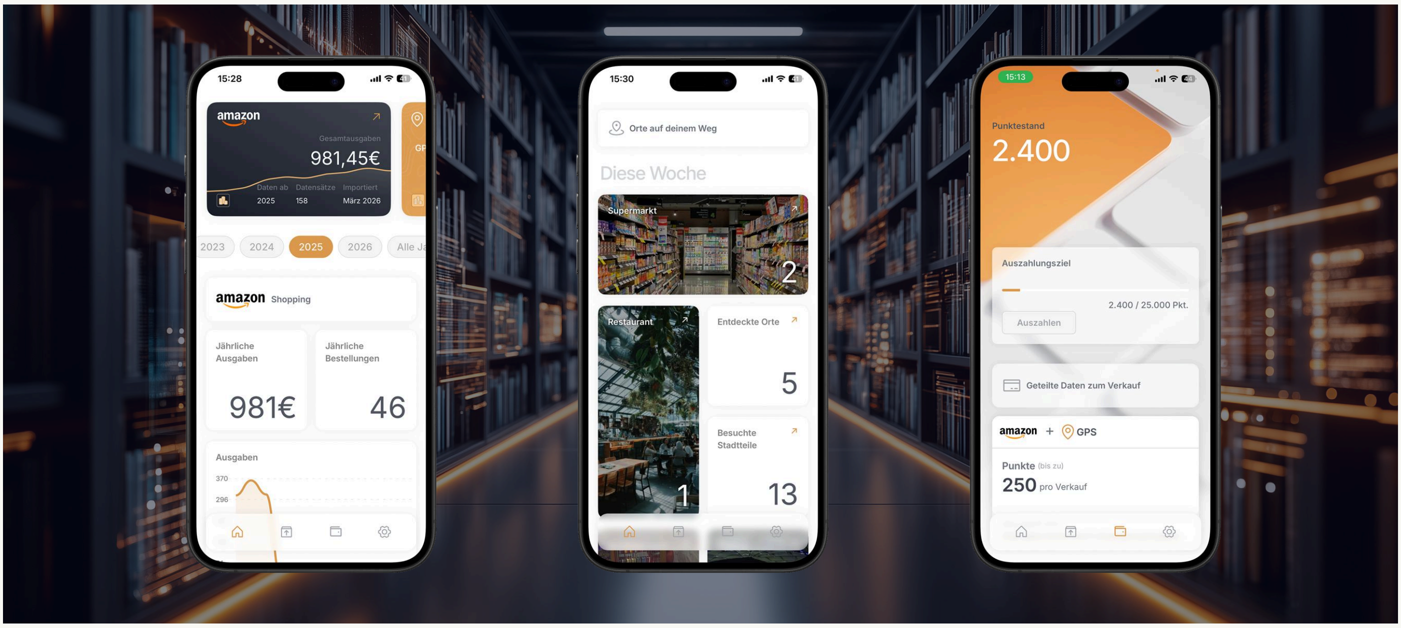
- Guided access to personal data requests on the Reef app.
- Full visibility into personal data before any decision to contribute is made.
- Granular control over what data is shared and what remains private.
- Every transaction and reward is recorded and verifiable on Cardano.

"The project, supported by the Cardano Foundation, demonstrates how sales, reward distributions, and member payouts can be recorded on-chain. This allows cooperative members and external auditors to independently verify financial flows rather than relying on the cooperative's own records alone. Jointly we were able to test the integration of Reef Data's systems with Reeve, validate the publishing and retrieval of structured data on-chain, and assess the combined solution's technical feasibility, performance, and usability for the benefit of our future cooperative members and customers."

Elizabeta Gorgievska
Head of Marketing, Reef Data GmbH

Solution

A curated data source built on transparent blockchain infrastructure



Reef built a cooperative data platform that inverts the existing system, built in partnership with the Cardano Foundation's Reeve platform. The cooperative operates with backing from Hamburger Volksbank, ARIC e.V., VALIO Hamburg GmbH & Co., and Disruptive Elements, giving the platform institutional support beyond its founding team. Instead of corporations extracting value from user data, **individuals can request their personal data from companies under the EU Data Act,** contribute it to a shared cooperative pool, and earn royalties proportional to what they share.

Users **request their data directly from companies through the Reef Data app.** Because this data is typically delivered as bulk CSV files that mean little to the average person, the app translates it into something legible and actionable. Users then **review their data and make an explicit, informed decision about what to share before anything leaves their device.** Only the data that is strictly necessary is contributed to the cooperative pool. Partner companies negotiate access to that anonymized pool directly with Reef, and demand for ethically sourced, user-consented data continues to grow as awareness of its value takes shape across the market.

Every transaction and reward is recorded and verifiable on Cardano through Reeve, **enabling auditors, the broader community, and each individual to independently verify every transaction without exposing user identities.** The platform functions as shared public infrastructure, with operating costs covered by the cooperative's jointly generated revenue.

Solution Walkthrough

Reef Data

01. Users request their personal data from companies through the Reef Data app, which guides them through the process.

02. Data is delivered directly to the user's device, never to Reef, staying fully under their control as the app translates raw files into something legible and meaningful.

03. Individuals review their data and make an explicit, informed decision about what to contribute, with full control over which sources to include or exclude.

04. Only the necessary data is anonymized on-device and contributed to the cooperative pool, where it is made available to verified partner companies.

05. Every transaction and royalty distribution is recorded on Cardano using Reeve, allowing auditors, the broader community, and each contributor to independently verify their share.

Results

Measurable progress toward a fairer data economy

Individual data ownership restored
For the first time, users can see what data exists about them and make informed decisions about how it's used.

Ethical data supply for enterprise buyers
Companies access ethically sourced, anonymized datasets, reducing compliance risk and dependence on unaccountable third-party brokers.

Transparent revenue distribution
Every purchase and reward payment is recorded on Cardano using Reeve and is independently verifiable by users, auditors, and the broader community.

Infrastructure designed to scale
The cooperative model and blockchain infrastructure support significant growth without proportional increases in operating costs.

Expanding access across markets
With Germany as the foundation, Reef is positioned to expand into Austria, Switzerland, and broader EU markets.

CARDANO Advantages

Proven resilience
Demonstrated security and reliability support continuous operation.

Scalable network
Future-ready infrastructure supports platform growth without sacrificing performance.

Secure data
Robust architecture protects sensitive data, minimizing the risk of breaches or fraud.

Sustainable operations
Energy-efficient consensus and ethical governance align with sustainability efforts.

Source
[1] Data Bridge: Global Data Monetization Market Size, Share, and Trends Analysis Report