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Institutional Digital Assets

Operating Models, Controls, and Market Structure

As digital assets move from experimentation toward financial infrastructure, the conversation is shifting. The question is no longer simply whether stablecoins, tokenization, and other digital asset models offer something new. It is whether they can operate within the legal, regulatory, governance, and control requirements of institutional finance. This book provides a practical framework for understanding digital assets through the lens of institutions rather than technology alone. Instead of examining custody, settlement, stablecoins, tokenization, compliance, and market structure as separate topics, it shows how these components interact to determine whether a digital asset model can function in practice. Readers will gain a clear understanding of how legal rights, operational controls, liquidity, cash movement, governance, and risk management come together to support institutional use. Drawing on the issues facing banks, custodians, exchanges, payment networks, fintechs, and infrastructure providers, the book explores the institutional foundations of digital assets. It explains why promising use cases do not always develop into viable operating or business models and why technical capability alone is rarely enough. Through a detailed examination of market structure, operating models, settlement infrastructure, tokenized assets, and onchain cash, it provides the context needed to evaluate what can realistically scale. Whether assessing stablecoins for payments and treasury operations, evaluating tokenized real-world assets, or designing digital asset services within regulated environments, readers will learn how institutions approach decision-making across legal, compliance, operational, and commercial dimensions. The result is a grounded view of a market in which institutional progress depends increasingly on infrastructure rather than product narratives alone. What You Will Learn • Understand how custody, controls, settlement, cash movement, and market structure shape institutional digital asset models. • Evaluate stablecoins, tokenized assets, and digital asset workflows through their legal, operational, regulatory, and commercial requirements. • Identify the difference between a promising use case and a model that can be governed, repeated, and used within an institution. Who This Book is For This book is intended for professionals working across financial services, fintech, market infrastructure, and digital assets, including those in strategy, product management, legal, risk, compliance, custody, treasury, operations, payments, and investment research.

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64,19 €
59,99 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca. Februar 2027

Artikelnummer: 9798868832420
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 979-8-8688-3242-0
Verlag: Apress
Erscheinungstermin: 01.02.2027
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: 1. Auflage 2027
Produktform: Kartoniert
Format (B x H): 155 x 235 mm