Interview Series

Xin, Sign: On-Chain Verification, Airdrops, and The Orange Dynasty

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As crypto applications move further into the mainstream, one of the biggest challenges remains unsolved: how do we establish trust in a decentralized world? From token distributions to identity verification, today's infrastructure is still fragmented, opaque, and heavily reliant on off-chain systems.

Enter Sign, a project founded by Xin and his team during a hackathon in 2021. What began as EthSign—a tool for digital signatures—has since evolved into a full-stack trust layer for Web3. With products like TokenTable and Sign Protocol, Sign is building a standardized, on-chain verification system that enables users, communities, and even governments to prove and share trust at scale.

To understand how Sign is redefining digital trust and where the future of on-chain identity is headed, Presto Research sat down with Xin to discuss the project's origins, product evolution, and why building with—and for—the community is core to everything they do.

1. Let's start from the top — who are you, and what's the origin story behind Sign?

I'm Xin Yan, co-founder and CEO of Sign. My journey started as an engineer, then an investor, and now an entrepreneur.

In 2021, my co-founders and I founded Sign, originally known as EthSign, as a hackathon project. Our initial vision was simple: digital signatures should be verifiable and accessible on-chain, globally.

As we built EthSign, we realized our focus wasn't just contracts—it was trust. Blockchain is a trustless network governed by code and consensus, but the real world runs on trust—whether it's hailing a ride, signing a contract, or verifying information online. If blockchain is to support real-world applications, we need to bridge this gap. That's what Sign does: we've built a standardized on-chain verification system, enabling individuals, businesses, institutions, and even governments to establish trust in a decentralized way.

2. What was the driving force behind building Sign — and how did TokenTable and Sign Protocol come to life?

We believe blockchain is the ultimate global ledger—real-time, accurate, and auditable. Our mission is to bring critical services and credential verification fully on-chain, making them universally accessible and verifiable.

Through iterations of EthSign, we saw a bigger opportunity: if you could sign legal documents on-chain, why not anything else? That led to Sign Protocol, an omnichain attestation infrastructure

that enables structured, verifiable data signing. This made attestations central to our vision—validations that carry weight based on the credibility of the signer.

Inspired by @balajis' OG MirrorTable article, we envisioned an on-chain cap table for signing SAFTs and automating token unlocks. But crypto founders weren't ready for full automation, so we simplified it: TokenTable became a smart contract-based token distribution tool. That pivot worked. From Zeta's airdrop to one of the largest $DOGS distributions on TON, TokenTable has now facilitated over $2 billion in token distributions across EVM chains, TON, and Solana.

Figure 1: Website of TokenTable Where Tokens Could Be Managed Easily
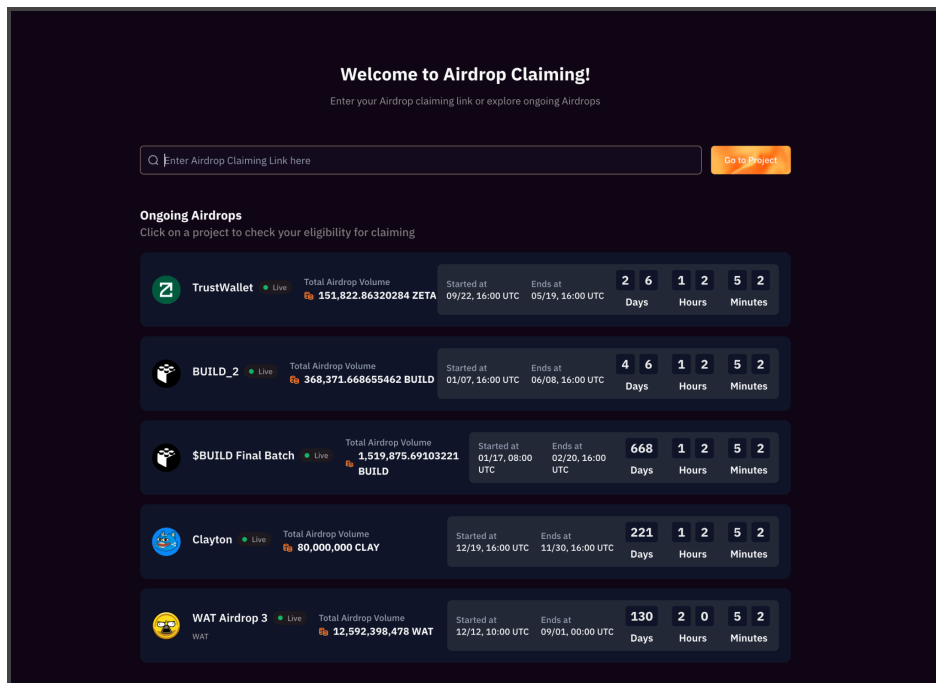
Editor's Note: Overview of Sign's Products

Sign's business can be classified into four main products.

1. Sign Protocol

An omni-chain attestation protocol that allows users to verify and record any type of information on-chain, ensuring transparency and interoperability across networks.

2. TokenTable

A token management platform that helps founders, investors, and communities manage token distributions, track vesting schedules, and maintain cap tables in a secure and automated way.

3. SignPass

A decentralized identity solution that acts as a digital passport for sovereign countries, network states, and online communities, enabling users to prove their credentials on-chain.

4. EthSign

A decentralized electronic agreement platform that allows users to create, sign, and verify contracts directly on the blockchain without relying on centralized intermediaries.

3. You've been through multiple market cycles now — what has changed the most since you started building?

The crypto community has evolved dramatically since I first joined - what began as a niche gathering of idealistic tech nerds obsessively debating decentralization and blockchain mechanics has matured into a mainstream movement where the focus has shifted from understanding the technology to applying it, where memes and culture now drive as much conversation as whitepapers once did, proving the revolution succeeded precisely because we stopped explaining the plumbing and started building what comes next.

4. Airdrops have evolved a lot — from free money to Sybil battlegrounds. Where do you see token distribution going next?

Airdrops have shifted from free giveaways to battlegrounds against Sybil attacks, and the future of token distribution will be defined by transparency and community-driven growth.

What TokenTable is doing—locking developer tokens with smart contracts and tracking token metrics in real time—is becoming the new standard. As token issuance expands to celebrity tokens and even national currencies, tools like TokenTable Dashboard will be critical for monitoring vesting schedules, tracking distribution across exchanges and on-chain locations, and detecting deviations from project whitepapers.

In the long run, crypto has been dominated by VC funding, but real success comes from engaged communities, not institutional investors. No billion-dollar token thrives on utility alone—network effects and participation matter more. The next wave of token distribution will prioritize community-first strategies over centralized funding.

5. You're building on-chain identity infra in a space that loves pseudonymity. How do you balance privacy and verification?

We designed Sign with privacy-first principles, enabling self-sovereign identities where users control their data. Zero-knowledge proofs (ZKPs) allow verification without revealing unnecessary details—like proving you're of legal age without disclosing your exact birthdate. This ensures trust and compliance while preserving privacy, striking the right balance between verification and pseudonymity in Web3.

6. Sign doesn't have a token (yet), but the community is real. What's your perspective on "wen token?" and managing expectations?

Yes, $SIGN is coming soon, but tokenomics isn't just about launching a token—it's about building a sustainable economy. Most projects treat airdrops as exit liquidity, but we're different.
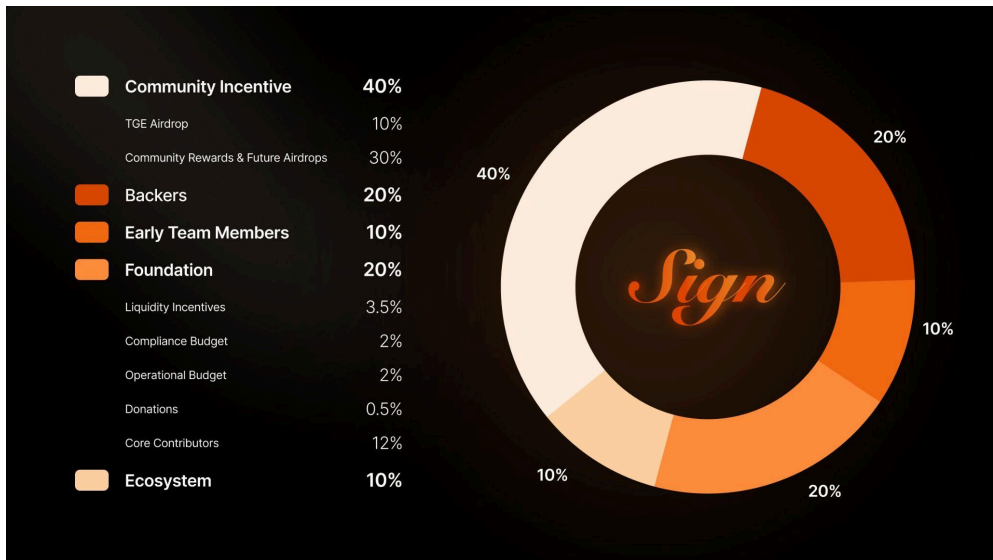
40% of the supply is allocated to pre-TGE contributors—team, community, and investors. 30% is reserved for Sign App mining, rewarding real contributions over time. TGE isn't the finish line; it's the starting point.

Community rewards won't stop after launch. The Sign App (coming in Q2) will be the main portal for earning $SIGN, with 3x more rewards for those who truly build. If you believe in Sign, you'll always have a way to earn—this isn't just about buying in, it's about contributing and growing together.

My goal for the Orange Dynasty isn't just to build a community that's bullish on Sign—we want 100 people to make 7 figures here and wear orange forever..

* The piece was written before Sign announced its TGE schedule. $SIGN is set to go live on April 28, 2025, through the Binance HODLer Airdrop.

Figure 2: Recently Released Token Allocation of $SIGN

Community Incentive	40%
TGE Airdrop	10%
Community Rewards & Future Airdrops	30%
Backers	20%
Early Team Members	10%
Foundation	20%
Liquidity Incentives	3.5%
Compliance Budget	2%
Operational Budget	2%
Donations	0.5%
Core Contributors	12%
Ecosystem	10%

7. The "Orange Dynasty" has some serious believers — even tattoos. How did you build such strong loyalty?

We are redefining Web3 culture, proving that genuine community respect matters. The Orange Dynasty isn't just a brand—it's a movement. Our creative content keeps the space vibrant and fun, while deep connections bring warmth to what was once an emotionally barren landscape. We lead with love.

A strong community needs an achievement system, just like a well-designed game. That's why Sign's SBTs recognize different contributions—builders, creators, supporters, and ambassadors all earn their place. For those who want to support but lack time, our NFTs offer another way to participate. This isn't just the following; it's an ecosystem where every contribution is valued, and every member has a meaningful role.

8. If you could magically fix one broken thing in crypto, what would it be — and why?

The VC playbook frames tokens as mere utility or governance tools - but reality proves value flows from community strength. A vibrant community creates endless utility across all the applications they build together. We reject the exploitative VC model of early token dumps on retail. That's why 40% of our tokens are reserved for community earnings - rewarding contribution, not extracting capital. True value grows when holders are builders.

9. Looking ahead: what's the long-term vision for Sign? Where do you want the project to be in 2–3 years?

We see blockchain as the foundation for a transparent, real-time, and tamper-proof global record system. Our goal is to seamlessly integrate essential services and credential verification on-chain, ensuring they are universally accessible, trustworthy, and verifiable.

This year, we're focusing on blockchain-powered public services by partnering with governments via Rollup-as-a-Service (RaaS) to build sovereign chains with zero gas fees for end users. We're deploying Sign Protocol for KYC and stablecoin payments, and expanding in Thailand, the UAE, Barbados, and over 20 other countries.

On the user side, we're building Sign App, a Worldcoin-style super app that integrates identity verification, blockchain transactions, and social features into one ecosystem—essentially an Alipay for Web3. Driving app adoption will be our top priority.

10. To wrap it up — favorite CT account, and any closing alpha for the users out there?

Crypto is currently a zero-sum game—new users and capital aren't entering the space. A real bull market needs fresh liquidity and new participants.

VC-driven projects may collapse in waves, leading to an industry reset. The rise of "Tech Vaporware"—projects with high valuations but little real-world value—will lead to a reckoning. Layer 1 chains with weak use cases will fade.

Instead, I see the rise of a crypto renaissance—community-driven projects taking center stage. The old guard can no longer dictate the market. Different ecosystems (Ethereum, Solana, etc.) are developing independent core communities, making the space more diverse and decentralized.

The next bull run will be fueled by real adoption, not just hype.

Figure 3: The Orange Dynasty Is Coming

That's all! Thank you very much Xin. I really appreciate your time, a lot of exciting things are coming from Sign.

About Presto

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