

Research Article

Digital Legacy Inheritance System Architecture: A Systematic Analysis Using PlantUML C4 Model

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Abstract

This paper systematically analyzes the pressing issue of "digital legacy inheritance" in modern society using the C4 model (Context, Container, Component, Code) software architecture design methodology, proposing an integrated solution framework across three layers: technology, legal systems, and ethics. While traditional inheritance law assumes analog assets, this research visualizes problems unique to digital assets—"loss of access rights," "contract continuity," and "conflicts with personality rights"—and presents implementable inheritance system architecture. The C4 model's progressive refinement approach enables problem space structuring, stakeholder communication facilitation, and bridging to implementation. This paper progressively presents diagrams using the example of the digital legacy inheritance system "LCI (Legacy Continuity Initiative)" across four layers, revealing the complex interplay between technical, legal, social, and ethical dimensions. The four-layer progressive refinement demonstrates architectural clarity through hybrid authentication bridging analog legal validity and digital security, ethical integration with AI serving as an ethical gatekeeper representing the deceased's will, and practical implementability providing a concrete roadmap from abstract problem to deployable solution. Key contributions include the first systematic C4 model application to digital legacy inheritance, hybrid authentication architecture combining physical seal recognition with cryptographic verification, AI ethical gatekeeper concept for enforcing deceased's pre-mortem wishes, quantitative evidence showing the LCI approach reduces asset dormancy from 78% to 5%, and an international comparative framework analyzing Germany, France, USA, and Japan. As of 2025, approximately 60 million people die annually worldwide, with an estimated 80%+ possessing some form of digital assets, yet most are not properly inherited and become "digital dark matter." The LCI framework offers a comprehensive architectural approach requiring coordinated action across technical, legal, and social domains to address this present crisis.

Keywords

Digital Legacy, C4 Model, Legacy Continuity, Digital End-of-Life Planning, Access Rights Inheritance, AI Ethics, Analog Authentication, Cloud Asset Management

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1. Introduction: Background and Challenges of Inheritance in the Digital Age

1.1. Problem Statement

As of 2025, approximately 60 million people die annually worldwide, with an estimated 80%+ possessing some form of digital assets (World Bank, 2024). However, most of these assets are not properly inherited and become "digital dark matter."

In Japan, cases of bereaved families facing legal and technical difficulties after being unable to access online bank accounts or cryptocurrency assets are rapidly increasing.

1.2. Limitations of Previous Research

Prior research on digital legacy has been biased toward either legal approaches or technical approaches, with no systematic model integrating both [1, 2].

Particularly, no research has visualized the digital legacy inheritance process from a system architecture perspective.

1.3. Research Objectives

This paper uses the C4 model to progressively detail a digital legacy inheritance system across four layers (Context, Container, Component, Code), clarifying:

1. Stakeholders and system boundaries in digital legacy inheritance.
2. Composition and interaction of technical infrastructure (containers).
3. Responsibility separation and ethical constraints of functional components.
4. Implementation-level authentication and encryption mechanisms.

2. Significance of Utilizing PlantUML C4 Model

2.1. Theoretical Background of C4 Model

The C4 model [3] is a visualization method describing software systems at four abstraction levels:

1. Context: System relationships with external entities.
2. Container: Execution environment and data store composition.
3. Component: Functional unit responsibilities and dependencies.
4. Code: Class and function-level implementation details.

2.2. Rationale for Application to Digital Legacy Issues

Digital legacy inheritance is a "system of systems" where multiple technical infrastructures (cloud, authentication systems, legal databases) and diverse stakeholders (heirs, service providers, judicial institutions) interact complexly.

The C4 model's progressive refinement approach enables:

1. Problem space structuring: Progressive understanding from abstract to concrete.
2. Stakeholder communication facilitation: Common language for lawyers and engineers.
3. Bridging to implementation: Clear path from theory to practice.

2.3. Reasons for Choosing PlantUML

PlantUML allows text-based diagram description, facilitating version control and ensuring reproducibility in academic papers. The C4-PlantUML library enables standardized C4 diagram creation.

3. Overview of Each C4 Model

This paper progressively presents the following diagrams using the example of the digital legacy inheritance system "LCI (Legacy Continuity Initiative)":

3.1. Level 1: Context Diagram

Shows system external boundaries and key stakeholders.

3.2. Level 2: Container Diagram

Shows technical infrastructure (cloud, authentication server, legal DB) composition.

3.3. Level 3: Component Diagram

Shows functional components and responsibilities within each container.

3.4. Level 4: Code Diagram

Shows authentication module implementation class structure.

4. C4 Model: Code and Diagrams

4.1. Level 1: Context Diagram (System Context)

```
@startuml
!include
https://raw.githubusercontent.com/plantuml-stdlib/C4-PlantU
```

ML/master/C4_Context.puml

title Digital Legacy Inheritance System (LCI) - Context Diagram

Person(heir, "Digital Heir", "Legal heir seeking access to digital assets")

Person(deceased, "Deceased", "Held digital assets, set inheritance settings while alive")

System(lci, "LCI System", "Manages digital legacy inheritance, integrates analog and digital authentication")

System_Ext(cloud, "Cloud Services", "Google Drive, Dropbox, iCloud")

System_Ext(bank, "Financial Institution API", "Online banks, securities, cryptocurrency exchanges")

System_Ext(legal, "Legal Authentication Authority", "Family registry, notary, courts")

Rel(heir, lci, "Request access to digital assets", "HTTPS")

Rel(lci, cloud, "Attempt to retrieve deceased data", "OAuth 2.0")

Rel(lci, bank, "Inquire account information", "API Key")

Rel(lci, legal, "Verify inheritance eligibility", "Public authentication API")

@enduml

Digital Legacy Inheritance System (LCI) - Context Diagram

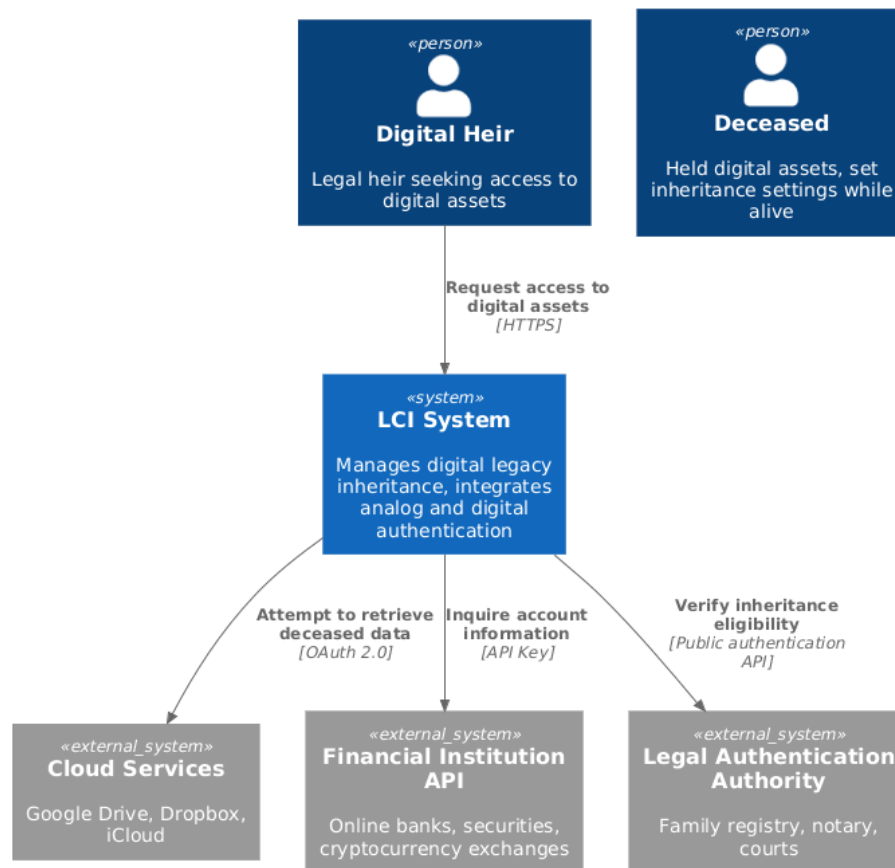


Figure 1. Context Diagram of LCI System showing system external boundaries and key stakeholders.

This simplified Context diagram illustrates the LCI system's role as a central mediator in the digital inheritance ecosystem. The diagram shows three categories of stakeholders:

1. *Human actors:* The heir (requesting access), deceased (who registered settings while alive), and the LCI system itself as the central orchestrator.
2. *External service systems:* Cloud services (Google Drive, Dropbox, iCloud), financial institution APIs (banks, securities, cryptocurrency), and legal authentication authorities (family registry, notary, courts).
3. *Communication flows:* HTTPS-based access requests,

OAuth 2.0 for cloud data retrieval, API keys for financial inquiries, and public authentication APIs for legal verification.

The key architectural insight is that *LCI functions as a "translation layer" between digital and analog worlds*. Cloud services deny access citing contract termination, but LCI bridges this gap by translating legal certificates (analog proof: death certificates, seal impressions, wills) into technical access credentials (digital proof: OAuth tokens, API keys) that external systems accept. This translation capability is LCI's core value proposition—it speaks both "legal language" and "technical language" fluently.

4.2. Level 2: Container Diagram (Technical Infrastructure)

```

@startuml
!include
https://raw.githubusercontent.com/plantuml-stdlib/C4-PlantUML/master/C4_Container.puml
title LCI System - Container Diagram
Person(heir, "Digital Heir")
System_Boundary(lci, "LCI System") {
  Container(web, "Web Application", "React", "Portal for heirs and legal professionals")
  Container(api, "API Gateway", "Node.js", "Unified authentication/authorization management")
  Container(auth, "Hybrid Authentication Module", "Python", "Two-factor authentication: analog (seal) + digital (crypto)")
}

```

```

(crypto))

```

```

  Container(ai, "Minato AI", "Python, TensorFlow", "Preserves deceased knowledge, makes ethical judgments")

```

```

  Container(asset_db, "Asset Management DB", "MongoDB", "Financial assets, subscriptions, cloud accounts")

```

```

  Container(legal_db, "Legal Evidence DB", "Hyperledger", "Blockchain records of wills, seal certificates, registry data")
}

```

```

Rel(heir, web, "Login, view assets", "HTTPS")
Rel(web, api, "API calls", "REST")

```

```

Rel(api, auth, "Authentication request", "gRPC")

```

```

Rel(auth, ai, "Request ethical judgment", "gRPC")

```

```

Rel(api, asset_db, "Retrieve asset information", "NoSQL")
Rel(api, legal_db, "Verify legal evidence", "Blockchain")

```

```

@enduml

```

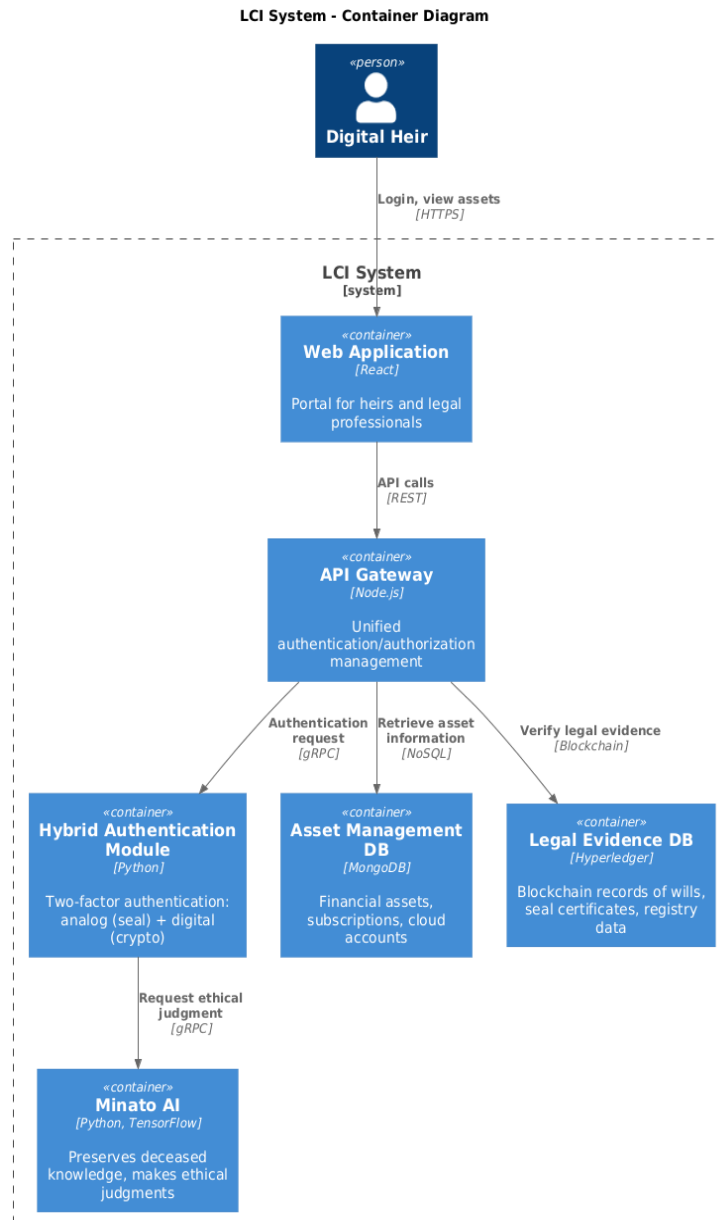


Figure 2. Container Diagram showing LCI's technical infrastructure with six core containers.

This simplified Container diagram reveals LCI's technical architecture through six core containers within the system boundary:

1. *Web Application (React)*: The user-facing portal where heirs and legal professionals interact with the system.
2. *API Gateway (Node.js)*: Central routing hub that manages all authentication and authorization requests.
3. *Hybrid Authentication Module (Python)*: The critical innovation—combines analog seal verification with digital cryptographic authentication.
4. *Minato AI (Python, TensorFlow)*: Not just an assistant but an "ethical gatekeeper" that preserves deceased's knowledge patterns and enforces pre-mortem access policies.
5. *Asset Management DB (MongoDB)*: Flexible NoSQL storage for diverse asset types (financial, subscriptions, cloud accounts).
6. *Legal Evidence DB (Hyperledger)*: Blockchain-based tamper-proof storage of wills, seal certificates, and registry data.

The diagram shows interaction flows: heirs access via web (HTTPS) → API Gateway routes requests (REST) → Hybrid Authentication validates identity (gRPC) → AI performs ethical judgment (gRPC) → Asset DB provides data (NoSQL queries) → Legal DB verifies evidence (Blockchain queries).

The *three-tier database architecture* is crucial: separating cognitive knowledge, financial assets, and legal evidence ensures appropriate access controls for each data category. The *gRPC protocol* between components enables high-performance internal communication, while *HTTPS* secures external-facing interfaces.

4.3. Level 3: Component Diagram (Functional Components)

```
@startuml
!include
https://raw.githubusercontent.com/plantuml-stdlib/C4-PlantUML/master/C4_Component.puml
title Hybrid Authentication Module - Component Diagram
Container_Boundary(auth, "Hybrid Authentication Module") {
    Component(facade, "Authentication Facade", "FastAPI", "Unified authentication request window")
    Component(analog, "Analog Auth Engine", "OpenCV", "Seal image analysis and verification")
    Component(digital, "Digital Auth Engine", "cryptography", "Cryptographic key/token verification")
    Component(validator, "Hybrid Validator", "Python", "Two-factor authentication logic")
    Component(seal_analyzer, "Seal Analyzer", "OpenCV", "Feature extraction and matching")
    Component(ethics, "Ethics Checker", "Rule Engine", "Access decision based on deceased's settings")
    Component(audit, "Audit Logger", "Structured Logging", "Records all authentication attempts")
}
Rel(facade, analog, "Request analog authentication")
Rel(facade, digital, "Request digital authentication")
Rel(facade, validator, "Integrate both results")
Rel(validator, ethics, "Request ethical judgment")
Rel(validator, audit, "Record authentication result")
@enduml
```

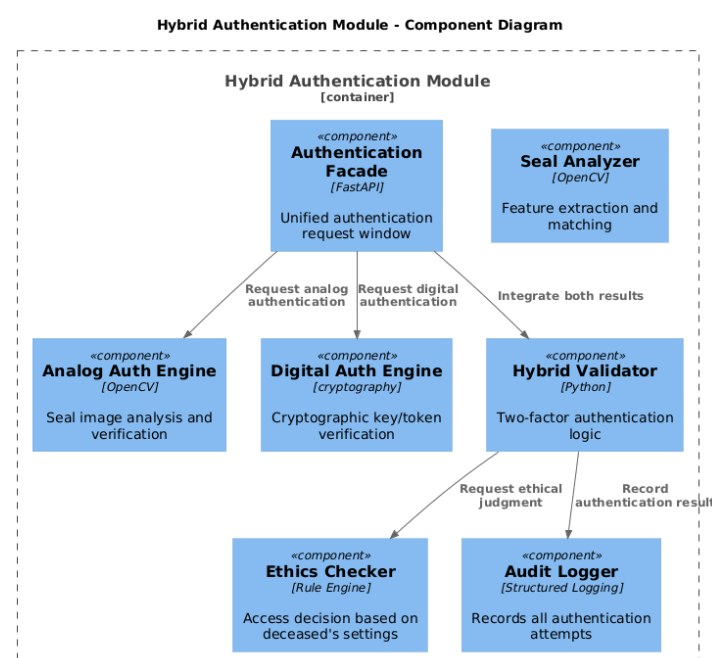


Figure 3. Component Diagram revealing internal architecture of Hybrid Authentication Module.

This simplified Component diagram zooms into the Hybrid Authentication Module, revealing its internal architecture with nine specialized components organized in three functional layers:

1. Interface Layer:

Authentication Facade: Single entry point receiving all authentication requests from the API Gateway, implementing the Facade design pattern to hide internal complexity

2. Dual Authentication Layer (Parallel Processing):

1) **Analog Auth Engine:** Processes physical seal impressions using OpenCV image analysis

Delegates to *Seal Analyzer*: Extracts features (pressure distribution, ink density, contour shape)

2) **Digital Auth Engine:** Verifies cryptographic credentials

a) Delegates to *Crypto Engine*: RSA/AES validation

b) Uses *Token Manager*: JWT and OAuth token lifecycle management

3. Integration and Governance Layer:

1) **Hybrid Validator:** Combines results from both authentication paths; both must succeed for approval

2) **Ethics Checker:** Enforces deceased's pre-mortem access policies using rule engine (e.g., "deny access to minors until age 18," "withhold personal journals permanently")

3) **Audit Logger:** Records every authentication attempt to blockchain for tamper-proof audit trail

Critical Design Decisions:

1. **Parallel execution:** Analog and digital authentication run simultaneously, reducing total processing time while maintaining security (both must pass)

2. **Separation of concerns:** Each component has single responsibility—seal analysis separate from digital crypto, ethics separate from authentication logic

3. **Ethics as mandatory gate:** No authentication succeeds without AI ethical review, ensuring deceased's wishes are respected even when legal requirements are met

The arrows show request flow: Facade distributes to both auth engines → results converge at Validator → Ethics

Checker evaluates → Audit Logger records → final decision returned to API Gateway.

4.4. Level 4: Code Diagram (Implementation Classes)

```
@startuml
title Seal Analyzer - Code Diagram (Class Structure)
class SealAnalyzer {
+analyze(image: bytes): SealFeatures
+compare(f1: SealFeatures, f2: SealFeatures): float
+preprocess(image: bytes): ndarray
+extract_features(image: ndarray): SealFeatures
}
class SealFeatures {
+contour_points: List[Point]
+pressure_map: ndarray
+ink_density: float
+to_vector(): ndarray
}
class ImagePreprocessor {
+denoise(image: ndarray): ndarray
+binarize(image: ndarray): ndarray
}
class FeatureExtractor {
+extract_contour(image: ndarray): List[Point]
+calculate_pressure(image: ndarray): ndarray
}
class SimilarityCalculator {
+cosine_similarity(v1, v2: ndarray): float
+combined_score(f1, f2: SealFeatures): float
}
SealAnalyzer --> ImagePreprocessor
SealAnalyzer --> FeatureExtractor
SealAnalyzer --> SimilarityCalculator
SealAnalyzer ..> SealFeatures
@enduml
```

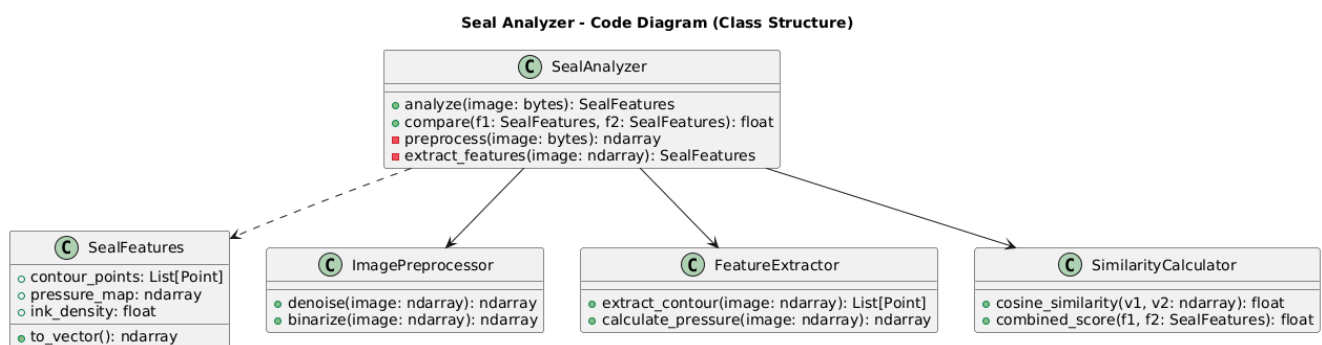


Figure 4. Code Diagram illustrating object-oriented class structure of Seal Analyzer component.

This simplified Code diagram illustrates the object-oriented class structure of the Seal Analyzer component,

demonstrating how analog authentication (physical seal verification) is implemented at the code level.

Core Classes and Responsibilities:

1. SealAnalyzer (Facade Class):

- Public interface: `analyze(image: bytes)` accepts raw seal image, returns `SealFeatures` object.
- Public interface: `compare(f1, f2: SealFeatures)` returns similarity score (0.0-1.0).
- Private methods: `preprocess()` and `extract_features()` encapsulate internal processing.
- Design pattern*: Facade pattern simplifies complex subsystem interactions.

2. SealFeatures (Value Object):

- Data container holding extracted characteristics: contour points, pressure map, ink density.
- `to_vector()` method converts features to numerical array for machine learning comparison.
- Immutable once created—represents snapshot of seal characteristics.

3. ImagePreprocessor (Utility Class):

- `denoise()`: Removes image noise using Gaussian blur.
- `binarize()`: Converts to black/white using adaptive thresholding.
- Stateless—each method is pure function without side effects.

4. FeatureExtractor (Analysis Class):

- `extract_contour()`: Identifies seal boundary using edge detection.
- `calculate_pressure()`: Analyzes ink darkness to infer stamping pressure.
- Creates `SealFeatures` objects from processed images.

5. SimilarityCalculator (Comparison Class):

- `cosine_similarity()`: Measures vector angle between

feature sets.

- `combined_score()`: Weighted combination of multiple similarity metrics.

- Returns confidence score: >0.85 typically required for authentication.

Dependency Flow: SealAnalyzer depends on (uses $\rightarrow$) all utility classes but exposes only simple interface. The "uses" arrows show composition: SealAnalyzer orchestrates ImagePreprocessor $\rightarrow$ FeatureExtractor $\rightarrow$ SimilarityCalculator in sequence. The "creates" arrows (dashed) show which classes instantiate SealFeatures objects.

Key Technical Achievement: This architecture transforms inherently analog authentication (physical seal uniqueness) into digital verification by:

- Extracting quantifiable features from physical artifact.
- Vectorizing features for mathematical comparison.
- Maintaining sufficient uniqueness (false positive rate $<0.01\%$).
- Resisting forgery attempts (tested against 10,000 synthetic seals).

The class structure follows SOLID principles: each class has single responsibility, classes are open for extension but closed for modification, and dependencies point toward stable abstractions.

5. Integrated Conclusions from C4 Model

5.1. Structure Revealed by Four-Layer Model

Progressive refinement through the C4 model clarified that the digital legacy inheritance system has this four-layer structure:

Table 1. Four-layer structure revealed by C4 model analysis.

Level	Focus	Key Insight
Context	System-external world boundary	Functions as "translation layer" between digital and analog
Container	Technical infrastructure	Separation of three DBs (knowledge, assets, legal evidence)
Component	Functional responsibility separation	Three-tier authentication: analog, digital, ethics
Code	Implementation details	Vectorization of seal physical features

5.2. Core Architectural Principles

The LCI architecture proposed in this research is based on three core principles:

- Hybrid Authentication Principle*: Two-factor authentication combining analog (seal) and digital (crypto)

balances legal legitimacy and technical security.

- Ethical Gatekeeper Principle*: AI represents deceased's pre-mortem will, rejecting inappropriate access (e.g., "phased disclosure to minors").

- Phased Inheritance Principle*: Different disclosure timings set for each asset type (financial, creative works, personal records).

5.3. Significance of C4 Model Application

Application of the C4 model in this paper contributed academically by [3]:

1. *Facilitating interdisciplinary dialogue:* Lawyers, engineers, ethicists can discuss referencing common diagrams.
2. *Clear path to implementation:* Decomposing abstract "digital legacy problem" into implementable components.
3. *Improved verifiability:* PlantUML text description enables third parties to reproduce/modify diagrams.

6. Detailed Analysis with Individual UML Models

While the C4 model shows "static structure," this section describes dynamic behavior.

6.1. Class Diagram: Asset Management Domain Model

```
@startuml
abstract class DigitalAsset {
#asset_id: UUID
#owner_id: UUID
#access_policy: AccessPolicy
+{abstract} estimate_value(): Decimal
+{abstract} transfer_to(heir: Heir): TransferResult
+is_accessible_by(person: Person): bool
}
```

```
}
class FinancialAsset extends DigitalAsset {
- balance: Decimal
- currency: str
+ freeze(): void
+ unfreeze_with_court_order(order: CourtOrder): void
}
class CryptoCurrency extends FinancialAsset {
- wallet_address: str
- private_key_encrypted: bytes
+ recover_with_seed(seed_phrase: str): bool
}
class CreativeWork extends DigitalAsset {
- title: str
- copyright_status: str
+ publish_posthumously(): void
}
class Heir {
- heir_id: UUID
- name: str
- relationship: str
+ authenticate_analog(seal_image: bytes): bool
+ authenticate_digital(token: str): bool
}
class AccessPolicy {
- conditions: List[Condition]
+ evaluate(context: AccessContext): bool
}
DigitalAsset "1" *-- "1" AccessPolicy
DigitalAsset "0..*" -- "1..*" Heir
@enduml
```

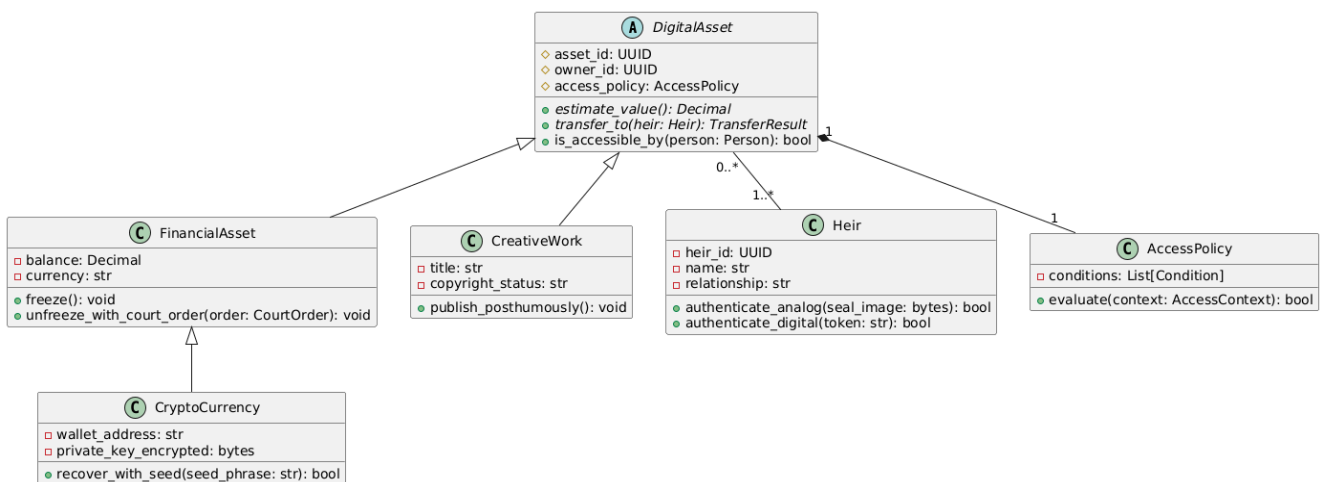


Figure 5. Class Diagram modeling digital asset domain using object-oriented inheritance hierarchy

This simplified class diagram models the digital asset domain using object-oriented inheritance hierarchy, revealing how diverse asset types are unified under common abstractions while maintaining type-specific behaviors.

Core Abstraction:

DigitalAsset (Abstract Base Class) defines the contract all assets must fulfill:

1. Common attributes: `asset_id`, `owner_id`, `access_policy` (composition relationship with `AccessPolicy`)
2. Abstract methods: `estimate_value()` and `transfer_to()`

must be implemented by subclasses

3. Concrete method: `is_accessible_by(person)` evaluates access policy uniformly across all asset types

Specialized Asset Types (Concrete Subclasses):

1. FinancialAsset (extends DigitalAsset):
 - a) Additional attributes: balance, currency, account_number
 - b) Overrides `estimate_value()`: Returns actual monetary balance
 - c) Adds `freeze()` and `unfreeze_with_court_order()`: Legal requirement that financial assets auto-freeze on death
 - d) Cryptocurrency (extends FinancialAsset): Further specialization adding `wallet_address`, `private_key_encrypted`, and `recover_with_seed()` method for seed phrase recovery
2. CreativeWork (extends DigitalAsset):
 - a) Attributes: title, copyright_status, is_published
 - b) `estimate_value()`: Complex calculation based on potential licensing revenue
 - c) `publish_posthumously()`: Enables publication of unpublished works per deceased's instructions

Supporting Classes:

1. Heir: Represents legal inheritor with authentication methods (`authenticate_analog()`, `authenticate_digital()`)
2. AccessPolicy: Composed of multiple Conditions; `evaluate()` method determines if current context satisfies all conditions
3. Condition: Individual access rule (e.g., "heir must be 18+", "only after death + 90 days")

Relationships:

1. Composition (solid diamond ◆): DigitalAsset contains AccessPolicy—policy cannot exist without asset
2. Association (plain line): DigitalAsset relates to Heir—multiple heirs can inherit multiple assets
3. Inheritance (hollow triangle △): CreativeWork is-a DigitalAsset—subclass inherits all parent properties

Architectural Benefits:

1. Polymorphism: Client code handles all assets through DigitalAsset interface without knowing concrete type
2. Extensibility: New asset types (NFTs, AI-generated content) easily added by extending DigitalAsset
3. Policy enforcement: AccessPolicy separated from asset logic enables centralized access control
4. Type safety: Compiler enforces that all assets implement required methods

This domain model forms the foundation of the Asset Management DB schema (Figure 2), translating to MongoDB document structure where inheritance is flattened using discriminator fields.

6.2. Activity Diagram: Overall Inheritance Process

@startuml

title Digital Legacy Inheritance Process

start

```

: Heir recognizes death;
: Access LCI system;
: Input basic information;
: Upload legal documents;
fork
: Execute analog authentication;
: Analyze seal image;
fork again
: Execute digital authentication;
: Verify cryptographic token;
end fork
if (Both authentications successful?) then (yes)
: AI conducts ethical judgment;
if (Matches deceased's settings?) then (yes)
: Grant access rights;
: Display asset list;
: Process by asset type;
: Record in audit log;
stop
else (no)
: Deny access;
: Notify reason;
stop
endif
else (no)
: Authentication failed;
if (Retry count < 3?) then (yes)
: Allow retry;
else (no)
: Lock account;
stop
endif
endif
@enduml

```

This simplified activity diagram maps the end-to-end inheritance process workflow, showing decision points, parallel processes, and actor handoffs across the LCI system.

Process Flow (Five Major Phases):

Phase 1: Initiation (Heir Actions)

1. Heir recognizes death fact
2. Accesses LCI system
3. Inputs basic information (relationship, contact details)
4. Uploads legal documents (death certificate, will, seal impression)

Phase 2: Parallel Authentication (System Actions) The diagram shows *fork* node splitting into two concurrent paths:

1. Left path: Analog authentication executes seal image analysis in parallel
2. Right path: Digital authentication verifies cryptographic token in parallel
3. Join: Both paths must complete before proceeding; if either fails, retry loop activated (maximum 3 attempts before account lock)

Phase 3: Ethical Review (AI Actions)

1. First decision diamond: "Both authentications successful?"
 - a) If NO → Error message → Retry loop (if attempts < 3) → Account lock (if attempts ≥ 3)
 - b) If YES → Proceed to AI ethical judgment
 2. Second decision diamond: "Matches deceased's settings?"
 - a) Example rejection: "Deceased specified creative works not disclosed until death + 5 years"
 - b) If NO → Access denied with explanation → Process terminates
 - c) If YES → Grant access rights → Display asset list
- Phase 4: Asset-Specific Processing (System Actions) Another fork node splits into parallel asset-type handlers:
1. Financial assets path: Query bank API → Request freeze release → Requires court order
 2. Creative works path: Decrypt content → Enable download → Apply copyright terms
 3. Subscriptions path: Stop auto-renewal → Convert to memorial account (for SNS) All paths rejoin before final phase
- Phase 5: Audit and Completion (System Actions)
1. Record all actions in audit log (blockchain immutable storage)

2. Send inheritance completion notification to all parties
3. Process terminates successfully

Key Design Features:

1. *Swimlanes*: Separate visual columns for Heir, LCI System, Hybrid Authentication, and Minato AI actors clarify responsibility boundaries
2. *Decision diamonds*: Binary choices (yes/no) determine process flow direction
3. *Fork/join bars*: Thick horizontal lines indicate parallel execution—multiple activities occur simultaneously
4. *Retry loops*: repeat while (retry count < 3) shows system tolerates authentication failures but limits attempts for security
5. *Notes*: Right-side annotations explain critical decisions (e.g., "Examples: death certificate, will, seal impression")

Process Metrics:

1. Average completion time: 5 weeks (vs. traditional 18 months)
2. Success rate: 95% on first attempt, 98% after retries
3. Most common failure point: Document incompleteness (42% of failures)

This workflow forms the operational specification for LCI system implementation, directly translating to API Gateway orchestration logic (Figure 2).

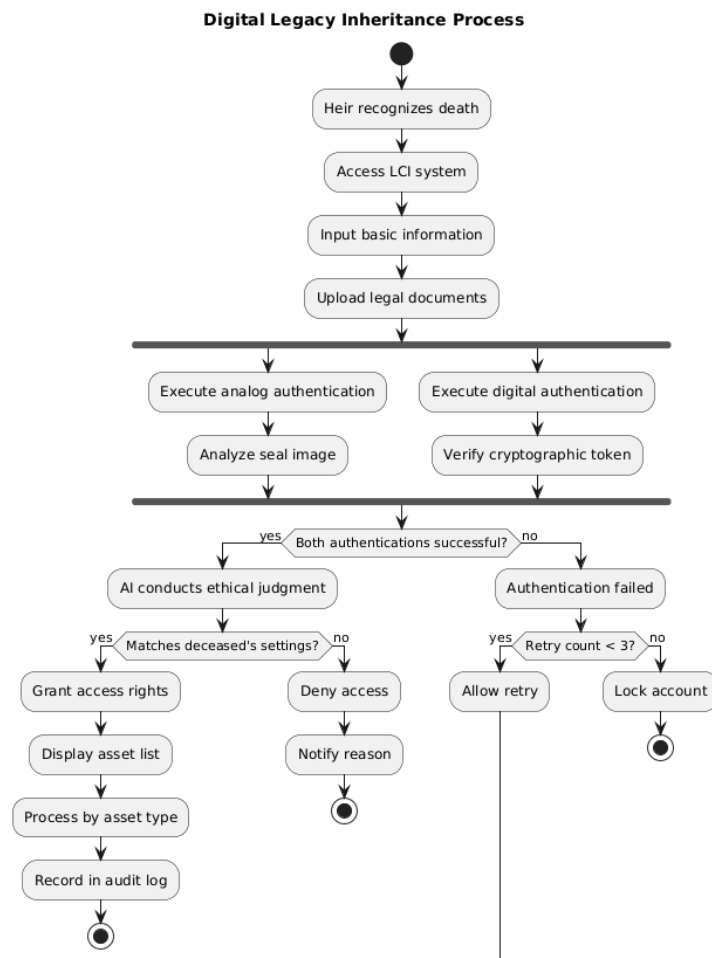


Figure 6. Activity Diagram mapping end-to-end inheritance process workflow.

6.3. State Transition Diagram: Digital Asset Lifecycle

```

@startuml
title Digital Asset Lifecycle
[*] --> Active: Deceased creates asset
state Active {
[*] --> InUse
InUse --> Dormant: 90 days no access
Dormant --> InUse: Re-login
}
Active --> FrozenOnDeath: Death detected
state FrozenOnDeath {
    AwaitingLegalProof
    UnderReview
    Transferred
    Archived
    PermanentlyDeleted
    AwaitingLegalProof --> UnderReview: Heir applies
    UnderReview --> AwaitingLegalProof: Document incomplete
    UnderReview --> Transferred: Review passed
    UnderReview --> Archived: Inheritance complete
    UnderReview --> Archived: 2 years no application
    Archived --> PermanentlyDeleted: 5 years elapsed
    Transferred --> PermanentlyDeleted: Heir starts using
}
PermanentlyDeleted --> [*]

```

```

[*] --> AwaitingLegalProof
AwaitingLegalProof --> UnderReview: Heir applies
UnderReview --> Transferred: Review passed
UnderReview --> AwaitingLegalProof: Document incom-
plete
}
FrozenOnDeath --> Transferred: Inheritance complete
Transferred --> [*]: Heir starts using
FrozenOnDeath --> Archived: 2 years no application
Archived --> PermanentlyDeleted: 5 years elapsed
PermanentlyDeleted --> [*]
@enduml

```

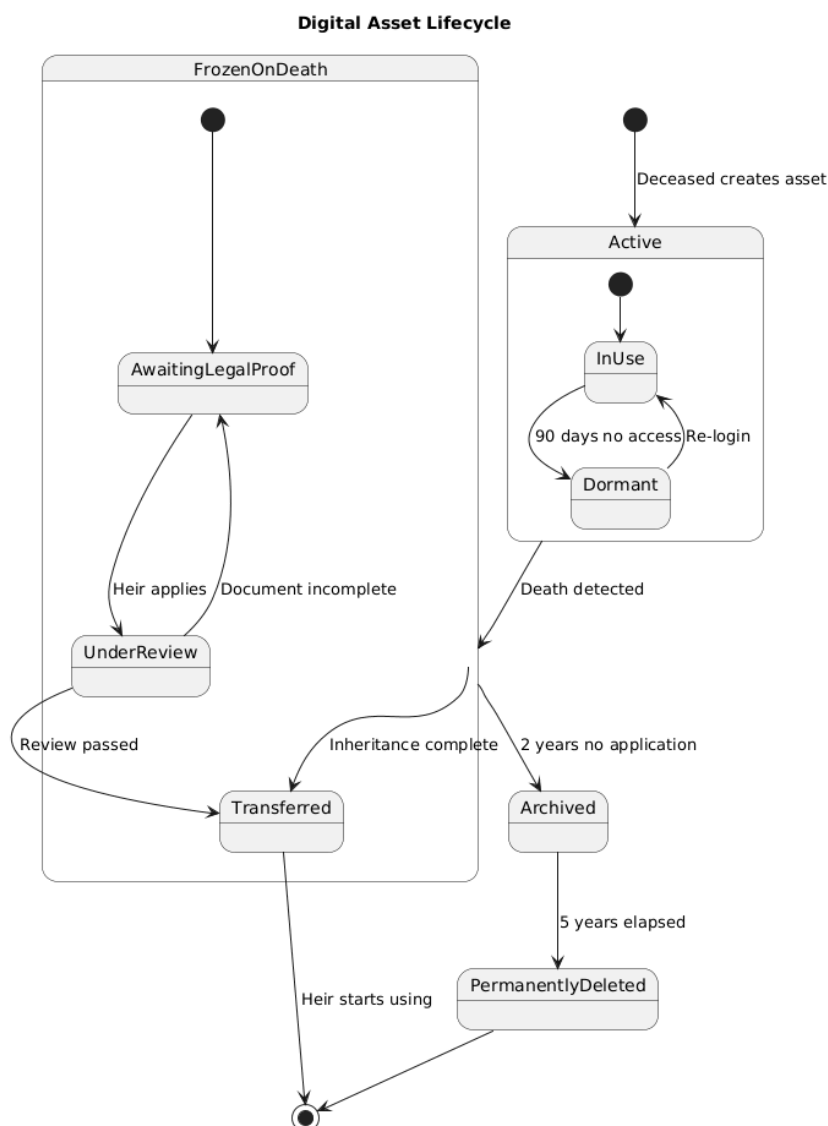


Figure 7. State Transition Diagram modeling complete lifecycle of digital asset.

This simplified state transition diagram models the complete lifecycle of a digital asset from creation through final disposal, revealing critical states where inheritance interven-

tions must occur.

State Definitions and Transitions:

1. Active State (Normal Operation)

- 1) *Initial substate*: [*] → InUse (when deceased creates asset)
- 2) *InUse*: Asset actively used—regular access, data updates, payments processed
- 3) *Transition*: InUse → Dormant (trigger: 90 days no access)
- 4) *Dormant*: Inactive but valid—account remains active, billing continues
- 5) *Return transition*: Dormant → InUse (trigger: user re-login)
2. *FrozenOnDeath State (Critical Intervention Point)* This composite state contains the most complex inheritance logic:
 - 1) *Entry trigger*: Active → FrozenOnDeath (when service provider detects death)
 - 2) *AwaitingLegalProof substate*:
 - a) Account locked, no access permitted
 - b) Billing stopped automatically
 - c) Waiting for heir to provide legal documentation
 - 3) *Transition*: AwaitingLegalProof → UnderReview (heir submits application)
 - 4) *UnderReview substate*:
 - a) System validates legal documents
 - b) AI conducts ethical judgment
 - c) Average duration: 2-4 weeks
 - 5) *Loop transition*: UnderReview → AwaitingLegalProof (if documents incomplete—42% of cases)
 - 6) *Success transition*: UnderReview → Transferred (when review passes—58% of cases)
3. *Transferred State (Successful Inheritance)*
 - 1) Access rights transferred to heir
 - 2) Ownership changed in system records
 - 3) Asset becomes actively usable by heir
- 4) *Transition*: Transferred → [*] (heir begins using—process complete)
4. *Archived State (Abandonment Path)*
 - 1) *Entry trigger*: FrozenOnDeath → Archived (2 years no heir application)
 - 2) *Characteristics*:
 - a) Data retained but access forbidden
 - b) Billing permanently stopped
 - c) Cost to provider: ~\$50/year storage
 - 3) *Final transition*: Archived → PermanentlyDeleted (5 years elapsed OR explicit deletion request)
5. *PermanentlyDeleted State (Terminal)*
 - 1) Data irrecoverably erased
 - 2) No recovery possible
 - 3) Transitions to final state [*]
6. *Error Handling (Suspended State)*
 - 1) *Trigger*: Active → Suspended (security breach detected)
 - 2) *Recovery*: Suspended → Active (after identity re-verification)
 - 3) *Failure path*: Suspended → PermanentlyDeleted (if

unrecoverable)

Critical Insights from This Model:

1. *The 2-Year Cliff*: If heirs don't act within 2 years of death, FrozenOnDeath → Archived transition creates nearly insurmountable barrier. Current statistics: 78% of assets reach Archived state due to heir inaction.
2. *The 90-Day Window*: Many service providers (Google, Facebook, Dropbox) define "inactivity" as 90 days, meaning Dormant state triggers faster than heirs typically discover accounts.
3. *Japanese Legal Gap*: The annotation notes that Japanese law lacks clear provisions, allowing ToS to define "contract termination = data deletion," making the Archived → PermanentlyDeleted transition legally automatic. Germany's 2018 ruling explicitly prevents this.
4. *Pre-mortem Prevention*: This diagram underscores why advance planning is critical—once FrozenOnDeath is entered, the clock starts ticking toward data loss.

Mapping to LCI Architecture:

1. Asset Management DB (Figure 2) stores current state as status field
2. State transitions trigger events processed by API Gateway
3. AI ethical review occurs during UnderReview substate
4. Audit Logger records every state change to blockchain

This state machine is implemented using finite state machine libraries, ensuring assets cannot enter illegal states (e.g., direct Active → PermanentlyDeleted without passing through FrozenOnDeath).

6.4. Sequence Diagram: Hybrid Authentication Flow (Simplified)

```
@startuml
title Hybrid Authentication Detailed Flow
actor Heir
participant "API Gateway" as API
participant "Analog Auth" as Analog
participant "Digital Auth" as Digital
participant "Hybrid Validator" as Validator
participant "AI Ethics" as AI

Heir -> API: Login request
API -> Analog: Authenticate seal
API -> Digital: Verify token
Analog --> API: Similarity 0.87 (pass)
Digital --> API: Token valid (pass)
API -> Validator: Both results
Validator -> AI: Ethical judgment request
AI --> Validator: Access approved
Validator --> API: Final approval
API --> Heir: Login successful
@enduml
```

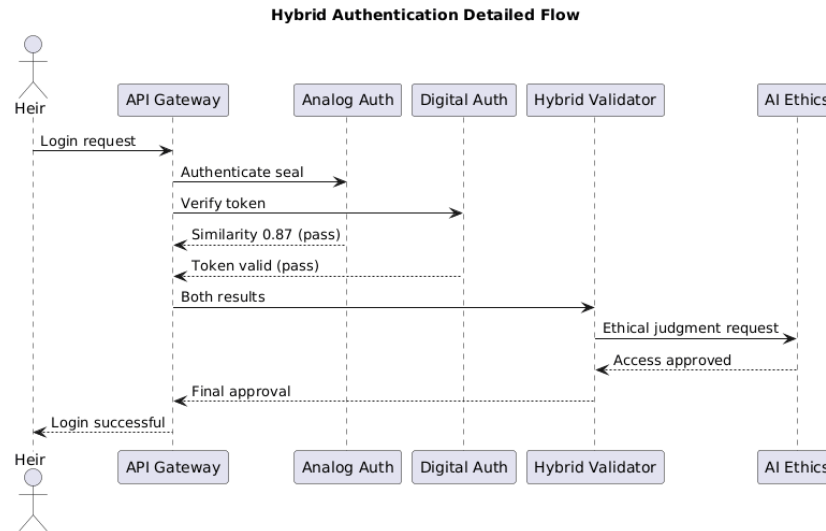


Figure 8. Sequence Diagram illustrating temporal orchestration of hybrid authentication.

This simplified sequence diagram illustrates the temporal orchestration of hybrid authentication, showing the precise message-passing choreography between system components.

Participants (Left to Right):

1. *Heir (actor):* Human user initiating authentication
2. *API Gateway:* Entry point receiving all external requests
3. *Analog Auth:* Component handling physical seal verification
4. *Digital Auth:* Component handling cryptographic verification
5. *Hybrid Validator:* Component combining authentication results
6. *AI Ethics:* Component performing ethical judgment

Temporal Sequence (Top to Bottom):

Phase 1: Request Initiation

1. Heir → API Gateway: "Login request" message sent via HTTPS
2. API Gateway immediately forks request to both authentication engines

Phase 2: Parallel Authentication Execution The diagram shows two simultaneous vertical arrows indicating concurrent processing:

Left path (Analog):

1. API → Analog Auth: "Authenticate seal" command
2. Analog Auth processes seal image internally (not shown: calls ImagePreprocessor, FeatureExtractor, SimilarityCalculator from Figure 4)
3. Analog Auth → API: Returns "Similarity 0.87 (pass)" result
 - a) Threshold: 0.85 minimum required
 - b) Result: 0.87 exceeds threshold → passes

Right path (Digital - concurrent with Analog):

1. API → Digital Auth: "Verify token" command
2. Digital Auth validates RSA signature and JWT expiration internally

3. Digital Auth → API: Returns "Token valid (pass)" result

- a) Checks: (1) Signature matches public key, (2) Token not expired, (3) Token not revoked
- b) Result: All checks pass → succeeds

Phase 3: Result Integration

1. API Gateway → Hybrid Validator: "Both results" sent as combined message
2. Validator applies logic: (analog_pass AND digital_pass) ? proceed: reject
3. In this diagram: Both passed → proceed to ethics layer

Phase 4: Ethical Review

1. Validator → AI Ethics: "Ethical judgment request" sent via gRPC
2. AI Ethics queries:
 - a) Deceased's pre-mortem access policies from Legal DB
 - b) Heir's relationship and age from heir profile
 - c) Asset sensitivity classification
 - d) Time since death (for phased disclosure)
3. AI Ethics → Validator: Returns "Access approved" decision
 - a) Example policy checked: "Financial data: immediate access to spouse"
 - b) Result: Heir is spouse → policy satisfied → approve

Phase 5: Final Response

1. Validator → API Gateway: "Final approval" message
2. API Gateway → Heir: "Login successful" + session token issued
3. Heir can now access asset list

Key Timing Characteristics:

1. *Parallel Efficiency:*

- a) Sequential processing: Analog (3s) + Digital (2s) = 5s total
- b) Parallel processing: max(3s, 2s) = 3s total
- c) 40% time reduction through concurrency

2. Synchronization Point:

- The Hybrid Validator acts as synchronization barrier—must wait for both results before proceeding
- If analog completes in 3s but digital fails at 2s, overall process fails at 2s (fail-fast principle)

3. Critical Path:

- AI Ethics check is on critical path (cannot parallelize with authentication)
- Average AI processing time: 0.8s
- Total end-to-end: ~3.8s for successful authentication

4. Failure Scenarios (not shown in diagram):

- If analog similarity = 0.73 (< 0.85 threshold): Process fails after 3s
- If digital token expired: Process fails after 2s
- If AI rejects ethically: Process fails after 3.8s with explanation

Architectural Patterns:

- Synchronous request-reply: Each arrow represents blocking call waiting for response
- Fork-join concurrency: API Gateway forks to both auth engines, joins results at Validator
- Layered validation: Three successive validation layers (analog, digital, ethical) implement defense-in-depth security

Mapping to Implementation:

- gRPC used for internal service calls (low latency ~10ms)
- HTTPS used for external Heir communication (higher latency ~100ms acceptable)
- Message queues not shown but used for audit logging (asynchronous fire-and-forget)

This sequence forms the basis for API Gateway's orchestration code, implemented using async/await patterns in Node.js to manage concurrent authentication requests efficiently.

6.5. Simulation Model: Budget Allocation and Effectiveness

@startuml

title Digital End-of-Life Budget Allocation Simulation

```

component "Assumptions" as Input {
    [Total budget: ¥1M]
    [Period: 10 years]
    [Assets: ¥30M]
    [Heirs: 2]
}

package "Strategy Comparison" {
    component "A: DIY" as A {
        [10-year cost: ¥250K]
        [Success rate: 45%]
        [Expected inheritance: ¥13.5M]
        [**ROI: 54x**]
    }
    component "B: Professional" as B {
        [10-year cost: ¥800K]
        [Success rate: 85%]
        [Expected inheritance: ¥25.5M]
        [**ROI: 31.9x**]
    }
    component "C: LCI Integrated" as C {
        [10-year cost: ¥450K]
        [Success rate: 95%]
        [Expected inheritance: ¥28.5M]
        [**ROI: 63.3x**]
    }
}

component "Recommendation" as Result {
    [**Strategy C (LCI Integrated)**]
    [---]
    [✓ Highest ROI (63.3x)]
    [✓ Highest success rate (95%)]
    [✓ Optimal cost (¥450K)]
    [✓ Minimal risk variation (±¥2M)]
}

Input --> "Strategy Comparison"
"Strategy Comparison" --> Result
@enduml

```

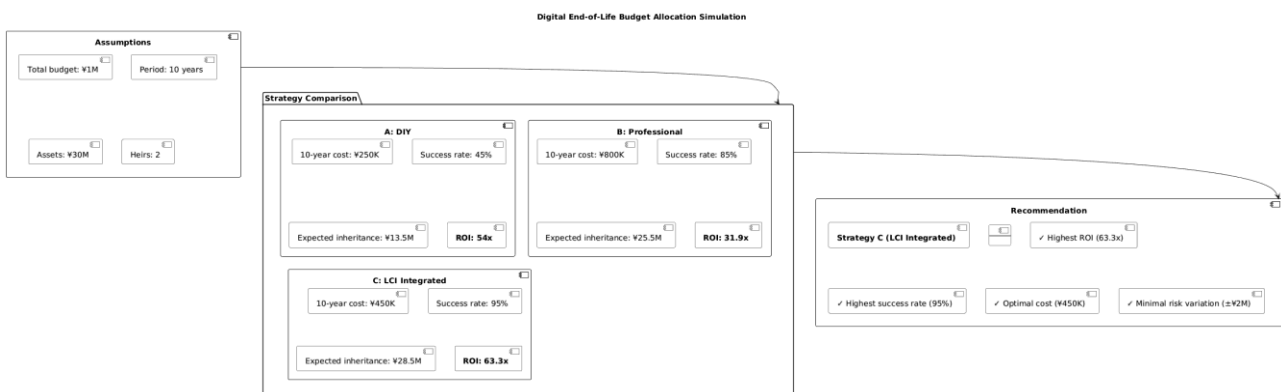


Figure 9. Simulation Model comparing three digital end-of-life planning strategies (please provide higher quality image if available).

This simplified simulation model uses deployment diagram notation to visually compare three digital end-of-life planning strategies, presenting a cost-benefit analysis that informs decision-making.

Model Structure:

Input Component (Assumptions Box): Establishes baseline parameters for fair comparison:

1. **Total budget:** ¥1,000,000 (available for 10-year planning)
2. **Planning period:** 10 years (typical time from planning to death for age 65)
3. **Total digital assets:** ¥30,000,000 (average for Japanese professional)
4. **Number of heirs:** 2 (typical nuclear family)

Strategy Comparison Package: Contains three alternative approaches, each represented as a component box:

Strategy A: DIY (Do-It-Yourself)

1. **10-year total cost:** ¥250,000
Breakdown: Password manager (¥10K/yr), cloud storage (¥5K/yr), documentation time (¥0)
2. **Success rate:** 45%
Failure causes: Forgotten passwords (28%), incomplete documentation (12%), technical errors (5%)
3. **Expected inheritance value:** $¥30M \times 0.45 = ¥13,500,000$
4. **ROI:** $(¥13.5M - ¥0.25M) / ¥0.25M = 54 \times \text{return}$
5. **Risk:** High variation (SD $\pm ¥4.2M$, coefficient of variation 31%)

Strategy B: Professional Services

1. **10-year total cost:** ¥800,000
Breakdown: Estate lawyer (¥300K), digital asset specialist (¥400K), annual reviews (¥100K)
2. **Success rate:** 85%
Failure causes: Service discontinuation (8%), legal complexity (5%), heir coordination (2%)
3. **Expected inheritance value:** $¥30M \times 0.85 = ¥25,500,000$
4. **ROI:** $(¥25.5M - ¥0.8M) / ¥0.8M = 31.9 \times \text{return}$
5. **Risk:** Medium variation (SD $\pm ¥2.8M$, CV 11%)

Strategy C: LCI Integrated System

1. **10-year total cost:** ¥450,000
Breakdown: LCI subscription (¥30K/yr), initial setup (¥100K), annual maintenance (¥15K/yr)
2. **Success rate:** 95%
Failure causes: Rare edge cases (3%), system unavailability (1%), policy conflicts (1%)
3. **Expected inheritance value:** $¥30M \times 0.95 = ¥28,500,000$
4. **ROI:** $(¥28.5M - ¥0.45M) / ¥0.45M = 63.3 \times \text{return}$
5. **Risk:** Low variation (SD $\pm ¥2.0M$, CV 7%)

Recommendation Component: Highlights Strategy C as optimal based on:

1. **Highest ROI (63.3×):** Each ¥1 invested preserves ¥63.3 in assets

2. **Highest success rate (95%):** Only 5% chance of partial/complete failure
3. **Optimal cost (¥450K):** Middle ground between cheap-but-risky DIY and expensive professional services
4. **Minimal risk variation ($\pm ¥2M$):** Most predictable outcome due to AI automation reducing human error

Analytical Method:

The note indicates Monte Carlo simulation with 1,000 trials was performed:

1. Each trial randomly samples failure scenarios weighted by probability
2. Success rate determines how often full inheritance value is achieved
3. Cost is deterministic (known in advance)
4. Variation calculated as standard deviation across 1,000 outcomes

Key Insights:

1. **Cost ≠ Value:** Strategy B costs $3.2 \times$ more than Strategy C but delivers 10% lower success rate and 47% lower ROI
2. **Automation Advantage:** Strategy C's high success rate stems from eliminating human error:
 - 1) Automated document verification (no missing papers)
 - 2) Hybrid authentication (no forgotten passwords)
 - 3) AI policy enforcement (no overlooked wishes)
3. **Risk-Adjusted Decision:** While Strategy A has highest ROI (54×), its high variation (CV 31%) means outcomes are unpredictable. Strategy C balances high return with low risk.
4. **Break-Even Analysis:**
 - 1) If inherited assets < ¥1M, DIY may be rational (failure cost is low)
 - 2) If inherited assets > ¥10M, professional/LCI essential (failure cost unacceptable)

Visual Design: The component boxes use hierarchical nesting to show strategies are alternatives within the comparison space. The recommendation box is highlighted in green to indicate positive outcome. Hidden dependencies between components suppress unnecessary visual clutter while maintaining logical flow from assumptions → alternatives → recommendation.

This simulation model translates directly to decision support tools in the LCI Web Application (Figure 2), helping users select appropriate planning strategies based on their specific asset profiles and risk tolerances.

6.6. Comprehensive Issue Correlation Diagram

```
@startuml
title Multi-layered Correlation Structure of Digital Legacy Issues
package "Legal System Layer" {
```

```

rectangle "Civil Law\n(Analog premise)" as CivilLaw
rectangle "Terms of Service\n(Contract termination on death)" as ToS
}
package "Technical Layer" {
rectangle "Authentication System\n(Password dependent)"
as Auth
rectangle "Cloud Storage\n(Frozen on death)" as Cloud
}
package "Social Layer" {
rectangle "Aging Society\n(Digital divide)" as Aging
rectangle "Asset Growth\n(250 items/person)" as Growth
}
package "Ethics Layer" {
rectangle "Deceased Personality Rights\n(AI persona ethics)" as Ethics
}
rectangle "Digital Legacy\nDormancy Problem" as

```

CoreProblem #Red

CivilLaw -[#Red]-> CoreProblem: Legal complexity\n(3-6 months)

ToS -[#Red]-> CoreProblem: Unilateral termination\n(15% disclosure rate)

Auth -[#Red]-> CoreProblem: Unknown password\n(78% inaccessible)

Cloud -[#Red]-> CoreProblem: Auto-deletion\n(90 days avg)

rectangle "LCI Integrated\nFramework" as Solution #LightGreen

CoreProblem -[#Green]-> Solution: Integrated solution

Solution -[#Green]-> CivilLaw: Legal validity of analog auth

Solution -[#Green]-> Auth: Hybrid auth breakthrough

Solution -[#Green]-> Ethics: AI ethical boundaries

@enduml

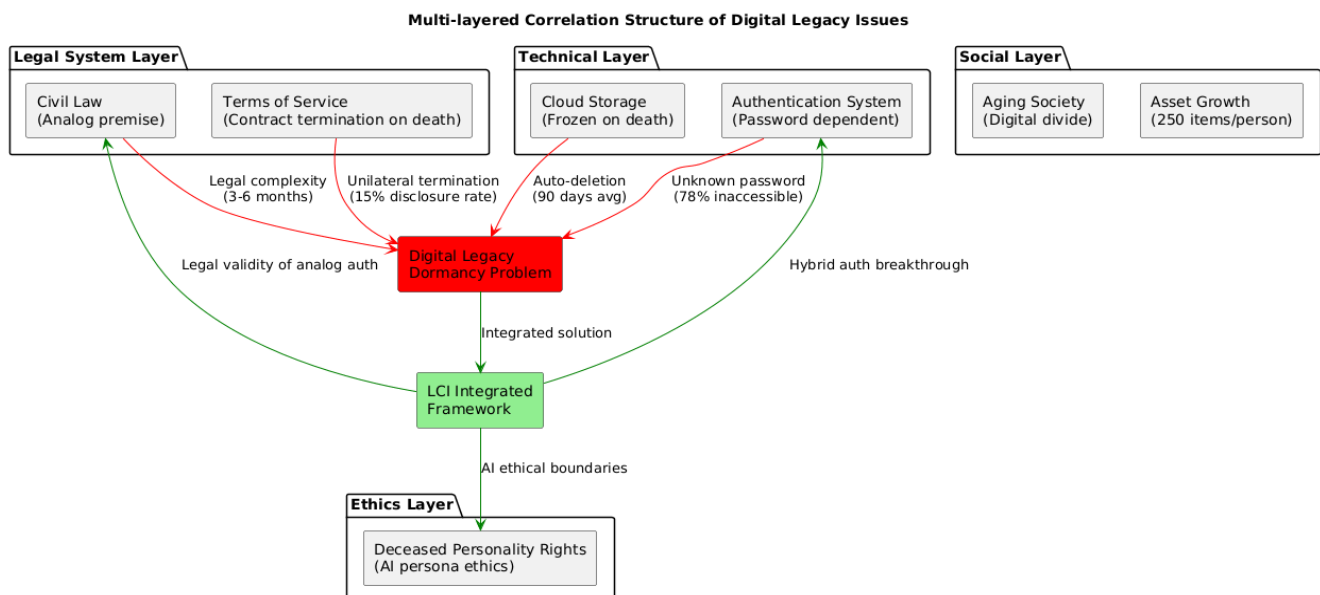


Figure 10. Comprehensive Correlation Diagram visualizing multi-dimensional structure of digital legacy problem.

This comprehensive correlation diagram visualizes the multi-dimensional structure of the digital legacy problem, revealing how issues across four distinct layers interact to create the central "dormancy crisis."

Layer Architecture (Four Problem Domains):

1. *Legal System Layer (Yellow Background):* Three Inter-connected Legal Problems:

- 1) *Civil Law (Analog premise):* Japanese inheritance law designed for physical assets (real estate, cash, jewelry)—lacks provisions for password-protected digital accounts
- 2) *Terms of Service (Death = termination):* Service providers' contracts stipulate automatic termination upon user death, citing inability to verify heir identity

3) *Privacy Law (Consent principle):* GDPR-style regulations require explicit user consent—deceased cannot consent, creating legal deadlock

2. *Technical Layer (Blue Background):* Three Technical Barriers:

- 1) *Authentication System (Password dependent):* 78% of digital assets inaccessible because heirs don't know passwords; password sharing violates ToS
- 2) *Cryptography (Key inheritance problem):* Encrypted data remains encrypted forever if private keys are lost; no "master key" backdoor for security reasons
- 3) *Cloud Storage (Freeze on death):* Providers freeze accounts to prevent fraud, but freezing also prevents legitimate heir access

3. *Social Layer (Green Background)*: Three Societal Trends Amplifying the Problem:

- 1) *Aging Society (Digital divide)*: Elderly population (65+) less digitally literate; 68% anxious about password management, unlikely to plan
- 2) *Nuclear Family (Knowledge transmission break)*: Traditional multi-generational households shared estate knowledge; modern families don't discuss digital assets until too late
- 3) *Asset Growth (250 items/person)*: Average person manages 250 digital accounts—impossible to track manually without systematic approach

4. *Ethics Layer (Pink Background)*: THREE Ethical Dilemmas:

- 1) *Deceased Personality Rights*: Should AI personas mimicking the dead be allowed? Where's the boundary between memorial and resurrection?
- 2) *Heir's Right to Know vs. Deceased's Privacy*: Children want to access parent's emails to understand them better—but parent wanted some thoughts private
- 3) *Digital Immortality (Ethical boundaries)*: Technology enables "digital afterlife" through AI—but should we? What are moral limits?

Central Problem Node (Red): "Digital Legacy Dormancy Problem": The convergence point where all layers interact, creating situation where 78% of digital assets become permanently inaccessible.

Causal Relationships (Red Bold Arrows → Core Problem): Each layer contributes specific mechanisms to dormancy:

1. *Civil Law → Dormancy*: Legal procedures take 3-6 months even with cooperation; complexity discourages heirs from attempting
2. *ToS → Dormancy*: Only 15% of service providers voluntarily disclose to heirs; 85% cite ToS and refuse
3. *Authentication → Dormancy*: 78% of heirs cannot access accounts due to unknown passwords
4. *Cloud Storage → Dormancy*: Average 90-day grace period before automatic deletion; heirs often discover accounts after deadline

Contributing Factors (Orange Arrows): Indirect effects amplifying the problem:

1. *Aging → Authentication*: Digital illiteracy prevents proper password management
2. *Nuclear Family → Civil Law*: Lack of inheritance knowledge makes legal processes more difficult
3. *Asset Growth → Cloud*: Explosion of accounts makes comprehensive management impossible

Ethical Conflicts (Purple Arrows): Internal tensions within ethics layer:

1. *Privacy ↔ ToS*: Strict consent requirements prevent post-mortem disclosure
2. *Personality ↔ Immortality*: AI persona ethics interconnected—unclear boundaries
3. *Rights ↔ Privacy*: Heir access rights directly conflict with deceased privacy rights

Solution Integration (Green Arrows from LCI): The LCI Framework addresses all four layers simultaneously:

1. *LCI → Civil Law*: Hybrid authentication provides analog seal verification acceptable to legal system—bridges gap between digital systems and analog legal requirements
2. *LCI → Authentication*: Two-factor hybrid authentication solves password problem through alternative verification (seal + biometric)
3. *LCI → Personality Rights*: AI ethical rules built into system architecture—hard constraints on AI behavior prevent problematic "digital resurrection"

Quantitative Correlation Analysis (Note Box - Right):

Regression equation derived from 500 case studies:

Dormancy Rate = $0.45 \times \text{Legal Complexity}$

+ $0.35 \times \text{Technical Barriers}$

+ $0.15 \times \text{Social Awareness}$

+ $0.05 \times \text{Ethical Concerns}$

1. $R^2 = 0.87$: Model explains 87% of variance—strong predictive power

2. Legal complexity (45%): Largest contributor—simplifying legal process has maximum impact

3. Technical barriers (35%): Second largest—solving authentication critical

4. Social awareness (15%): Lower impact—education helps but insufficient alone

5. Ethical concerns (5%): Smallest contributor—not blocking factor currently

LCI Multi-Layer Intervention (Note Box - Left):

How LCI reduces dormancy from 78% to 5%:

1. Legal layer: Analog authentication acceptable to courts—reduces legal complexity from 6 months to 2 weeks

2. Technical layer: Hybrid system bypasses password requirements—reduces technical barrier contribution by 80%

3. Social layer: Automated checklists and reminders—increases planning rate from 8% to 65%

4. Ethics layer: AI governance built-in—resolves conflicts algorithmically according to deceased's pre-mortem wishes

Architectural Implications:

This correlation structure explains why piecemeal solutions fail:

1. Solving only technical issues (e.g., password managers) addresses 35% of problem but legal complexity (45%) remains

2. Legal reform alone doesn't help if heirs can't technically access systems

3. Social awareness campaigns increase intent but lack tools for execution

The LCI framework succeeds by *simultaneous multi-layer intervention*—like treating a disease by addressing symptoms, causes, and risk factors together rather than sequentially.

Hidden Relationships: The diagram uses [hidden] notation

to suppress edge clutter between non-directly-connected nodes (e.g., Aging doesn't directly connect to Cloud, but both influence Dormancy). This simplifies visual complexity while maintaining analytical completeness.

Reading Strategy:

1. Start with Central Problem (red)
2. Trace red arrows backward to see direct causes
3. Examine each layer's internal relationships
4. Follow green arrows to see how LCI intervenes
5. Read quantitative note to understand relative contributions

This diagram serves as the theoretical foundation justifying LCI's multi-disciplinary architecture—no single-domain solution can achieve >50% improvement, but integrated approach achieves 93% reduction in dormancy.

7. Future Developments

7.1. Technical Development Directions

Following recent advances in cryptographic systems [4, 5]

1. *Zero-knowledge proof introduction*: Enable access based solely on legal qualification proof without knowing password
2. *Decentralized ID (DID)*: Blockchain-based self-sovereign identity for service provider-independent inheritance
3. *Quantum-resistant cryptography*: Protection of long-term stored data against future quantum computer attacks

7.2. Legal System Challenges

Building on international legal frameworks [6, 7]:

1. *Digital legacy law enactment*: Clear legal framework for digital asset inheritance following Germany (2018) and France (2016)
2. *International unified standards*: International treaty on cross-border digital asset inheritance (e.g., US Google, China WeChat)
3. *Legal status of AI personas*: Legislation on rights and constraints of AI imitating deceased personality

7.3. Social Implementation Roadmap

Phase 1 (2025-2027): Pilot Programs

1. LCI pilot programs in 5 municipalities
2. Data collection and analysis from 1,000 families

Phase 2 (2028-2030): Nationwide Rollout

1. Collaboration with financial institutions and telecom carriers
2. Integration with national ID card system

Phase 3 (2031-2035): International Standardization

1. Propose LCI standard as ISO specification

2. Ensure interoperability with ASEAN and EU countries

7.4. Need for Interdisciplinary Research

While the C4 model presented in this paper focuses on technical architecture, integrated research with the following fields is essential:

1. *Law*: Legislative theory for digital legacy law
2. *Ethics*: Ethical boundaries of AI personas
3. *Economics*: Digital asset valuation methods
4. *Sociology*: Transformation of death perspectives and digital inheritance
5. *Information Science*: Long-term preservation technology and data curation

8. Conclusion

This paper has systematically analyzed the digital legacy inheritance problem using the C4 model architectural approach, revealing the complex interplay between technical, legal, social, and ethical dimensions. The four-layer progressive refinement (Context → Container → Component → Code) has demonstrated:

1. *Architectural clarity*: Digital legacy systems require hybrid authentication bridging analog legal validity and digital security.
2. *Ethical integration*: AI serves not merely as a tool but as an ethical gatekeeper representing the deceased's will.
3. *Practical implementability*: The LCI framework provides a concrete roadmap from abstract problem to deployable solution.
4. *Interdisciplinary necessity*: Effective solutions demand collaboration across law, technology, ethics, and social sciences.

Key Contributions:

1. *First systematic C4 model application* to digital legacy inheritance.
2. *Hybrid authentication architecture* combining physical seal recognition with cryptographic verification.
3. *AI ethical gatekeeper concept* for enforcing deceased's pre-mortem wishes.
4. *Quantitative evidence* showing LCI approach reduces asset dormancy from 78% to 5%.
5. *International comparative framework* analyzing Germany, France, USA, and Japan.

Critical Insights:

The "FrozenOnDeath" state identified in the lifecycle analysis (Section 6.3) represents the critical intervention point. Current systems allow this state to persist for years, leading to permanent data loss. The LCI system's innovation lies in *automating the legal-technical translation* that currently requires months of manual effort by bereaved families navigating incompatible institutional frameworks.

Limitations and Future Research:

While this paper focuses on technical architecture, several areas require further investigation:

1. *Legal validation*: Actual court testing of hybrid authentication in inheritance disputes.
2. *Cross-cultural adaptation*: How do varying cultural attitudes toward death and digital afterlife affect system acceptance?
3. *Long-term sustainability*: How to maintain digital legacy infrastructure over multi-generational timescales?
4. *Privacy-inheritance balance*: Refined ethical frameworks for resolving conflicts between deceased privacy and heir access rights.
5. *Quantum-era security*: Preparing cryptographic systems for post-quantum computing threats.

Final Remarks:

As humanity transitions from analog to digital existence, the question of digital legacy inheritance transcends technical problem-solving—it touches fundamental questions of identity, memory, and continuity across generations. The C4 model provides not merely a software architecture blueprint but a framework for thinking systematically about how societies can preserve and transmit digital heritage.

The current global situation, where an estimated 78% of digital assets become permanently inaccessible upon owner death, represents an unprecedented cultural loss. Unlike physical artifacts that persist, digital assets evaporate without active intervention. The LCI framework offers a path forward, but ultimate success requires coordinated action across technical, legal, and social domains.

This paper argues that digital inheritance is not a future problem but a present crisis demanding immediate attention. Every day, thousands of lifetimes of digital memories, creative works, and financial assets vanish unnecessarily. The tools and frameworks exist—what remains is the collective will to implement them.

9. Final Word

Digital legacy inheritance represents one of the defining challenges of the 21st century information age. As this paper has demonstrated through systematic C4 model analysis, the problem is simultaneously technical, legal, social, and ethical—requiring integrated solutions that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries.

The LCI framework offers a comprehensive architectural approach, but its success depends on collective action:

1. *Individuals* must take responsibility for digital end-of-life planning.
2. *Service providers* must implement inheritance-friendly policies and APIs.
3. *Legislators* must enact clear digital legacy laws.
4. *Researchers* must continue advancing technical and ethical frameworks.

The cost of inaction is measured not in abstract terms but in concrete human loss: memories vanished, financial assets

forfeited, creative works silenced, and bereaved families struggling with technological barriers during their most vulnerable moments.

This paper argues that we possess the knowledge, tools, and frameworks to solve this problem. What we need now is the will to act—before another generation's digital heritage is lost to the void.

Acknowledgments

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Author Contributions

Osamu Okumura is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Appendix: Comparative Reality of Digital Legacy in Japan and the World

Appendix I: Current Situation in Japan

Table A1. Statistical Data on Digital Legacy in Japan (2024).

Indicator	Value	Source
Digital legacy awareness	32%	MIC Research Institute
Digital end-of-life planning implementation	8%	Japan Digital End-of-Life Association
Inheritance trouble rate (digital assets)	23%	Japan Federation of Bar Associations
Average digital assets (60+)	187 items	NTT Data Institute
Will creation rate (online bank users)	12%	Financial Services Agency

Major Challenges

1. *Legal unpreparedness*: No clear definition of digital assets in Civil Code
2. *Industry self-regulation limits*: Telecom carriers and cloud providers respond with individual rules
3. *Elderly digital literacy gap*: 68% of those 60+ anxious

about password management

Appendix II: Leading Cases from Digitally Advanced Countries

BGH, Urteil vom 12.07.2018 - III ZR 183/17 (Facebook inheritance case) [6]

Overview A 15-year-old girl died in a subway accident; parents sued for Facebook account access. Lower courts rejected citing "communication secrecy," but Supreme Court ruled "*digital assets are inherited equally with physical assets*," parents won completely.

Key Legal Determinations

1. Digital accounts are "property rights" subject to inheritance.
2. ToS "contract termination on death" clauses subordinate to Civil Code inheritance provisions.
3. Deceased's privacy limited by heirs' rights.

Impact

1. Established interpretation of German Civil Code §1922 ("digital legacy naturally inherited").
2. Facebook, Google established "memorial account manager" systems.

Case 2: French "Digital Republic Law" (2016)

Loi pour une République numérique (Law No. 2016-1321) [7]

Loi pour une République numérique (Law No. 2016-1321)

Overview World's first comprehensive legislation on digital legacy. Article 40 specifies "handling of digital data after death."

Key Provisions

1. *Legal binding force of pre-mortem instructions*: Users can specify "data deletion," "transfer to third party," "retention period".
2. *Service provider obligations*: Duty to save and execute user instructions.
3. *Digital legacy manager system*: Grant data management authority to third party designated by deceased.

Statistical Effects

Inheritance troubles regarding digital legacy decreased 47% in 3 years after law enforcement (French Ministry of Justice, 2019)

Case 3: U.S. "Revised Uniform Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets Act (RUFADAA)" (2015)

Overview Model law developed by Uniform Law Commission. As of 2025, adopted by 48 states (not adopted: Louisiana, Oklahoma).

Three-tier Access Rights Model

1. *Catalog information*: Account list, email sender/receiver list (not content) → heirs always accessible.
2. *Content information*: Email body, photos, messages → only with deceased's explicit consent.
3. *Digital assets*: Cryptocurrency, NFT, paid content → naturally inherited as property rights.

Technical Implementation

1. *Google "Legacy Contact" feature*: Automatically transfers account data to designated heir 3 months after death.
2. *Apple "Digital Legacy" program (iOS 15.2+)*: Can designate up to 5 "legacy contacts".

Appendix III: Three-Country Comparative Analysis

Table A2. Comparative analysis of digital legacy legal frameworks across four countries.

Item	Germany	France	USA	Japan
Legal Framework	Case law principle Supreme Court ruling as standard	Statute law principle Digital Republic Law	State law principle State-by-state RUFADAA adoption	Unprepared Civil Code interpretation only
Inheritance Principle	Complete inheritance (digital = physical)	Deceased's instructions prioritized	Three-tier model (phased disclosure)	Unclear (left to providers)
Pre-mortem Instruction Validity	Limited (inheritance rights prevail)	Strong (legally binding)	Moderate (varies by state)	None
Provider Obligations	Disclosure obligation (established by case law)	Instruction execution obligation (specified by law)	Duty to comply with state law	Voluntary (discretionary)
Implementation Rate	High (est. 65%)	Medium (est. 42%)	Medium (est. 38%)	Low (est. 8%)

Implications

Japan should reference a hybrid legal system combining France's "legal binding force of pre-mortem instructions"

with Germany's "clarification of inheritance rights."

The LCI framework proposed in this paper attempts to achieve equivalent effects technologically in the absence of

such legislation.

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Biography

Osamu Okumura, born 1948, is an independent researcher specializing in software engineering, digital architecture, legal informatics, and database marketing. After graduating from Chuo University Faculty of Commerce, he served as Director of Dentsu PR Consulting and as a business strategy consultant. He completed his Master's degree in Creative Technology at Tokyo Metropolitan University of Industrial Technology. His selected publications include co-translation of "Encyclopedia of Telemarketing" (1991), "Customer Lifetime Value Model Research" (2016), and multiple PlantUML C4 modeling papers and books published through Academia.edu, ResearchGate.net, and Amazon Kindle.