

May 4th - May 10th
PERSPECTIVES by Eric F. Risley

Quite a week: the annual Consensus event, the largest crypto M&A deal in history, and three other M&A transactions signaling the future direction of crypto.

The melding of crypto and traditional financial services continues. The most notable example to date is Bullish's acquisition of Equiniti. Bullish CEO and former NYSE President Tom Farley is delivering on a vision informed by his direct experience with the evolution of traditional capital markets. Over the course of his career, capital markets transitioned from paper to electronic trading. Today, programmable representations of assets, called tokens, and a single source of ownership, a shared ledger called a blockchain, are beginning to reshape capital markets again.

The rebuilding of capital markets infrastructure has begun, allowing financial assets to be instantly traded, monitored (for example, collateral levels), serviced (for example, paying a dividend or interest payment, or executing a stock split), kept compliant (for example, transfer restrictions), and, perhaps surprisingly to some, used to determine ownership. These capabilities allow for significant efficiency improvements and cost reductions, while more importantly unlocking the potential for new types of securities and a truly global capital market. As most of you know, this is the tokenization theme we have long discussed, now becoming real. See more in our **M&A Alert** on the transaction.

Payments are similarly in the early stages of replumbing. The payment asset is simply a digital form of fiat currency, now known by the poorly named term "stablecoin," and a shared ledger called a blockchain serves as the single source of truth for ownership. Instant, global transfer of value, in other words, a payment, is the benefit. This week, Payward, Kraken's parent company, continued its aggressive M&A efforts with the acquisition of Reap. More in our **M&A Alert**.

The future is the continued bridging of crypto and traditional financial services. Within the next half decade, it will become increasingly hard to differentiate between the two.

RECENT CRYPTO M&A TRANSACTIONS ([click here for full AP M&A Tracker](#))

Target	Acquirer	Transaction Summary	M&A Alert
		Transaction Value: \$4.2B Rationale: To vertically integrate from trading and market data into the regulated share-registry layer Sector: Investing & Trading Infrastructure Target Description: U.S.- and U.K.-regulated global transfer agents and shareholder services provider	●
		Transaction Value: \$600.0M Rationale: Add corporate card and payments to its payments, B2B and unified stablecoin infrastructure mapping Sector: Payments Infrastructure Target Description: HK-based, stablecoin-native global corporate card issuance and payments platform	●
		Transaction Value: \$100.0M Rationale: Add trading infrastructure and further expanding beyond payments to full-stack crypto platform Sector: Investing & Trading Infrastructure Target Description: Solana-based, low-slippage decentralized trade execution and routing platform	○
		Transaction Value: \$18.0M Rationale: To continue building its Solana ecosystem from DAT and attain another revenue stream business Sector: Investing & Trading Infrastructure Target Description: Privacy-focused cross-chain swap aggregator across centralized and decentralized venues	○
		Transaction Value: Not disclosed Rationale: To add financial services and blockchain sector expertise to its communication agency platform Sector: Consulting & Services Target Description: Financial services PR agency specializing in asset management, fintech, and blockchain	○

OVERALL CRYPTO M&A ACTIVITY LEVELS
