

**May 7, 2026**Target:  **REAP**Buyer:  **PAYWARD****Payward to Acquire Reap for up to \$600M**Author: john@architectpartners.com  
dong@architectpartners.com

More Information: efr@architectpartners.com

**Transaction Overview**

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Payward, the parent company of crypto exchange Kraken, announced that it had entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Reap, a Hong Kong-based stablecoin-native card-issuing and payments infrastructure company, for up to \$600 million, payable in a mix of cash and Payward stock.

**Target: Reap**

Founded in 2018, Reap is a Hong Kong-based, stablecoin-native card-issuing and payments platform that operates across both fiat and stablecoin rails through a unified API.

Reap's core offerings include: 1) Reap Direct, a stablecoin-embedded business account that bundles corporate Visa credit cards, cross-border payments, and expense management across stablecoins and fiat; 2) Embedded Finance, an API platform for card issuing and global fiat payouts, enabling clients to launch branded card programs and payment products on Reap's rails; and 3) Agentic Payments, which enables AI agents to transact on behalf of individuals and businesses.

Reap has expanded its regulatory footprint across Hong Kong, Singapore, and Mexico, with strategic partnerships including Circle, Solana, Visa, and Paxos. In December 2025, Reap joined the Global Dollar Network alongside Kraken, Anchorage Digital, Bullish, OKX, Robinhood, and Worldpay, with plans to integrate Paxos-issued USDG into its card programs, cross-border settlement tools, and embedded finance systems.

Reap processed more than \$2 billion in stablecoin-funded transaction flow in 2024. In 2025, both revenue and transaction volume nearly tripled, and the company reached profitability that same year. As of May 2026, Reap serves more than 22,000 businesses worldwide; named

clients include Animoca Brands, Trust Wallet, CoinMarketCap, Amber Group, and RedotPay.

As of its publicly announced Series A financing in October 2022, Reap had raised \$40 million through a combination of equity and debt financing. The Series A was led by Acorn Pacific Ventures, Arcadia Funds, and HashKey Capital, with participation from Hustle Fund, Fresco Capital, Abacus Ventures, and Payment Asia. Reap's broader investor base has also included Global Founders Capital and Oyster Ventures.

Key competitors and adjacent providers include BVNK (Mastercard), Bridge (Stripe), Rail (Ripple), Baanx (Exodus), AlloyX (Solowin), Zero Hash, and Airwallex.

**Buyer: Payward**

Payward is the parent company of Kraken. Originally the legal entity behind Kraken, Payward was repositioned in February 2026 as a multi-brand holding platform. Payward currently encompasses Kraken (its primary business), NinjaTrader, Breakout, Backed Finance, xStocks, and CF Benchmarks, as well as Payward Services, its B2B infrastructure arm.

For the full year of 2025, Payward reported adjusted revenue of \$2.2 billion, a 33% increase year over year from \$1.5 billion in 2024. Trading-based revenue accounted for 47% of the total, with the remaining 53% from asset-based services, including payments, custody, yield, and financing.

In November 2025, Payward raised \$800 million at a \$20 billion post-money valuation in a round backed by Citadel Securities, Jane Street, and Apollo Global Management, and confidentially filed an S-1 with the SEC ahead of a planned IPO. In April 2026, Deutsche Börse Group made an additional \$200 million strategic investment in the company.

Payward has built significant payments momentum over the past two years, moving from stablecoin distribution into consumer and enterprise payment infrastructure. The foundation began with Kraken's role in the Global Dollar Network and USDG, expanded through Krak's P2P fiat and stablecoin payment app, and was reinforced by Kraken Financial's Federal Reserve master account, which connects Payward more directly to U.S. fiat settlement rails. The launch of Payward Services then formalized payments as part of a broader B2B infrastructure platform, while the Reap acquisition added the card issuing, cross-border payout, and stablecoin treasury capabilities needed to push that infrastructure deeper into real business workflows.



### Transaction Parameters

Payward has agreed to acquire Reap for up to \$600 million, payable in a mix of cash and Payward stock issued at a \$20 billion equity valuation. The specific breakdown is not disclosed. Reap will continue to operate as a stand-alone platform within the Payward ecosystem under its existing brand and leadership team, led by Daren Guo.

Anchoring on a blended fee rate of 50 bps, equivalent to Reap's stated bank transfer fee ([source](#)), and applying a +/- 10 bps sensitivity range, Reap's revenue on \$6 billion of estimated 2025 volume would be approximately \$24 million to \$36 million. This would imply a transaction revenue multiple of approximately 16.7x to 25.0x.

Previous comparable transactions include: Mastercard | BVNK (\$1.8B, [M&A Alert](#)), Stripe | Bridge (\$1.1B, [M&A Alert](#)), Solwin | AlloyX (\$350M, [M&A Alert](#)), Ripple | Rail (\$200M, [M&A Alert](#)), and Exodus | Baanx (\$175M, [M&A Alert](#)).

### Strategic Rationale

Payward Services already provides the crypto-native infrastructure layer, spanning trading, custody, tokenized assets, on- and off-ramps, derivatives, funding, liquidity, compliance, risk management, and settlement. Reap extends that stack into payments distribution by adding card issuance, corporate card programs, cross-border payouts, and stablecoin treasury workflows through a single API-driven platform.

The combination matters because stablecoin payment products are difficult to build independently. Partners would otherwise need to stitch together card issuing, banking partners, fiat rails, stablecoin settlement, custody, FX, compliance, and liquidity. With Reap, Payward can offer a more complete embedded finance stack that helps partners launch products, allowing end users to hold, convert, spend, and move money across fiat and stablecoin rails without rebuilding each component themselves.

Reap also expands Payward's regulatory and geographic reach. The company brings licenses and registrations across Hong Kong, Singapore, and Mexico, including a Singapore Major Payment Institution license, a Hong Kong Money Service Operator license, and a Mexico Money Transmitter Registry. Reap accelerates Payward's expansion across APAC and the Americas, while Payward's U.S. and European licenses open new corridors for Reap. Together, the businesses are positioned to scale stablecoin-powered payments infrastructure across high-growth markets, including MENA and Latin America.

### Architect Partners' Observations

The Reap acquisition reinforces Payward's evolution from a crypto exchange operator into a multi-brand financial infrastructure holding company. Kraken remains the flagship brand, but recent acquisitions show Payward expanding across trading, derivatives, tokenized assets, payments, custody, benchmarks, and B2B infrastructure. NinjaTrader added futures brokerage and retail derivatives distribution, Bitnomial added regulated U.S. derivatives infrastructure, Backed / xStocks expanded its tokenized securities footprint, CF Benchmarks supports institutional data and indexing, and Reap now adds global cards and stablecoin payments.

The strategic rationale is not simply that Payward is trying to build another Coinbase. Coinbase remains the clearest example of the "Everything Exchange" model, with a unified Coinbase-branded platform spanning trading, custody, staking, wallets, stablecoins, Base, derivatives, and on-chain commerce. Payward appears to be choosing a different aggregation layer: the regulated infrastructure stack that can power financial products across multiple brands, customer segments, and partner channels.

That distinction helps explain the holding company strategy. Rather than forcing every capability into a single Kraken-branded front end, Payward can serve different markets with purpose-built brands while sharing infrastructure underneath. Through its brands, Payward is building a modular platform across liquidity, custody, payments, tokenized assets, derivatives, benchmarks, and embedded finance.

The so-what is distribution leverage. Coinbase's model depends on bringing more activity into Coinbase's own platform. Payward's model can work even when the end customer never interacts with Kraken directly. Banks, fintechs, brokers, payment companies, marketplaces, and enterprises can use Payward's infrastructure to embed crypto trading, custody, stablecoin settlement, card programs, treasury workflows, or tokenized asset capabilities into their own products.

In our view, Payward is helping define the next evolution beyond the "Everything Exchange": an "Everything Financial Infrastructure" model. If Coinbase is building the most complete branded crypto financial platform, Payward is assembling the regulated infrastructure stack that can power many financial platforms.

### Sources

[PitchBook](#), [Press Release](#), [Payward](#), [Kraken](#), [Reap](#)