

## Bitcoin Company Teams with Mike Tyson for Las Vegas ATMs

By Daniel Rothberg

Monday, July 27, 2015 | 5:45 p.m. (Possibly) Coming to Las Vegas next month: Mike Tyson bitcoin ATMs. Better Than Bitcoin New Report: Smart investors are putting their money here instead. Bitcoin Direct LLC, a company that registered in Nevada in April, is hoping to make the former heavyweight champion the face of the virtual global currency. Bitcoin Direct expects two Mike Tyson-themed cash-to-bitcoin ATMs to appear in Las Vegas in the middle of next month and three to appear in September.

“He expands the bitcoin audience dramatically,” said Peter Klamka, the company’s CEO. “Far more people know Mike Tyson than have ever known of bitcoin.”

Tyson, who lives in Las Vegas, first announced his ATM machine in a tweet to his 4.8 million followers that directed users to a webpage teasing the sponsorship.

“Mike Tyson’s fastest knockout in the ring was 30 seconds. The Mike Tyson ATM can turn your cash into bitcoin in under 20 seconds,” the promotional website promises.

Bitcoin Direct already operates an ATM in One Kick Nick’s, a Las Vegas mixed martial arts gym. After launching the five Tyson machines, the company hopes to launch ATMs in New Jersey and California. Klamka said Tyson is popular in several demographic groups — for his boxing career among adults and his “Hangover” role among millennials — and his partnership has the potential to bring a whole swath of new users to bitcoin.

“He is a well recognized figure who has been involved with money on both sides of the equation for most of his life,” Klamka said. “At a minimum people will try bitcoin because Mike Tyson has tried it.”

Several media reports Monday questioned the legitimacy of Bitcoin Direct because it has little web presence and is majority owned by beef supplier Conexus Cattle Corp. Klamka disputed the claim that his deal with Tyson was a scam, saying he needed Conexus’ investment to cover startup costs and that Tyson is a partner in the venture.

While Bitcoin Direct is not yet at a point where it can release a photo of the ATM, Klamka said the machine has already been delivered and designed. An office manager at One Kick Nick’s also said she received a sneak peek of the Mike Tyson ATM last week.

If the machines do make it into stores next month, they won’t be the first. Las Vegas already has several ATMs for the increasingly popular currency, including one inside downtown bar/club Gold Spike and another a few blocks away at The D Hotel, which accepts the currency for certain nongaming charges.

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