

Adding a Crypto Process Platform to their Credit Card and Merchant Processing Solutions, Aliant Payment Systems, Inc. is enabling eCommerce and Business-to-Business Merchants to access CryptoFins including Bitcoin, Ethereum and Litecoin



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CEOCFO: *Mr. Brown, according to the tagline on the Aliant Payment Systems Inc site, you provide “Merchant Solutions at the Speed of Life.” How are doing so?*

Mr. Brown: I would say that we are just basically innovators when it comes to merchant solutions. We basically target ecommerce type clients, large processing merchants and business to business merchants. Our job is to basically bring all forms of payment to them, including major credit cards, debit cards and ACH services. As of recently we just brought on our crypto processing platform that allows our merchants to be able to access CryptoFins, which would be bitcoin, ethereum and litecoin, so that is another suite of products that we have. Our job is basically to bring those payment services to merchants here, domestically and internationally.

CEOCFO: *Would you explain the innovative part? What is different about your approach?*

Mr. Brown: We are one of the first traditional merchant processing companies that crossed lines into digital currency. We are actually the first certified payment processor for Litecoin. There really are not other traditional payment processing companies that apply major credit cards and debit cards along with crypto processing. There are other crypto platforms that solely provide crypto, so the innovative part is that we actually can take a crypto transaction and we can convert it into US dollars. The merchant does not really have to know anything about digital currency. We will do all of that for them. They can accept a payment via website, email invoice, mobile device and on the cell and then we will convert the currency for them. There are really no other companies out there right now doing that.

CEOCFO: *Why did you decide it is time to be involved with crypto currency from the payment side or is it more that you want to be ahead of the game?*

Mr. Brown: Both. I think that the payment industry is a very competitive industry this new product gives us an advantage. I also found a true need for crypto payments. Our clients can sometimes be “hard to place” merchants. There are a lot of ecommerce companies with large volume, so traditional banks might shy away from them due to the risk of the business model. Therefore, this is another form of payment. I was an investor to start out with, but I saw the benefit of blockchain, the underlying technology behind crypto currency. I was pretty well educated on how it works and then also the digital currency itself. Just being in the payment industry for about twenty years I recognized that this is going to change our industry for sure. I am a one hundred percent believer of that. I decided that there is no reason to wait; that we were going to lead the pack. That is how I came to the decision. Between understanding crypto currency, investing and understanding the underlying technology, we went ahead and moved forward with offering that as a form of payment for our customers.

CEOCFO: Are merchants ready?

Mr. Brown: Yes, they are ready. We have merchants that are processing right now, that are really doing a great job with it. Would I say that all merchants are ready? No. Most of them do not understand crypto currency, but I think the great thing about our platform is that you do not really have to understand it. I would say that most merchants really do not know the back end workings of the credit card industry either. However yet, people have them in their wallets, they have easily processed transactions and the money hits their account. Therefore, I do not think there has to be a ton of knowledge there. The mass adoption of digital currency has to start somewhere. I believe that has already started. Therefore, I think the more innovative, the more forward thinking merchants are going to be the ones first out of the gate just due to sheer competition and their competition will follow.

CEOCFO: How do you make it easy for your clients?

Mr. Brown: We take a kind of a GoDaddy approach. I have always been a fan of that company; their marketing, their kind of edginess, their attack, they have a great website and they are very cost effective. However, one thing about GoDaddy is that you can get on the phone with them and the layperson can really understand how to buy a domain and how to put together a website and that is what we have as well. Our call center is very well versed in how crypto works and credit card processing, how we can blend them both and how we can talk with them about what the benefits are and that it is really not that difficult. That is what we do. We are able to educate the merchant and we are able to provide that level of service. What we see a lot of on the crypto side is just websites and people have to go to a website and sign up and figure it out. They never talk with anybody. That might be fine for the people that have those kinds of abilities, but there are many merchants out there that do not have those abilities, does not have the time and they need to have someone basically explain to them how the process works and that is our job. That is the kind of approach we take.

“Our core business is credit card processing and merchant processing and always will be. However, we are going to be the driving force of mass adoption to crypto currency and that is our goal.”- Eric Brown

CEOCFO: What, if anything, can you do if at the point of purchase a credit card is rejected and it should not have been? Is that something you can do anything about or is it strictly MasterCard or Visa? How do you handle problems at point of purchase?

Mr. Brown: It is neither MasterCard nor Visa. It is actually your issuing bank that is rejecting the transaction. It is rejecting the transaction due to an algorithm that is in place that recognizes that you do not use the card very much. It might have been at a retailer that you do not go to very often. It might have been a dollar ticket item, it could have been the area that you were in. There are many different factors that come into play to fraud check. That is really all it was. It was rejected due to a fraud check. The next time that that happens you just immediately call your credit card company and say, “Yes, I am standing here, I am at the location”. Many times what happens, let us say you are with Chase, Chase will say, “Okay, we are going to send a code to your phone and you tell us what that code is.” They will shoot a text message to your phone and that is just called dual authentication. You are going to see different forms of security coming when you are doing payments. Because fraud is so rampant you will see biometrics are starting to come out, dual authentication is coming out. Digital wallets are more secure. The reason that you saw that transaction was simply because it was a fraud check.

CEOCFO: Can you help a merchant walk someone through a situation like that?

Mr. Brown: Absolutely. Those are phone calls that we take every day; not uncommon. I think our merchants are pretty well versed. We typically deal with pretty good sized merchants that are pretty payment savvy, so they know what to do. Another advantage to Aliant Payment Systems is that we have people that going to pick up the phone and actually answer questions for you; it just not a virtual site service. You can contact us virtually if you like, but we do have that ability and just experience of running those transactions. That is a very common question that we get and we basically just let the merchant know and just say, “Look, this is something the customer has to call in about.” The merchant themselves can do nothing about it. There are two sides of the industry. There is the issuing side where they issue the card. There is the processing side where they process the card. Therefore, when an issuer sends out a rejection that means the person that is the cardholder needs to call and get that resolved.

CEOCFO: Do potential customers recognize the customer service aspect of what you are doing? Are they looking for that or is it just a bonus they find out about when they have a problem and you are helping them?

Mr. Brown: That is a good question! I think that the merchants do look for it. We had an email this morning from a large merchant that is doing a lot of crypto transactions with us and there was a hiccup this morning and there has been a hiccup this weekend. When you are dealing with people’s money they are much more at ease when they can get hold of people. You do not necessarily have to talk to us on the phone, but they have to be able to have someone respond and

know that someone is working on it. I am a firm believer in that. We are dealing with people's money! Sometimes we are dealing with their sole source of money! This is an ecommerce client. One hundred percent of their business is running through our network and it is important that these people have the ability to get hold of us and chat with us and so forth. Some businesses do not require that. However they want to deal with it; they want to do payments through email, through ticket services and so on, but we find that we are successful with this program. Again, it is kind of like a GoDaddy type of model where, yes there are a lot of different ways to get hold of them, but it is very much, "Hey, follow us, we will walk you through it!" That is the kind of attitude we take with this.

CEOCFO: *People are changing merchants all the time. How do you reach out so potential customers understand the difference?*

Mr. Brown: It is funny. It is basically how we market to clients. We actually have a pretty large social media following. We also utilize Google pay per click content for our merchant accounts. We are on an organic search for crypto. There are not many companies out there. We put out many blogs, a lot of information, and many tweets. What happens is that you just generate organic growth and that gets picked up by Google. We do not actively call out to merchants. We will use different avenues of media to be able to basically get our story out there, our word out there and then have people contact back to us. We also have a network of resellers. They could be software companies, they could be sales agents, so we have various different networks of resellers that could utilize payment services. They might be selling a software for, let us say, the beauty salon industry and they want to tap into a payment component for their software, so that someone can fully run their calendaring, their products, their payments; everything through the software. Therefore, we become that component. We also have sales agents that resell our services from around the country, so they have their own marketing. However, our direct marketing really ties into internet based marketing and a lot of social media. We have a very, very good social media following. It is very strong and some of the larger notable clients that we have seen are coming through are coming through social media.

CEOCFO: *What are you able to do with newer technologies? Clearly crypto is one item, but how is technology, which is changing at the speed of light, making a difference for you?*

Mr. Brown: It is changing every industry. Particularly blockchain where crypto currency is live on, the underlying technology of blockchain is going to change pretty much every industry. It will change the way we look at the internet. It will change the way you get your medical records from different doctors. It will change how you title cars and homes and things long those lines; how you have always your taxes, transcribe records of tax payments and so on. I think one of the technologies that we see up and coming, which is mildly scary to tell you the truth, is AI. If you look at artificial intelligence it has the ability of changing our world in many good ways, but also has the ability of changing our world in many bad ways. I think the technology is something that we definitely have to keep looking at and deciding if it is really worth it to go down this road. However, the problem with technology it seems to be its own kind of living entity. It seems to just evolve now on its own.

CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people, particularly the customer service people that are talking to clients? How so you make sure that you have got knowledgeable people that will pay attention to the customer?*

Mr. Brown: It is like the X-Factor in your company at times. However, it is the thing that is really the most important. Therefore, I do not necessarily look at their skills in, let us say, customer service. The first thing is, do I feel like they fit within the group? That is really the key. Do I feel as if they are going to work well within the group that we have put together? I basically run Aliant like a sports team. You are recruiting people in, you are recruiting people from other companies, you are picking out people from school; basically all the things that a sports team would do. You are making decisions on giving people certain monies based in their skills, their skill level, but at the end of the day if you really, truly want to win, you have to play as a team. You cannot really play as an individual effort, because you are never going to get there. You might have one person who really performs well, but if the team in general is not good then you are going to have issues as a company and that can stem to operations, customer service, sales; every other department. The last few people I hired; one was a real struggle because I had two very close people in competition for the position. It was a very difficult decision to make. The other person that I was hiring for a different position that day, I hired in five minutes. I literally sat down and just looked at her and I knew that was it. She has every skill that I was looking for, but what was most important was how I felt that they were going to work within the group. If they disrupt the group then they have to go. You have seen that, especially within sports teams. Even if a player is that good, if they disrupt the team as a whole they have to go.

CEOCFO: *What is your geographic reach today?*

Mr. Brown: Our geographic reach is the domestic United States, Canada, the EU, we have the ability of doing accounts in Australia as well. It is a little bit out of our reach as of right now, but those are basically our geographic areas. We have

some other smaller areas that we do now, but areas that we just really do not hit right now would definitely be Russia, China and South America.

CEOCFO: *How is business?*

Mr. Brown: Business has been excellent! It is an extremely competitive business. We have been doing it a long time. The addition of our crypto processing platform has vaulted us into a completely different arena now! We are talking to clients that we would not be talking to before! It is opening up a lot of doors. It is opening up a lot of doors with large resellers in our industry that are looking to work with us; just over the weekend, on social media, one merchant with seventeen hundred locations. The other one is a travel booking company. I cannot mention the name, but it is a name you recognize. This is just over this weekend! This is just from being on social media! Therefore, business has been phenomenal. We have been very pleased about it. However, the reason why is that we are bringing on something which is very new and the crypto community is very passionate about their currency and their product and we have tapped into that and they have adopted us. That in turn has taken our business to another level.

CEOCFO: *What is next? What might we expect a year from now for Aliant Payment Systems Inc?*

Mr. Brown: Our job is going to be mass adoption of crypto currency. Our core business is credit card processing and merchant processing and always will be. However, we are going to be the driving force of mass adoption to crypto currency and that is our goal. We see that as somewhere to between three to five years and we will be here as that continues and grows. Then we will go from there. I am not exactly sure what we would do from there. We get offers. There are companies that are trying to buy us all the time. We had another one this morning through email. There are all kinds of private equity firms and things along those lines. As of right now we are not interested at all. Our focus is mass adoption crypto currency and that is what the next few years is going to be for Aliant Payment Systems.

CEOCFO: *You are really enjoying this!*

Mr. Brown: It is the first time I have actually, probably really enjoyed my business in ten years the way I am enjoying it right now. Yes!

