

DIGITAL ASSETS

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BLOCKCHAIN NEWS MAKING INVESTOR HEADLINES THIS MONTH

FUNDSTRAT INCREASES BITCOIN TARGET 25%

Despite recent Bitcoin criticism from Elon Musk, Fundstrat's Tom Lee boosts Bitcoin 2021 price target 25% to \$125,000.

BANK OF AMERICA EMBRACES BLOCKCHAIN

Bank of America joins Paxos network to settle stock trades in minutes rather than days, by using blockchain, according to a recent Bloomberg report.

MONEYGRAM DROPS RIPPLE FOR BITCOIN

MoneyGram has partnered with Coinme to facilitate cash buying and selling of Bitcoin through thousands of new point of sale locations.

SONY MAKES A BET ON BLOCKCHAIN

Sony Entertainment has patented an eSports betting platform, allowing users to bet Bitcoin or digital items, with odds determined by machine learning.

CRYPTO AND ESG

BITCOIN'S ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND THE FUTURE OF BLOCKCHAIN SUSTAINABILITY

BY LIAM MCDONALD

With critics questioning the viability of the crypto ecosystem after sustainability concerns raised by Elon Musk and others, Sarson Funds believes that crypto moves in stride with the future of sustainable finance and ESG investing.

Contrary to popular opinion that Bitcoin and crypto assets are encouraging ill-spend of the global energy supply, this article will overview Bitcoin's true energy usage next to traditional financial institutions, the primary energy source Bitcoin mining operations, and how the ecosystem is launching more scalable and energy efficient blockchains to spearhead the future of financial operations.

To begin, I'd like to highlight the computations of Sarson Funds Chief Marketing Officer Jahon Jamali, who recently calculated the true energy usage of the entire traditional banking system next to Bitcoin's singular decentralized network. According to Jamali, the traditional banking system uses an average of 140 terrawatt-hours (TWh) per year to power its operations, while Bitcoin uses only 32.56 TWh per year.

While 32.56 TWh beats the energy usage of the entire country of Norway, comparing these vastly different entities is like comparing apples and oranges. To measure Bitcoin's energy usage in relation to a more comparable entity, it is only fair to size Bitcoin up against the system it is competing against, the global financial infrastructure. Traditional finance uses roughly 400% the energy that Bitcoin does, so while the Bitcoin network does use substantial amounts of energy, it pales in comparison to the system it aims to upend.

The next argument to tackle: Bitcoin and dirty energy. This past week, Bitcoin lost nearly 12% of its value when Elon Musk raised concerns that much of Bitcoin's mining and transaction operations were sourced from fossil fuels.





CRYPTO AND ESG

CONTINUED

While Musk's concerns are valid regarding the use of dirty energy in some crypto mining, Ark Investments recently claimed in a CNBC "Closing Bell" interview that 76% of Bitcoin miners are using renewable energy to fuel their operations. So, while Bitcoin may be using comparable amounts of energy as Norway, its comparative carbon footprint is somewhere between half and a quarter, according to a Coinshares article on the environmental impact of Bitcoin mining.

Lastly, several blockchains have emerged in the past year that aim to construct a new horizon of sustainability for the crypto ecosystem. These blockchains have integrated Proof-of-Stake (PoS) network validation protocols, the sustainability-minded progression from Proof-of-Work (PoW) block validation, also known as mining, that powers the aggressive energy consumption of industry leaders like Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Litecoin.

PoS protocols allow token holders with certain native token reserves to stake tokens, meaning that their token holding over time allows users to validate blocks on the network and collect token rewards. Instead of miners using large quantities of energy to solve mathematical functions and unlock a block, Proof of Stake protocols randomly select one token staker to validate the next block and collect staking rewards, comparable to the mining rewards structure.

PoS protocols create competition among stakers by encouraging larger token holdings in order to increase the chances of a staker being selected as the next validator. Current industry leaders in PoS protocols are Ethereum, Polkadot, Cardano, Algorand, and CasperLabs. Large scale adoption of staking protocols will substantially relieve the crypto ecosystem from the environmental concerns related to the mining process, creating a pathway for crypto to be embraced on a global scale.

With these recent advancements, the crypto ecosystem is strengthening the longevity of the global financial system in an increasingly environmentally focused landscape. Crypto's focus on efficient scalability is naturally building the blueprint for a truly sustainable financial future.



76% OF BITCOIN MINERS ARE USING RENEWABLE ENERGY TO FUEL THEIR OPERATIONS.

ATARI MEETS BLOCKCHAIN

THE HALF-CENTURY JOURNEY FROM SILICON VALLEY TO THE METAVERSE

BY NATHAN FRANKOVITZ

Earlier this month, Atari restructured its business to create two separate divisions, Atari Gaming and Atari Blockchain. The announcement comes after years of development in the space, since Atari first publicly expressed its interest in crypto assets in early 2018.

In his foreword to the Atari Token Whitepaper, Atari CEO Frederic Chesnais points to the gaming industry's progressive decentralization as support for the gaming giant's strategic move. "Atari means 'Revolution, Technology and Entertainment'. When I started to work on blockchain and cryptocurrencies, I immediately thought of creating a virtual currency that could be used in any video game.", Chesnais wrote.

Launched in the fall of 2020, Atari Token (\$ATRI) aims to "become the token of reference for the interactive entertainment industry". The token's first use-case is within crypto-casinos, where players can gamble in virtual blockchain-based games. Described by Reuters as "The 'Metaverse' Bet", Atari has already initiated a two-year lease term on virtual land in Decentraland, a popular Ethereum-based virtual world. After licensing its own retro arcade, Atari celebrated its Decentraland Casino's Launch Party with \$10,000+ in prizes and a live set played by the platinum selling artist Dillon Francis.

With a growing economy of finite in-game lands, currencies, items, and services, Decentraland and its peers are blurring the lines between reality and virtual worlds. According to an article by Coindesk, an in-game competitor to Atari named Decentral Games began hiring for its virtual casino as early as February this year.

More broadly, Atari seems to subscribe to the zeitgeist for crypto assets demonstrated by the rapid growth of DeFi, or decentralized finance. Chesnais continues in his foreword, "Like many other people, Atari fully supports the idea of 'finance without borders'. That is why the number of people actively using crypto-currencies is steadily growing and approaching the psychological mark of 50 million."

HOW BLOCKCHAIN IS DRIVING THE GAMING ECONOMY

CRYPTO ENTREPRENEURS CAPITALIZE ON ESPORTS

Esports personality Susie Kim recently launched her own custom fan cryptocurrency. Over 30 other notable esports gamers have launched their own token.

NFTS ENABLE A NEW FRONTIER FOR GAMING

Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) create one-of-a-kind digital assets, allowing users to acquire in-game assets of value that are stored on the blockchain.

BLOCKCHAIN IS BUILDING THE VIRTUAL WORLD

Virtual worlds in gaming are quickly gaining popularity. One Atari partner, Decentraland, has become the virtual world's one-stop-shop for digital assets.



ATARI

ATARI MEETS BLOCKCHAIN

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Indeed, unlike the privatization of profits in the classical free market, Atari's Blockchain initiatives appear to embrace publicly-distributed, player-owned virtual assets.

Atari cites upcoming trends backing their investment in Atari Token, echoing narratives already seen driving DeFi. According to their Whitepaper, the number of people with access to the internet will quickly climb from 4.5 billion to 8 billion.

Many of these internet newcomers will have less robust identification records than existing users. These "under-documented and/or underserved individuals" lack access to financial systems that offer improvement to their economic condition, which may be alleviated by the maturing DeFi ecosystem.

Atari also cites diminishing hardware costs, rising rates of self-education, and the replacement of cost-prohibitive financial services with increasingly reliable smart contracts. Each of these narratives bolster Atari's assertion for an overarching "Mega-Trend: The Emergence of Online Smart Platforms Offering the Future of Work."

"What we anticipate is the explosion of online platforms that offer tasks through smart contracts, using cryptocurrencies as the utility token that acts as the conduit for value or the medium of exchange," says Atari. For those already following crypto asset trends, this is not a bold claim—it's already the reality. The question is, which tokens have the real "utility"?

Further, which tokens' prices, if any, will reflect value not just for the tokens' utility, but also as a generally accepted "medium of exchange" derived from mass adoption network effects? With long-standing conflicts over which crypto assets best serve as money, Atari Token's ambitions for utility beyond powering video-gaming platforms will not be realized overnight.

Overall, however, we think Atari Token is poised to make strides in the crypto ecosystem. With a long-term, people-first strategy loyal to the broader ethos of decentralization through blockchain, Atari's leadership and brand reputation could make its \$ATRI token an indispensable part of the quickly emerging gaming metaverse. Ultimately, crypto assets depend on community consensus.

If Atari Token demonstrates effective governance, trust, performance, and integration while fueling next-generation gaming experiences the brand was once known for, the best may be yet to come for Atari's legendary history.



CASPER NETWORK



BUILDING THE BLOCKCHAIN OF THE FUTURE, TOGETHER

BY LIAM MCDONALD

The Casper Network's mission is to create a collaborative blockchain that supports a robust community of smart contract and decentralized application creators. CasperLabs aims to be a leading solution to the blockchain trilemma, a three-factor functionality problem in achieving a scalable, decentralized, and secure blockchain. Casper has brought together some of the smartest minds in crypto and tech to build the Casper Network, which is believed to be a solution to the blockchain trilemma.

Casper's native token, CSPR, is the utility token required to pay for transaction fees. These tokens can also be used to support the network via the Proof of Stake mechanism. By staking CSPR to support the network, CSPR owners can expect to be compensated via the network's system of inflation rewards.

WHAT DIFFERENTIATES CASPER NETWORK

The Proof of Stake (PoS) mechanism, as opposed to Proof of Work (PoW), allows the Casper Network to provide predictable transaction fees. Arguably the most notable downside of the Ethereum blockchain is the unpredictability of the network fees, which is because Ethereum still mainly exists on a PoW blockchain. Casper's verification process is designed to support cutting edge decentralized applications and smart contract execution. PoS works by allowing users to stake tokens as a means to validate transactions rather than the massive energy consumption used to mine blocks. The PoS integration is designed to deliver Casper Network as a leading solution in enterprise and developer blockchain adoption to help meet the evolving needs of people and the world. For developers, the Casper Network is differentiated because of the upgradability of the blockchain. Casper Network's code has low barriers to entry as it seeks to unite the world of developers to come together and build the blockchain of the future.

WHY CASPER NETWORK'S FEATURES MATTER

CasperLabs takes the cutting edge elements of first generation blockchains and expands upon them. By stabilizing transaction costs, improving security features, and supporting enterprise use cases, the Casper Network creates the next step in real world blockchain applications. Simply put, CasperLabs stands to drive valuable opportunities for the developer ecosystem and their communities of users.

WHO'S INVOLVED IN CASPER NETWORK?

The management team has an extensive background ranging from consulting, venture capital, and industry defining technology companies. Led by Chief Executive Officer Mrinal Manohar, and an executive team of Chief Technology Officer Medha Parlikar, Chief Operations Officer Cliff Sarkin, and Chief Financial Officer Daniel Marfu, CasperLabs is led by tenured tech experts with leadership experience in Google, Microsoft and Adobe.

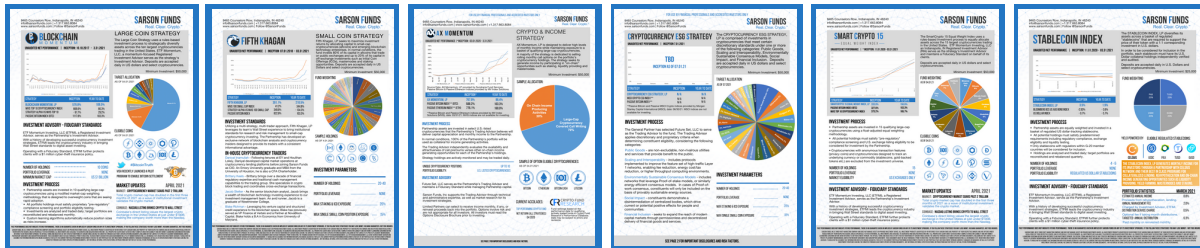
THE FUTURE OF CASPER

Casper's CSPR token is being listed on the Huobi, OKEx, MXC, and ZB exchanges Tuesday, May 11th at 7am EST (7pm in Beijing, China). For live updates on CSPR's performance, please follow Casper's page on CoinMarketCap, [here](#). With the utility and versatility of the Casper Network, Sarson Funds believes that CasperLabs has the potential to pioneer the future of blockchain, crypto, and decentralized finance. For more on CasperLabs, please visit [casperlabs.io](#).

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