

The Largest Bank in America Just Built a Crypto Onramp for 78 Million People

JPMorganChase, Coinbase, Ultimate Rewards, and the Distribution Event That Changes Everything -- Q2 2026

JPMorganChase is the largest bank in the United States by assets, with a balance sheet exceeding \$3.9 trillion and approximately 78 million retail customers who interact with the bank through the Chase consumer banking brand. On May 20, 2025, CEO Jamie Dimon told investors at the bank's annual investor day: we are going to allow you to buy it. We are not going to custody it. We are going to put it in statements for clients. Dimon was talking about Bitcoin -- the same asset he had described as a hyped up fraud and a pet rock in previous years. The announcement marked a definitive shift in Chase's retail crypto strategy. That announcement was followed in 2025 by the formal launch of a strategic partnership with Coinbase that included three specific products: a direct bank-to-wallet API connection allowing Chase customers to seamlessly link their bank accounts to Coinbase wallets, the ability to transfer Chase Ultimate Rewards points to a Coinbase account -- the first time a major credit card rewards program has been used to fund a crypto wallet -- and the ability to use Chase credit cards to fund a Coinbase account. The direct bank-to-wallet connection and Ultimate Rewards transfer features were targeted to go live in 2026. The credit card funding capability launched in Fall 2025. When 78 million Chase customers can buy Bitcoin using their existing banking app, their credit card rewards points, or a direct bank account link -- without opening a separate crypto exchange account, without completing a new KYC process, and without leaving the Chase financial ecosystem they already trust -- the retail adoption barrier that has kept tens of millions of Americans out of crypto effectively disappears. This is the distribution event the crypto market has been waiting for.

01 -- THE DIMON REVERSAL: FROM PET ROCK TO WE ARE GOING TO ALLOW YOU TO BUY IT

Jamie Dimon's progression from Bitcoin skeptic to Bitcoin access provider is the most important individual signal of institutional adoption in the history of cryptocurrency -- not because of what Dimon personally believes about Bitcoin's long-term value, but because of what his decision reveals about the commercial reality JPMorganChase faces in its retail banking market.

Dimon's public Bitcoin criticism followed a consistent pattern over nearly a decade. In September 2017, he called Bitcoin a fraud at the Barclays Global Financial Services Conference. In January 2021, he described Bitcoin as not his thing. In 2023, he called it a pet rock and a hyped up fraud. Each statement was made in his capacity as a business executive responsible for the largest bank in America -- a bank whose 78 million retail customers are the same demographic that was simultaneously adopting Bitcoin,

Ethereum, and crypto at the fastest rate of any asset class in financial history.

The commercial reality that changed Dimon's position is visible in the data. Charles Schwab CEO Rick Wurster confirmed in a CNBC interview that 20% of Schwab's clients already own crypto. Schwab serves approximately 38.9 million active brokerage accounts, suggesting approximately 7.8 million Schwab clients hold crypto assets. If the same 20% penetration rate applies to Chase's 78 million retail customers, approximately 15.6 million Chase customers already hold crypto through non-Chase platforms -- Coinbase, Kraken, Binance, or other exchanges. These 15.6 million customers are holding a significant and growing portion of their investable assets at platforms that compete with Chase for their financial relationship. The crypto onramp is not Dimon's endorsement of Bitcoin. It is JPMorganChase's commercial response to losing wallet share to crypto-native platforms.

The specific framing Dimon used -- we are going to allow you to buy it; I defend your right to buy bitcoin -- is the corporate equivalent of a retailer stocking a product it does not personally endorse because customer demand makes refusing to stock it more costly than stocking it. JPMorganChase is not becoming a Bitcoin advocate. It is becoming a Bitcoin access provider because the alternative is watching its most engaged retail customers move more of their financial relationship to platforms that offer what Chase does not. The onramp is the commercial acknowledgment that crypto demand among Chase's customer base is too large and too durable to continue ignoring.

DIMON TIMELINE: 2017 called Bitcoin a fraud. 2021 said not his thing. 2023 called it a pet rock. May 2025 told investors we are going to allow you to buy it. The man did not change his mind about Bitcoin. The commercial reality changed the decision. 78 million customers, 20% already own crypto elsewhere. That is the number that moved Chase.

02 -- THE COINBASE PARTNERSHIP: THREE PRODUCTS THAT CHANGE DISTRIBUTION

The formal strategic partnership between JPMorganChase and Coinbase announced on the official JPMorganChase.com newsroom is the most significant crypto distribution partnership between a traditional bank and a crypto-native platform in history. The three specific products it creates each address a different barrier that has kept traditional banking customers from accessing crypto.

The direct bank-to-wallet API connection is the most technically significant product in the partnership. Through JPMorgan's secure API, Chase customers will be able to seamlessly link their bank accounts to Coinbase wallets. This direct connection allows mutual customers to transact with the confidence, security, and privacy they expect as Chase customers -- without having to navigate the ACH transfer delays, the manual bank account verification processes, and the fraud holds that have historically made funding crypto exchanges from bank accounts a friction-filled experience that turned away millions of potential retail crypto buyers.

The Ultimate Rewards transfer capability is the most strategically creative product in the partnership. Chase Ultimate Rewards is one of the most valuable credit card rewards programs in the United States -- with an estimated 57 million Chase credit card accounts accumulating points that can be transferred to airline and hotel partners at a standard rate of one cent per point. The ability to transfer Ultimate Rewards points to a Coinbase account means that the approximately 57 million Chase credit card

holders who accumulate rewards points as a routine consequence of their daily spending can fund crypto purchases using points they already have -- without any cash outlay. This is the first time a major credit card rewards program has been used to fund a crypto wallet, and it creates a zero-marginal-cost crypto entry pathway for tens of millions of Americans who already hold Ultimate Rewards balances.

The Chase credit card funding capability -- which went live in Fall 2025 -- allows Chase customers to use their credit cards to fund Coinbase accounts directly. This is significant because it removes the bank account ownership requirement that had created an additional friction layer for younger customers who may not have a traditional checking account but do have Chase credit cards. The credit card funding pathway, combined with the bank-to-wallet API and Ultimate Rewards transfer, creates three separate entry points to crypto through Chase's existing customer relationship -- each designed for a different customer profile and each removing a specific barrier that had previously prevented that customer from accessing crypto.

03 -- THE 78 MILLION NUMBER AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR BITCOIN DEMAND

The scale context for the Chase-Coinbase partnership is essential for understanding its demand implications. JPMorganChase serves approximately 78 million retail customers in the United States through the Chase consumer banking brand -- representing approximately 24% of all American adults. These 78 million customers have an average banking relationship that includes checking accounts, savings accounts, credit cards, mortgages, and investment accounts -- making Chase the primary financial institution for a significant share of the American middle class.

If 20% of Chase's retail customers follow the same adoption pattern that Charles Schwab confirmed for its client base, approximately 15.6 million Chase customers currently hold crypto. The Chase-Coinbase partnership does not primarily target these existing crypto holders -- they already have Coinbase accounts or equivalent platforms. It targets the remaining 80%, approximately 62.4 million Chase customers who do not currently hold crypto, and specifically the subset of that group who would consider crypto if the access barrier were removed.

Even a conservative estimate of the partnership's demand impact is significant. If the Chase-Coinbase onramp converts 5% of the non-crypto-holding Chase customer base to first-time crypto buyers -- 3.1 million new buyers -- and those buyers invest an average of \$1,000 each in their first year, that represents \$3.1 billion in new crypto demand from a single distribution partnership. If the average first investment is \$2,000 -- consistent with the entry-level investment behavior documented for retail investors accessing new asset classes through familiar banking interfaces -- the demand implication rises to \$6.2 billion. For context, the entire Bitcoin ETF market accumulated approximately \$115 billion in assets under management across its first full year of operation. The Chase-Coinbase onramp, at scale, could add meaningful demand increments on an ongoing basis as the partnership matures and awareness builds across the 78 million customer base.

The Ultimate Rewards transfer capability has an additional demand implication that is separate from new cash investment. Chase estimates that approximately 57 million Ultimate Rewards accounts hold unclaimed points. If even 1% of those accounts transfer points to Coinbase for crypto purchases -- 570,000 accounts -- and each transfer represents 50,000 points with a face value of \$500, the total

redemption represents \$285 million in crypto buying from rewards points that would otherwise have been redeemed for travel or retail purchases. This is not new money entering the crypto market. But it is new buyers entering the crypto market -- and first-time buyers who acquire crypto through a rewards point transfer are disproportionately likely to add cash purchases once they have established a Coinbase account and experienced the platform.

78 MILLION CHASE CUSTOMERS: 20% estimated already hold crypto elsewhere. 80% have not yet bought. Chase-Coinbase onramp targets the 80% with three zero-friction entry pathways. Even 5% conversion of non-holders is 3.1 million new buyers. The distribution event is the demand catalyst.

04 -- HOW CHASE COMPARES TO THE BROADER TradFi CRYPTO ONRAMP WAVE

JPMorganChase's retail crypto onramp is the largest single distribution event in crypto history -- but it is part of a broader wave of traditional financial institution crypto access launches that are simultaneously expanding the total addressable market for retail crypto adoption in the United States.

Morgan Stanley announced it will offer crypto trading on its E-Trade platform starting in the first half of 2026 through a partnership with Zerohash. E-Trade serves approximately 7.5 million accounts, primarily retail brokerage clients who skew toward active individual investors -- a demographic with historically high crypto interest. Charles Schwab confirmed its Bitcoin trading launch for the first half of 2026, serving its 38.9 million active brokerage accounts. Schwab CEO Rick Wurster acknowledged the commercial reality directly: we have lots of clients who have the vast majority of their assets at Schwab but are holding some at digitally native firms and keep asking us to launch this so they can bring their crypto assets to us. Fidelity already offers direct Bitcoin and Ethereum trading to its retail brokerage customers and has been the most crypto-forward of the traditional brokerages for several years.

The cumulative distribution expansion from JPMorganChase at 78 million retail customers, Charles Schwab at 38.9 million brokerage accounts, Morgan Stanley E-Trade at 7.5 million accounts, and Fidelity at approximately 40 million retail accounts represents potential crypto access for approximately 164 million Americans through their existing traditional financial institution relationships -- a population that represents approximately 50% of all American adults. The era in which buying crypto required opening a separate account at a specialized exchange, completing a new KYC process, and learning a new platform is ending. The era in which buying crypto is as simple as buying a stock through your existing banking or brokerage relationship has arrived.

05 -- JPMD ON BASE: THE INSTITUTIONAL AND RETAIL RAILS CONVERGE

The Chase retail crypto onramp exists alongside JPMorganChase's institutional blockchain infrastructure -- and the convergence of these two tracks in 2026 is the most important structural development in the bank's digital asset strategy.

JPM Coin -- rebranded as JPMD -- launched on Coinbase's Base blockchain in 2025 for institutional clients, enabling near-instant issuance and redemption of JPMorgan deposit tokens on a public

Ethereum Layer 2 network. Coinbase and Mastercard were among the first institutions to complete JPMD transactions on Base. JPMorgan's Kinexys platform processes \$5 to \$7 billion in daily blockchain transactions and has exceeded \$3 trillion in cumulative volume. JLTXX -- JPMorgan's tokenized government money market fund -- launched on Ethereum with \$100 million in May 2026.

The institutional blockchain infrastructure and the retail crypto onramp are not separate products. They are two ends of the same distribution architecture. A Chase retail customer who buys Bitcoin through the Chase-Coinbase onramp is using the same Coinbase infrastructure that settles JPMorgan's institutional JPMD transactions on Base. The API that connects Chase's retail banking to Coinbase's consumer platform is built on the same technical foundation as the institutional integrations between JPMorgan's Kinexys platform and the broader blockchain settlement ecosystem. When the retail and institutional tracks of JPMorganChase's crypto strategy are viewed together, the picture is a complete financial services platform that serves crypto access at every level of the market -- from the individual Chase customer buying \$100 of Bitcoin with Ultimate Rewards points to the institutional treasury manager settling \$100 million in tokenized collateral through Kinexys.

06 -- CONCLUSION: THE DISTRIBUTION WALL JUST CAME DOWN

The most consistent constraint on retail crypto adoption in the United States has not been regulatory uncertainty, price volatility, or technical complexity. It has been distribution. The crypto industry built exceptional products -- Bitcoin, Ethereum, Coinbase's exchange, the ETF structure -- but lacked the distribution infrastructure to put those products in front of the full addressable market of American retail investors who might want them. Coinbase had 98 million verified users at its peak. Chase has 78 million retail customers. The two are not additive -- many Chase customers already have Coinbase accounts. But the partnership does not need to add new users to the crypto market to be transformative. It needs only to remove the friction that has kept the portion of Chase's customer base who would invest in crypto from doing so.

The distribution wall that the Chase-Coinbase partnership is dismantling has three components. First, the account creation barrier: 78 million Chase customers no longer need to open a separate Coinbase account to buy crypto -- they link their existing Chase account. Second, the funding barrier: Chase customers can use bank accounts, credit cards, or Ultimate Rewards points to fund crypto purchases. Third, the trust barrier: Chase customers who trust their bank but not an unfamiliar crypto exchange can now access crypto through the Chase relationship they already have. Each of these three barriers has historically prevented a portion of potential retail crypto buyers from taking the first step. Removing all three simultaneously, for 78 million people at once, is the largest single reduction in retail crypto access friction in history.

For investors who have been tracking the complete institutional and retail crypto adoption buildout documented in the Alain AI Lab research library -- the Bitcoin ETF approvals, the 401k DOL safe harbor, the CLARITY Act commodity classification, the DTCC tokenization timeline, the Moody's Aaa-mf ratings -- the Chase-Coinbase partnership is the retail distribution confirmation that completes the demand side of the adoption thesis. The institutional supply of compliant crypto products is being assembled simultaneously with the retail distribution infrastructure that puts those products in front of 78 million

Americans. The adoption cycle is completing on both ends at once.

Jamie Dimon called Bitcoin a pet rock in 2023. In 2025 he said we are going to allow you to buy it. In 2026 Chase customers can buy Bitcoin with their credit card rewards points. 78 million people. Three zero-friction entry pathways. The distribution wall just came down.

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