

Crypto Betting Has Turned HBO's Satoshi Nakamoto Reveal Into a 'Sporting Event': Director

The director behind an HBO documentary on Bitcoin said its release has been heightened by people wagering on Satoshi Nakamoto's identity.

Image: Shutterstock

An HBO documentary dubbed "Money Electric: The Bitcoin Mystery" will soon [try to answer the longstanding question](#) of [Satoshi Nakamoto](#)'s identity. And as its debut approaches, the hype has been heightened by a bevy of on-chain speculation, according to director Cullen Hoback.

"Polymarket turned 'Money Electric' into a sporting event," Hoback told *Decrypt* in a statement Monday. "Even I'm refreshing the betting pool to see how high the total volume gets."

Wallets linked to [Bitcoin](#)'s creator still hold 1.1 million BTC, representing a \$67 billion question hanging over the crypto industry since the pseudonymous Satoshi's disappearance in 2011. On the crypto prediction market platform Polymarket, the mystery has gained its own financial stakes, with over \$6.3 million in total bets made so far.

While Len Sassaman had been the leading outcome on Polymarket for days, his odds whipsawed Monday. Sassaman's chances of being identified as Satoshi plummeted as low as 6% as other names pulled ahead, further bouncing around until landing in second place with a nearly 17% chance as

of this writing.

As Sassaman's odds wavered, two candidates have emerged stronger: Computer scientist Nick Szabo currently leads with a 23% chance, as of this writing, while Blockstream CEO Adam Back's chances sit at about 16%.

The investigative filmmaker [confirmed](#) on Twitter (aka X) Friday that his documentary will "land on a specific name" behind Satoshi. At the same time, he made assurances directly to "gamblers," promising to steer clear of any associated wagers himself.

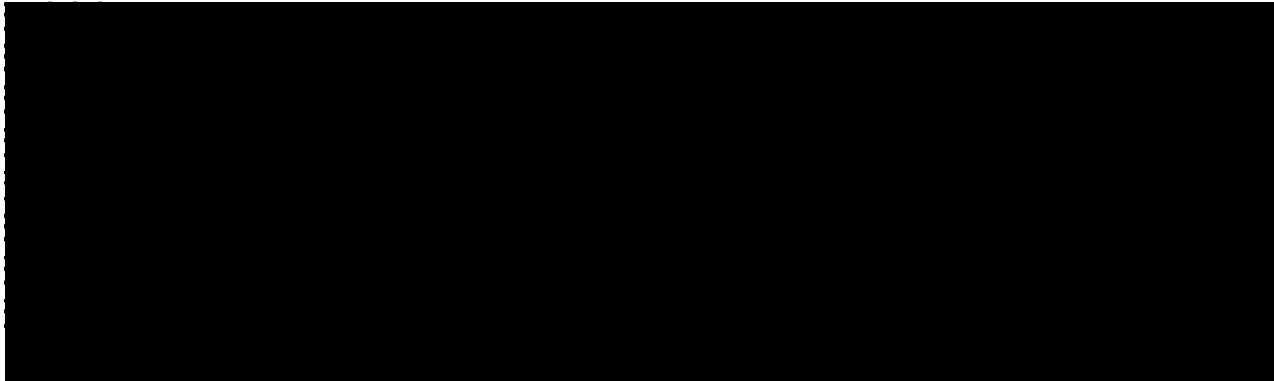
Excluding the documentary's cast, which includes the crypto entrepreneur Roger Ver, also known as "[Bitcoin Jesus](#)," around two dozen individuals worked on the film, according to [IMDb](#). Among the crew, it's likely that someone besides Hoback knows who the documentary names as the potential person behind the Satoshi moniker.

As a blockchain-based prediction platform, Polymarket has gained notable traction for gauging future events like the fast-approaching U.S. presidential election. With every speech or campaign event, new information is folded into Polymarket odds as America's fate itself shifts.

Yet the conclusion to Hoback's documentary has already been determined, leaving bettors with little more than rumor or speculation to go off of. Still, insiders could be ponying up on Polymarket, but it's unclear how that activity would go noticed by the Polymarket's users.

Hoback told *Decrypt* that he's asked his team not to participate in any wagers as well. Additionally, he said there are a "handful of people who have seen the film outside of production," increasing the odds that the Polymarket wager's resolution was preempted by an insider.

"Guess that's the definition of a sure bet," Hoback said. "What even are the rules on this stuff!?"



[Price data by](#)
[BTC price](#)

The Polymarket wager's skew toward Sassaman, who committed suicide in July 2011, could be tied to a viral tweet last week from Galaxy Head of Research Alex Thorn. The researcher [said](#) on Twitter (aka X) that he was "hearing" that the documentary will identify Sassaman as Satoshi.

On Twitter, some users circulated a screenshot of an email snippet from an HBO-linked address, [claiming](#) it was proof that the documentary's Satoshi culprit is indeed Sassaman.

Szabo, a 60-year-old computer scientist, [coined](#) the term "smart contract" long before Bitcoin's first transaction in 1996. While a *New York Times* article [detailed](#) the case for him being Satoshi in 2014, he has continuously denied that he created Bitcoin.

Though Back emerged as a likely Satoshi candidate Monday, the noted cypherpunk has [maintained he is not Bitcoin's creator](#), tweeting a denial in February. On Monday, he [tried](#) to hammer the point home again, while casting doubt on the documentary's findings.

"They are likely to get it wrong," he said. "No one knows who Satoshi is."

As Polymarket bettors continue to mull Satoshi's identity, the public won't have to wait much longer for clarity. The exploration into Bitcoin's origins, potentially revealing who the asset's creator truly is, will debut on HBO and Max on Tuesday at 9:00pm ET.

Edited by [Andrew Hayward](#)

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