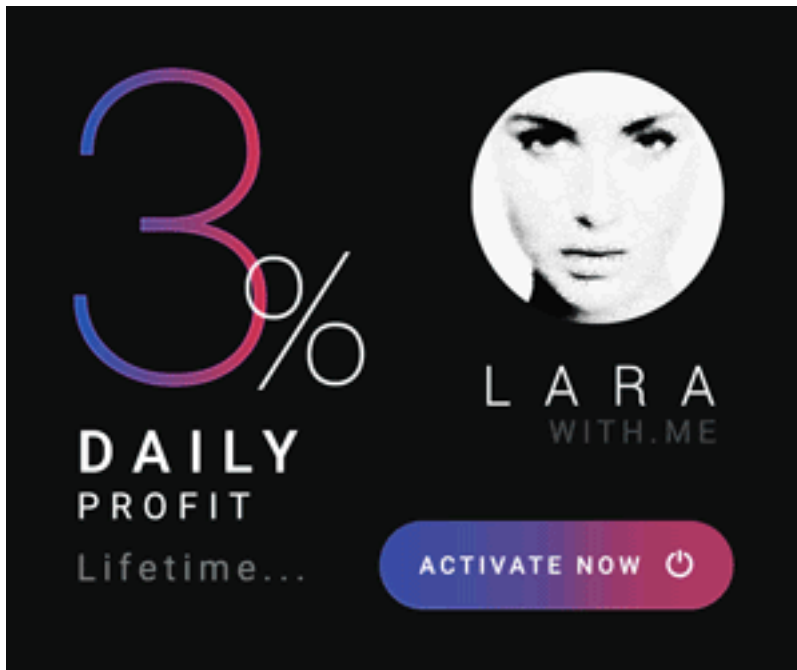


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BitTorrent Project WebTorrent Taps Bitcoin And Blockchain

🕒 11/10/2016

👤 Elliot Maras (<https://www.cryptocoinsnews.com/author/elliott-maras/>)



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Bitcoin and blockchain technology may be among the more obvious tools of evolving Internet decentralization, but **BitTorrent** (<https://hacked.com/tag/bittorrent/>), peer-to-peer file sharing, also portends major changes for commerce and industry.

(<https://cdn4.cryptocoinsnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/WebTorrent-image.png>)

Because bitcoin and blockchain technology use peer-to-peer protocols, they are often deployed in BitTorrent projects.

Direct File Sharing

WebTorrent, a streaming BitTorrent client for the browser, powered by WebRTC (web real-time communication), allows users to share files directly from their browser, without having to install or configure anything.

“WebTorrent is just like BitTorrent, except it works in the browser,” Feross Aboukhadijeh, the 25-year-old programmer who is building WebTorrent, told CCN. He added:

So you can think of the relationship between WebTorrent and blockchains the same as you think of BitTorrent and blockchains. Basically, the two P2P technologies are often complementary, as we’ve seen in Web2Web (a WebTorrent project), and other projects like it. For example, ZeroNet uses BitTorrent and bitcoin to create free and uncensorable websites.

Aboukhadijeh also built PeerCDN, a peer-to-peer content delivery network (CDN) to make sites faster and cheaper.

PeerCDN is a next-generation CDN powered by WebRTC for efficient peer-to-peer delivery of website content. PeerCDN was founded by Aboukhadijeh, Abi Raja, and John Hiesey in March 2013 and was sold to Yahoo in December 2013.

WebTorrent Is Free

Unlike PeerCDN, WebTorrent is free software, licensed under the MIT (<https://www.cryptocoinsnews.com/tag/mit/>) License.

On a technical level, PeerCDN and WebTorrent were built with different goals in mind, Aboukhadijeh said. “PeerCDN was optimized for low-latency downloads and fast peer discovery,” he said. “This meant the client and site owner trusted centralized servers to map file URLs to content hashes.”

WebTorrent, on the other hand, doesn’t require clients to trust a centralized server. “Given a torrent file or magnet link, the WebTorrent client downloads the file without trusting servers or peers at any point,” he said.

Netflix Explores WebTorrent

Netflix has already shown interest in WebTorrent.

“It was pretty cool to show off WebTorrent at Netflix headquarters,” Aboukhadijeh said. “They were really interested in the possibility of WebTorrent to help during peak hours when everyone is watching Netflix and the uplink to ISPs like Comcast gets completely saturated. WebTorrent could help by letting Comcast subscribers share data amongst themselves without needing to traverse the congested Comcast-Netflix internet exchange.”

Peer-Assisted Delivery

One of the more exciting WebTorrent uses is peer-assisted delivery, according to its [website \(https://webtorrent.io/\)](https://webtorrent.io/). Non-profit projects like the Internet Archive and Wikipedia could cut hosting costs and bandwidth by letting visitors contribute. Popular content is served browser-to-browser, fast and cheaply. Rarely-accessed content is sent over HTTP from the origin server.

There are also business use cases, from CDNs to app delivery.

The WebTorrent website lists several ways it's being used, including colored coins, an open protocol for creating digital assets in the blockchain, and “tokenly pockets,” digital token issuance with Webtorrent-based metadata.

Also read: [BitTorrent moves to decentralize the web](https://www.cryptocoinsnews.com/bittorrent-moves-decentralize-web/)

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Web2Web WebTorrent Project

The Web2Web project, powered by WebTorrent and bitcoin, allows anyone to create updatable, resilient websites, according to [torrentfreak](https://torrentfreak.com/web2web-serverless-websites-powered-by-torrents-bitcoin-161008/) (<https://torrentfreak.com/web2web-serverless-websites-powered-by-torrents-bitcoin-161008/>). Web2Web is a server-less and domain-less website, according to its GitHub site (<https://github.com/elendirx/web2web>).

The Web2Web GitHub site noted websites get seized by losing control over a webserver or a domain. By replacing both the webserver and the domain with torrents and blockchain, there's nothing left to seize.

When you open index.html in the browser, here's what happens:

1. The bitcoin address 1DhDyqB4xgDWjZzfbYGeutqdqBhSF7tGt4 is searched for the latest outgoing transaction containing OP_RETURN script. Inside the script there is a torrent infohash of webpage.html.
2. The webpage.html is downloaded from torrent via WebTorrent and displayed.

To perform serverless updates, torrent of the updated webpage.html is created and its infohash is inserted into new bitcoin transaction sent from the 1DhDyqB4xgDWjZzfbYGeutqdqBhSF7tGt4 address.

Users will be able to sign up by sending small amounts of bitcoin to the bitcoin address.

It will be possible to build serverless, e-commerce websites using bitcoin payments, the website noted. Users can create a distributed web page at the Web2Web gateway.

Featured image from iStock.

Tags: bittorrent (<https://www.cryptocoinsnews.com/tag/bittorrent/>),
Feross Aboukhadijeh (<https://www.cryptocoinsnews.com/tag/feross-aboukhadijeh/>)
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Elliot Maras
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Elliot Maras has reported on the payments industry and financial services for trade publications and websites for several years. He is based in Cleveland, Ohio.



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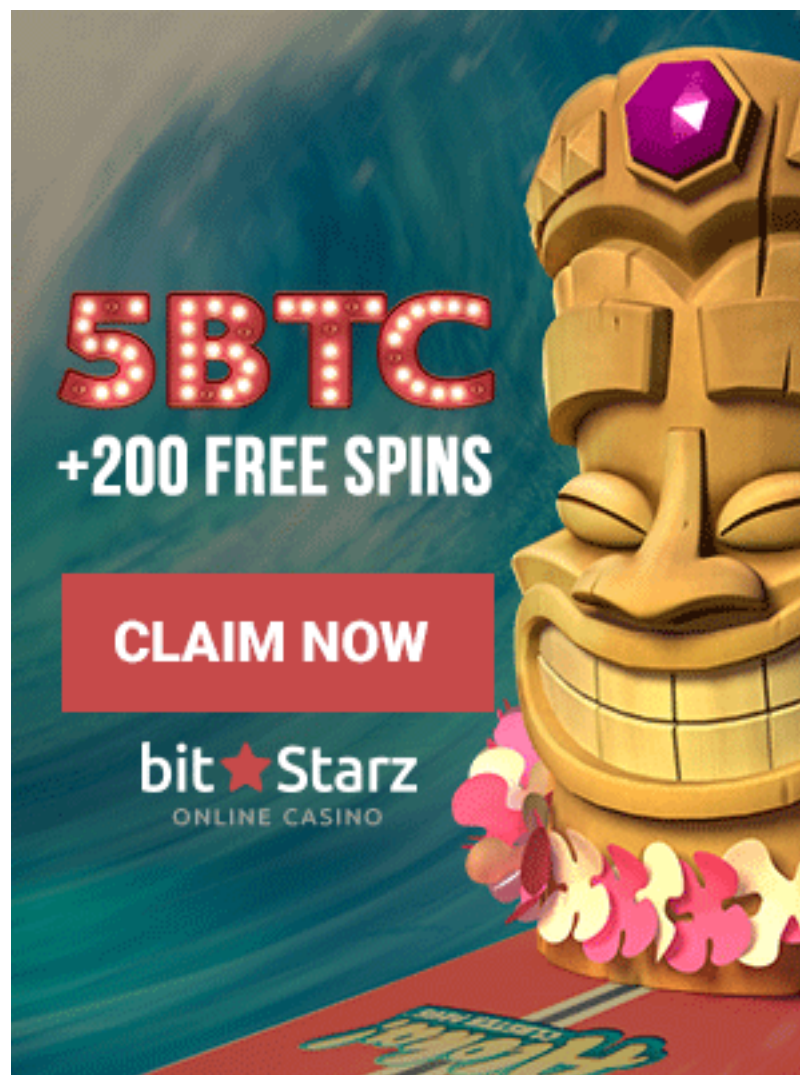


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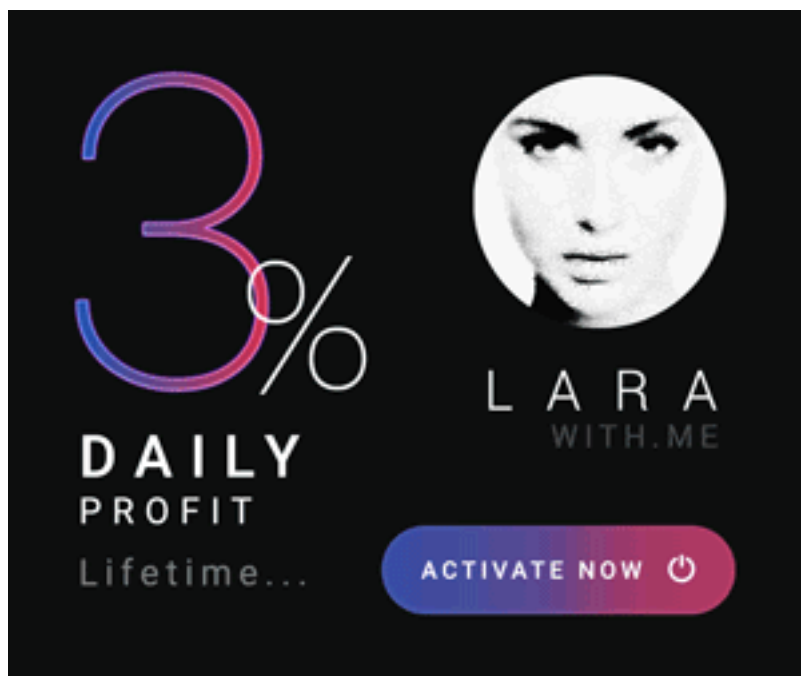


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