



Accept Bitcoin at Your Business

A practical guide for local RVA business owners

Bitcoin isn't just for tech people anymore. Over 65 million Americans own it, and they want to spend it. This guide covers everything you need to know — what it is, why it matters for your bottom line, and how to start accepting it today with tools you may already have.

Why Accept Bitcoin?

0%

Processing fees
(Square, thru 2027)

0

Chargebacks
ever

Instant

Settlement
via Lightning

66M+

American
crypto owners

Save Money

- Credit cards cost you 2.5–3.5% per transaction
- Bitcoin Lightning payments: 0% on Square (through 2027), pennies elsewhere
- No chargeback fraud — Bitcoin payments are final
- No monthly gateway fees with self-hosted options

Grow Your Business

- Attract a loyal, tech-savvy customer base
- Stand out from competitors — most local businesses don't accept Bitcoin yet
- Get listed on btcmapping.org (Bitcoin's Yelp — 10K+ listed merchants)
- Free marketing: Bitcoiners actively seek out and promote Bitcoin-friendly businesses

Real talk: You don't have to "believe in" Bitcoin to benefit from accepting it. You can auto-convert every payment to dollars instantly. Think of it as another payment method — one that costs you less than credit cards.

How Bitcoin Payments Actually Work

Bitcoin transactions at a business work a lot like scanning a QR code to pay — because that's exactly what happens:

- 1 Customer is ready to pay.** Your POS shows a QR code (or you display one on a tablet/phone).
- 2 Customer scans with their Bitcoin wallet** (Cash App, Strike, Coinbase, or any Lightning wallet) and confirms payment.
- 3 Payment arrives in seconds** via the Lightning Network — Bitcoin's fast payment layer.
- 4 You receive funds** in Bitcoin, US dollars, or a mix — your choice. No waiting. No holds.

⚡ What is the Lightning Network? A layer built on top of Bitcoin that makes payments nearly instant and almost free. Think of it like how Venmo sits on top of your bank — Lightning sits on top of Bitcoin but moves at internet speed.

Choose Your Setup

There's no one-size-fits-all. Here are the three most popular options, from easiest to most sovereign:

Option 1: Square (Easiest)

Best for: Businesses already using Square POS

- Turn on Bitcoin Payments in your Square Dashboard — no new hardware needed
- **0% processing fees through 2027**
- Auto-convert to USD or hold Bitcoin — your choice
- Works on Square Terminal, POS app, Online Store, and Invoices
- Same reporting and reconciliation you're used to

Get started: squareup.com/us/en/bitcoin

Option 2: BTCPay Server (Most Sovereign)

Best for: Businesses that want full control, no middleman

- Free, open-source software — no company controls it
- Self-hosted: you run it, you own the keys, you control the funds
- No KYC, no account approval, no fees to anyone
- Integrates with WooCommerce, Shopify, and custom POS setups
- Requires some technical setup (or hire someone to set it up for you)

Learn more: btcpayserver.org

Option 3: Third-Party Processors

Best for: Quick setup without existing Square infrastructure

- **Strike** — 0% merchant processing fees, instant USD conversion (strike.me/business)
- **Speed** — Bitcoin payment processor with POS integrations (speed.dev)
- **Zaprite** — Invoicing and payments for businesses (zaprite.com)

Side-by-Side Comparison

	Credit Cards	Square Bitcoin	BTCPay Server
Processing Fee	2.6% + 10¢	0% (thru 2027)	0% (always)
Chargebacks	Yes (costly)	None	None
Settlement Speed	1-3 business days	Instant	Instant
Auto-Convert to USD	N/A	Yes	Via plugin
Hardware Needed	Card terminal	Existing Square	Any device
KYC Required	Yes	Yes	No
Self-Custody Option	No	No (Square holds)	Yes (your keys)
Setup Difficulty	Easy	Easy	Moderate

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to hold Bitcoin? What if the price drops?

No. Every option above lets you auto-convert to US dollars instantly. You get paid in dollars, the customer pays in Bitcoin. Zero price risk on your end.

Is it legal?

Yes. Bitcoin is legal in all 50 states. The IRS treats it as property. For tax purposes, if you auto-convert to USD, it's recorded just like any other sale.

Will anyone actually use it?

Over 65 million Americans own crypto. Bitcoiners actively seek out businesses that accept it and become fiercely loyal customers. Many communities maintain maps of Bitcoin-accepting businesses.

What about taxes?

If you auto-convert to USD, it's straightforward — same as a regular sale. If you hold Bitcoin, gains/losses are tracked when you eventually sell. Your accountant can handle this; it's well-established now.

Is it hard to set up?

If you use Square, it's a settings toggle. Other options take 15-30 minutes. It's genuinely easier than setting up a new card terminal.

What do my customers need?

Any Bitcoin Lightning wallet. Cash App, Strike, Coinbase, Wallet of Satoshi, Phoenix — there are dozens. Most people who own Bitcoin already have a wallet.

What about the energy/environmental concerns?

Over 50% of Bitcoin mining uses renewable energy sources. It's the only payment network where energy sourcing is transparently discussed. Visa, Mastercard, and the banking system don't publish their energy footprint.

Can I start small?

Absolutely. Many businesses start by just putting a QR code by the register. No need to change your entire payment system. Add it alongside what you already do.

Get Listed — Let Bitcoin Customers Find You

Once you're accepting Bitcoin, get on the map — literally:

- **BTC Map** (btcmapp.org) — The go-to directory for Bitcoin-accepting businesses worldwide. Free to list.
- **Yelp / Google** — Add "accepts Bitcoin" or "accepts cryptocurrency" to your business description.
- **Social media** — Post about it. Bitcoin Twitter/X will amplify it. Use #Bitcoin and #PayWithBitcoin.

Pro tip: A simple "Bitcoin Accepted Here" sticker in your window generates curiosity and conversation. It signals that your business is forward-thinking and customer-friendly.

 **Share this guide:** Know another business owner who should see this? Send them rvabitcoin.com/payment-acceptance-guide

Resources & Links

Setup & Tools

- Square Bitcoin: squareup.com/us/en/bitcoin
- BTCPay Server: btcpayserver.org
- Strike Business: strike.me/business
- BTC Map: btcmap.org

Learn More

- [Bitcoin.org](https://bitcoin.org) — Beginner's guide
- Bitcoin Design Guide: bitcoin.design
- Square's Getting Started Guide: squareup.com/.../getting-started-with-bitcoin-on-square

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Have questions? Want help setting up? Reach out — happy to walk you through it.

"Fix the money, fix the world."