

Digital Assets:

Large-Scale Products and Investment Setting up for 2026

This edition focuses on the pivotal developments in December 2025 that signal a shift toward large-scale product integration and investment in digital assets, setting the stage for 2026 as a year of convergence between traditional finance and blockchain ecosystems. Core themes include enhanced utility, cash flows, and cross-network collaborations, highlighted by key announcements such as the UAE's significant Bitcoin investments, Ripple's conditional national trust bank charter, Figure Technologies' onchain equity issuance on Solana, XRP's expansion to Solana, Ethereum's Fusaka upgrade, and major institutional launches at the Solana Breakpoint conference, all underscoring maturing regulatory clarity and real-world applications.

The key announcements in December:

1. UAE is Buying Millions in Bitcoin and Names Bitcoin as 'Key Pillar in Future Finance' December 8th, 2025¹

In a speech at Bitcoin MENA, Mohammed Al Shamsi, representing UAE National Security, said Bitcoin is no longer merely a "digital asset," but is now recognized as a "key pillar" in modern financing. The Abu Dhabi Investment Council (ADIC) increased its Bitcoin exposure in the third quarter of 2025, more than tripling its stake in the largest Bitcoin ETF to nearly 8 million shares, valued at \$518 million as of December 8th.

2. XRP: Ripple's Conditional OCC Approval for National Trust Bank Charter December 12th, 2025²

The U.S. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) granted Ripple Labs Inc. conditional approval to establish Ripple National Trust Bank (RNTB), a de novo (newly chartered) national trust bank. RNTB will operate as a limited-purpose national trust bank, emphasizing fiduciary services like digital asset custody, reserve management for Ripple's RLUSD stablecoin, and institutional payments/settlement infrastructure. This is preliminary approval only; final charter requires meeting pre-opening conditions, including capital adequacy (e.g., minimum Tier 1 capital), robust risk management, governance frameworks, AML/KYC compliance, and insurance.

Implications:

- ① **Boosted Institutional Adoption and Utility for XRP:** With federal charter status, Ripple can offer regulated custody and settlement services, integrating XRP more seamlessly into cross-border payments and treasury operations. Investors may see increased demand for XRP as it supports RLUSD and other institutional use cases, especially if Fed master account access (for direct Fedwire/FedNow settlements) is granted by Q2–Q3 2026—eroding competitors' moats like Circle's USDC or Tether's USDT.
- ② **Enhanced Regulatory Credibility and Risk Reduction:** The OCC's oversight adds a layer of federal supervision, building on Ripple's SEC victory, which could attract more institutional inflows. For investors, this mitigates risks from regulatory uncertainty, potentially stabilizing XRP's price and fostering long-term growth amid broader crypto-Traditional Finance (TradFi) convergence.
- ③ **Potential for Value Accrual and Market Momentum:** As Ripple becomes a "crypto-native bank," XRP holders gain indirect exposure to a compliant entity with banking privileges, which could drive scarcity (e.g., via escrow locks) and upside potential.

Ripple's conditional OCC approval for Ripple National Trust Bank on December 12, 2025, represents a landmark advancement in integrating blockchain with traditional banking, enabling enhanced custody, stablecoin management, and payment services under federal oversight. For XRP investors, this bolsters the token's institutional utility, reduces regulatory risks, and paves the way for greater demand and potential price appreciation, positioning Ripple as a compliant bridge between crypto and finance in a maturing market.

3. Figure Technologies (FIGR) Files “Second Initial Public Offering (IPO)” to Bring Native Equity Issuance to Solana

December 12th, 2025

Figure Technologies, a public company that followed a traditional Nasdaq IPO process in September 2025 (ticker: FIGR, raised ~\$787 million), announced a groundbreaking development that it filed for a second public offering aimed at issuing native equity directly on the Solana public blockchain. Executive Chairman and co-founder Mike Cagney revealed that the company had submitted a second S-1 registration statement to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)³. The filing itself was submitted confidentially in November 2025, with a public announcement on November 17, but the high-profile reveal at the Solana Breakpoint conference emphasized its blockchain-native aspects.

This “second IPO” or secondary offering aims to issue a new class of blockchain-native equity shares directly on public blockchains, starting with Solana (with plans to expand to Ethereum and Avalanche).

Unlike the company’s existing Nasdaq-listed shares, these would be minted, issued, traded, and settled entirely onchain via Figure’s regulated Alternative Trading System (ATS), functioning effectively as a decentralized exchange. The proposed offering would have no reliance on traditional intermediaries: Bypasses stock exchanges (e.g., Nasdaq), brokers (e.g., Robinhood), or prime brokers (e.g., Goldman Sachs).

Implications:

- ① **Transforms Equity Markets with DeFi Integration:** By enabling onchain trading, instant settlement, and DeFi composability (e.g., using shares as collateral), it bypasses legacy systems, potentially lowering costs, increasing 24/7 accessibility, and unlocking new yield opportunities for investors—bridging TradFi and DeFi in a regulated way.
- ② **Boosts Solana’s Institutional and Real - Word Assets Ecosystem:** Choosing Solana for high throughput and low fees positions as a hub for tokenized securities, attracting institutions (e.g., alongside J.P. Morgan and State Street at Breakpoint). This could accelerate real-world asset (RWA) adoption, with Figure’s consortium standardizing processes and driving ecosystem growth.
- ③ **Establishes Regulatory Precedent for Tokenized Assets:** SEC approval would validate blockchain-native securities, reducing intermediaries and fostering innovation in capital markets. It could inspire other companies to follow, shifting toward decentralized, transparent systems amid favorable U.S. regulatory shifts under the Trump administration.

Figure Technologies’ onchain IPO announcement heralds blockchain’s integration with capital markets, issuing native tokenized shares on Solana for instant settlement and DeFi use. It bypasses intermediaries, boosts accessibility and efficiency, elevates Solana in RWAs, and sets a regulatory precedent. Approval could speed TradFi-crypto convergence and spur equity trading innovation.

4. XRP is Coming to Solana: Expanding XRP’s Utility Across Multiple Blockchains

December 12, 2025

Hex Trust, a regulated digital asset custodian, partnered with LayerZero, a cross-chain interoperability protocol, to launch a wrapped XRP token (\$wXRP) on the Solana blockchain. This token is backed 1:1 by native XRP held in institutional-grade custody and is fully redeemable at any time for the original XRP on the XRP Ledger (XRPL)⁴.

Long-term, it could boost overall XRP demand by integrating its deep liquidity into thriving ecosystems, fostering collaborations (e.g., RWA tokenizations, payments-DeFi hybrids) and reducing reliance on the XRP Ledger alone for growth.

Implications:

- ① **Enhances Institutional Adoption Through Regulated Security:** Hex Trust's licensed custody (with insurance, audits, and compliance), wXRP mitigates common bridge hack risks and appeals to institutions positions XRP as a compliant, multi-chain asset for institutional strategies (e.g., pairing with RLUSD for stable yields), bridging traditional finance into high-performance DeFi without full exposure to volatile native tokens.
- ② **Unlocks DeFi Participation and New Use Cases for XRP Holders:** XRP's strength has historically been in fast, low-cost cross-border settlements on the XRPL, but DeFi activity there remains limited compared to Solana's high-throughput ecosystem (billions in monthly decentralized exchange volume). wXRP enables holders to deploy their assets in Solana's lending protocols, liquidity pools, perpetuals, and yield strategies without selling or bridging risks typical of unregulated wrappers. This directly increases XRP's utility, potentially driving organic demand as users wrap more native XRP to access higher yields and trading opportunities.
- ③ **Public Blockchain Network Liquidity:** In a multi-chain world, this positions XRP as a more versatile asset, potentially increasing its relevance amid competition from faster chains.

This supports Ripple's vision of "XRP everywhere," making it more competitive in a fragmented crypto landscape where liquidity and accessibility drive value. It is more about sustainable utility expansion. It's a regulated, high-liquidity bridge that brings XRP into modern DeFi without forcing holders to sell or take undue risks.

5. Ethereum (ETH) Fusaka Upgrade - Enhancing Scalability

December 3, 2025

The Fusaka upgrade represents a key milestone in Ethereum's development, ushering in a roadmap defined by well-articulated strategic goals. This evolution reflects a growing sophistication in Ethereum's governance, transitioning from disjointed decision processes to a streamlined and unified approach to protocol advancement.

For ETH investors, it stands out as potentially the most impactful development in years, ushering in a transformative phase where ETH evolves into a revenue-generating, financially robust asset.

Implications:

- ① **Dramatic L2 Scaling and Fee Reductions:** Fusaka boosts blob capacity and throughput, slashing L2 transaction costs by 60–95% and enabling smoother, higher-volume apps. Cheaper fees drive adoption (e.g., more DeFi, gaming), increasing network activity and ETH demand; analysts predict this could spark a rally mirroring post-Pectra (earlier Ethereum fork) gains⁵.
- ② **Improved Value Capture and Deflationary Pressure:** The blob fee floor and higher activity enhance EIP-1559 fee burns, potentially creating a supply crunch with 23%+ of ETH staked. This acts like Ethereum's "most important value capture since EIP-1559," reducing circulating supply and supporting price upside amid low exchange reserves (16.8M ETH, a 5-year low); long-term, it positions ETH as a cash-flowing asset with scarcity-driven gains.
- ③ **Enhanced Decentralization and User Accessibility:** Lower (node) requirements foster more validators, while biometric support simplifies onboarding. A more resilient, user-friendly network attracts mainstream adoption, boosting ETH's competitiveness (vs. Solana) and investor confidence; this could amplify staking yields and reduce risks from centralization, aiding long-term valuation in 2026.

The Fusaka upgrade represents a transformative milestone for Ethereum, optimizing scalability through enhanced data availability and blob capacity, while bolstering pricing power via fee mechanisms and aligning incentives across users, validators, and developers. For ETH investors, this could herald a new era of value accrual, with potential deflationary pressures from increased fee burns and L2 adoption driving long-term price appreciation, making it one of the most investor-relevant developments in years amid Ethereum's push toward mass scalability.

6. Notable Announcements at the Solana Breakpoint Conference

December 11-13, 2025

The Solana Breakpoint conference is the annual flagship event for the Solana ecosystem, organized by the Solana Foundation. The 2025 edition emphasized a product-focused approach with real launches, technical breakthroughs, and business outcomes including:

- ① **J.P. Morgan U.S. Commercial Paper:** In a historic move, J.P. Morgan arranged a U.S. commercial paper issuance for Galaxy Digital on Solana. By executing this on a public mainnet rather than a private ledger, J.P. Morgan validated the thesis that public chains like Solana offer superior liquidity and settlement guarantees.
- ② **State Street:** State Street (Approximately \$50 trillion assets in custody) announced plans to launch the State Street Galaxy Onchain Liquidity Sweep Fund (SWEET), a tokenized private liquidity fund on Solana in early 2026. This tokenized money market fund will allow 24/7 subscriptions and redemptions via PayPal's PYUSD. It's the first for a Global Systemically Important Bank.

Summary

December 2025 showcased transformative momentum in digital assets, with the UAE tripling its Bitcoin ETF stake and declaring it a financial pillar, Ripple gaining conditional OCC approval for a national trust bank to boost XRP's institutional utility, Figure Technologies filing for blockchain-native equity on Solana to revolutionize capital markets, wXRP bridging XRP to Solana for DeFi access, Ethereum's Fusaka upgrade driving L2 scalability and value capture, and Solana Breakpoint featuring J.P. Morgan's commercial paper issuance and State Street's tokenized fund. These milestones, amid regulatory progress and technological integrations, position digital assets for mainstream adoption, offering investors opportunities in diversification, yield, and efficient financial infrastructure as crypto evolves into a core component of global finance.

¹ <https://bitcoinmagazine.com/news/uaes-hails-btc-as-a-key-future-finance>

² <https://occ.gov/news-issuances/news-releases/2025/nr-occ-2025-125.html>

³ <https://solana.com/news/solana-breakpoint-2025>

⁴ <https://www.hextrust.com/resources-collection/hex-trust-to-issue-and-custody-wrapped-xrp-wxrp#>

⁵ <https://www.investing.com/analysis/fusaka-upgrade-pushes-ethereum-toward-its-next-scaling-phase-200670988>

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including high volatility, lack of regulation, cybersecurity incidents, theft or loss, developmental risk, and the potential for competing platforms or technologies. The technology is new and many uses may be untested. Investments concentrated in a single industry, such as blockchain, may exhibit higher volatility and be more vulnerable to factors affecting that industry.

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