



SurBitcoin Launches First Bitcoin Exchange in Venezuela

By Diana Ngo
August 19, 2014

SurBitcoin, the first Bitcoin exchange platform in Venezuela, announced its launch on August 15 during the Impact Hub Caracas Bitcoin conference.

According to the PanamPost, New-York-based brothers Kevin and Victor Charles, decided to start this project after a meeting with Rodrigo Souza, a native Brazilian software developer and entrepreneur based in NY.

Souza co-founded BlinkTrade, an open-source Bitcoin trading platform that enables anyone to create his/her own exchange with a counterparty 0.6% transaction fee.

SurBitcoin uses BlinkTrade's open-source exchange platform. The project is still at a beta version, but Venezuelans can already register on the platform. The two brothers are waiting for the member database to reach 200 users before starting trades. Kevin Charles said:

"We are very excited to move forward with this project. Bitcoin has potential to grow in Venezuela."

In Venezuela, Bitcoin's popularity is growing, and the digital currency's volatility is not a cause for concern for its population as inflation reached 142% between 2013 and 2014, according to a study conducted by the Cato Institute called The Troubled Currencies Project. Also, the brothers estimate that 70% of Venezuelans are unbanked and believe that Bitcoin could considerably help improve living conditions.

Unlike Bolivia and Ecuador, Venezuela's government hasn't taken a position on Bitcoin, and the two brothers truly believe the future of cryptocurrencies in the country depends on the conduct of SurBitcoin:

"We have to be extremely transparent and thorough in checking users who open an account with us. We will take money-laundering regulations into account, so that drug traffickers cannot use our platform."

The exchange requires users to provide their ID and physical address. The personal information is verified through Venezuela's electoral registry and only then the accounts are activated and ready for trading with cryptocurrency.