ACI Worldwide to Add Microservices Card Switching to ACI Connetic for Cards via Acquisition of Cranium Ventures

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ACI will incorporate Cranium Ventures' microservices-based card switching framework into ACI Connetic for Cards.

OMAHA, Neb.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 1, 2026-- ACI Worldwide (NASDAQ: ACIW), an original innovator in global payments technology, today announced it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Cranium Ventures, a privately held developer of cloud-native card payment switching technology. The technology will be added to ACI Connetic for Cards, which ACI launched in March 2026.

ACI Connetic is the platform behind ACI's intelligent payments orchestration strategy, introduced in 2025 as the industry's first unified cloud-native platform bringing account-to-account payments, card payments and AI-powered fraud prevention onto a single architecture. ACI's acquiring, issuing, ATM and self-service banking solutions process more than 300 billion card transactions annually. The acquisition accelerates ACI's existing Connetic for Cards roadmap, bringing planned card switching capabilities to market sooner.

Purchase transactions on the global card networks are projected to reach more than 1.1 trillion in 2029, a 43 percent increase over 2024. At the same time, institutions are running more payment rails in parallel, and card authorization at many banks and processors still relies on architecture designed before cloud computing was an option. A common modernization approach has been to wrap an existing switch in new interfaces rather than rebuild what runs underneath. ACI built ACI Connetic to address that directly.

Founded in 2018 in the United Kingdom, Cranium Ventures has key operations in Singapore and Malaysia and developed SYNAP, a microservices-based card switching framework that runs in cloud, on-premises and hybrid environments. Under the agreement, ACI will acquire Cranium Ventures' technology, intellectual property and commercial relationships, and Cranium co-founders Ashraf Dimitri and Tony Horrell will join ACI, bringing decades of experience delivering payment switching technology to financial institutions and processors worldwide. Dimitri founded Oasis Technology in 1989 and was a lead architect of IST/Switch, a global payment switch. Horrell has founded and exited multiple payment industry companies and has also held senior roles at leading payments technology companies, including Visa, First Data, and ACI Worldwide. Cranium's broader technical team also brings experience implementing and operating SYNAP, including at two of the world's largest processors.

"Card processing is one of the hardest modernization problems left in payments, and we have been working on it for years," said Thomas Warsop, President and Chief Executive Officer, ACI Worldwide. "Financial institutions need more than a switch. They need intelligence embedded throughout the payment lifecycle, and that is what we built ACI Connetic to deliver. ACI Connetic for Cards is already in market, and Cranium Ventures moves that work forward faster. It will further strengthen our competitive position in cloud-native switching and payment solutions, consistent with our focus on expanding our strategic growth platform."

"Modern switching has to hold up in environments where the tolerance for failure is close to zero. That is what we built for," said Tony Horrell, Chief Executive Officer, Cranium Ventures.

"We set out to answer whether a microservices switch could hold up under the volumes and the certification demands that real card processing puts on it, and we put it into production," said Ashraf Dimitri, Chief Technology Officer, Cranium Ventures.

Financial terms were not disclosed. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and approvals and is expected to close in the third quarter of 2026. ACI will support Cranium Ventures' existing SYNAP customers following close.

Source for global card purchase transaction projections: The Nilson Report, January 2025.

About ACI Worldwide

ACI Worldwide, an original innovator in global payments technology, delivers transformative software solutions that power intelligent payments orchestration in real time so banks, billers, and merchants can drive growth, while continuously modernizing their payment infrastructures, simply and securely. With more than 50 years of trusted payments expertise, we combine our global footprint with a local presence to offer enhanced payment experiences to stay ahead of constantly changing payment challenges and opportunities.

About Cranium Ventures

Cranium Ventures develops SYNAP, a microservices-based card payment switching framework for banks, processors and payment service providers. The company has operations in the United Kingdom, Singapore and Malaysia.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements based on current expectations that involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Generally, forward-looking statements do not relate strictly to historical or current facts and may include words or phrases such as "believes," "will," "expects," "anticipates," "intends," and words and phrases of similar impact. The forward-looking statements are made pursuant to safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

Forward-looking statements in this press release include, but are not limited to, (i) expectations that the transaction will close in the third quarter of 2026, (ii) expectations regarding the acquisition of Cranium Ventures' technology, intellectual property and commercial relationships, (iii) expectations that Cranium Ventures' co-founders will join ACI, (iv) expectations that Cranium Ventures' technology will be incorporated into ACI Connetic for Cards, (v) expectations that the transaction will accelerate ACI's Connetic for Cards roadmap and bring planned card switching capabilities to market sooner, (vi) expectations regarding the capabilities of Cranium Ventures' technology, (vii) expectations that ACI will support Cranium Ventures' existing SYNAP customers following close, and (viii) expectations regarding projected growth in global card purchase transactions and demand on payment authorization infrastructure. All of the foregoing forward-looking statements are expressly qualified by the risk factors discussed in our filings with the

Securities and Exchange Commission.

Media
Katrin Boettger, Communications & Corporate Affairs Director, ACI Worldwide, katrin.boettger@aciworldwide.com

Investors
John Kraft, SVP, Head of Strategy and Finance, ACI Worldwide, john.kraft@aciworldwide.com

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