

CRYPTO OTC MARKETS

2025 results & trends

An institutional trading analysis by Finery  Markets

Contents

I. Executive summary

II. Methodology

III. Key 2025 growth metrics (YoY)

IV. 2025 wrap-up

V. Crypto OTC 2025 results & trends

VI. CEXs, DEXs, and OTC: 2024-2025 dynamics

VII. Stablecoins

VIII. Institutional flow breakdown

Appendix 1: The market design edge in the \$20B crypto liquidation crisis: A case study

I. Executive summary

1. Crypto OTC markets performed stronger than expected.

Crypto spot OTC markets posted 109% YoY growth in 2025, significantly exceeding industry forecasts of 10-60% made at the start of the year¹. This expansion was propelled by technological advancements that reduced costs, freed up working capital, and improved institutional accessibility through TradFi-style infrastructure.

2. Connectivity to OTC infrastructure proved critical during the major market crash of the year.

On October 10-12, 2025, nearly \$20 billion in crypto assets were liquidated over 48 hours alongside a stablecoin depeg event. While CEX order books amplified panic through visible liquidation cascades, OTC private rooms absorbed volatility through off-screen liquidity and bilateral pricing.

3. Stablecoins became the undisputed leader in institutional flow.

As a leading ICT provider for the digital asset space, Finery Markets has become the foundational infrastructure for the stablecoin surge. In 2025, stablecoins accounted for 78% of all OTC transactions processed through our liquidity network—a massive leap from 26% in 2023. This threefold increase in just 24 months underscores our role in providing the resilient connectivity required for institutional-grade stablecoin adoption.

4. OTC emerged as a new growth engine for institutional crypto adoption.

While top-20 CEX volumes showed moderate growth of 9%² and activity experienced high-amplitude volatility, OTC markets demonstrated consistent compound growth throughout 2024-2025. This structural shift signals market maturation: institutional adoption is no longer dependent on CEX-driven growth alone.

5. Market infrastructure fragmentation presents the next critical challenge.

As stablecoin issuers proliferate across blockchains, market fragmentation and systemic risk escalate proportionately. A depegging event for one stablecoin could trigger a widespread run on issuers, as demonstrated during the October crisis. For any stablecoin to achieve widespread utility, it must be supported by a robust market infrastructure ensuring strong secondary liquidity.

¹ According to "Crypto OTC trading report 2024" by Finery Markets

² Source: The Block

II. Methodology

This report examines crypto OTC market performance across 2024–2025, a formative period for institutional crypto adoption.

The analysis is based on over 15 million institutional spot crypto trades executed on the Finery Markets platform between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2025.

Our proprietary data reflects activity from a diverse range of participants, including market makers, payment providers, brokers, OTC desks, hedge funds, and custodians.

The findings presented in this report are based on this sample and highlight aggregated trading behavior, volume distribution, and key market trends.

III. Key 2025 growth metrics (YoY)

TOTAL CRYPTO SPOT OTC VOLUME:

+109%

OTC TRANSACTION COUNT:

+100%

STABLECOIN VOLUME:

+119%



ETH VOLUME:

+152%

BTC VOLUME:

+86%

Finery Markets' Referral Program

Swift Process. Better Rewards. Lasting Value.

[Calculate Your Rewards](#)

IV. 2025 wrap-up

When crypto finds its economic historian—and, hopefully, a meticulous and even-handed one—the 2024-2025 period will likely be marked as the period when the true institutional story began.

The green light for ETFs ignited the move. From that point forward, crypto went full throttle across business, regulatory, and technological fronts. Institution-grade CEX, DEX, and OTC segments sustained prolonged periods of triple-digit growth.

The nascent 'picks-and-shovels' era gave way to the rollout of institutional-grade infrastructure, underpinned by pro-crypto legislation, M&A waves, and TradFi taking the front seat.

What once thrived on retail-driven momentum matured into an enterprise-grade asset class. The nascent 'picks-and-shovels' era gave way to the rollout of institutional-grade infrastructure underpinned by pro-crypto legislation, M&A waves, and TradFi taking the front seat.

As always with crypto, the pace exceeded even the boldest projections. Finally, crypto became ready to meet the needs of traditional finance.

2025 intensified these dynamics. Markets reached all-time highs across major digital assets. Tier-1 institutions issued stablecoins and launched tokenized money-market funds. Major crypto firms went public. M&A activity surged nearly fourfold.

But rapid change brought strain. 2025 saw de-pegs, violent swings, and structural failures emerge without warning. Consequently, early 2026 opened under pressure: 24-month lows, evaporating liquidity, and a trillion dollars erased from market cap.

Did 2024-2025 set the bar too high? Or are markets approaching a reversal point?

This review takes a data-first approach to examining key market developments over the past 24 months in search of answers.

V. Crypto OTC 2025 results & trends

Overall, crypto OTC markets performed better than expected. In Feb. 2025, Finery Markets polled key industry stakeholders, including liquidity providers (LPs), market makers, and prime brokers. The majority expected a moderate annual growth range between 10%-60%.

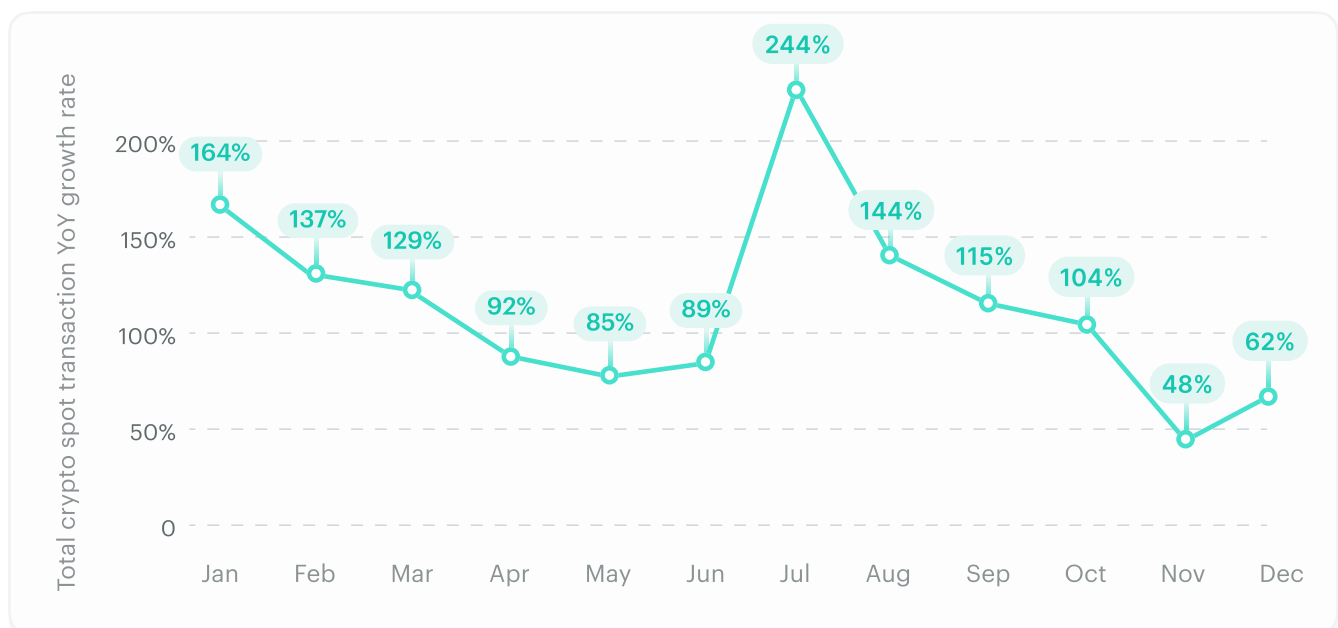
As of Jan. 2026, crypto spot OTC markets posted 109% YoY growth in 2025. However, the figure masks stark segmentation.

OTC markets: 109% YoY growth in 2025. ETH led at 152%, outpacing BTC's 86%.

ETH led asset class performance at 152%, outpacing BTC's 86%, a reversal of traditional dominance patterns. This may reflect broader institutional adoption of Ethereum's layer-2 infrastructure for tokenization and on-chain activity and late-2025 Spot ETF institutional inflows. However, BTC retained first place in total volumes.

Stablecoins grew 119%, reinforcing their role as institutional settlement infrastructure. Crypto-to-stablecoin flows surged 171%, nearly double the 93% increase in crypto-to-fiat conversions.

Crypto spot OTC volume growth, YoY, 2025



VI. CEXs, DEXs, and OTC: 2024-2025 dynamics

Throughout 2024–2025, crypto spot OTC markets showed the steadiest growth. **This was propelled by technological advancements that reduced costs, freed up working capital, expanded available trading regimes, and improved institutional accessibility to digital assets through TradFi-style infrastructure.**

While DEX activity experienced hyper-growth followed by sharp reversals, and CEX volumes entered a contraction phase in 2025, OTC demonstrated comparatively stable compound growth across the cycle.

Institutional adoption is no longer dependent on CEX-driven growth alone. A gradual pivot by institutional players toward off-exchange execution offers operational flexibility and capital efficiency for large-block trading.

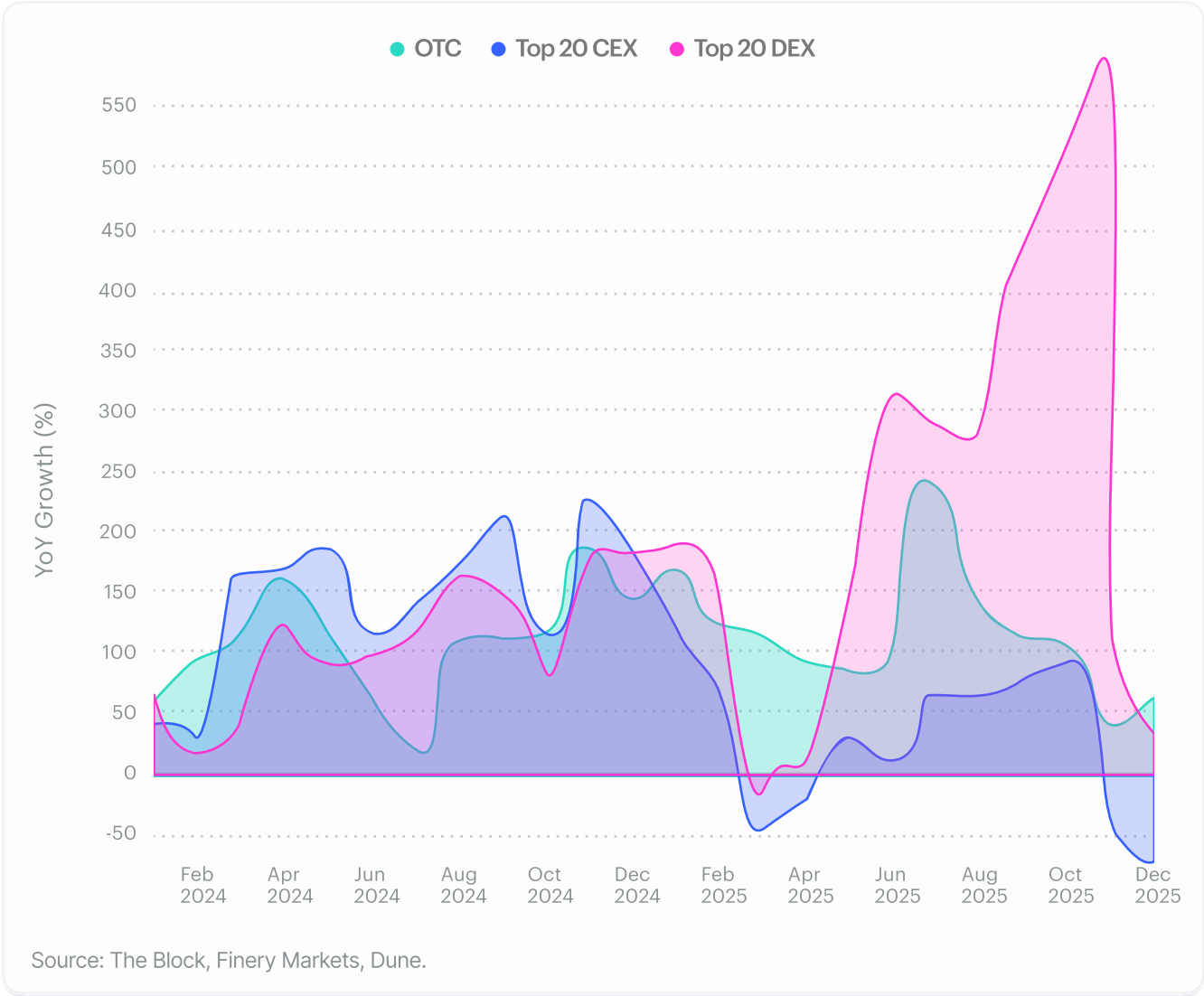
The outsized growth of the OTC segment (+109% YoY) must be viewed as a structural re-alignment of the institutional stack. Rather than simple organic growth, this data reflects a deliberate migration of high-value flow away from legacy exchange models. By shifting volume to OTC private rooms, institutions are effectively 'unbundling' the market—prioritizing execution quality and settlement safety.

Institutional adoption is no longer dependent on CEX-driven growth alone. A gradual pivot by institutional players toward off-exchange execution has offered operational flexibility and capital efficiency for large-block trading.

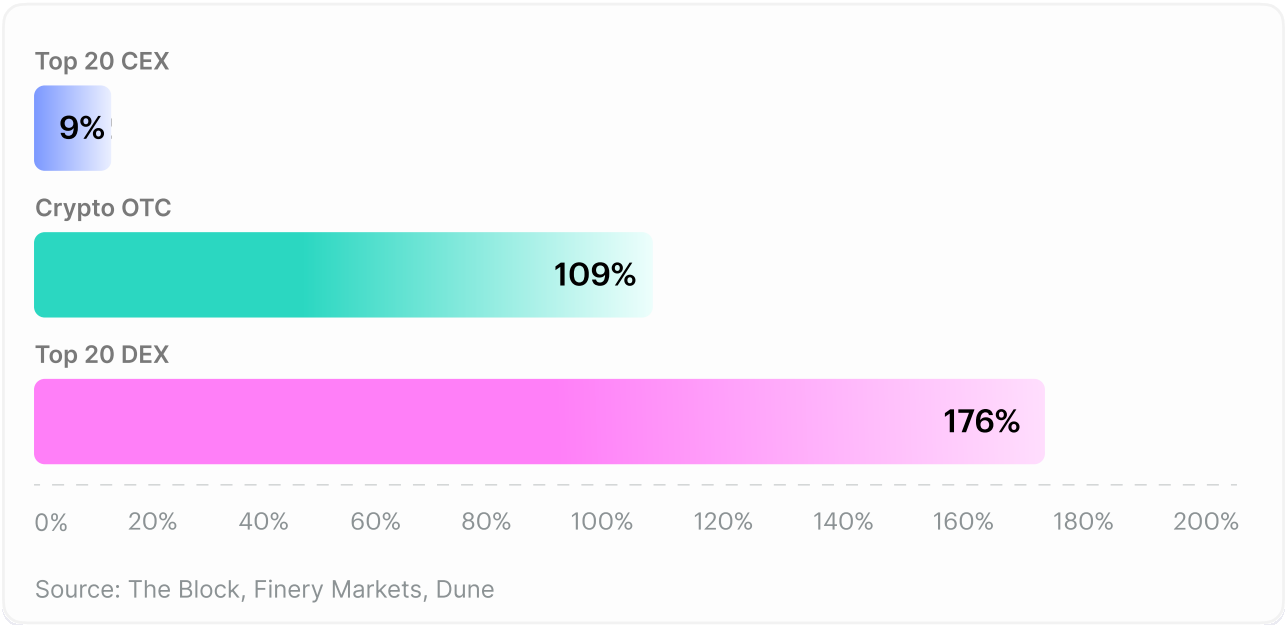
For institutional participants, this comes as no surprise. Similar structural developments emerged during the rise of FX markets.

Crypto spot market dynamics (2024–2025)

CEX vs DEX vs OTC: YoY growth



CEX vs DEX vs OTC: YoY Growth (2025)



VII. Stablecoins

Over the past 24 months, stablecoins have evolved from a niche segment to full dominance in institutional trades.

In 2025, stablecoins accounted for 78% of all OTC trades, up from 26% two years ago. Simultaneously, stablecoin volumes jumped 119% YoY. This expansion aligns with stablecoin supply growing nearly 50% YoY and surpassing \$300 billion by year-end³.

With an increase in stablecoin issuers across blockchains, market fragmentation and risk escalate proportionately. A depegging event for one stablecoin could trigger a widespread run on issuers, significantly amplifying systemic risk.

Their performance showcases stablecoins' prominent role in settlement and bridging on-chain and traditional finance rails, offering remarkable gains in both cost and speed.

Ultimately, stablecoins matured into a dollar-denominated settlement orchestration layer. USDT and USDC dominance is unquestionable at present.

However, as stablecoins have become as ubiquitous as the classic fiat dollar, other players are actively scouting the market. It is reasonable to expect that more local currencies will have stablecoin equivalents on digital rails. Moreover, the market is already flooded with announcements from corporations preparing to launch their own stablecoins.

Though technological feasibility is obvious, market realities will challenge every stablecoin issuer who fails to address the principal, yet typically overlooked issue: secondary market liquidity.

As we wrote in our [Stablecoin Report](#) earlier this year, for any stablecoin to achieve widespread utility and confidence, it must be highly liquid, easily tradable, and legally sound across diverse liquidity pools and various secondary venues.

³ According to DefiLlama data

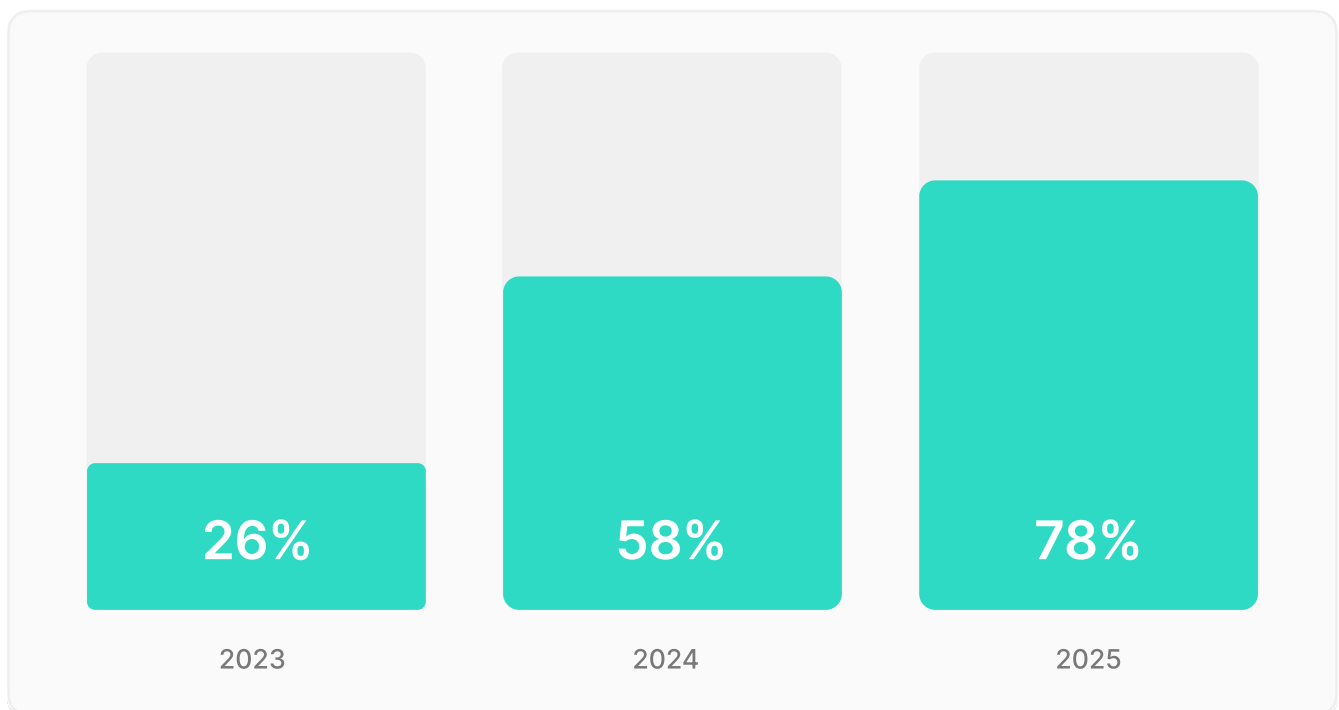
This critical infrastructure includes:

- Trading venues offering a wide array of stablecoin pairs
- Dedicated liquidity providers and market makers facilitating efficient stablecoin-to-crypto and stablecoin-to-fiat markets
- Centralized and DeFi infrastructure equipped with robust collateral management and efficient cross-chain swap capabilities
- Custodians and compliance platforms that safeguard institutions as they enter these sophisticated flows

As stablecoin issuers proliferate across blockchains, market fragmentation and risk escalate proportionately. A depegging event for one stablecoin could trigger a widespread run on issuers, significantly amplifying systemic risk.

The events of Oct. 10-12 illustrated this dynamic. \$20 billion in crypto assets were liquidated over 48 hours, and a stablecoin depeg event occurred. Specifically, the Ethena (USDe) depeg to \$0.65 on Binance served as a stress test for exchange-level oracles. **How secondary market depth helped buffer these shocks and contain depegging risk is detailed in Appendix 1.**

Stablecoin share of total OTC trades (2023–2025).



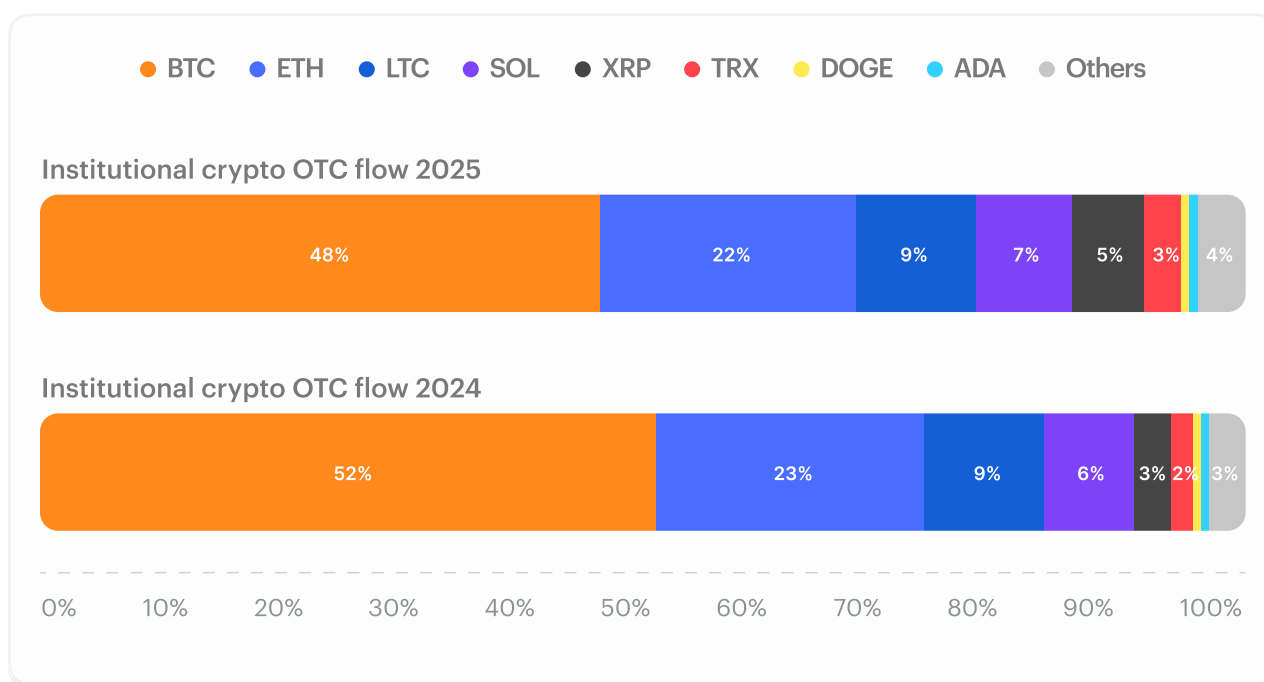
VIII. Institutional crypto flow breakdown

BTC remained the dominant institutional OTC asset in 2025, accounting for 48% of crypto trading volume, down from 52% in 2024. This four-percentage-point decline reflects portfolio diversification rather than reduced activity, given that BTC volumes grew 86% YoY.

ETH held relatively steady at 22% of crypto volume, compared with 23% in 2024. LTC maintained its 9% share across both periods, while SOL expanded to 7% from 6% in 2024.

XRP demonstrated the most significant relative growth, increasing to 5% from 2% in 2024.

Institutional crypto flow, 12M 2025 vs. 12M 2024



Appendix 1:

The market design edge in the \$20B crypto liquidation crisis: a case study

On Oct. 10-12, 2025, \$20 billion in crypto assets were liquidated over 48 hours. Why did OTC infrastructure remain resilient during peak market stress, ensuring operability and large-block trading.

Collateral mispricing and bank-run dynamics

The market crash of October 10-12, 2025 was marked by a massive sell-off and stablecoin depeg event. Institutions faced a critical infrastructure choice.

CEXs with visible order books amplified panic through liquidation cascades, collateral mispricing based on isolated exchange prices, and bank-run dynamics that accelerated during stress events.

The problem wasn't just price dislocations. It was structural fragility that could transform a localized issue into systemic failure. Institutions needed infrastructure that could absorb shocks without broadcasting panic signals across the market.

OTC as a crisis response infrastructure

1. Crisis Detection:

Ethena's USDe stablecoin briefly crashed to \$0.65 on Binance while holding \$0.92 on Bybit, creating collateral evaluation risk. Binance's reliance on its own local spot price for collateral evaluation posed potential for exploited liquidation spirals.

2. Institutional Migration:

Capital rapidly shifted to Finery Markets' OTC private rooms, where off-screen liquidity and bilateral pricing isolated trades from visible order book panic.

3. Containment:

Private room architecture prevented contagion by absorbing price shocks within discrete trading relationships rather than broadcasting them across public venues, while USDe redemptions continued functioning smoothly on primary platforms.

Battle-tested market design

Finery Markets' private room infrastructure delivered resilience across four critical dimensions:

a) Dark liquidity

Unlike centralized exchanges with visible order books, each OTC private room operates as a unique liquidity environment for individual takers. Off-screen execution prevented panic-driven information cascades, significantly reducing systemic risk propagation.

Structure	CEX	OTC Private rooms	Impact on Risk
Order Book	Central, Visible liquidity	Unique to each taker, Off-screen liquidity	Dark liquidity significantly reduces the spread of systemic risk.
Panic	Visible panic accelerates “ bank-run ” like dynamics.	Private rooms effectively contain price shocks.	

b) Collateral integrity

OTC bilateral pricing eliminated reliance on potentially distorted single-exchange spot prices for collateral evaluation. Institutions avoided the CEX USDe scenario where localized price dislocations could trigger inappropriate liquidations.

c) Panic containment

Private rooms functionally isolated price shocks. While exchange order books amplified selling pressure through visible liquidation waves, OTC infrastructure absorbed volatility without broadcasting stress signals across the broader market.

d) Liquidity commitment under stress

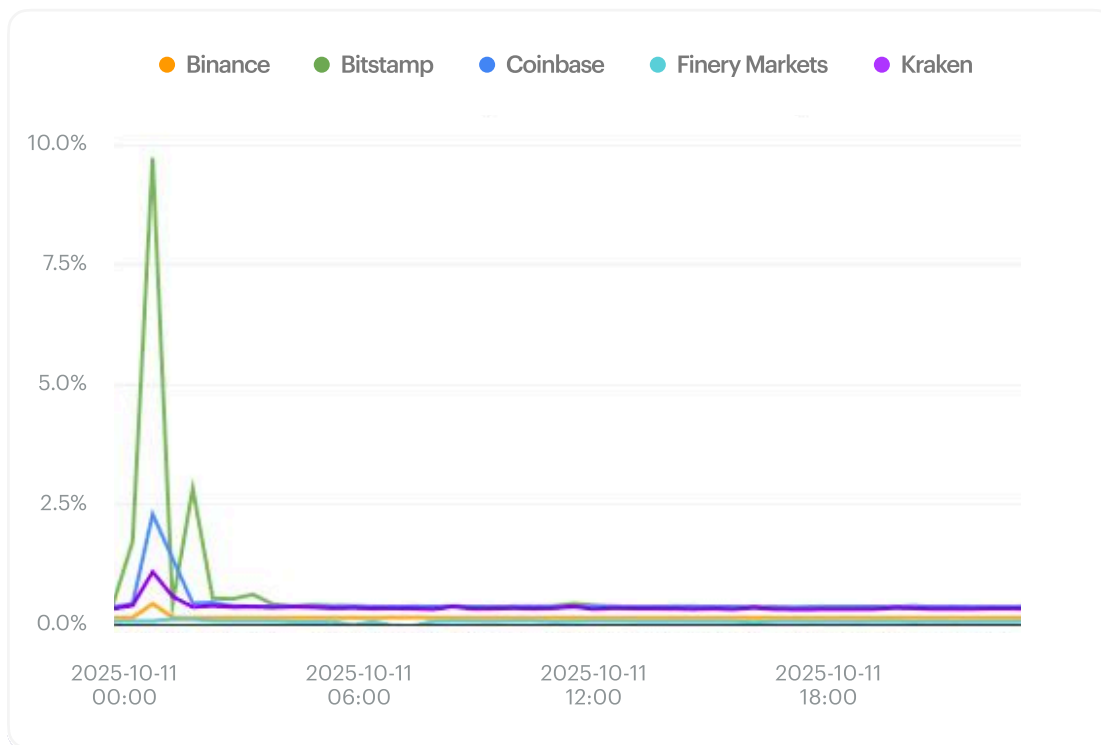
During peak crisis periods (October 10-12), OTC spreads remained substantially narrower than exchange spreads, which jumped significantly. This demonstrated superior capital commitment when institutions needed it most.

OTC as a crisis response infrastructure

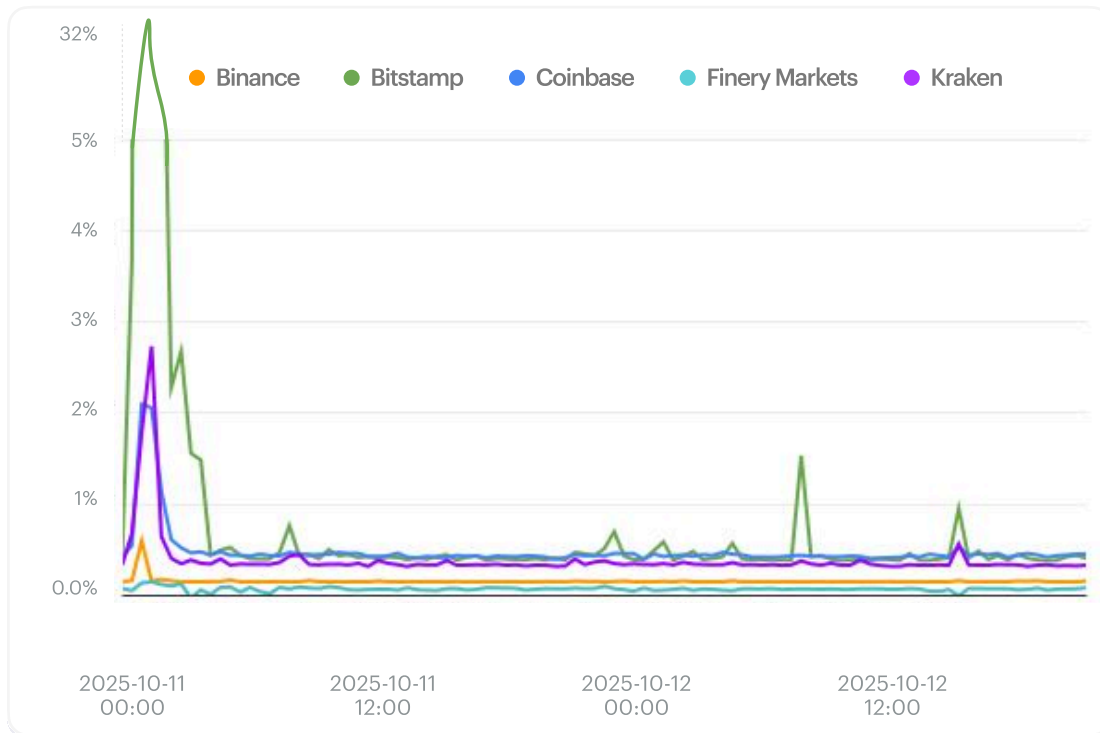
OTC bilateral pricing eliminated reliance on potentially distorted single-exchange spot prices for collateral evaluation. Institutions avoided the CEX USDe scenario where localized price dislocations could trigger inappropriate liquidations.

- **+107% volume growth (WoW)** for BTC/USDT and ETH/USDT pairs in OTC private rooms versus +48% on exchanges.
- **Substantially narrower spreads were maintained** throughout the crisis, while exchange spreads deteriorated significantly, proving superior liquidity quality during peak stress
- **Zero systemic contagion** from the USDe depeg. OTC infrastructure successfully contained what could have been a cascade across leveraged positions
- **Continuous market function** with off-screen liquidity pools maintaining orderly execution as exchange order books were fragmented across venues

Bid-ask spreads for 0.01 BTC / USDT



Bid-ask spreads for 5 ETH / USDT



A proven risk mitigation framework

Finery Markets' OTC private rooms provided institutions with structural insulation from exchange-driven contagion. By isolating bilateral trades from visible order book dynamics, the infrastructure prevented localized price dislocations from propagating systemwide.

The USDe incident demonstrated the critical importance of this design. Had institutional volume remained concentrated on exchanges with visible liquidation cascades, an isolated price crash could have triggered collateral mispricing across platforms, creating a self-reinforcing liquidation spiral.

Instead, OTC infrastructure absorbed the shock through dark liquidity pools that maintained pricing integrity and prevented panic amplification.

Strategic outcomes

Finery Markets provides institutions with OTC technology to build an off-screen execution layer. During the October 2025 crisis, it delivered:

- Systemic risk firewall that contained exchange dysfunction
- Superior liquidity quality during peak volatility
- Collateral integrity was protected from single-exchange price distortions
- Continuous market access when public venues were fragmented
- Validated execution advantage

About Finery Markets

Finery Markets is a leading ICT solutions provider for institutional digital asset trading, offering a non-custodial crypto ECN and robust trading SaaS. Specifically designed for institutional clients across more than 41 countries, our infrastructure plays a critical role in their operational resilience, enabling secure and transparent digital asset operations.

The company offers the first hybrid, crypto-native ECN technology, enabling trading via an order book, RFQ, or quote streams.

Since its launch in 2019, Finery Markets has expanded its ecosystem, now serving over 150 digital asset clients—including payment providers, brokers, OTC desks, hedge funds, and custodians. By providing resilient trading infrastructure, Finery Markets enhances capital efficiency, ensures optimal execution, assists in risk management, and simplifies settlement processes, all while supporting clients in meeting regulatory requirements.

In 2024, Finery Markets was recognized as one of the top 50 rising stars in the Deloitte Technology Fast 50 competition. The company was named among the Top 300 Fintech Companies by CNBC and Statista.

Finery Markets is the first crypto ECN to receive the SOC 2 Type 1 & Type 2 certification.

Finery Markets hosts “[The Flow](#)”, a C-level institutional crypto podcast that explores the development of the digital assets market structure.

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