

Here's what bitcoin's monster 2017 gain looks like in one humongous chart

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Cryptocurrency has soared more than 1,500% this year



Getty Images

In early February, the digital currency bitcoin hit a startling milestone when its price surpassed \$1,000 for the first time ever. That seems awfully quaint now that the world's largest cryptocurrency has added another zero to the end of its price and shows no signs of stopping its rise.

Bitcoin's [BTCUSD, -14.39%](#) rise has been meteoric, and while investors in the first half of the year were marveling at how quickly it was breaking through \$100 milestones, they now stare agape as \$1,000 markers fall by the wayside. It hit \$5,000 in October, followed by \$6,000 later that month. The \$7,000 threshold had to wait until early November, but then \$8,000 fell a couple of weeks later, followed by \$9,000 a few days later, and then \$10,000 before you could even catch your breath.

It is currently trading at \$15,905.04, up 16% on the day, [having gained more than 1,500% in 2017 alone](#). It hit a record of \$16,615.94 earlier in the day. No wonder Stephen Roach, a professor at Yale and a former economist at Morgan Stanley, said that ["bitcoin is the most vertical of any pattern I've ever seen in my career."](#)

Obviously, each successive \$1,000 rise is a smaller accomplishment on a percentage basis (to get to \$13,000 from \$12,000 requires an 8.3% rise, compared with the 9.1% move required to get from \$11,000 to \$12,000), but it does illustrate just how quickly the digital currency has been rising this year. It has moved so fast that we are barely able to fit all the milestones onto this whopper of a chart (which has been updated many, many times this year).

If that chart doesn't convey just how vertigo-inducing the move has been here are a couple more stats that should do it:

- A year ago, bitcoin was trading at about \$763.90, meaning it has enjoyed a 12-month gain of nearly 2,000%.
- With its year-to-date rise, bitcoin now has a market capitalization of about \$278.8 billion, according to the pricing website CoinMarketCap. It first cracked \$100 billion in just October, meaning it has nearly tripled in a matter of weeks.
- At its current size, bitcoin is bigger than all but 12 of the components of the S&P 500 [SPX, -4.10%](#) In the past month alone, it has surpassed such iconic brands as Walt Disney Co. [DIS, -3.68%](#) General Electric Co. [GE, -4.67%](#) Coca-Cola

Bitcoin's path to \$15,000

In one chart

The No. 1 cryptocurrency by market cap has skyrocketed 1,376% this year -- from just under \$1,000 at the outset of 2017 to top \$15,000 in December.



Co. [KO](#), -3.94% and Home Depot [HD](#), -5.60% In the past couple of days, it has eclipsed Procter & Gamble Co. [PG](#), -3.79% , Visa Inc. [V](#), -3.84% and Chevron Corp. [CVX](#), -5.03% Of the 30 components of the Dow Jones Industrial Average [DJIA](#), -4.60% only six are larger than bitcoin.

Read more: [Bitcoin's surge past \\$12,000 makes it bigger than all but 16 S&P 500 components](#)

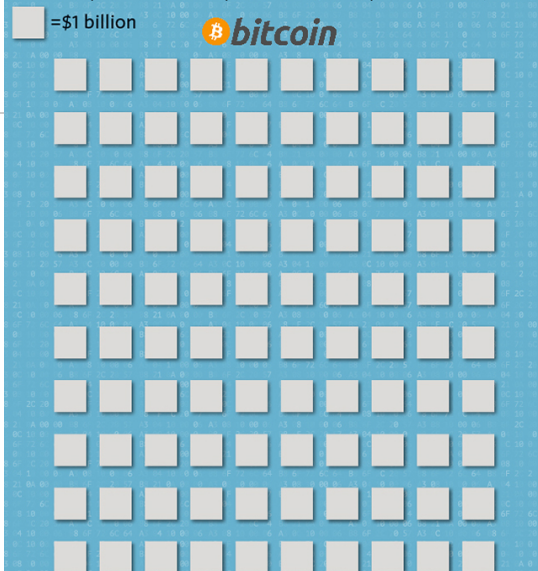
- Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss, two early adopters of the digital currency, [are believed to be the first bitcoin billionaires](#), after having made an \$11 million bet on it more than four years ago.
- While [a number of prominent investors have called bitcoin a bubble](#), a fraud, or worse, its proponents say the rally is nowhere near over. According to LendEDU, a marketplace of private loans, the average bitcoin investor [is waiting for it to hit \\$200,000 before selling](#). According to [an unscientific poll conducted on Twitter](#), a vast majority of participants expect bitcoin to top \$30,000 (which would mean more than doubling from current levels) before the Dow hits 30,000—a 24% gain.
- The Commodity Futures Trading Commission [last week said it would allow the listing of bitcoin futures](#), with a number of exchanges—including Cboe Global Markets [CBOE](#), -3.06% , Nasdaq, and the CME Group [CME](#), -3.24% —announcing they would launch such products. Futures are seen as potentially further legitimizing bitcoin as an investment, and they could drive additional demand into the space.

• Bitcoin is not the only digital currency to experience massive gains in 2017. Its chief rival—Ether, which runs on the Ethereum blockchain—has soared more than 5,400% in 2017, last trading at \$442.30. It ended 2016 at \$8.03. Ether has a market capitalization of \$42.4 billion.

• There are three digital currencies with a market cap greater than \$10 billion, according to CoinMarketCap, and a fourth—the [high-flying IOTA](#)—with a value that hovers near that level. There are 16 digital currencies with a value greater than \$1 billion, and nearly 90 that are valued at more than \$100 million. The entire cryptocurrency space is worth \$426.2 billion, having topped \$400 billion earlier Thursday.

The \$405 billion world of cryptocurrency, in one chart

Bitcoin currently accounts for 63% of the total cryptocurrency market cap. What makes up the rest? (Last updated: Dec. 7, 2017)

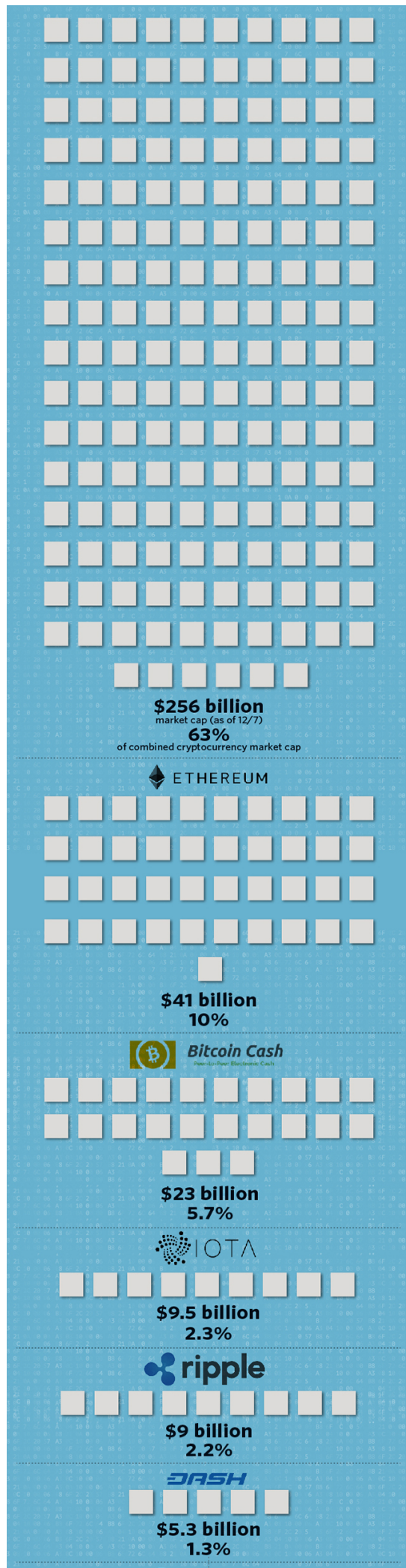


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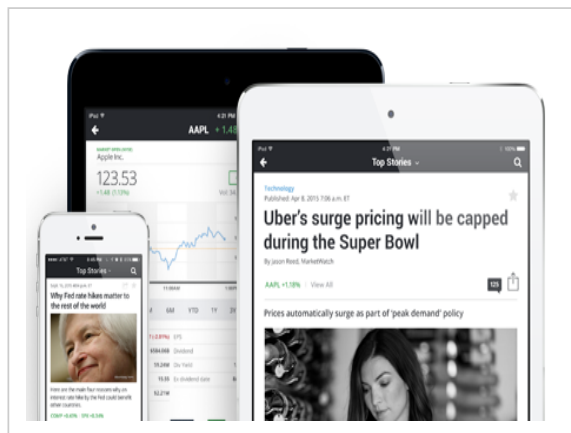
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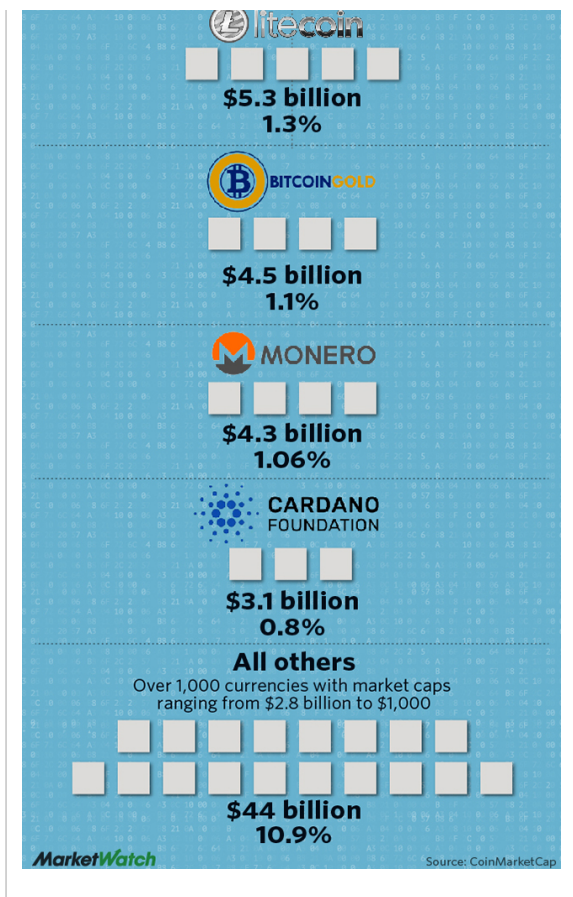


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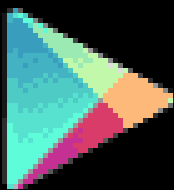


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