

WikiLeaks getting credit card funds

July 7 2011, By RAPHAEL G. SATTER , Associated Press

WikiLeaks has again begun accepting credit card donations, a company affiliated with the secret-spilling site said Thursday.

Andreas Fink, the chief executive of Icelandic [payment processor](#) DataCell, told The Associated Press that Visa and MasterCard were again processing payments to WikiLeaks after a seven-month hiatus.

Fink claimed the move as a tacit admission of guilt from the credit card companies, but it may well have been accidental.

Visa Europe spokesman Simon Kleine told AP that processing the payments was "not something that we've sanctioned" and that the company was investigating. An email and [phone calls](#) seeking comment from MasterCard were not immediately returned.

Visa and MasterCard pulled the plug on the company, DataCell ehf, in early December, shortly after WikiLeaks began publishing about 250,000 U.S. State Department cables. But Fink said Thursday that card services had been restored - saying that lawyers had made sure of it by making test donations.

"We have seen donations going through," he said, although he added that he wouldn't get a clear idea of how much money was flowing into WikiLeaks' coffers for another couple of days.

Visa Inc. and MasterCard Inc. were two of a host of financial and Internet services companies which severed their links with WikiLeaks

following the publication of the State Department cables. PayPal Inc., Amazon.com, [EveryDNS](#) and others also cut their ties with the site amid intense government criticism of the online activist group - leading WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to accuse them of bowing to pressure from the Pentagon.

Last week, WikiLeaks and DataCell said they were preparing to take the credit card companies to court in Denmark. On its website, WikiLeaks claims that the block placed on [WikiLeaks](#) by companies such as MasterCard and Visa have cost it more than 90 percent of its donations, or \$15 million. It has offered no explanation as to how those figures were derived.

The company is still [raising money](#) through bitcoins, a kind of online currency, and direct bank transfers to accounts in Iceland and Germany.

More information: <http://www.datacell.com>

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