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Nasdaq Proposes Near-24-Hour Trading

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On December 15, 2025, the Nasdaq Stock Market LLC (Nasdaq) filed a proposal with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to amend the exchange's rules to allow equity securities and exchange traded products (ETPs) to trade 23 hours a day, five days a week, as early as late-2026.

Overview

Under Nasdaq's existing trading schedule, equity trading occurs during three sessions each weekday: pre-market (4:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Eastern Time (ET)); regular market (9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET); and post-market (4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET). Under the proposal:

- Nasdaq would operate two equity trading sessions each weekday: a day session (4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET) and a night session (9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. ET).
- The one-hour pause from 8:00 p.m. ET to 9:00 p.m. ET between trading sessions would be reserved for systems maintenance, processing corporate actions (*g*., stock splits and dividends) and trade clearing.
- Each trading week will begin Sunday at 9:00 p.m. ET and conclude Friday at 8:00 p.m. ET, and any trades executed between 9:00 p.m. and midnight during the night session would be counted toward the following trading day.

According to Nasdaq, this proposal is a response to growing global demand for access to U.S. equity trading markets outside of traditional trading hours. Nasdaq's rule filing states that investors, particularly those based in Asia and Europe, increasingly seek to trade U.S. stocks and ETPs during local business hours. Chuck Mack, Nasdaq' Senior Vice President of North American Markets, previously stated that expanded trading hours would allow global investors access "on their own terms . . . in their own time zones." Other Nasdaq representatives have characterized the proposal as a competitive measure, arguing that it would better align U.S. markets with global trading behaviors and alternative trading platforms that already offer extended or continuous access.

Nasdaq's proposal is part of a broader industry trend in the U.S. trading market, in response to investor demand, toward extended trading hours. In 2024, the SEC approved registration of a new exchange, 24X National Exchange, designed to operate nearly 24 hours a day, though this exchange is not yet operational. Most notably, earlier in 2025, the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) received preliminary SEC approval for a 22-hour trading day, five days a week, for U.S. equities and ETPs. The SEC's approval was conditioned on expanded data feed availability and other infrastructure conditions that would likely apply to Nasdaq as well. To facilitate information access, the Securities Information Processors (SIPs), which consolidate and disseminate U.S. market price data across exchanges, recently filed plans with the SEC to extend their operational hours to supply continuous pricing information. Nasdaq has acknowledged that details surrounding market protections, corporate actions and trading halts will require further coordination within the industry as part of the proposal's implementation.

Support

Proponents of 24-hour trading argue that extending equity trading hours would modernize U.S. markets and better reflect the increasingly global and technology-driven nature of investing. As noted above, a principal justification offered by Nasdaq is that investor participation is no longer confined to U.S. time zones. Global institutional and retail investors, particularly in Europe and Asia, often seek access to U.S. securities during their own business hours, rather than during overnight or early-morning windows. Extended trading hours could therefore enhance accessibility and participation without requiring investors to rely on limited pre-market or post-market sessions.

Proponents also contend that nearly-continuous trading may improve price discovery by allowing markets to respond more promptly to international news events, economic data releases, and geopolitical developments that occur outside traditional market hours. Under the current framework, material news released overnight can result in sharp price movements at the market open, and supporters argue that a longer trading window could allow prices to adjust in real time and more gradually as information becomes available.

Opposition

Critics of near-24-hour trading have raised concerns that extended hours could negatively affect market quality, particularly during overnight sessions when participation is expected to be significantly lower. Historically, trading outside regular market hours has been characterized by thinner liquidity, wider bid-ask spreads, and greater price volatility. Opponents argue that expanding these periods could amplify such conditions, potentially disadvantaging investors who execute trades when fewer counterparties are active.

Some analysts have also expressed concern that continuous trading may contribute to the "gamification" of equity markets. They argue that prolonged availability could encourage speculative or impulsive trading behavior, particularly among retail investors, while offering limited incremental benefit to long-term capital formation.

Potential Market Impact

If approved and implemented, Nasdaq's proposal could have wide-ranging implications for issuers, intermediaries, and investors. Market participants may need to adjust risk management systems, staffing models, and surveillance practices to accommodate longer trading days. Clearing and settlement processes would also need to operate reliably across extended hours to avoid introducing systemic risk.

Issuers could face new considerations around corporate disclosures and investor communications. Earnings releases, guidance updates, and other material announcements are often timed to avoid disrupting regular trading. A near-continuous market could complicate these practices and increase the likelihood of price movements occurring in relatively illiquid conditions, or result in more frequent trading halts.

For investors, extended hours may increase flexibility but also heighten execution risks. Market participants may need to rely more heavily on limit orders and exercise greater caution when trading during overnight sessions, when price movements may be less representative of broader market consensus.

Nasdaq's proposal for near-24-hour trading is part of a broader discussion of how U.S. equity markets operate in an increasingly global and digital financial ecosystem. As the SEC reviews the proposal and related infrastructure changes, including expanded data feed availability, the debate underscores the tension between innovation and market stability.