

Banco Central do Brasil Calls Time Out on WhatsApp Payments

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Brazil giveth and Brazil taketh away, as WhatsApp Payments, which were rolled out countrywide last week, are now on hold.

Banco Central do Brasil posted a notice on its website Tuesday, reading (translated from Portuguese): “Within the scope of its duties as regulator and supervisor of payment arrangements in Brazil, the Central Bank ordered Visa and Mastercard to suspend the start of activities or immediately stop using the WhatsApp application to initiate payments and transfers within the scope of arrangements instituted by these supervised entities. The BC’s motivation for the decision is to preserve an adequate competitive environment, which ensures the functioning of an interoperable, fast, secure, transparent, open and inexpensive payment system.”

No one from WhatsApp would comment for attribution, but the Facebook-owned messaging app indicated that it planned to continue its efforts in the country.

WhatsApp said in a blog post when it introduced the feature that it would enable people to send money securely or make purchases from local businesses without leaving their chats in the app, adding that a special six-digit PIN or fingerprint would be required in order to prevent unauthorized transactions.

WhatsApp Payments is enabled by Facebook Pay, and WhatsApp said last week that the goal is to enable people to use the same credit card information across Facebook’s family of

apps in the future.

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