RISKIQ®

RiskIQ i3:

COVID-19 Weekly Update

05/22/2020

Table of Contents

Methodology

The information provided in this report is limited to open source and publicly available data discovered through standard, commonly known browsing techniques and keyword searches. To provide efficient results, RiskIQ may use websites that require payment in exchange for aggregation of data that is otherwise publicly available without payment and could be obtained by anyone accessing the correct sites or engaging the correct third parties to obtain the information. Information presented in this report is cross-checked against multiple sources for full verification; however, some assessments and conclusions are based on incomplete information and represent the RiskIQ analyst's judgment based on patterns and data available.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this report is "as-is" and Customer acknowledges and agrees that RiskIQ makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information. Customer agrees that RiskIQ shall not have any liability resulting from Customer's use of this information.

Notable Events in the Past Week

The Italian government announced that it will open its [regional and international borders](#) on 06/03/2020. Italians are hopeful that reopening borders will bolster the nation's struggling tourism industry, which accounts for 13% of Italy's gross domestic product. For the first time in months, Italian officials reported a [daily death toll](#) of fewer than 100 after reporting 99 fatalities on Tuesday, 05/19/2020.

South Korean health officials [discovered](#) that a group of COVID-19 patients who tested positive again had not passed the virus on to others, suggesting that the suspected relapses were possibly a testing fluke. While the results are preliminary, South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday announced that they would no longer require quarantine for discharged patients.

Pharmaceutical company [Moderna Inc.](#) reported early results from the first human study of its COVID-19 vaccine, which were described as positive. Moderna said the vaccine induced immune responses in some of the healthy participants, and the shots were generally safe and well-tolerated. Though the trials have shown promise, the vaccine has not yet demonstrated to be effective against COVID-19 infection.

[S309](#), an antibody first found in blood samples from a patient who recovered from SARS in 2003, inhibits coronaviruses, including the cause of COVID-19. S309 is now on a fast-track development and testing path at Vir Biotechnology. David Veesler, an assistant professor of biochemistry at the University of Washington, said they still "need to show that this antibody is protective in living systems, which has not yet been done."

Uber announced that it is [cutting several thousand additional jobs](#), closing more than three dozen offices, and is re-evaluating future plans for the company. The move comes two weeks after Uber announced it was cutting 3,700 jobs as the company grapples with the ongoing pandemic.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the company will be permanently moving toward a [work-from-home](#) model. During a livestreamed conference on Thursday, Zuckerberg said the changes will initially be for U.S.-based senior engineers. Zuckerberg said he expects half the workforce to be working remotely within ten years.

Airlines are making significant [changes to policies](#) as they move to resume operations. Airports and airlines are conducting temperature checks for all crew and, in some cases, passengers, while face masks are becoming increasingly common. Several airlines are boarding passengers

from the back to avoid traffic jams. Many airlines are removing in-flight magazines, declining meal services on shorter flights, and discontinuing the duty-free cart.

President Donald Trump threatened to permanently cut funding for the WHO if the agency "does not commit to major substantive improvements within the next 30 days." Trump sent a letter to WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus detailing grievances, specifically that the agency has displayed an "alarming lack of independence from the People's Republic of China."

On Tuesday, the Trump administration extended a public health order that prohibits migrants from crossing the border without giving them access to the asylum system until the government determines the pandemic no longer poses a risk to public health. The order was published in March with a thirty day limit, and it was extended for another thirty days in April. The U.S. also announced on Tuesday that it was extending its ban on cross-border travel at the Canadian and Mexican borders for another thirty days.

Robert Redfield, director of the CDC, said the U.S. is ready to begin reopening, but said the country needs to further invest in public health infrastructure and contact tracing. Redfield said the CDC aims to expand the contact tracing workforce by between 30,000 to 100,000 employees.

The CDC has shifted its stance on how COVID-19 spreads, now saying the primary transmission is person-to-person and downplaying the role of touching contaminated surfaces in spreading the virus. The CDC still recommends regular hand washing and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

A leaked Pentagon memo revealed that Department of Defense officials are preparing for a "globally-persistent" pandemic well into 2021. The memo also cautioned that a vaccine may not be available until "at least the summer of 2021."

Strikes, walkouts, and protests over working conditions are occurring across the U.S. as workers demand better pay and safer working conditions. Various industries, including food service, meat processing, retail, manufacturing, transportation, and healthcare, are protesting about issues related to low pay, working conditions, and a lack of safety precautions.

American workers filed 2.4 million unemployment claims last week, representing a slight decline in previous historically high numbers brought about by the pandemic. In the week ended 05/09/2020, continuing unemployment claims jumped from 22.5 million to 25.1 million.

Colorado Governor Jared Polis signed off on a state policy that will allow sports to be played in the state without fans in attendance. Polis said the state will be ready to host sporting events as soon as sports leagues are ready to resume activities.

For the first time since 03/12/2020, California's Bay Area reported no deaths from COVID-19 for two consecutive days. Los Angeles County officials said they are aiming for a "safe reopening" as early as 07/04/2020. Officials previously announced the county was targeting an August reopen date, but the new announcement provides hope for an accelerated timeline.

Digital Exploitation

A well-organized Nigerian crime ring is exploiting the COVID-19 crisis by committing large-scale fraud against multiple state unemployment insurance programs, with potential losses in the hundred of millions of dollars, according to a new alert issued by the U.S. Secret Service. The official memo from the Secret Service warned that the ring has been filing unemployment claims in different states using Social Security Numbers and other personally identifiable information (PII), a substantial amount of which belong to first responders, government personnel, and school employees. This network believed to possess a substantial PII database to submit the applications and hundreds of "mules" to launder the proceeds.

NBC reports that four states, and possibly more, are warning unemployment applicants that their personal information may have been leaked. The first leak occurred in Arkansas after the state launched its online Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program on 5 May with a system developed by Arkansas company Protech. The second incident involved Deloitte, who was hired by Colorado, Illinois, and Ohio to develop their respective online pandemic-related unemployment systems. Exposed information included names, full social security numbers, banking details, addresses, number of dependents, and even (at least in Illinois) correspondence between the unemployment office and applicants.

Microsoft is warning of an ongoing COVID-19-themed phishing campaign that installs the NetSupport Manager remote administration tool. The massive campaign is spreading via malicious Excel attachments in emails pretending to be from the Johns Hopkins Center. The attachment contains macros that prompt the user to "Enable Content" and once clicked, will download and install the NetSupport Manager client. Though NetSupport Manager is a legitimate remote administration tool, it is commonly distributed among hacker communities to use as a remote access trojan. When installed, it allows a threat actor to gain complete control over the infected machine and execute commands on it remotely.

Despite achieving the world's highest download rates for an contact-tracing application, Iceland's Rakning C-19 does not appear to have helped the country in addressing COVID-19. Rakning was downloaded by 38% of the country's population, but according to the Icelandic Police Service, the impact of the application has been small. Instead, Iceland attributes its success in managing COVID-19 to early and wide-scale testing as well as manual tracing such as phone calls.

Estonia has begun testing one of the world's first digital immunity passports in a bid to restart its economy. The passports will allow citizens to show their coronavirus test results to third parties, like employers and restaurants, using a temporary QR code on their phone. The World Health

Organization (WHO) has warned governments against issuing immunity passports given the lack of evidence that people who have recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies, and are protected from a second infection.

[Campaign groups wrote the UK Prime Minister](#) warning that UK's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) and its digital arm, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), will have the capacity to re-identify the phones of people who have installed the UK coronavirus contact-tracing app. In their open letter to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the groups, including tech justice nonprofit Foxglove and digital rights campaigners Access Now, argued that the legal framework for the software is inadequate to prevent misuse of personal data. The UK's contact-tracing app is currently in trials in the Isle of Wight.

End Report