



RiskIQ i3:

COVID-19 Weekly Update

06/05/2020



Table of Contents

Methodology	3
Disclaimer	3
Notable Events in the Past Week	4
Digital Exploitation	6

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

[Geneticists](#) have been scouring human DNA for clues. A study by European scientists is the first to document a strong statistical link between genetic variations and COVID-19. Variations in two spots in the human genome are associated with an increased risk of respiratory failure in patients with COVID-19. One of these spots includes the gene that determines blood types. Having Type A blood was linked to a 50 percent increase in the likelihood that a patient would need to get oxygen or to go on a ventilator.

Dr. Alberto Zangrillo, the head of the San Raffaele Hospital in Milan, Italy, said COVID-19 has [lost its potency](#) and has become less lethal. Zangrillo said that swabs performed over a ten-day period show “viral load in quantitative terms that was absolutely infinitesimal compared to the ones carried out a month or two months ago.” Still, the Italian government urged caution, saying residents need to continue to follow safety precautions.

The [public healthcare system in Mumbai](#), India is overwhelmed as the pandemic ravages the city. Stories are emerging of corpses being left in hospital hallways and patients being asked to sleep on the floor while the hospitals wait for beds to open up.

President Donald Trump said the U.S. would go ahead on its threat to [withdraw from the WHO](#). Trump accused the WHO of helping China cover up the threat of the virus and also criticized the organization for failing to sound the alarm on the virus quickly.

The [U.S. economy](#) gained 2.5 million jobs in May and the unemployment rate dropped to 13.3 percent. That’s down from 14.7 percent in April, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The surprising data comes amid the phased reopening of businesses across the country after months of economic pain from the coronavirus pandemic, which pushed up unemployment to Great Depression-era levels.

Many Americans are [struggling to cope](#) with the realities of the pandemic and its associated economic impacts. A survey conducted by the Census Bureau and the CDC shows that nearly one-third of Americans reported anxiety and depression symptoms since April, up from 11% during the first three months of 2019.

The [NBA's board of governors](#) intends to approve a league proposal on a 22-team format to restart the season in Orlando, Florida. Commissioner Adam Silver and the league's advisory/finance committee have shared the broad details of a plan with teams to play at the Walt Disney World Resort. The plan includes 13 Western Conference teams, nine Eastern Conference teams, eight regular-season games, a possible play-in tournament for the eighth seed, and playoffs.

Two decades of using borrowed money to pay for new [stadiums](#) is coming back to haunt many cities across the country. At Gila River Arena in Glendale, Arizona, the coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of eight NHL games, a Celine Dion concert, and a professional bull-riding tour, but it didn't change the schedule for the city's \$10.7 million 2020 debt payment for the venue.

Chief Information Officers and industry experts say [manufacturers](#) will be spending far more on data management and analytics tools in the aftermath of the coronavirus outbreak. Using those tools for deeper insight into operations, sales and supply chain disruptions. This effort will build its data capabilities to enhance the ability to remotely monitor plant equipment, which engineers had limited access to during the pandemic.

Drug maker [Eli Lilly](#) began the first study of an experimental drug derived from a blood sample of an early U.S. survivor of COVID-19. The trial aims to evaluate the drug's ability to treat hospitalized patients, and the company plans to eventually evaluate the drug's ability to prevent infections in at-risk individuals.

On Wednesday, [Florida](#) saw its largest number of new cases of the coronavirus since mid-April as the state works to reopen its economy. The Florida Department of Health announced the state has a total of 58,764 confirmed cases, a jump of 1,317 from the day before. Wednesday's total is Florida's largest since April 17, when it had a daily total of 1,413 cases. Some 2,566 people have died from the virus in Florida. More than half of the state's cases are concentrated in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe counties in South Florida.

The [Florida Keys reopened](#) for visitors on Monday after being closed down for more than two months. Roadblocks were taken down near Key Largo, though beaches will remain closed due to ongoing protests in South Florida relating to the death of George Floyd.

The [Las Vegas Strip](#) opened Thursday after a nearly 80-day slumber due to the coronavirus crisis.

Most of Virginia will be moving into [Phase Two](#) of the state's reopening plan on Friday, 06/05/2020. Virginia Governor Ralph Northam said he is confident the state is ready to move into Phase Two as the percent of positive tests continues to trend downwards. For the entire state of Virginia, excluding Northern Virginia, the rate of positive cases is trending downward towards 10 percent while the number of tests has increased.

Digital Exploitation

In an interview this week, Christopher Krebs, the director of the United States Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), said that he expects to see "every intelligence service" attempt to [target and steal COVID-19 research](#) and data. This statement broadened the CISA and FBI joint warning last month about Chinese-backed hackers targeting U.S. organizations working to develop vaccines for the virus. Krebs added that "the Chinese have obviously been one of the more brazen in terms of their approach, but others are in the game, too...This is a very active space, very active space."

Cybercriminals are taking advantage of the [massive uptick in unemployment](#) across the U.S. in a recent spear-phishing campaign which purports to be resumes sent from job-seekers but actually spreads banking credential-stealing malware. The emails attachments contain Zloader, a banking malware designed to steal credentials and other private information from users of targeted financial institutions. However, the malware can also steal passwords and cookies stored in victim's web browsers.

This week, the U.S. [Cyberspace Solarium Commission](#) issued a white paper on lessons learned about cybersecurity from the COVID-19 pandemic. The document points out similarities between a pandemic and a major cyberattack—most notably that prevention and pre-established relationships are cheaper and more effective than detection and response. Further, the paper adds new recommendations urging Congress to pass an Internet of Things law, calling for increased support to combat cybercrime and support victims, as well as increasing nongovernmental capacity to identify and counter foreign disinformation and influence campaigns.

Research conducted by Cybernews suggests an unprecedented amount of interest in hacking and cybercrime during the global pandemic. Their review of Google search trends indicates that during the months of March, April, and May, online [searches related to hacking](#), scamming, and other forms of cybercrime skyrocketed. In addition, visits to popular hacker websites and forums increased by up to 66% in March.

Malicious actors are already [spoofing legitimate contact tracing](#) efforts in the UK. Although the UK's National Health Service (NHS) created a web page detailing the legitimate contact tracing process, threat actors are finding the process quite easy to mimic. Following a positive COVID-19 result, actual contact tracers using the phone number 03000135000 will call or text individuals to request personal information and ask that they sign into an NHS contact-tracing

website. Unfortunately, phone numbers are relatively easy to spoof and victims will have no way to tell the difference between a legitimate outreach and a malicious one.

[Malwarebytes](#) recently released a special edition of their quarterly Cybercrime Tactics and Techniques (CTNT) report focusing on coronavirus-themed attacks/lures. The report lists malware that has been associated with malicious COVID-19 cyber activity, to include AveMaria and DanaBot, and highlights the uptick in skimming, phishing, and other creative attack methods.

End Report