

HELLO
ISSQUARED FAMILY,

Wish you all a very Happy New Year 2023. May this new year bring you more happiness and reasons to smile. We are happy to connect after a gap of three months to share major updates across all the corners of ISSQUARED® with great memories of the successful event at Pelican Hills, CA.



ISSQUARED

BUZZ

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2023

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023



PRODUCT CORNER

PRODUCT UPDATES

The year 2022 was an interesting year with many successes and fallbacks for the product team. As we close the year, we have fantastic memories of the successful event at Pelican Hills, CA. Pelican Hills is a remarkable luxurious location. And to be there with family on a trip sponsored by ISSQUARED® is nothing more than a dream come true. Thank you ISSQUARED® for giving all of us the opportunity to relax and connect with co-workers around the globe. It was mesmerizing!

The customers on-site were lightning struck with the success and achievements of the company. The buzzword was if a company can pull off such an event even in such economic times, then the company is really doing well. We are doing great with the investments of trust in our products from the clients. Thank you once again to the leadership team for bringing such positive vibes and energy back into the team.

The product team is working extra hard post product re-launch and definition of all the product lines and vision from the CEO in the event. With the EBIS suite defining the next level of management of assets (human and physical), ISSQUARED® has new potential with existing and new clients. The way everything is linked and tied together makes sense from an organizational point of view.

The identity product has matured and opened doors for new thoughts and discussions around performance. The product has a rich set of features and capabilities. The next challenge the team is solving is scale. How well can the product perform for billions of users? This is a good problem to solve and it will be useful for the extended product suite.

Overall, 2022 was a fantastic ride for the product team. We have many ups and downs and maybe many down moments. With the core value of simplifying complexity, we will be up in the sky flying high with influence into January 2023!

CLOUD SERVICES

The cloud services team is thankful to the leadership team for the excellent re-launch of the products and how everything connects together with Fabulix hardware and software. The event was a success and with such a fabulous location, the environment was perfect for Fabulix! Fabulix as a software and hardware was demonstrated and very well received. The customers and partners were enthusiastic when the rack was shown and the tasks it can perform. Awesome work team!

Venkat Kakarlapudi from the Architecture team built an IPAM solution using NetBox open-source software. As we grow at a fast pace, it is challenging for our teams to track IP addresses and VLANs on spreadsheets. The new IPAM solution will help our infrastructure teams centrally document and track all of our public and internal IPs, VLANs, devices, racks, sites and regions.

The cloud services and architecture team is working with a famous US-based supermarket for their O365 and cross-tenant cloud migration project. This is one of the very critical migrations for the customer and ISSQUARED® is proud to be executing this, flawlessly. Great job team!

On the same lines the team did O365 is at the final stages for a banking customer. This again is an excellent collaborative effort by the team.

Apart from the regular customers tasks, the team also discovered and helped partner teams like the learning management system at ISSQUARED® to automate specific tasks which were manual or not existing earlier. Awesome work!

Overall, 2022 was a year that ended well with Pelican hills and we are all set for success in 2023!



IT CORNER

IT CONSULTING & DELIVERY SERVICES

After 6-8 months of meticulous planning & coordination, and after crossing many hurdles, the ISSQUARED® team has successfully completed the LDAP DR exercise at Amgen. This is a mandatory exercise done every 3 years on the regulated LDAP service at Amgen.

ISSQUARED® team has also successfully completed the Okta DR exercise at Amgen. This was the first time when DR exercise was performed for Okta service at Amgen.

Raize Bepari and team went through rigorous planning for its successful completion.



INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

The internal patching schedule for January month is as follows:

JANUARY 2023	
SERVER	DATE
Development Servers	Jan-13-2022
Test Servers	Jan-17-2022
Production Servers	Jan-20-2022

December was a CRAZY busy month!

A big thank you to all involved with the M365 rollout and Teller Project at the Bank of Guam!

The M365 Office apps have been deployed to all BoG workstations and email migration is right around the corner. This required a lot of people to put in extra hours for several weeks on end and was a true team effort with involvement from the Managed and Professional Services teams, Architecture Team, and the Project Management Office. Special thank you to Jeevan Tangellamudi, Kelly Macone and Sridhar Veluri for their help and guidance on this.

Though not complete, a major milestone was met to get specific branches migrated to the new Teller application by the end of the year. There is still work to do to close this out at the other branches, but we are on the home stretch now. Special thank you to Debiprasad Maharana and Damian Arceo!

Sean Keifner, Anil Gudavalli, Denzil Buthapathi and Sandeep Naligili were all involved in both projects and played critical roles in getting all this work done. Thank you guys!

Thank you Network Team!

Due to a security vulnerability that was announced, our Network team had to scramble to get all of our ISSQUARED and customer firewalls upgraded. Thank you Dilip Rudraraju, Praveen Teegala and Sai Jagadish Darapureddy for digging in and getting the work done successfully, with minimal impact, and on very short notice!

Reminders, please save both as bookmarks:

ISSQUARED employees can use this URL to reset their password as needed.

<https://fed.issquaredinc.com/adfs/portal/updatepassword>

ISSQUARED employees can use this URL to open FSM Incidents or Service Requests. Just log in with your domain credentials.

<https://servicedesk.issquaredinc.com/internaluser/login>

Equally important is keeping your workstation up to date with patches. **When working remote, please remember to stay connected to VPN to help ensure that your workstation gets all the latest updates.**

ISSQUARED MEA

- ISSQUARED has signed 2 Distributors for:
 - a. DVCOM for Fabulix group of products
 - b. Bulwark Technologies for OLM/EIAG/OAM
- We participated in GITEX exhibition which is the largest IT event in the region.
- The 1st Fabulix HCI order was confirmed during the event for a customer in Kuwait.



Partnership with Bulwark Technologies for our OLM/EIAG/OAM



Partnership with DVCOM



HR UPDATES

Start thinking about your goals 2023

Goals give employees direction and focus, help them see what is important, and provide a sense of purpose. They motivate the team for productivity and success.

As we approach new year 2023, this is the right time to start thinking and collaborating with team for department and individual goals ensuring they are aligned with company's broader goals to achieve new heights of success.

HR Updates

In alignment with ISSQ's Global Career Framework, ISSQ is conducting annual performance reviews of ISSQ US and ISSQ GUAM employees for 2022.

In the world of HR...

ISSQ On-boarding

There were 15 new additions to the ISSQUARED family during the months of October, November and December 2022. Welcome aboard.

ISSQ Work'ersaries
Congratulations and keep going!!!!

Employee (s)	Milestone (Years)
Toswel Ilidio Sequeira Jean Denzil Benhur Buthapathi Gopalakrishnan Dharmalingam	5

Work'ersaries (from ISSQ US)
Congratulations and keep going!!!!

Jagan Jatavallabhula completed
10 Years

ISSQ Rewards and Recognition (RnR) for December 2022

EXCELLENCE

John Ferro

"For work with our department, cost center and SKU's initiative, accomplishing finance goal of enabling budgeting and financial reporting for our business Units and related departments and costs centers going into 2023."

Subhadra Bommu

"Subhadra has had major contribution with issue resolution and support for customer Production issues. She has developed Unix connector framework which was used to build unix connectors for Redhat linux, ubuntu and amazon linux operating systems."

Chandrashekhar Rangu

"For dedication and the hard work, he has put in, to achieve the target to meet our deadlines."

Madhavi Jatavallabhula

"For her key contributions to the deployment of various HR modules within ORSUS Workforce by performing thorough user acceptance testing. These modules are critical to the success of the overall ORSUS product portfolio. I would also like to acknowledge her ability for taking initiative, handling and completing various critical HR responsibilities & tasks independently with high quality of work, thus helping achieve our HR goals for 2022."

ACHIEVEMENT

Annas Mohammad

"For the work he did for multiple clients this year. He is very hardworking and knowledgeable. He takes full responsibility of any projects/tasks assigned to him and swiftly provides resolution."



ISSQUARED

Sanjeev Kumar

“For being an exceptional resource and for his major contribution in understanding and implementing cryptographic algorithms along with resolving major challenges in new technology Pkeyfx.”

Pradeep Gandikota

“Pradeep has proven that he is committed to continue growing professionally for any task, customer, or location where we need him. His growth as an engineer has been matched by his growth as support for product and development. He has stepped up for every challenge we have giving him. And has become one of the go to Engineers in ISSQUARED.”

Lavakumar Rayapati

“Lava has made major contribution with design, code review for team members work, Reviewed expensive queries and optimized for better Performance. As an individual contributor he has designed and developed REST and SCIM connector generic framework and developed Beyond trust connector using SCIM connector framework”.

Venkat Neelakantam

“Adding the accounting for our building LLC as well as publishing India and UAE financials each month by established deadlines, to accomplish the finance goal of issuing consolidated statements.”

Chris DeCastro

“Since the beginning, Chris demonstrated great aptitude for learning, willingness to help others, and be a great team player. His responsibilities quickly grew since then and he was promoted to the site lead shortly after. Chris is willing to step up to the plate, roll up his sleeves, and help his team on the island with whatever is necessary to get the job done.”

ABOVE & BEYOND

Joaquin Quinata

“Kin” is a key member of the network team and came to ISSQUARED in Jan 2022. Kin has a great depth of technical knowledge, as well as years of in-depth knowledge for a key strategic customer. As great as those are, it is Kin’s willingness to step forward and take ownership of a request or troubleshooting an issue and bring in others as needed to work as a team to see it through to resolution. Thank you, Kin for everything you do for ISSQUARED and our customers!!”

Randy Garbrick

“Randy has been the most consistent engineer. He bills good numbers every month. His regulars love his work. He's very versatile, and he gets certificates when we need them.”

Suhas Sawant

“Suhas leads the ISSQUARED Platforms team and has one of the more difficult jobs on the Managed Services team. He works with his team on all sides of the globe to ensure that ISSQUARED servers, platforms and applications are up to date and available to be used by the business, both ISSQUARED and external customers. Suhas has been guiding his team in creating manuals and runbooks to ensure that anyone on the Platform team can step in and help support as needed, leading to consistency in support, fewer service impacting incidents, all the while growing the team in experience and helping them progress their careers. Thank you, Suhas.”

Roger Nenes

“Embodies the “own the account” philosophy of managing customer accounts.

Excellent execution on major deals this year.

Near perfect customer interaction on deep technical selling.”

Neville Mendonca

“Neville is our lead IAM Architect. His ability to assess, design and build solutions for our customers has been invaluable. His work ethic is unquestionable and his ability to drive projects to close shows his commitment and dedication to ISSQUARED and our customers.”

Kelly Macone

“Kelly is the manager of our End User Services / Desktop Engineering team. He brings an extensive amount of experience and knowledge to this team, and just naturally has a mentoring mentality. Kelly has been integral in streamlining and improving how we internally at ISSQUARED, as well as our customers, keep endpoint operating systems and applications up to date. But it is the mentoring that Kelly does that stands out, bringing the team alongside him in everything he does. Thank you, Kelly for everything you do for ISSQUARED and our customers!!”

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Kimberly Sitton

“Role model employee.

Perfect example of “consistent” delivery.

Customer trust building.

Differentiating factor in major deals this year.”

Srishti Shrivastav

“We congratulate Srishti for successful implementation of FSM in customer environment in given tight deadline and additional complexities. Her prompt response in resolving any unexpected issue and her willingness to take risks and meeting the deadlines is always appreciated. She is a great team player as well as Lead for keeping every team member on same page, assisting and prioritizing their tasks and helping others whenever possible. She is a valuable asset not only to the team but also for our organization.”

Client Appreciation

Client: CForia

ISSQ Team member: Mani Kiran Avvaru and Ajay Kumar Suvarapu

Feedback from the client:



Critical Compliance/ audit/ policy updates/ trainings:
Compliance trainings are happening for all new joiners on regular basis. All employees are requested to keep an eye out for this section as in coming new year policy updates and compliance training will be coming their way.

IN OTHER NEWS...

1st January - Happy New Year 2023 from the ISSQUARED family. May this year bring more happiness, joy, and prosperity to you and your family.



CURRENT OPEN POSITIONS

We are seeking new talents who would like to be part of ISSQUARED journey. [Click the link](#) to current openings for more details and refer individuals among your network who can fit in now. Also avail referral bonus for your connections.



Department	No. of Positions	Experience	Level
Dotnet	22	1-3	Junior Level
O365 Engineer	1	1-3	
Content Writer	2	4-6	Mid Level
Data Analyst	1	4-6	
Dotnet	10	4-6	
NOC L2	2	4-6	
ISIM	2	4-7	
Hyper V	2	4-7	
Product Support	2	4-7	
Salesforce Developer	1	2-4	Senior Level
SailPoint Developer	3	5-9	
Dotnet	17	7+	
Data Analyst	1	8-12	
End User Services (SCCM)	1	7+	
NOC L3	2	8-12	Senior Level
AD-L3	1	8-15	



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT(L&D)

Partner Training

Training on Fabulix modules for Sales team of partners was launched in Dec. 2022 on Moodle platform.

New LMS Tovuti is being evaluated for its features.

To finalize Training calendar 2023 for various teams is in progress. All Managers were requested to share trainings for their teams for next six months.

Udemy

Udemy Updates

Let's appreciate Chandra Sekhar for being the top learner of the quarter, who devoted 108 Hrs 22 Mins, closely followed by Rakesh Patil who devoted 99 Hrs 52 Mins on the ISSQUARED® Udemy platform. Thank you so much for inspiring us to grow by learning.

According to the report of ISSQ employees' engagement with Udemy over the last three months, 186 users were active who watched training videos and 2.4% of the users were active via mobile app.

The average time spent on training per active user (in the last three months) is 13 Hrs 23 Mins.

The most watched course based on employee count of the month is **Security Awareness Training, Internet Security for Employees.**

To know what's more for you to learn, log on to Udemy and search for your favourite course!!!

SALES SUMMARY

Before we talk about 2023, special thanks are due to the Team ISSQUARED for a very good effort in 2022, from both a top-line and bottom-line revenue perspective.

Thanks are due to the Sales team, Sales Operations, Marketing & Inside Sales, Connectivity team, as well as very good support from finance, distribution, pre-sales, engineering, managed services & professional services.

There have been very good sales efforts from the entire team, enabling 2022 to be a growth year, with better progress towards our organic growth targets compared to the past two years.

At the year end mainland USA event, Roger Nenes and Kimberly Sitton were recognized for their critical role in the above achievements.

We have entered 2023 with good momentum, and the goal is to capitalize on this, with larger deal sizes, as well as executing on more cross-sell and upsell opportunities.

Good focus on the Enterprise business.

We have had a number of IAM related opportunities, as well as wins on the IAM front.

There has been a good start with assessments/ initial roadmap projects in the Enterprise space.

We are on the verge of some large IAM opportunities, which is the result of very good efforts over the last several months.

Overall, the momentum on the enterprise side is very good, in terms of new customer meetings and discussions.

There has been great progress in the VAR business with a large year end deal, that adds to the momentum going into 2023.

A few large deals in the VAR business helped us in the overall topline growth.

We expect to add to this momentum with a focus on some very strategic deals in Q1/Q2.

We plan to add to the sales team strategically, leveraging either product and/or security sales talent.

2023 Focus Areas

Product Focus:

We plan to increase the marketing, as well as development focus for our key products.

Product launch was the highlight of our mainland USA year end event in December 2022.

Security & IAM:

These areas have clearly shown a lot of traction, and we plan to have an increasingly crisp and well-defined go-to market strategy for these.

Strategic Partnerships:

We will continue to leverage and expand on some very good deals, made possible by excellent regional relationships.

Deeper integration with pre-sales.

Operational Focus

New standardized SKUs have been rolled out in CRM, which will increase visibility and tracking of sales and investments, based on business units, lines of business and aligned with the strategic vision for the company.

CRM Focus:

Continuous improvement on the quality of data, as well as early visibility for opportunities.

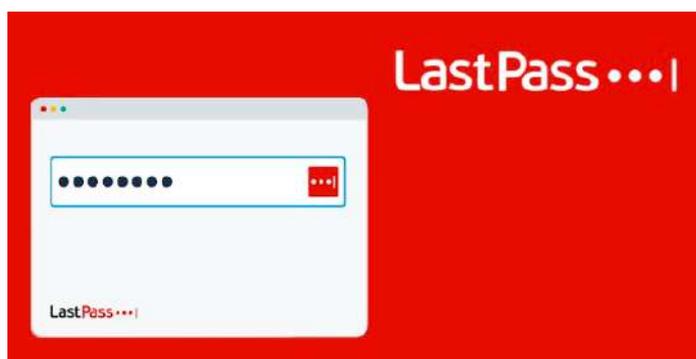
Enforcement of Campaign Tracker for lead tracking (from lead generation activities).

Integrated Marketing Plan & Inside Sales Team, working more closely with the Sales Team.

Integrated training plan to cover all aspects of Sales & Technology, with the intent of rapidly broadening our ability to cross-sell and upsell.

CYBERSECURITY NEWS STORY

LastPass Breach Involves Customer Vault Data



LastPass issued a notice of Security Incident to the LastPass community on December 22, 2022. The notice informed LastPass users that an unauthorized party gained access to a third-party cloud-based storage service, which LastPass uses to store archived backups of the production data.

Based on the investigation to date, the company has learned that an unknown threat actor accessed a cloud-based storage environment leveraging information obtained from the incident that was previously disclosed in August 2022. Though no customer data was accessed during the August 2022 incident, some source code and technical information were stolen from the development environment and used to target another employee, obtaining

credentials and keys which were used to access and decrypt some storage volumes within the cloud-based storage service.

The company has determined that when the cloud storage access key and dual storage container decryption keys were obtained, the threat actor copied information from a backup that contained basic customer account information and related metadata including company names, end-user names, billing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, and the IP addresses from which the customers were accessing the LastPass service.

LastPass production services are currently operating from on-premises data centers with cloud-based storage used for various purposes such as storing backups and regional data residency requirements. The cloud storage service accessed by the threat actor is physically separate from the production environment.

Source: [LastPass Notice](#)

Linux Kernel Vulnerability



Researchers from the Zero Day Initiative have detected a critical use-after-free remote code execution vulnerability in Linux kernel Server Message Block (SMB) server, ksmbd. The issue lies in the way SMB2_TREE_DISCONNECT commands are processed. The issue results from the lack of validating the existence of an object prior to performing operations on the object. An attacker can leverage this vulnerability to execute code in the kernel context.

This new program, which was introduced to the kernel in 2021, was developed by Samsung. Its point was to deliver speedy SMB3 file-serving performance. SMB is used in Windows in Linux, via Samba as a vital file server protocol. Ksmbd is not intended to replace Samba but to complement it. Samba and ksmbd developers are working on getting the programs to work in concert.

Source: [Zdnet](#)

US Federal Government Will Investigate Southwest Airlines Cancellations



The US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said on Dec. 28 that his agency will investigate what caused a large number of flight cancellations over the holiday weekend. The company's pilot and flight attendant unions said that Southwest ignored the need to upgrade its outdated computer systems, which contributed to the airline's troubles in the face of winter storms.

The wave of cancellations continued to frustrate thousands of travelers, as Southwest scrubbed roughly 2,500 flights on Dec. 28 and Dec. 29 while trying to recover from a meltdown that left it under growing scrutiny from lawmakers and federal regulators.

Source: [The Washington Post](#)

Thousands of Citrix Servers Remain Unpatched



Within the past two months, Citrix has released updates to address two critical flaws: unauthorized access to gateway user capabilities (CVE-2022-27510) and unauthenticated remote arbitrary code execution (CVE-2022-27518). Although Citrix released fixes for the flaws on November 8, 2022 (CVE-2022-27510) and December 13, 2022 (CVE-2022-27518), thousands of Citrix Application Delivery Controller (ADC) and Gateway endpoints are still unpatched.

Citrix and the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) warned that CVE-2022-27518 is being actively exploited in the wild by threat actors, including the China-linked APT5 state-sponsored group.

A country-wise breakdown shows that more than 40% of servers located in Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, France, Singapore, Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. have been updated. However, only 20% of nearly 550 servers have been patched in China.

Fox-IT said it was able to deduce the version information from an MD5-like hash value present in the HTTP response of the login URL (i.e., "ns_gui/vpn/index.html") and map it to their respective versions.

Source: [The Hacker News](#)

Toronto Children's Hospital Ransomware Attack



An apparent ransomware attack affecting the network of the Toronto (Canada) Hospital for Sick Children caused delays in the treatment and diagnostic services. The attack occurred on December 19, 2022. Hackers targeted the hospital's network on Dec. 19, forcing it to take down its affected network for recovery. Popularly known as SickKids, the hospital is one of Canada's largest research-focused centers for children.

In a statement, the hospital said the hack affected a few of its internal clinical and corporate systems, as well as some hospital phone lines and web pages. The hospital did not provide details on the ransomware attack but said at the time the incident did not result in any user data leaks.

According to the latest update, the hospital has acknowledged that while it has restored some of the affected systems, such as phone lines and websites, it will take a few more weeks to completely restore all services. As a result, some patients "may still experience diagnostic and/or treatment delays," the hospital said.

Source: [GovInfoSecurity](#)



Did you visit ChatGPT – The New AI Chatbot that answers complex questions, programs computers, and more



Another AI tool stokes excitement and concerns with its ability to answer complex questions. ChatGPT is a new chat-based tool built by research lab OpenAI that answers to questions with conversational dialogue. Those who have used Siri or Alexa and at times had to rephrase questions to get the answers out could be delighted by the natural language abilities of ChatGPT. The tool lets you type questions in natural language and the chatbot gives conversational yet slightly stilted answers. The bot remembers the thread of your dialogue using previous questions and answers to the next responses. Its answers are derived from the huge volume of information on the internet.

ChatGPT is not a perfect substitute for doing your own research. It does not separate fact from fiction, as CNET science editor Jackson Ryan noted while stating its current weaknesses in critical thinking.

Source: [OpenAI](#)

Amazon Plans to Eliminate Barcode



Barcodes are in use for almost 50 years now. The first item marked with the Universal Product Code (UPC) was scanned in 1974 at the checkout of Marsh Supermarket in Troy, Ohio. The first product to have a barcode was Wrigley's Gum. But for Amazon, it's not good enough.

Robots may be the future but sometimes barcodes are difficult to find and are affixed to oddly shaped products. As a result, it is a challenge for robots to troubleshoot barcodes.

Hence, the company is working on eliminating barcodes according to the latest news post by Amazon Science on December 09, 2022.

Using pictures of items in Amazon warehouses to train a computer model, the company has developed a camera system that can monitor items flowing down the conveyor belts to make sure they match their images. Eventually, Amazon's AI experts and roboticists want to combine the technology with robots that identify items while picking up and turning them around.

"Robots can pick up items and process them without needing to find and scan a barcode. It will help us get packages to customers more quickly and accurately", said Nontas Antonakos, applied science manager of Amazon Computer Vision group in Berlin, Germany.

The system, called multi-modal identification, shall not fully replace barcodes very soon. Products in Amazon warehouses will require to have barcodes as long as external companies that make and ship them rely on the technology to identify and track stock. Amazon's new system is currently in use in facilities in Barcelona, Spain and Hamburg, Germany.

Source: [Amazon Science](#)

iPhone Overtakes Android in the US Smartphone Market



Google slides to second position to Apple in the Android vs. iPhone war for the first time in over a decade of the US smartphone market. The open-source operating system which runs the majority of devices could not outsell the iPhone stateside. Citing data from market research and industry analysis firm Counterpoint Research, the Financial Times reports that iPhone took over the entire Android ecosystem in June 2022 to claim 50 percent of the US market share. In doing so, Apple achieved its highest-ever share of the American smartphone market. Apple claimed the spot on the back of the iPhone's "active installed base," a metric that accounts all the people who are using an iOS device after purchasing one used.

The US, Canada, and Japan are the only countries where Apple has an edge over Android. Android dominates everywhere else, usually by a wide margin. Though Android's chances to reclaim the US crown may appear bleak, there is reason to be optimistic. Google is building an ecosystem to surround the Pixel 7 with the introduction of the Pixel Watch and a Pixel tablet is expected to come this year.

Google probably has nothing to worry about because iPhone has always had a strong presence in the US compared to other markets. However, the company is likely looking at the situation closely. "This is a big milestone that we could see replicated in other affluent countries across the globe," said Jeff Fieldhack, Counterpoint Research Director to The Times.

Source: [CNET](#)

iOS16.2 – What's New in the iPhone Upgrade?



What's better - iOS or Android? If you are on team iOS, then you will have more reasons to advocate your favorite smartphone operating system. Apple's new upgrade iOS 16.2 has much more in store for iPhone users. You can be more productive, get more entertainment and lots more with the new iPhone upgrade.

The new update includes Freeform, a whiteboarding tool where you can brainstorm together with your friends and colleagues across Mac, iPad, or iPhone. You can attach files, add ideas, flowcharts and discuss any abstract concept on the whiteboard with your team. The tool is flexible which allows you to collaborate and brainstorm ideas together.

Another feature that is even more attractive than whiteboarding is karaoke. The new update "Apple Music Sing" is a singalong feature to the Apple Music app. It also has a new lock screen function where you will be able to hide wallpaper or notifications.

A few useful widgets are also included in the new update. There is a sleep widget that informs you about your sleep data. A medication widget that reminds you of when to take your medicine. The activity widget lets you see what games your friends are playing from the home screen.

Now you will also be able to play with your friends while facetimeing them. The new update includes Shareplay support for multiplayer games in Game center. You can call up your friends and play together while talking on facetime.

The new iOS 16.2 update has improved the security of iCloud. It increased the number of data categories protected under end-to-end encryption. Finally, there are a few bug fixes and other minor improvements.

Source: [CNET](#)

Will Elon Musk Quit as Twitter CEO?



Twitter CEO Elon Musk tweets to resign from his post when he finds a replacement or in his words, someone "foolish enough to take the job". Elon Musk has promised to abide by the result of a Twitter poll which saw 57.5% of users say "yes" to him quitting the role. Musk claims to still run the software and servers teams after his replacement is found.

Changes on the Twitter platform since his takeover in October 2022 have been heavily criticized.

Civil liberties groups have also criticized his approach to content moderation, accusing him of taking steps that increase hate speech and misinformation. Musk was also condemned by the United Nations and European Union over Twitter's decision to suspend the accounts of some journalists who cover the social media firm. The UN tweeted that media freedom is not a toy and the EU threatened Twitter with sanctions.

In addition, some investors have speculated that he might not be able to manage Tesla – his electric car firm in which he personally participates in engineering and production.

According to Musk, finding someone to take over the Twitter platform may be a challenge. After laying off Twitter staff in November 2022, Musk reportedly told remaining workers that the company could see a net negative cash flow of several billion dollars in 2023.

Source: [BBC NEWS](#)

Elon Musk sells \$3.6bn of Tesla shares amid shrinking share value



Recently, Elon Musk lost his top position as the world's richest person. After his takeover of Twitter, electric car maker Tesla has seen its share prices fall. Last year, Tesla was worth \$1 tn. After Musk's buyout of Twitter, Tesla's share prices have slumped. Investors fear that Twitter's buyout will take away attention from Tesla.

Before purchasing Twitter, Elon Musk sold a vast number of Tesla shares to aid his purchase. It was reported that 19.5 million shares worth \$3.95 bn were sold a few days after completing the purchase of Twitter. Elon Musk had to go through a legal tussle to own Twitter, which further slumped the value of Tesla shares.

Another factor contributing to falling share prices is the weakening of economy. As economy weakens, the demand for electric vehicles may go down. Investors fear that higher borrowing costs may discourage the buyer and lean them towards other sellers of electric vehicles. Another concern for investors is the number of recalls of the vehicles, governments increasing probe into crashes and the autopilot features of Tesla cars.

Adding to this crashing share prices, recently Elon Musk has sold another huge chunk (i.e., twenty-two million) of his shares in Tesla worth \$3.6 bn. Over the past year, Musk has sold \$40 bn worth of shares of the electric car maker Tesla. The reason for the sale of so many of his shares is not yet disclosed.

Source: [BBC NEWS](#)

Sharing Live Location is Prohibited on Twitter



After Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter, a lot of changes came in the bird app. From staff changes to policy changes, a lot has changed, and a lot is still changing. Several accounts were suspended recently because of a policy update from Twitter. The update was regarding posting or linking a person's physical location. Twitter prohibited posting or sharing a person's live location, regardless of whether the information is available publicly.

As a result of this update, an account @ElonJet belonging to a Florida college student Jack Sweeney was suspended. Jack Sweeney used the account to track the location of the billionaire's private jet. Sweeney had several similar accounts which tracked the location of private planes of Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, and Bill Gates. After the privacy policy update, Sweeney's personal account as well as several of his accounts like @ElonJet were suspended.

In response to the update, Elon Musk tweeted that his son got involved in a crazy stalking incident. He said that the car in which his son was travelling was blocked from moving. He further tweeted that any account location doxing in real time would be prohibited as it puts the person at physical risk.

Earlier in 2022, Elon Musk had offered \$5000 to Jack Sweeney to take down the account. However, the 20-year-old denied the offer stating amount did not compensate for the satisfaction he received from doing his work.

Source: [CNET](#)

Rolls Royce Tests Running Jet Engine by Hydrogen Fuel



Aviation industry is one of the sectors that contribute to carbon emissions. It consumes the most traditional fuel which in turn leaves a huge amount of carbon behind. To reduce this high carbon emission, Rolls Royce tried out a much greener fuel Hydrogen, to run a jet engine in a military site on Salisbury Plain.

The jet engine is conventional and has a Rolls-Royce AE-2100A gas turbine which is the most widely used design for regional airplanes around the world. The only unconventional element of this test run is the fuel. This is for the first time when hydrogen was used as fuel to run a modern aircraft engine. Rolls Royce in collaboration with the airline EasyJet conducted the tests. The engine was devoid of any bodywork with all its intricate wiring and pipework exposed. It was securely fastened to a sturdy test rig while the engineers stayed at a safe distance in a control room.

The objective of the test is to prove that it is possible to run and control a jet engine using hydrogen fuel. The ultimate objective is to cut down carbon emissions by using hydrogen power to fuel the aviation industry.

Alan Newby, director of aerospace technology at Rolls-Royce said, "The reason we are looking at hydrogen is really the drive for Net Zero. The beauty of looking at a fuel like hydrogen is that it does not contain any carbon and, therefore, when it burns it produces no CO₂".

David Morgan, chief operating officer at easyJet said, "We started a few years ago looking at what might power the future of aircraft. We looked at battery technology and it was quite clear that the battery technology was not going to do it for the large commercial aircraft that we fly. We have concluded that hydrogen is a very exciting proposition for us."

Source: [BBC NEWS](#)



THE LATEST NEWS ON COVID-19

A new variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading in the U.S., raising concerns about a potential wave of infections and reinfections to start the new year.

The variant, called XBB.1.5, is a descendant of Omicron and a close relative of the XBB variant, which spread widely in Singapore and India this past fall. A December study in the journal *Cell* demonstrated that XBB is better at evading immune defenses gained from vaccination and prior infection, compared to other variants.

Along with its adeptness at getting around immune blockades, XBB.1.5 is projected to be transmissible based on key mutations picked up while the virus evolved. Such tweaks are raising concerns about a surge in cases this winter – particularly due to low rates of booster uptake and relaxed disease-mitigation measures.

How widespread is XBB.1.5 in the U.S.?

During the week ending Dec. 31, 2022, XBB.1.5 accounted for 40.5% of new sequenced COVID-19 cases in the U.S., according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

National representative diagnostic data from Walgreens, a COVID-19 testing provider across the U.S., shows almost 40% of tests are now coming back positive, though it's not possible to say how many of those infections were due to XBB.1.5. Hospitalizations are also starting to tick upward nationwide, according to CDC data.

Do vaccines and treatments work against XBB.1.5?

While there isn't much data on XBB.1.5 yet, but research on its relative XBB provides some clues. Research recently published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (based on a small number of people) suggests that XBB is more immune-evasive than previous versions of the virus. People who have received the updated bivalent booster are better protected against it than those who have not.

Only 15% of people in the U.S. under age 5 and older have gotten a bivalent booster, indicating many people are currently not as protected as they could be against the new variant, according to CDC.

Whether or not monoclonal antibody treatments are effective against XBB.1.5 is another concern. In the fall of 2022, federal health officials acknowledged that some monoclonal antibody therapies do not work well against newer variants, which is particularly concerning for immunocompromised people who do not respond well to vaccines. The recent *Cell* study found that these therapies largely did not work against XBB, which suggests the same may be true for XBB.1.5.

Will XBB.1.5 lead to a new wave of Long COVID cases?

The virus can affect anyone infected by SARS-CoV-2, including those who are vaccinated and initially had mild disease. Some data suggests that people infected by earlier Omicron variants were less likely to develop long COVID than those who caught Delta. But if XBB.1.5 spreads widely, even a small percentage of people developing long-term complications could mean lots of new Long COVID cases.

To track the current number of cases across the globe, visit the WHO Coronavirus dashboard at <https://covid19.who.int/>

Vaccination Status

According to [Our World in Data](#) reports, 69.1% of the global population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

13.18 billion doses have been administered worldwide and 2.35 million doses are administered every day.

25.9% of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.



ISSQUARED

WEAR A MASK

FOR YOUR SAFETY AND OTHERS'