

NHS contact tracing, delayed SpaceX launch and other news

Maddyness provides you with a quick digest of three news items to keep you up to date with the startup scene, emerging trends and other noteworthy stories.

The NHS contact-tracing app is officially launched

The NHS Test and Trace service is now live in England with 25K contact tracing staff and the capacity to trace 10K contacts per day. According to Health Secretary Matt Hancock, the Government waited to launch the contact tracing app until now because it needed to “flatten the curve of infections first”.

The NHS contact tracing app is still being trialled on the Isle of Wight and will form part of the new Test and Trace strategy in the coming weeks with people on the Isle of Wight being asked to download it to their smartphones in a pilot.

The app is designed to alert people to potential exposure to coronavirus as part of the government’s plan to shape how and when the UK ends lockdown. The strategy aims to test people to uncover the virus, track how and where the virus is spreading, trace people who may be infected.

SpaceX and Nasa postpone the launch of Crew Dragon to Saturday

Yesterday Astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley boarded a Crew Dragon capsule built by Elon Musk's California-based company SpaceX hoping to take off, but the mission was aborted 17 minutes before the launch time.

Officially, SpaceX and Nasa were set to launch the Crew Dragon spacecraft in the evening with the Falcon 9 rocket due to lift off from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, bound for the International Space Station.

But Nasa had to abort its mission to the International Space Station on Wednesday afternoon due to poor weather, delaying a historic event that would have marked the first crewed launch from US soil in almost a decade. The launch is however rescheduled for Saturday 30th May.

Two UK startups partner to build a huge battery factory

Battery specialists [AMTE Power](#) and [Britishvolt](#) plan to collaborate to build the UK's first full cycle battery cell *GigaPlant*, servicing the automotive and energy storage markets. Both parties have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) focussed on each other's complementary ambitions to create and expand an onshore manufacturing supply chain.

"We are delighted to be working with Britishvolt exploring the creation of a large scale manufacturing facility in the UK, and thank APC for introducing us. The recent global crisis has further highlighted the importance of having a robust onshore supply chain, and the creation of a GigaPlant would place the UK in a strong position to service automotive and energy storage markets."

The scalable production of lithium ion cells is key to electrifying vehicles and would drive new manufacturing revenues and new employment, and can be built on AMTE's focus on the supply of specialised cells, thereby continuing the country's tradition of excellence in battery cell innovation." – Kevin Brundish, CEO of AMTE Power

The partnership will enable scalable production of a diverse product portfolio of lithium-ion batteries to support the country's Road to Zero targets and unprecedented transition to electrification.

"Aligning our objectives with AMTE Power, who are looking to add to their current manufacturing capabilities in the UK, our ambition is to build a 30+ gigawatt-hour factory with the support of the British Government, creating up to 4,000 jobs in the process. Meeting Road to Zero targets and moving the UK into a low carbon economy will necessitate the unprecedented electrification of vehicles, and reliance on renewable energy will require extensive battery storage. It is costly and carbon-intensive to have lithium-ion batteries imported from the Far East, and this GigaPlant would cement a solid onshore supply chain to ensure quality and

eliminate future uncertainty of supply.” – Lars Carlstrom, CEO of Britishvolt

The unc0ver team releases a new “jailbreak” to unlock any iPhone

The unc0ver team has released a new “jailbreak” tool that unlocks every iPhone, even the most recent models running the latest iOS 13.5. For as long as Apple has kept up its “walled garden” approach to iPhones by only allowing apps and customizations that it approves, hackers have tried to break free from what they call the “jail,” hence the name “jailbreak.”

Hackers do this by finding a previously undisclosed vulnerability in iOS that break through some of the many restrictions that Apple puts in place to prevent access to the underlying software, for safety. But jailbreakers say breaking through those restrictions allows them to customize their iPhones more than they would otherwise, in a way that most Android users are already accustomed to.

#unc0ver v5.0.0 is NOW OUT.

— @Pwn20wnd (@Pwn20wnd) *May 23, 2020*

The jailbreak supports all iPhones that run iOS 11 and above, including up to iOS 13.5, which Apple released this week. Details of the vulnerability that the hackers used to build the jailbreak aren’t known, but it’s not expected to last forever: as jailbreakers work to find a way in, Apple works fast to close the jailbreak. Security experts typically advise iPhone users against jailbreaking, because breaking out of the “walled garden” vastly increases the surface area for new vulnerabilities to exist and to be found.

