



A first look at 2021

A PREVIEW OF THE YEAR WE'VE HAD

Although there are still weeks left in 2021, we're excited to share with you a first look at the year we've had at ISRG—from issuing our second billionth certificate to launching two new projects in addition to Let's Encrypt, it's been a successful year.

If you'd like to ensure you receive the full 2021 Annual Report, [subscribe to our newsletter](#); we'll only email you a handful of times each year.



JOSH AAS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

From ideas to implementations

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We can do a lot to improve security and privacy on the Internet by taking existing ideas and applying them in ways that benefit the general public at scale. Our work certainly does involve some research, as our name implies, but the success we've had in pursuing our mission largely comes from our ability to go from ideas to implementations that improve the lives of billions of people around the world.

Our first major project, Let's Encrypt, now helps to protect more than 260 million websites by offering free and fully automated TLS certificate issuance and management. Since it launched in 2015, encrypted page loads have gone from under 40% to 92% in the U.S. and 83% globally.

We didn't invent certificate authorities. We didn't invent automated issuance and management. We refined those ideas and applied them in ways that benefit the general public at scale.

We launched our Prossimo project in late 2020. Our hope is that this project will greatly improve security and privacy on the Internet by making memory safety vulnerabilities in the Internet's most critical a thing of the past. We're bringing a healthy dose of ambition to the table and we're backing it up with effective strategies and strong partnerships.

Again, we didn't invent any memory safe languages or techniques, and we certainly didn't invent memory safety itself. We're simply taking existing ideas and applying them in ways that benefit the general public at scale. We're getting the work done.

With our latest project, Privacy Preserving Metrics (PPM), the core ideas are a bit newer than the ideas behind our other projects, but we didn't invent them either. Over the past decade or so some bright people have come up with a way to resolve the tension between wanting to collect metrics about populations and needing to collect data about individuals.

We believe those ideas have matured enough that it's time to deploy them to the public's benefit. We started by building and deploying a PPM service for Covid-19 Exposure Notification applications in late 2020, in partnership with Apple, Google, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Linux Foundation. We're expanding that service so any application can collect metrics in a privacy-preserving way.

Being ready to bring ideas to life means a few different things.

We need to have an excellent engineering team that knows how to build services at scale. It's not enough to just build something that works - the quality and reliability of our work needs to inspire confidence. People need to be able to rely on us.

We also need to have the experience, perspective, and capacity to effectively consider ideas. We are not an organization that "throws things at the wall to see what sticks." Between our staff,

our board of directors, our partners, and our community, we're able to do a great job evaluating opportunities to understand technical feasibility, potential impact, and alignment with our public benefit mission—to reduce financial, technological, and educational barriers to secure communication over the Internet.

"THE SUCCESS WE'VE HAD IN PURSUING OUR MISSION LARGELY COMES FROM OUR ABILITY TO GO FROM IDEAS TO IMPLEMENTATIONS THAT IMPROVE THE LIVES OF BILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD."

Administrative and communications capabilities are essential. From fundraising and accounting to legal and social media, our administrative teams exist in order to support and amplify the critical work that we do. We're proud to run a financially efficient organization that provides services for billions of people on only a few million dollars each year.

Finally, it means having the financial resources we need to function. As a nonprofit, 100% of our funding comes from charitable contributions from people like you and organizations around the world. But global impact doesn't necessarily require million dollar checks: since 2015 tens of thousands of people have given to our work. They've made a case for corporate sponsorship, given through their DAFs, or set up recurring donations, sometimes to give \$3 a month. That's all added up to \$17M that we've used to change the Internet for nearly everyone using it. I hope you'll join these people and [support us financially if you can](#).

JOSH AAS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





TOBI LÜTKE
FOUNDER & CEO | SHOPIFY

"Let's Encrypt makes it
easy for *everyone* to do the
right thing to secure the
Internet. We couldn't be
happier to give our support
to such a great effort."

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