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by **Evan Schuman**
Contributor

IonQ's \$1.2 billion acquisition of Elisity is trying to position it for quantum cybersecurity

News

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Analysts argue that the product integration will be difficult, and also saw the move as being more about buying existing Elisity customers than the technology itself.



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When quantum vendor IonQ on Sunday announced a \$1.2 billion all stock deal to take over cybersecurity vendor Elisity, it spoke of a near-term future where enterprise quantum cybersecurity needs will move beyond replacing to-be-outdated encryption.

The acquisition brings together IonQ's post-quantum cryptography (PQC) and quantum key distribution (QKD) capabilities and Elisity's enterprise Zero Trust technology platform, **IonQ** [<https://www.networkworld.com/article/3846145/ionq-alice-bob-roll-out-quantum-breakthroughs.html>] said in **a news release** [<https://ionq.com/news/ionq-to-acquire-elisity-to-accelerate-zero-trust-for-the-quantum-era>]. "On a combined basis, IonQ will benefit from an expanded cybersecurity platform that both uncovers and protects against present LLM and emerging quantum threats."

The news release pointed to more than 100 global Elisity customers, and said IonQ expects to receive "expanded channels to bring its PQC, QKD and quantum computing offerings to market for both enterprise and government networks, opening up the more than \$10 billion microsegmentation market." Analysts and consultants saw the move as having potential, but pointed to technical challenges of truly integrating the product lines.

"What IonQ gets today is access. Dividing the headline price by those deployments puts it at about \$13 million each," said **Frank Dickson** [<https://www.linkedin.com/in/frankdickson/>], principal analyst at Dickson Research. "That is a steep price for a Rolodex, if you will. Paying in its own stock makes the price easier for IonQ to swallow."

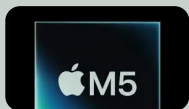
Dickson said that Elisity, which was founded in 2019, has focused on zero trust microsegmentation.

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"In plain terms, it limits each user, device, workload, and AI agent to only the network connections it needs. An attacker who gets in cannot roam freely," Dickson said. "Its software enforces those rules over the network a customer already owns, without new hardware. That is a solid business aimed at attacks happening today. Little of it has anything to do with quantum."

Justin Greis [<https://acceligence.com/talent/profiles/justin-greis/>], CEO of consulting firm Acceligen, added that the pairing could be effective for enterprise CISOs, assuming the internal tech integration issues can be overcome.

"Bringing those capabilities together could create a compelling platform, particularly as enterprises contend with increasingly complex environments, autonomous AI agents, and a growing number of non-human identities," Greis said. "But these are different layers of protection, and integrating them into a cohesive offering will require meaningful engineering and execution."

Brian Jackson [<https://www.infotech.com/profiles/brian-jackson/>], a principal research director at Info-Tech Research Group, also noted that part of the move speaks to IonQ's need for revenue while quantum is ramping up.

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“IonQ’s core quantum computing business is still years from broad commercial payoff, so this reads as a move to build revenue in adjacent security markets where customers are already buying,” he said. “The quantum link is thinner than the announcement suggests. Post-quantum cryptography runs on classical systems, so migration depends on cryptographic inventory and crypto-agility, not quantum computing expertise.”

Paul Smith-Goodson [<https://moorinsightsstrategy.com/team/paul-smith-goodson/>], VP/principal analyst at Moor Insights & Strategy, agreed that the potential benefits from the acquisition are real, but he added that quantum requirements from the US government are also a key factor.

“At the architectural level, integrating Elisity with IonQ’s PQC and QKD establishes an end-to-end defense capable of neutralizing future CRQC [Cryptographically Relevant Quantum Computer] threats,” Smith-Goodson said. “Elisity also hands IonQ an immediate, established enterprise sales pipeline of trusted CISO relationships. That will allow IonQ to cross-sell its broader quantum portfolio and capitalize on federal PQC migration mandates.”

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