

# Market Announcement | 18 April 2023

## 1Q23 Business Update

Freelancer Limited delivers Gross Payment Volume in 1Q23 of \$311.7 million, down 4.6% on pcp. However, GPV was up 33.9% on 4Q22.

- Freelancer GMV \$32.2m, flat on pcp
- Escrow GPV \$268.6m, down 4.8% on pcp

Group net cash receipts \$13.7m, down 10.4% on pcp:

- Freelancer cash receipts \$11.1m down 10.4% on pcp
- Escrow cash receipts \$2.6m down 10.1% on pcp

The group as a whole was profitable in March.

- Freelancer achieved operating profit in March
- Escrow.com was profitable for 1Q23

FX had a tailwind of 5.5% in 1Q23 as the Australian dollar depreciated against the USD from an average of 0.7237 to 0.6840.

The group had neutral net operating cash flow of  $-\$(0.1)$  million for 1Q23 (1Q22:\$1.7 million) and ended with cash & equivalents of \$22.7 million, down 2.9% on 4Q22.

**SYDNEY, 18 April 2023** - Freelancer Limited (ASX: FLN) (OTCQX: FLNCF), the world's largest freelancing and crowdsourcing marketplace by total number of users and jobs posted, today released its business and activities update for 1Q23.

The Freelancer Group primarily consists of Freelancer.com- the largest cloud workforce in the world, Escrow.com- the world's largest online escrow company, which facilitates and secures large value payments, and Loadshift- Australia's largest online freight marketplace. All are market leading, broad, horizontal service offerings that consumers through to large enterprises require as part of their everyday business.

## Freelancer.com

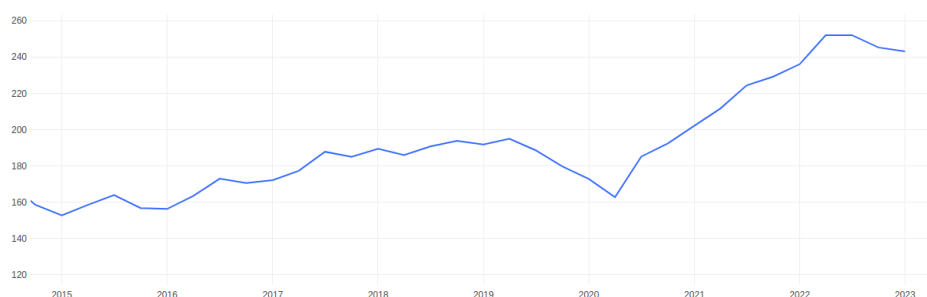


### Summary

Freelancer cash receipts were \$11.1m, down 10.4% on pcp. GMV was flat year on year at \$32.2m. Our focus has been heads down on getting the business unit to profitability and user-facing product. Marketing costs and overall operating costs were down 33.3% and 16.7% on pcp respectively. In March, we got the business into operating profitability.

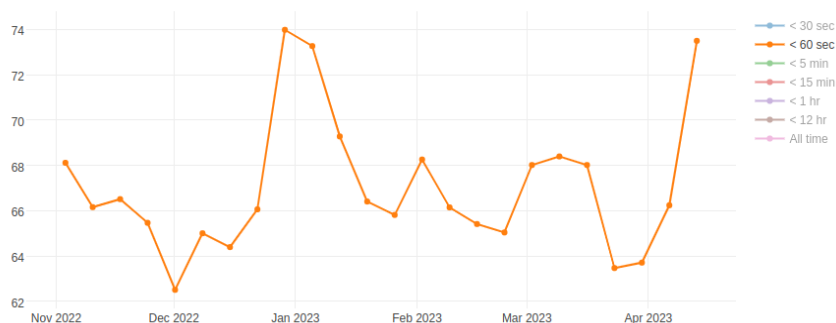
### Marketplace

In 1Q23 we added 1.8m new users and 268k new projects to the marketplace. In 1Q23, the average project size was \$243, up 3% on pcp<sup>1</sup>.



**Figure 1: Average project size (US Dollars)**

Marketplace liquidity remains strong, with a slight recent uptick in the percentage of projects receiving their first bid within 60 seconds to 73.5%.



**Figure 2: Time to first bid (%)**

<sup>1</sup> Metric has been updated to be the total GMV in US Dollars on projects transacted over a given quarter, divided by the count of projects *which have GMV* within the given quarter. The previous definition of all payments to date on a project completed on a certain date lagged (payments continued to accrue on projects later).

## Product & Engineering

Our current focus in 2023 is user-facing product, including:

1. Taking UX & design to the next level: from consistent to delight
2. Collaborative features to drive retention, engagement and growth
3. Personalisation to drive core marketplace conversion
4. Improve acquisition through organic channels

### Taking UX & design to the next level: from consistent to delight

In 2022, the focus of our design team was consistency- UI patterns, UX components. Largely achieving our design goals in 2022, the focus for 2023 is delight- magic in the visual design and UI/UX, that elevates from average to exceptional.

Examples of the team's work so far include seamless infinite scrolling, a revamped news feed interface, new project navigation, alongside a litany of smaller visual and UI improvements. In particular, there is an enhanced focus on the smaller details that bring delight to a users experience- hover-animations, interactive transitions & loading states, and brand-focused imagery.

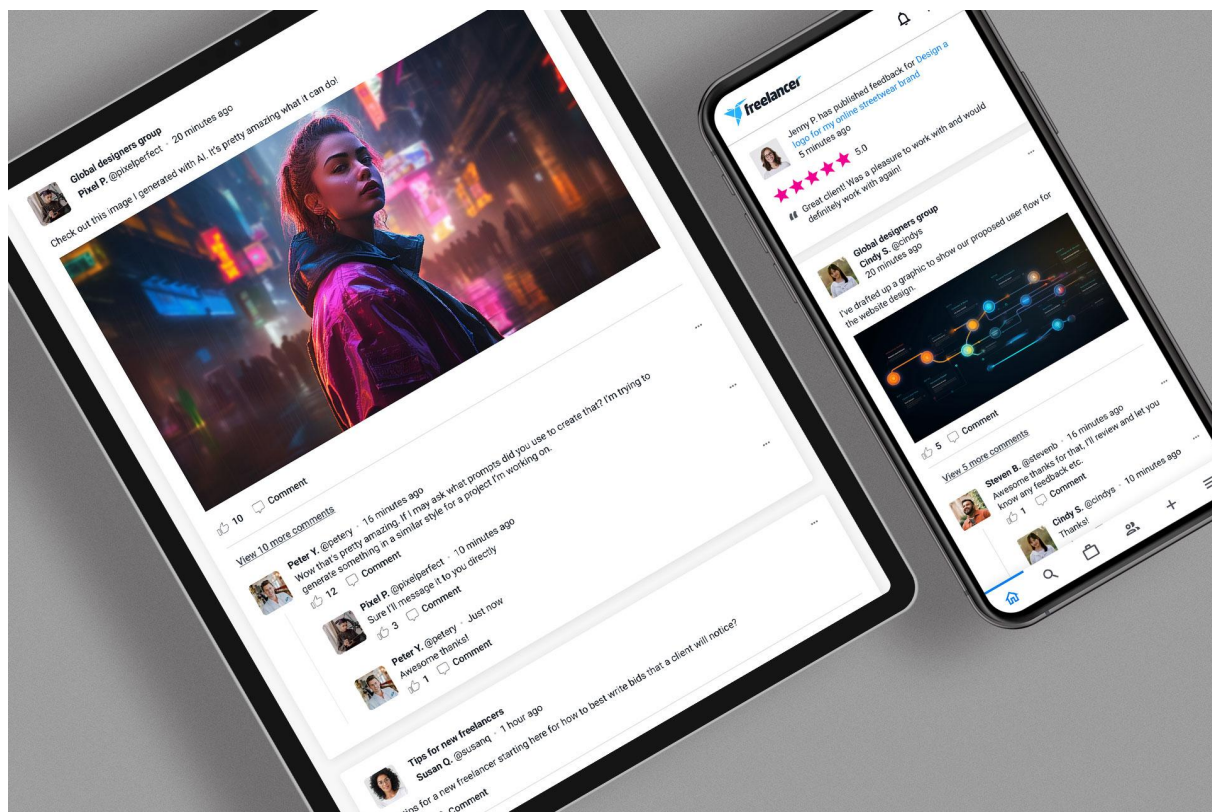
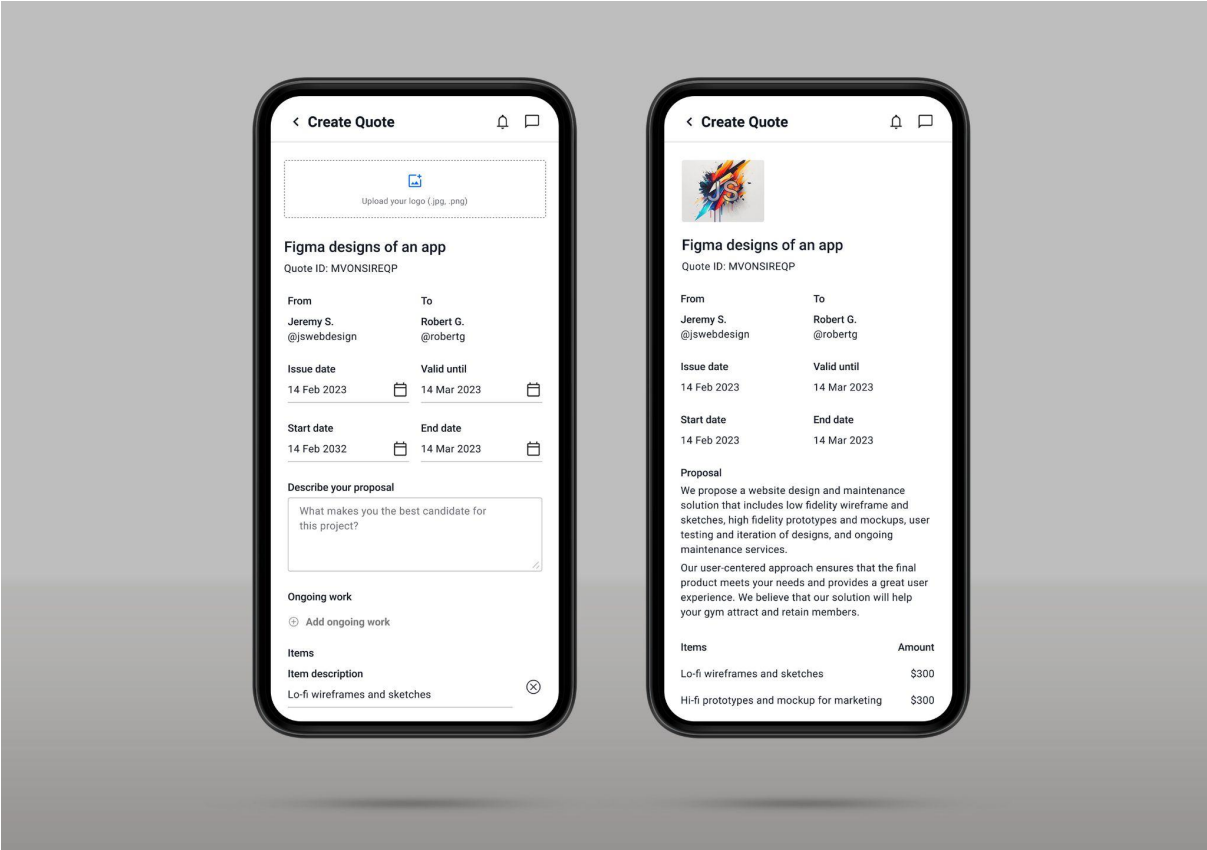
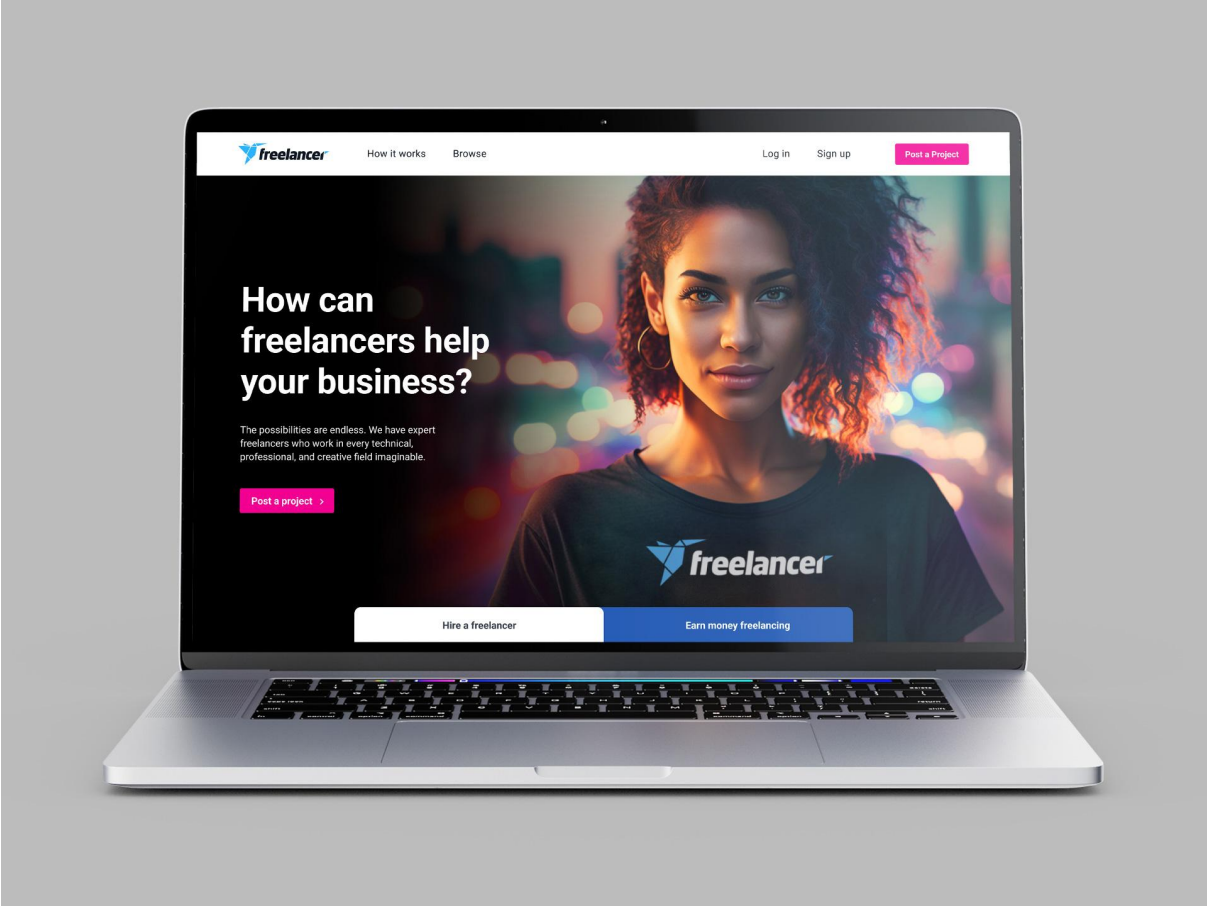


Figure 3: UX improvements



Collaborative features to drive retention, engagement & growth

We are seeing strong lifts in collaboration metrics. Since the launch of our Groups product, engagement in 1Q23 has continued to grow at ~20% month on month. This was achieved through improvements in discovery, product performance, page load times, infinite scrolling, notifications and improving image quality.

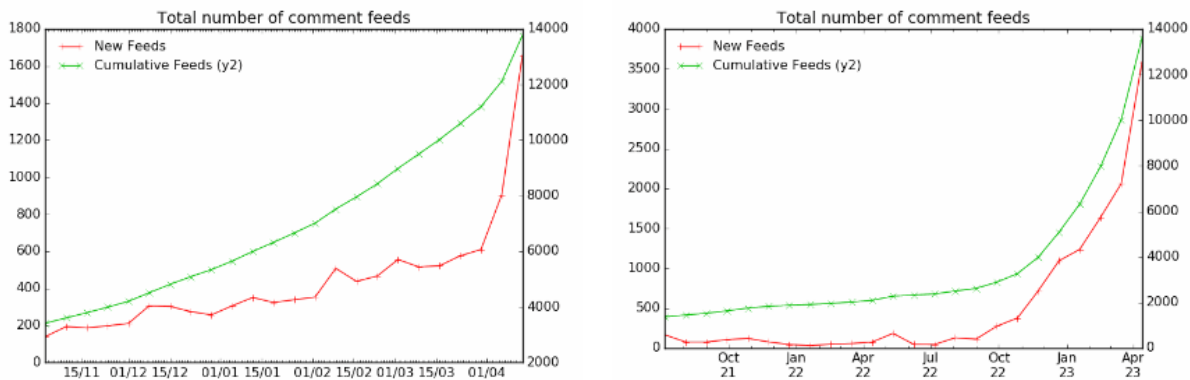


Figure 4: Groups performance

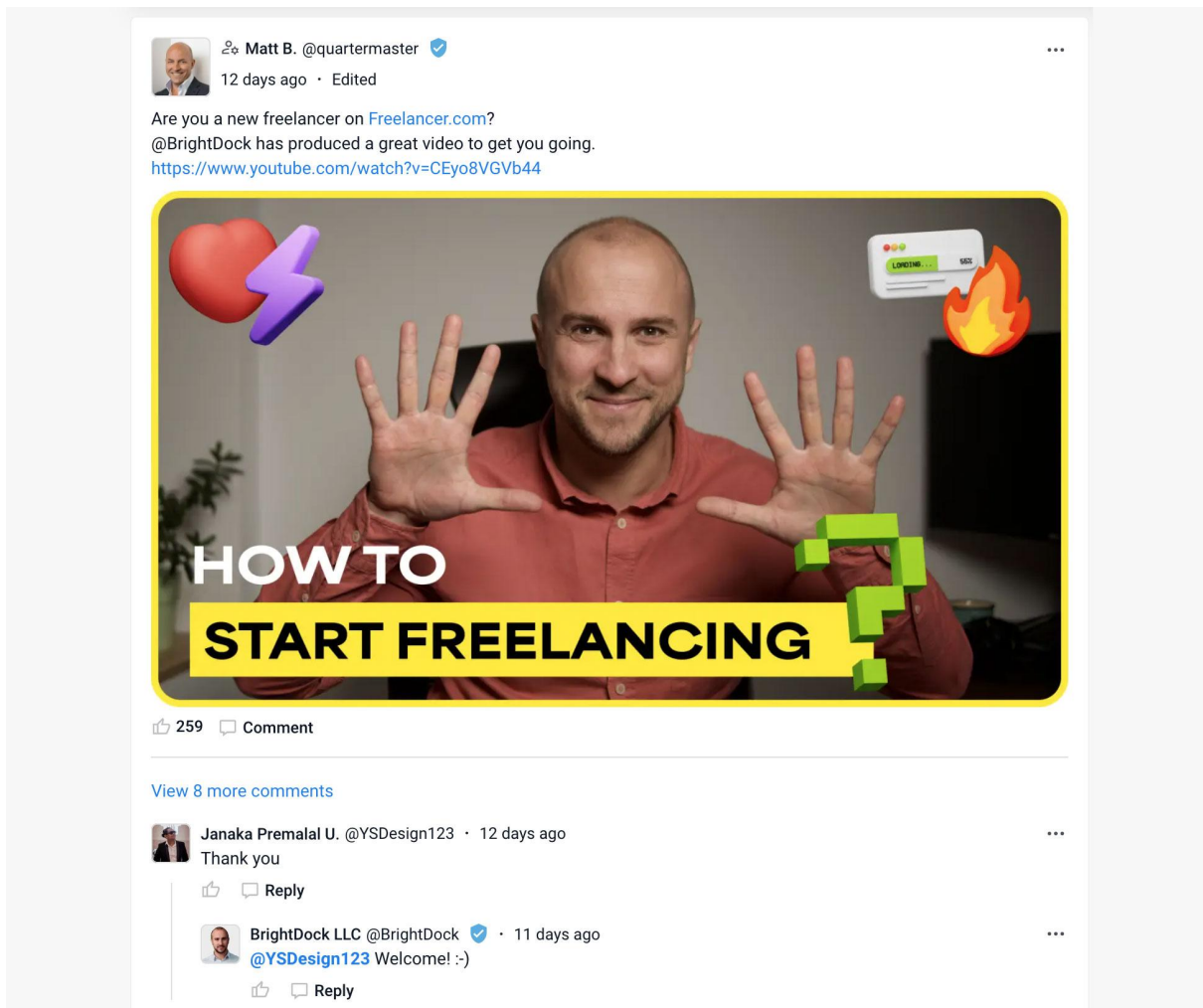


Figure 5: Groups



In addition to the work on our Groups product above, we also worked on improving our voice calling functionality to facilitate better engagement between clients and freelancers. Initial results show a 74% increase in connected calls. Our AB tests show that this should flow to financial metrics.

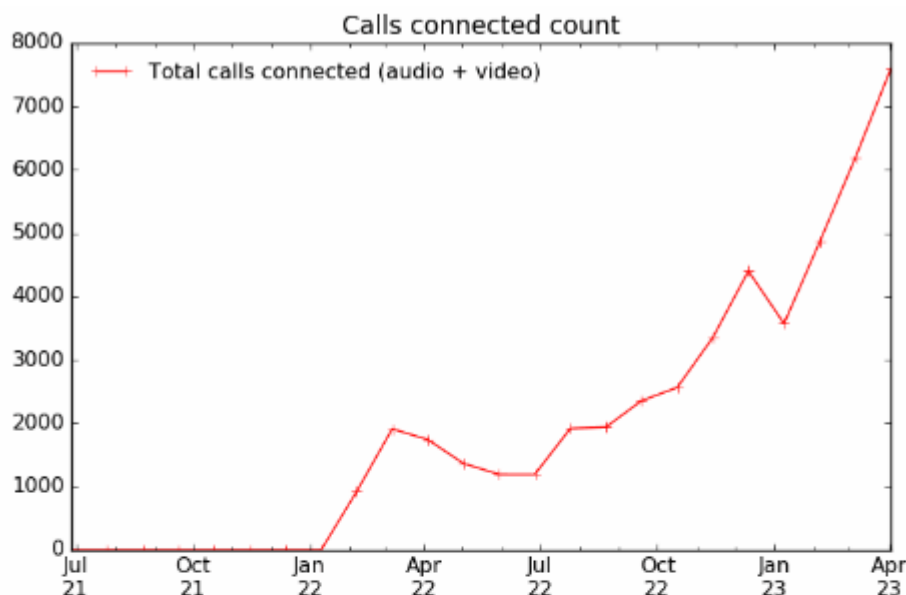


Figure 6: Audio calling performance

### Personalisation to drive core marketplace conversion

The first quarter saw a continuation of our efforts to drive marketplace conversion through personalisation. We are encouraged by a number of the A/B tests we have been running.

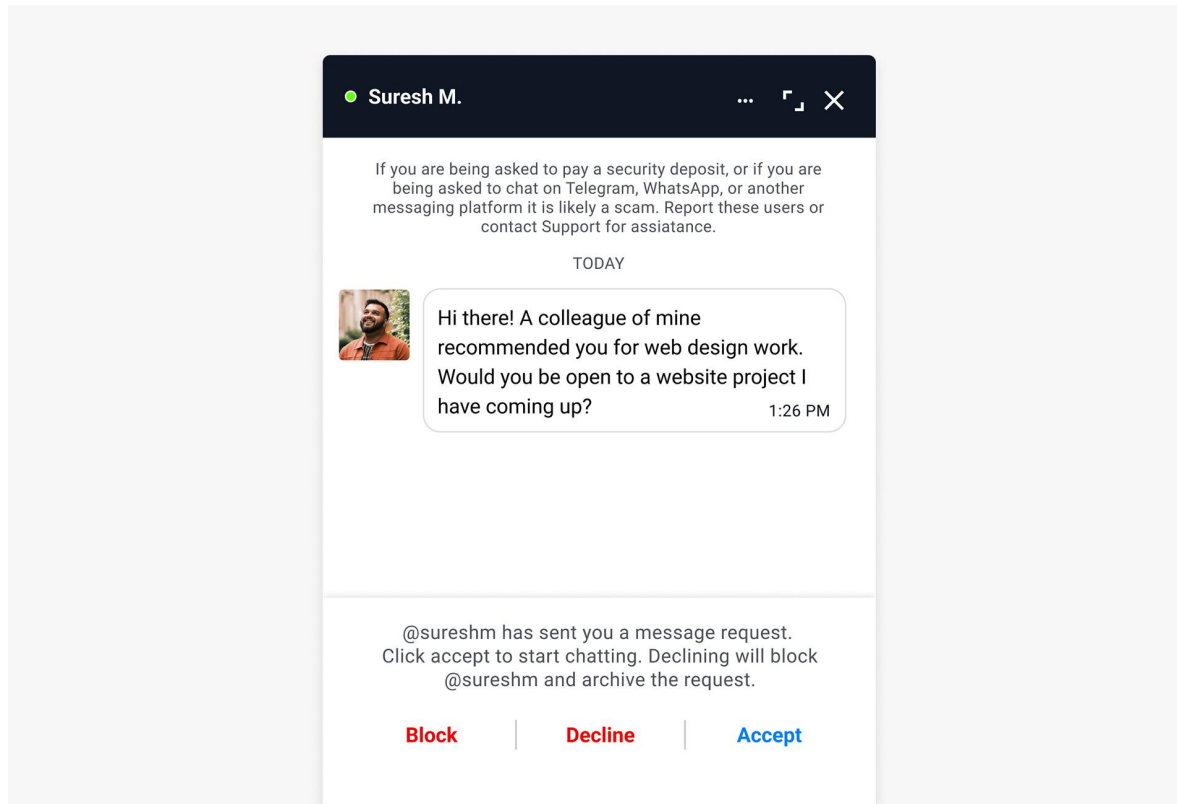
We are working on a substantial number of initiatives in this space, only a small number of which are discussed below:

#### Chat Requests

As discussed in our previous report, in 1Q23 we have begun replacing the “HireMe” funnel with a new funnel based on “Chat Requests”. Instead of a client initiating the project, the client simply starts chatting to the freelancer, and when the time is appropriate, the freelancer sends the client a personalised quotation for the work. This has two major benefits:

- 1) Clients typically do not fully understand the scope or pricing of their work up-front, leading to issues in negotiation
- 2) The prior “HireMe” funnel was a substantial vector for spam and other T&S issues.

Chat Requests, inspired by the approach taken by social networks, fixes both of these issues, and is being progressively rolled out. We aim to complete the roll-out in 2Q23. This will lead to financial performance improvements with the quotations product.

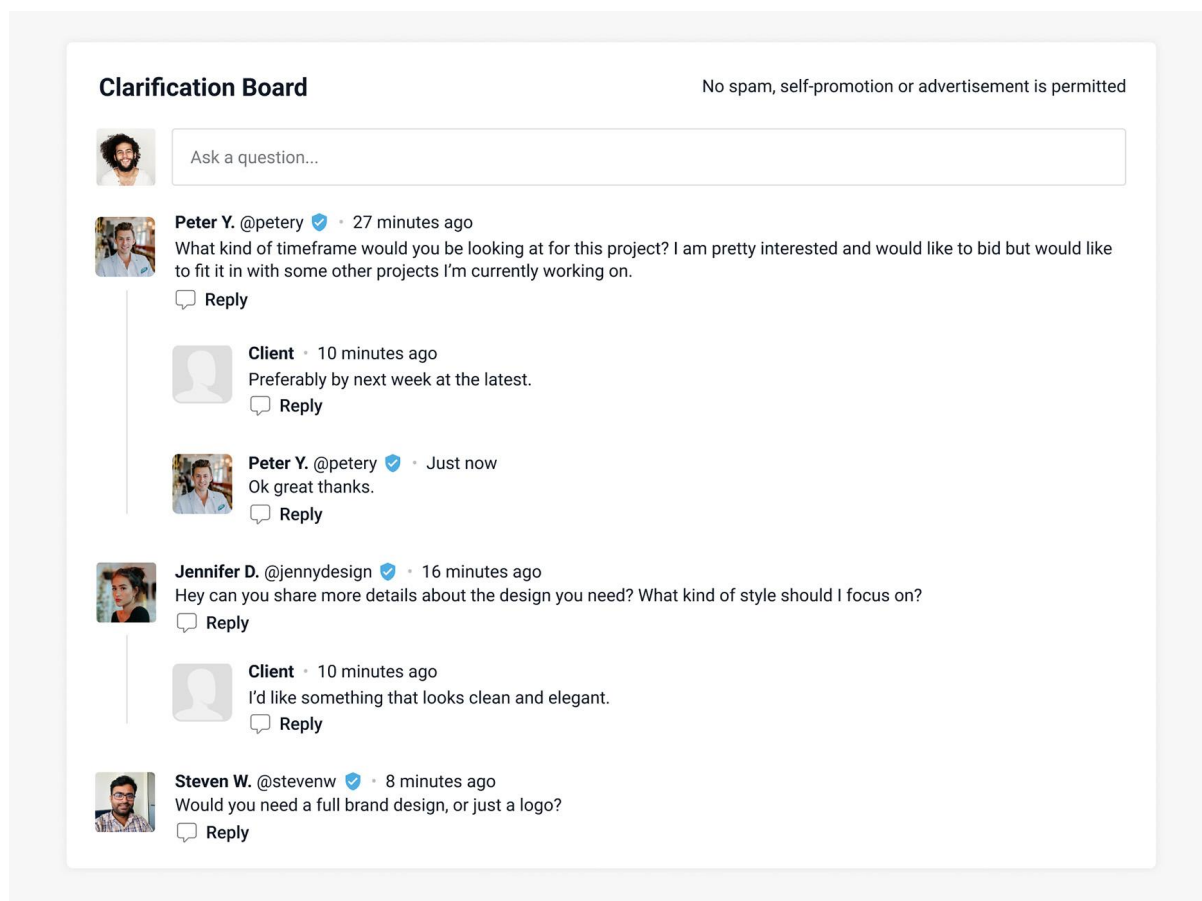


**Figure 7: Chat Requests**

### Project Clarification Board

Lack of key information when bidding is a common problem that our freelancers face. It results in shorter, more generic bids, alongside mispricing of jobs and subsequent difficulties in negotiation.

Leveraging our Groups product, we have begun rolling out a new Project Clarification Board (PCB) that acts as an open forum letting Verified freelancers discuss the details of the project with the client prior to bidding. In addition to improving bid personalisation & quality, and reducing negotiation friction, we believe the PCB will also improve SEO.



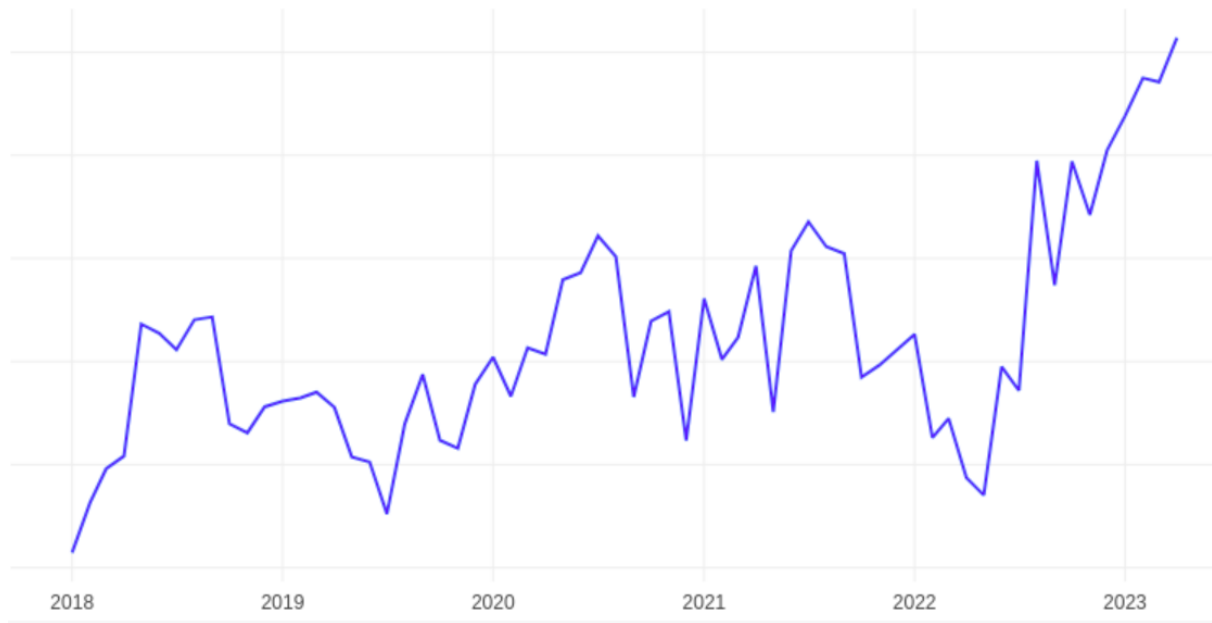
**Figure 8:** Project Clarification Board

## Improve acquisition through organic channels

The predictive model we deployed is starting to pay off- search engine marketing non-brand profitability has now reached its highest value in five years, while volume remains steady versus recent prior quarters. This work is the culmination of a multi-year effort, and the primary focus of the team is now elsewhere.

In 2Q23 the focus is now on organic channels, including but not limited to SEO and organic virality. We have a number of tests in the pipeline here which we look forward to discussing in our 2Q23 market update.





**Figure 9:** Non-brand SEM profitability

## Enterprise



## Freelancer Enterprise

The Freelancer Enterprise division continued to grow with 1Q23 USD GMV up 81% on pcp and 18% up on 4Q22.

Key developments this quarter:

- Executed MSA with the EMEA entity of a leading top-4 global professional services firm. The first project from the pilot is live on the platform. We also progressed discussions with their Indian entity with the goal of finalising commercials in the near future. We are also in discussions with their Australian and Philippines offices.
- Executed Service Agreement with the Middle-Eastern branch of a Switzerland based global pharmaceutical company and are currently activating the partner.
- We achieved 123% quarterly GMV growth from a Fortune 500 technology client and have also received over \$350k in forward bookings. They are running several large-scale projects to expand their central Contingent Workforce Program so we can continue supporting them at a global scale.
- We finalised the proposal and engagement model with a state-wide Government organisation in APAC. We are working towards the goal of providing their constituents access to our platform and subsidised projects from some of the largest companies in the world.
- We added to our Government Team with a new senior hire to lead the growth of our NASA NOIS2 engagements and other Government opportunities globally.
- Completed vendor onboarding for the research division of a global electronics and one of the world's top smartphone manufacturers.
- Deloitte MyGigs, a customised version of InSource for Deloitte, continues to grow. A dedicated team of product managers and engineers have been working closely with Deloitte to further tailor and enhance our product and integration capabilities. The engineering services engagement has more than doubled since October last year.

## Global Fleet / Field Services

In 1Q23 we completed the technology integration of the Freelancer platform with the global computer & printer company's CRM and workflow management platform. This integration is now fully operational across India, Australia and New Zealand. The goal now is to expand services to more new cities and countries for both consumer and commercial segments. In

2Q23, our two top goals are to expand to installation work and penetrate the United States market.



**Figure 10:** Field service engineers based in India, completing on-site field repairs in some of our new expansion cities (Pune, Lucknow and Vizag).

In brief:

**India:** Technical integration is live in 10 cities. Focusing on enhancing the freelancer experience and productivity. Working on expansion into Jamshedpur and Bhubaneswar, which will bring us to 12 out of 18 cities. Proposal approved for installation work in India, working with the partner on training before going live in Mumbai and Delhi.

**Indonesia:** Contract extended across six cities with high-quality work and customer satisfaction scores.

**Australia:** Working on expanding into four additional cities across Australia (Wollongong, Woolner, Hervey Bay and Alice Springs). Engagement extended, enabling expansion into any city. Cost-effective solution maintaining consistent volumes to explore other markets.

**New Zealand:** Engagement extended, running in Auckland and Wellington at the moment but looking to expand into additional cities. Cost-effective solution maintaining consistent volumes to explore other markets.

**Malaysia:** Operational. Recruitment continues to expand coverage and increase volumes. Work is currently in regional areas to reduce turnaround times for repairs before expanding to metro areas.

**Rest of World:** Interest from across the globe with presentations to country heads. Part consumption compared to partners as well as cost opened doors to the USA, and we are

aiming to penetrate the break fix market. There are 13 countries on the initial target list out of 50 regions. We are aiming for a big step in volumes now that integration is complete.

## NASA & U.S. Government

In 1Q23 Freelancer hosted several in-person events for NASA. In January, Freelancer flew to Boulder, CO, USA to organise a laboratory assessment event as part of phase 3 of the US\$1 million NOIS2-064 [CommanDING Tech Challenge](#).

This is a next-generation heads-up display for first responders (police, ambulance, firefighters, national guard and others) incorporating AR/VR, CCTV and a variety of sensor sources (such as first responders' heartbeats). The key takeaway here is the sophistication of work that Freelancer is delivering for top tier US government agencies.

The winners of phase 3 were:

- First place - \$110,000 USD - TurnRock Labs, Seattle, WA
- Second place - \$85,000 USD - Engineering Dynamics, Silver Spring, MD
- Third place - \$60,000 USD - BadVR, Inc., Los Angeles, CA
- Fourth place - \$35,000 USD - Headwall VR, Beltsville, MD
- Fifth place - \$10,000 USD - Red Volta, LLC, Raleigh, NC
- Sixth place - \$10,000 USD - Cloud Responder, Redondo Beach, CA



**Figure 11:** Live Actors simulating an incident for the CommanDING Tech Challenge





**Figure 12:** One AR/VR solution for first responders in the CommandING Tech Challenge

In March, Freelancer hosted a final Technology Demonstration event, where finalists demonstrated their technology, design, and company, and demonstrated dashboard capabilities through a staged live scenario to judges, client, and representatives of the public safety community. The final phase was held at FedEx Institute of Technology in Memphis, Tennessee on March 7-9. After three days of demonstrations, NIST and a panel of industry experts awarded the final winners of the challenge:

- 1st place - Headwall VR - \$130,125 USD
- 2nd place - BadVR, Inc. - \$96,000 USD
- 3rd place - TurnRock Labs - \$52,750 USD
- 4th place - Engineering Dynamics - \$34,625 USD

In March, we also awarded Phase 2 Preliminary review winners of the US\$300,000 NOIS2-071 [Counting Every Drop Challenge](#) in partnership with GEONOR on behalf of Bureau of Reclamation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and NASA. This challenge involves creating a next-generation precipitation measurement device.

The winners were:

- Rahavi Brothers (Canada) | *Intelligent Precipitation Measurement System (IPMS)*
- PMASS (USA) | *Precipitation Measurement with Advanced Solid-state Sensors*
- PGRAWS (USA) | *Precipitation Gauge with Redundant Array of Weight Scales*
- Top Solvers (USA) | *Precipitation Device*

In the quarter we were chosen to execute a new project with Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, NOIS2-096 Network Science Freelance Expertise, in partnership with defence contractor LMI. Total contract value is US\$130,000. This is our second project with CDC, a continuation of their commitment to advance network science technologies to identify threats in injury topics. The goal of this project is to advance the development to characterise the timing, nature, and progression of an emerging health threat (suicide, overdose, and/or adverse childhood experiences) and develop and evaluate an approach based on network science for early detection of such a health threat.

The full list of task orders won to date:

ID	Sponsor	Skills	Value inc. Prizes (AUD)	Task Order Purpose
NOIS2-096	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	Network Science	\$193,368.50	Develop a neural network model to to apply and advance network science techniques to identify emerging threats in injury topics.
NOIS2-090	National Institutes of Health	Genome Editing	\$10,630,000	Develop delivery systems to deliver genome editing machinery to target cell types or specific tissues.
NOIS2-071	Bureau of Reclamation	Hydrologic Engineering	\$590,200	Develop new and improved designs for ground-based precipitation measurement devices.
NOIS2-064	Department of Commerce - National Institute of Standards and Technology	UI/UX Design, Software Development	\$1,950,000	Advance incident command dashboard technologies to allow for real-time tracking of assets, personnel, and objects of interest.
NOIS2-068	NASA Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate	Graphic Design	\$85,162.13	Seek freelance graphic illustration and facilitation expertise.
NOIS2-069	NASA Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate	English Transcription Services	\$8,840	Transcribe interview recordings.
NOIS2-031	NASA Langley Research Centre	Physics, Mechanical Engineering	\$130,000	Develop novel shock propagation prediction techniques, helping them advance shock propagation prediction past the current 50 year-old empirical methods.



NOIS2-030	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	Network Science	\$273,000	Explore how recent advances in network science can be used to more quickly and accurately identify emerging health threats, such as suicide and drug overdose.
NOIS2-038	NASA Game Changing Development Program	Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence	\$130,000	Use machine learning and artificial intelligence to identify potential risks on active projects by using historical data and information available.
NOIS2-039	Department of Commerce - International Trade Administration	UI/UX Design, Software Development	\$1,071,200	Promote cross-border data flows through the creation of a data privacy certification software program.
NOIS2-043	Bureau of Reclamation	Computational Fluid Dynamics	\$721,500	Optimise and speed up the sparse matrix linear equations solver for computational fluid dynamics models.
NOIS2-017	National Institute of Child Health & Human Development	Data Science	\$624,431.60	Identify factors and interventions that impact maternal morbidity and severe maternal morbidity.
NOIS2-006	Bureau of Reclamation	Electrical Engineering	\$486,834.40	Improve the reliability of hydropower plant generation. by automating safety equipment testing and reducing plant downtime.

Escrow.com



Escrow.com saw its best quarter since 2Q22, as transaction volume rebounded. Gross Payment Volume (GPV) was AU\$268.6m down 5% on pcp or (US\$183.2m down 10.7% on pcp), but up 47% quarter on quarter. Strength continued into April as of the time of writing of this report.

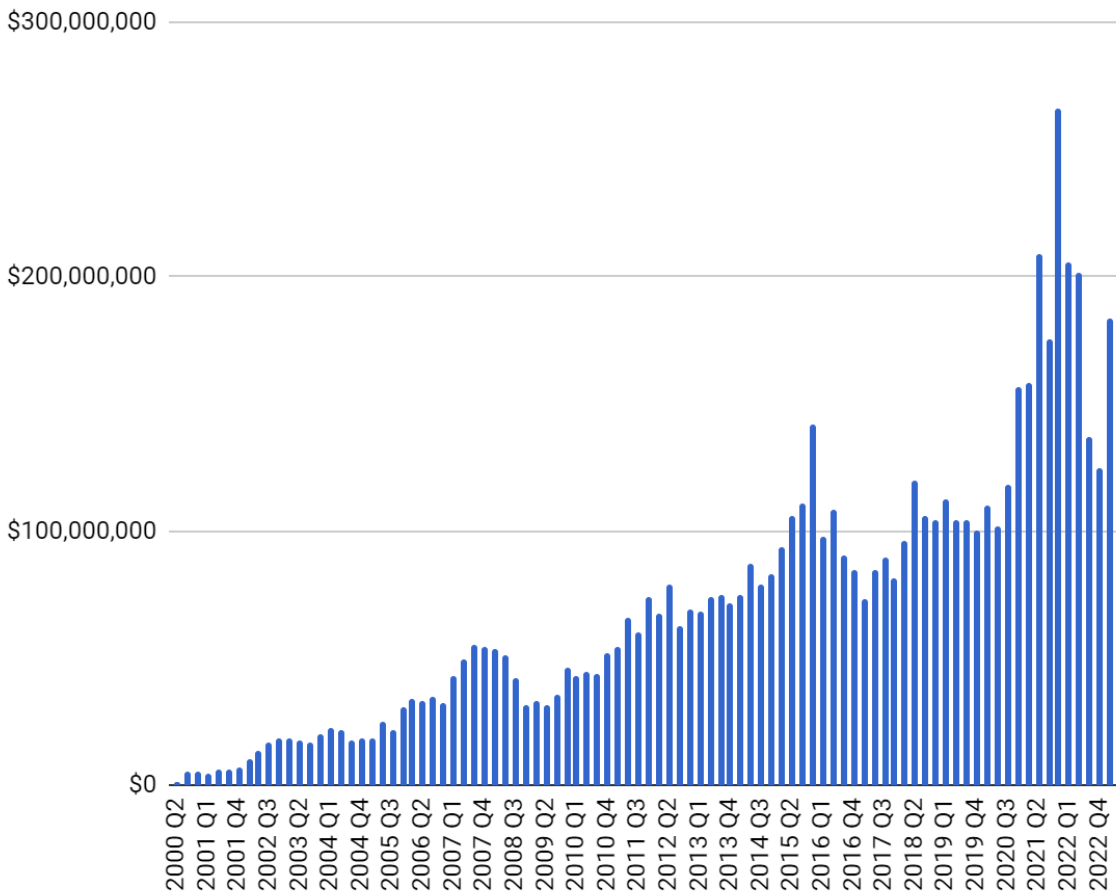


Figure 13: Escrow Gross Payment Volume (USD) by quarter since inception

In the quarter we saw a resurgence in large value transactions (\$1m+) with 1Q23 domain name volume being on par with 1Q22. As commented previously, we expect to see growth in that segment this year with an anticipated boom in venture capital following into startups

capitalising on generative AI. In the quarter, we also handled the purchase of chat.com, prompt.com and NewYork.com, among others.

## Licensing

Shortly following the conclusion of the quarter, Escrow.com was granted an escrow licence in Nevada. This achievement marks the completion of our US licensing program, as we are now fully licensed in all states that mandate either an escrow or money transmission licence. Notably, Escrow.com is the sole escrow firm in the United States to have achieved this feat, and uniquely holds licences in multiple states, with no other company outside of real estate escrow has.

Escrow.com has 55 financial services licences granted or in-application and is now fully licensed in the United States, Canada and Australia, with a United Kingdom application in its final stages of processing.

Licensing is an arduous process and it is common to take 5-7 years in certain jurisdictions.

## Product

For 1H23, the priorities for product are as follows:

- Prioritise customer feedback
- Improve the overall KYC experience to best in class
- Reduce friction of the end-to-end transaction flow
- Support more verticals and transaction types
- Provide a better partnership experience
- Automate internal transaction processes

These reflect our commitment to designing a product that enhances user experience and is fully customer centric in its design and transaction flow. In addition to transaction counts, this effort also improves our conversion funnel.

We have started to build a foundation of how the Escrow.com user experience will change, with our goal to provide significant results by the end of 1H23.

Releases as of 1Q23 include:

- Improved search experience
- Enhanced AML/AFT measures

## Partner Activity

In 1Q23, Escrow.com continued to introduce and support a diverse range of marketplaces and brokers, both existing and new partners.

## **Real Estate / Construction**

Towards the end of December, we received approval from compliance to get started on a specific pricing structure for the Real Estate vertical in 31 US states. We are now actively doing outbound sales for real estate and construction marketplaces with the goal of focusing on buyer deposits for real estate.

## **Automotive**

We continue to be active with follow up from the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) conference. The NADA Expo is the auto industry's premier marketplace, with more than 500 companies offering thousands of products, solutions and services in one place.

## **Import/Export**

In the quarter, we signed eWorldtrade, and they are beginning to work on integration. The B2B Marketplace currently caters to over 500,000 registered users and is expanding its database of manufacturers, suppliers and companies from all over the world. We also signed Global Trade Plaza, a B2B portal for import/exports. This partnership will allow manufacturers & exporters to use our escrow services to receive the funds from buyers from around the world.

## **M&A Marketplaces**

Marketplaces for business acquisitions continued to be a strong vertical for partner growth. One of our M&A partners had 970 transactions in 1Q23. In the quarter, we also signed BitsForDigits, a micro private equity marketplace connecting owners of profitable online businesses with purchasers.

## **IP Addresses**

We continue to see steady transactions with our IP partners and more growth opportunities stemming from last year's IP meetings that we attended. We signed a new IP partner IP4WISP in the quarter, as well as closed a number of large value transactions.

## **Domain Names**

We continue to broaden our offerings and increase our partnerships in the space. We will present our Masters of Domains Award to the top brokers at Namescon Global in Austin, Texas at the end of May, 2023.

This work includes upgrading and automating the Domain Name Holding offering, streamline the client onboarding process and KYC, revamping partner tools, integrated partnership reports, and improving the experience for our partners and their customers. We have a strong account management team in place for this vertical.

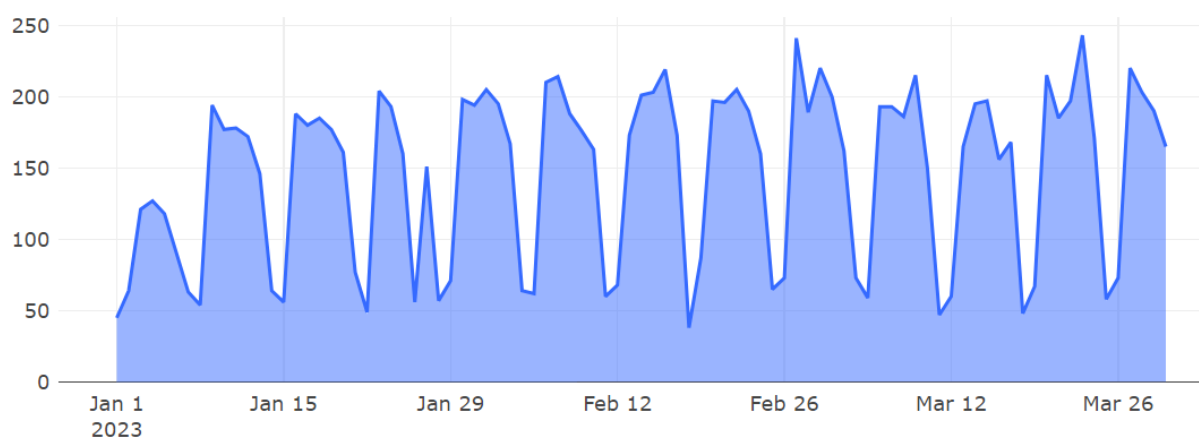
## Loadshift



Loadshift delivered another strong quarter as the team continues the transition of the Loadshift business to a marketplace model. We saw several all time high records in funds flowing through the platform and marketplace activity.

1Q22 saw significant uplifts on 4Q22 including:

- GMV: up 38.2% QoQ
- All-time record for most quotes/day: up 60% QoQ
- All-time record for unique carriers quoting: up 58% QoQ
- Conversion rate on jobs awarded through the platform: up 80% QoQ
- Number of reviews on completed loads: up 28% QoQ
- Average completed load size: \$3,895 (down 3.2% on pcp)
- Average freight charge: \$3.40/km (up 11.5% on pcp)



**Figure 14:** Number of loads posted in CY23

Total loads posted for 1Q23 were 13,226 (down 33.3% on pcp). Total kilometres posted were 17,656,006 (down 37.8% on pcp), representing \$60 million of Notional Gross Load Value (down 31% on pcp).

As reported previously, the numbers prior and post integration are not direct comparisons:

- Prior to integration, loads on the bulletin board expired in three days while in the new marketplace they expire in 30 (or upon award), so there are less 'reposted' loads.
- A number of competitors (freight forwarders) used to cross-post loads and go off-site to complete them have been banned.



The composition of high value freight (machinery) is unchanged at 27.1% in 1Q23 versus 27.0% in 1Q22, with general loads improving to 6.4% from 4.7% over the same period.



**Figure 15:** McCloskey moved from Cleveland QLD to Werribee VIC in 1Q23



do you have the origin

**Figure 16:** Ex-army tank moved from Tamborine QLD to Napier WA in 1Q23

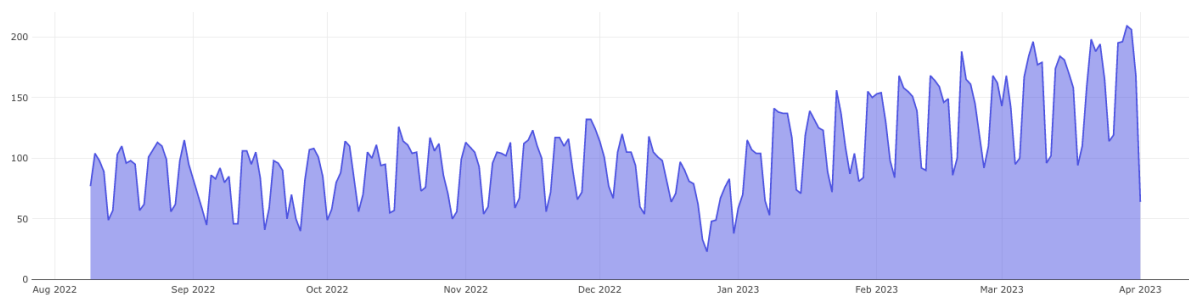




**Figure 17:** Yellow pump moved from Cape Preston WA to Welshpool WA in 1Q23

In terms of the product, several improvements were shipped for both shippers and carriers with a view to increase adoption of payments and on platform quoting. Shippers are now prompted to add more details regarding a load including pickup and dropoff full addresses, address types, site contact details, loading conditions and specific questions for the type of load. This will help to provide more details to carriers to submit accurate quotes, reduce back and forth in the communication between shipper and carrier and increase the award rate. The details are also automatically shared with the carrier when loads are accepted, resulting in improved communication and ensures a great experience for both shippers and carriers.

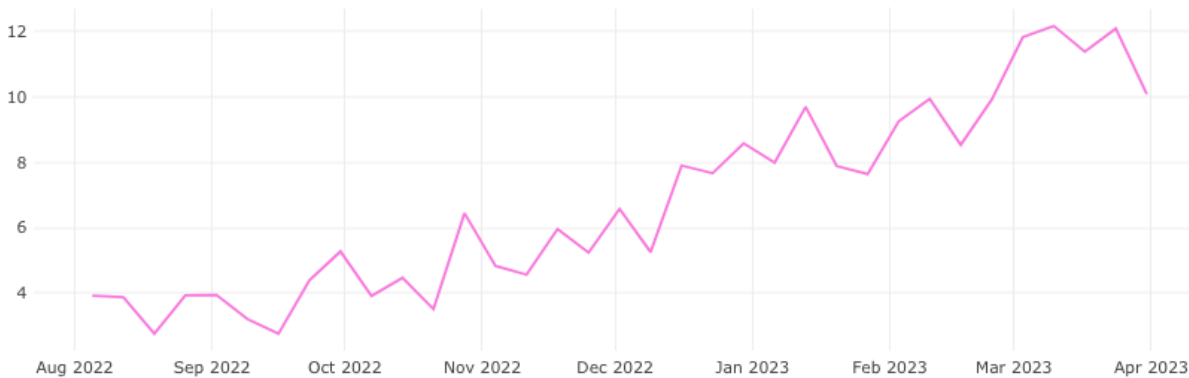
Several improvements were introduced to improve the carrier experience, including notifications, filters management, and load management functionality.



**Figure 18: Daily quoting carriers (since merger)**



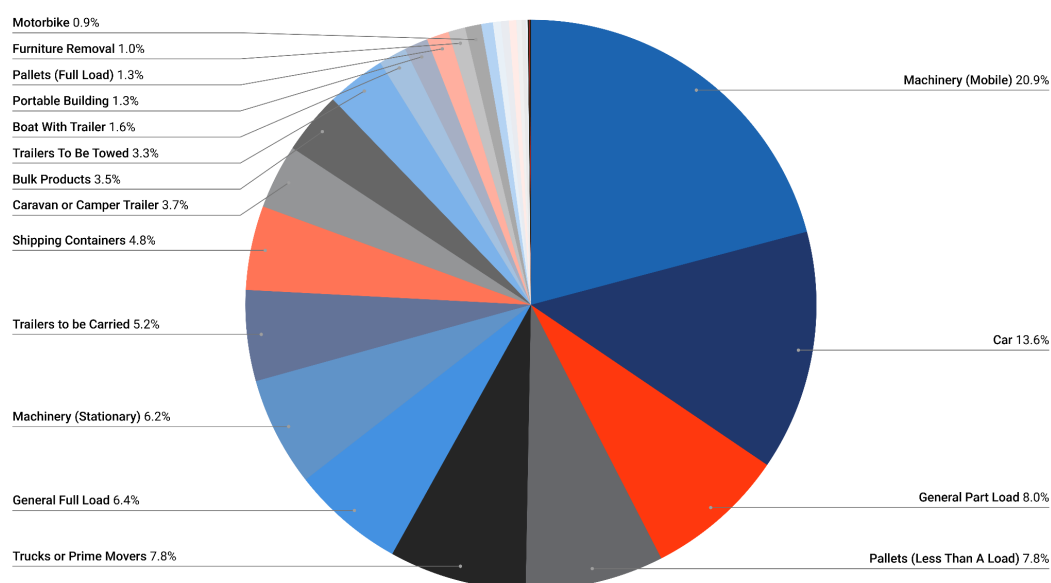
**Figure 19: Quotes per day (since merger)**



**Figure 20: Loadshift award rate**

## Freight Categories

The freight moved by the group is consistent with the numbers prior to integration. It is diversified but primarily heavy machinery (20.6% mobile, 6.7% stationary) for the mining, construction and industrial sectors. This is followed by vehicles, cars 13.6%, trucks 7.7%, pallets less than a load 7.9%, general part loads 8.0% and general full loads 6.4%.



**Figure 21: Load composition in 1Q23**

## Group Profitability

The group is now starting to see the results of the numerous cost efficiencies, which were implemented in 2H22 across all expense categories. Operating costs in 1Q23 were flat on 4Q22. The group was profitable in March with the Freelancer division achieving an operating profit in that month. The Escrow division was profitable for 1Q23. As mentioned in prior reports, the group will continue to monitor operating expenditures to ensure that a sustained level of profitability can be achieved in FY23.

## Conclusion

The group had negative net operating cash flow of  $-\$(0.1)$  million for 1Q23 (1Q22:\$1.7 million) and ended with cash & equivalents of \$22.7 million, down 2.9% on 4Q22.

## For more information please contact:

Neil Katz  
Chief Financial Officer  
Freelancer Limited  
[investor@freelancer.com](mailto:investor@freelancer.com)

## Forward-looking statements

This document contains certain "forward-looking statements". The words "anticipate", "believe", "expect", "project", "forecast", "estimate", "outlook", "upside", "likely", "intend", "should", "could", "may", "target", "plan" and other similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Indications of, and guidance on, future earnings and financial position and performance, including Freelancer's FY23 outlook, are also forward-looking

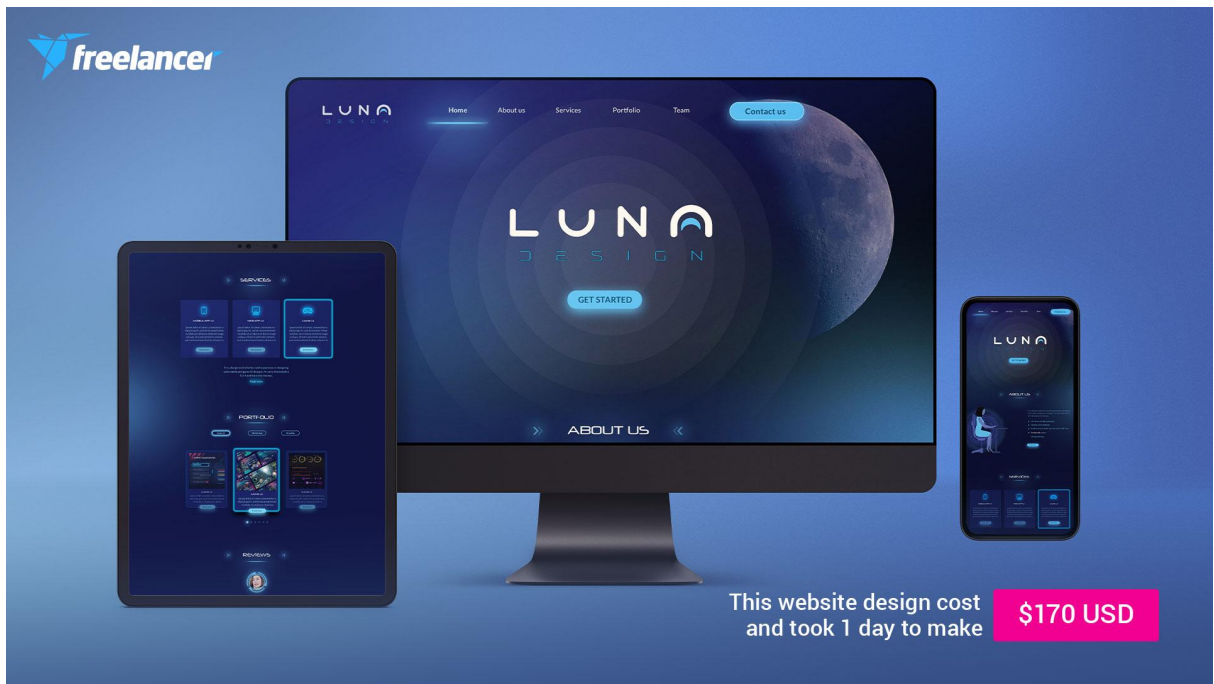
statements, as are statements regarding Freelancer's plans and strategies and the development of the market. Such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors, many of which are beyond the control of Freelancer, which may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in such statements. Freelancer cannot give any assurance or guarantee that the assumptions upon which management based its forward-looking statements will prove to be correct or exhaustive beyond the date of its making, or that Freelancer's business and operations will not be affected by other factors not currently foreseeable by management or beyond its control. Such forward-looking statements only speak as at the date of this announcement and Freelancer assumes no obligation to update such information. The release, publication or distribution of this document in jurisdictions outside Australia may be restricted by law. Any failure to comply with such restrictions may constitute a violation of applicable securities laws.

### **About Freelancer**

Twelve-time Webby award-winning Freelancer.com is the world's largest freelancing and crowdsourcing marketplace by total number of users and projects posted. More than 66 million registered users have posted over 22 million projects and contests to date in over 2,700 areas as diverse as website development, logo design, marketing, copywriting, astrophysics, aerospace engineering and manufacturing. Freelancer owns Escrow.com, the leading provider of secure online payments and online transaction management for consumers and businesses on the Internet with over US\$6 billion in transactions secured. Freelancer also owns Freightlancer & Loadshift, enterprise freight marketplaces with over 700 million kilometres of freight posted since inception. Freelancer Limited is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange under the ticker ASX:FLN and is quoted on OTCQX Best Market DTC under the ticker FLNCF.

End





This Webflow website cost  
and took 3 days to make

\$80 USD

This package design cost  
and took 8 days to make

\$55 USD