

## TOP STORIES #82

As always, there is lots of news, the most significant being Intel's release of its XEON 6 generation of CPUs (see story below).

As promised, the second "Did you Know" story is published below, and I bet you did not know our SAM capability was that extensive!

Last Week's [TOP STORIES #81 is here](#)

Colleagues can join this newsletter by [clicking here](#).

### Did you Know?

**First Technology has a software asset management team that turns 20 next year and boasts over 100 years of experience (not a typo)!**

The team is 100% South African (but works globally), everybody in the team works full time for First Technology Group, **has 72+ current certifications** (these are REAL certifications - being able to count MS-DOS licenses is not a "certification"!) AND has **the most Block64 certifications in the world!!!**

Block64 is not "yet another SAM tool." It is one of the few tools recognised by Microsoft, which counts for a lot when presenting results.

Block 64 is an extensive discovery and analytics platform that is an agentless, cross-platform discovery tool that optimises, reduces risk, and drives down the cost and complexity of managing a bewildering diversity of applications.

**The SAM team is by far the biggest and most experienced in South Africa. Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with this team and see how they can help you with your SAM challenges!**

### Hardware

#### Intel Launches XEON 6 family

These are the 1st CPU's manufactured based on the 18A (Angstrom) node. With this generation, Intel hopes to maintain its leadership over AMD. The YouTube channel Serve The Home has a [very enthusiastic review of the new CPUs here](#) and some [background on the CPU's here](#). It will be a while before we will be able to get to play with these new servers, but the specs look very impressive indeed, and if you are still running workloads on-premise, these new servers should definitely be in your plans with your next refresh.

**In terms of planning, it is important that you contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our hardware specialists to start making these plans!**

### Microsoft

#### Microsoft's Recall to be re-released with improvements

Microsoft is now trying again to release Recall with security features based on user feedback. Microsoft is now prioritising security, making it opt-in-only, with added encryption layers, and requires Windows Hello for access. You can [read a great summary here](#) with links to further details from Microsoft,

#### Dual Use rights for Power BI report server return

Microsoft has quietly added Power BI Report Server dual-use rights for high-end Fabric deployments, **which will help customers avoid a significant budget increase.**

**Mary Jo Foley of Directions on Microsoft explains:** *"Dropping dual-use rights had a big impact on customers already using the benefit. It meant that when Premium P customers migrated to Fabric, they would have to purchase expensive SQL Server Enterprise edition core licenses with Software Assurance to license their existing Power BI Report Server deployments back. For a Power BI Report Server licensed for eight vCores that would be an upfront cost of US\$60,492 for SQL Server Enterprise and an annual SA subscription of US\$15,123. Considering the licenses were already included in a Premium P1 subscription that cost customers US\$60,000 per year, this would result in costs more than doubling for the first year and a 25% increase for subsequent years. Not a minor change".*

You can [read the full report here](#).

**NB!** Power BI reporting server is basically a new name for SQL Reporting Services.

**Please contact your First Technology licensing specialist to understand if you are affected, and if so that you have obtained confirmation from Microsoft in writing, and further to see if possible, that you are benefiting from the Power BI Reporting Server dual use rights.**

## Self-service purchase feature for Copilot customers

Microsoft has announced that starting in early October 2024, customers of Microsoft 365 Business Basic, Standard, and Premium will be able to purchase Microsoft 365 Copilot through the self-service channel.

The Microsoft guide for administrators (which includes the ability to block this) [can be found here](#), and the announcement from Microsoft [can be found here](#).

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to assist in understanding the implications of this announcement.](#)

## Microsoft CoPilot Wave 2 - Overview

There has been a lot of press around this announcement, so now is a good opportunity to summarise where you can find all the important information on Wave 2

Firstly, there's a new addition to the broader Copilot family called Copilot Pages. This is essentially a workspace where you can easily store content generated by Copilot and collaborate on it with colleagues. You can find more details about Copilot Pages, [along with a demonstration video, here](#).

Next, there's another new member – Copilot Agents, designed to allow anyone to add new knowledge and skills to Microsoft 365 Copilot. [Details about Copilot Agents can be found here](#).

Existing features of the Copilot family, such as Copilot in Word or PowerPoint, have been enhanced, and [further information is available here](#).

Additionally, there's a rebranding: the previous Copilot for Microsoft 365 is now Microsoft 365 Copilot, and this change extends to Microsoft 365 Copilot for Sales, Service, and Finance. [Please contact your First Technology account manager to arrange demos of these new CoPilot features and to discuss progress and plans for deploying CoPilot in your environment so users can start experimenting.](#)

## Security

### When hiring Remote Workers is a bad idea.

New research from Mandiant has revealed that workers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) have been posing as other nationalities in order to get hired by Western companies and infiltrate their systems.

It is a reminder that it is a very good idea to make sure you have measures in place to make sure you are actually meeting the prospective employee "in the flesh".

Also, if you have a remote work policy, have measures in place to be able to check that the employee is not running two jobs from home at the same time! [You can read more here](#).

### Scammers Use QR Code Stickers to Target Motorists and Shoppers

Though this scam has not reached South Africa, it will get here, and this is yet another attack vector that we simply might not realise we are being tricked.

Beware of posters being stuck up with QR codes that promote an easy way to pay for a parking ticket or get access to a special promotion in the Mall the QR code is stuck in - it could be a phishing attack - Users need to be made aware of not being trusting of a QR code stuck up in a parking lot or a mall. You can [read more about this new attack here](#).

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to discuss the various training options for your users to make them aware of these new attacks and others appearing daily.](#)

## Cloud & AI

### OpenAI may increase Pricing.

This poses an interesting question as to what Microsoft and Google may do, as so far the "baseline price" has been pegged at \$20 per month.

Increasing to \$22 per month by the end of 2024 and then to \$44 per month by 2029 seems a lot, but then again, what will AI be capable of by then?

Will "the others" follow?

You can read [more about this possible increase here](#).

With these price increases coming, it is crucial to experiment with AI as soon as possible, putting

you in a better position to understand its value in your company going forward.  
Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our AI specialists to start assisting you on your journey with AI.

## What's up at FTG

### Invitation to Register for Zoomtopia by GaldonData

You are invited to register here. Please take a screenshot of your registration and send it to [marketing@galdon.co.za](mailto:marketing@galdon.co.za) for a chance to win a **Yealink BH70 Wireless Bluetooth Headset**. **Zoom is recognised as a Customers' Choice** in the Gartner® Peer Insights™ "Voice of the Customer" for "Unified Communications as a Service" report, so even if you are standardised on Teams because of strategy or licensing benefits (or both) it is still always good to see what the "other side" is doing.....

**When:** 10 October

**Where:** Online - [Register here](#)

### CoPilot Security Demo

BUI, FTG's security division, is able to present CoPilot for Security information-sharing sessions, workshops and demos. Please contact your First Tech Group account manager to make arrangements to attend, or you can [request a session here](#).

### What does a World Class SoC look like and how does it work?

You are invited to book a tour of one of our SoC (Security Operations Center) nodes (and there are still parts we can't show you). You can [book for the tour here](#).

### BUI blog - 3rd Video Available

FTG's Azure and security division, BUI, has launched a blog focused on Security—what's new, what changed, and what you need to do to maintain a good security posture. This one, however, is about a game that Dirk learnt about while attending Black Hat in Vegas.

**All BUI videos have been moved to one YouTube channel, which you can find here.**

The Security Blog Video #003 is [now available to view here](#).

This video introduces you to KC7 - a Cyberdetective game!:

## Movies

Public school kids are back at school this week...

Private School Holidays: 21 September to 8 October 2024

**Public School Holidays: 21 September to 30 September 2024**

Now Playing: [Bagman](#)

Now Playing: [Transformers One](#)

Now Playing: [Lee](#)

Now Playing: [Panda Bear in Africa](#)

Now Playing: [Devra Part 1](#)

Now Playing: [Hellboy: Crooked Man](#)

4 October: [Aftermath](#)

4 October: [Joker: Folie A Deux](#)

4 October: [Woman of the Hour](#)

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