

TOP STORIES #115

Welcome to TOP STORIES, which has been published for more than 22 years!

It has now been more than 2 years since we have been publishing weekly.

As a user of Microsoft technologies, you are receiving this publication to stay informed about critical topics such as Microsoft licensing, price increases, end-of-life dates, technical updates, security notices, and more.

I recommend you scan through "**Don't Forget**" which is now a separate document for you to download - it was making TOP STORIES too long to read through.

Reminder that you can access [TOP STORIES AI \("TSAI"\)](#) to search for anything in the archive. You can read more about TSAI in [TOP STORIES #108](#).

You will need an MS ID to sign in, and if you are using your corporate ID, this might require organisational permission.

Check out the **official movie release** dates in South Africa for all studios at the bottom of this email. The schedule has been updated to provide you with releases four weeks in advance. It is accurate!

Last week's [TOP STORIES #114 is here](#)

If you would like to invite other colleagues to join this newsletter (even if it is just for the movie release dates), they can [click here](#).

If you do not want to continue receiving TOP STORIES, click on the unsubscribe link at the bottom of the mail.

Upcoming Shows

The next big computer show of the year is [Computex](#) (at the same time as Microsoft Build). NVIDIA will, of course, make a big splash [with the keynote](#).

We are also going to see [announcements from AMD](#) that will be great news for consumers and a headache for NVIDIA.

Intel is also [getting ready to release some high-end GPU cards](#) as well.

Of course, all the major publications will have live updates from the show.

For example, you can [follow Techradar's coverage here](#).

Microsoft Build is scheduled to start on Monday in Seattle, and you can surely expect for AI to be hyped up big time!

This is set to be a pivotal event for the global developer community, with a strong emphasis on the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence, particularly through Microsoft Copilot and emerging AI agent technologies.

The hybrid format, offering free online access, makes the conference's wealth of knowledge, including keynotes, deep-dive technical sessions, and hands-on labs, accessible to an unprecedented audience.

Digital online attendance is free - [see here](#). You will also be able to access a lot of the content after the conference has ended, so if you are in the development or even the deployment of Microsoft technologies, I encourage you to register.

For example, there are 75 Sessions alone relating to AI, CoPilot and Agents that you can attend online.

InfoComm - the coolest Pro AV gathering on the Planet is coming up June 11-13 - This show is more relevant than ever to the IT industry because many of these technologies are used in meeting rooms. The line between Pro AV and IT is now very blurry indeed! So, even if you are just interested in meeting rooms, this is [still an important show to follow!](#)

Account Manager?

Not sure who is your account manager? [Click here for us to help sort that out!](#)

Don't Forget

The documents for you to download are very detailed, spanning 24 pages, so I recommend you

search for what you need to get updates on. The material is presented in a way for you to copy the relevant pieces and send them to teams focused on different aspects of Microsoft technologies.

The April document has been updated to include new additions for May and can be [downloaded here](#). The complete, detailed guide for May 2025 to May 2026 [can be downloaded here](#)

The most critical update to note is that Microsoft has announced that security updates for Microsoft 365 Apps (e.g., Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook) running on Windows 10 will continue for three years after the Windows 10 end-of-support date.

This means Microsoft 365 Apps on Windows 10 will receive security updates until October 10, 2028. Now, how do you do that while not supporting the host operating system?

Important Caveats

- This extension applies to security updates for M365 Apps only. The Windows 10 OS itself still reaches end of support on October 14, 2025 (unless ESUs are purchased for the OS).
- If an issue with M365 Apps occurs only on Windows 10 (and not on Windows 11), Microsoft support will advise moving to Windows 11. Troubleshooting assistance may be limited if unable to move to Windows 11.
- Bug reports or feature requests for M365 Apps on Windows 10 will not be accepted after October 2025.

This significantly impacts planning for organisations, offering more flexibility for the M365 Apps component while still necessitating a Windows 11 migration strategy for the underlying OS. More on this below.

Hardware

Samsung Launches 500Hz OLED gaming monitor

Refresh rates for gaming monitors are reaching extreme levels, where image quality is reaching levels of perfection previously regarded as unattainable for mere mortals (us) just 2 years ago. You can [read more about this new Samsung monitor here](#). Acer [has announced one as well](#).

The Ultimate foldable monitor

Well, at least for now! A foldable touch-enabled monitor has been announced that is billed as the ultimate portable productivity tool. This monitor can fold or bend to any angle, and will have a 3K resolution and will be available in 2 sizes.

Unfortunately, the price is a bit on the high side!

You [can read more here](#).

This is the start of a new trend of portable, foldable displays, and these prices are likely to drop quite quickly.

Your DVDs might be rotting!

Physical media remains the only reliable way to ensure you maintain legal access to old titles and series. In the world of streaming content, a title can disappear forever at a moment's notice. This problem is called [Streaming Service Fragmentation](#).

"DVD Rot" has [appeared on some Warner titles from 2006 to 2008](#) and will appear on many more as time passes.

It may be a good idea to start checking your collections and make sure you have a digital copy before some of your precious disks literally disintegrate.

People with large physical collections will find that they become increasingly valuable, as [subscriber fatigue starts to manifest](#).

Microsoft

M365 updates till 2028 on Windows 10 - it gets confusing!!!

Microsoft "quietly" updated its support terms last week to state that M365 apps are still supported on Windows 10, which is going out of support on 14 October 2025.

Now, how do you support an application on an operating system that you insist you will NOT support?

Office Watch thinks that Microsoft got pressure from their very large enterprise customers to make this change.

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

Another good document to refer to about this issue is the one published by [Directions on Microsoft here](#).

This change is going to allow companies to have more breathing room to upgrade to Windows

11, and take the intense pressure off IT departments to upgrade this year.

You CAN get patches for your computers at home for free on Windows 10 for personal use from [OPatch](#). This is NOT a Microsoft solution, but could be better than nothing..

Please contact your First Technology account manager to see how this change may impact you and how this may affect or benefit your plans to roll out new machines.

Qualified Users or Devices guide updated

Microsoft has updated this document with cosmetic changes, preserving the rules published way back in 2020. You can [download the latest guide here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our licensing specialists to revisit these rules, and even today in the world of USER subscription licensing, understanding the differences, especially in shift worker scenarios, can lead to very significant savings.

Security

Your meeting room is spying on you!

As you may have read [last week](#) about our OT security division specialising in finding vulnerable devices in the dark corners of your network that normal tools do not find, there is another part of your network leaking data that is hiding in plain sight.

Your Zoom or Teams room is collecting and transmitting LOTS of data all the time! It is very important when implementing Teams or Zoom meeting rooms to be very clear about what telemetry you are OK with leaking out to the vendors.

These are not just devices that may be vulnerable, they are devices which you have not configured to STOP sending data out of your company. You can [read more about this data leakage here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our meeting room specialists to help you make sure you know what data your devices are collecting and sending onward. If something is free, ask yourself why, and if just maybe you have become the product!

A reminder to Patch NOW!

5 of the 70 vulnerabilities addressed with Microsoft's patch Tuesday are already under active attack!

This Patch Tuesday is also an excellent opportunity to test if your teams are on top of their game because this time, some more obscure components need to be patched. You can [read more about these vulnerabilities here](#). It is also a good opportunity to ask your First Technology account manager to connect you with our security specialists to check out your network to see if all your tools are working and to verify that patches are actually being applied and you are not missing anything. No matter how good you may think you are, it is always a good idea to get someone else to mark your homework just in case you have missed something, as the stakes are VERY high for getting it wrong!

Hackers attacking IoT systems with 11,600+ Malware Families

A new report shows that hackers are now actively launching attacks using over 11,600 malware families. Not variants. Families!

What's notable is not just the scale, but the level of automation. From loaders and droppers to full-blown info-stealers and ransomware, it's all being deployed programmatically, often without any human involvement once the attack has been initiated.

And the success rate? **High**. Most of these are targeting unpatched systems, incorrectly configured tools, and basic security hygiene failures — things we still see all too often.

This is a useful reminder that it's not about **whether** malware is trying to get into your environment. It's already trying. The real question is whether you'll even know when it succeeds. You can [read more about these attacks here](#).

If you haven't taken a proper look at your security stack recently — or worse, if you're assuming that what's in place is "probably fine" — now would be a good time to recheck that assumption by contacting your First Technology account manager to connect you with our security experts to work with your security teams to help plug holes nobody knew existed - until you looked.

Cloud & AI

OpenAI releases GPT 4.1

GPT 4.1 is now available for software engineers writing and debugging code. This replaces GPT

How are YOU using AI?

It is interesting to read how Satya Nadella is using AI to "listen" to podcasts - where he uploads the transcripts and then discusses the content with the AI.

He also claimed that 30% of MS code is written by AI.

You can [read more about this interview here](#). I think AI helps Satya get through a lot more information, but you miss out on the emotional content conveyed by the person speaking, which can be very important when understanding emphasis and context.

Are you going to read a transcript of the movie Lilo & Stitch this weekend, or would you prefer to go and experience the movie?

It is very important for you to experiment with CoPilot in your work to see how it can empower you to do things you may not have felt possible on your own, but it cannot replace everything. There ARE some transcripts that CoPilot is really handy to summarise, but for others I like to hear the person's voice.

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our CoPilot experts to help explore what is possible with CoPilot in your work.](#)

What's up at FTG

Cloud costing you more than expected?

First Technology Group is stepping up your cloud financial management game with Umbrella (formerly Anodot Cost) — our preferred platform for FinOps and Cloud Cost Management. Umbrella unlocks faster innovation, deeper insights, and robust cost optimisation, empowering you to proactively manage your cloud spend and enhance financial efficiency.

[As a Platinum preferred partner across Africa, FTG brings you unmatched expertise and tailored support, ensuring a smooth integration of Umbrella into your current systems with minimal operational disruption.](#)

Here's what [Umbrella](#) means:

- **Enhanced Cost Management:** Full visibility of your cloud expenses to pinpoint savings.
- **Improved Financial Efficiency:** Powerful analytics to guide smarter cloud investments.
- **Seamless Integration:** Effortlessly combines with your existing infrastructure.

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect with our SAM or FinOps teams to see how they can help you optimise your cloud costs. Even if you may think you have your costs under control there is no harm in asking somebody else to take a look.... just in case!](#)

Free Microsoft Support Ends

Microsoft has ended free technical support for Azure.

The only free support you now get is for billing and subscription issues.

[Microsoft now charges \\$650 per support incident - NB! Not a typo!!](#)

BUI, FTG's Cloud and Security division has introduced a new support model that mitigates some of this impact - you can [read more and sign up for more information here](#).

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to discuss your support requirements, as First Technology group can provide **GLOBAL SUPPORT 24/7/365** for a wide range of vendors, including Microsoft.](#)

FT-KZN Upgrades Senate Chambers

The chambers at Mangosuthu University have been completely upgraded with state-of-the-art technology to facilitate how modern meetings and presentations are conducted. This is one of many examples of what the team in KZN is able to achieve. You can [read more about this here](#).

If you think your installation might be a bit complicated and needs integration with multiple vendors, contact your First Technology account manager, who can connect you with a team that can help.

Pitfalls with Dynamics 365

The CRM Team, of First Technology Group [have published a document on ITWeb](#) about avoiding the pitfalls of a D365 Customer engagement implementation. If you are looking to dive down the D365 rabbit hole, this is a good article to read. Then, contact our Dynamics 365 specialists on the [CRM Team website](#) or through your First Technology account manager.

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 - 6th and 7th (Entra Suite Overview) Videos Available

FTG's Azure and security division, BUI's Video Blog, has been updated with 2 more videos.

The [6th Edition addresses improvements to Defender XDR](#), and the [7th Edition is crucial to review, as it provides an overview of the Microsoft Entra Suite](#).

Joint Standard 2 on Cyber Security and Resilience

BUI has published a 1-page guide for you to gauge your compliance and, if you have concerns, to reach out to the BUI specialists for assistance. The [guide is available here](#).

BUI Opens 4th Cyber Security Operations Centre in Kenya

As part of BUI's investment in talent in Africa and the broader East African region, BUI, together with the Microsoft country manager for Kenya, held the inauguration ceremony of the new Cyber SOC. You can read [more about this launch here](#).

Movies

We have a good lineup for late May - Lilo & Stitch. Mission Impossible are highlights.

Now Playing: [The Salt Path](#)

Now Playing: [Final Destination: Bloodlines](#)

Now Playing: [Hurry up Tomorrow](#)

23 May: [Lilo & Stitch](#)

23 May: [Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning](#)

23 May: [Die Dekonstruksie van Retta Blom](#) trailer is [here](#)

30 May: [Karate Kid: Legends](#)

30 May: [The Phoenician Scheme](#)

30 May: [Guns Up](#)

6 June: [Ballerina](#)

6 June: [Life of Chuck](#)

13 June: [Materialists](#)

13 June: [How to Train your Dragon](#)

13 June: [Dangerous Animals](#)

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