

TOP STORIES #118

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!

There are some really interesting announcements in the "What's up at FTG" section this week, with some new events and a **major bombshell** from our CyberSecurity division - go take a look below....

Last week's [TOP STORIES #117 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

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!**

The Show Daily **VIP edition is available here** .

Apple WWDC starts on 9 June, which is obviously going to get a lot of attention. If you would like to join the conference online, you can **read more about it here** .

AWS Summit is up next in New York

This is a **major event for AWS** on 16 July to showcase to customers and developers what is on the roadmap for AWS.

Black Hat USA 2025

This is a **major security conference for 2-7 August** that is a "Must Attend" for everybody who is serious about security. Of course, FTG will have people attending, and there will surely be some interesting feedback.

Account Manager?

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

Did you Know?

Techsonic, a division of First Technology Group is the only certified Platinum Zoom Partner in South Africa!

Not only are they experts in Zoom, but they do amazing venue installations, such as the **Cape Town TimeOut Market**.

If you need advanced Zoom installations and amazing venues with video walls and impressive sound systems, contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with the experts,

or [visit their website here](#).

Don't Forget

This is a list of ALL Microsoft services and products that are "expired" for whatever reason for the next year.

The documents you can download are very detailed, spanning 24 pages, so I recommend searching for what you need in them to stay updated.

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 is [now available for download](#).

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

Microsoft cracks the USB whip.

This is really good news, and something you need to pay attention to as you DEFINITELY need to update all your RFP/I's for hardware going forward.

Note, this article is NOT addressing Thunderbolt, which is not in nearly as big a mess as USB-C. Almost a third of all "faults" being reported relating to USB ports have not been faults, but "caused" by a port lacking functionality that you would have thought would have been available.

You actually have NO IDEA what functionality the ports on your notebook have until you test them!

So, enter Microsoft, where, going forward, Microsoft states that manufacturers must comply with [WHPC specifications](#) for USB-C to remain compliant, with Power Delivery being mandatory.

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

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our hardware support specialists to ensure that your specifications are updated and you are applying and enforcing the criteria Microsoft has now published to ensure you actually get the functionality you pay for with ports that are clearly identified.

10th Generation 30Gig Tape LTO is finally here.

Although the native capacity is significantly less than what we originally expected, it is still more than 50% of what can be achieved with LTO-9.

Basically, 6 LTO-10 tapes can replace 10 LTO-9 tapes. Tape is not going away and remains BY MILES, the cheapest way to archive data.

You can [read all about the LTO-10 release here](#). This is not very fast storage, or faster than the previous LTO-9, so one tape can take a day to fill!

Please ask your First Technology account manager to connect you with our enterprise storage specialists to assist with pricing and availability of LTO-10 devices.

Careful what you point your camera at!

Here is a short story of an iPhone user who discovered, the hard way, that a [LIDAR](#) sensor can permanently damage your phone's camera sensor.

As LIDAR's appear everywhere, be careful where you point your camera! You can [read more about this sorry tale here](#).

Microsoft

What's in the New Outlook for June

Microsoft is doggedly trying to improve the New Outlook to eventually fully replace the "Classic Outlook" by 2029 - and I think they have a loooooong way to go! Nevertheless, Microsoft has [announced some improvements that you can read about here](#). In practice, for many companies, the New Outlook will actually be quite acceptable to start migrating to. It is isolated pockets that will still be heavily dependent on the Classic Outlook, probably because they are using COM add-ins (some still from Microsoft and Adobe) and also using PST's for types of offline storage.

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our messaging specialists to assist with evaluating what you need to start doing to move away from the Classic Outlook - Microsoft appears to be determined to eventually shut it down!

Microsoft Project for Web Retirement

Microsoft has announced [Project for the web retirement](#) as part of the migration to Planner.

[The official announcement can be found here](#). The [FAQ relating to PLANNER](#) can be found here - it is very detailed!

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our specialists who can assist you with the implications of this migration and how you may be affected.

CoPilot too expensive for Teams? Try Zoom Companion for Teams!

For many companies, one of the most obvious value propositions for CoPilot is the ability to transcribe and summarise meetings, but at \$30 per month, it can get expensive, as it is unable to do the same for Google Meet and Zoom. Would it not be better if you had ONE system that can record, transcribe and summarise meetings for a variety of clients?

And you can! Here is a [YouTube video that shows you how](#) to use Zoom Companion (at half the price) in Teams.

If you would like to explore implementing this option, please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our Teams AND Zoom specialists to see if this is a viable option for your environment.

Power Platform Licensing Guide May 2025

There are only a couple of updates - self-service Disaster Recovery options and a new table on page 27 showing consumption rates for AI builder.

You can [download the latest guide here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to understand how the changes affect your adoption of Power Platform and how to take best advantage of the features available in what you are already licensed for.

Security

Hackers Using New ClickFix Technique To Exploit Human Error

There is always a new trick to get caught with. In this attack, hackers exploit your trust in traditional security measures on your PC to psychologically manipulate you into becoming compromised.

This attack has a global reach, and just because you are in South Africa does not exclude you from it, [which you can read more about here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to ensure that you schedule the next round of training for your users. This will keep them up to date with the latest tricks to avoid clicking on links they should not.

Cloud & AI

A Tale of 32 Otters

This is an amazing story of how 32 otters have evolved since the public birth of AI with ChatGPT, beginning with very primitive still images and progressing to realistic videos today.

Take a moment to read this really interesting article, which takes you on this fascinating journey and will hopefully leave you wondering about what you will create. Why not give it a try?

Ask CoPilot, GPT and Gemini to create some otters for you (just for starters)!

You can [read the story of how these otters have evolved here](#) ... and then maybe try to

imagine what otters our AI's will be drawing for us in 5 years time... frankly, I struggle to imagine what we could be seeing in 5 years!

The point of this story is that if you are not experimenting with AI to understand how and where it can make a difference in any aspect of your life, you really need to start before you find yourself left behind.

PLEASE contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our AI specialists to have a discussion about what they could do for you using AI with your company's data by showing you examples of what they have done in other places, and also take you through what they have done with TSAI - The AI for TOP STORIES you are reading!

What's up at FTG

First Digital Makes AI History

First Digital just became the first SA-headquartered company to earn [Microsoft's Advanced Specialisation for Building AI Apps on Azure](#) — **and nailed the audit.**

This confirms what we already knew: our AI isn't hype. It works. And now Microsoft agrees!

Please contact your First Technology account manager to explore what we can do for you. The AI you use to query the TOP STORIES archive(TSAI) is one of those apps!!

BUI Just Dropped a Bombshell: South Africa's First Cyber Warranty

While other companies are saying you should have this, **BUI has done it!**

BUI, FTG's Cloud and Security division, has become the first Microsoft Cloud Solutions Partner in South Africa to launch a Cyber Security Warranty.

That's right — they're so confident in their security operations, they're backing it with a financial warranty.

Think of it as putting your money where your Security is. If you suffer a cybersecurity incident, they will assist your organisation up to the value of R1,000,000.00.

It's the kind of assistance customers didn't even know they needed — until now.

You can read more about the announcement on ITWeb here.

Please contact your First Technology Group Account manager to connect you with the BUI team to discuss how you can take advantage of this new level of protection.

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.**

The Future of Customer Service: Smarter, Faster, Friction-Free

The CRMTeam FTG's Microsoft Dynamics experts are holding an in-person event at Microsoft's Office in Bryanston on the 12th of June to explore how your contact centre can be transformed into an AI-powered customer service hub.

This addresses changing customer service expectations and how organisations can consider adapting.

Where: Microsoft Offices, 3012 Winnie Mandela Drive, Bryanston, Sandton

When: 12 June 09H00 to 14H00

[Register Here.](#)

Freddy Knows Best

Reinventing ITSM with AI That Thinks Ahead Join First Digital for a live session on how Freddy AI is transforming IT service management in Freshservice.

Learn how AI-powered automation, insights, and smart features like ticket summaries, reply suggestions, and dynamic actions help reduce workload, boost productivity, and cut costs.

Don't miss this look at the future of ITSM with Freshservice + Freddy AI.

Where: Online with Teams - [Register here](#)

When: Wednesday 11 June from 10H00 to 11H00

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 CRMTeam, 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.](#)

Movies

Lilo & Stitch DID work it's magic and appealed to kids of all ages, and took in 3X more from the Box Office than Mission Impossible!

Now Playing: [Ballerina](#)

Now Playing: [Life of Chuck](#)

13 June: [Materialists](#)

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

13 June: [Dangerous Animals](#)

20 June: [Elio](#)

20 June: [28 Years Later](#)

20 June: [Bride Hard](#)

27 June: [Sharp Corner](#)

27 June: [M3GAN 2.0](#)

27 June: [F1](#)

27 June: [A Jungle Beat 2: The Past](#) (Trailer on [YouTube is here](#))

04 July: [Jurassic World: Rebirth](#)

First Technology | Midrand | Johannesburg, GAUTENG 2191 ZA

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!