

TOP STORIES #70

Welcome to all the new members of TOP STORIES

It is not the busiest of weeks for news because of the 4th of July Holiday in the USA.

If colleagues want to subscribe, they can click [here](#).

Last Week's [TOP STORIES #69 is here](#).

Hardware

Huawei Succeeds Where Microsoft Failed

Success is a point of view, but in this case, Huawei has succeeded in creating an operating system that does not depend on Android. The HarmonyOS Next replaces the Linux kernel which will roll out by the end of the year. This now creates a third operating ecosystem with different value propositions from what we are used to. It fragments the market, but it creates more competition. [You can read more about this here](#).

AI PC's - The "Hype-factor"

Right now, I think we can agree that AI is being hyped everywhere; what used to be called a well-written program by a good developer is now called "AI." From a hardware perspective, if you need to buy hardware now, you need to be careful, as it is changing so fast that what you buy now will probably be obsolete in six months. The release of Snapdragon Windows-based CoPilot+ PCs has not helped (in a good way).

So, if you have to buy, buy HIGH - with as much storage and RAM, the most powerful CPU and GPU you can afford, with the minimum being 32Gig RAM and at least 256Gig SSD NVMe storage.

You can read [more about these thoughts here](#).

[Please contact your First Tech Account manager to connect you our hardware specialists to make sure you are getting the right help in planning your refresh cycle.](#)

Microsoft

New Teams supports personal accounts

Up to now the "New Teams" has only supported enterprise accounts. You can now use the same version of Teams for personal accounts. This can at least make things simpler and consume fewer resources if you have to switch between multiple accounts. [You can read more here](#).

Unfortunately, running multiple instances of the "New Teams" does not seem to be possible at the moment.

Excel gets a new look

The web version has gotten a makeover that makes it faster and easier to use. You can [read more about the changes here](#).

NEW! Dynamics Contact Centre

Microsoft has introduced a new product that builds on the capabilities of the previous Voice and Digital Messaging channel add-ons for Dynamics 365 Customer Service, now available as a standalone solution.

Enhanced with Copilot and powered by Generative AI, this Contact Center as a Service (CCaaS) solution offers advanced features for improved customer interactions.

Here is a [handy YouTube video](#) that gives you an idea of what this can look like.

In terms of licensing, the standalone solution is priced at \$110 per user per month.

Alternatively, it can be bundled with Customer Service Enterprise in a new offering called Customer Service Premium, which is available at \$195 per user per month.

The [Microsoft Announcement is here](#).

The [pricing detail is here](#), and the effective herbal tranquilisers can be [found here](#) now that you have seen the pricing.

[It is very important to contact your First Tech account manager to connect you with our Dynamics experts to help you understand how this CoPilot-based offering from Microsoft can improve efficiency in your contact centre.](#)

RIP Microsoft Publisher

Microsoft has announced that Publisher will reach the end of support in October 2026. Frankly, I

do not think that many still use it, so I doubt there will be an outcry over its demise. You can find can [find the official announcement here](#).

Security

The biggest-ever password leak

10 billion credentials are at risk - this is a reminder to make sure you have different passwords for sites and that you do change the ones to sites that are important to you. You [can read more about this here](#).

Cloud & AI

It's not good enough until Suddenly, it is

If you are into AI, or you are tasked with trying to figure out how your company can benefit from AI, I [highly recommend that you read this paper](#) from Ethan Mollick.

He talks about how AI is now crossing the threshold between being a toy and when it is something serious that you can actually use.

He uses the analogy of when digital cameras crossed the threshold of suddenly being better than Polaroid cameras, and goes on to give other examples.

He gives many examples with Claude, GPT-4o (aka CoPilot) and Gemini to show that we are now at this threshold.

His test of the AI's ability to understand the reference to "long purples" in a passage from Hamlet is most intriguing.

For now, only Claude understood fully, and thus, for this test passed the threshold.

This paper is not for everybody, but if you are wrestling with how to use AI in your company, I recommend that you take the time to read this article and the other articles it links to.

If you now need to take the leap and start applying AI to your data in your company it is really important to contact your First Tech Account manager to connect you with our teams in First Tech. dedicated to both preparing your environment for AI (the security bits) as well as actually using AI within the Microsoft ecosystem.

What's up at FTG

CoPilot Readiness Workshops

They are available.

You can register for them [here](#) or [here](#).

Copilot for Security

Join BUI, (FTG's Azure, Cloud and Security specialists) for an exclusive one-on-one demo session featuring Microsoft Security Copilot!

This is a prime opportunity for your team to experience the forefront of technology with our latest release. Dive into discussions about defining and understanding the consumption needs specific to your organisation.

Reserve your spot now! [Sign up here](#).

NEW! FTG's BUI MonthlySecurity Blog

FTG's Azure and security division has launched a blog focused on Security - what's new, what changed and what you need to do to maintain a good security posture. The blog will be published monthly - [and here is the 1st one](#) (2nd edition next week) - it's only 4mins long, and has some interesting information about:

- New Recommendations in Entra ID
- Entra Admin Center Updates
- Conditional Access Policies Renaming
- Phasing Out Legacy Identity Protection Policies

Movies

For sheer mayhem and special effects, Twisters looks like a movie made to be enjoyed in IMAX. Fly Me to the Moon is really interesting, especially for the moon landing conspiracy theorists!

12 July: [Blue Lock the Movie: Episode Nagi](#)

12 July: [Fly me to the Moon](#)

12 July: [Twisters](#)

12 July: **Long Legs**

Now Playing: **Despicable Me 4**

Now Playing: **A Quiet Place: Day 1**

Now Playing: **Treasure**

Now Playing: **He's not ready**

Now Playing: **Kalki 2898 AD**

First Technology | Midrand | Johannesburg, 2191 ZA

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



Try email marketing for free today!