

## TOP STORIES #120

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 provides you with releases four weeks in advance. It is accurate! I believe this is the only place in South Africa where you can find a comprehensive list of all the upcoming movies.

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 #119 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 has wrapped. You can [find the best of the show summarised here](#). The [Show Dailies can be found here](#). It will open on Day 1, but look below the magazine you have opened, and you will see a selection of magazines at the bottom of the site for the rest of the publications. rAVE has [extensive coverage of Infocomm 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!](#)

## Don't Forget

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

The downloadable documents are very detailed, spanning 24 pages, so I recommend searching for what you need within 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 guide for July 2025 to July 2026 can be downloaded [here](#)

The July guide is focused on the changes relating to the end of Windows 10  
This should be read in conjunction with the [previous guide 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.](#)

## Did you Know?

### Cyber MXDR by BUI Comes with a R1,000,000 Cyber Warranty

**Who needs this? Everybody! Any business that cares about not becoming the next ransomware headline needs to take notice.**

BUI is ISO/IEC 27001:2022 and 22301 certified, which means they meet the highest global standards for security and continuity.

With offices in South Africa, the UK, the USA, and beyond, First Technology Group is a global leader in providing these solutions. Although the warranty is currently only available in South Africa, the company is expanding its reach globally.

[Please contact your First Technology Group Account Manager to connect you with the BUI Security specialists to explore how this can benefit your business and enable you to enjoy a much better, sleeping-pill-free sleep!](#)

## Hardware

### Infocomm - the frog is starting to boil

[The message is really clear: anybody still insisting that the Pro AV industry is separate from Enterprise IT is going to get cooked!](#)

The biggest takeaway from Infocomm 2025 is that the line between ProAV and IT has all but evaporated.

All vendors at Infocomm were speaking "Fluent IP". The latest solutions transport Video over **SDVoE** at 10Gb, audio with **Dante**, and the meeting-room stack is expected to plug straight into Teams, Zoom or Google without drama.

The message is clear: [AV is no longer a bolt-on, it's an IT subsystem — managed, monitored and secured like any other network workload.](#)

You can [read more here](#)

As an Enterprise Class Global IT Group, FTG, knowing that the AV and IT industries would eventually merge, has already placed its Pro-AV divisions within the IT Group for decades. This means these divisions can tap into essential networking and security resources from other specialist divisions, which are essential in ensuring these solutions are fully integrated.

[Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our ProAV specialists, who already understand how the world is changing and what they are doing is just a subset of the bigger picture that FTG is fully able to support.](#)

## Microsoft

### Legacy Drivers removed from Windows Update

This is good news! This will improve the overall security posture of Windows, as many old drivers contain vulnerabilities, but also means if you have some old or special hardware that has been relying on Windows updates to install drivers, it may be an idea to make sure you have your own offline library of drivers.

You will be able to find them on the internet, but that can get very risky!!

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

## Microsoft Testing emergency PC to Cloud Failover

I think it will depend on the billing model to determine how viable this is, but this is quite a good idea where a backup of your PC is kept in the cloud, allowing you to fail over to it should you have a disaster. Microsoft has announced a trial for something like this called "Windows 365 Reserve". You can [read more about this here](#). [Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our specialists who will be able to help with a trial as soon as this service becomes available, even if still in preview. Availability will vary between regions.](#)

## Beware! Your Win10 machine may be force-upgraded to Win11

It seems Microsoft is preparing to upgrade computers that meet the minimum hardware spec to Windows 11 without any option to stop it. This is similar to what happened with Windows 8 getting upgraded to Windows 10. You can [read more about this here](#). [Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Managed Services support teams to assist with dealing with this issue, as there may be good reasons for delaying the upgrade or a need to take other measures to keep running Windows 10.](#)

## Security

### TSA Issues Urgent Warning for Airports

This warning is for ALL travellers, not just in the USA. There is an increasing chance that your USB charging port at the airport has been compromised to allow an attacker to inject nasty malware into your phone, or worse, get compromised through using a WiFi connection that has been set up to act as a honeypot. When you are travelling, you are at your most vulnerable, you are tired, and your guard is down... Never do any financial transactions while at the airport or do anything on your device that could get you compromised. Even having a VPN does not fully protect you. You can [read more here](#). [It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that your executives are well protected and trained to spot something dodgy, so please contact your First Technology Account manager to connect you with our experts to help ensure that all your systems on these mobile devices are working to protect your data and your executives have received the necessary training.](#)

### Voice AI Deepfakes Continue to Improve

Attackers are making increasing use of ever more freely available voice modulation tools to imitate voices to trick people into clicking something or acting on a request that results in damage to your business. You can [read more about this here](#). [Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to help schedule the necessary training to ensure these increasingly sophisticated and convincing attacks do not catch your users out.](#)

## Cloud & AI

### First-ever attack on M365 CoPilot

This attack is really bad! No Clicks, No Phishing, No Warning Attackers can steal information without you having to do anything! Microsoft says it has been fixed, so don't panic! This is a reminder that as much as AI is inevitable in your company, it is critical that you ensure you are protecting and categorising the data the AI can access and that you have all measures in place to protect it. You can [read more about this vulnerability here](#). [Please talk to your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our security and AI specialists to help ensure that your deployment of AI capability is done in the most secure manner possible.](#)

## 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 Warrant**

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.**

## 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 - 8th, 9th and 10th Videos Available

FTG's Cloud and Security Division, BUI's Video Blog, has posted 3 new videos focusing on Entra ID. It is highly recommended that you review these videos as they give you an understanding of how to squeeze value out of the Microsoft suites as opposed to buying alternative products which may not be necessary.

**No. 8:** Streamlining employee onboarding

**No. 9:** Modernise Remote Access

**No. 10:** Secure Internet access based on business requirements.

## 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

28 Years turning out to be very good (if you like that kind of stuff), but Elio is also doing great for kids of all ages!

Now Playing: [Elio](#)

Now Playing: [28 Years Later](#)

Now Playing: [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](#)

11 July: [SMURFS](#)

11 July: [Superman Legacy](#)

18 July: [I know what you did last Summer](#)

18 July: [Four Letters of Love](#)

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