First Technology Group

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BUI INNOVATION DELIVERY RESULTS | TechSonic | First Horizon

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3rd August #178

New for This week!

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

- **Another 3 New vendors threatlocker, safetica and mailstore** are added.
- **Microsoft EoL section updated for April 2027 -** New update coming in August
- **DarkWeb Weekly Intelligence Report #178-** No rest for the wicked, now AI powered
- **Did you Know? -** We have the nuclear DFIR option!
- **Microsoft Promotions** - Some are out, and surprisingly they have to do with AI.
- **Microsoft Makes history** - and so will you!
- **Microsoft confirms Win11 is a RAM hog** - Really? What a surprise!
- **Microsoft Builds CoPilot SuperApp** - One App to Rule Them ALL.
- **What's new in Teams** - Looks like it is trying to be a SuperApp too!
- **It just takes 2 mins** - And you are reading the "Did You Know" story for today
- **Your CEO may not be your CEO** - Transfer HOW MUCH MONEY? Of course I will!
- **Phishing tools bypass MFA** - A human still needs to agree.
- **Watching the Consumption Meter** - How much it can hurt when you don't

Microsoft Modernisation April 2026-2027

Microsoft Modernisation strategy has been updated. This addresses key EoL dates, price increases and updates up to 1 April 2027

New report in August.

DarkWeb Weekly Intelligence Report #178

We scan the DarkWeb continuously for Hacker signals and Ransomware attacks.
Click above for the report from our live dashboard that we will publish weekly (but actually updated continuously).
This is part of the DarkWeb monitoring services included with many of BUI's managed services offerings. **This report is live, and this is a "snapshot" of the top 10 events as of Sunday Afternoon.**

TOP STORIES #177

Click button above for last weeks news.

Visit FirstMarketPLace Link here for New Additions

threatlocker. safetica and mailstore have been added for this week.
See below for Linkedin
Try out our AI to see whats been added since launch.

Our LinkedIn

Movie releases

Get all the releases for the next 4 weeks in South Africa. **July marks summer blockbuster season with The Odyssey & Moana screening and Spiderman is heading to a Billion Dollar weekend opening.**

TOP STORIES ARCHIVE

Register with the link above and get access to the entire TOP STORIES Archive with an AI to help you find what you want. You can also find all the vendors added to FirstMarketPlace and get a whole lot of detail about them!
It's in Beta so it could make mistakes.

Request Account Manager

SUBSCRIBE TO TOP STORIES

Did You know?

What to do when your breach goes Nuclear!

Digital Forensics. Incident Response. Readiness.
One BUI Cyber DFIR team, before, during and after an incident.

- **A cyber breach is not a server outage**.
  Restarting, rebuilding or wiping systems too early can destroy evidence, hide the point of entry and allow the attacker to remain inside your environment.

SCAN ME

- **DIGITAL FORENSICS (DF): FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED.**
  BUI preserves and analyses digital evidence, reconstructs the attack timeline, identifies the point of entry, determines which systems, identities and data were affected, and documents the findings for management, insurers, legal teams and regulators.

- **INCIDENT RESPONSE (IR): CONTAIN, REMOVE AND RECOVER.**
  BUI helps isolate affected systems, contain the spread, remove attacker access, secure compromised identities, eradicate malicious persistence and restore the environment safely.
  BUI can also assign Microsoft Defender licensing at no charge for the duration of the recovery process.

- **PROACTIVE DFIR: PREPARE BEFORE THE INCIDENT.**
  BUI develops Incident Response and Forensic Readiness Plans, defines roles and escalation paths, runs tabletop exercises and breach simulations, and assesses your attack surface before an attacker tests it for you.

- **WHY BOTH DF AND IR MATTER.**
  Digital Forensics tells you what happened, how far it spread and what evidence must be preserved. Incident Response uses that intelligence to stop the attack and restore operations. Recovery without forensics risks destroying evidence. Forensics without response leaves the threat active.

- **ACTIVE CYBER INCIDENT?**
  Go immediately to:
  https://hacked.support
  .....to request assistance from BUI's Cyber DFIR team.

Further, please contact your First Technology Group account manager to arrange a response readiness conversation, before you ever need the emergency one.

Microsoft New Promotions

The promotions are here! See the link below!

Microsoft NCE Promotions

Microsoft News This Week

Microsoft makes market history with earnings surge amid capacity constraints

After months of Wall Street questioning whether Microsoft's enormous AI investment would ever pay off, the answer was a VERY loud yes.
Microsoft shares jumped around 15.5% in one day, adding approximately $450 billion in market value after revenue reached $90 billion and Azure grew 43%.
Azure also passed $100 billion in annual revenue for the first time.

But there is an unintended consequence. Microsoft added 31 datacentres and another gigawatt of capacity during the quarter, while spending $41 billion on infrastructure.

Yet demand STILL exceeds available Azure capacity, with new CPU and GPU resources being consumed almost as quickly as Microsoft brings them online.
CapEx is expected to exceed $50 billion next quarter, with no clear indication of when these constraints will end.

Directions on Microsoft notes that Demand for M365E7 is ramping, with Satya telling attendees that hundreds of enterprise customers are purchasing millions of seats since E7 became available two months ago.

For customers, this means that region, architecture, capacity and commercial choices matter more than ever.
Securing capacity, choosing between Pay-As-You-Go, Reservations and Savings Plans, managing AI consumption and avoiding expensive design mistakes requires continuous attention....
NOT an annual review after the money has already gone!

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Azure, licensing and FinOps specialists to help secure the right capacity, implement the right architecture and keep a VERY close eye on the meter!

Directions: Record Results and Capacity Constraints

WebProNews: Microsoft Rewrites Market History with Earnings Surge

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Microsoft Confirms Windows hogs memory

Microsoft has finally acknowledged that Windows 11 needs to use less memory, and has committed to reducing its footprint on machines with 8Gig RAM and above by the end of 2026.

This includes making WinUI, Chromium and WebView2 more memory efficient.... all those little things quietly eating your RAM before Teams, Outlook and Edge have even started running.

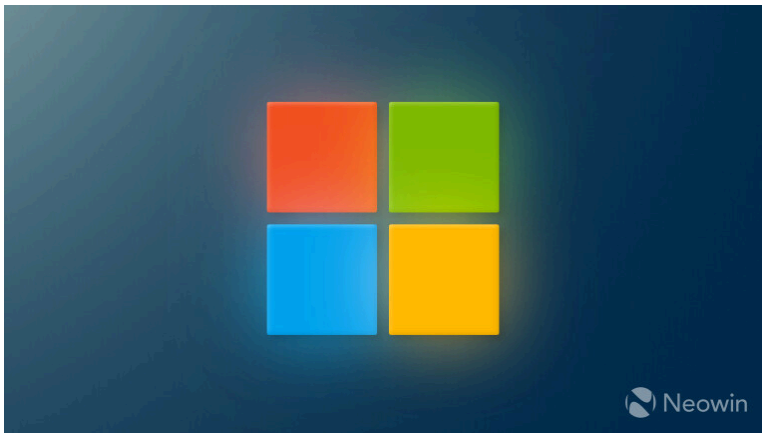
This is VERY good news.

For companies trying to keep older 8Gig and 16Gig machines alive, this buys valuable breathing room.
Combined with a properly engineered and debloated Windows 11 image, it could extend the useful life of the existing fleet and save a few users from needing trauma counselling every time they open Teams, Outlook and too many browser tabs together.

HOWEVER.... this is NOT permission to start buying new 8Gig machines, or quietly change the next RFQ back to 16Gig!
TOP STORIES has recommended 32Gig since #46 and repeated the point in #173. That remains the practical target for new corporate machines expected to last.
Microsoft putting Windows on a diet helps us sweat the older hardware.... **it does not make under-specced new hardware a clever investment.**

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Windows and hardware specialists to optimise the fleet you already have, and to ensure your next hardware refresh still aims for 32Gig wherever possible.

WindowsLatest: Microsoft commits to optimise Windows 11



Microsoft building CoPilot SuperApp

Microsoft will bring Copilot Chat, Cowork, Autopilots and Code together in one flagship “super app” this quarter, spanning both consumer AND business use. For companies, it will connect with Agent 365, CRM and ERP systems, while

Microsoft’s business model increasingly combines per-user licensing with consumption charges. The scale behind the strategy is enormous, with quarterly revenue reaching $90 billion, Azure growing 43%, and Microsoft’s share price jumping more than 15%.

This is exactly what I have been saying in TOP STORIES for months. Microsoft controls the document layer through Word, Excel and PowerPoint, communications through Teams and Outlook, development through GitHub and Azure, and much of corporate identity, security and compliance.
The new super app becomes the visible surface sitting above ALL that plumbing.

For a company already invested in Microsoft, this strengthens the argument that Copilot is the only practical AI that can be allowed broadly into the corporate environment without building an entirely separate security and governance stack.

You may be absolutely convinced that you are NEVER buying Copilot or E7.
WIth this Microsoft roadmap it is essential to take them VERY seriously anyway.
In six months, an AI that can see your work, collaborate with people AND agents, write code and operate inside your existing corporate controls may make today’s decision look VERY different from the one in 6 months time where alternatives have more risk.

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Microsoft specialists to help secure and categorise your data, evaluate Copilot and E7, and work out what you should buy... and, just as importantly, what you should NOT buy! Ready or not AI is coming - and it has Microsoft's name on it!

StartupFortune: Microsoft building an AI Super app

NeoWin:CoPIlot SuperApp coming this quarter

What's New in Teams for July

Microsoft’s July update is not really a collection of new buttons..... it demonstrates how Teams is rapidly becoming the control plane for ALL business communication.
Meetings, phone calls, interpretation, recaps, meeting rooms, external collaboration and even AI agents are increasingly being brought together inside Teams. At the same time, Microsoft is adding stronger administration and security, including better control over agents, reporting

suspicious external users, applying sensitivity labels to recordings and consolidating device management. Teams is becoming more useful..... but also considerably more complicated to configure and govern properly.

Clearly, it's NOT a good idea to switch on every shiny new feature and hope for the best. It is maybe a better plan to talk with people who work with Teams in many companies, each with their own challenges every day, and to tap into their experience to guide you on what should be enabled (and governed) for your company.

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Teams, Teams Phone, meeting room, security, and licensing specialists to regularly review what has changed... and make sure Teams becomes a properly managed communications platform rather than another collection of expensive buttons that nobody knows how to use!

Microsoft: New Teams features added for July

Security

A Two-Minute Microsoft Teams Call Could End With Your Network Encrypted With Ransomware

Sophos has uncovered a campaign where attackers impersonate IT support staff through Microsoft Teams. In calls often lasting only two minutes, users were persuaded to launch Quick Assist or another remote-support tool and hand control of their computer to the attacker.

Once inside, the attackers installed backdoors, moved across the network and, in at least three cases, deployed Chaos ransomware. One organisation went from the initial call to widespread encryption in less than 17 hours.

There was no clever vulnerability required to get through the front door..... a human simply opened it!
This is another reminder that the human remains the weakest link. Users must be continuously trained to NEVER grant remote access following an unexpected Teams call, and to verify every support request using a known internal contact.

You need the best security tools, but without regular awareness training that actually lands, somebody can still hand an attacker the keys to your network in less time than it takes to make a cup of coffee!
Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our security specialists to review your protection AND user training.

CyberSecurityNews: 2mins on Teams then Ransomware!

Your CEO may not be your CEO!

More than half of organisations have suffered targeted attacks impersonating an executive or employee. Most appeared through fake social media profiles or convincing video content, with AI making it frighteningly easy to create believable identities, images and deepfakes.

The attackers may never need to breach your network..... they simply borrow a trusted name, face or voice and wait for somebody to obey!

This again proves that the human being remains the weakest link. Security tools are essential, but employees MUST be trained to stop, question urgency and independently verify any request involving money, credentials or sensitive information..... even when they can apparently see or hear the boss!

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our security specialists to review both your protection and security awareness training.

Knowbe4: Most Organizations Hit by Targeted Impersonation Attacks

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Cloud & AI

Amazon blew $1.8 million on a single Claude AI task and didn't notice for 5 months!

Amazon reportedly spent $1.8 million on a Claude Sonnet project that went 860% over budget, was not detected for five months, and never even launched!
Two other AI projects pushed the total unplanned spending to around $2.5 million.

Token-based charging meant that relatively small coding mistakes became catastrophically expensive once AI agents repeatedly consumed processing without anybody watching closely enough.

As I have warned in TOP STORIES repeatedly over the past two months, buying the licence is only where the meter STARTS.

AI agents, Azure workloads, Fabric capacity, API calls, Copilot Credits, GPU hours and storage can all continue consuming..... even when nobody is watching, and sometimes when the project is achieving absolutely nothing!

I have also warned that an annual cost review does not prevent the problem, it simply summarises the bad news afterwards.
If you have a pipe that has burst underground in your home - you only discover it on the next bill, imagine discovering the leak a year later - in some countries you only get your water bill quarterly!

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Cloud, AI, Azure and FinOps specialists. They can help put the correct budgets, alerts, controls and governance in place, continuously monitor consumption, eliminate waste, select the right models and commitments, and ensure that your consumption is not merely controlled..... but OPTIMAL. The consumption meter will keep ticking away, even when the project isn't!

betanews: What happens when you don't manage consumption

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