

TOP STORIES #116

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 #115 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!**

Computex has wrapped with a slew of announcements and cool stuff. You will find hundreds of hours of content posted on YouTube. **"Just search for "best of Computex 2025"**.

An important one to watch is the piece about CAMM2 memory modules to replace the ancient SODIMMS - I'll be covering some interesting parts of Computex under "Hardware" Below.

Microsoft's Build Conference also wrapped for this week, and if you have registered, you will be able to go back and review a lot of the content of Build, though it has been extensively covered in most of the main IT publications on the web. You can find an **overview of the Build Keynote here**.

The Verge put together a great summary of all the **demos from Build** (including the keynote) and a **summary of Build in 15 mins**. I will cover the impact of what was covered by Build in the coming weeks in Top Stories.

Google's I/O conference also wrapped with some announcements relating to its AI roadmap, which are quite impressive. This is good, OpenAI will continue to have serious competition. You can watch an **overview of I/O in under 10 minutes 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?

Did you know?

First Digital is building Enterprise Grade apps at a 1/10th of the cost!

A client needed ten full mobile and web apps. Traditionally, that would have taken years, cost millions, and required a team of full-stack developers with a whiteboard addiction.

First Digital delivered the lot in under a year – for the cost of what most would spend on one app. First Digital's delivery team, utilising low-code AI-based principles, can build a process in days, not months!

The teams build Secure, Auditable and Integrated apps built to run on Azure, powered by platforms like OutSystems, Freshworks, and Nintex – but always delivered through First Digital's methodology.

The tool is not the hero. The team is.

If you have a manual process or a legacy application, especially one that is using a database like SQL 2012 or older that is our OS support, it could be a very good idea to contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our experts in First Digital to see how they can "build an App in a flash"

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

Best of Computex 2025

There is no shortage of exciting news that came from Computex 2025 and you will find hours of content to entertain and educate you about what to expect from your computing systems for the near future - just search "Best of Computex 2025" PCMag has got a great summary of what they think was important [which you can watch here](#). Love the self-destructing SSD!

The very last segment talks about notebooks built around the next generation of CPU's from Intel - Panther Lake - so.... it means we SHOULD see them in production early 2026.....

There is one important video to watch, which is about the next generation of memory modules. This talks about the NEXT generations of computers that will have modules that will be quite different from what we are used to for significantly increased memory performance. Dell has been quite involved in ratifying this standard, which is now called CAMM2. You can [watch the Linus Tech video about it from Computex here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our Dell Specialists to understand when you will be able to take advantage of this new memory standard for notebooks that will perform even better on EVEN less power!

Microsoft

Microsoft's top 5 AI releases from Build 2025

The build conference was "wall to wall" with AI news, and if you actually work through all the presentations, you will be watching for days, but to make it easier to find the highlights, [here is a summary of the top 5 announcements](#) from the conference.

4 notable announcements from Build

Windows File Explorer is getting an AI boost where you will be able to use AI to interact with your files with a right-click

GitHub is getting a coding Agent to automate simpler tasks and find bugs faster

For those who work with PDF documents, Edge will now be able to translate documents in over 70 languages.

And the biggest update is that Microsoft is **bringing agentic AI to large enterprises**.

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

With what has been announced at Build, it is more important than ever to get on the AI bandwagon before you get left too far behind. You need to start by ensuring that your environment is secured and that you have some control over what data you will give your AI access to.

To start this journey, please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our AI specialists, start planning how to deploy AI, provide awareness training and show your staff how AI can enhance what they do.

Dynamics Business Central Price Increase

Microsoft has announced that from 1 October 2025, device licenses will increase from \$40 to \$45, Essentials from \$70 to \$80, and Premium from \$100 to \$110 per month and additionally, the amount of storage accrued for each license will be increased as well. You can [read the official Microsoft announcement here](#).

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our Dynamics Specialists to understand the implications of these increases in your environment, and depending on your contract, to see if it is possible to negotiate some relief.

Security

Total Blackout for South Africa

An interesting article has [just been posted on Moneyweb](#) about South Africa risking a total blackout because of its infrastructure being vulnerable to cyber attack. It's interesting because I had just published a story about [A Fish and A Thermonometer](#) and a Hack, and went on to explain how we could show a Wind Farm in South Africa can be taken down. Do that to a few installations simultaneously, and you have a [grid collapse](#), just like Spain and Portugal experienced.

Basically, if you cause enough fluctuations of the grid's frequency over a short period of time, everything disconnects to prevent catastrophic damage.

This is a reminder that the way into a company's network can be through unassuming devices that, once the hacker gains a foothold, a disaster can quickly follow.

You need to be secure from every possible attack vector, but there are THREE that you should pay careful and consistent attention to.

1. Make sure your users are constantly trained and reminded on how to be on the lookout for new phishing attempts. They are getting more sophisticated all the time.
2. Find and secure all those IoT devices that you had no idea were hiding in dark corners of your network or even on entire VPN's you had no sight of.
3. **Make sure that the security tools you have deployed are actually enabled and working. Over 60% of all companies with security tools deployed that THOUGHT they were working got hacked, only to discover the things they had deployed to protect them did not!**

Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our specialist teams to help implement a plan to plug these holes. Even if you think you are OK and you have everything in place to protect your environment from attack, there is really no harm in asking somebody else to take a look and see what they find!

Cloud & AI

AGI will be here before 2030

It seems that Google's Sergey Brin is convinced we will see AGI before 2023 which is a similar

assertion from OpenAI's SAM Altman. [You can read more about this here](#).

What is clear is that developments are not slowing down, and by the time we get to 2030, the world will be very different from what we know today.

What is also VERY clear is that it is essential to be experimenting with AI NOW to learn in practice with how it can help you and through that partnership help improve your capability and productivity. You HAVE to start with making sure that your data is secure and categorised, and then give an AI access and then start experimenting.

PLEASE START. The gap between those that are experimenting with it and those that have done nothing is widening every day, and soon the gap will get too big to close.....

PLEASE contact your First Technology Account manager to connect you with our specialists to get you on that journey as fast as possible. Just give [TSAI](#) a test drive to see what a very simple AI brought to life in just three weeks on TOP STORIES can do.

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

It seems Lilo & Stitch and Mission: Impossible have worked their magic, and the box office is going to take in [record numbers](#).

Now Playing: [Lilo & Stitch](#)

Now Playing: [Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning](#)

Now Playing: [Die Dekonstriksie 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](#)

20 June: [Elio](#)

20 June: [28 Years Later](#)

20 June: [Bride Hard](#)

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