

TOP STORIES #46

Now that the excitement of CES is dying down, we have a lot of other news bubbling, in particular quite a lot from Microsoft where you are also going to learn about a new performance specification called "TOPS" - it's not that new really, but now that Microsoft is quoting it, we are now all hearing about it!

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Hardware

Microsoft to set 16Gig RAM minimum and 40 "TOPS" for AI PC's

For those who have seen the FTG technology roadmap presentations, I have been predicting this change for quite a while and recommending that you adjust your minimum criteria for when you prepare your RFQ for the next hardware refresh. **Actually, 32Gig RAM should be regarded as a minimum.** You can read more about how this [new minimum requirement has come about here](#).

What is "TOPS"?

This is a measure of AI computing performance in "Terra (Trillions) Operations Per Second" which is quite vague as there does not seem to be a very specific set of operations that must be performed to come up with this measurement. Venturebeat is [offering some commentary on this here](#). It is interesting that Microsoft is setting a minimum of 40 TOPS for an AI computer, when Meteor Lake comes in at 35 and AMD Ryzen 8000 is rumoured to come in at 39-40. It is however predicted that TOPS performance could increase by 9-fold year on year, so this "minimum" could be easily achievable in a year from now, and thus this "high" limit could become easily achievable by everybody making new AI processors really soon.

Microsoft

Microsoft Product Terms updated 16 Jan 2024

Microsoft has made [new changes to its product terms](#) to list CoPilots availability under the different types of licensing agreements.

Microsoft is also listing the prerequisites for Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365:

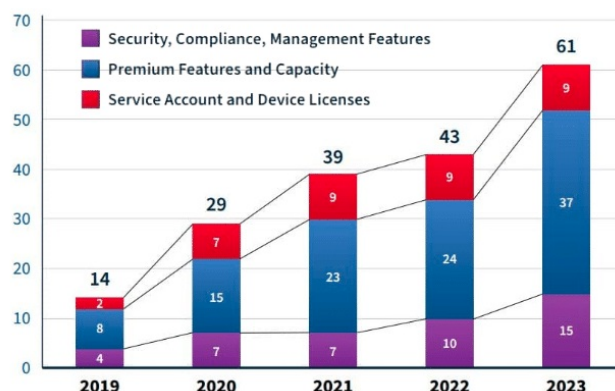
Microsoft 365 Business Standard/Business Premium/E3/A3/E5/A5; **Office 365 E3/A3/E5/A5**

It's important to note that you can buy CoPilot even if you just have O365 as shown above. F series SKU are not "supported".

I've bought a car with no Seats!

The Register and Directions on Microsoft have highlighted a growing problem. The number of billable add-ons has ballooned from 14 in 2021 to 61 by the end of 2023!

COUNT OF COMPONENTS NOT IN MICROSOFT 365 SUITES



www.directionsonmicrosoft.com

This is potentially leading to ballooning costs where you may be persuaded to buy suites and add-ons that are not really appropriate for your business, leaving these expensive licenses wasted. **Or, you may be buying what you think is the full suite, only to discover later that**

you need add-ons you did not budget for!

More than ever, it is so important to have a licensing and technical solutions specialist who can really help you navigate this complexity and only purchase the licenses that will truly add value and help you get more value from what you are already paying for. In Tirst Technology, we have been doing this for more than 25 years and have a lot of experience so we can really help with this.

You can read more about this flurry of add-ons from [The Register here](#) and [Directions on Microsoft here](#). It's not just about paying for the licenses, it's about getting them to work properly as well, and with that, [First Technology has ALL the engineering capability across all of Microsoft's competencies](#) to get anything that Microsoft can sell to work!

Windows 12, Windows AI or Windows 11 24H2?

The rumour mill is grinding away furiously as to what we can expect from Microsoft in the latter half of 2024, but what we can be sure of no matter what name the next iteration of Windows gets, Microsoft is doubling down on AI - and it is important to heed the change in minimum hardware specifications - more powerful computers with new AI processing capability will be required no matter what new name Windows gets.

Even if you think AI is not important today, remember that any new PC you buy will be around for at least three years, so a bit of future-proofing (if you can afford it) will be a good idea. [You can read more about what we can expect in 2024 here](#). There is [more discussion about Windows 24H2 here](#).

Cloud & AI

Microsoft Launches CoPilot Pro

This new service is at \$20 per month (which happens to be the same price as ChatGPT) but also brings AI to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook. Note the prerequisites in the product terms above. You can [read more detail about CoPilot Pro here](#).

Sam Altman and Bill Gates talk about AI

This is a really interesting summary of the discussion between these two famous people. This is part of the Bill Gates Unconfuse Me podcast series - well worth listening to. [A summary of the discussion and a link to the podcasts can be found here](#).

Security

SCAM Alert! It might look legitimate, but it's not!

Check this website out: <https://kitchenwarehouse.co.za/>

It is a professional-looking domain, and on the face of it, it looks professional, and the deals look amazing (1st red flag). When shopping online, unless it is a REALLY well known site like Takelot, Amazon, FirstShop, etc... pay very close attention to what is going on with the site. It has no information about the company, and the address is very dodgy, does the credit card vendor name match the site? have you searched the web to see if it is a scam, [like here](#)? Is the offer too good to be true? (probably is).

70 Million credentials leaked.

You can never let up in trying to make sure your passwords are as secure as possible, and that you do not use the same password across different online accounts. [Read more here](#) about this massive leak, and how to check if your credentials have leaked.

Your computer's BIOS is not safe either!

All the top BIOS vendors are releasing patches and in turn these are being rolled out by all major hardware vendors. It is important to make sure that your devices are fully patched even at firmware level. [Read more here](#).

What's up at FTG

[With the ability to now buy one CoPilot license at a time](#), getting ready for CoPilot is very important, as utilising AI in your business will become increasingly important - especially when the AI can use your own data to support you.

BUI is offering an [M365 CoPilot Readiness Workshop](#) to help you get ready. You can [register here](#).

Movies

Now Playing: [Poor Things](#)

26 January: [All of us Strangers](#)
26 January: [Beautiful Wedding](#)
26 January: [Color Purple](#)
26 January: [The Beekeeper](#) (Action Jason Stratham style - reviews out already)

First Technology | Midrand, Johannesburg, GAUTENG 2191 South Africa

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