

## TOP STORIES #94

The year is ending with lots of juicy leaks on what we will see at CES 2025 from a rollable screen from Lenovo (more below) to a [transparent OLED TV from LG](#) for \$60K!!!!

The Tech publications are flooded with speculation on the NVIDIA GeForce 50 series GPU's that are going to be launched - and while the [pricing is causing the most consternation](#), Intel has scored a goal with it's [reasonably priced Arc B580](#). CES 2025 is still ramping up for its big opening on the 7th of January, and with that, you can read the first [Show Daily Publication for the show here](#) where you can read about massage chairs (a staple of CES) to scooters and everything in between. It's 90 pages - and a lot of interesting reading!

I Love the idea of the "MouthPad" on page 45, the underground drone for mining exploration on Page 48, and YARBO, the modular yard robot, on page 81 (bottom right).

[TOP STORIES #93 can be found here.](#)

If you would like to invite colleagues to join, they can [click here](#) to subscribe.

## Did You Know?

**You are over-licensed!?**

**You're probably overpaying for Microsoft licenses—and don't even realise it.**

Managing Microsoft 365 subscriptions is no small task. Without clear visibility, it's easy to:

- Overallocate expensive licenses.
- Issue multiple licenses to the same user.
- Leave premium features unused while paying full price.

**License Pulse changes the game.** It connects to your Graph API and reveals exactly how your team uses their licenses. With these insights, you can:

- Reassign underutilised licenses instead of buying more.
- Optimise your subscriptions to reduce waste.
- Negotiate smarter with Microsoft using data-driven insights.

This tool delivers results *fast*—setup takes just a few hours. [Contact your First Technology account manager today to explore a demo or proof of concept.](#)

## Hardware

### Lenovo to launch "rolling laptop"

This is one of the cooler leaks of the the show. This notebook looks quite ordinary until you flip a switch on the side, and the display magically extends into a dual 16:9 aspect ratio display! [Take a look at the video here.](#) This is a prototype, so there are no plans for production, but it is still very cool!

### 4 differences between PCIe 4.0 and PCIe 5.0 SSDs

If you are buying a new notebook in 2025, it is important to make sure it has the latest CPU, GPU, and storage—particularly PCIe 5.0 SSDs. [Here is a guide that explains the difference between 4.0 and 5.0.](#)

What you should be doing is waiting for prices to decrease unless you are getting a really good deal on a machine from a previous generation or if you HAVE to buy a machine now.

This is very important when it comes to planning your company's hardware refreshes.

You can't take the specifications of the previous generation you bought and issue an RFP for the next generation on the same basis.

Everything is changing—the CPUs now come with NPUs, the minimum memory must be 32 Gig, and your storage (as discussed here), ports, and even docking stations (hubs) **must** be updated.

[Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our hardware experts to plan your refreshes because they are getting complicated.](#)

### A supercomputer in the Palm of your hand

NVIDIA has launched the Jetson Orin Nano Super, a palm-sized computer capable of delivering 67 TOPS. This will drive a huge leap in endpoint AI applications, and I would not be surprised to see it integrated into a new laptop variant.

You can read [more about the development kit here](#). Dave's Garage has a [really informative video that shows how to use it showing off its capabilities](#).

## Microsoft

### Office 365 Activation issue

Just in time for Christmas!

Some users are receiving notifications that their licenses will be deactivated, which can be quite alarming. Microsoft [has acknowledged the problem](#). You can try to fix it by signing out of everything (including Outlook) and then signing back in. The Register goes into [more detail about the problem here](#).

### Reminder: Classic Outlook has 5 years left

As I have addressed in previous TOP STORIES, **Microsoft will force migrations to the New Outlook starting in April 2026**. However, you can block the migration for now. Office Watch has [published a guide on how to do so](#).

This just delays the inevitable.

It is really important to start planning the migration because, as covered in [TOP STORIES #52](#), some features will never be implemented in the new Outlook.

Microsoft is constantly making improvements to the New Outlook, like the better [Offline Mode documented here](#). The agenda for Microsoft is simple: remove legacy parts of Outlook that caused instability and make Outlook run exclusively from the cloud—i.e., none of your emails can be stored locally in old-fashioned PSTs.

This makes sense, as if everything is stored in the cloud, CoPilot will be able to scan your emails and give you all sorts of clever help in the future.

**Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our experts to start planning this migration to the New Outlook - it is better to start this sooner rather than later, especially when it comes to discovering some COM add-ins that a certain department may be dependant on that everybody has forgotten about because it "just works".**

### Dynamics 365 Licensing Guide: December

The latest guide can be [downloaded here](#). There are no major updates, just the last edition for the year to go through if you have nothing else to do for Christmas!

## Security

### Google Calendar invite could be malware

This is a reminder that we have to be alert all the time. As much as we worry about our company computers and emails, many of us have private Google email addresses, and we can forget that they are just as vulnerable. [Here is a story about how you can get tricked](#) - please warn your loved ones to remain extra careful over the festive season.

### Mobile Phishing Attacks Use New Tactic to Bypass Security Measures

This is a warning to users not to install apps on their mobile devices from messages that appear to be from their bank or other legitimate institution. [Read more here](#). This type of attack is going to increase in 2025.

I have been receiving messages that I have defaulted on my MTN cellphone account and then given a link to make immediate payment.

So many people could get caught by this one too!

**This is a reminder to contact your First Technology account manager to speak with the security specialists and plan the training schedule for your users in 2025. The bad guys never give up, and they don't even take holidays!**

### Fake parcel delivery notifications

There are many variants of this scam, but all of them try to trick you into clicking a link to make a payment. Do not click the link and enter details, as the scammers will use your information for nefarious purposes.

**These attacks are already common in South Africa, so please warn relatives who may not be so tech-savvy to be super careful and, if they are not sure, ask you before doing anything.**

## Cloud & AI

**Even Netflix struggles to identify and understand the cost of its AWS estate**

If you are having trouble trying to tack the cost of your estate, take some comfort in knowing that probably EVERYBODY is struggling, including Netflix. [You can read more about Netflix's challenges here.](#)

In January 2025, First Technology will launch a system that will greatly help you manage and optimise your estate regardless of where it is hosted. This project has been in "Stealth Mode" for two years and is now ready for us to Launch in the new year. Keep following TOP STORIES!

## What's up at FTG

### Microsoft AI Tour in Johannesburg

First Technology Group will have a major presence at the Microsoft AI Tour in Johannesburg. You will be able to meet our experts in all fields of AI. These experts from First Technology, BUI, CRM Team and First Digital will be there to introduce, explore and demonstrate business-centric AI-powered solutions to boost creativity and productivity. These include out-of-the-box solutions as well as custom designs developed by First Technology Group companies.

**When:** 23 Jan 2025 7:00am to 1:45pm

**Where:** Sandton Convention Centre

[Register here](#)

### Pure Storage event - Special Guest speaker - PSG Wealth

This is a special in-person event to start the new year. It introduces the Pure Storage and First Technology partnership, takes you behind the scenes of the technology, explains how you can benefit from it, and discusses what the future looks like with Containers and Kubernetes.

**When:** 23 Jan 2025 at 8:00am

**Where:** Pencil Club, 1 Ncondo Pl, Umhlanga Ridge, Durban, 4320

[Register Here.](#)

**There are limited seats, so please register ASAP**

### CoPilot Security Demo

BUI, FTG's security division, can present CoPilot for Security information-sharing sessions, workshops and demos.

In light of ongoing attacks that will only get sneakier, it is essential to contact your First Tech Group account manager to arrange to attend a session. You can also [request a session here.](#)

### 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 - 3rd Video Available

FTG's Azure and security division, BUI, has launched a blog focused on Security—what's new, what changed, and what you need to do to maintain a sound security posture. This one, however, is about a game that Dirk learnt about while attending Black Hat in Vegas.

[All BUI videos have been moved to one YouTube channel, which you can find here.](#)

The Security Blog Video #003 is [now available to view here.](#)

## Movies

School holidays from 6 December to January 25! 50 Days!

Now Playing: [Mufasa: The Lion King](#) - It is doing well, but **will still be beaten by Sonic 3**

Now Playing: [Canary Black](#) (Already Streaming on Amazon - reviews not great)

27 December: [Sonic the Hedgehog 3](#) - the blockbuster for December!

27 December: [Baby Girl](#)

27 December: [Werewolves](#)



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