

# .top\_stories

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## 10th November #140

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### New for This week

Hopefully this new format is easier to read. Your feedback to improve further is appreciated



- 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.
- Read about the **most certified Veeam backup partner in Africa**
- **Microsoft CoPilot** gets 12 new features
- **Microsoft Teams** returns to the M365 Suites with new pricing.
- **Azure vCore Customisation** can save you money.
- **Windows 11 26H1** confirmed.
- **Microsoft Phishing** attempts evolve
- **Microsoft Chat with Anyone Teams feature** causes concern

**Upcoming  
Technology Shows**

Click for an update on the upcoming technology shows like CES 2026

**Read this before you  
buy your new TV**

Learn about understanding how the resolution of the human eye will help save you a lot of money on your TV and get a better monitor for work!

**Last weeks TOP  
STORIES #139**

Click button above for last weeks news

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## Visit FirstMarketplace

We have added **Flexera** and **Bitwarden** to the FTG global Marketplace

## Movie releases

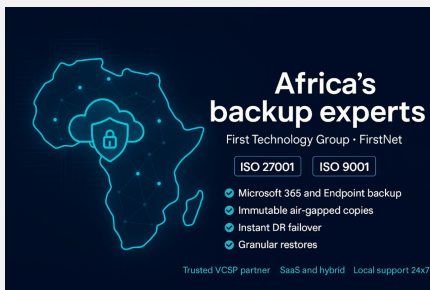
Get all the releases and trailers for the next month in South Africa

## Microsoft products End of Life. What to know

Important to review especially with Windows 10, Exchange and others

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**SUBSCRIBE**



## Did you Know?

Africa's most certified backup partner resides inside **First Technology Group!**

FirstNet is the only Veeam VCSP in Africa with exclusive badges across Off-site Backup..... DRaaS, and Microsoft 365 BaaS AND we pair that with Druva's cloud-native protection to cover M365 and endpoints end-to-end.

All of it is run in ISO 27001 and ISO 9001 environments for security and quality you can audit. Expect immutable backups, instant DR failover, granular restores and expert support. Pricing is straightforward, with an option for managed service when needed.

FirstNet is the safest most complete and most certified route to backup for DR and Microsoft 365 protection in Africa, with clear price points and proven delivery.

Please contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our Backup experts to help craft a solution for you.

**Visit FirstNet**

## Microsoft **News This Week**

### Microsoft CoPilot gets 12 New Features and..... **Clippy-Mico!**

- Copilot gets more personal and useful this season. Better collaboration, stronger adaptation to you, deeper memory, and smarter contextual understanding.

- Health and education see notable upgrades.  
More capable out of the box for clinicians, teachers, and learners.
- Edge picks up new Copilot Mode tricks  
It now reasons over your open tabs to act as a proper browser buddy.
- Copilot has a new face called Mico, expressive, customisable, and designed to feel warmer without dumbing anything down

[Visit Microsoft for More](#)

Please contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our CoPilot specialists to show how you can take advantage of the new features.

[Request Account Manager](#)

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## Teams Returns to M365 Suites

As expected, the suites that include Teams returned on 1 November 2025  
Pricing has been realigned, the non-Teams suites drop in price, and the Teams Enterprise licence rises to create the agreed delta between with-Teams and without-Teams offers.

[Microsoft Pricing Plans](#)

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## Azure vCore customisation to save costs

Microsoft introduces two CPU controls for Azure VMs in preview. You can disable Simultaneous Multi-Threading to run one thread per physical core which can lift performance for specific workloads.

You can also set a custom virtual core count below the default for a chosen VM size. This does not lower the VM price ..... but it can cut licensing on software billed per vCore ..... SQL Server for example.

[Microsoft Announcement](#)

Please contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our Azure (and SQL) specialists to see how this new way of customising Azure can save you money.

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## RHEL Software Reservations in Azure Launched

Microsoft confirms that Software Reservations for Red Hat Enterprise Linux are now generally available.

The Reservations portfolio expands to 32 members, each providing discounts on Azure services in exchange for a time-based commitment. RHEL requires a one-year commitment, with savings of up to 24% when running RHEL on Azure virtual machines. As with other Reservations, the benefit is automatically applied to matching RHEL VMs you deploy. Additionally, instance size flexibility means the discount still applies if the VM uses a different virtual core count from the Reservation.

[RHEL Announcement from Microsoft](#)

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Azure (and Linux) specialists to help with configuring these workloads, as well as procuring [Red Hat from First MarketPlace](#)

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## Windows 11 26H1 Confirmed

Microsoft has confirmed that it is testing new version of Windows that is likely to be only for new Snapdragon and Nvidia NX1 CPU's.

It is expected that these new machines will ship with the new operating system early next year making sense that Microsoft will not wait for the annual 26H2 update.

**Windows 11 26H1  
detail**

Please contact your First Technology Group account manager to connect you with our Hardware specialists to help review your procurement roadmap to accommodate new requirements for ARM-based Windows 11 machines, which will increasingly become an attractive alternative to Intel and AMD.

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## Security



### Microsoft Helpdesk Phishing attempt

Credential-stealing attempts are now becoming the most popular scams on the internet. Knowbe4 has published an article that shows what happens when they actually click through the scam which even includes a check to see if you are human (while checking that you are fully patched in the background). This is again a reminder that the Human is the weakest link in the chain and that regular training is essential from experts who spend all their time researching what the bad guys are getting up to. **Just because you attended training 6**

**months ago does NOT mean you are able to spot the latest tricks today. It is SO IMPORTANT to stay up to date.**

**Dissecting a M365 phishing attack**

This is yet another reminder that you should contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our specialist partners, who are experts in helping you train your users to stay alert to these attacks. **Unfortunately, it seems we have to approach all communication with ZERO trust!**

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### AI Phishing attacks surge in Africa

Knowbe4 has warned that threat actors are actively using AI to improve the quality and speed of their attacks, adapting to the target so that they can reconnoitre really fast and then craft a customised attack using deepfake technology and other methods. Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and South Africa are the most frequently attacked.

Contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our specialist

## AI Attacks Surge in Africa

### Microsoft Teams' New "Chat with Anyone" Feature Exposes Users

Microsoft's upcoming Teams update, set for targeted releases in early November 2025 and worldwide by January 2026, **will allow users to initiate chats with only an email address, even if the recipient isn't a Teams user.** This feature raises security concerns among experts.

With chats governed by Entra B2B Guest policies but still confined to the organisation's boundary, the risk of inadvertent data exposure grows.

The feature rolling out between November and January is "DEFAULT ON" and needs to be disabled by admins.

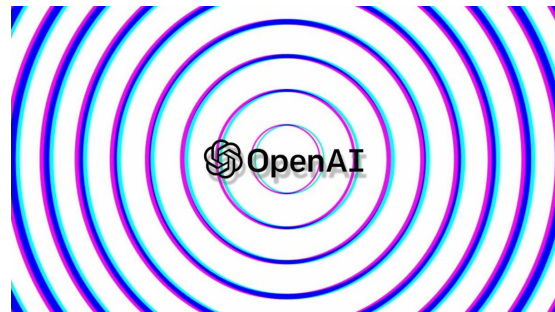
Please contact your [First Technology Group account manager](#) to connect you with our Teams and security specialists to review your Security relating to Teams and how you treat external users going forward

More on "Chat with Anyone"

## Cloud & AI

### OpenAI to release GPT 5.1

OpenAI is preparing to release GPT 5.1. in the next few weeks, which means we will probably see it in CoPilot at the same time. This is an incremental release that will not bring any dramatic improvements. For that, we have to wait for 2026. Google is also expected to release Gemini 3 soon - and has been incorrectly reported previously as having been released, so we will be seeing it soon!



GPT 5.1  
Release

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