TOP STORIES #69

Welcome to all the new members of TOP STORIES
This is a busy week again, but the most interesting news is that by the time you read this, free support will have ended (see the story below).
If colleagues want to subscribe, they can click **here**. I apologise, the link I gave last week did not work, this one does - I double-checked!
Last Week's **TOP STORIES #68 is here**.

Hardware

Fancy OLED Displays Coming to Dell Laptops

Apple released their iPad Pro models featuring stunning OLED displays. These displays feature a 2-stack design for increased performance and brightness. This type of technology is now coming to Dell laptops, starting with the new XPS13.
As I have said many times, it is important to plan your purchases of new hardware carefully and avoid locking yourself into any specific configuration for an extended period. You can **read more about this new display technology here**.
Please Contact your First Tech account manager to connect you with our hardware specialists so you can make arrangements to get evaluations and plan for your next refresh.

Leaked Intel Lunar Lake Benchmarks look good

It is looking like the Intel Lunar Lake CPUs are going to meet expectations of being high-performance low-power processors that exceed Microsoft's minimum requirement of 40 TOPS. All going well, **we should be able to get our hands on them before the end of 2024**.
Again, it is SO IMPORTANT to be planning with our hardware specialists your hardware refresh agendas for the rest of 2024 and into 2025, as things are changing faster than ever. Please contact your First Tech. account manager to discuss the roadmap to align with your plans.

CoPilot+ PC's underwhelming

This reviewer **from Tom's Hardware is seriously underwhelmed with the CoPilot+ PC's** but does admit that the Snapdragon PC's are more power efficient. I do think it is early days, and there are going to be many reviews, positive and negative. Still, with so much changing so fast, try to hold off on buying hardware right now unless you really have to.
If you are in the "have to" league, please Contact your First Tech Account manager, who will put you in touch with our specialists to plan what is coming and when you will be able to get your hands on it.

Microsoft

Support Terminated!

As you may have seen in **BREAKING NEWS #2**, Microsoft has ended free support for Azure. This is quite a big deal because if you have any issues with Azure, the support call is now billable - and though you have a number of **options from Microsoft**, First Technology Group is able to offer you support from South African engineers with full Escalation to Microsoft engineering 24 X 7 X 365, and of course, billed in local currency.

We are the most highly certified company in South Africa receiving "**Partner of the Year for South Africa 2024**" for the 2nd time in a row - as seen in **BREAKING NEWS #3** for more.

Our services range from Enterprise-level Support operations right down to essential and reactive support for smaller businesses.
You have further options for just Microsoft and vendor escalation, cloud and on-premises support, and 24/7 assistance for critical workloads.
No matter how big or small you are we have an option for you.

Please **contact us here** or reach out to your First Tech account manager to discuss your requirements.

Also, this situation is similar for most other cloud providers, such as AWS and others, and we are certified to support those, too—talk to us about them as well!

CoPilot Prerequisites expanded, again

Microsoft has further expanded the prerequisites for CoPilot as follows:
Microsoft 365 Apps for business/Apps for enterprise/Business Basic/Business Standard/Business Premium/F1/F3/E3/A3/E5/A5;
Office 365 F3/E1/E3/A3/E5/A5;
Exchange Online;
SharePoint Online;
OneDrive for Business;
Microsoft Clipchamp;
Microsoft Teams EEA/Enterprise/Essentials;
Planner Plan 1;
Project Online;
Visio Online
You can find this listed in the **Product Terms here**.
You can also find more news about what new CoPilot features **Microsoft is releasing here**.

CoPilot comes to "Old" Outlook

If you have the paid CoPilot for the M365Mxx plan, you will get CoPilot in Outlook with all the features you have experienced in Word, for example.
You can read more about how **Microsoft has implemented it here**.

Teams Room gets multiple camera views

Attendees will be able to switch between multiple cameras to catch all the boardroom action remotely! You can read more about **this feature and others here**.
You also get Intelligent message translation for chats and **improvements in VDI Optimisation**.
Zoom **already has the feature**.
You can contact your First Tech account manager to put you in contact with our Teams and Zoom Room specialists to talk about enabling more advanced features to make the conferencing experience better.

Security

Malware threats more than ever

We are all at risk and being tricked, checked, misled and tricked into getting compromised. We cannot take our attention off security and be suspicious of EVERYTHING. With all the drama going on in the world, and more all the time, you simply cannot let your guard down. You can read more about **why all things bad are at an all-time high**!
Here is an example of a **new Microsoft email scam** with some clues on how to spot one.

Azure MFA rollout clarified

Microsoft has provided an update on preparing for MFA across all of Azure starting in July. The changes affect everybody in Azure, **so it is important to be aware of them**.

Cloud & AI

GPT-5 Coming soon?

Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suleyman has hinted that we will be seeing GPT-5 and GPT-6 sooner than expected. Actually, the interview with him has **stirred up quite a storm**, but it is clear that we are in for another big step change in AI - it's about to get a lot cleverer - **you can read more about the interview here**.
As I have been urging for some time now, it is SO IMPORTANT to start experimenting with how AI can benefit you in your company, and you need to make sure your environment is secure so the data your AI is working with does not get easily compromised. Remember, the target for hackers may not be the data, but the AI that is working with the data.
We are all trying to figure this out as we go - see the story from last week " **With AI, we are all in R&D**"
To prepare for this, please ask your First Tech account manager to connect you with our Security and AI specialists, who can help you start experimenting with AI.

The Cocktail Effect

You may recall in **TOP STORIES #65** I told the story of how AI will contribute to improving the quality of life - and talked about technologies that will soon be available for us to hear clearly in noisy environments. This is known as the Cocktail Effect - and the Sennheiser YouTube ad

beautifully **demonstrates how we can suffer from it**.
Well, Sennheiser has already released a product with some of this technology. You **can read about it here**.
They are EXPENSIVE! It will not be long before many other top brands come out with this technology and improve on it even further, so stick around—it's going to get exciting —this is just "v1.0"!

What's up at FTG

CoPilot Readiness Workshops

They are available.
You can register for them **here** or **here**.

Copilot for Security

Join BUI, (FTG's Azure, Cloud and Security specialists) for an exclusive one-on-one demo session featuring Microsoft Security Copilot!
This is a prime opportunity for your team to experience the forefront of technology with our latest release. Dive into discussions about defining and understanding the consumption needs specific to your organisation.
Reserve your spot now! **Sign up here**.

NEW! FTG's BUI MonthlySecurity Blog

FTG's Azure and security division has launched a blog focused on Security - what's new, what changed and what you need to do to maintain a good security posture. The blog will be published monthly - **and here is the 1st one** - it's only 4mins long, and has some interesting information about:

- New Recommendations in Entra ID
- Entra Admin Center Updates
- Conditional Access Policies Renaming
- Phasing Out Legacy Identity Protection Policies

Movies

INSIDE OUT 2 has continued to **soar to new heights** at the box-office. Even DeadPool 3 may struggle to beat it! A surprise is that a Quite Place: Day 1 is doing much **better than expected**.

NO RELEASES for the week of 5 July
Now Playing: **Despicable Me 4**
Now Playing: **A Quiet Place: Day 1**
Now Playing: **Treasure**
Now Playing: **He's not ready**
Now Playing: **Kalki 2898 AD**

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