

# TOP STORIES #60

The big news this week, is that a South African company, BUI, a division of the First Technology Group has found a critical vulnerability in Microsoft Defender XDR - read more below.

Last Week's [TOP STORIES #59 is here](#).

If you would like colleagues to sign up for this newsletter, they can [click here](#).

## Hardware

### Intel confirms Panther Lake for mid 2025

Not only will we see performance tripling over what we can buy today with Lunar Lake, but we will also see another **doubling** by mid-2025!

Panther Lake is the result of three generations' rapid development in endpoint AI computing capability, which most likely sets the stage for the release of Windows 12 in October 2025.

[Read more about the Panther Lake announcement here](#).

## Microsoft

### End of Support for the "Old" Teams

It is now finally time to make sure you are running the "New Teams". The Old Teams will be switched off 1 July 2025. [Read more here](#).

This is also a good time to remind you that the next big app that is on the chopping block is your favourite Outlook, with a "New Outlook" already released for you to play (unhappily) with.

I originally published a story about this in [TOP STORIES #53](#) and in [TOP STORIES #52](#) where I recommend you review the story "[Warning about the "New Outlook"](#)" in which is especially important to note that support for COM add-ins ends with the Old Outlook. A big feature that is still not shipped in the New Outlook is PST support - you can [see the list here](#).

### What is Windows 11 LTSC - can I install it?

The answer is: "not really".

Only if you are a company with an Enterprise Agreement can you get your hands on it (exceptions apply).

[This is a special version of the operating system designed for long-term stability and reliability, ideal for mission-critical systems that require minimal updates.](#)

Unlike the standard version, LTSC receives feature updates only every 2-3 years and monthly quality updates without bundled apps like Microsoft Store and Microsoft Edge, making it suitable for devices like medical equipment and ATMs that need to operate consistently with little maintenance. [You can read more about Windows 11 24H2 LTSC here](#).

What it also means is that Windows 11 is really ready for the Enterprise.

Microsoft now has a stable enough version that corporates can install without (hopefully) major issues.

If you have not already, this is the signal for you to start deploying Windows 11 24H2 if you can wait for it (September 2024), but it should not stop you from deploying in the meantime, as upgrading to 24H2 should be seamless.

[It is important to start now, if you have not already, as Windows 10 is coming to the end of support in October 2025.](#)

Please reach out to your FT account manager to connect you with the right resources in the First Technology Group to help with this - we have a LOT of experience!

### Dynamics Licensing Guide April 2024

There is an updated guide that you can [download here](#).

The changes from the previous guide can be found on Page 63 where Microsoft appears to be tweaking your Sales Use Rights.

It is also important to remember that a significant price increase is coming in October 2024, which I addressed in [TOP STORIES #59](#).

Therefore, it is very important that you reach out to our Dynamics Specialists to help understand (and hopefully mitigate) the impact.

**The On Premise Licensing guide is also updated**, which you [can download here](#).

There is actually a single site where you can download ALL the guides including GP - [the link is here](#).

# Cloud & AI

## New AI that runs on your laptop

Microsoft has unveiled the Phi-3 Mini, a new AI model that operates directly on your personal computer. (Disclaimer: I have not installed it myself).

This local execution ensures your data remains private, eliminating the need to transmit it to cloud services, which could potentially be intercepted by unauthorized entities.

Additionally, Phi-3 Mini is available at no cost because it is distributed as open-source software.

[To download and install it go here.](#)

For a guide on [how to get it working go here.](#)

It is very important to start looking at what AI capability you can get on your PC without any dependence on the cloud. Remember that by the middle of 2025, the computers that will be available then could be five times **more powerful with AI than the most powerful computer you can get today!**

**Please ask your First Tech Account manager to reach out to our team of AI Development experts to help you put a picture together on how to start experimenting with all these different types of LLM's.**

**It's NOT all about the cloud as AMD, Intel, NVIDIA, and Qualcomm want you buying high powered silicon at the endpoint as well.**

## Security

### BUI, a South African Cyber Company Research Department Finds Critical Microsoft Vulnerability

**A newly discovered critical vulnerability** within the Attack Surface Reduction (ASR) rules of Microsoft Defender XDR poses a severe threat to cybersecurity.

These rules, which are integral to the protection of organizational networks, can be bypassed by adversaries due to an unprotected registry key, allowing them to evade detection and compromise system defences.

Despite the gravity of the situation, a fix is not yet available, leaving organizations to rely on Advanced Hunting queries and Custom detection rules for interim risk mitigation.

**The vulnerability may result in your endpoints being compromised and lead to a potentially serious degradation of your protection.**

A detailed explanation of the vulnerability and a method to mitigate this issue has [been published here.](#)

**If you need help immediately with this issue reach out to your First Technology Group Account manager,** or you can [click here](#) to complete the form and put "XDR" in the message.

### Microsoft to put Security above all else

Microsoft has revealed plans to prioritize security over features and investments. I expect Microsoft's investments in its AI tool, "CoPilot for Security," to increase dramatically. [You can read more about this here.](#)

### Will Microsoft commit to "Secure by Default"?

To quote Directions on Microsoft, "Microsoft should not be selling security as a premium offering".

Microsoft has made some baby-steps in this direction by making logs available to customers not licensed for E5 for 180 days in response to the Midnight Blizzard attack in 2023. Right now, Microsoft's easiest security option is M365E5, but unfortunately, it needs to be for ALL users.

You can read more about what to do in [this paper from Directions on Microsoft](#) by Mary Jo Foley. Some commentary from [The Register is also interesting.](#)

There are some possible options by taking lower level SKU's and then adding specific add-ons, but your specific situation needs to be understood.

**It is really important that you reach out to your First Tech Account manager to help you explore options to try and improve your licensing value proposition.**

## What's up at FTG

### Sophos Security Technical Masterclass on Sophos Intercept X

**This is an in-person event in Umhlanga, Durban**

#### When

Wednesday 8 May 2024 @ 9:00am - [Register here.](#)

#### Where

Holiday Inn Express Umhlanga, 2 Ncondo Place Crn Ncondo Place &, Ntusi Rd, Off Umhlanga Rocks Dr.

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

**Copilot for Security** You and your team are invited to a one-on-one demo session we are hosting featuring Microsoft Security Copilot. It's a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase this cutting-edge technology to you. [Sign up here](#).

## Movies

Now Playing: [10 Lives](#)

Now Playing: [The Fall Guy](#)

Now Playing: [Boy Kills World](#)

3 May: [Star Wars: Episode 1 The Phantom Menace \(re-release\)](#)

3 May: [Breathe](#)

3 May: [Challengers](#)

3 May: [Just Now Jeffrey](#)

3 May: [Snake](#)

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