

# TOP STORIES #90

The biggest event of the week was [Microsoft's Ignite conference](#), where Microsoft made many announcements, mostly about AI. Cnet has made a [15 minute video summarising the highlights](#). The [full keynote is here](#). One of the announcements was the Windows 365 Link, which [Linus Tech Tips has quite an amusing view of!](#) A lot more news below as well.

You can read [TOP STORIES #89 here](#)

If colleagues want to join the newsletter, then can [click here to subscribe](#).

## Did you Know?

### PEXA has just won two awards!

This award-winning groundbreaking AI-powered HR assistant from [First Digital](#) is built to streamline and enhance employee interactions with HR policies. This advanced chatbot, developed for the City of Cape Town using Azure AI services, delivers precise, policy-grounded answers, eliminating the frustration of navigating complex HR documentation.

From managing leave requests to addressing nuanced queries about career progression, PEXA provides swift, accurate, and transparent responses in multiple languages.

Now production-ready, PEXA is a shining example of how AI transforms internal processes, saving time and improving efficiency.

If you are wondering, "PEXA" stands for "Policy EXplanation Assistant"!

**Curious to see the magic in action? Contact your First Technology account manager today and schedule a demo to explore how PEXA or similar solutions could revolutionise how your staff and customers can get intelligent answers in their home language to complex questions!**

P.S. Links to all the previous "Did you Know" stories can be [found here](#).

## Hardware

### AMD Builds a custom CPU for Microsoft

Microsoft announced these CPU's for use in it's HBv5 virtual machines for extreme performance requirements.

The specifications are quite impressive! [You can read more about this here](#). **With Microsoft constantly changing its Azure infrastructure, it is very important to review whether what you are hosting in Azure is optimal for the workload. Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our experts who provide these optimisation services.**

### NVIDIA RTX 50 Series info leaked

The 50 Series is going to bring significant performance and price increases across the range and it looks likely that we will find out more at CES 2025. You [can read more here](#).

Now the question is - if you need a GPU - will you buy a 40 series now?

It seems there might be a shortage of the 40-series anyway - so your efforts to get anything may get frustrated! Read [more on that here](#).

## Microsoft

### New Security efforts at Ignite

In the wake of the CrowdStrike debacle, Microsoft has been working on rehabilitating it's image as part of it's Secure Future Initiative. Further updates have been announced at Ignite to bolster Windows 11 and CoPilot security. You can [read more on all these announcements here](#).

**With Microsoft constantly adding new layers of security along with new features, it is so important to review if these can help improve your security posture (or not), so please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our specialists to review your position.**

### Microsoft Ignite: What you need to know

Directions on Microsoft has published a really good summary of all the key announcements at Ignite that companies may find interesting. As much as CoPilot was

getting attention, there were other important announcements relating to SQL, Windows Server, and most importantly, Azure Stack, which was being upgraded to Azure Local. You can [read more from Directions on Microsoft here](#).

## **New Teams features to affect Millions.**

Meeting transcription will support 51 spoken and 31 translation languages (careful about muttering under your breath in your language about what you really think about the meeting!). Meeting recaps will be generated automatically in the language of your choice. You can [read more about these features here](#).

Even more impressive is that you will be able to clone your voice to speak with others in their language with real-time speech-to-speech translation! Of course, there are going to be significant security risks that we still need to understand fully. You can [read more about this translation tech. here](#).

To learn more about these features that were announced, please contact your First Technology account manager to put you in touch with our Teams specialists to review these features and many others and see which of them could help your business work more efficiently.

## **Azure AI Foundry revealed**

Microsoft has announced that it is consolidating all its generative AI tools into a single management portal and console. You can [read more about all the new advanced features arriving in this new platform here](#).

Concerning the PEXA story above, which uses these tools, it is also a great opportunity to contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our AI experts in First Digital to take you through all the tools available on Azure that can do amazing things for your business. You "don't know what you don't know" until you actually have a chat about what might be possible!

## **Everything at Ignite about Teams gadgets**

[RaVe publication has an excellent summary](#) of all the product launches and announcements with videos related to Teams, especially all the new Teams gadgets from Crestron, Jabra, Yaelink, HP Poly, etc.....

**If you would like to know when you can get these products in South Africa, an idea of pricing and to understand more about any one of the technologies you see demoed at Ignite, FTG has multiple divisions specialising in different product segments that will be able to advise you.** Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with the best specialists who are most qualified to address your specific interest.

## **Security**

### **Fake AI generators used to steal ALL your passwords**

There is a social media campaign promoting a fake editor called "EditPro" with a supporting website. What it actually does is install a credential-stealing program that hoovers up all your credentials! This affects Windows and MacOS devices. [You can read more here](#).

This is a reminder that you have to be SUPER careful as to what programs you install and to be really careful that the source is legit. **As always, your users need constant reminders and training on what to look for.** Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our trainers to make sure you are regularly refreshed on what the bad guys are up to. They never rest, nor should you!

### **Scammers up to their old tricks with new twists**

Attackers are leveraging voice, images, and deepfakes featuring celebrities to endorse fake schemes, all targeting the vulnerable [which you can read more about here](#). These vulnerable people are not companies but our friends and family. As the silly season approaches, now is the time to take a moment to help make your family aware of scams that do their best to trick them.

Of course, companies are not immune, and as always, they have to ensure their users are being trained to be alert for the next devious trick to catch you out. The more aware you are at work, hopefully, you will be more aware at home. **Please contact your First Technology account manager to connect you with our specialists to ensure that your training is up to date.**

# Cloud & AI

## Send your clone to attend a conference call

AI is going to create challenges for employers - both good and bad. [Here is news about a startup that can create a clone of yourself](#) after 5 mins of training. After that, it will attend meetings for you while you relax in bed or take time out on the beach while to everybody else in the meeting, you are smartly dressed "at the office".

Now, imagine if you give that clone access to all your data and work mails, it may even be able to answer questions better than you in the flesh!

It is scary to think where this will end up!! You can read [this story on The Register](#) which will give you an idea of just how deep the rabbit-hole will go!

## AI improving the eyes, ears and voices of contact centres

A Deloitte study highlights that service innovators leveraging AI outperform others, achieving higher customer and employee satisfaction. You can [read more here](#).

By automating management tasks, AI ensures adherence to regulations and company policies, allowing agents to focus on delivering exceptional customer experiences. **This is what First Digital is demonstrating it can do in practice TODAY with PEXA. It is a good idea to start exploring what AI can do to enhance the quality of your service to your employees AND your customers. It is highly recommended that you contact your First Technology account manager to put you in touch with our experts at First Digital to start having these discussions. Maybe there is a PEXA just for you!**

## What's up at FTG

### CoPilot Security Demo

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

**In light of ongoing attacks like those discussed above, it is essential to contact your First Tech Group account manager to make arrangements to attend a session, or you can [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! Yikes!!!!**

All three movies being released for 29 November look to be very good and completely different from each other. Take a look at the trailers.

Now Playing: [Absolution](#)

Now Playing: [Wicked Part 1](#)

Now Playing: [Arthur's Whiskey](#)

29 November: [MOANA 2](#)

29 November: [Elevation](#)

29 November: [Heretic](#)



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