

# TOP STORIES #76

As always, an interesting week. [TOP STORIES #75 is here](#), and if colleagues want to join, they can [click here](#).

## Hardware

### New AI Benchmarks

Primate Labs the developer behind the Geekbench benchmarking suite has released a tool to measure AI capabilities of devices. A number of big brands are adopting GeekBench and we will probably see more to follow as well as other Developers releasing different types of benchmarks.

This will go a long way towards standardising how we compare one AI system with another. You can read [more about this announcement here](#).

## Microsoft

### Exchange Server SE

Microsoft has confirmed the next version of Exchange will be a Subscription Edition which will be available in Q3 of 2025. It follows the same rules as Sharepoint SE - you need an active subscription to use it, and if you end the subscription you get the right to use the last perpetual version - in this case Exchange 2019. You can find the announcement and Migration paths [posted by Microsoft here](#). This also ties in with the article I published in TOP STORIES #75 regarding [support for Exchange 2016 coming to an end](#).

**If you have any type of Exchange server deployment on-premise, even if hybrid, it is really important that you ask your First Technology account manager to talk to our engineers to be sure about your roadmap of migrating to the latest version of Exchange.**

### Mandatory MFA from October for Azure

This was first announced in [TOP STORIES #64](#), so this is really just a reminder that Microsoft is forging ahead.

Phase 1 of the rollout starts in October. You can [read more about the rollout here](#).

**It is recommended that you contact your First Tech account manager to put you in touch with our Azure experts to assist with any challenges or questions you may have regarding this change.**

## Security

### Make Sure your Outlook is patched.

Infection is easy by downloading a small file from any website, and so is the cure, so please make sure you are patched. You can [read more here](#).

You may as well check out the work-around for the [typing crash bug as well here](#),

### Anybody can get Phished

This is a good reminder that no matter how good you think you are at spotting something nasty, you can still get hacked.

You can never let your guard down, but no matter how careful you are, something bad will eventually happen because nobody can be on guard all the time.

Here is what happened to [Linus Tech @ 26:18 time stop](#).

He got caught at the wrong moment when his guard was down.

This is an important reminder to always make sure that no matter how big or small you are if you have data you can loose, you need to have it backed up in a way you can recover from it even if you are completely locked out.

**Please talk to your First Tech account manager to put you in touch with our Backup and security specialists to help you make SURE that your security and recovery processes are in place.**

## Cloud & AI

### New GPT-4o model Released.

OpenAI is making continuous improvements to its AI model [as you can see here](#). What is important to remember is that as OpenAI improves its model, so does Microsoft's - and it is very important that you stay up to date with what Microsoft is offering under its CoPilot brand.

Of course, don't forget Google - there is some advanced stuff coming as well, like [Project Astra, which you can read about here](#).

You will see below that we are having demos showing how Dynamics is enhanced with CoPilot - please contact your First Tech account manager to see if these demos are relevant to your business,

## How far have we come?

Almost 2 years later, where are we with AI?

Are we suffering from [Change Blindness](#)?

Ethan Mollick has [written a very interesting blog](#) that helps us realise just how far we have come with AI where the leaps that have been taken from less than 2 years ago are incredible. He also notes how quickly students and teachers have adopted AI. I think the most important and scary point to take away from his article is that if the pace of change continues at the same pace as it has in the last 2 years, our world is going to look very different from today. I have followed how technology has changed over the last 40 years, using Moores Law (which is now dead) as my "North Star" and what you must also note is that change is compounded from one year to the next, so in 2 years time things **will** be really different (again) because of the compounding effect.

**I urge you to take time to read [this article](#)**- it really makes one realise how far we have come, and it serves as a reminder that you **HAVE** to be playing with how AI can benefit your business.

There is nobody that will be able to tell you better than yourself - there **IS NOBODY** that has many more years experience than you, we are literally all in R&D together!

**What we can do is show you how to use the AI tools and most importantly how to make sure your environment is secure for the deployment of AI. Please contact your First Tech account manager to connect you with our AI experts (spread across many divisions - AI is everywhere) to start this journey, and if it is already started see if we can help speed it up.**

## What's up at FTG

### Exclusive Dynamics 365 & CoPilot Demo

CRMTeam, a division of First Technology Group is excited to invite you to an exclusive Microsoft event focused on the transformative power of Dynamics 365 and Copilot.

This is a unique opportunity to see how these leading solutions can streamline your business processes and drive success.

**Where:** Johannesburg - Microsoft Corporate Hill Office Park, 3012 Winnie Mandela Dr.

**When:** 19 September 2024

**RSVP By:** 6 September 2024

### BUI Cyber Research finds another Zero Day vulnerability in Teams

The Cyber Security and Azure Expert division for FTG has found another vulnerability, which they have [published the details of here](#).

**Please contact your First Technology account manager, who will connect you with our experts to help you determine whether you need help to check whether you are vulnerable and, if so, what you can do to protect yourself.**

### 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

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.

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

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

### Data Security in the Age of AI

**Join BUI for an enlightening session on Data Security, along with an exhilarating Cyber Security Escape Room.**

An interactive experience that will keep everyone on their toes and fully immersed.

Ignite your enthusiasm with a custom-designed escape room, where critical cyber security concepts come to life through exhilarating challenges.

**Where:** Johannesburg - Garden Venue Hotel

**When:** 10 September 2024

[Register here.](#)

**Where:** Cape Town - 12 Apostles Hotel & Spa

**When:** 19 September 2024

[Register here.](#)

## Movies

Alien is proving to be a huge hit, so if you can, go and get terrified in IMAX!

Now Playing: [Alien: Romulus](#)

Now Playing: [It ends with us](#)

Now Playing: [Vedaa](#)

23 August: [Inspector Sun](#)

23 August: [Blink Twice](#)

23 August: [The Crow](#)

23 August: [Spirited Away](#)

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